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অসম চৰকাৰ



ভাৰত বহু সন্মানেৰে বিভূষিত সুধাকণ্ঠ ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকাদেৱৰ জন্ম-শতবাৰ্ষিকী উপলক্ষে সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমা বিভাগৰ উদ্যোগত বিশেষ আয়োজন

সুধাকণ্ঠলৈ শ্ৰদ্ধাৰ্য

আৰু

ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকা সংগ্ৰহালয়ৰ আধাৰশিলা স্থাপন

৮ ছেপ্টেম্বৰ ২০২৬ || পুৱা ৯:৩০ বজা

ড° ভূপেন হাজৰিকা সমন্বয় তীৰ্থ, জালুকবাৰী, গুৱাহাটী

মুখ্য অতিথি

ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা

মুখ্যমন্ত্রী, অসম

সদৌ অসম ভিত্তিত ভূপেন্দ্ৰ সংগীত প্ৰতিযোগিতা আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান

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শ্ৰীশ্ৰীমাদেৱৰ আন্তৰ্জাতিক প্ৰেক্ষাগৃহ, পাঞ্জাবাৰী, গুৱাহাটী

আয়োজক :

ভূপেন হাজৰিকা সাংস্কৃতিক ন্যাস আৰু শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ কলাক্ষেত্ৰ সমাজ

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সঞ্চালক

সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমা বিভাগ, অসম

তথ্য আৰু জনসংযোগ সঞ্চালকালয়, অসমৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰচাৰিত

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DIPR/D/HLT/22/5-Sep-26

NSE gets regulatory nod for ₹ 30,000 cr IPO, the biggest so far

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd has received regulatory approval for the long-awaited ₹ 30,000-crore initial public offering (IPO), which could potentially be the country's biggest-ever yet.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued an observation letter, effectively a clearance to the world's largest derivatives exchange to proceed with the IPO, according to an update on the regulator's website on Friday.

The NSE's offering of 14.89 crore shares will compete alongside Jio Platforms Ltd, billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led conglomerate's digital services arm, for the biggest-ever IPO tag. Jio's offering is estimated to be about ₹ 37,700 crore but its timing has not yet been announced.

The NSE IPO will surpass Hyundai Motor India's ₹ 27,858.75 crore listing in 2024 as well as LIC of India's ₹ 20,557.23 crore offering in 2022. It will also dwarf Paytm's (One97 Communications) ₹ 18,300 crore (2021), Tata Capital's ₹ 15,511.87 crore (2025) and Coal India's ₹ 15,200 crore (2010) listing.

The exchange is expected to announce the IPO price band and other key details next week. The public issue is likely to be launched on September 15 with the exchange targeting a listing on September 24-25, sources close to the development said. The listing is targeted before the Pitru Paksha period begins on September 26.

The IPO, which will see light after nearly a decade of regulatory delays, will place NSE among India's 10 most valuable companies by market capitalisation.

NSE, whose listing plan has been held up since 2016 by regulatory scrutiny and legacy legal issues, had filed its draft red herring prospectus with SEBI on June 17.

This week the Supreme Court dismissed SEBI's appeals in the long-running NSE co-location and dark-fibre cases - the governance disputes that had stalled the exchange's listing ambitions for nearly a decade.

NSE dominates the country's equity derivatives market and is the world's busiest derivatives exchange by contracts traded, while also operating the benchmark Nifty 50 index.

The proposed IPO will comprise an offer for sale by existing shareholders, allowing them to monetise their stakes without bringing fresh capital into the exchange.

The offering, structured entirely as an offer for sale of up to 14.89 crore shares - roughly 6 per cent of NSE's paid-up capital - is expected to raise close to ₹ 30,000 crore. Bankers tracking the deal expect shares to be priced around ₹ 2,000 apiece, in line with where the stock has been trading in the pre-listing grey market, with a formal price band expected to be announced



around September 11.

Because the issue is entirely an offer for sale, proceeds will flow to selling shareholders rather than to the exchange itself. NSE filed its draft prospectus with SEBI in June, though the approval timeline slipped after SBI Capital Markets was added to the list of selling shareholders, a change that triggered a fresh 21-day public feedback window on the revised documents.

NSE's path to market has been one of India's longest-running corporate sagas. The exchange first filed for an IPO in December 2016, only to see the process repeatedly derailed by a co-location scandal involving allegations that select brokers were given preferential, low-latency access to its trading systems, along with related governance lapses that drew sustained regulatory scrutiny.

NSE sought SEBI's no-objection certificate - the mandatory clearance market infrastructure institutions must obtain before filing an IPO - multiple times over the years, including attempts in 2019, 2020 and 2024, before finally securing it earlier this year.

A listing would crown a remarkable turnaround for an exchange that, as recently as a decade ago, was mired in litigation and reputational damage.

According to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), State Bank of India will offload up to 2.48 crore shares in the IPO, while MS Strategic (Mauritius) Limited will sell 1.60 crore shares.

Notably, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), NSE's single largest shareholder with a 10.72 per cent stake, will not sell any shares in the IPO.

Other key selling shareholders include Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, Aranda Investments (Mauritius) Pte Ltd, Bank of Baroda, Stock Holding Corporation of India Ltd, General Insurance Corporation of India, The New India Assurance Company, National Insurance Company and United India Insurance Company.

SBI currently holds a 3.23 per cent stake in NSE, while its subsidiary SBI Capital Markets

owns another 4.33 per cent. Stock Holding Corporation of India has a 4.44 per cent stake in the exchange.

While the final issue size and valuation will be determined later, people familiar with the matter said the IPO could be around ₹ 30,000 crore, implying a market capitalisation of more than ₹ 5 lakh crore. NSE has around 1.8 lakh shareholders.

NSE's IPO filing follows its board's approval of the proposed IPO on February 6, after the exchange received SEBI's no-objection certificate (NOC).

The journey, however, has been a long one. NSE had first filed draft offer documents in 2016 to raise around ₹ 10,000 crore through an OFS by existing shareholders. SEBI subsequently withheld approval amid concerns over governance lapses and the co-location case.

Over the years, NSE made multiple representations to SEBI and undertook a series of governance and compliance measures to address the regulator's concerns.

A key hurdle was cleared earlier this year when NSE moved towards settling the long-running co-location and dark fibre matters with SEBI.

In July, NSE paid ₹ 714.74 crore to SEBI after receiving the regulator's in-principle approval to settle the two matters for ₹ 1,491.21 crore. The latest payment, together with ₹ 776.47 crore already deposited by NSE, completed the agreed settlement amount.

SEBI had earlier agreed, in principle, to settle the co-location and dark fibre matters for a cumulative ₹ 1,491.21 crore and directed NSE to pay the balance after adjusting the amount already deposited.

NSE had initially filed two settlement applications with SEBI on June 20, 2025, covering the co-location and dark fibre matters for a cumulative ₹ 1,387.39 crore. It subsequently revised the settlement terms on March 13, 2026, raising the cumulative amount to ₹ 1,491.21 crore.

On the financial front, the exchange reported a 15 per cent decline in profit after tax to ₹ 10,302 crore in FY26, compared with ₹ 12,188 crore in FY25. Total income also slipped to ₹ 18,713 crore in FY26 from ₹ 19,177 crore in the previous fiscal.

During the June quarter, NSE reported a 7 per cent rise in its consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to ₹ 3,120 crore from ₹ 2,924 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. Its total income increased 9 per cent year-on-year to ₹ 5,252 crore in the April-June quarter of FY27 from ₹ 4,798 crore a year ago.

A total of 20 merchant bankers are managing the IPO. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Nepal flood death toll

after he was taken out safely. Maharjan's wife said her husband, who is from Kathmandu, had been given a "second life" and thanked rescuers who risked their lives to save him. "He has returned with a second life. We are extremely happy," his wife, Hira Shobha, was quoted as saying by the Kathmandu Post. "We had been waiting. I am now going to the hospital to see my husband."

Meanwhile, the sixth and seventh relief flights from India carrying 21.5 tonnes of relief materials arrived in Kathmandu on Thursday night.

"India's support to Nepal's relief efforts for Rasuwa flash flood continues: 6th and 7th relief flights (C-130Js) arrived in Kathmandu tonight carrying 21.5 tonnes of relief assistance, including forensic kits and medical supplies," India's Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava said in a post on X.

"These materials were handed over to Nepal, and will help strengthen ongoing Nepali relief and rescue efforts and support communities affected by Rasuwa floods," he added. Around 600 children remain unaccounted for in Nepal's Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts.

An estimated 280 children are missing in Rasuwa, and between 300 and 350 others remain unaccounted for in the neighbouring Nuwakot in central Nepal, the Kathmandu Post newspaper reported, citing figures compiled by local Education Development and Coordination Units (EDCUs), local governments, and educational institutions.

Surya Bahadur Khatri, head of the Nuwakot Education Development and Coordination Unit, said, "We are actively liaising with headmasters to collect verified data on missing students, though school heads are struggling to provide exact figures due to broken communications."

"Although a few missing students have been located, new reports of unaccounted-for children continue to arrive from various schools. We estimate that at least 300 pupils are missing in our district." In Bidur Municipality of Nuwakot alone, roughly 250 children are missing since the floods hit, according to Navaraj Sapkota, school inspector of the municipality's education unit.

"The situation on the ground is deeply distressing. In some cases, we have located surviving parents who cannot find their children, while in other instances, surviving students are searching for missing parents," said Sapkota. Bidur houses 170 educational institutions—142 community schools and 28 private schools.

In Rasuwa, Durga Prasad Silwal, chief of the local education unit, said that official verification is ongoing but preliminary records indicate that 280 students are currently missing across the district.

The disaster has also taken a toll on teachers and school staff. Education units confirmed that 22 teachers and school staff members remain missing across both districts. Additionally, several teachers from Dhading and Gorkha who had travelled to Rasuwa for pilgrimage were caught in the deluge and remain missing.

Rasuwa reported 16 missing teachers—15 from community schools and one from a private institution—while Nuwakot confirmed six missing teachers, according to Kathmandu Post. Although several bodies of victims have been recovered in downstream districts, authorities have yet to verify the exact number of identified students or teachers.

According to the Ministry of Education data, the floods affected 22 schools across Rasuwa, Nuwakot, and Dhading, with 12 institutions completely destroyed, the report said. Separately, Nepal's government has announced a special relief package for businesses hit by the devastating floods, offering concessions, loan restructuring and cheaper credit, as authorities began work on relocating settlements destroyed by the disaster.

The Nepal Cabinet on Thursday described the business-related measures as the first phase of its recovery package, the Kathmandu Post reported.

Businesses whose commercial vehicles, transport equipment, plants, machinery, tools or other equipment were destroyed beyond repair or swept away will be allowed to import replacements without paying customs duties, the report said.

The concession will also apply to goods on which customs duties had already been paid but which were destroyed before reaching their destination. Replacement goods will have to be imported through any customs office within six months, it said.

Provincial and local governments will also be asked to provide temporary concessions on property and business taxes, building permit fees and other local charges for affected businesses and properties, the report added. The government has directed Nepal Rastra Bank, the country's central bank, to facilitate restructuring or rescheduling of loans taken by flood-affected borrowers, it said.

The Insurance Authority has separately been asked to speed up claims by allowing insurers to deploy surveyors through simplified procedures. Insurers will be required to provide advance payments of up to 50 per cent of estimated losses based on preliminary assessments.

The relief measures come as authorities prepare a longer-term plan for communities whose homes and settlements were swept away. (PTI)

Yaba tablets worth

continues. At Dighorkhal Check Post on the Assam-Meghalaya border, @assampolice intercepted a vehicle and seized 1,20,000 Burmese cigarettes concealed in a secret chamber," it said. The CMO added that two persons have been apprehended and legal action initiated against them. (PTI)

Ticket aspirants need to

Hussain also claimed that there are allegations of misuse of administrative influence in relation to 15th Finance Commission funds at the gram panchayat level against the former DC.

He urged the EC to take up the issues "with the competent authority and ensure that his (Sharma's) resignation is not accepted until the allegations and circumstances surrounding his conduct are duly examined, subject to the applicable service rules and law".

Hussain also called for "exemplary and appropriate action as may be warranted, if the allegations are found to be established" against Sharma by the poll panel.

Reacting to the Congress's allegations, state BJP spokesperson Kamal Medhi said, "Our party has a set system of selecting candidates for any election. One has to meet the requisite criteria for getting candidature. Moreover, Sharma has not joined our party yet."

He said that as a former bureaucrat, Sharma is welcome to join the BJP, just like any other willing individual, but who gets party candidature for the Nagaon by-election will be decided as per procedure only. (PTI)

Shah meets Tripura CM, Tipra Motha

Debbarma had on Wednesday said Tipra Motha would not enter into an alliance for the Village Committee elections without a written assurance on land rights for indigenous people in the Sixth Schedule areas.

The Village Committee elections are being held after a gap of 10 years. The polls, initially due in 2022, were delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent legal complications.

Founded by Debbarma, the scion of Tripura's erstwhile royal family, Tipra Motha emerged as a major political force in the state's tribal belt after sweeping the TTAADC elections in 2021. It won 13 seats in the 60-member assembly in the 2023 elections, emerging as the second-largest party in the House and the principal opposition.

It subsequently joined the BJP-led government in March 2024 after signing a tripartite accord with the Centre and the Tripura government aimed at finding an "amicable solution" to issues concerning the state's indigenous people.

The accord covered a range of issues, including land and political rights, economic development, identity, culture and language. Relations between the allies, however, have remained strained, with Tipra Motha repeatedly accusing the Centre and the state government of failing to implement key provisions of the accord.

The differences intensified over the past year, with the two sides also trading charges following clashes involving their workers. The parties eventually contested the TTAADC elections earlier this year separately despite continuing to share power in the state government.

Tipra Motha won 24 of the 28 elected seats in the tribal council polls, dealing a major setback to the BJP, which has drawn much of its support in the state from Bengali Hindu voters, in the tribal belt. (PTI)

Arunachal Guv urges teachers

a student throughout their lifetime," he said. Parnaik said teachers are the builders of individuals and the foundation of a progressive and responsible society.

The governor said Teachers' Day marks the birth anniversary of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the former president whose life demonstrated the transformative power of education. (PTI)

'Eye in sky': ISRO launches

flanked by key scientists involved in the mission, said soon after the launch.

He recalled that the first launch of GSVL (D1) was done with a payload of 1,536 kg and since then, gradually, ISRO improved the performance of GSVL by optimising the structural mass, and improving the propulsion systems.

"Today, we have injected the heaviest satellite 2,367 kg using this launch vehicle." Once the EOS-05 is operationalised in the orbit, it will become India's first dedicated imaging satellite from the geo-orbit providing "strategic data" for the country, he said. Quoting satellite data, he confirmed that all the systems were operating perfectly well and that the solar panel has been successfully deployed. "The health of satellite is perfectly alright," he said.

"This is a great achievement for our country's space programme because this is the first EOS that will be placed on the geo platform for the national activities."

In the days to come, the orbit raising maneuvering will be done and the satellite will be elevated to required orbit and will be placed in the geo platform, he said, adding the success is the culmination of team work of ISRO and its industrial partners.

Mission Director Thomas Kurien said the mission carried uniquely configured EOS capable of near real time imaging. "It is the heaviest satellite ever launched by GSVL into a GTO or sub-GTO orbit," he added. Project Director (Satellite) Imteyaz Ahamed described the EOS-05 as a unique, one of its kind satellite with multi-band operating capabilities. "It is a complex satellite in terms of configuration, content and capability."

Earlier, at the end of a smooth 27-hour countdown, which commenced at 23.30 hours on Wednesday, the rocket began its ascent on dot at 2.55 AM from the second launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre. The odd hour and rain could not deter the enthusiasm of members of public as many, armed with umbrellas, turned up in good numbers to cheer the launch. The 3-stage, 51.7 meter Geosynchronous Launch Vehicle (GSVL), with its third stage being cryogenic, has a lift off mass of 420.5 tonne and the heavy satellite is ensconced on the rocket nose cone.

The GSVL-F17/EOS-05 mission is said to be a replacement for the unsuccessful GSVL-F-10/EOS-03 mission of 2021.

An onboard computer had aborted that mission at 307 seconds into the flight then. A probe into the post-flight data had indicated that an anomaly in the Cryogenic Upper Stage led to the mission failure, according to ISRO. The pre-dawn launch on Friday follows a gap of nearly eight months and brings ISRO its first success of the year. On January 12, ISRO's PSLV-C62 rocket carrying 16 satellites failed to place them in the intended orbit after encountering an "anomaly" in the critical third stage of the launch. Later, addressing a press conference, the ISRO chief said the earth observation satellite's operational lifetime is nine years and dismissed speculations that it was a "spy satellite."

Days ago, Narayan visited the Tirumala Tirupati Lord Venkateswara Swamy temple and prayed for the mission's success.

Meanwhile, PM Modi said the success was a proud moment for the country. "Yet another outstanding achievement by ISRO and a proud moment for our nation. The successful launch of GSVL-F17 carrying EOS-05, India's first-ever imaging satellite from Geosynchronous orbit is a reflection of the excellence, innovation and growing capabilities that define India's space sector," Modi said in a post on X. (PTI)

Range Rover Electric marks new era for luxury SUV

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Range Rover has entered a new era with the launch of its first-ever electric model, Range Rover Electric, combining electric propulsion with the brand's established focus on luxury, refinement and all-terrain capability.

Built at JLR's Solihull manufacturing facility in the UK, the Range Rover Electric is powered by twin permanent-magnet electric motors, each rated at 260kW, generating a combined output of up to 405kW and 850Nm of torque.

The company claims a WLTP range of up to 600 km, with a real-

world range of up to 535 km.

The electric powertrain is designed to deliver quieter and more responsive performance while retaining Range Rover's off-road capabilities.

Intelligent Driveline Dynamics (IDD) can distribute rear torque from 100% to zero to help prevent loss of traction, while Integrated Traction Management (ITM) controls motor speed within 50 milliseconds and manages wheel slip significantly faster than an internal-combustion engine equivalent.

The vehicle's Single Pedal mode works with the traction manage-

ment system to provide control on steep terrain.

The company says it can pull away smoothly on slopes of up to 33 degrees and complete rolling climbs on gradients of up to 45 degrees.

"Range Rover Electric is the result of a decade of considered engineering and technological development, setting a new benchmark for The Original Luxury SUV," said Martin Limpert, Managing Director, Range Rover.

He said electric propulsion had enhanced the vehicle's refinement while advanced chassis technologies retained its breadth of capabil-

ity.

The Range Rover Electric uses an 118.5kWh usable lithium-ion battery with 344 prismatic cells and an 800-volt electrical architecture.

When connected to a 350kW rapid DC charger, the vehicle can charge from 10% to 80% in around 22 minutes, or add up to 220km of WLTP range in 10 minutes when charging at its maximum rate.

The vehicle can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in as little as 4.5 seconds, while overtaking acceleration from 80 to 120 km/h can be completed in as little as 2.7 seconds.

Duolingo to offer 12 months of Super subscription to Airtel's 376 million customers

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Duolingo, the global mobile learning platform, has partnered with Bharti Airtel to offer 12 months of Super Duolingo at no additional cost to Airtel's 376 million subscribers.

Duolingo's language-learning app offers courses in more than 40 languages, combining bite-sized lessons, gamification, personalised learning and AI-powered features. The platform also offers learning experiences in chess, mathematics and music.

Under the partnership, Airtel subscribers will receive access to Duolingo's premium, ad-free learning experience, including unlimited energy, AI-powered real-time speaking practice, personalised exercises and mistakes review. The Super Duolingo subscription will be available to Airtel customers across mobile, Wi-Fi and DTH.

Customers can access the offer through the Airtel App without requiring a credit card.

The companies said language skills are increasingly becoming important for education, employment and global opportunities. The partnership is aimed at providing Airtel customers with an accessible digital learning platform and encouraging regular language-learning habits.

Rashi Dhanani, Head of Business Development, India, Duolingo, said India was one of the company's most important markets, with growing interest in language learning among students, professionals and an increasingly global workforce.

She said the partnership with Airtel would bring Super Duolingo to a wider audience across the country.

Motoverse 2026 unveils first artist lineup

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Royal Enfield has announced the first artist lineup for Motoverse 2026, setting the stage for what the company says will be the biggest edition yet of its annual celebration of motorcycles, music, art, sport and culture.

The three-day festival will be held from November 27 to 29 at Vagator, Goa, against the backdrop of Royal Enfield's 125th year.

The event will feature motorcycle unveils and launches, Pure Sport experiences, art and craftsmanship, curated rides, food, workshops and community-led activities.

The Main Stage will feature Rebel, Lifafa, Farhan Akhtar, Sanjith Hegde, MHR & Friends and The Think Floydian.

The lineup spans independent hip-hop, Hindi-language electronica, playback music and tribute performances.

Rebel represents India's independent hip-hop circuit, while Farhan Akhtar will bring his screen-and-stage repertoire to the festival.

Sanjith Hegde will perform from

his multilingual playback repertoire, while Lifafa is known for his work in Hindi-language electronica. MHR & Friends will present a genre-fluid mix of rap, melody and experimental production, while The Think Floydian will recreate Pink Floyd's atmospheric live sound.

The Community Stage will focus on India's independent and emerging music scene, featuring singer-songwriters Rushil and Mali, hip-hop artist Suggahunny, and performers Curtain Blue, Komorebi & Goya, OG SHEZ and Aksomaniac. More artists are expected to be announced in the run-up to the festival. The Pure Sport arena will offer riders and enthusiasts a chance to test their skills across Dirt Track, Moto Polo, Maut Ka Kuan, Slide School, Drift School and Trail School.

Motoverse will showcase creativity and craftsmanship from Royal Enfield's global creative movement, while MotoReel will bring together riders, adventurers, racers, custom builders and explorers through workshops, conversations

AFFIDAVIT

I, Mafidul Islam do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I am permanent resident of the below mentioned address and citizen of India by birth. That my actual and correct name is Mafidul Islam. That my name has wrongly been recorded vide AADHAR No. 4408-4221-2746 as Mahidul Islam in place of Mafidul Islam. That Mahidul Islam and Mahidul Islam are the same and one person.

Sd/-

Mafidul Islam
SO- Kajimuddin
RO- Paschim Padokhat,
PO- Shyamtila,
Dist- Darrang (Assam)

ACHIEVEMENT



Lwithma Basumatary has been awarded the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) by the Department of Earth Science (Geography), University of Science and Technology Meghalaya (USTM) for her thesis entitled "Ginger Cultivation among the Tribal Communities of Karbi Anglong District, Assam."

She completed her research under the guidance of Dr. Swarup Jyoti Baishya, Assistant Professor, USTM, with Dr. Palme Borthakur, Assistant Professor, Royal Global University, and Dr. Alajanj Simbachalam, Assistant Professor, NIRDP-NEEC, as Co-supervisors.

She is the daughter of Bihuti Khakhary and Rijen Basumatary and sister of Punit Basumatary. She hails from the small village of Sonarjan, Langhin Tinali, Karbi Anglong, Assam.

Her achievement is a proud moment for her family, community, and native village.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2026

THE HILLS TIMES 3

KA seen development after peace pact: CM

'2021 Accord fulfilled the long-standing aspirations of Karbi people'

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday said the Karbi Peace Accord, signed five years ago, has accelerated development of Karbi Anglong district.

He said the district was progressing in growth parameters, a testimony that dialogue leads to a resilient future.

"Today, we commemorate the historic signing of the Karbi Peace Accord - a pivotal milestone that forever transformed the socio-political landscape of Assam and turned a page from conflict to lasting harmony," Sarma said in a social media post.

The Accord was signed in New Delhi in 2021 between the Centre, state government and five major insurgent groups. The pact brought to an end years of violence, killings and abduction in the rebels' fight for a



separate homeland in Karbi Anglong, a territory of ethnic Karbi tribals. Sarma maintained that the

accord fulfilled the long-standing aspirations of the Karbi people while safeguarding the territorial integrity of Assam.

From infrastructure upgrades to targeted tribal welfare, the agreement opened new doors for youth, art and local entrepreneurship, he said. "As Karbi Anglong marches ahead on the path of prosperity, we salute the spirit of peace and unity that made this agreement possible. A shining example of how dialogue builds a resilient future," the chief minister added.

He affirmed the state government's commitment to ensuring the fast paced growth of the region and the welfare of the people, while safeguarding their distinct identity. (PTI)

Nepal flood death toll hits 1,295; Two rescued after 9 days

KATHMANDU, Sept 4: The death toll due to flash floods in Nepal rose to 1,295 on Friday as more bodies were recovered from the affected areas, while two men were rescued alive from a tunnel at the Trishuli 3A hydropower project after being trapped for nine days.

The flash floods, triggered by an ice-rock avalanche near the Nepal-Tibet border on August 26, devastated towns and villages in northern and central Nepal, leaving a trail of destruction.

So far, 1,293 bodies have been recovered from eight different districts across Nepal. These include 359 bodies recovered in Chitwan district, 221 in Nawalparasi East, 212 in

Nawalparasi West and 186 in Nuwakot.

Similarly, 140 bodies were recovered in Rasuwa, 72 in Gorkha, 65 in Dhading and 38 from Tanahu, according to Nepal Police.

With two victims of the flood dying in two different hospitals in Kathmandu on Friday, the death toll has risen to 1,295.

The joint command of security forces is actively conducting search and rescue operations for the estimated 5,000 missing. So far, 13,093 people have been rescued from the affected areas. The two men rescued alive from the tunnel were identified as Kabir Maharjan, 45, a mechanical supervisor on the project, and Sanjay

Sah, 30, a foreman, according to the Public Relations Directorate of the Nepal Army.

Maharjan was flown to Nepal Army Hospital in Chhauni, Kathmandu, and his condition is said to be critical, while Sah is under treatment at the Trishuli hospital in Nuwakot, according to Raja Ram Basnet, Nepali Army spokesperson.

Sah, who is from Saptari district in Madhesh province, told security personnel that he was chanting 'Hare Krishna' mantra for the last nine days while trapped inside the tunnel.

"I was chanting Hare Krishna mahamanttra for the past nine days," he said, briefly talking about the incident soon. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Yaba tablets worth ₹1.4 cr, 1.2 lakh Myanmarese cigarettes seized

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Seven people were arrested and Yaba tablets worth Rs 1.4 crore and over 1.2 lakh Myanmarese cigarettes were seized from their possession in separate operations in Assam, officials said on Friday. The Yaba tablets were seized in Sribhumi district and the smuggled cigarettes in adjacent Cachar, both in southern Assam's Barak Valley.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, in a social media post, said, "At Badarpur, @sribhumipolice intercepted 2 vehicles and seized 14,000 Yaba tablets worth Rs 1.4 cr."

He said five accused have been apprehended, lauding the police for the successful operation.

Yaba tablets are illegal in India as they contain methamphetamine, a Schedule II substance under the Controlled Substances Act.

The chief minister's office (CMO), also in a social media post, said another operation was carried out at an inter-state border checkpoint in Cachar district. "ZERO tolerance against smuggling and illegal trafficking (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Ticket aspirants need to fulfil certain criteria: BJP

Nagaon LS bypoll : Cong seeks EC intervention over likelihood ex-DC joining fray

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: The Assam unit of the Congress on Friday sought the intervention of the Election Commission (EC) over reports that the BJP was likely to field former Nagaon deputy commissioner Devasish Sharma as its Nagaon Lok Sabha bypoll.

The grand old party contended that questions would be raised on the neutrality of the by-poll as the former bureaucrat had directly handled "sensitive aspects" of the district till recently.

The BJP, however, said that the party has a set system of selecting candidates for any election, and those seeking nominations have to meet certain criteria; and moreover, Sharma was yet to join the party.

The Congress, nevertheless, sought an independent, time-bound inquiry into the tenure of Sharma, who took voluntary retirement recently, including into allegations of financial irregularities in gram panchayat fund allocations.

While state Congress president Gaurav Gogoi aired his apprehensions on social media, the party's Dhubri MP Rakibul Hussain has written to the EC on the issue.

"The @ECISVEEP must urgently intervene in the Nagaon Lok Sabha by-election in Assam. There are serious questions arising

from the resignation of the Nagaon DC Shri Devasish Sharma and his alleged attempt to contest the forthcoming by-election from the BJP," Gogoi said in a social media post on Friday.

The Nagaon by-election has been necessitated following the resignation of incumbent two-term MP Pradyut Bordoloi, who quit the Congress to join the BJP just ahead of Assam Assembly polls in April. He is now the MLA of Dispur constituency.

Gogoi maintained that over the past few months, as district commissioner-cum-district election officer, Sharma had handled several sensitive aspects of the electoral process, and "the decisions taken by him may have a bearing on the neutrality of the by-election".

"There are also allegations of irregularities involving 15th Finance Commission funds at the gram panchayat level and of administrative influence in their implementation," the state Congress chief claimed.

He urged the EC to order an independent, time-bound inquiry into Sharma's tenure as DC-cum-DEO and the alleged financial irregularities.

"Any inaction from the Election Commission will further erode public trust in elec-

tions in India," Gogoi added.

Hussain, in a letter to the EC on Thursday over the same matter, also sought an immediate inquiry into Sharma's term and review of decisions taken by him.

In the letter forwarded through the state chief electoral officer (CEO), which was shared with the media on Friday, the MP maintained that the poll panel's immediate intervention was necessary to uphold the purity, neutrality and credibility of the electoral process.

Hussain said he had written to the EC on the same matter on August 30, citing news reports and social media posts regarding Sharma's possible candidature for the forthcoming Nagaon Lok Sabha by-election.

"His resignation, coming in the midst of the election process and following the widespread reports concerning his possible political candidature, warrants a proper, independent and time-bound inquiry into his conduct and activities while holding the office of DC-cum-DEO," Hussain said. He requested the commission to review and scrutinise all material, election-related decisions and actions taken during Sharma's tenure, particularly those which could have any bearing on the by-election. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Shah meets Tripura CM, Tipra Motha founder amid BJP-ally differences ahead of village polls

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Union home minister Amit Shah on Friday held a meeting with Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha and Tipra Motha founder Pradyot Kishore Debbarma amid differences between the two allies over an electoral understanding for the upcoming Village Committee polls and the regional party's demand for land rights for indigenous people.

BJP's Northeast coordinator Sambit Patra was also present at the nearly 90-minute meeting at Shah's residence, sources said.

The BJP and Tipra Motha have remained allies in the state government despite repeatedly clashing over tribal issues. Friday's meeting assumes significance as the two sides have been negotiating a possible seat-sharing arrangement for elections to 587 Village Committees under the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAAD), scheduled for September 28.

The TTAADC covers around two-thirds of Tripura's geographical area and is home to a large part of the state's indigenous population, making hold over tribal politics crucial for both parties.

Sources said Debbarma remained firm during the meeting on his demand for protection of land rights of indigenous people



and received an assurance from the BJP leadership that the issue would be addressed. There was, however, no immediate official announcement on the contours of any electoral understanding between the two parties.

"Met Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah Ji in New Delhi today. During the meeting, Founder of Tipra Motha Party Maharaja Pradyot Manikya Ji and BJP North East Coordinator Sambit Patra Ji were also present," Saha said in a post on X. "We had a fruitful and constructive discussion on matters of mutual importance and the development and welfare of the people of Tripura," he said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Train movement to Mizoram affected due to soil erosion near tracks after heavy rain



GUWAHATI, Sept 4: Train movement to Mizoram has been affected due to soil erosion close to railway tracks following heavy rainfall, an official statement said here on Friday.

The restoration work in the affected area between Jamira in Assam and Bairabi in Mizoram has begun and several trains have either been cancelled or short-terminated, the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said.

"The railway tracks between Jamira in Assam and Bairabi in Mizoram on the Katakhal-Bairabi section have been affected by soil erosion near the tracks following heavy rainfall on the evening of September 3," the NFR statement said. Around 70 metres of railway tracks have been affected due to soil erosion. There is no direct road access to the affected site, posing additional

challenges for restoration, the statement said.

It said restoration work at the site has commenced, while the situation is being assessed and the repair efforts are being closely monitored. "Considering the site conditions and accessibility constraints, the restoration work may take some time to complete," it added.

As a result, a few trains have been cancelled and some short-terminated. The cancelled trains include Guwahati-Sairang Express, Silchar-Bairabi Express, Sairang-Kolkata Express and Bairabi-Silchar Express, all of which were to commence journey on September 4.

The Silchar-Sairang Express and Sairang-Silchar Express, commencing journey on September 5, have also been cancelled. The Sairang-Guwahati Express, commencing journey on September 4, will be short-terminated from Hailakandi, and remain cancelled between Sairang near Aizawl and Assam's Hailakandi. The Sairang-Anand Vihar Terminal Express, also commencing journey on September 4, will be short-terminated from Hailakandi, and remain cancelled between Sairang and Hailakandi. (PTI)

Arunachal Guv urges teachers to promote innovation, ethical values among students

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: Arunachal Pradesh Governor KT Parnaik on Friday urged teachers to be "game changers" by promoting innovation, social responsibility and ethical values among students.

In his message on the eve of Teachers' Day, Parnaik said educational institutions should prepare young people to become assets to society, capable of being innovative, employable and enterprising, while creating opportunities and generating sustainable wealth through responsible use of the state's natural and human resources.

The governor extended his greetings to the teaching community and appreciated their dedication, wisdom and compassion in shaping not only the minds of students but also their character and values.

"Teaching is a noble profession carrying the responsibility of enlightening, inspiring and preparing young people for life. A teacher's words, example and encouragement can influence (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Indian embassy in Kuwait helps Tamil Nadu domestic worker after torture allegations

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Indian Embassy in Kuwait has stepped in to assist an Indian domestic worker who posted a video alleging that she was tortured and denied pay for months in the Gulf country.

In the video, the woman - identified as Vanitha from Tamil Nadu - appealed to the authorities in her home state to help her return to India.

Responding to a question on the issue during his regular press briefing, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the embassy has extended her a helping hand.

"As soon as our embassy became aware of this issue, it offered assistance," Jaiswal said.

"She is currently at our embassy. We remain committed to doing our best for the well-being, safety and welfare of Indian nationals abroad," he said.

The woman from Tamil Nadu's

Kallakurichi district alleged torture, starvation and non-payment of wages by her employers.

She said she travelled to Kuwait three months ago through an employment agent.

In the video, in which she is seen with her head covered with a scarf, the woman alleged that she had been denied proper food for more than 50 days and not paid her salary for the past two months.

"They are torturing me... I request the Collector madam and the Superintendent of Police madam to somehow rescue me and help me return to my motherland," she said with folded hands.

Jaiswal also responded to a separate question on certain remarks reportedly made by Birmingham Mayor Zaker Choudhry on the Kashmir issue.

"The whole of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral and inalienable parts of India," Jaiswal said. (PTI)

Assam court sentences three drug traffickers to 15 years in jail

GUWAHATI, Sept 4: A special court in Assam's Kamrup Metropolitan district has sentenced three people to 15 years of rigorous imprisonment in a six-year-old drug trafficking case, the Narcotics Control Bureau's Guwahati Zonal Unit said on Friday.

The NDPS court also imposed a fine of Rs 2 lakh on each of the convicts, two of whom, Shakil Khan and Md. Yahiya Khan, are from Manipur and the other, Mithilesh Kumar, from Bihar. Failing to pay the amount would lead to an additional one-year jail term, the NCB said.

They were arrested from the Six Mile area of Guwahati in October 2020 with 2.146 kg of methamphetamine, officials said, and a case was registered against them under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. (PTI)

Chimpanzee vocalisations develop through interactions with their social and ecological environments

Chimpanzees may have 'dialects', study suggests

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Acoustics of chimpanzees' laughs, grunts and whimpers have revealed that young ones may go on to develop distinct vocal patterns or 'dialects', according to a study.

Researchers said findings published in the journal PLOS One provide a new way of understanding how distinct vocal patterns between varied populations of chimps originated and developed, and challenge the assumption that calls of the primate are inflexible and determined solely by genetics.

They compared the vocalisations of infant and juvenile chimpanzees from two geographically separated populations at Chimfunshi Wildlife Orphanage in Zambia and Gombe National Park in Tanzania. The authors "found that we could discriminate between sites for all call types, indicating the presence of dialects across the chimpanzee vocal repertoire".

They also discovered that differences between the groups became more pronounced as the animals grew older, suggesting that vocal behaviour continues to develop throughout early life.



"Understanding how communication develops during early life is fundamental to understanding animal behaviour. Our findings show that chimpanzee vocalisations are not simply fixed from birth but continue to develop as young animals interact with their social and ecological environments," lead researcher Kasandra Giragosian, a doctoral researcher at Queen Mary University of London, said. Early in the human

evolution, acoustics of vocal behaviour is largely similar across populations. However, as evolution progressed, acoustic differences between populations grew bigger, the researchers said.

Similar to humans, who develop accents specific to a region, the team found that young chimpanzees from different communities produced subtly different vocal patterns too.

Further, population-specific vocal

characteristics were found to be already present in infancy, while others emerged during the juvenile years. The developmental pattern suggested that social interactions, environmental conditions and other non-genetic influences may all contribute to shaping how young chimpanzees communicate, the researchers said.

The study provides the first evidence that chimps develop population-specific, distinct vocal differences or dialects as they develop, and contributes to a growing body of evidence that primate communication is more flexible and dynamic than previously recognised, they said.

The research also offers a new perspective on the processes that shape vocal behaviour in other species as it focussed on how communication changed with time, instead of comparing adults from different populations.

The researchers also provide a framework for investigating how communication systems emerge and diversify within animal populations, they said. (PTI)

'Eye in sky': ISRO launches advanced earth observation satellite for 'strategic data'

SRIHARIKOTA, Sept 4: ISRO on Friday made its way into history books yet again with the successful launch of the country's first ever imaging satellite in geo-orbit, placing the over 2,300 kg payload into a precise orbit using a GSLV rocket.

"The eye in the sky," as one of the senior scientists involved in the mission described the satellite, is set to provide real-time imagery and help the nation in areas including agriculture, and disaster management. Friday's launch marked the space agency's maiden success for the year 2026.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, chief ministers of various states, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, among others, hailed the successful launch of the EOS-05 earth observation satellite.

The satellite was successfully placed in the intended sub-geosynchronous transfer orbit, about 18 minutes after it lifted off from the spaceport here, ISRO announced.

The space agency dismissed speculations that EOS-05 was a "spy satellite". While several earth obser-



vation satellites operate from low earth orbit (LEO), the EOS-5 satellite is set to hover at an altitude of roughly 36,000 km above earth, which is the geosynchronous orbit and at that level, the satellite will match Earth's rotational speed.

At over 2,300 kg, this is the heaviest satellite ever to be carried by a GSLV and the satellite was perfectly ahead in its trajectory.

The mission success, following

some earlier failures, was apparently a morale booster. A beaming ISRO chief V Narayanan said: "I am very happy to announce that the GSLV F-17 vehicle has successfully and precisely injected the advanced EOS-05 geo imaging satellite in the intended and required orbit."

"This is the 107th launch from Sriharikotika and the 19th mission of GSLV," the Secretary, Department of Space, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Fishes live in the sea, as men do a land; the great ones eat up the little ones. William Shakespeare

India at Bishkek SCO

The picturesque Kyrgyz capital of Bishkek, surrounded by mountains, green meadows and the stark beauty of Central Asia, produced an unusually consequential diplomatic tableau this week: Narendra Modi, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin together under the same roof, with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif watching from the sidelines and, at one point, apparently hurrying after Putin for a handshake. The Bishkek summit was the 26th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State and marked the organisation's 25th anniversary. For India, the 26th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit was less about dramatic agreements than about diplomatically positioning. Modi managed to do something increasingly difficult in a fractured world: maintain productive equations simultaneously with China and Russia while putting Pakistan's terrorism problem squarely on the SCO agenda. The summit also handed the organisation's rotating chairmanship to Pakistan. That makes the Bishkek outcome particularly significant. The next SCO Heads of State meeting will be held in Pakistan in 2027, placing New Delhi in the unusual position of having to participate constructively in an organisation chaired by a country with which it has no normal political dialogue. Modi's message to Xi: engagement without surrender. The most politically significant encounter was arguably the Modi-Xi interaction.

There was no dramatic breakthrough announced between India and China. Nor should the brief exchanges between the two leaders at the summit be mistaken for a new strategic understanding. But the optics mattered. Modi and Xi were seen speaking during the summit's official proceedings, signalling that the two Asian powers are prepared to maintain high-level communication even while substantial differences remain. That is useful diplomacy for New Delhi. India does not want the SCO to become simply an extension of China's geopolitical influence. Nor does it want its participation reduced to an anti-American or anti-Western platform dominated by Beijing and Moscow. By remaining engaged with Xi while simultaneously asserting India's independent positions on terrorism, connectivity and global conflicts, Modi demonstrated the strategic autonomy that has become the central theme of Indian foreign policy. The message was essentially: India can sit with China without becoming China's camp follower.

Putin, Modi had a considerably more substantive bilateral conversation. The two leaders reviewed the India-Russia strategic partnership, including trade, investment, energy and defence cooperation. Modi also made clear that India wants the Ukraine war to end. He told Putin that humanity must move from "endless wars to ending wars" and said India would continue to support every genuine peace effort. This was an important balancing act. India remains one of Russia's major economic partners, particularly in energy, while Moscow remains a crucial defence supplier. Yet New Delhi has consistently resisted becoming an apologist for Russia's war in Ukraine.

The spirit and history of Teachers' Day

Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was a profound thinker, a respected philosopher, and a dedicated leader. He served as the first Vice President of India from 1952 to 1962. He then served as the second President of India from 1962 to 1967. People remembered him for his intellectual brilliance and his deep affection for students. When he became President, his students and well-wishers wanted to mark his birthday with a grand celebration. He gently declined their offer for personal recognition. He asked them to honor all teachers across the nation instead. That selfless gesture gave birth to India's national Teachers' Day on September 5th, 1962.

World Teachers' Day was created much later by international organizations. In 1994, UNESCO proclaimed October 5th as World Teachers' Day. This global event marks a major milestone in educational history. On October 5th, 1966, a special intergovernmental conference brought together representatives from UNESCO and the International Labour Organization. They adopted a recommendation concerning the status of teachers. This document set international standards regarding teacher rights, initial training, continuing education, employment, and learning conditions.

The two celebrations serve distinct purposes. India's Teachers' Day is a warm, culturally rich national tribute. It centers on personal respect, gratitude, and traditional bonds between students and educators. World Teachers' Day focuses on global advocacy. It draws attention to international teacher shortages, fair pay, policy improvements, and fundamental rights for educators in developing regions.

To understand India's Teachers' Day, one must look at the life of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. He was born on September 5th, 1888 in Tiruttani, a small town in Tamil Nadu. His family was traditional and lived with limited resources. Young Radhakrishnan proved to be an outstanding student. He earned scholarships that allowed him to continue his studies without financial strain on his parents. He studied philosophy at Madras Christian College and quickly fell in love with the subject. Radhakrishnan believed that education was not just about memorizing facts. He saw education as a pathway to moral growth, character building, and intellectual clarity. He began his teaching career at Presidency College in Chennai. He later taught at the University of Mysore, the University of Calcutta, and Banaras Hindu University. His reputation as a brilliant speaker spread across the globe. Ox-

ford University invited him to hold the Eastern Religions and Ethics chair. He explained Indian philosophical thought to Western audiences with exceptional clarity and grace.

Despite reaching the highest political office in India, Dr. Radhakrishnan always identified himself primarily as a teacher. When his admirers asked to celebrate his birthday in 1962, he made a memorable request. He asked that September 5th be observed as Teachers' Day throughout India. He wanted every educator, from primary school instructors in rural villages to university professors in major cities, to feel valued and respected.

World Teachers' Day emerged from a collective effort to improve educational standards worldwide. Throughout the mid-twentieth century, nations recognized that quality education depended heavily on the well-being and qualifications of teachers. However, many countries lacked clear standards for teacher training, employment terms, and academic freedom. To address these concerns, UNESCO and the International Labour Organization convened a landmark meeting in Paris. On October 5th, 1966, delegates approved the UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. This document remains a cornerstone for educational policy. It defines the responsibilities of teachers and outlines the support governments must provide to ensure high-quality instruction.

In 1994, UNESCO officially declared October 5th as World Teachers' Day to commemorate the signing of the 1966 recommendation. In 2006, UNESCO expanded this framework by adopting recommendations concerning higher education teaching personnel. World Teachers' Day now serves as an annual check-in for global education goals. It offers a platform for trade unions, non-governmental organizations, and policy experts to discuss systemic challenges facing the profession.

The fundamental differences between these two observances lie in their history, scope, and implementation. India's Teachers' Day is observed nationally on September 5th, stemming from a single leader's birth anniversary, and focuses on direct student gratitude and classroom culture. World Teachers' Day is celebrated globally on October 5th in over one hundred countries, stemming from an international treaty, and focuses on policy reform and workplace rights.

In India, September 5th is a lively and memorable day in academic institutions. Senior students often take over teaching duties for

the day. They dress in formal attire, handle attendance, conduct lectures, and manage classrooms. This tradition gives young adults a real appreciation for the hard work required in teaching. Schools organize cultural programs featuring music, dance, theater, and speeches. Students present personalized cards, flowers, and small gifts to show their affection. On a national level, the President of India presents the National Awards to Teachers to honor exemplary educators from across the country.

World Teachers' Day operates on a broader scale. Each year, UNESCO, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization, and Education International select a specific global theme. These themes highlight urgent issues such as addressing global teacher shortages, supporting educators during crisis situations, or integrating modern technology into instruction. Conferences, policy forums, and digital campaigns take place worldwide. Governments use the day to announce new educational initiatives, funding commitments, and labor reforms.

While October 5th is the recognized international date, many countries choose dates based on local historical milestones. The United States celebrates National Teacher Day on the Tuesday of National Teacher Appreciation Week in early May. China celebrates Teachers' Day on September 10th, a tradition re-established in 1985 to rebuild social respect for educators. Many Latin American countries honor educators on September 11th, commemorating the death of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, an influential Argentine educator and politician. South Korea celebrates Teachers' Day on May 15th, the birth anniversary of King Sejong the Great, who created the Korean Hangul alphabet.

Both observances reflect how society views the role of the educator. In traditional frameworks, such as the one Dr. Radhakrishnan embodied, teachers are mentors who shape moral character and preserve cultural wisdom. In modern policy frameworks, such as the UNESCO guidelines, teachers are skilled professionals who require adequate resources, fair compensation, continuous training, and safe working conditions.

Today's educators face new challenges. Digital technology, rapid societal changes, and evolving career demands require teachers to continuously update their skills. Both September 5th in India and October 5th globally remind society that progress depends on well-supported, highly respected educators. September 5th celebrates the deep personal bond between teachers and students, while October 5th ensures that teachers receive the structural support they need to succeed.

Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and his educational philosophy

By: Lalit Nath

Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan holds a distinguished position in the history of Indian wisdom, spiritual tradition and value-based education. As a lifelong teacher, a profound thinker, a deep scholar of Eastern philosophy and an advocate of universal humanism, Radhakrishnan earned a unique status for Indian thought on the global stage through his pursuit of knowledge. Every year on September 5, Teacher's Day is celebrated across India in his sacred memory. This day not only honours a great educationist but also reaffirms his deep faith in the teaching community and his immense contribution to the field of education. His philosophy of life was an extraordinary synthesis of literature, culture, education, morality and social responsibility. He viewed knowledge not merely as a means of earning a livelihood, but as a powerful medium for the awakening of the human soul and the moral elevation of society. Dedicated to spreading Indian humanistic thought and spiritual consciousness, this great thinker's educational philosophy remains profoundly relevant today for every student, teacher and intellectual in search of core values.

The criticism by Christian missionaries that Hinduism was based on blind faith and superstition sparked Radhakrishnan's intense desire to understand the deeper meaning of the religion. Consequently, after completing his M.A., he undertook detailed research on the Advaita Vedanta of Hinduism. In 1908, he submitted his research paper titled 'The Ethics of the Vedanta and Its Metaphysical Presupposition', which created a stir in the academic community. Radhakrishnan's philosophy was fundamentally a dynamic interaction between life, spirituality and rational thought. He argued that the individual soul is not separate from the ultimate reality or cosmic wholeness.

Radhakrishnan's philosophy of life strongly emphasized the unity of all existence and the realization of our inherent spiritual nature. He strived toward the synthesis of Eastern philosophies—including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism and Islam—and aimed to balance knowledge, life, and spirituality. In his view, human beings can achieve fulfillment in life and reach their ultimate goal through their own efforts and actions. In Dr. Radhakrishnan's philosophy, self-discovery, empathy and the pursuit of truth are essential elements of a meaningful and fulfilling life. For Radhakrishnan, spirituality was not confined to religious philosophy alone; it was a living process of exploring one's consciousness and attaining oneness with the universe.

In 1918, while working as a professor at Mysore University, he published 'The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore', focusing on the literary and religious life of Kabitguru Rabindranath Tagore. In 1923, his most famous work, 'Indian Philosophy', was published. Perhaps that is why Bertrand Russell remarked: "A man of infinite learning and a true representative of all that is best in both Indian philosophy and Indian civilization."

Dr Radhakrishnan's philosophical treatises were renowned for their immense scholarship and deep insight, which made him an engaging and influential speaker on various subjects including philosophy, education and spirituality. Universities across India and abroad invited him to deliver lectures. In 1929, he earned high acclaim for his profound lectures on ideals of life at Manchester College, Oxford and at Harvard University in the United States. Radhakrishnan's philosophy built a bridge between Eastern and Western thought, bridging the gap between them. He described Eastern philosophy, particularly Indian philosophy, as a repository of timeless wisdom. He advocated a life guided by truth, compassion and justice. For him, leading a moral life was indispensable not only for personal growth but also for the betterment of society as a whole. Radhakrishnan's philosophy emphasized service to humanity and social responsibility. He envisioned a society where individuals actively engaged in uplifting the less fortunate and worked toward the collective welfare. He laid maximum stress on self-awareness, self-discovery and self-realization as means to understand oneself and the universe.

Despite the abundance of scientific discoveries in modern times, despair, frustration, anxiety, worry and fear are on the rise. In such a mechanical social setup, Radhakrishnan's philosophy remains deeply relevant for establishing inner peace and universal brotherhood. According to him, religion is an eternal human need that can foster spiritual elevation. Radhakrishnan believed in the harmony of science and spirituality. He viewed science as a method to explore the material world and spirituality as a medium to understand the deeper layers of reality. Rejecting the notion that science and religion are in conflict, he argued that both are simply different paths to uncovering truth.

This perspective also underscores moral living and ethical values. He believed that true spirituality is expressed through moral behavior, empathy and service to others. He considered the practice of religion fundamental to an individual's spiritual growth. In his role as a philosopher-president, Radhakrishnan highlighted the significance of religious tolerance and mutual understanding.

As an educationist, Radhakrishnan believed in the transformative power of education. In his view, education should not merely provide a means to earn a living; it must help build character by developing an individual's inherent potential. According to Radhakrishnan, education is not the mere accumulation of information; rather, it should empower individuals with critical thinking, intellectual depth, morality, and spiritual consciousness to become responsible citizens and compassionate human beings. Teachers must commit themselves to fulfilling their duties and responsibilities with dedication, self-realization and confidence. He advocated a student-centric approach that encourages critical thinking, self-discovery and deep engagement with one's cultural heritage. He emphasized the role of teachers not as mere providers of information, but as guides and facilitators. His teachings inspire individuals to gain deep insight, bring diverse cultures together and live a life guided by ethical principles.

In today's age of value crisis, his ideals offer the right path for both teachers and students. In a mechanical world struggling with complexities, his philosophy stands as an imperishable lamp, illuminating the way toward a more meaningful and purposeful existence. On the auspicious occasion of Teacher's Day, the entire teaching fraternity should take a fresh resolve to dedicate themselves to their work, inspired by the vision of this ideal teacher and great philosopher.

Significance of Teachers' Day and the ideals of Dr Radhakrishnan

Teachers' Day is such a sacred festival that illuminates the grand purpose of education and the immense contribution of teachers before society, sending a deep message regarding the importance of education. This day is not merely a platform for expressing gratitude towards teachers, but rather a symbol of shaping the future of society, reminding us of the possibility of strengthening the moral, intellectual and cultural foundations of society through education. A teacher is a pathfinder who sheds the light of knowledge, giving a new direction to the lives of students and planting the seeds of moral values alongside knowledge in their minds. Through their teaching, students gain not only textbook knowledge but also life values, honesty and the concept of right and wrong, which propel their lives forward in a beautiful direction. In India, Teachers' Day is celebrated every year on the 5th of September, which is intrinsically linked to the birthday of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. He was a great educator, philosopher and statesman who made immense contributions in the field of education. The depth of his life, ideals and educational philosophy has enriched the significance of this day even further. From his life, we can deeply realise the true purpose of education and the importance of a teacher's responsibility. His ideals have provided a new dimension to the role of teachers, guiding us even today. Through Teachers' Day, we can realise the value of a teacher's dedication, sacrifice and devotion, which leaves a profound impact at every level of society. This day inspires us to think about the possibility of societal transformation through education. Without the contribution of teachers, the progress of society is impossible and this day provides an opportunity to honor their noble work. Teachers' Day reminds us that through education, we can build a strong, moral and knowledge-rich society. From the life of Dr. Radhakrishnan, we can deeply comprehend the value of education, the dignity of teachers and their responsibility towards society. In this article, the significance of Teachers' Day and the ideals of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan will be discussed in detail, so that the depth of this day and the impact of his life become clear. The significance of Teachers' Day is deeply connected with every stratum of society. A teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge, but the architect shaping the future of society. In their hands lies a power that can give a new direction to an individual's life. Through a teacher's instruction, students acquire not only textbook knowledge, but also life values, morality, and concepts of right and wrong. Through Teachers' Day, we honor this great responsibility while creating awareness about the importance of education. On this day, students express gratitude to their teachers who have created rays of light in their lives. However, the significance of this day is not limited merely to expressing gratitude. It reminds us of

the possibility of societal improvement through education. Teachers' Day reminds us that through education, we can build a strong, moral and knowledge-rich society. The role of the teacher is presented on this day as a noble service that impacts every field of society. Without the contribution of teachers, the progress of society is impossible and this day provides an opportunity to honor this immense contribution of theirs. Teachers' Day inspires us to think about the possibility of societal change through education. Through this day, we can realise the value of a teacher's dedication, sacrifice and devotion, which strengthens the foundation of society. Through this power in the hands of teachers, positive change can be brought about at every level of society. Teachers' Day also reminds us that through education, we can build a healthy, conscious, and advanced society. This day forces us to rethink the dignity of teachers and their responsibilities. The role of a teacher is not confined solely to teaching within the four walls of a classroom; rather, by fulfilling their responsibility towards society, they can build a beautiful future. Through this great responsibility of teachers, positive change can be brought about at every layer of society. Teachers' Day reminds us of the universality, morality and importance of human values in education. Through this day, we can deeply realize the value of a teacher's dedication, sacrifice and devotion. This contribution of teachers can bring about positive change at every level of society. Teachers' Day inspires us to think about the possibility of societal transformation through education. The value of a teacher's dedication, sacrifice and devotion can be deeply realized through this day. This contribution of teachers can bring about positive change at every level of society. Teachers' Day reminds us of the universality, morality and importance of human values in education.

The name of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan is intrinsically linked with Teachers' Day. He was a great educator, philosopher and statesman who made immense contributions in the field of education. The proposal to celebrate his birthday as Teachers' Day came from his disciples, but due to his humility and deep reverence for teachers, rather than connecting this day to his own memory, he dedicated it to the entire teaching community. This incident reflects the depth of his personality and his selfless mindset. Dr Radhakrishnan's life and ideals teach us the true purpose of education. He believed that education is not merely a medium for gathering information, but rather a process that develops the human mind and propels an individual toward higher goals in life. According to him, through education, an individual can realize their potential and fulfill their responsibility toward society.

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This philosophy of his continues to serve as a guiding light for teachers and students today. From his life, we can deeply comprehend the value of education and the dignity of teachers. His humility and profound respect for education established him as a unique personality. This aspect of his life has made the significance of Teachers' Day even more profound. From his life, we also learn this lesson that a teacher's responsibility is not limited merely to classroom teaching. By fulfilling their responsibility toward society, they can build a beautiful future. This train of thought of his created a new direction in the field of education. This aspect of his life reminds us of the universality, morality and importance of human values in education. Through this philosophy of his, we can deeply realise the true purpose of education and the role of teachers. This aspect of his life has made the significance of Teachers' Day even deeper. From his life, we can deeply comprehend the value of education, the dignity of teachers and their responsibility toward society. Through this philosophy of his, we are reminded of the universality, morality, and importance of human values in education.

In Dr Radhakrishnan's educational philosophy, special emphasis was laid on the coordination of knowledge with morality. He believed that the primary goal of education is to establish harmony between the human heart and mind. Merely textbook knowledge cannot grant fulfillment to a person unless it is connected with moral values. This thought process of his created a new horizon in the field of education. According to him, a teacher's responsibility is to show students the path of living an honest life along with knowledge. A teacher's life itself is an open textbook from which students derive important life lessons. Dr Radhakrishnan himself was an exemplary teacher who left a profound impact on the minds of his students. His teaching method was simple, clear and profound. He explained complex philosophical subjects in such a simple manner that ordinary people could easily understand them. This ability of his established him as a unique teacher. In his educational philosophy, emphasis was placed on the coordination of knowledge with human values. He believed that through education, an individual can expand the horizons of their mind and fulfill their responsibility toward society. This philosophy of his continues to work as a guiding force in the field of education today. This dimension of his educational philosophy has given a new dimension to the role of teachers, guiding us even today. This mindset of his has made the significance of Teachers' Day even deeper. This dimension of his educational philosophy reminds us of the universality, morality and importance of human values in education.

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Why the skilled trades are becoming plan a to get a job

By: Mark C. Perna

Jobber's Blue Collar Report may only have existed since 2023, but it's already tracking a significant shift in how young people—and their parents—view education and career pathways.

What's new this year? It's the first year that more Gen Zers than not say that college is no longer the surest path to a solid career (42% to 36%). Parents are following suit, with 45% saying college is no longer the safest route to long-term employment, compared to 34% who still believe it is.

"What we're seeing isn't a rejection of education. It's a reassessment of what career security looks like," says Scott Shaw, President and CEO of Lincoln Tech. "For decades, a four-year degree was widely viewed as the default path to stability. Today, students are weighing rising tuition costs, student debt, changing workforce needs, and the opportunities they see in skilled trades."

What's the alternative to college? Parents of the up-and-coming Gen Alpha in particular are leaning heavily toward the skilled trades as a better investment than a college degree (52% to 18%).

Though this shift has been underway for several years, AI is accelerating it. A majority of Gen Alpha's parents are concerned about AI's impact on future careers (73%) and also say it has made them rethink the job security so often taken for granted with white-collar work (68%).

Meanwhile, 76% of Gen Z say it's important to choose a career that's hard to automate, and 38% see AI as a positive

force in the skilled trades.

Things are definitely shifting. Just how fast, and how the change will up-end the status quo for students, colleges, trade schools and industries, is anyone's guess.

Why the skilled trades still have underdog energy

Half the Gen Z respondents surveyed this year stated that no teacher, counselor or administrator ever recommended a skilled trade as a potential career to them.

"For me, this is the biggest challenge and opportunity," says Shaw. "Starting in the 1980's, we decided as a country that we should send more students to college and to achieve this objective most schools eliminated shop class and other technical programs to provide more academic education to get more people prepared for college."

The result? Several generations have simply not been exposed to the trades. Shaw believes this lack of exposure, along with a bias against the trades by educators and parents, has resulted in our current shortage.

"The reality is that up until the last few years, high schools for the most part have been anti-skilled trades," he says. "That is changing. We have more high schools today allowing us into their classroom to share our message about the trades and we have high schools who are open to having a dual enrollment program in the skilled trades."

But there's still a cultural stigma to overcome, with 64% of respondents admitting that a negative perception around vocational education still exists. "The stigma exists because cultural perceptions often lag behind economic reality,"

explains Shaw. "The encouraging news is that attitudes are changing faster than stereotypes. More parents are recognizing the value of skilled trades careers, even if broader perceptions haven't fully caught up."

What changes the narrative, Shaw believes, is exposure and real outcomes. "When students and families see modern training facilities, advanced technology, strong earning potential, and successful graduates building rewarding careers, perceptions begin to change naturally."

Presenting college and vocational paths equally

For young people to make a fully informed decision about their education and training pathway, they need to see all their options during the high school years (or sooner, in my opinion). But it's not enough to just tell kids that the skilled trades exist. Teachers, counselors, parents and other voices must present it as an option that is as equally valid as other pathways.

"This means giving students the same level of information, exposure, and guidance regardless of the path they're considering," says Shaw. "That includes career fairs featuring employers alongside universities, opportunities to visit job sites as well as college campuses, and honest conversations about costs, earnings, credentials, and long-term career opportunities across all pathways."

Of course, schools play a pivotal role in this effort, but they cannot do it alone. "Employers need to provide meaningful work-based learning experiences, and families play an important role by encouraging students to explore the full

range of opportunities available to them," says Shaw. "When schools, employers, and families work together, students are better equipped to make informed decisions about the future that's right for them."

How parents can help their kids

Jobber's research found that 93% of parents would provide the same financial support for trade school as a four-year university, indicating that the financing conversation is truly shifting. Shaw agrees, noting, "For a long time, families viewed higher education spending primarily through the lens of a four-year degree. Today, more parents are evaluating education based on outcomes and return on investment rather than the type of institution."

Of course, the conversation doesn't stop there. "Affordability and access remain real challenges," says Shaw. "Many families understand how to navigate college financing, but they're often less familiar with scholarships, grants, apprenticeships, and other funding opportunities available for skilled trades training."

"The mindset is shifting faster than the system, and there's an opportunity to help families better understand the full range of pathways available to them."

Entrepreneurship opportunities in the trades

Another reason the skilled trades are catching the eye of today's younger generations is the myriad of entrepreneurship opportunities they offer. With 77% of Gen Z saying they want to become business owners, they're the most entrepreneurial-minded generation to date—and



they can see the clear path from skills to business ownership in the trades. Another 34% believe the trades are the fastest path to getting ahead financially, ahead of 27% who believe this is true of college.

Many parents are also on board, with 47% say the trades offer stronger opportunities for entrepreneurship and 51% who say the trades lead to faster financial independence.

"Students can see how an electrician, HVAC technician, automotive technician, or welder progresses from apprentice to experienced professional and, for many, eventually to business owner," says Shaw. "In many trade industries, entrepreneurship is a natural career progression and an opportunity that students can clearly see for themselves."

"That's especially appealing to a generation that values independence, flexibility, and the opportunity to build something of their own."

All the options and opportunities

Shaw says his biggest takeaway from this research is that young people aren't lowering their ambitions, but rather are redefining what success looks like.

"They're looking for careers that offer stability, meaningful work, financial opportunity, and the chance to build a future on their own terms. That's why this shouldn't be framed as a debate between college and the skilled trades," he says.

This is what I've always advocated for. I believe college is a fantastic pathway and we need more degree workers than ever—but we also need more skilled workers in areas that are not degree dependent.

"The real goal is making sure every student has access to complete, accurate information so they can choose the path that best aligns with their strengths, interests, and goals." Says Shaw.

"Success has never belonged to one pathway, and it shouldn't now." (Courtesy: Forbes)

PFRDA Recruitment 2026 – 30 Officer Grade A (Assistant Manager) Posts

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has released an advertisement for the recruitment of 30 Officer Grade 'A' (Assistant Manager) vacancy. It is an excellent opportunity for candidates looking to build their career in the field of insurance.

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

PFRDA Vacancy Details

Name of post: Officer Grade 'A' (Assistant Manager)
No of posts: 30 posts
Discipline-wise vacancy:
General: 25
Research: 2
Actuary: 2
Official Language (Rajbhasha): 1
Pay: Rs. 62,500-3600(4)-76,900-4050(7)-1,05,250-EB-4050(4)-1,21,450-4650(1)-1,26,100 (17 years).

Eligibility Criteria of PFRDA Recruitment

Age Limit: Age of the candidate must not have exceeded thirty (30) years as on July 31, 2026 i.e., candidate must have been born on or after August 01, 1996.

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

Category	Age Relaxation
OBC	3 years
SC/ST	5 years
PwBD - UR & EWS	10 years
PwBD - OBC	13 years
PwBD - SC & ST	15 years

Educational Qualification

Streamwise Educational Qualification

- General- Master's Degree/PG Diploma (min. 2 years) in any discipline; OR Bachelor's Degree in Law; OR Bachelor's Degree in Engineering; OR ACA/ICA (ICAI); OR ACS/FCS (ICSI); OR ACMA/FCMA (ICMAI, erstwhile AICWA/FICWA from ICWAI); OR CFA (CFA Institute)
- Research- Master's Degree/PG Diploma (min. 2 years) in Economics/Commerce/Business Administration/Econometrics/Quantitative Economics/Financial Economics/Mathematical Economics/Business Economics/Agricultural Economics/Industrial Economics/Business Analytics; OR in Finance/Quantitative Finance/Mathematical Finance/Quantitative Techniques/International Finance/Business Finance/International & Trade Finance/Project & Infrastructure Finance/Agri. Business Finance; OR in Statistics/Mathematical Statistics/Statistics & Informatics/Applied Statistics & Informatics/Data Science/AI/Machine Learning/Big Data Analytics; OR Master's Degree in Mathematics with one-year PG Diploma in Statistics or related subjects
- Actuary- Graduation from a recognized University/Institute AND Pass or exemption in all seven (07) 'Core Principles' subjects of the Institute of Actuaries of India (IAI) Examination
- Official Language (Rajbhasha)- Master's Degree in Hindi/Hindi Translation with English as a subject at Bachelor's level; OR Master's Degree in Sanskrit/English/Economics/Commerce with Hindi as a subject at Bachelor's level; OR Master's Degree in both English and Hindi/Hindi Translation

Selection Process

The selection process for PFRDA Officer Grade A (Assistant Manager) Recruitment 2026 will be conducted in three stages — Phase I, Phase II and Interview. Candidates will have to qualify at each stage to move forward in the recruitment process.

Phase I – Online Screening Examination

Phase I will consist of two papers, carrying 100 marks each:

Paper 1: This paper will cover English Language, Quantitative Aptitude, Reasoning and General Awareness. It will have 90 questions to be completed in 60 minutes and will be common to all streams.

Paper 2: This will be a stream-specific paper consisting of 50 questions, with a duration of 40 minutes.

A negative marking of 1/4 mark will apply for each wrong answer. The marks obtained in Phase I will be used only for shortlisting candidates for Phase II and will not be considered for the final selection.

Phase II – Online Examination

Phase II will also consist of two papers:

Paper 1: A descriptive English paper carrying 100 marks, with 3 questions to be answered in 60 minutes. It will carry 1/3rd weightage in Phase II.

Paper 2: An objective, stream-specific paper carrying 100 marks, consisting of 50 questions with a duration of 40 minutes. This paper will carry 2/3rd weightage.

A negative marking of 1/4 mark will be applicable in Paper 2. Based on their performance in Phase II, candidates will be shortlisted in merit order for the interview. The number of candidates shortlisted will be limited to five times the total number of vacancies.

Phase III – Interview

Candidates who qualify for Phase II and are shortlisted will be called for the Interview. The interview may be conducted in Hindi or English, as per the candidate's choice.

The final selection will be based on the prescribed weightage of the Phase II examination and the Interview, as specified in the official recruitment notification.

Application Fee Category	Fee
Unreserved/GEN, EWS & OBC	₹ 1000/-
SC/ST/PwBD & Ex-serviceman	Nil

How to Apply for PFRDA Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates can submit their online application provided they fulfill the eligibility criteria as specified by the authority. Here is the basic steps one need to follow to submit the online application

- Step 1: Scroll down, check Important Web-Link's section.
- Step 2: Click Online Application Form Link and Register yourself.
- Step 3: Next again Click Online Application Form Link and login .
- Step 4: Enter all personal and educational information as required.
- Step 5: Pay application fee as per your category and submit the form .
- Step 6: Also, take a print of the submitted form .

Important Dates of PFRDA Assistant Manager Vacancy 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 3rd September 2026
- Closing date of submission of online application: 24th September 2026

ESIC Hospital Guwahati Recruitment – 33 Teaching Faculty Posts

ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Beltola, Guwahati-22 has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 33 Teaching Faculty Posts the cadre of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor & Senior Residents. Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed.

ESIC Hospital Guwahati Vacancy Details

- Professor
No of posts: 06
Pay: Fixed Basic Pay of Rs. 1,18,500/- (Level 13) + Other Allowances
 - Associate Professor
No of posts: 13
Pay: Fixed Basic Pay of Rs. 78,800/- (Level 12) + Other Allowances
 - Assistant Professor
No of posts: 14
Pay: Fixed Basic Pay of Rs. 67,700/- (Level 11) + Other Allowances
- Eligibility Criteria of ESIC Hospital Guwahati Recruitment

Age Limit:

Teaching Faculty: Not exceeding 69 years on date of Document verification & Interview.

Senior Resident: Not exceeding 45 years as on the date of Document verification & Interview.

Educational Qualification & Experience: Educational Qualification & Experience: As per NMC guidelines as stipulated in Gazette Notification No. CG-DL-E-05072025-264399 dated 30.06.2025. Accordingly, all eligible Medical candidates with requisite qualification and experience can apply for the appropriate faculty/ Senior Resident posts in broad specialties.

Non Medical Candidates may also apply. For non-medical candidates, qualification is MSc with PhD in relevant disciplines.

Selection Process

Candidates may appear for the walk-in-interview as per the following schedule-
Date of Interview: 15.09.2026 (Tuesday)
Time of Interview: 10:00 AM
Venue of Interview: Chamber of the Dean, ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Beltola, Guwahati-781022.
Reporting Time for Document verification: 09:00 am to 09:30 am.

How to Apply for ESIC Model Hospital Guwahati Recruitment ?

Interested and eligible candidates are hereby requested to fill the application and send the same along with MCI/ SMC Number, Contact number via email to deanbeltolaguwahati@gmail.com. They are also allowed to come for the Interview with all relevant documents without any prior application.

Documents Required

- Age Proof (Class 10th certificate/Birth certificate)
- MBBS Certificate.
- PG Degree/ Diploma Certificate.
- MCI/SMC Registration Certificate with MD/MS/DNB qualification.
- M.Sc Certificate (For Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry & Statistics) with PhD degree (if required).
- BCME & BCBPR Certificate wherever necessary.
- Two Recent Passport size Photographs.
- Caste Certificate for SC/ST/OBC & I&A Certificate for EWS candidates. OBC candidates
- are required to submit latest OBC Certificate as per Central Govt. Proforma, not more
- than One year old from the date of interview. No relaxation/reservation would be
- applicable to SC/ST/OBC/EWS candidate applying for unreserved vacancies). Persons with Disability have to submit PWD Certificate for getting reservation as per GoI rules.
- No Objection Certificate from present employer, if applicable. No candidate will be allowed to appear in the interview without NOC from his employer (Also applicable for Doctors under Bond).
- Experience Certificate, wherever applicable.

National Informatics Centre Recruitment 2026 – 376 Posts, Online Apply

National Informatics Centre (NIC) has released a recruitment notification for the recruitment of 376 Scientific/ Technical Assistant-'A' posts on Direct Recruitment Basis. This is a Group-B S&T (non-Gazetted) post in level 6 (Rs. 35400-Rs.112400) of 7th CPC for which candidates will be shortlisted based on valid Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) score of 2024/2025/2026.

Interested and eligible candidates may check this article for detailed official notification, educational qualification, age limit, salary details, and application procedure to be followed. Last date of submission of application for these posts is 30th September 2026.

NIC Vacancy Details

Name of post: Scientific/ Technical Assistant-'A'
Category of post: Group 'B', Non-Gazetted S&T post

Name of organization: National Informatics Centre (NIC)
No of posts: 376 posts
Pay: Pay Level-6 (35400 – 112400)

Category	No of posts
UR	157
SC	55
ST	26
OBC-NCL	101
EWS	37
PwBD	19

Discipline-wise Vacancy Discipline	No of posts
Computer Sciences & Information Technology	300
Electronics and Communication Engineering	26
Data Science and Artificial Intelligence	50

To know more about GATE, you may visit our article about Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE).

Eligibility Criteria of NIC Recruitment

Educational Qualification

Candidates must have passed in M.Sc./MS/MCA/B.E./B.Tech. in the below mentioned fields (single or in combination):

Electronics, Electronics and Communication, Electronics & Telecommunication, Computer Sciences, Computer and Networking Security, Software System, Information Technology, Informatics.

Age Limit

Age of the candidates must be maximum 30 years as on 30th September 2026 .

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

Category	Age Relaxation
OBC-NCL	3 years
SC/ST	5 years
PwBD - UR & EWS	10 years
PwBD - OBC/NCL	13 years
PwBD - SC & ST	15 years

GATE Score

Candidates possessing the essential educational qualification and valid GATE Scores for the year 2024 / 2025 / 2026 in the following disciplines are only eligible to apply:

- (i) Computer Science and Information Technology (CS);
- (ii) Electronics & Communication Engineering (EC); and
- (iii) Data Science and Artificial Intelligence (DA).

Application Fee

Candidates have to pay an application fee as mentioned below as per their categories or community:

Category	Fee
SC/ST/ PwBD/ Women candidates	Nil
UR / OBC (NCL) / EWS	Rs 800/-

How to Apply for National Informatics Centre Recruitment?

Interested and eligible candidates may apply online for these vacancies through online mode by visiting NIC Recruitment Portal. Candidates may follow below mentioned steps to apply for NIC recruitment.

- Scroll down, go to Important Web-Links section.
- Click on the "Online Application Form".
- 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 NIC Recruitment 2026

- Starting date of submission of online application: 1st September 2026
- Last date of submission of online application: 30th September 2026, 5:30 PM

'The long-term plan will be to establish settlements in areas outside the flood-risk zones'

Nepal announces relief package for flood-hit businesses, plans settlement relocation

KATHMANDU, Sept 4: Nepal's government has announced a special relief package for businesses hit by the devastating Bhotekoshi floods, offering concessions, loan restructuring and cheaper credit, as authorities began work on relocating settlements destroyed by the disaster.

The measures came as the government stepped up recovery efforts following the devastating floods, which swept away homes, roads and bridges in Nepal on August 26, leaving hundreds dead and thousands missing, with several settlements along the Trishuli riverbanks destroyed.

The Nepal Cabinet on Thursday described the business-related measures as the first phase of its recovery package. The Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

Businesses whose commercial vehicles, transport equipment, plants, machinery, tools or other equipment were destroyed beyond repair or swept away will be allowed to import replacements without paying customs duties, the report said.

The concession will also apply to goods on which customs duties had already been paid but which were destroyed before reaching their destination. Replacement goods will have to be imported through any customs office within six months, it said.

Provincial and local governments will also be asked to provide temporary concessions on property



and business taxes, building permit fees and other local charges for affected businesses and properties, the report added.

The government has directed Nepal Rastra Bank, the country's central bank, to facilitate restructuring or rescheduling of loans taken by flood-affected borrowers, it said. The Insurance Authority has separately been asked to speed up claims by allowing insurers to deploy surveyors through simplified procedures. Insurers will be required to provide advance payments of up to 50 per cent of estimated losses based on preliminary assessments.

The relief measures come as authorities prepare a longer-term plan for communities whose homes and

settlements were swept away.

The August 26 flood destroyed around 15 settlements across Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading, The Kathmandu Post reported.

The National Planning Commission (NPC) has begun work on a master plan to rebuild infrastructure, develop safer settlements and address longer-term development needs.

NPC vice-chair Gunakar Bhatta said the commission was also preparing a post-disaster needs assessment, which will examine damage and losses across infrastructure, productive sectors, services, the environment and the wider economy.

A preliminary assessment by Nepal's National Disaster Risk Re-

duction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) found that around 1.6 million people across 15 local units were directly affected, while 8,317 houses were destroyed, the report said.

The Ministry of Infrastructure Development will first focus on restoring roads and bridges connecting the affected areas before planning new settlements.

Ministry Secretary Gopal Prasad Sigdel said the long-term plan would be to relocate people away from flood-risk areas.

"The long-term plan will be to establish settlements in areas outside the flood-risk zones," he was quoted as saying by The Kathmandu Post.

Authorities are mapping settlements that are no longer habitable while continuing rescue, relief and temporary shelter operations.

Around 3,948 people rescued by the government were staying at holding centres in Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Dhading and Kathmandu, the report said.

NDRRMA chief executive Dharmaraj Upreti said teams were identifying safer locations for displaced communities.

"People cannot return to settlements that have been swept away by the flood. The government has formed teams to identify safer locations and is working on a plan to relocate them," he was quoted as saying by The Kathmandu Post.

Officials are considering moving some communities to other dis-

tricts or finding safer vacant land within the affected districts.

The government has previous experience of relocating disaster-hit communities, including after the 1993 floods and the 2015 earthquake.

Experts have also urged authorities to consider livelihoods, social ties and future disaster risks while choosing new locations, the report said.

"There is a serious risk of major disasters in the Himalayan region from Taplejung to Darchula in the coming years," former prime minister Baburam Bhattarai was quoted as saying by The Kathmandu Post.

"Safer areas should be identified nearby, such as small valleys in the mountains and higher ground in the hills, where at-risk settlements can be relocated," Bhattarai said.

Meanwhile, Nepal's government has also announced support for personnel engaged in the rescue effort. Government spokesperson and Education Minister Samit Pokharel said the Cabinet decided on Thursday to provide risk allowances and meal expenses to security personnel and government employees deployed for search and rescue operations following the Bhotekoshi flooding. Onlinekhabar news portal reported. Those injured during the operations will receive free medical treatment, while families of personnel who die during rescue operations will receive NRs 1 million in relief, according to the report. (PTI)

Russian attacks kill at least 3 in Ukraine as US talks on war are expected



KYIV, Sept 4: Russian attacks overnight killed at least three people in Ukraine, local officials said Friday, as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he was expecting US envoys in Kyiv in the coming days as part of renewed diplomatic efforts to end the war.

The air war between Russia and Ukraine has intensified as the conflict stretches into its fifth year following Moscow's invasion of its neighbour. Russian forces have relentlessly struck civilian areas.

Previously, these attacks occurred mostly at night, but now they are happening during the day as well. The front line in eastern and southern Ukraine remains largely deadlocked. Though US efforts to negotiate a settlement have yet to produce a path to peace, in his nightly address Thursday Zelenskyy said that preliminary dates have been set for meetings in both Moscow and Kyiv. Ukraine's negotiating team is in near-constant contact with the US side and preparing for talks, he said.

"They confirmed they will have a meeting in Moscow and another one in Kyiv. We expect the latter to take place in the coming days. This is very important. It is important that America remain actively engaged," he said, adding that Ukraine is ready for substantive, high-level negotiations.

Russian state news agency Tass reported Friday that American negotiators Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner would visit Moscow first, then Kyiv on Saturday and Sunday, though this could not be independently verified.

Speaking with journalists Friday, presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov refused to confirm reports that Kushner and Witkoff would visit Moscow, only saying that the media would be informed if such a meeting took place.

US officials did not immediately confirm the visit.

Kushner and Witkoff last visited

Moscow in January 2026, where they met with Russian President Vladimir Putin. This would be their first visit to Kyiv. After that meeting, Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov described talks as constructive, but said: "that reaching a long-term settlement can't be expected without solving the territorial issue."

However, further talks have lost momentum with the White House's attention focused on its conflict with Iran.

In a news conference on Wednesday, Putin described negotiations as "frozen."

The latest diplomatic developments coincided with a "massive" overnight Russian attack on the Odesa region that killed one person and injured at least five others, including a child, regional head Oleh Kiper said in a post on Telegram. The attacks damaged multiple residential buildings, including two multistory blocks.

Overnight strikes elsewhere in Ukraine killed two police officers in Dnipro, officials said, while a drone attack in Kyiv injured three people after hitting a residential building.

A Russian drone struck the headquarters of Ukraine's security service, Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram Friday, noting he had spoken with acting security chief Oleksandr Poklad.

The security service, whose headquarters are located in central Kyiv, close to a historic church and international hotels, is among the agencies carrying out deep strike operations inside Russian territory.

In Russia, a large-scale Ukrainian drone strike hit the Black Sea resort city of Sochi and the nearby district of Sirius, regional officials said Friday. They said the attack sparked a blaze at an oil depot but gave no further details. Russian media outlets reported two depots were hit, with one fire in Sochi and another in Sirius. (AP)

Tibet flash flood death toll rises to 31, another 531 missing

BEIJING, Sept 4: The death toll in the flash flood that struck Gyirong county in Tibet near the Nepal border last week has increased to 31, with 531 others still missing, Chinese officials said on Friday.

So far, the rescue teams have recovered 987 pieces of personal belongings in the area, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported, quoting local emergency response and rescue authorities.

According to figures released August 30, the missing included 261 foreigners, including 49 from India and 22 from other countries, Xinhua had reported, citing an official briefing in Tibet.

The missing people included 104 people from Nepal, 33 from Latvia, 18 from the United States, 15 from Britain, six each from Canada and Australia and the rest from other countries.

The Chinese officials were sharing details about the missing foreigners with embassies based in Beijing.

The massive flash flood struck the immigration post at the Gyirong-Nepal border on August 26, where hundreds waited on both sides either to enter or exit Tibet.

A large number of Indian pilgrims were visiting Tibet to take part in the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra. (PTI)

North Cypriot leader says 2 more bodies were recovered from ferry wreckage

ISTANBUL, Sept 4: The remains of two more people have been recovered from the wreck of a passenger ferry that sank off the coast of Cyprus, the leader of the island's northern territory said Friday.

The findings bring the total confirmed deaths to 12, with 16 people still missing. Prime Minister Ural Ustel said in comments reported by the Cypriot newspaper Kibris.

The Filo Jet was carrying 267 passengers and crew when it capsized and sank after leaving Kyrenia, a port in northern Cyprus, for Tasucu, Turkey, on Sunday afternoon. Two Turkish navy search and rescue vessels joined the search, carrying submersible vessels able to reach the ferry wreckage some 550 metres (1,804 feet) below the surface.

Speaking to reporters at Kyrenia, known as Girne in Turkish, Ustel said the remains belonged to two women. The bodies of a man and a woman were recovered earlier.

"Our search operations to reach our 16 missing peo-

ple continue uninterrupted on a 24/7 basis with the strong support of the Republic of Turkey and the participation of all relevant units. They are carrying out these operations under very difficult conditions," Ustel added. The search operation is being conducted about 7.5 kilometers off the northern Cypriot coast.

Survivors have said the ferry, a wide-bodied catamaran, began listing and taking on water after they heard a number of loud noises from below the decks, sparking panic on board. They said people were trapped inside the passenger seating area as water gushed in and the ship lurched onto its side.

Eight crew and a director of the ferry's owner, Filo Denizcilik, are in custody. Five others, including Filo Denizcilik staff and port officials, are also under investigation.

Cyprus was split along ethnic lines in 1974, and Turkish Cypriots declared independence in 1983. Only Türkiye recognises the north of the island, where it maintains more than 35,000 troops. (AP)

12 militants killed in Balochistan: Pakistan Army

KARACHI, Sept 4: Pakistani security forces have killed 12 militants belonging to Baloch insurgent groups in the Kalat district of the troubled Balochistan province, the army said on Friday.

Police and paramilitary forces also foiled an attempt by dozens of armed militants to take control of Bhag city in the province on Friday, in which five people were injured, the Inter-Services Public Relations, the media wing of the military, said in a statement.

It said that security forces conducted intelligence-based operations on Wednesday in which 12 Baloch militants were killed.

"During the conduct of the operation, the terrorists' hideout was identified, monitored and busted through prompt surgical action and 12 terrorists were killed," it said.

A cache of ammunition and improvised explosive devices was destroyed on-site, it added.

It said that a relentless counter-terrorism campaign under 'Azm-i-Istehkam' by security forces and law enforcement agencies would "continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country".

Meanwhile, two policemen were among five people injured after militants attacked a police station, the assistant commissioner's office and a bank in Balochistan's Bhag city on Friday.

Shahid Rind, a spokesperson for the Balochistan government, said that about 40 militants attacked the three places using "heavy weapons, rocket launchers, machine guns, sniper rifles and hand grenades".

Rind said the militants failed to take control of the Bhag police station or seize weapons from the facility as the security forces engaged the attackers in a gun battle for nearly two hours and forced them to retreat. (PTI)

Israeli release, shipping slowdown and other Mideast news

DUBAI, Sept 4: Israel has released four more Lebanese civilians who had been detained by its forces in southern Lebanon. Ship traffic remains low on the Strait of Hormuz days after the US and Iran exchanged attacks for the first time in a month. And fighting has intensified in Yemen between Iran-backed rebels and government forces.

Israel released four Lebanese civilians to Lebanese authorities on Friday as part of a deal between the countries, a day after the first was freed. All had been detained by Israeli forces in southern Lebanon, where troops now occupy a large swath in the wake of new fighting with Hezbollah began two days after the US and Israel attacked Iran.

Israel on Thursday said it had agreed to release them after Lebanon provided assistance in searching for the bodies of Lebanese Jewish leaders who went missing in the 1980s during Lebanon's civil war.

Officials said the release comes as a result of US mediation and negotiations between Israel and Lebanon. Another round of talks is expected in Rome later this month. Ship traffic on the Strait of Hormuz remained low after the renewed US attacks on targets in Iran earlier this week and Iran's retaliatory attacks in the region, including firing at US' Gulf ally Kuwait on Thursday.

Fuel prices are again affected. Diesel hit

a new record price in the US on Friday, soaring to an average of USD 5.85 a gallon for the first time ever.

The benchmark US crude price rose above USD 91 a barrel with the new wave of uncertainty around traffic on the strait, which Iran continues to use as leverage after six months of war with the US.

Fighting intensified overnight between Iran-backed Houthi rebels and Yemeni government forces along Yemen's west coast near an important supply route.

An official with the internationally recognised government's health ministry told The Associated Press there were an unspecified number of casualties on both sides in the fighting in mountainous Taiz province. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorised to speak with the media. A military official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorised to brief the media, confirmed casualties on both sides.

Jabal Nu'man overlooks a major supply route for Yemeni government forces between Taiz province and Mokha, a port city heavily targeted by the Houthis in recent weeks.

The Houthis' expansion of attacks in these areas appears to indicate an effort to gain full control of the Bab el-Mandeb strait, the southern gateway to the Red Sea, according to Moahmed Abdelrahman, a Taiz province spokesperson. (AP)

Israel frees 4 more Lebanese prisoners in deal tied to missing Jews from Lebanon's civil war

TYRE (LEBANON), Sept 4: Four prisoners from Lebanon held in Israel were released and handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross Friday as part of a deal between the two countries. In return, Lebanon agreed to search for the bodies of Jewish Lebanese citizens who went missing during the country's civil war decades ago.

Dozens of Lebanese prisoners are believed to be held in Israeli detention centres, including civilians as well as Hezbollah militants captured during fighting in southern Lebanon. A total of five detainees are being released under the current deal, all civilians.

The first Lebanese prisoner, identified as Malek Ghazi, was released to the International Committee of the Red Cross and then to the Lebanese army on Thursday.

Associated Press journalists waiting at a checkpoint south of the city of Tyre in southern Lebanon saw a convoy of ICRC vehicles heading toward the Naqoura border crossing Friday morning.

Mahmoud Ayash, the brother of prisoner Hussein Ayash, who was waiting there, said his brother had been detained for more than two months and had called from the border crossing in Naqoura to say that he had been released and was with the ICRC.

"I hope all our prisoners in Israeli prisons will be released and for all Lebanese citizens to be liberated," he said.

The ICRC said in a statement that the remaining prisoners had been transferred to it on Friday. The organisation called for its teams to be granted access to the remaining prisoners, noting that it has not had access to detainees held in Israel since October 2023.

"Many families in Lebanon are still waiting for an-

swers about the fate of loved ones who may be detained, deceased or otherwise unaccounted for," it said. The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement Thursday that Israel agreed to release five Lebanese civilians detained by Israeli forces in southern Lebanon after Lebanon provided assistance in searching for the bodies of Lebanese Jewish leaders who were "abducted and murdered by terrorist organizations" in the 1980s, during Lebanon's civil war.

Officials said the prisoner release came as a result of US mediation and as a result of ongoing negotiations between Israel and Lebanon.

Other thorny issues remain to be resolved. Lebanon and Israel, which do not have diplomatic relations, entered into rare direct negotiations after the outbreak of the latest war between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah on March 2.

Hezbollah fired missiles over the border, two days after the US and Iran attacked Iran. Israel launched aerial bombardment and a ground invasion of Lebanon and is now occupying a large swath of the south. Lebanon and Israel in June signed a US-mediated framework deal under which Israeli forces were to withdraw from areas they are occupying in southern Lebanon in exchange for disarmament of the Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, but little progress has been made in implementation on the ground.

Hezbollah is not a party to the Lebanon-Israel talks and has said it will not give up its weapons in any area north of southern Lebanon's Litani River. Israeli officials, meanwhile, have said they will not withdraw unless Hezbollah is disarmed throughout the country. (AP)

Iranian strikes on Jordan test bonds between US and one of its staunchest Mideast allies

DUBAI, Sept 4: Jordan, a staunch US ally that hosts American forces in the Mideast, has paid a price for its relationship with Washington, which has made the kingdom's military bases a target of repeat Iranian strikes.

Hundreds of drone and missile attacks have added to other strains on Jordan that include a slumping economy and volatility in the neighbouring West Bank, where Israeli settlers have ramped up attacks on Palestinians.

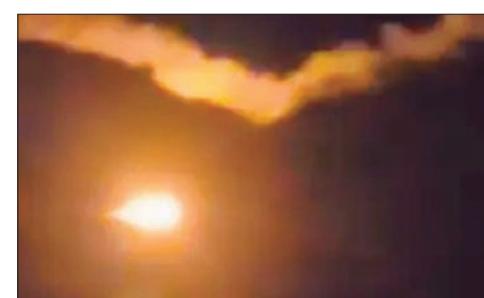
Despite the risk of more strikes, Jordanian leaders say they are committed to maintaining the relationship after decades of courting deeper security ties with American officials and offering to be a reliable partner with the West in a region rocked by conflict. Analysts say the alliance offers Jordan a way to guard against Iran's attempts to destabilise its neighbours.

King Abdullah II of Jordan seemed to acknowledge the need for such alliances last year, when he warned that destabilisation fuelled by the COVID-

19 crisis, Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and multiple Israeli military campaigns in the Middle East could trigger chaos far beyond the region. "We are living through wave after wave of disruption, without pause," he told European lawmakers. "There is no telling where the boundaries of this battleground will end. That, my friends, is a threat to people everywhere."

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a puzzle-piece-shaped nation bordering Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Israel and the West Bank. More than 11 million Jordanians live between the Jordan River, the Red Sea and eastern deserts strewn with ruins.

Besides the threat from Iran, Jordan faces other challenges, such as an economy that has buckled under millions of refugees fleeing regional conflicts. Soaring energy prices and inflation have added to the burden as the tourism sector struggles to draw visitors to landscapes lionized in Hollywood by Peter O'Toole, Harrison Ford and Matt Damon. And next door, growing Israeli settler violence



in the West Bank is deeply unsettling to Jordanians who fear instability could drive many of the 2.8 million Palestinians there to flee into the kingdom, said Sean Yom, a professor at Temple University and author of a 2025 book titled "Jordan: Politics in an Accidental Crucible."

Since taking the reins from his father, King Hussein, in 1999, Abdullah has forged ever-stronger links between his capital, Amman, and

Washington. The monarch — a fluent English speaker whose dynasty claims to be descended from the Prophet Muhammad — enjoys widespread support among world leaders and Democratic and Republican lawmakers in the US.

President Donald Trump once called the king "one of the true great leaders of the world." Joe Biden also praised his leadership. First lady Jill Biden was a guest at the wedding of Abdullah's son Hussein to a Saudi aristocrat in 2023. Pope Leo welcomed Abdullah to the Vatican in 2025.

As part of its partnership with the West, Jordan provided logistical help and intelligence for the US-led 2003 invasion of Iraq, and it contributed to the fight against Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq.

Amer Sabaih, an independent Jordanian political analyst, said Jordan's alliance with the US is central to Abdullah's yearslong campaign to secure his kingdom against danger, including from Iran. Jordanian elites see Iran's support of Shiite

militias in Iraq, armed Palestinian groups and Syrian drug traffickers as direct threats to the royal court, Yom said.

"Very few people in Jordan think the Islamic Republic is good for the Middle East," he said.

Amman and Washington signed a defence-cooperation agreement in 2021 that granted US forces and contractors access to 12 military installations across the kingdom. The NATO military alliance opened its first liaison office in the region in Jordan in 2025.

In the run-up to the Iran war, Jordan's sprawling Muwaffaq Sali Air Base became "a key logistics hub" for US C-17 transport planes and about 60 combat aircraft, said David Schenker, a fellow at the Washington Institute.

"Jordan provides great strategic depth," he said, calling the kingdom's position "essential" to the US campaign against Iran. "This makes Jordan a target, not just targeting US forces but also targeting the king." (AP)

Vehicular and railway traffic have been disrupted in five districts of the northeastern state

Tripura surrendered militants reject govt appeal to lift 72-hour road, rail blockade



AGARTALA, Sept 4: A joint committee representing surrendered militants of seven groups on Friday rejected the Tripura government's appeal to withdraw the road and rail blockade until their demands are met.

The development came after Jirania sub-divisional magistrate Animesh Dhar approached the protesting former militants and appealed to them to withdraw the blockade.

Vehicular and railway traffic have been disrupted in five districts of the northeastern state following a 72-hour statewide strike called by three surrendered mili-

Rehabilitation Committee (JARC) and ATTF (Old) -- later joined the agitation.

"We don't want to sit on the road braving the sweltering heat, but the surrendered militants were forced to block railway and road connectivity to get the government's promises implemented," NLFT (Original) leader Prasenjit Debbarma told reporters.

"Although we have an 11-point list of demands, the government must immediately accept all the surrendered militants on the list. Out of over 1,200 cadres, only 91 have been accepted by the police so far," he said, adding that all pending police cases against the cadres should also be withdrawn.

Debbarma said the agitation would intensify if the government did not agree to fulfil all their "legitimate demands" immediately.

Dhar, who held discussions with the leaders of the surrendered militants at Hatai Kotor in Jirania subdivision, said the administration had conveyed their demands to the higher authorities.

"Members of seven surrendered militant organisations joined the movement to press for their demands. We communicated their points to the higher-ups for taking necessary steps," he said. (PTI)

'Attack on democracy': Congress on blast outside Manipur leader's house

IMPHAL, Sept 4: The opposition Congress in Manipur on Friday condemned the bomb blast outside the residence of its legislature party leader Keisham Meghachandra, describing it as an "attack on democracy".

Senior Congress spokesperson Hareshwar Goswami said differences in a democracy should be resolved through dialogue and peaceful negotiations.

"We take the bomb blast at the residence of the Congress legislature party leader as an attack on democracy. If there are different views, it should be negotiated and discussed peacefully," Goswami said, addressing a press conference.

"We strongly condemn the attack. The attack is not just on Meghachandra but the Congress as a whole. Such things should not happen again," he added.

Goswami said the party was yet to receive any information about the motive behind the attack, alleging that it was the handiwork of miscreants "who may have been instigated by someone".

Unidentified men triggered a blast near the gate of Meghachandra's residence in Thoubal district on Thursday evening, police said.

The explosion took place around 8.15 pm near the wall of Meghachandra's residence at Yairipok Bishnu Naha in Wangkhem constituency. The explosive is suspected to have been a grenade, they said.

No one was injured in the incident, and Meghachandra was not home at the time of the blast, police said. (PTI)

Four-day drive to redress grievances of Aizawl's power consumers from Sept 7

Jamir urges power dept to highlight benefits under RDSS



AIZAWL, Sept 4: The Mizoram Power and Electricity Department will launch a four-day drive from September 7 to address electricity billing and smart meter-related grievances for consumers here, officials said.

The initiative was taken up amid rising complaints of inflated electricity bills following the installation of smart meters.

As part of the campaign that will run till September 10, dedicated complaint booths will be opened at all electricity bill counters across Aizawl with designated officers and staff deployed to receive and address consumer complaints, an official said.

Complaints that can be settled immediately will be taken up for on-the-spot resolution.

The power department urged consumers to submit their grievances at the bill counter in their areas during the campaign instead of waiting for regular grievance redressal.

The complaint booths will be

closely monitored by the secretary and chief engineer of the department, officials said.

Officials of the department, however, asserted that installation of smart meters does not necessarily mean that consumers would receive higher electricity bills.

They have identified several factors that could cause bills to rise after the new meters are installed.

According to officials, the first bill generated after smart meter installation may be higher because the initial billing cycle can cover a longer period than usual.

They also pointed out that old meters may have recorded inaccurate readings due to meter faults, manpower shortages or human error. Once such meters are replaced with smart meters, bills may more accurately reflect actual power consumption, making them appear higher than earlier bills, officials said.

Another factor is the transition from manual to remote meter reading.

Smart meters are designed for remote reading, but network communication and billing systems have to be properly configured after installation, according to officials.

Where meters are installed midway through a billing cycle, manual readings may still be required, creating the possibility of errors that could result in higher or incorrect bills, they said.

Officials also warned that consumers generating electricity, particularly through solar systems, without approval and exporting power to the grid system may have the exported energy recorded as imported consumption.

This could lead to bills showing consumption higher than the electricity actually used, they said.

Smart meters can also detect external magnetic tampering and other attempts to interfere with meter functioning. Such tampering may trigger full-load recording and substantially increase the bill, officials said.

According to officials, 73,428 consumer smart meters, 624 distribution transformer meters and 90 feeder meters have so far been installed in Aizawl. The smart meter installation drive is expected to be completed by January next year, they added.

Pointing out that smart meters were being installed for free through contractors, they said consumers will have to bear the cost if their existing wiring is inadequate or requires replacement. (PTI)

Man shot dead in Manipur

IMPHAL, Sept 4: An unidentified man was found dead in Manipur's Imphal East district on Friday with a gunshot wound on his head, police said.

The body was found along the Kangla Angom Laiching Road in Lamlai police station area around 4.30 am by morning joggers.

It was picked up by the police around 8 am, an officer said, adding that further investigation is underway. (PTI)

NEC completes ₹ 32.54 crore infrastructure projects in Sikkim



GANGTOK, Sept 4: The North Eastern Council (NEC) has completed three major infrastructure projects valued at ₹ 32.54 crore in Sikkim, focusing on drainage protection, easing urban congestion and expanding higher education infrastructure.

The NEC, which functions under the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), is the statutory apex regional planning body for the economic and social development of the eight states of the Northeast.

According to a statement issued by the DoNER, the projects completed during July-August are integrated drainage works at Lower Rangpo, an underground parking facility at Namchi and construction of Sikkim State University at Temi Tarku.

The NEC said the 8.17 crore drainage project at Lower Rangpo is designed to channel surface runoff and wastewater safely towards the river. It is expected to benefit more than 10,000 people in the low-lying area, which is vulnerable to waterlogging and landslides, the statement said.

The ₹ 14.77 crore underground parking project is expected to ease traffic congestion in Namchi Bazaar.

The third project, construction of Sikkim State University at Temi Tarku, was formally closed on August 28, according to the NEC.

Sanctioned at ₹ 9.61 crore, the project provides modern academic infrastructure and is intended to expand access to higher education within the state.

The NEC said the three projects reflect its focus on sustainable engineering, planned urban development and accessible higher education, while balancing infrastructure growth with Sikkim's fragile mountain ecology. (PTI)

Mizoram tops states in drug demand reduction efforts



AIZAWL, Sept 4: Mizoram has ranked first among all states in efforts to curb drug abuse under the Centre's National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), a central scheme run by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to cut down the use of narcotic substances, officials

said on Friday.

The recognition was announced at a meeting chaired by the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Secretary on Thursday, officials said.

The NAPDDR seeks to prevent drug abuse, treat and rehabilitate drug users, strengthen treatment and rehabilitation services, and

build the capacity of personnel involved in drug-demand reduction, besides creating awareness among children and young people.

Mizoram's Social Welfare, Women and Child Development Department is the nodal agency for implementing the NAPDDR in the state.

Mizoram has been implementing

the programme from the state level down to districts and blocks, with Social Welfare Minister Lalrinpui overseeing the initiatives and Deputy Commissioners leading district-level efforts, officials said.

The state government has also been working with churches and various voluntary organisations to strengthen the campaign against drug abuse, with particular emphasis on protecting women and children. The state submits regular implementation reports to the Union Ministry, they said.

The Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) is also being implemented across all districts under the NAPDDR.

Officials said that the strong co-ordination among the state and district administrations, churches and voluntary organisations had contributed significantly to Mizoram's recognition as the top-performing state in the country in drug demand reduction efforts. (PTI)

Murder accused recaptured three days after escape from police station



AIZAWL, Sept 4: Police have recaptured a man who escaped from their custody following his arrest for allegedly killing a 15-year-old girl whose body was found in Lunglei district two days after she went missing, officials said on Friday.

Denghmingthanga (20), the prime accused in the crime, and Lalneihkima (34) were arrested on August 20, days after the girl's body was found near a state-run school in Mualthum North.

An officer said Denghmingthanga escaped around 1 am on Tuesday from the Lunglei police station, where he was being held for questioning.

An intense search operation was initiated, involving police, Young Mizo Association volunteers, local leaders and locals, to trace him.

CCTV footage scanned showed the accused moving towards Rahsi Veng locality in Lunglei, following which the area was combed and Denghmingthanga was located in a farm near Vanhne village around 4:30 pm on Thursday.

He was brought back to Lunglei and produced before a judicial magistrate, who remanded him to judicial custody, police said.

A constable at the Lunglei police station has been suspended for dereliction of duty, officials said. (PTI)

North Eastern Council completes ₹ 82.4-cr projects in Arunachal in Jul-Aug

ITANAGAR, Sept 4: The North Eastern Council (NEC) on Friday said it has completed development projects worth ₹ 82.41 crore in Arunachal Pradesh in July and August this year.

It has also released nearly ₹ 15 crore for ongoing work related to connectivity, education, agriculture and preservation of indigenous languages. The completed projects were taken up under the Scheme of NEC (SoNEC) and North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS), covering healthcare, education, rural infrastructure, horticulture and road connectivity

across several districts of the state, an official statement said here.

Among the major completed projects is the ₹ 14.38-crore upgradation of the 40-bed district hospital at Likabali in Lower Siang district. The upgraded facility includes a maternity ward, an operation theatre, emergency and diagnostic equipment and a blood bank. The NEC also completed hostels for boys and girls at Roing in Dibang Valley district, sanctioned at a cost of ₹ 5.17 crore. Community infrastructure works were completed in the Hunli-Desali block of Lower

Dibang Valley district at ₹ 4.74 crore and the Taliha block in Upper Subansiri at ₹ 4.95 crore.

In Tirap district, the Tissa viewpoint near Tissa camp was developed at a cost of ₹ 1.8 crore to boost the area's tourism potential.

In the agriculture sector, a 200-hectare bamboo plantation across jhum and fallow lands in the Hikam and Muro areas of Tadin village in West Siang was completed at a cost of ₹ 2.19 crore. The project is aimed at promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities as an alternative to shifting cultivation, the statement added. (PTI)

40 high-hazard glacial lakes identified in Sikkim, 16 at highest risk of outburst

GANGTOK, Sept 4: The eastern Himalayan state of Sikkim has identified 40 high-hazard glacial lakes, with 16 of them classified as being at the highest risk of catastrophic outbursts that could threaten downstream settlements.

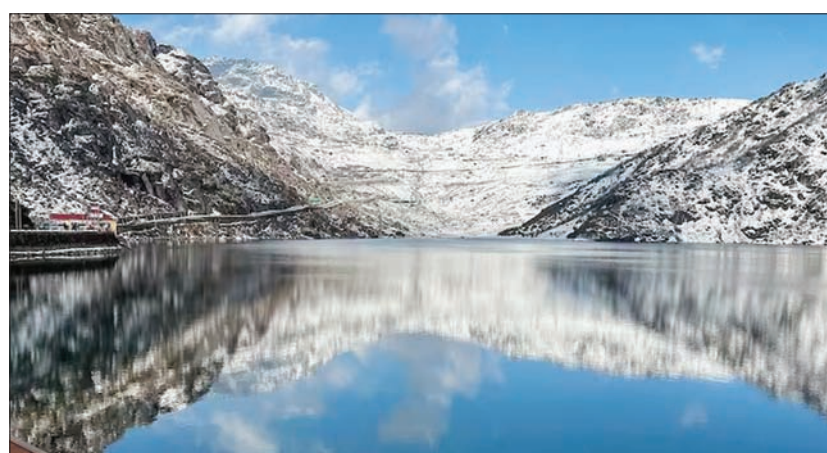
The data is significant as it comes against the backdrop of the recent flash flood in Nepal, triggered by a glacial collapse near the Nepal-Tibet border on August 26 that left a trail of destruction with hundreds of people dead and scores missing.

Though the catastrophe was not linked to a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF), the flash flood has highlighted a broader transformation across the Himalayas as glaciers retreat, new lakes are forming in their place, while existing ones are expanding.

Glacial lakes are formed by the melting of glaciers and accumulation of meltwater in depressions on or near the glacier's surface. GLOFs occur when these lakes suddenly burst open due to factors such as excessive water accumulation or triggers like earthquakes.

These floods can cause significant destruction and pose serious risks to people and the environment downstream.

One such outburst in Sikkim in October 2023 resulted in at least 60 fatalities and extensive damage in the Mangan, Gangtok, Pakyong and Namchi districts. It also destroyed the Chungthang dam, a crucial part of a major hydropower project.



At a media sensitisation workshop on GLOF Risk Mitigation held here on Thursday, Principal Secretary Sandeep Tambe said remote sensing and satellite imagery were being used to monitor changes in glacial lakes.

Of the 40 high-hazard lakes, 16 are in Category A (highest risk), two in Category B (high risk) and nine in Category C (moderate to low risk), while 13 remain unclassified, he said.

The workshop focused on strengthening public understanding of GLOF risks and ensuring that verified, science-based information reaches the public.

Yougan Tamang, the press secretary to Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, said media sensitisation was crucial to communicating the scientific measures being undertaken to mitigate GLOF risks.

Sikkim's Department of Science and Technology was designated the nodal department for GLOF hazard assessment and mitigation studies in February 2025, with the work being carried out through an interdisciplinary approach, Tamang said.

The state is also working towards what could be the country's first dedicated GLOF Risk Mitigation Protocol, aimed at creating a standardised scientific framework for assessing, preparing for and mitigating glacial flood risks.

It could also serve as a model for other Himalayan regions, an official release said. Field studies cover water-level and discharge monitoring, Electrical Resistivity

Tomography, geophysical and differential global positioning system surveys, bathymetry, flood modelling, hazard assessment and feasibility studies for lowering lake levels and constructing flood-retention structures.

Tambe said a uniform strategy could not be applied to all lakes, and separate proposals had therefore been prepared for the Lhonak Complex, Shako Chho Lake and Gurudongmar Complex, according to the release.

The Sikkim government has identified Shako Chho as most vulnerable to GLOF. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Shako Chho has been submitted to the National Disaster Management Authority, and a preliminary project report has been sent to the Jal Shakti Ministry.

The Central Water Commission is preparing a DPR along with the Sikkim government for a flood-retention structure at Dolma Sampa near Muguthang in the Lhonak Complex.

For the Gurudongmar Complex, a moraine plug wall at the lake outlet has been proposed. The Department of Science and Technology and Brahmaputra Board are jointly working on the proposal, taking into account both GLOF risk and the lake's cultural and religious significance.

The Science and Technology Department's principal director-cum-secretary D G Shrestha said Sikkim's devastating 2023 GLOF had underscored the urgency of strengthening preparedness.

At the policy level, Sikkim is pursuing a whole-of-government approach, clearer business rules, measures to bridge technical expertise gaps and a proposal for a commission on glacial hazards.

Various lake-level lowering techniques are being examined, including siphoning, pumping, improving existing channels, artificial channels, moraine cutting with safety walls and tunnelling.

Shrestha outlined a four-stage mitigation process -- preliminary assessment, comprehensive assessment, designing mitigation measures and execution -- and stressed the need to strengthen institutional, technical and financial capacity.

He also said additional early-warning sensors had been proposed across Sikkim following a virtual meeting with Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, who gave a positive assurance on the proposal.

On Thursday, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan reviewed the preparedness of Himalayan states and Union Territories in dealing with GLOF risks and snow avalanches.

The chief secretaries and State Disaster Management Authorities of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, along with senior officers of the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Disaster Management Authority, Central Water Commission, India Meteorological Department and the Defence Geoinformatics Research Establishment attended the meeting. (PTI)

Several temples of Goa were destroyed during Portuguese rule, says CM Sawant



PANAJI, Sept 4: Goa would have had temples comparable to those in south India had the Portuguese not arrived in the coastal state, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said here on Friday.

CM Sawant, while announcing the restoration of the historic Koti Tirth site in Divar, said several temples were destroyed during Portuguese rule.

"Had the Portuguese not come to Goa, we would have seen temples in Goa similar to those in south India," Sawant said.

Goa was ruled by eight to ten kingdoms, Sawant said, adding that Kadamba rulers, along with local Goans, built several temples.

"But many of these religious structures were subsequently destroyed during Portuguese rule," he said while describing the Kadamba period as the state's "golden era".

Speaking during the 'Udak Shanti' and 'Ganga Pujan' ceremony held as part of the Koti Tirth Corridor project, Sawant said the initiative sought to revive the legacy of temples that were destroyed during the Portuguese rule.

The Koti Tirth project is envisioned as a heritage initiative representing temples and religious sites that were destroyed during the Portuguese period, and aims to reconnect the present generation with Goa's pre-colonial cultural and architectural heritage.

The Koti Tirth Corridor project would be completed within a year, the CM added.

Sawant also said the ancient Gopakapattana Port in St Andre constituency, which has historical significance, would be developed in the future. (PTI)

'Smash the prospects of women' real mindset of Rahul Gandhi, Cong govts: BJP

'I want to ask why Rahul Gandhi remains silent regarding these accusations'

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The BJP on Friday attacked Rahul Gandhi, saying "smash the prospects of women" is the real mindset of the Congress leader and his party's governments.

"For Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, the slogan 'smash the patriarchy' is nothing but empty words and political rhetoric," BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj told reporters here.

This came a day after Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy sacked Forest Minister Konda Surekha from the Council of Ministers with immediate effect amid a row over some remarks made against him and others by the woman leader's daughter.

Surekha, on her part, claimed she did nothing wrong and accused the chief minister of doing "black-mail politics".

Reacting to the development, Swaraj said, "Just yesterday, in



Telangana, we witnessed how a senior leader from his (Rahul Gandhi's) own party, the Congress, was humiliated and dropped from the Cabinet by the Congress government in the state."

Surekha has levelled "extremely serious" allegations against the Congress government and the Telangana chief minister, she said.

"I want to ask why Rahul Gandhi remains silent regarding

these accusations of injustice and blackmail? Perhaps it is because, for him, 'smash the patriarchy' is merely an election slogan, nothing more than political rhetoric," she added.

Swaraj alleged that in reality, the mindset of Gandhi, the Congress and its governments is to "smash the prospects of women if they are progressive".

"You may have observed that in

Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka – the states governed by the Congress – not a single woman was deemed worthy of being entrusted with the responsibility of a ministerial post," the BJP leader added.

Addressing an event in Pune on August 22, Gandhi had lashed out at the "Manusmriti mindset" and urged girl students to "smash patriarchy", while also taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his remark that he was shocked to hear girls using abusive language during the recent protest at Jantar Mantar.

Interacting with girl students at his 'Chhatron Ki Gooni' outreach programme here, Gandhi said women belong to themselves and not to their fathers, husbands or sons, and termed as shameful the Manusmriti's prescription that a woman should remain under the authority of male relatives at every stage of her life. (PTI)

'Must explain': Mayawati asks Modi govt to clear scepticism over new GDP figures



LUCKNOW, Sept 4: Biju Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Friday weighed in on the controversy surrounding the first-quarter GDP numbers, urging the Narendra Modi government to clear people's doubts over the credibility of the figures.

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister claimed that India's 7.8 per cent growth for the April-June quarter has drawn scepticism as people "suffering from the blows of hyper-inflation, immense poverty, and unemployment are wondering whom to trust".

The controversy over India's GDP figures arose after former finance secretary Subash Chandra Garg, in an interview, accused the authorities of altering past data to make current economic performance look better.

The Congress subsequently highlighted Garg's claims, alleging data manipulation and demanding an explanation for the previous year's GDP figures.

The government, however, rejected these allegations, saying that the growth rate reflects the newly adopted statistical framework.

Commenting on the debate, Mayawati, in a lengthy post on X in Hindi, said, "If we take the government's sky-high claims on this matter at face value, it would be a good thing. However, if these are fudged figures, it is certainly a cause for concern. Therefore, to kindle hope among the people, the government must reliably explain what benefits this high growth rate has brought to the country's millions of poor, hardworking masses and what benefits it will bring in the future."

She said that since this issue is linked to the welfare of the people, development statistics and claims are like a double-edged sword.

"This is why they are judged more by ground realities – that is, the development that is right and

useful is the one that appeals to the people, meaning it brings equitable change to their lives and makes them happy and prosperous," 70-year-old Mayawati said.

"Thus, GDP growth figures and claims have their place, but for the true beneficiaries of development – the country's millions of hard-working masses – to receive its benefits and truly feel them is also essential for the nation's and people's welfare. Otherwise, the nearly 140 crore people here will continue to bear the burden of being a 'poor populace under a wealthy government'," she added. The BSP chief further said that the country's development will only bring "ache din" (good days) when its crores of toiling masses become capable of living a life free from poverty, unemployment and corruption.

The BSP chief also said that the Uttar Pradesh government's decision to double the remuneration for outsourced employees and provide security cover to 20 lakh people through the establishment of the UP Outsourcing Services Corporation would be far better served by directly offering people government jobs, so that "this system remains free from the web of bureaucratic whims, corruption, exploitation". On Sept 2, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation defended the GDP figures, saying that revisions to last year's GDP and the divergence between different price measures reflect updated data and estimation techniques rather than an attempt to artificially boost headline growth. The clarification came two days after the government released an updated series of annual and quarterly GDP estimates with 2022-23 as the base year, incorporating a new Producer Price Index (PPI), Banking Services Price Index and additional administrative data. (PTI)

Two more bodies found, death toll in Palghar building collapse rises to 17

PALGHAR, Aug 28: The death toll in the collapse of an allegedly unauthorised building at Virar in Maharashtra's Palghar district has risen to 17 with the discovery of two more bodies, officials said on Thursday.

Police have arrested the builder of the four-storey structure, Ramabai Apartment, after the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC) lodged a complaint, they said.

"Two more bodies have been located under the debris. The teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and other rescue units are extricating them," said Vivekanand Kadam, Chief of the Disaster Management Cell of Palghar District. Their identities will be ascertained subsequently, he said.

The building, housing nearly 50 flats, collapsed on an adjacent vacant tenement at Vijay Nagar in Virar area of Palghar, adjoining Mumbai, at 12.05 am on Wednesday, they said.

A one-year-old girl's birthday party was underway on the fourth floor when 12 flats in a wing of the building collapsed, trapping residents and guests under the debris, as per eyewitnesses.

Palghar District Collector Dr Indu Rani Jakhar on Thursday morning said that the death toll in the incident had gone up to 15 overnight.

The girl, whose birthday was being celebrated when the incident occurred, was among the deceased.

Six other persons, who were injured and rescued, were undergoing treatment in various hospitals, according to an official from the Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC).

Emergency teams, including the NDRF, local police and fire department, continue to sift through the rubble to check if more victims are trapped.

The work of clearing the debris will continue to ensure no other person is trapped under the rubble, the

collector told PTI.

"The work is almost complete, but we want to be absolutely sure before concluding the operation," she added.

Kadam said the teams are working around the clock. "The goal is not only to recover those trapped but also to ensure no lives are put at further risk," he said.

The authorities on Wednesday identified seven of the deceased.

They have identified eight more victims as Govind Singh Ravat (28), Shubhangi Pawan Saheni (40), Kashish Pawan Saheni (35), Deepak Singh Behra (25), Sonali Rupesh Tejam (41), Harish Singh Bisht (34), Sachin Nevalkar (40) and Deepesh Soni (41).

Eyewitnesses described the horrifying scene, where a moment of happiness turned to chaos in an instant. "People were dancing and celebrating (during the birthday party) when suddenly the entire structure collapsed like a pack of cards," said a survivor.

The aftermath was marked by chaos and panic, with people screaming and accusing the builder of negligence.

Residents claimed that unlike previous incidents of building collapses where cracks or structural weaknesses were visible beforehand, there were no such warning signs here. The sudden collapse has raised serious concerns over building safety and unauthorised constructions in the area.

Locals have alleged "lethargy and negligence" on part of the builder and authorities, with many demanding a thorough investigation into how the unauthorised structure was allowed to house so many residents without proper safety measures.

Police on Wednesday arrested the builder after the VVMC lodged a complaint. (PTI)

Block Congress Committee conventions to be held across Haryana till Sept 30

CHANDIGARH, Sept 4: Haryana Congress President Rao Narender Singh on Friday said that Block Congress Committee conventions will be organised across the state till September 30.

These conventions will facilitate direct interaction with party workers and help formulate strategies to strengthen the organisation at the grassroots level, he said.

Singh said that he will lead the Narnaul Block Congress Committee convention on September 5. Lalit Yadav, MLA from Mundawar (Rajasthan), will participate in the convention as the special guest.

AICC In-charge Haryana Sanjay Dutt and Singh will preside over various Block Congress Committee conventions.

As per the scheduled programme, conventions will be held on September 6 at Pingawar (Nuh) and Badshapur (Gurgaon), and on September 7 at Shahabad Rural (Kurukshetra) and Saha (Ambala). Singh said the conventions will also focus on strongly raising pressing issues concerning the people of Haryana and preparing Congress workers to fight for their resolution.

He said that issues such as unemployment, deteriorating law and order, and students' concerns will be given prominence. (PTI)

NDMC sets up 24x7 command centre to tackle civic issues in Lutyens' area during BRICS Summit



NEW DELHI, Sept 4: With the national capital gearing up to host world leaders for the 18th BRICS Summit later this month, the New Delhi Municipal Council is setting up a round-the-clock command centre to keep the city running smoothly during the high-profile event.

According to an official order issued by NDMC Secretary Rahul Singh, an Integrated Command & Control Centre (ICCC) will operate out of Palika Kendra from September 5 to 14 while designated nodal officers will work in shifts to track complaints, monitor civic services, and respond to ground-level issues as they crop up.

India is scheduled to host the 18th international summit of BRICS nations – comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and some additional countries – on September 12 to 13, as part of its BRICS chairmanship.

The ICCC aims to streamline civic operations and ensure swift coordination between local civic bodies and key agencies, including the Delhi Police, Traffic Police and CPWD.

To ensure that no civic issue goes unattended, officers from civil engineering, horticulture, public health, enforcement, transport, fire safety and other departments will oversee daytime operations. At night, a dedicated nodal officer from each department will remain stationed at the control room to handle any off-hour emergencies.

All departmental heads and in-charges have been asked to be

available round the clock throughout the 10 days from September 5 to 14.

To help the line departments and security agencies coordinate seamlessly, the civic body has activated dedicated 24x7 phone lines at the command centre.

In a statement issued last week, NDMC chairman Manoj Kumar Dwivedi said that as part of its preparations for the BRICS Summit, the municipal council has drawn up a plan under which 41 major roads have been divided into 14 circles, each headed by a nodal officer who will conduct daily inspections and ensure that civic issues are addressed promptly.

He said the council has identified 15 locations for floral boards, nine for flower fountains and 17 roundabouts for special illumination and beautification. Several other prominent locations have been earmarked for focused cleaning and upkeep, though their details have not been disclosed for security reasons.

Special sanitation arrangements, including additional staff and night-duty teams, will be in place from September 9 to 14.

Mechanical sweepers, scrubbers, manual sweeping teams, temporary dustbins and mobile toilets will be deployed, while stray animals will be removed from key areas.

The civic body will also work with hotels, resident welfare associations and market traders to maintain cleanliness and civic discipline in areas linked to the summit. (PTI)

Akhilesh vows 'world-class' development of Braj region if SP returns to power

LUCKNOW, Sept 4: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Friday vowed to undertake "balanced and world-class" development of the Braj region if the party returns to power in Uttar Pradesh, while asserting that the development should not come at the cost of 'Brajwasis'.

In a post on X on the occasion of Krishna Janmashtami, Yadav extended greetings to devotees and said his party would repeat its commitment to developing the religious and mythological centres of Mathura-Vrindavan, Barsana and Govardhan.

"Just as we had undertaken foundational works for the development of the Braj region during the SP government, we reiterate our resolve today that in our upcoming government, we will undertake balanced, world-class, all-round development of the religious region of Mathura-Vrindavan-Barsana-Govardhan," he said.

The former chief minister said the development would seek to preserve the area's religious and mythological significance while providing modern infrastructure and facilities to pilgrims and spiritual tourists. (PTI)

Shared details of excluded voters, BLAs should have noted addresses: Delhi poll body

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Responding to allegations by the AAP and the Congress that incomplete details of voters removed from the draft rolls were provided to them, the Delhi poll office has said it had shared the information, and the booth-level agents (BLAs) of the parties should have noted the addresses of such persons.

The AAP and the Congress have alleged that the addresses of voters marked under the 'absent, shifted, dead, duplicate' (ASDD) categories, who were removed from the draft rolls published on August 31, were not provided to the parties.

AAP Delhi president Saurabh Bhardwaj and Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav had written to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Delhi, seeking details, including addresses and photos, of those placed under the ASDD categories.

The draft electoral rolls for Delhi were published on August 31, after the completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, in which about 47.5 lakh electors out of the 1.45 crore voters in the national



capital were excluded.

Those excluded can file their claims till September 30 through Form 6 with supporting documents. The final voter roll will be published on November 4.

"We repeatedly told the Election Commission that the names, phone numbers and addresses of those whose names have been deleted should be shared with the political parties, so that they can be verified," Bhardwaj had said.

He claimed that the Delhi CEO's office had assured to provide the lists with complete details.

Replying to the claims, the Delhi CEO's office said in a statement that the political parties had been requested to direct their BLAs to approach the concerned booth-level officers (BLOs) associated with the SIR exercise for noting down the addresses and other details of electors placed under the ASDD list.

The BLOs completed house-to-house verification of voters and provided due information to the BLAs, with whom they conducted periodical meetings, it said.

Based on the information submitted by the BLOs, a list of ASDD electors was generated through the ECINet in the format given by the Election Commission, and the same was uploaded on the website of the Delhi CEO, the statement said.

"As regards not mentioning the addresses of the deleted electors, the BLAs, who are appointed by the political parties polling station-wise, should have noted the addresses of the ASDD electors from the concerned BLOs during the meetings," the Delhi CEO's office said. (PTI)

'The new India no longer just dreams; it realises them in space as well' Former Jharkhand CMs hail successful launch of India's first ever imaging satellite in geo-orbit



JAMSHEDPUR, Sept 4: Former Jharkhand chief ministers Arjun Munda and Raghubar Das on Friday hailed the successful launch of India's first-ever imaging satellite in the geo-orbit, saying the country has been setting new milestones in the space sector and showcasing its self-reliance under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) placed the over 2,300-kg EOS-05 satellite into a precise orbit using a GSLV rocket early on Friday, making the space agency's maiden success for 2026.

This was the heaviest satellite ever to be carried by a GSLV. Once the EOS-05 is operationalised in orbit, it will become India's first dedicated imaging satellite from the geo-orbit, providing "strategic data" for the country.

Commending ISRO for the feat, BJP leader Munda said on X that this was a "testament to the growing strength of a self-re-

liant India and the capability of our scientists".

"Congratulations to all for this. The new India no longer just dreams; it realises them in space as well. India is continuously setting new milestones in the space sector under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he added.

Das said Indian scientists have once again showcased to the world their talent, hard work, and capabilities.

"The successful launch of GSLV F-17 and the successful placement of EOS-05 into orbit is a splendid testament to the nation's growing scientific and technological prowess," the senior BJP leader wrote on X.

"Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, India is scripting a new saga of self-reliance and strength in every field, from space to technology," he added. (PTI)

Marriage shouldn't mean only women adjust, say 'Pyaar Prema Kalyanam' actors



Tamil actors Elan and Saanve Megghana say their movie "Pyaar Prema Kalyanam" was designed to start a conversation around a subject often taken for granted -- where will a couple live after marriage -- by reversing the norm and having the husband move into his wife's family home instead.

Directed by Elan, who also stars in the film opposite Megghana, the romantic comedy follows a woman who refuses to leave her parental home after her wedding, prompting her husband to move in with her family instead.

The film, which follows Elan's 2018 directorial debut "Pyaar Prema Kaadhal" but features a new cast and characters, premiered on Netflix on August 21.

"More than talking about what is right and what is wrong, we just wanted to explore... we wanted the audience, after watching

the movie, to start a conversation. That was our main idea," Elan, whose character in the movie is also named Elan, told PTI in an interview.

"For any couple who wants to get married, they also should discuss where they will live before tying the knot. We all discuss other things, like financial stability, babies and all that but this particular point is always taken for granted," he added.

Megghana, who plays Pavithra, a social media influencer, said the film treats a potentially sensitive premise with humour rather than turning it into a message-driven social drama.

"He (Elan) doesn't make it a social issue, but treats it in a very humorous way," she said, adding that the idea of a woman asking her husband to move in with her family "should have been normalised long ago".

"Nowadays I think men and women have become extremely understanding because they recognise each other. I somehow feel it's more vocal right now. In Indian households, women are told to adjust and compromise, right? That doesn't happen at all nowadays because women also are very much financially independent, and things have changed. So I think this film happened because we all know that objectively people will relate to it," she added.

Elan, who also directed the 2024 hit

"Star", said the story, written by Mumbai-based writer Nivedita Pohankar, was originally shared with him in casual conversation before he encouraged her to develop it into a script.

"The reason why I wanted to make this movie was to show the perspective of the women rather than showing what a man goes through. That's not the point of the movie. This is strictly a movie to advocate what women have been going through for centuries. So I resonated with the script very well, and I had no questions over it," he added.

Megghana said the film makes the case that homemaking is not tied to gender.

"Irrespective of the gender, anybody can be a homemaker. We made it like a housewife, but I felt it could be a house husband also. One should not be ashamed of being a house husband or working inside the house. I think we just have to break that conditioning."

"Pyaar Prema Kalyanam" marks Elan's acting debut and he credited his team, including "shadow director" Harish and cinematographer Ganesh, for allowing him to focus on his performance while directing.

"Everybody literally helped me out, so I'm very grateful for them. Before shooting, we made sure that every-

thing was clear to everyone so that I didn't need to worry about my acting part on the floor. So they took care of it very well, and that made things easier for me," he said.

Elan said the praise from filmmaker Vetrimaaran for his acting was among the best responses he has received for the film.

"What else can I ask for? He's someone who believes that acting is so important. Getting a compliment from him is the best compliment I got for this movie," he said.

Megghana, whose earlier credits include "Pitta Kathalu" and "Kudumbasthan", said she continues to look for well-written roles and considers her craft a work in progress with each project.

"There's a lot to learn and I'm trying to be as open as possible because only when I'm open and receiving things can I learn and unlearn things and get better... I really want people to remember and always think that whichever film I'm part of or associated with, that film will definitely leave something with them, entertain them, or it will be a good film. That's exactly how I want to shape my career."

"Pyaar Prema Kalyanam" also features Radhika Sarathkumar, M S Bhaskar and Yogi Babu, with music by Yuvan Shankar Raja. (PTI)

I'M GOING TO ENJOYING WATCHING IT ON BIG SCREEN: SHRIYA PILGAONKAR ON 'MIRZAPUR: THE MOVIE'



It all felt like a big party, says actor Shriya Pilgaonkar, who returns as Sweetie in "Mirzapur: The Movie", the cinematic extension of her popular crime series "Mirzapur", and she hopes that fans will be as welcoming of the film as they have been of the show.

The film, which made its debut in cinema halls across the country on Friday, marks the first big-screen outing for the "Mirzapur" universe, which began as a streaming series in 2018 and went on to become one of India's most successful OTT franchises over the course three seasons.

Pilgaonkar, who has reprised her role of Swaragini "Sweetie" Gupta, the love interest of Ali Fazal's gun-totting gangster Guddu Pandit, from the show's first season, called the movie an "experiment".

"I hope it does well. We've no idea how it will be received, but there's anticipation, there's love, and for me, coming back to it after season one, and reuniting with the cast, has felt like a party. So, I'm going to enjoy watching it on the big screen," the actor told PTI in an interview.

"Mirzapur: The Movie" brings back the lawless world of Mirzapur, where the battle for power continues amid a barrage of bullets, betrayals and bloody rivalries. The movie is set in 2018, hinting at an untold chapter from the first season of the show.

Besides Pilgaonkar and Fazal, the movie also brings back the show's core cast which includes Pankaj Tripathi as Kaleen Bhaiya, Divyendu as Munna Tripathi, Rasika Dugal as Beena Tripathi, Shweta Tripathi as Gajgamani "Golu" Gupta and Abhishek Banerjee as Subodh alias "Compounder".

Though her character was killed in the season one finale, Pilgaonkar said the affection audiences have continued to show towards Sweetie has always stayed with her.

"I did not expect that people would feel so much for Sweetie. That is the love that has carried us through. I can confidently tell you that just the love that 'Mirzapur' has received will keep me going. That's how sweet and loyal the fans are," she said.

Pilgaonkar revealed that when the team shot for season one, they had no idea that the show or its characters would develop such a passionate fan base.

"When we went on set, and we were performing, we realized that each of these characters is such a vibe. We could feel like the energy was something special. But no one could have predicted the cult following."

"The reviews were not very good when the series released. But it was only over a period of time, fans have given it love," the actor said.

Pilgaonkar recalled telling her actor mother, Supriya Pilgaonkar, after the audition for the show's first season that she had thoroughly enjoyed the experience. (PTI)

"At that point, it was interesting, it was a puppy. As a person, I was a puppy. But I was a puppy. Presented tainment, "N meet Singh f

Priyanka Chopra Jonas to present Karl Lagerfeld Prize at LVMH Prize ceremony

Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas has been named an ambassador for the 2026 LVMH Prize final and will present the prestigious Karl Lagerfeld Prize at the ceremony in Paris, France.

The actor, who is a Dior ambassador, will join fellow Dior ambassador Jennifer Lawrence and Thai actor Urassaya "Yaya" Sperbund, a face of Louis Vuitton, as presenters at the ceremony to be held at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, a press release said.

The official Instagram page of the LVMH Prize announced Chopra Jonas as one of the ambassadors for the event.

"We're thrilled to welcome the remarkable actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas as one of the ambassadors for this year's LVMH Prize final," the post read.

Chopra Jonas will present the Karl Lagerfeld Prize, which carries a grant of EUR 200,000 (one euro = ₹ 109.87) and a year-long mentorship programme covering areas such as sustainability, communication, marketing, manufacturing and financial management.

Lawrence will present the EUR 400,000 Grand Prize, while Sperbund will hand over the Savoir-Faire Prize.

The LVMH Prize celebrates emerging fashion talent, with nine designers competing for three awards at this year's ceremony. (PTI)

Uttam Kumar @100: The superstar who still lights up Bengali cinema

In the opening moments of Satyajit Ray's "Nayak", the protagonist Arindam Mukherjee asks his assistant about the box office report of his new movie. When the assistant makes excuses, the star proclaims grandly, "I'm there, isn't it enough?"

And for many decades in Bengali cinema, it really was. Uttam Kumar, who in many ways mirrored his own stardom in the 1966 Satyajit Ray classic, was that rare matinee idol whose stardom dazzled through his journey from black and white films to technicolour. Almost eight decades later, it still does.

He would have been 100 on Thursday.

The tributes flowed in, including from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Film lovers believe that Satyajit Ray wrote the entire script for the film 'Nayak' ('The Hero') with Mahanayak Uttam Kumar in mind..."

"His life offers another great lesson: never give up. Although his early films did not fare well, he remained focused on his work. It was this dedication that enabled him to reach such great heights," Modi said.

Uttam Kumar. The very name



was the guarantor of box office success in a filmography that includes hits such as "Saptapadi", "Jiban Mrityu", "Antony Firingee" and "Grihadaha".

Born Anun Kumar Chattopadhyay in North Kolkata on September 3, 1926, Kumar died when he was just 53. He drove himself to hospital and died there of a heart attack, plunging the world of Bengali cinema into deep mourning.

With his premature death in 1980, Kumar is framed in celluloid as the forever young, charming superstar with a winsome smile.

"Charulata" star Madhabi Mukherjee, who worked with Kumar on films such as "Shankha-

bela", "Biraj Bou" and "Garh Nasimpur", writes in her memoir "Madhabi's Garden": "Some say Bengali cinema would have flourished much more had Uttam Kumar lived longer."

"I cannot tell what might have been, but I feel God ended his story at a time that would ensure his immortality."

Kumar, who married Gauri Chatterjee in 1948 when he was just starting out, had a long-term partnership with fellow actor Supriya Debi.

Behind the charming persona was a hard-working actor who tried time and again to break out of the romantic hero image playing villains in films such as "Stree" and "Kuhok". But it didn't work out very well.

According to Mukherjee, he had the skill and the versatility to play various kinds of characters.

"In Kuhok, he played the villain, but the film wasn't successful, for audiences didn't accept him in the role of a bad man. Uttam Kumar nurtured his rage against them and channelled it into his performance as a villain once again many years later in 'Stree'. This time the film was a major success. But when he played a manservant in Khokabur Prottyaborton, the audience didn't

care for it.

"Still he didn't give up, continuously dismantling and remaking his actor persona. Watching his films one after another would reveal how he constantly tried to expand and diversify the range of characters he portrayed. His acting seemed to improve with each film... The appeal of his performances on screen has not dimmed at all, and he still occupies the Bengali heart in a way that is unprecedented," she writes.

Kumar's career unspooled through over 200 movies. His chemistry with fellow star Suchitra Sen is celebrated as among Indian cinema's most enduring pairings.

"His was a phenomenal stardom unmatched even today. His pairing with Suchitra Sen is timeless in cinema and celebrated the way Hindi cinema celebrates Raj Kapoor-Nargis. It sort of immortalised them on celluloid," said film historian SMM Ausaja.

Uttam-Suchitra, as they came to be known in the course of the 30 films they paired up for, first starred together in romantic comedy "Sharey Chuattar" in 1953. They also worked on films such as "Agni Pariksha", "Shapmochon", "Harano Sur", "Saptapadi" and "Jhinder Bondi". (PTI)

'SLOW HORSES' STAR GARY OLDMAN SAYS HE DOESN'T LIKE HURTING PEOPLE: 'I'M SOFTER THAN JACKSON LAMB'

Veteran British star Gary Oldman says he has little in common with Jackson Lamb, the notoriously foul-mouthed spy he has portrayed in many seasons of "Slow Horses", as unlike the character, he avoids confrontation and would never deliberately make someone feel uncomfortable.

Over a career spanning more than 45 years, Oldman has portrayed a wide range of characters, from memorable villains in "Leon: The Professional", "Air Force One" and "The Fifth Element" to supporting roles in "The Dark Knight" trilogy and the "Harry Potter" films, as well as his Oscar-winning portrayal of Winston Churchill in "Darkest Hour". He even played an understated spy in "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy".

But Jackson Lamb is of a different breed. He is crude, contemptuous, cynical, unkempt, openly smokes, drinks cheap alcohol and eats junk food, all this in addition to his ever-farting state of existence.

Yet, beneath all this lies a brilliant spymaster -- sharp, instinctive, fiercely loyal and always several steps ahead of both his enemies and his own superiors.

So did years of playing this unconventional spy rub off on him?

"Well, I would hope not. Well, I do

like junk food occasionally, I try to avoid it. I don't smoke and I don't drink anymore. I'm much softer than (him)," Oldman said during a virtual press conference, also attended by PTI.

According to the 68-year-old actor, Jackson Lamb, which he has played in five seasons with the sixth slated for release and two more in the production, is a man without any "filter, so he'll be very direct with people".

"And I don't want confrontation now, life's too short, and maybe I like to sort of rough it up a bit when I was younger but I'm far too... I don't want to hurt people's feelings, I don't want to make people feel less than or uncomfortable."

"Lamb, he does a bit, there's a side of him that actually takes pleasure in that. So, I hope I've not picked up anything," Oldman said.

"Slow Horses", which will return with its sixth chapter on September 16 on Apple TV, follows a group of disgraced MI5 agents who have been banished to Slough House, a dumping ground for spies who have made career-ending mistakes but have not been fired.

Led by Jackson Lamb, the so-called "slow horses" are assigned tedious, low-level work but inevitably find themselves drawn into dangerous investigations that put them at the centre



of high-stakes national security threats.

Based on Mick Herron's bestselling "Slough House" novels, the show combines espionage, dark humour and workplace drama while chronicling the dysfunctional but fiercely loyal team of misfits.

Such has been the authenticity of his portrayal that fans have often posed a particular question to Oldman's co-stars Kristin Scott Thomas and Jack Lowden, he said.

"People ask them, 'Does he smell?' Well, I don't smell, it's all smoke and mirrors, it's all make-up and hair gel,"

he stressed.

Oldman said that the character has become a part of his everyday life now.

"It's been an interesting thing playing a character who is the lead in something. I've done it with 'Harry Potter', and I've done it with 'The Batman' trilogy, but that was sort of infrequent, it's not as continuous as this."

"And we're all very comfortable with these characters, and I literally could do Jackson Lamb in an instant... You carry the DNA of the thing around with you."

Since its debut in 2022, "Slow

Horses" has steadily grown in popularity, earning acclaim for its sharp writing, dark humour and unconventional take on the espionage genre.

Over the years, the series has built a loyal fan base and emerged as one of the most celebrated spy dramas in recent television.

Asked why the show has resonated with viewers so much all over the world that they eagerly wait for a new season, Oldman said the appeal lies in the fact that spies in "Slow Horses" are unlike the ever-famous James Bond or Jason Bourne, the lead protagonist of the Bourne franchise.

"Mick (the author) has sort of turned the world of spies sort of upside down on its head. Instead of this unreachable, fantastical world out there of James Bond... What we have with the 'Slow Horses', is alcoholics, drug addicts, dysfunctional people and people who have got to pay their mortgages."

"We've got people that are going through divorce or separated from their partners but they're trying to kind of work out the custody arrangements with their kids. They're spies but it's a world that we can relate to or we can touch and understand. And that's what has people coming back to the show."

Oldman said the team of "Slow Horses" is very conscious of keeping

the cycle going as they know that having a long gap between seasons will make viewers almost forget the characters.

He said the show's quality of the writing is simply brilliant and its characters -- whether it is Lowden's River Cartwright, Thomas' Diana Taverner or Saskia Reeves as Catherine Standish or Rosalind Eleazar as Louisa Guy -- are quite fascinating.

"We have a wonderful template, which are the books, so you're not suddenly jumping the shark," he added.

What does he miss between the shooting of seasons?

For Oldman, it is the company and camaraderie between the cast, which has become like "a big family".

"As a new season gears up and as my start date sort of nears, I get quite excited to get on the set again and see Saskia, Jack, Chris (Christopher Chung), Amiee (Aimee-Ffion Edwards) and Tom (Brooke)."

"I think that's been one of the things that has made it as enjoyable as it is over such a long period of time. This is the only experience I have with long-form but I can't think of anything worse than being in a long-running series with people that you don't get on with or you don't like. I think that would be hard. So, that has really kept me going," he said. (PTI)

India, Japan to play historic men's T20I match ahead of Asian Games

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Indian men's cricket team will take on Japan in their first-ever T20 International on September 22, marking the launch of celebrations for the 75th anniversary of India-Japan diplomatic relations.

The match, to be played in Sano in Japan, will offer the Indian team valuable game time to fine-tune combinations and build momentum ahead of the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya from September 19 to October 4.

"The Japan Cricket Association (JCA) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) are delighted to announce that the men's teams from each nation will play a T20 International match to launch the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of India-Japan Diplomatic Relations," said BCCI in a statement.

The teams will compete for the Suzuki Cup at the Sano International Cricket Ground in Tochigi Prefecture, Japan.

"The match will be the first step of 'Sport 75', an initiative that stems from an agreement reached during a summit between Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and aims to promote human exchanges and cooperation between India and Japan in the field of sports, taking note of India's ambition to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games



in 2036," the statement added. The Indian team will be led by Shreyas Iyer, with vice-captain Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson and teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi among the key names in the squad.

India are the defending Asian Games champions after claiming gold at the previous edition in Hangzhou, China, where their final against Afghanistan was

washed out by rain and they were awarded the title on the basis of their higher T20I seeding.

Seeded directly into the knockout stage, India will begin their Asian Games campaign in the quarterfinals on September 28.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said the India-Japan clash will provide cricket with a platform to expand its footprint and reach new,

uncharted territories.

"The BCCI is delighted to be part of this historic occasion as the Indian and Japanese men's teams come together for a special T20 International in Japan. This is a significant moment for cricket, as it takes the Indian team to new territory and provides an opportunity to introduce the sport to a wider audience in Japan and East Asia," said Saikia.

"India and Japan share a strong and longstanding relationship and friendship, and we are pleased that cricket will be part of the celebrations marking 75 years of bilateral relations between the two countries, and we thank the Japan Cricket Association (JCA) for its efforts in making this fixture possible," he added.

He said it was the responsibility of the world's largest cricket board to take the sport beyond its traditional strongholds and into new territories.

"The BCCI believes that the growth of cricket must extend beyond its traditional territories, and as the world's largest cricket board, we recognise our responsibility to contribute to that growth."

"The BCCI will work closely with the JCA to further strengthen cricket in Japan and to build on this relationship in the years ahead."

JCA CEO Naoki Miyaji said: "To be able to invite the reigning world champions to the home of cricket in Japan is a landmark moment for our association."

"We thank the BCCI for working with us towards this goal and greatly look forward to welcoming the passion of Indian cricket fans, and we actively encourage any local Japanese people curious about cricket to come and cheer on our team in what will be a truly memorable occasion." (PTI)

Sheetal leads India's charge as Ahmedabad hosts country's first international para archery event



AHMEDABAD, Sept 4: Trailblazer Sheetal Devi will be the centre of attention when India's finest para archers take aim in country's first international para archery event beginning here on Saturday.

The third stage of the 2026 Hyundai World Archery Para Series that will conclude on Wednesday brings 109 archers from 19 countries to India for a competition that also serves as an important build-up to the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Para Games.

At the forefront of the home challenge is Sheetal, the world number one in compound women and the reigning world champion, who will be competing in front of the home Indian crowd for the first time in an international event.

The 19-year-old has already established herself as one of the sport's biggest names despite her young age.

Born without arms, Sheetal uses her right foot and shoulder to draw the bow and a specialised release aid held in her mouth to shoot.

Her rise to the top has been remarkable. At the Gwangju 2025 World Archery Para Championships, she became the first woman without arms to win a para archery world title, defeating defending champion and Paralympic champion Ozgur Cure Girdi of Türkiye 146-143 in the compound women's final.

That world title added to a glittering record that already included a mixed team bronze at the Paris 2024 Paralympics alongside Rakesh Kumar -- making her India's youngest Paralympic medalist at 17 -- and two gold medals at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games.

Sheetal has also shown that her ambitions extend beyond para archery.

In 2025, she became the first Indian para archer to be selected for the country's able-bodied national squad after finishing third in selection trials for the Asian Cup in Jeddah.

She arrives in Ahmedabad in strong form.

At the second stage of this year's Para Series in Nove Mesto in June, Sheetal topped qualifying in the compound women's event with 697 points, setting a new Asian record in the process.

India's challenge will run much deeper than its teenage superstar. World number one Toman Kumar, the reigning world champion in men's compound, will spearhead the men's challenge, while Paris 2024 mixed team bronze medallist Rakesh Kumar adds considerable experience to the compound line-up.

In recurve, Paralympic champion Harvinder Singh will be among India's leading medal hopes, while world number five Pooja heads the women's challenge.

India's 29-member squad will be seeking to build on an impressive start to the inaugural Para Series season.

The hosts topped the medal table at the opening stage in Bangkok with seven gold medals, underlining the depth of their para archery programme. The Ahmedabad event will nevertheless present a different challenge, with the home team facing several of the world's leading archers.

Among the international stars are France's world number two Guillaume Toccolet in men's recurve, Czechia's world number one Sarka Pultar Musilova in women's W1 and Cyprus' world number one Christos Misos in the visually impaired 1 category.

China, Czechia and Great Britain have also brought strong squads, ensuring that India's home debut will be tested by some of the sport's best.

The event will feature individual and team competition across recurve, compound, W1 and visually impaired categories, with seven individual titles, three doubles titles and mixed team honours at stake, along with valuable world ranking points. (PTI)

Pressure off for F1 leader Antonelli heading into home race in Italy

MILAN, Sept 4: No longer a teenager, Kimi Antonelli is keen to show just how much he has progressed as he prepares for his home grand prix, even though he has to start at the back of the grid.

It was two years ago at Monza that Antonelli was given his Formula 1 debut but that lasted just 10 minutes as the youngster was involved in a high-speed crash in the first practice session for the Italian Grand Prix.

Now Antonelli, who turned 20 last week, arrives as championship leader.

"That definitely was not the way I wanted to introduce myself into the sport," Antonelli said. "If someone, while I was walking off in the gravel, would have said, in two years you're going to be leading the world championship in this exact moment, I would have said shut up ... don't joke with me."

"But, you know, it's happening. And, you know, I'm very, very, very happy, very grateful. And just got to keep pushing."

Antonelli, who is bidding to become F1's youngest-ever champion, is the first Italian to lead the standings going into his home race since Alberto Ascari in 1953.

No Italian has won at Monza since 1966. However, his chances of becoming the first Italian driver to win at Monza in 60 years have been hampered by taking a hefty grid penalty after Mercedes opted to swap his car's power unit to head off potential reliability problems in the second half of the season.

Monza is a high speed track where Mercedes' engine is likely to be strong, and overtaking is relatively easy, giving Antonelli a chance to make up places, thrilling the fans as he slices through the field.

Antonelli admits his chances of



winning are slim, but that removes the pressure from his young shoulders.

"I'd very much rather fight for pole and start at the front," he said. "But in some ways, I feel like it makes me a bit more relaxed going into the weekend. And I think also that's why I'm going to be able to enjoy more the driving and the weekend itself."

"Of course, the goal is always the same, and we're going to try to maximize the result ... but definitely I feel very free mentally going into this weekend. I'm actually very excited, very much looking forward to it, but with no real pressure."

Ferrari tribute to Schumacher Antonelli leads teammate George Russell and Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton by 59 points, with defending champion Lando Norris 24 points further back.

The race is always special for Ferrari, with the circuit packed with passionate, red-clad tifosi. And they had something to celebrate right from the off as both cars topped the first practice session on Friday.

Charles Leclerc was fastest, 0.173 seconds ahead of Hamilton, with Russell third and Liam Lawson — who is again stepping in for the injured Isack Hadjar at Red Bull — fourth. Antonelli, with his new engine, was fifth-fastest. (AP)

Title holder Barcelona gets rematch of 2025 final with Arsenal in Women's Champions League draw

NYON, (SWITZERLAND), Sept 4: Title holder Barcelona's defense of the Women's Champions League will include hosting Arsenal in a rematch of the 2025 final won by the London club after the 18-team draw was made Friday.

Barcelona faces a season of transition after two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas and other storied Spain players left in the offseason, though got a favorable slate of six opponents that starts later this month.

Also hosted in Barcelona are Paris FC and Servette, while there are trips to play at Bayern Munich, Roma and HB Køge of Denmark.

Arsenal will host eight-time champion OL Lyonnes, Benfica and Køge, and also visit Paris FC and Inter Milan.

OL Lyonnes, which was the beaten finalist in May, goes to Arsenal, Juventus and Servette, and will host Chelsea, Europa Cup winner Hacken and Inter Milan. English champion Manchester City will host Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid and Austria Vienna, while traveling to face Bayern, Hacken and Inter.

Real Madrid hosts both Paris clubs plus Inter, with away games at Bayern, Roma and Man City.

Women's Champions League format and schedule The six rounds of the league phase start Sept. 22



and are played through Dec. 16.

The top four in the 18-team standings in December will go direct to the quarterfinals starting in March. Fifth to 12th in the standings enter the knockout playoffs in February.

The final is played in Poland's national stadium in Warsaw in late May.

UEFA prize money fund tops \$21 million The 18 Champions League clubs will share a UEFA prize money fund of 18.2 million euros (\$21.2 million), with each guaranteed \$05,000 euros (\$587,000).

There is 5.6 million euros (\$6.5 million) on offer in the Women's Europa Cup, the second-tier competition which debuted last year won by Hacken. (AP)

Asiad-bound shooters to undergo final preparatory camps in Delhi and Bhopal

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Asian Games-bound Indian shooters will undergo preparatory camps at facilities in Delhi and Bhopal this month as they look to fine-tune their skills for peak performance at the quadrennial showpiece beginning September 19 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The camps have been divided between the MP State Shooting Academy in Bhopal and the Karni Singh Range in the national capital.

As per the schedule, the selected Asian Games pistol and rifle shooters will train in Bhopal from September 5 to 14.

The skeet camp commenced at the Karni Singh Range on Friday, while the camp for trap shooters will be held from September 10 to 18 at the same venue.

National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) High Performance Director Pierre Beauchamp said the focus of the camps would be on mental conditioning and technical refinement.

"At this stage, our focus shifts from volume to precision, mental conditioning, and technical refinement."

"The structure of these final camps allows our sports science and coaching teams to closely monitor each athlete's performance metrics and ensure they peak exactly when they step onto the range at the Asian Games," said Beauchamp. The shooting events at the Asian Games are scheduled to take place from September 17 to October 3 at the Aichi Prefectural General Shooting Range.

The squad:

Rifle and Pistol:

10m Air Rifle Men: Parth Rakesh Mane, Himanshu Dhillon, and Rudranksh Balasahab Patil; **10m Air Rifle**

Women: Elavenil Valarivan, Sonam Uttam Maskar, and Vidarsa K Vinod; **50m Rifle 3 Positions Men:** Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Niraj Kumar, and Rudranksh Balasahab

Patil; 50m Rifle 3 Positions Women: Ashi Chouksey, Vidarsa K Vinod, and Tilottama Sen; **10m Air Pistol Men:** Kedarling B. Uchagavne, Kamaljeet, and Aakash Bharadwaj; **10m Air Pistol Women:** Suruchi, Esha Singh, and Manu Bhaker. **25m Rapid Fire Pistol Men:** Anish; **25m Sports Pistol Women:** Esha Singh, Manu Bhaker, and Rahi Samobhat; **10m Air Rifle Mixed Team:** Parth Rakesh Mane and Elavenil Valarivan; **10m Air Pistol Mixed Team:** Kedarling B Uchagavne and Suruchi.

Shotgun: Trap Men: Kynan Chenai, Ahvaz Rizvi, and Shapath Bharadwaj; **Skeet Men:** Anantjeet Singh Naruka, Bhavtegh Singh Gill, and Mairaj Ahmad Khan; **Trap Women:** Neeru, Manisha Keer, and Aashima Ahlawat; **Skeet Women:** Parinaaz Dhalwal, Raiza Dhillon, and Maheshwari Chauhan; **Trap Mixed Team:** Kynan Chenai and Neeru; **Skeet Mixed Team:** Anantjeet Singh Naruka and Parinaaz Dhalwal. (PTI)

Vishesh wins maiden title on home course at Telangana Golconda Masters

HYDERABAD, Sept 4: Local favourite Vishesh Sharma showed steely resolve to emerge triumphant following a dramatic final round to secure his maiden professional title at the ₹ one crore Telangana Golconda Masters here on Friday.

The 19-year-old closed with a one-under 69 to finish at 21-under 259, one stroke ahead of Noida's Amardeep Malik at Hyderabad Golf Association.

Vishesh (60-66-64-69), playing his second season on the DP World PGTI, collected ₹ 15 lakh. The victory lifted him from 25th to 14th on the 2026 Order of Merit, taking his season earnings to ₹ 30,93,550, and secured his place in the DP World India Championship.

Malik (61-65-68-66) mounted a strong challenge with a closing four-under 66 but finished runner-up at 20-under 260. His eventful round contained an eagle on the par-five sixth, six birdies, two bogeys and a double bogey.

The 41-year-old earned ₹ 10 lakh and moved from 22nd to 19th on



the Order of Merit, with season earnings of ₹ 27,75,748.

Chandigarh's Akshay Sharma (69-69-63-60) matched the course record with the lowest round of the day, a 10-under 60. His round featured an eagle, 10 birdies and two bogeys, including four successive birdies from the third through the sixth. He climbed into a share of third at 19-under 261.

Delhi's Honey Baisoya (64-64-68-65) joined Akshay in third after making seven birdies and two bogeys in a 65. He earned ₹ 5,49,800 and strengthened his hold on third place in the season rankings with total earnings of ₹ 57,21,892.

Vishesh began the day with a

four-shot advantage, but his route to victory was far from straightforward. His 69 featured seven birdies, four bogeys and a double bogey as Malik reduced the margin to one.

"I'm over the moon. It still hasn't completely sunk in," Vishesh said. "To claim my first professional title at 19, and to do it at my home course, makes this victory incredibly special." The crucial response came after his double bogey on the par-four 13th. With the tournament tightening, Vishesh made consecutive birdies on the 14th and 15th to retain his lead.

The title came in Vishesh's 33rd DP World PGTI start since joining the tour last season. His previous best result was sixth place at the Boulders Classic in April.

Chandigarh's Angad Cheema (66-67-66-66) finished fifth at 15-under 265, followed by Ajeetesh Sandhu (65-69-67-65) in sixth at 14-under 266. Delhi's Rashid Khan (68-69-63-67) and Kshitij Naveed Kaul (68-66-65-68) shared seventh at 13-under 267. (PTI)

We are always one step ahead of Pakistan: Deepti

DUBAI, Sept 4: Senior all-rounder Deepti Sharma on Friday said that India have always been one step ahead of Pakistan in their recent meetings and would look to continue just like that when they face each other in the Women's Asia Cup here on Saturday.

India, who have already made it to the semifinals with one game in hand, will start as favourites against Pakistan in their final league game. The Harmanpreet Kaur-led team is currently on top of Group A with two dominating wins -- against Thailand and Hong Kong.

"Look, there is no advantage as such. The only thing is that whatever we have won against them (Pakistan), whether it is the Asia Cup or any other matches, we are always one step ahead of them. And that's it," Deepti said at the pre-match press conference.

"The whole team is performing well. If you look at the bowling unit or the batting unit, I think both things are balanced. The one who has a good day, she tries to do better and take the game further. And



those around her, they try to stay positive things so that they step in more in their game."

Asked about the Pakistan team, she said, "Look, our team is also good and their bowlers are also good. We know that. But we focus more on the strengths we have. And as I said, we want to play a

good brand of cricket. That's what we are focusing on."

"We just want to play good cricket. As a bowling unit, as a batting unit, the team should be as compact as we are playing in two games. That's the mindset," said Deepti who has taken six wickets from the two matches so far.

She refused to give out anything on the team combination, saying "That's the call of the management."

The 29-year-old Deepti had words of praise for left-arm spinner Shree Charani and leg-spinner Prema Rawat.

"Charani is a very good talent. He is number one in the rankings. She has performed very well in the last year. The way she turns the ball, unbelievable. It's not easy to play for a batter."

"It's the same with Prema. She has not played so many matches. But whenever she gets a chance to bowl, she is always one step ahead. It's like 'I have to find breakthroughs for the team'."

Charani has taken four wickets from two matches while Prema has two scalps from two games.

Deepti said as a senior player she has tried to help them as much as possible.

"I have tried to help them as much as I can in the ground and in the nets, and share my experience with them. Being a senior player, I help them as much as I can." (PTI)

A night in a box: SAI's 'container simulator' prepares Indian athletes for unusual Asian Games stay



PATIALA, Sept 4: The beds are a little over six feet long, the walls are close, and there is little room for anything beyond the essentials.

For some of India's athletes, however, spending a night inside a shipping container at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports (NSNIS) here is less about discomfort and more about preparation for an unusual living arrangement awaiting them in Japan at the Asian Games.

With the Aichi-Nagoya Games begin-

ning September 19 and no conventional athletes' village this time, Sports Authority of India (SAI) has set up makeshift container rooms at its centres in Patiala and Bengaluru to give its athletes a taste of what they can expect in Japan.

The idea is to make the unfamiliar familiar.

Athletes are taking turns to spend a night inside the container, waking up the next morning and following their usual routine before heading to training.

By the time they reach Japan, the hope is that their accommodation will no longer be a distraction.

"Two years ago, when it was established that the accommodation at the Asian Games will be in a unique style -- containers, cruise etc. -- and not a village, at that time the Sports Minister's vision was that the players must be acclimatised in a similar way, like a simulator," Deputy Director General, SAI, Vineet Kumar told a select group of journalists at NSNIS, Patiala.

"And they don't feel claustrophobic or feel what sort of accommodation we have come in. So they don't feel shocked or get a setback and they go and play the Games without any pressure," Kumar, who is also the Senior Executive Director, NSNIS, Patiala, added.

For athletes, accustomed to sprawling rooms and dedicated spaces for their equipment, the compact surroundings can take some getting used to.

But two-time Asian Games champion shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor believes the advance preparation could make a difference.

"It looks small from outside but it's quite nice on the inside. All the facilities are here. This will be the first time that we stay in such a congested set-up but having stayed here it's good we are acclimatised," Toor told PTL.

"If we had directly gone to Japan, it would have stayed in our mind for one or two days," added the six feet four inches tall two-time Asian Games gold medalist.

That is precisely what SAI and the Ministry wanted to avoid.

"The psychology of the athlete is such that if a logistical issue like this is there, it affects him. So the Minister's vision was that such a thing doesn't happen and the players can focus on their game," Kumar said.

A Ministry-SAI team visited Japan on a reconnaissance trip before the two simulation rooms in Patiala -- one for men and one for women -- were prepared based on what Indian athletes are expected to encounter.

"We have made a roster and the athletes stay here turn by turn. They have to stay the night so that in the morning they

know how to go about things," Kumar said. The exercise began on August 28 and around eight athletes have so far spent time in the container.

For Commonwealth Games bronze medalist discus thrower Seema Kaliramma, the experience took some adjustment.

"I stayed here for two nights. It was a bit difficult to adjust because throwers take a little more space and this is quite small. The second day was good, I was able to sleep properly. The life of an athlete has a lot of adjustment, then only they win something," she said.

The simulation has removed an element of uncertainty, according to her.

"Staying here will help as we won't feel claustrophobia. I am thankful to SAI for doing this. Now the fear of not knowing how the accommodation will be in Japan is gone. I feel better as we won't be thinking how it will be there and how we will feel," she said.

SAI has nevertheless tried to make the limited space as functional as possible.

The roughly 13-metre-long and three-metre-wide unit has two twin-sharing

bedroom quarters at either end, linked by a narrow central passage.

There are two split air-conditioners, a small laundry area with a washing machine and a compact kitchenette with a refrigerator and sink. The bathroom is divided into separate spaces for the wash basin, toilet and shower.

Four cabinets provide storage, while the space underneath the beds can accommodate heavy kit bags -- an important consideration for athletes travelling with bulky equipment.

"The athletes have given a positive feedback. They feel like 'yeh jungle mei mangal kaise ho gaya'," Kumar said.

There is also a sustainability element to the experiment.

The two containers were already available at the NSNIS, having been used during the COVID-19 pandemic to store equipment for weightlifting and athletics.

Their sporting purpose will end after the Asian Games simulation, but the containers themselves will remain in use. They are planned to be converted into guest houses, with two beds removed to create twin-sharing rooms. (PTI)

Sports Ministry invites applications to form NSF for Yogasana

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Sports Ministry has initiated the process of seeking applications for a new national federation for yogasana, setting September 17 as the deadline for eligible bodies after a Delhi High Court quashed the recognition granted to Yogasana Bharat.

While setting aside Yogasana Bharat's recognition, the Delhi High Court had also directed that a fresh process to grant affiliation be initiated by the Ministry.

"In compliance with the Hon'ble High Court judgment dated 09.07.2026 in WPC(C) No.2012021, the Ministry invites applications from eligible bodies for consideration for grant of recognition as the National Sports Federation (NSF) for the sport of Yogasana," stated a Ministry order.

"All eligible bodies are requested to submit the applications in the proforma annexed, along with the requisite supporting documents to the Ministry. Last date for submission of applications is 17.09.2026 (17:30 Hrs)," it added. The proforma has 30 questions, including details of office-bearers and how they obtained the positions, the status of affiliation with the corresponding international body, the list of affiliated state/UT level bodies and activities of the applicant federation in the last three years among others.

Yogasana Bharat was granted recognition as NSF by the Ministry in 2020 and it conducted the World Championship of the sport in Ahmedabad in June where more than 70 countries participated. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated the tournament with a virtual address. (PTI)

Women's Asia Cup: India favourites against arch-foes Pakistan

DUBAI, Sept 4: Having already made the semifinals, a far superior India will be expected to step up the intensity against traditional foes Pakistan in their final league game of the Women's Asia Cup here on Saturday.

Men or women, routinely scheduled Indo-Pak fixtures in multi-team events have not lived up to the off-field hype for a while now. Nothing different is expected when the two teams meet at the Dubai International Stadium with overwhelming title favourites India expected to steamroll Pakistan.

That is not to say that India don't have work to do in the shortest format, having made premature exits in the past two World Cups.

They need to develop a pool of power-hitters and fast bowlers to challenge the hegemony of Australia.

However, at the Asia level, no side comes close to India's level. The Indians had somehow finished runners-up to Sri Lanka in the previous edition. Pakistan, on the other hand, have won their opening game against Thailand and remain in contention for the last-four stage.

Ahead of the game, both India openers Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma looked at the top of their game. Mandhana broke a battery of records against Hong Kong en route a memorable hundred to fire out a warning for the other teams in the competition.

The pitches here have not been the easiest to bat on.

The batters usually take about 10 balls or so to assess the pace of the surface and accordingly plan



their innings. This is exactly what both Mandhana and Shafali did on Thursday night.

The likes of Pratika Rawal, Richa Ghosh and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur will look to spend more time in the middle, having not been able to convert starts.

Pressure is mounting on new number three Rawal, who has not been able to meet the demands of the T20 game, having found plenty of success in the ODI format.

The addition of Nandani Sharma in the pace attack is a step in the right direction as she is delivering on her promise while opening the bowling alongside spearhead Kranti Gaud.

Pakistan, on the other hand, need drastic improvement in their batting to competing with India. The shortcomings in the batting department have let the team down for a number of years.

Even in their last game against Thailand, Pakistan found themselves under pressure in the pow-

erplay with the loss of three wickets. However, they managed to defend a lowly 119 against a less-established side.

The team over-relies on opener Muneeba Ali and bowling all-rounder Fatima Sana who is also the captain of the side. That will need to change if Pakistan are to challenge their mighty rivals.

Squads: 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.

Fatima Sana (captain), Ayesha Zafar, Eman Naseer, Eymen Fatima, Gull Feroza, Momina Riasat, Muneeba Ali Siddiqui (wk), Sadaf Shamas, Nashra Sundhu, Sadia Iqbal, Saira Jabeen, Shawaal Zulfikar, Tuba Hassan, Umm-e-Hani, Waheeda Akhtar.

Match starts 8pm IST. (PTI)

BCCI hands Bengal leg-spinner Rohit Yadav 2-year ban for age fraud CAB crackdown on 62 cricketers

KOLKATA, Sept 4: The BCCI has imposed a two-year ban on Bengal leg-spinner Rohit Yadav for allegedly misrepresenting his age, weeks after he was selected in India's Under-19 squad for the upcoming series against Australia.

Rohit, who is originally from Uttar Pradesh, had represented India during the Under-19 team's tour of Sri Lanka in July, taking six wickets and helping the side win the final Test.

"He has been banned for two years," said a BCCI source.

He was also part of India's U-19 home onedayers and multi-day games against the touring Australia U-19 side in Rajkot and Ahmedabad, slated later this month.

The age discrepancy came to light when his documents were scrutinised in Sri Lanka. Rohit has three birth certificates carrying different years of birth -- 2007, 2009 and 2010 -- making him ineligible to play in age-group cricket.

There were also discrepancies in his Aadhaar records. When he was



registered with the Cricket Association of Bengal his year of birth was recorded as 2007. His Aadhaar records subsequently showed 2006 in updates in 2017 and 2020 before being changed to 2009 in 2021.

The CAB had earlier kept Rohit out of its junior teams over the discrepancies and subsequently informed the BCCI.

The Board has now barred him from participating in domestic cricket for two years and informed

all affiliated state associations.

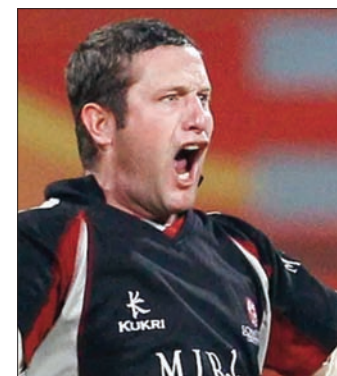
CAB crackdown on 62 cricketers Rohit is among 62 players declared ineligible for registration or transfer for any tournament during the 2026-27 and 2027-28 seasons by the CAB over documentation and age-related discrepancies.

The list also includes former India Under-19 World Cup winner Ravi Kumar and left-arm spin all-rounder Vishal Bhatti, who has made three first-class and two List A appearances. Ravi, a key member of India's 2022 Under-19 World Cup-winning team, has been flagged for a 45-month age discrepancy in CAB records.

The CAB has also identified significant discrepancies involving several other age-group players, with some records showing differences of several years.

The action is part of the association's wider scrutiny of player documentation and age records which has been uploaded on its website. (PTI)

To play against South Africa at SuperSport Park in ODI WC would be a dream ending: Roelof



NEW DELHI, Sept 4: At the ripe old age of 41, Roelof van der Merwe is seeking to end his eventful journey in international cricket at the SuperSport Park in Centurion, his home ground in South Africa before he shifted his allegiance to the Netherlands in 2015.

Defeating the men from his country of birth in next year's ODI World Cup would only add to the drama of his fairy tale ending in international cricket, Roelof visualises in his virtual interaction with PTL.

"We still have a few hurdles (for qualification) to jump over and hoops to jump through to get into the World Cup. We've got a good team and we've got a good set-up to actually achieve that."

"It would be an unbelievable tournament for me. If that is to be my last World Cup, to finish it maybe at Supersport Park. Maybe even against South Africa, that would be a dream ending," said Roelof, one of the few cricketers who have represented two teams in international cricket.

Provided they qualify, the Netherlands would back themselves to get the better of South Africa for the third time in an ICC event.

Roelof is currently in the middle of a significant campaign in the inaugural European T20 Premier League (ETPL), Europe's first multi-country franchise T20 league. He is playing for Rotterdam Dockers and doing what he does best, keeping things tight with his left-arm spin.

Having plied his trade in franchise leagues around the world including the IPL (his last season there was in 2013), it is interesting that Roelof prioritises national duty at the fag end of his career.

He is determined to push his body in his honest attempt to play the ODI World Cup and if he is able maintain fitness, why not another T20 World Cup appearance in 2028.

"Look, I won't say franchise cricket at the moment is my focus point. Obviously, I want to play another World Cup. Obviously, I've got to look after my body, I've got to look at volume I play and all that."

"I would love to play another World Cup. Obviously, the next World Cup is the 50-over World Cup in South Africa. I think that will be my next goal to finish in South Africa where it all started. It would be great, but you never know."

"If the body is good, it could be another T20 World Cup the year after, he said when asked about his short-term and long-term goals.

Roelof can bat but of late he is being used more as a bowler and he remains electric on the field as ever, aptly defined by his sensational backward running catch of David Miller in an upset win over the Proteas back in the 2022 T20 World Cup.

"I love doing fielding. I do believe it's a massive part in winning games. That's probably the one way I can measure myself, whether I should stop playing or keep playing."

"At the moment, still doing my effort with fielding and trying to impact the game that way," said the Johannesburg-born cricketer.

His economy rate in 71 T20 internationals is an impressive 6.63 and goes a shade above seven if one considers his staggering 377 games in T20 cricket overall.

He last played in the unforgiving world of IPL back in 2013 and modestly attributes his current economy rate to not playing in the world's biggest league in more than a decade. "Look, if I'm only playing in the IPL, I'm probably going to be way above 7 or maybe even 8-9. It just depends where in the world you play. All the wickets everywhere is as good."

"I'm probably seen as a defensive bowler, so I think that also helps a bit. But it all depends on conditions. There's probably better bowlers than me going at nine. Probably bowling in tougher areas of the game. Maybe I'm just lucky," he said with a wry smile. (PTI)

Sharma shoots bogey-free 64, lies second in Switzerland

CRANS MONTANA (SWITZERLAND), Sept 4: Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma opened with his best round of the season, a blemish-free six-under 64, to share the second spot at the Omega European Masters here. The 30-year-old was one shot behind China's Wu Ashun (63), who has also been struggling for consistency this season.

Ashun made seven birdies and Sharma had six and both players were bogey-free at the par-70 Severiano Ballesteros Course at Crans-sur-Sierre

Golf Club. It was Sharma's best score of the season and came ahead of next month's marquee event at home -- the USD four million DP World India Championship. Things, however, did not change much for fellow Indian Yuvraj Sandhu, who struggled to a seven-over 77 and was T-151.

Sharma, who regained his tour card for this season through the Qualifying School, is without a top 20 to his name on the DP World Tour. He is 179th on the Race to Dubai Rankings De-

livered by DP World, needing a very strong finish to his season to come close to the top 100 and retain his playing privileges for the 2027 season.

"I played really well today. Just found the groove after a long time and the weather was amazing, which really helped. I'm just tired of the rain; it's just been raining a lot the last couple of weeks, and it was nice to have some sunshine, and it was quite a smooth round," Sharma said. (PTI)

Limited time left: Carlsen urges chess to look beyond him

BENGALURU, Sept 4: Chess' undisputed king Magnus Carlsen enjoys being part of the game's evolution and experimentation with new formats, but feels that his time at the top is "limited" and said organisers should not shape the future of chess around his preferences.

The five-time world champion, who has opted out of the classical World Championship cycle, will return to action in the fourth season of the Global Chess League (GCL).

"Look, I think there are a lot of positives in the chess world these days," Carlsen, who holds the highest rating in chess history at 2882 and continues to lead the FIDE rankings as the world's No. 1 player, said during an interaction here.

Asked whether the emergence of new fans and formats over the last five to six years was now a motivating factor for him, Carlsen said; "Over the last 5-6 years, there have been a lot of new chess fans all around the world, and we're still trying to find the right formats to present the game."

"For me, it's interesting to be part of those innovations, but it's not necessarily an overarching goal," added Carlsen, who will represent Alpine APL Pipers in GCL.

The Norwegian superstar further said his motivation fluctuates from tournament to tournament, but stressed that organisers should not build their plans around him given the limited time he has left as an active player.

"I'm motivated for tournaments -- sometimes more than other times, which is plain



to see in how I approach them.

"But it kind of is what it is now. What's more important for the future of chess is that you (organisers) shouldn't necessarily try things because of what I want to do or what motivates me. There's a pretty limited time frame in terms of when I'm going to be around as well."

But the 35-year-old made it clear that he remains eager to compete and is particularly looking forward to the GCL, whose rapid format suits him.

"For now, I like to play and I'm looking forward to competing here. It's a similar time format to what I was successful in recently."

Carlsen has been a central figure in the modernisation of chess, but his own competitive priorities have increasingly shifted towards shorter formats and selected events after he chose not to defend his world title in

the classical format.

He further spoke on his mixed record in team competitions.

"Team events have been a bit up and down for me over the years, though it's been better recently. In the last couple of Olympiads, I performed decently even if team results fluctuated. Winning the European Club Cup in '23 was honestly one of the highlights of my career," he said.

The GCL features six franchises competing in a double round-robin league stage, followed by knockouts to determine the champion.

Each team fields six players simultaneously across six boards, comprising one Icon, two Superstar Men, two Superstar Women and one Prodigy player.

The league uses a rapid time control of 20 minutes per player, with a two-second incre-

ment from move 41.

A win with Black earns four game points, compared to three for a win with White, while a draw earns one point for each player.

Future perfect: Aronian

Armenian Grandmaster Levon Aronian, who will represent Ganges Grandmasters, believes the explosion in online chess has demonstrated a clear appetite for the sport, with the next challenge being to turn that interest in playing into a wider audience for watching and learning.

"Nowadays, when I board a flight or take a train, every tenth person I see is playing chess on their phone -- there is clearly a demand for our sport. The challenge is attracting people not just to play, but to watch and learn," the former Blitz world champion said.

The 43-year-old backed the continued experimentation with formats, saying the chess community must keep adapting to attract new audiences.

"We operate as a family, constantly experimenting with new formats and changes. I believe the breakthrough will happen and chess will become bigger than it is," he said.

Drawing an analogy with the music industry, he recalled his mother's career as a singer to explain that persistence and constant promotion will eventually help chess reach a new level.

"In pop music -- since my mother was a singer -- they say if you continuously work and release new material, your moment will come. It's the same for us: we just have to participate and promote our game with everything we have," he concluded. (PTI)