



Brief Post

1 arrested
City Correspondent, Guwahati, May 30: An East Guwahati Police District team from Odalbakra Out Post under Dispur Police Station arrested one Mahadev Sarkar (24) aka Kaliya of Sribhumi Nagar after he was caught with 1 stolen scooty, Legal action initiated, informed by Police Commissionerate Guwahati.

One held
City Correspondent, Guwahati, May 30: An East Guwahati Police District team from Basistha Police Station arrested one Pranab Deka (32) of Nalbari following his theft of electrical a under-construction building at Sourav Nagar near Beltola on 25th of May.

15 bundles of copper wire, 4 water taps and 1 LED light: at stolen wire recovered from him and seized. Legal action initiated, informed by Police Commissionerate Guwahati.

Mo returned
City Correspondent, Guwahati, May 30: East Guwahati Police District team from Sonapur Police Station recovered 11 lost mobile phones (Mo) for the last few days and returned them to their rightful owners - bringing back smile, informed by Police Commissionerate Guwahati.

Myanmar President arrives in Bodh Gaya on five-day India visit

New Delhi: Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing arrived in Bodh Gaya as part of his five-day visit to India, marking an important occasion in the long-standing relationship between the two neighbouring countries that share deep historical, cultural and spiritual connections rooted in Buddhism. The visit drew considerable attention as the Myanmar President began his engagements in one of the most revered Buddhist pilgrimage destinations in the world. Upon reaching Bodh Gaya, President U Min Aung Hlaing offered prayers at the world-renowned Mahabodhi Temple, a sacred site that holds immense significance for Buddhists across nations.

The President also visited the historic Sujata Temple, another important religious and cultural landmark associated with the life of Lord Buddha. The temple commemorates the place where Sujata is believed to have offered food to Siddhartha Gautama before he attained enlightenment, making it a site of profound reverence for Buddhist devotees and scholars alike. During his stay in Bodh Gaya, President U Min Aung Hlaing is also scheduled to visit various Myanmar Buddhist monasteries located in the town, further underlining the close religious and cultural links that have developed over centuries between Myanmar and India through shared Buddhist

the globe as the place where Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. The visit to the temple reflected the enduring spiritual bonds that connect the people of India and Myanmar and highlighted the central role of Buddhist heritage in fostering mutual understanding and goodwill between the two

Assam celebrated the country, Lok Bhavan



Lok Bhavan Assam celebrates Goa Statehood Day

Guwahati, May 30: In keeping with the spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and the Government of India's initiative to commemorate the Statehood Days of various States and Union Territories across the



Assam celebrated the country, Lok Bhavan

Nagaon DC Warns Officials: "Responsibility Does Not End with Completion of Water Supply Schemes"

Staff Reporter, Nagaon, May 30: Stressing the importance of ensuring the effective implementation of public welfare schemes, Nagaon District Commissioner Devashish Sharma on Friday stated that the responsibility of government officials does not end with the completion of a water supply project; rather, they must ensure that people receive the intended benefits without interruption.



Chairing a meeting of the District

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1st meeting of District Task Force for National Immunization Day-2026 successfully completed in Jorhat district

A special polio vaccination drive will be conducted from June 28 to June 30

Jorhat, May 30: In accordance with the directives of the Central Government, the first meeting of the District Task Force for the National Immunization Day-2026, to be held on June 28 across the



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2 teenagers missing from Mohkhuli in Nagaon

Rashidul Hoque, Rupahihat, May 30: The disappearance of two 16-year-old teenagers from Mohkhuli, who fall under



the jurisdiction of the Nagaon Itachali police outpost, for the past two days has created intense concern across the region. The teenagers, Ishrad Alam and Humayun from Mohkhuli, had left their home last Friday,

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Cachar Administration steps up tobacco control enforcement on World No Tobacco Day

Silchar, May 31: Marking World District Tobacco Control Cell (DTCC) under the District Health Society, Cachar, conducted a special enforcement drive across Silchar in collaboration with the District Administration, Cachar Police and Silchar Municipal Corporation to strengthen compli-



No Tobacco Day, on Saturday the

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NFR Achieves First-Ever Maize Loading from Tufanganj to Rudrapur City

Maligaon, May 30: Northeast Frontier Railway has achieved another milestone in freight transportation with the successful commencement of first-ever maize loading from Tufanganj station under Alipurduar Division in West Bengal to Rudrapur City station in Uttarakhand.



On 27th May, 2026, a total of 1310.4 tonnes of maize were loaded from Tufanganj station for transportation

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5 Suspected Dacoits Apprehended

Staff Reporter, Nagaon, May 30: In a major preventive operation, Nagaon Police apprehended five suspected criminals and seized a cache of burglary and dacoity-related tools during a naka checking drive conducted at Borghat Bypass on Friday.

Acting on a specific intelligence input, a police team led by senior officers conducted a special naka checking operation in front of Bypass Dhaba at Nagaon Borghat Bypass. During the operation, a white Maruti Alto bearing registration number AS-02-AF-4458 was intercepted while proceeding towards Nagaon town.

The vehicle was thoroughly searched in

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IIT Guwahati Hosts Commemorative Event on First Anniversary of Operation SINDOOR

Rajib Borgohain, Guwahati, May 30: Marking the first anniversary event featured a special lecture delivered by Brigadier G.S.



of Operation SINDOOR, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati in association with the 21 Mountain Artillery Brigade, conducted a commemorative event today, 29th May 2026, at its campus. Organised by the Institute's Diversity and Equality Cell, the

Grewal, Sena Medal (SC), Commander of the 21 Mountain Artillery Brigade.

The lecture highlighted critical themes such as decision-making under challenging circumstances, adapting to adversity, and the

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BJP's Development Agenda Wins Hearts in Assam: CM

Guwahati: NDA has pledged continued development for Assam constituencies, highlighting its commitment to transforming the region through comprehensive infrastructure upgrades, improved healthcare, and education. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma emphasized the NDA's unwavering dedication to creating jobs, fostering economic growth, and ensuring security, urging voters to support the alliance's progress-focused agenda. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma intensified his campaign efforts for BJP candidates in Samaguri and Bihali Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LACs), ahead of the upcoming bye-elections, appealing to the people's support to secure a strong showing for the party. Addressing a rally in Samaguri, Sarma strongly criticized the Congress party, accusing its leadership of exploiting the region for personal political gains and asserting that the BJP, under his leadership, is dedicated to serving the people of the constituency with integrity and a focus on development. Sarma, who has held the Chief Minister's office since May 2021, highlighted the contrast between his party's approach to governance and the alleged history of Congress leadership in the region, emphasizing that under the BJP's rule, Assam has witnessed a new era of development and good governance. He reassured the gathering that the BJP's agenda is centered on tangible progress, rather than self-interest, and urged the people of Samaguri and Bihali to vote for BJP candidates, promising a brighter future for the constituencies. Reflecting on his own political journey, Sarma reminded the audience of his transition from being a long-time member of the Indian National Congress to joining the BJP and subsequently leading the party to victory in Assam. A seasoned and influential figure in Assamese politics, Sarma has effectively connected with the public by championing development and good governance, while also serving as the convenor of the North-East Democratic Alliance (NEDA). The rally underscored several core themes of the BJP's campaign, which Sarma elaborated on for the crowd. He stressed that Congress leaders have historically exploited the people of Samaguri for their own political benefit, pledging that the BJP would serve the constituency's needs with sincerity and dedication. Sarma went on to highlight the BJP's recent achievements in Assam, including the launch of Mission Basundhara in 2021, which aims to address land-related issues for residents. This initiative, according to Sarma, has resonated with many people, especially those from marginalized sections, and stands as an example of the BJP's commitment to resolving long-neglected community concerns. The Chief Minister urged the people of both Samaguri and Bihali LACs to support BJP candidates in the upcoming elections, expressing confidence that the party's focus on development and good governance would bring about positive change for these constituencies. In addition to his election-centered messaging, Sarma's rally also reflected his broader governance priorities and accomplishments. Since assuming office, Sarma has introduced a series of significant initiatives aimed at land reforms, anti-encroachment drives, and educational reforms, such as the conversion of state-funded madrasas into regular schools. These initiatives are part of his administration's larger vision to transform Assam by addressing both the educational and social needs of the people. Sarma also highlighted his firm stance on security issues, particularly counter-terrorism efforts and extrajudicial measures, which have garnered both praise and controversy. His headline approach to maintaining law and order has drawn mixed reactions, with some praising him for restoring peace in volatile regions, while others have criticized his methods as heavy-handed. Nonetheless, Sarma's influence within the state remains strong, and his campaign in Samaguri and Bihali represents a critical moment for the BJP, as the party seeks to solidify its

control across Assam. The upcoming bye-elections are seen as a significant test of the BJP's support in the region, and Sarma's outreach to voters emphasizes his vision for an Assam governed by the BJP's principles of progress, security, and welfare. His speech concluded with a call to action, urging voters to turn out in large numbers and choose the BJP candidates, positioning the party as the only viable option for those who want a government focused on the welfare and prosperity of Assam. The Chief Minister's dynamic campaign is expected to play a key role in consolidating BJP's influence in the region, as the party strives to fulfill its promises of development and growth for the people of Assam. As the bye-elections draw nearer, the people of Samaguri and Bihali will decide whether Sarma's vision for the state and his promises of progress will resonate with their aspirations. Sarma's leadership has been marked by both achievements and controversies, and it is clear that his influence will remain pivotal in shaping the political landscape of Assam in the years to come. The outcome of the upcoming bye-elections will not only be crucial for BJP's hold in Samaguri and Bihali but will also serve as a barometer for the party's future prospects in Assam, where Sarma's role as Chief Minister and his leadership within the BJP will continue to play a defining part in the region's development. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has ramped up his campaign for the upcoming bye-elections in Samaguri and Bihali Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LACs), urging the people to vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates to ensure continued development and governance centered around the welfare of the region. At a rally held in Samaguri, Sarma took the opportunity to sharply criticize the Congress party, accusing it and its leadership of exploiting the people of the region for their personal and political gain. He painted a stark contrast between the BJP's approach to governance and that of Congress, asserting that under the leadership of the BJP, Assam has entered a new phase of development, growth, and governance that places the needs of the people at the forefront. Sarma's message was clear: the BJP's commitment to progress is unwavering, and they are dedicated to serving the people with honesty and integrity, focusing on tangible results, rather than the political games played by previous administrations. During his address, Sarma reminded the crowd of his long political journey, from being a prominent member of the Indian National Congress to eventually joining the BJP. His transition to the BJP marked a significant turning point in Assam's political landscape, as it led to the formation of a stable government in the state, characterized by focused leadership and a commitment to solving long-standing issues. Sarma, who has established himself as a key figure in Assamese politics, emphasized that his political evolution was driven by his desire to bring about real change, which he believes can only be achieved through a party like the BJP that truly understands the needs of the people. His position as the convenor of the North-East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) further underscores his importance in regional politics and his deep connection with the aspirations of the people of Assam and the larger Northeast. Sarma's rally in Samaguri also focused heavily on BJP's achievements and the numerous welfare programs that the party has implemented during his tenure as Chief Minister. One of the key initiatives highlighted by Sarma was Mission Basundhara, a scheme launched in 2021 with the objective of addressing land-related issues for residents across the state. This program has proven particularly impactful in Samaguri and other constituencies, as it seeks to streamline land documentation and resolve disputes that have long hindered the region's progress. Sarma emphasized that this initiative is just one of many that demonstrate BJP's com-

mitment to addressing the problems that have been neglected by previous governments. The Mission Basundhara program, according to Sarma, has resonated deeply with the people, as it has provided them with a sense of empowerment and ownership over their land, which has been a long-standing issue in rural areas. Sarma's speech also underscored the broader goals of the BJP in terms of infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and security. He pointed to his government's efforts to strengthen Assam's infrastructure through road construction and bridge repairs, which are aimed at improving connectivity and providing better access to essential services. These projects are expected to boost economic activity and facilitate trade and commerce within Assam and beyond, ultimately leading to a more prosperous state. Sarma also mentioned the educational reforms under his leadership, including the conversion of state-funded madrasas into regular schools, a move that aims to modernize education in the state and provide better opportunities for the youth. The healthcare sector also received significant attention during Sarma's address, as he discussed the expansion of medical services, particularly in rural areas. He cited the development of new medical facilities and the recruitment of more healthcare professionals as part of the government's plan to improve access to quality healthcare for all residents. Sarma also emphasized his commitment to security and law and order in Assam, where he has taken strong measures against insurgent groups and organized crime. His tough stance on terrorism and security-related issues has garnered both support and criticism, with some praising him for restoring stability to the region, while others argue that his methods can be too aggressive. The Chief Minister's remarks during the rally in Samaguri resonated deeply with the crowd, particularly his call for voters in both Samaguri and Bihali to back the BJP candidates in the bye-elections. Sarma expressed his confidence that the party's developmental agenda and governance model would result in substantial improvements for these constituencies, urging the electorate to make their voices heard by voting for BJP. He concluded his speech by calling on the people to recognize the importance of these bye-elections, which will play a crucial role in determining the future direction of Assam and solidifying the BJP's presence in the state. Sarma's campaign in Samaguri and Bihali marks a critical moment in the BJP's political journey in Assam, as the party seeks to expand its influence and deepen its roots across the region. The bye-elections in these constituencies are being closely watched as a litmus test for the BJP's support base in Assam, and Sarma's leadership will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping the outcomes. His government's initiatives have sparked both praise and controversy, and as the elections approach, the Chief Minister's outreach to voters will continue to be a key factor in BJP's strategy to secure victories in these constituencies. As Sarma looks to the future, he remains focused on his vision of an Assam that thrives under the principles of development, governance, and welfare. His leadership has been characterized by a mix of bold initiatives and firm policies, and while not everyone agrees with his approach, it is clear that Sarma's influence remains strong. The outcome of the Samaguri and Bihali bye-elections will have a lasting impact on the state's political landscape, as it will determine whether the electorate believes in the BJP's promise of growth and prosperity, or whether the opposition's claims of exploitation and neglect will resonate more strongly with the voters. The coming weeks will be crucial for Sarma and the BJP as they continue to fight for the people's mandate and work toward building a better Assam.

Coffees of Nagaland

New Delhi: Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region and Communications Jyotiraditya M. Scindia launched the cluster-based "Coffee Value Chain Development Mission" for Nagaland, marking a major step towards transforming the state into a premium specialty coffee hub with strong domestic and global market linkages. The launch ceremony witnessed the presence of Minister of State for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region Sukanta Majumdar, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, Deputy Chief Minister T. R. Zeliang, Advisor for Land Resources G. Ikuto Zhimomi, and Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region Secretary Sanjay Jaju along with senior officials, coffee growers, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders associated with the coffee sector. Conceived with an outlay of Rs 175 crore, the "Coffees of Nagaland" Mission has been designed through a comprehensive whole-of-government approach aimed at strengthening every aspect of the coffee ecosystem in the state while ensuring that the aspirations and realities of coffee-growing communities remain central to the implementation strategy. The initiative adopts a cluster-based development model under which two pilot coffee clusters have initially been identified, namely Tuophema village in Kohima district for Arabica coffee cultivation and Ghotovi village in Newland district for Robusta coffee production. The mission seeks to address critical gaps in the coffee value chain through an integrated strategy covering plantation development, scientific cultivation, post-harvest processing, branding, marketing, traceability, exports, tourism promotion, infrastructure support, and capacity building for farmers and entrepreneurs. Addressing the gathering, Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia emphasized that the initiative reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making farmers genuine stakeholders across the entire agricultural value chain and ensuring that rural producers receive the benefits of value addition and market integration. He stated that the mission goes beyond a traditional administrative framework and represents a "whole of India" approach by bringing together governments, ministries, coffee producers, entrepreneurs, processors, branding experts, exporters, and market leaders on a single platform to collectively build a globally competitive coffee economy in Nagaland. He further explained that the mission has been conceptualized as a full-value-chain development initiative that will transform Nagaland from a raw coffee-producing region into a recognized premium and traceable single-origin coffee destination capable of competing in both national and international specialty coffee markets. Stressing the importance of branding and market identity, the Minister said the mission would promote "Nagaland Coffee" under the broader "Brand North East" initiative, thereby creating a distinctive identity for the state's coffee in global markets. He added that the government would support the initiative through extensive media campaigns, participation in national and international trade fairs, and promotional activities aimed at increasing awareness and market visibility for Nagaland's coffee products. The Minister also highlighted the tourism potential linked to the initiative, noting that the mission intends to develop coffee plantation stays and "farm-to-cup" tourism experiences in the pilot clusters to establish Nagaland as a unique specialty coffee tourism destination.

Assam's Skill Development Program Gets Major Boost

Guwahati: In a remarkable achievement for Assam's youth, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma proudly announced that 47 candidates from Assam's ITI Tinsukia have been selected by Maruti Suzuki Motors in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, for apprenticeship and Fixed Term Contract (FTC) roles out of a pool of 59 candidates who underwent rigorous screening, marking a significant milestone for skill development in the region. Sarma, extending congratulations to the young achievers and their mentors, emphasized that this success reflected not only the students' dedication but also the high standard of training offered by ITI Tinsukia, underscoring the quality of Assam's vocational training institutions. The Chief Minister highlighted how this achievement aligns with the state's broader vision of empowering its youth through vocational education, pointing out that the government has been keen to develop a skilled workforce capable of competing in domestic and international job markets. Under the leadership of Sarma, the Assam government has made significant strides in enhancing vocational training, with a multi-layered approach that includes strengthening Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), establishing Centers of Excellence, and developing the Assam Skill University, all aimed at preparing young people for the modern job market. As part of this strategic initiative, the government is making substantial investments in upgrading training facilities, providing industry-standard equipment, and aligning curriculum with the needs of emerging sectors, thereby ensuring that Assam's youth are equipped with the technical expertise required in high-demand industries like automotive engineering, healthcare, and information technology. The success of the ITI Tinsukia candidates is an important testament to this forward-thinking strategy and showcases how investments in education and training are beginning to bear fruit in the form of tangible job opportunities, such as the collaboration with Maruti Suzuki. Maruti Suzuki's selection of Assam's ITI candidates for its roles highlights the growing recognition of the state's ITIs, which have been modernized with cutting-edge tools and machinery to provide hands-on experience, ensuring that graduates are job-ready and prepared to meet industry demands. Sarma emphasized that these developments are part of Assam's long-term strategy to create sustainable employment opportunities for its youth, reduce outmigration, and contribute to local and regional economic growth. With the establishment of institutions like the Assam Skill University, which will provide advanced technical education in fields critical to Assam's future growth, the state is positioning itself as a hub for skill development and youth empowerment. The university is expected to become a leading center for vocational education in the region, offering courses designed to meet the needs of industries and enhance the employability of Assam's workforce. This is further complemented by the creation of Centers of Excellence, which are aimed at promoting specialized skills that will not only benefit the local economy but also help build a strong and self-sufficient workforce capable of driving innovation and economic progress. The selection of 47 students from ITI Tinsukia by Maruti Suzuki, one of India's largest and most successful automotive manufacturers, demonstrates the success of these initiatives, as it provides young professionals with the opportunity to work with a globally rec-

ognized company, setting a benchmark for the potential of skill-based training in Assam. These candidates, many of whom come from rural backgrounds, have now been offered a platform to display the power of vocational education, and their success serves as an inspiration for other young people in the state. The ITI Tinsukia students' achievement in securing positions with Maruti Suzuki also underscores the alignment between Assam's skill development initiatives and the needs of the corporate world, which is increasingly looking for candidates with specialized skills that can directly contribute to their business growth. The state government's focus on strengthening the link between education and industry has created a pipeline of skilled workers who are ready to meet the demands of leading companies in sectors ranging from automotive engineering to information technology, thereby increasing employment prospects and bolstering the local economy. The selected candidates from ITI Tinsukia expressed their excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to work with Maruti Suzuki, noting that it would provide them with invaluable experience and help them build a career in the automotive industry. For many of these young professionals, the opportunity to work with such a prestigious company marks a major milestone in their careers, and they are eager to bring back their newfound skills to their communities, further enriching the local development ecosystem. This achievement is a clear reflection of the Assam government's commitment to curbing unemployment, reducing outmigration, and ensuring that young people from all corners of the state have access to quality education and job opportunities. By focusing on skill development and ensuring that training programs are aligned with the needs of the industry, Assam is creating a future where its youth are equipped with the skills necessary to secure stable, well-paying jobs that will help them lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the state's economic progress. Chief Minister Sarma, in his address, reiterated his government's ongoing efforts to foster a skilled and resilient youth workforce, stating that the success of the ITI Tinsukia students was a direct result of the government's multi-layer strategy to enhance vocational training across Assam. He expressed confidence that this initiative would continue to pave the way for more such success stories in the future, creating a steady stream of skilled professionals who can drive the state's economic growth. As part of his vision, Sarma assured that the government would continue to invest in improving the state's educational infrastructure, modernizing training facilities, and creating job opportunities for young people. With a focus on reducing unemployment, curbing outmigration, and developing a self-reliant workforce, the Assam government's approach to skill development is positioning the state as a leader in shaping India's skilled labor force. This milestone, which saw 47 candidates from ITI Tinsukia secure positions with Maruti Suzuki, is just one example of the transformative power of vocational education and training, and it signals a bright future for Assam's youth. By aligning educational institutions with industry needs, providing cutting-edge training, and creating strategic partnerships with leading companies, the state is helping its young people thrive and succeed in a rapidly changing global economy. The government's efforts to empower youth through education and skill development are laying the

foundation for a prosperous future for Assam, where its young professionals can play an instrumental role in driving economic growth and development across the region. The success of the ITI Tinsukia students is just the beginning, and as more young people from Assam take part in these skill development programs, the state is set to become a beacon of progress, innovation, and self-reliance. Through strategic investments in education and training, the Assam government is steadily creating an environment where youth are equipped with the tools, resources, and opportunities needed to build successful careers and contribute to the state's growth, making the vision of a skilled and resilient workforce a reality. This accomplishment highlights the effectiveness of Assam's skill-development vision, which emphasizes both technical proficiency and practical job-readiness, fostering an environment where young people can pursue stable careers and economic security. The selected candidates from ITI Tinsukia expressed excitement about joining Maruti Suzuki, grateful for the opportunity to work in one of the country's leading companies, and many, hailing from rural backgrounds, now have an inspiring platform to demonstrate the power of vocational education. This milestone also signals a bright future for Assam's skill development initiatives, as the state's increasing alignment with industry needs presents a pathway for young professionals to thrive and even bring these learned skills back to their communities, enhancing local development. The support for skilled professionals from the Assam government further underscores its commitment to curbing unemployment, reducing outmigration, and creating a self-reliant workforce, ultimately setting a strong example of regional economic advancement. Through investments in education and strategic partnerships, the Assam government's vision of a skilled and resilient youth workforce is steadily becoming a reality, and the success of the ITI Tinsukia candidates is a promising indication of the state's growing role in shaping India's skilled labor force. As more young people from Assam are equipped with the skills demanded by the modern job market, the state is building a robust workforce ready to tackle the challenges of the 21st century. By providing vocational education and creating direct links between institutions and industries, the Assam government is not only ensuring that its youth have access to job opportunities but is also promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance, where young professionals can innovate and drive change within their communities and beyond. The Maruti Suzuki selection marks a watershed moment in the state's skill development efforts, setting a precedent for future initiatives that will allow Assam to continue making strides toward becoming a hub for skilled labor and talent, benefiting both the local and national economies. Furthermore, these efforts reflect the government's broader goal of reducing unemployment and outmigration, as well as fostering an environment where young professionals can achieve upward mobility, contributing to both personal and community-wide prosperity. With continued support for skill-based education, the Assam government is ensuring that its young people are not only job-ready but also equipped to shape the future of their state and nation, making significant strides toward an economically secure and self-reliant Assam.

Assam emerges as a high-growth market for PBPartners

Guwahati: PBPartners, Policybazaar's PoSP arm, hosted a press meet in Guwahati to showcase its strong growth trajectory and expanding foot-

engagement in the region. The company currently operates across 562 of Assam's 598 pin-codes through a network of over 1,500 Health & Life Insurance partners, and over 4.5 lakh insurance partners nationwide. PBPartners aims to significantly expand its reach by growing its partner network to 4,000 by FY2026-27. Within the state, Bongaigaon has emerged as a key growth centre and top-performing market in terms of partner activity and business generation. Strengthening market presence through partner empowerment: "The growth we are witnessing in Assam reflects the increasing awareness around financial protection and the entrepreneurial opportunities emerging within insurance distribution. Our focus remains on empowering partners with the right technology, support, training, and earning opportunity - enabling them to drive insurance access for all and help families get insured," said Neeraj Adhana, National Sales Head - Life & Health, PBPartners. Customers in Assam are becoming increasingly aware and informed about the importance of health insurance and evolving protection needs. The market is witnessing a rising demand for Super Top-up plans and riders such as OPD, Critical Illness, and Day 1 PED benefits, reflecting a growing preference for comprehensive health coverage and enhanced financial protection. Empowering partners through enhanced support, rewards, and earning opportunities: PBPartners continues to strengthen its part-

ner ecosystem through a range of initiatives designed to enhance earnings, simplify operations, and reward performance. 100% Renewal Commission Guarantee: PBPartners offers partners a 100% Renewal Commission Guarantee, ensuring they continue to receive renewal commissions whenever their customers renew their health insurance policies through any channel. The initiative is aimed at providing sustained earning opportunities and reinforcing partner confidence through long-term customer relationships. Enhanced Health Claims Support: PBPartners has strengthened its claims assistance framework with dedicated support systems for both customers and partners. The enhanced mechanism enables smoother claim processing and faster turnaround times, improving the overall claims experience. PBP One Clubs: Under its flagship loyalty programme, PBP One, PBPartners has introduced new Clubs to recognize and reward top-performing Health & Life Insurance partners. The programme offers exclusive recognition and rewards, domestic and international travel benefits, and premium destination experiences, including Dubai, Armenia, Paris, and more. PBP Mitra: PBPartners has launched PBP Mitra, a dedicated toll-free helpline (1800 120 800) designed to provide faster query resolution and seamless assistance through a single-window support mechanism. The platform enables partners to access timely support for service-related concerns. Quarterly Partner Contests: PBPartners continues to engage and reward partners through quarterly contests, offering opportunities to win domestic and international travel experiences along with other exclusive rewards. These initiatives are aimed at driving engagement, recognizing performance, and encouraging business growth across the partner network. These efforts reflect the company's commitment to enabling partners to grow their businesses while delivering seamless insurance experiences to customers across the region.

ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India secures first-ever SIP approval under PM-SETU

Guwahati: In a landmark development under the Pradhan Mantri Skill and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU) scheme, the National Steering Committee (NSC) has approved the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the Visakhapatnam ITI Cluster in Andhra Pradesh, submitted by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India). The approval marks the first-ever Strategic Investment Plan to be cleared under PM-SETU and makes Andhra Pradesh the first State to operationalize an industry partnership under the scheme. The approval was accorded during the 3rd National Steering Committee Meeting convened by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India at Kaushal Bhawan, New Delhi. The milestone represents the first concrete step towards implementing PM-SETU's vision of transforming Government ITIs into industry-managed, outcome-oriented institutions through deep partnerships between State Governments and leading industry players. The meeting was chaired by Smt. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and attended by Shri Dilip Kumar, Director General, Directorate General of Training (DGT), along with members of the National Steering Committee. Senior representatives from the Capacity Building Commission (CBC), National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries, Ministry of Labour and Employment, participating State Governments, industry leaders including Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Hero MotoCorp, Bajaj Auto, ITC Limited and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) India, as well as development partners such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank participated in the deliberations. A key outcome of the meeting was the approval of the Strategic Investment Plan for the Visakhapatnam ITI Cluster in Andhra Pradesh, submitted by ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India. With this approval, Andhra Pradesh becomes the first State under PM-SETU to onboard an Anchor Industry Partner (AIP), marking a major milestone in the operationalization of the industry-led Hub-and-Spoke model envisioned

under the scheme. The approval of the Visakhapatnam Cluster represents a significant step towards transforming Industrial Training Institutes into industry-managed, outcome-oriented institutions capable of responding to evolving workforce requirements. The successful approval of the proposal is expected to serve as a model for other States seeking to strengthen industry participation in vocational education and training and accelerate the implementation of PM-SETU interventions across the country.



The National Steering Committee reviewed the overall progress of PM-SETU implementation across participating States and deliberated on policy and implementation measures aimed at strengthening industry participation, improving institutional governance, enhancing the financial sustainability of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs), and accelerating the operationalization of projects under the scheme. The discussions focused on advancing industry-led governance mechanisms, promoting outcome-based skilling, and strengthening partnerships between industry, State Governments and training institutions to ensure that India's vocational education and training ecosystem remains responsive to emerging sectoral demands and future workforce requirements. PM-SETU, a flagship initiative of the Government of India with an outlay of Rs.60,000 crore, aims to transform 1,000 Government ITIs through an industry-led Hub-and-Spoke model. The scheme seeks

to modernise infrastructure, strengthen industry engagement, improve employability outcomes, and establish National Centres of Excellence (NCoEs) in high-growth sectors, building through stronger government-industry partnerships — a future-ready workforce equipped for advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies. With 32 States and Union Territories having constituted their State Steering Committees and 12 States/UTs having floated their Requests for Proposals for

inviting industry participation in the selection of Anchor Industry Partners — several of which are approaching closure within the coming weeks — PM-SETU stands at the threshold of a full-fledged, industry-led implementation phase. A robust pipeline of State-industry consultations, with multiple rounds concluded and several more scheduled in the weeks ahead, reflects deepening convergence between industry interest and State preparedness. Central and State Governments are working in close coordination to ensure that the momentum generated through preparatory milestones translates swiftly into on-ground project execution, with industry partnerships poised to drive ITI transformation at scale across the country. In the coming months, further Strategic Investment Plans are expected to receive National Steering Committee approval, paving the way for a transformed vocational education and training ecosystem for Viksit Bharat 2047.

MG launches MAJESTOR D+ SUV in India starting at Rs 40.99 lakh

Guwahati: JSW MG Motor India has launched the much-anticipated MG MAJESTOR, calling it India's first D+ SUV, with prices starting at Rs 40.99 lakh (ex-showroom) for the 4x2 automatic top trim. The 4x4 automatic top trim has been priced at Rs 44.99 lakh (ex-showroom). The MG MAJESTOR will be available in both six- and seven-seater configurations for the 4x2 variant, while the 4x4 version will be offered only as a seven-seater. The SUV is powered by a twin-turbo diesel engine delivering 215.5 PS power and 478.5 Nm torque, paired with an 8-speed automatic transmission. MG said the SUV comes with advanced off-road capabilities, including a 4WD system with 10 off-road modes, Crawl Control Mode, and first-in-segment triple differential locks. The vehicle also offers 219 mm ground clearance

and an 810 mm water-wading capability. The company highlighted the MAJESTOR's dimensions, claiming it is the longest, widest and tallest in its segment with a 2950 mm wheelbase. Key features include Level 2 ADAS, panoramic sunroof, ventilated and massaging front seats, dual 12.3-inch displays, 12 JBL speakers, three-zone climate control, dual wireless chargers and more than 75 connected car features. Commenting on the launch, Managing Director Anurag Mehrotra said the MAJESTOR combines premium comfort, advanced technology and superior off-road capability. MG is also offering an assured buyback program with up to 70 per cent value along with warranty and roadside assistance benefits under its MG Shield ownership package.

Organic India highlights herbal digestive wellness solutions on World Digestive Health Day

Guwahati: Organic India has marked World Digestive Health Day by highlighting its range of certified organic herbal products designed to support digestive wellness and overall gut health. The company said its products are sourced directly from more than 2,000 organic farmers and undergo over 600 quality checks. According to Organic India, all herbs are grown in chemical- and pesticide-free soil and formulated using whole herbs to preserve the complete spectrum of natural plant actives and nutrients. Among the products promoted for digestive health is Triphala, available in powder and capsule forms. Made from Amalaki, Bibhitaki and Haritaki, the traditional formulation is known for supporting digestion, detoxification and bowel regularity, while also helping relieve constipation. The company also highlighted its Psyllium Whole Husk Isabgol, a natural source of

dietary fibre that helps maintain bowel regularity, supports digestive function and may assist in cholesterol management and weight control. Organic India's Sat Isabgol Pre & Probiotic Fibre Powder combines psyllium husk with prebiotic fibre and 1.5 billion CFU of Bacillus coagulans probiotics to support gut microbiome health. The sugar-free product is available in Orange and Cinnamon flavours. Another product featured is Revitalise Gut Tea, a caffeine-free blend of organic herbs including spearmint, ajwain, cumin, ginger and black pepper. The tea also contains 1 billion CFU of Bacillus coagulans per three servings and is designed to support everyday digestive comfort. The company said the initiative aims to encourage consumers to prioritise gut health through natural and organic wellness solutions.

Top skills employers prioritise in 2026 as AI redefines jobs across industries: Indeed-Nasscom Report

Bengaluru: As AI becomes central to workforce strategy, Indian employers are prioritising practical, AI-ready skills across both general industries and the technology sector, according to the Indeed-Nasscom report, India's AI Talent Inflection Point: From Skill Gaps to Competitive Advantage. The report finds that 86% of employers have seen AI impact job roles and responsibilities, while 35% report significant redefinition or transformation. Nearly all organisations expect their 2026 workforce strategy to centre around AI-related or AI-supported roles, with 40% expecting a major rejig. Sashi Kumar, Managing Director, Indeed India, said, "AI is no longer limited to specialist technology roles. It is changing how work is designed across industries, and employers are responding by hiring for demonstrable skills, certifications and practical capability. The data shows that India's opportunity lies not only in building AI talent, but in making AI readiness broader, more accessible and more aligned to real workplace needs. For job seekers, the message is clear: continuous learning, hands-on experience and the ability to work with AI will matter more in 2026." Ketaki Karnik, Head Nasscom Research and Insights, said, "The findings of the Indeed-Nasscom report affirm the inflection point India's talent ecosystem is currently experiencing. As AI profoundly reshapes roles across industries, our collective focus must be on accelerating skilling initiatives to build a future-ready workforce and cement India's position as a global technology leader. Prioritizing demonstrable AI-ready skills is crucial for converting skill gaps into a competitive advantage." The latest hiring trends indicate that employers

across industries are increasingly seeking skills that support AI adoption, implementation and business integration, with the most in-demand capabilities being cloud and infrastructure integration, Generative AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) including prompt engineering, MLOps and deployment, and data analytics and visualisation. The report highlights that 63 per cent of employers have recorded a year-on-year increase in hiring for AI-related roles, led by the BFSI and telecommunications sectors. The most sought-after AI role categories include AI engineering and development, AI operations and enablement, and infrastructure and data systems. Within the technology sector, demand is rising for AI-integrated roles requiring expertise in AI, Python, machine learning, Azure and TensorFlow, while software engineering positions continue to prioritise Agile methodologies, communication skills, APIs and Git. Certifications are also emerging as key hiring signals, with 40 per cent of employers preferring demonstrable AI skills or certifications over degrees and another 32 per cent giving equal weight to skills, certifications and academic qualifications. The most valued certifications include AWS, Azure, Salesforce, Certified Scrum Master, CISSP, ITIL, Java and ISTQB certifications, as well as PMP. Meanwhile, internships are becoming an increasingly important talent pipeline, with India witnessing a 103 per cent increase in internship postings over the past three years. Employers are particularly looking for interns with communication skills, English proficiency, keyword research, analytical skills, SEO expertise, Microsoft Excel, Python programming, Microsoft Office proficiency, HTML and JavaScript skills.

Amazon Fashion makes style discovery smarter with AI during 'Wardrobe Refresh Sale' from May 28-June 2

Bengaluru: Amazon Fashion today announced the 18th edition of its much-awaited Wardrobe Refresh Sale (WRS), running from May 28 to June 2, bringing customers exciting savings across fashion and lifestyle essentials. Customers can explore over 4 lakh styles from more than 1500 top brands and avail 50-80% off across apparel, beauty, footwear, watches, luggage, handbags, accessories and more. This edition of the Wardrobe Refresh Sale brings together trend-led styles, everyday essentials and premium fashion picks with 50-80% off on top brands including Wrogn, Libas, Gerber, Crocs, Maybelline, Puma, American Tourister, Palmonas and Philips. The shopping event also reflects evolving customer preferences towards discovery-led and inspiration-first shopping, particularly among Gen Z customers who continue to drive strong momentum and increasingly seek trend-forward styles at great value. This July, Amazon Prime Day is back in India for its tenth edition and Prime members can look forward to great deals, bigger savings, exciting new launches and more.

Refresh your style effortlessly with AI-powered discovery: To make fashion discovery more intuitive this summer, Amazon Fashion offers AI-powered discovery tools that help customers explore trends, discover styles and build

complete looks effortlessly. With Rufus, Amazon's AI shopping assistant, customers can receive curated picks and personalized recommendations across fashion categories through simple conversational queries like "summer sneakers under INR 2000," "vacation-ready co-ord sets," or "minimal jewelry for everyday wear." Rufus continues to get smarter, faster and more capable by tracking price history. It provides 30- to 90-day price history tracker, allowing customers to see if the price is at its lowest and helping them make smarter shopping decisions with just a click on "Price history" option on the product detail page. You can also ask Rufus to "Set a price alert for when these sneakers are under INR 7000", "Buy this dress when it's 50% off," or "Purchase this t-shirt when it's INR 600 or less." Rufus will regularly check prices and alert you or complete your purchase using your default payment method when the item reaches your price target. Beyond voice-guided discovery, Amazon Lens AI adds a visual layer to the experience: customers can upload or click a photo of an outfit or fashion item and instantly discover similar styles available on Amazon, while the 'Wear It With' feature enables customers to create complete head-to-toe looks by pairing apparel with complementary footwear, bags, watches and beauty

products from top brands for a complete wardrobe refresh. The upcoming Wardrobe Refresh Sale brings a wide range of fashion, accessories and travel essentials for men and women. Among the new launches, the WROGN Cotton Slim Fit Polo T-Shirt in olive offers a blend of comfort and smart casual style at INR 1,079, while the Rare Rabbit Gallardo Cabin Size Matte Grey Hard Trolley Bag, priced at INR 5,999, combines durability, TSA-approved security and smooth mobility for modern travellers. For women, highlights include the SASSAFRAS Floral Front Tie Knot Romper at INR 646, the elegant Lukson Grace Blossom Lab Grown Diamond & Ruby Bracelet at INR 8,074, the stylish ERIDANI Amaris Strappy Heels at INR 1,799 and the spacious Lavie Mono Clair Large Hobo Bag at INR 1,649. Men can explore the WROGN Oversized Polo T-Shirt at INR 809, the classic Nike Killshot 2 Leather Tennis Shoes at INR 6,876, the feature-packed Fastrack Limitless FS2+ Smart Watch at INR 1,599 and the Vincent Chase Full Rim Pilot Sunglasses at INR 899. Travel enthusiasts can also opt for the Rare Rabbit Tony 2Pc Hard Trolley Bag Set, priced at INR 11,999, offering a durable polycarbonate build, TSA-approved locks and smooth spinner wheels for convenient and stylish travel.

Editorial



IDY 2026

In a remarkable demonstration of India's cultural strength and global leadership in holistic wellness, the city of Hyderabad witnessed an unprecedented gathering of yoga enthusiasts as more than 6,000 participants performed Bhujangasana in perfect unison during the grand Yoga Mahotsav held at the serene Kanha Shanti Vanam, marking the 50-day countdown to the International Day of Yoga 2026, in an event that not only celebrated India's ancient tradition but also set a historic benchmark by entering the Asia Book of Records for the largest gathering performing the asana simultaneously, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for yoga as a collective movement for health and unity, as the programme, organised by the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga under the Ministry of Ayush, drew participation from thousands of citizens along with dignitaries and international representatives, creating a vibrant and inspiring atmosphere that underscored the transformative power of yoga in promoting physical well-being, mental clarity, and social harmony, while addressing the gathering, Union Minister for Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy emphasised that yoga is not merely an ancient heritage of India but a priceless gift to humanity, stating that leaders, professionals, and people across the globe are increasingly embracing yoga and deriving immense benefits from its practice, highlighting its universal relevance in today's fast-paced and stress-driven world, and he further underlined the role of yoga in nation-building by asserting that for India to achieve the vision of a developed nation by 2047, it is essential to build a healthy, disciplined, and peaceful society, adding that yoga offers a practical, accessible, and cost-effective solution to modern challenges such as stress, unhealthy lifestyles, and environmental concerns, while also expressing his aspiration that Hyderabad, already recognised as a global hub for innovation and technology, should emerge as a leading centre for yoga and holistic wellness, thereby strengthening India's position as a global wellness leader, as the event also saw the presence of Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ayush and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Prataprao Jadhav, who highlighted the remarkable transformation of yoga into a global movement under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, noting that yoga has evolved into a powerful tool for promoting holistic well-being, encompassing physical health, mental balance, and emotional resilience, while reinforcing India's identity as a global hub for wellness and healthcare, and he elaborated on the significance of the newly launched Yoga 365 initiative, which encourages citizens to integrate yoga into their daily routines, stating that through this campaign, implemented in collaboration with partners such as Habu and MDNIY, the government aims to foster a culture of regular practice among people across all age groups, supported by a 100-day free yoga training programme running until June 21, with the objective of engaging over one lakh participants and offering Yog Mitra certification, thereby creating a large network of trained individuals who can further spread awareness and practice of yoga at the grassroots level, while he also announced that the next Yoga Mahotsav, marking the 25-day countdown to the International Day of Yoga 2026, will be held at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, symbolising the integration of India's rich cultural heritage, architectural brilliance, and wellness traditions, further strengthening the narrative of yoga as a bridge between tradition and modernity, as the event also featured contributions from senior officials including Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Ayush Ms. Monalisa Dash, who acknowledged the role of the Heartfulness Institute and described Kanha Shanti Vanam as a place that embodies the peace and balance that yoga seeks to cultivate, adding that the gathering was intended to inspire a nationwide movement towards health, harmony, and unity, while the presence of distinguished dignitaries such as Kamlesh D. Patel, President of Heartfulness, Member of Parliament Smt. D. K. Aruna, and Padma Shri Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary of the Ministry of Ayush, along with representatives from various yoga institutions and state administration, added further prominence to the occasion, which also showcased a range of engaging activities including a mass demonstration of the Common Yoga Protocol led by Prof. (Dr.) Kashinath Samagandi, Director of MDNIY, followed by a Heartfulness Meditation session guided by Daaji, highlighting the integration of traditional practices with modern approaches to mindfulness and well-being, while cultural elements such as Natyayoga performances and a yoga fusion presentation by a Korean team added an international and artistic dimension to the event, reflecting the universal appeal and adaptability of yoga across cultures, as the participation of dignitaries and representatives from more than 20 countries, including Kazakhstan, Lesotho, Bulgaria, Cuba, Namibia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, further underscored the growing global footprint of yoga and India's leadership in promoting it as a tool for sustainable living and global harmony, and the Yoga Mahotsav at Kanha Shanti Vanam thus emerged as a powerful symbol of collective commitment towards health and wellness, reinforcing the Government of India's vision of promoting yoga as a cornerstone of public health and a means of achieving holistic development, while also serving as a significant milestone in the nationwide build-up to the International Day of Yoga 2026, which will be observed on June 21 with widespread participation across the country and around the world, as the event successfully brought together diverse stakeholders, inspired individuals to embrace healthier lifestyles, and strengthened India's role as a global ambassador of yoga, ensuring that this ancient practice continues to thrive and contribute to the well-being of humanity in the years to come.

How Iran war could mark slow decline of petrodollar era

For the past half-century, the global energy market spoke in a single financial language: the US dollar. Few international arrangements shaped economic power so quietly yet so profoundly. The foundations of that system were laid in the turmoil of the 1973 oil crisis, when Arab producers restricted supplies during the Arab-Israeli war and energy prices surged across the industrial world. Out of that upheaval emerged a financial structure that would underpin the modern international economy. Oil would be priced largely in dollars, and the immense revenues generated from those sales would flow back into Western financial markets. This arrangement became known as the petrodollar system. It rarely appeared in mainstream discussions, yet it influenced globalisation processes. All nations needing oil initially relied on dollars. Energy exporters accumulated large dollar reserves and invested them in US financial markets, especially US Treasury bonds. The cycle strengthened each year. By the end of the twentieth century, the dollar had become not only a national currency but also the medium of international trade. The structure today faces pressures that nobody could have imagined before. Even the conflicts and turmoil now observed in the Middle East have been viewed through traditional geopolitical lenses: the region's politics, security issues, and the age-old game of dominance in a geopolitically important part of the world. But underlying the ongoing transformation is a financial change. A system that links the world's most important commodity to the American currency is beginning to show signs of strain. The petrodollar order did not happen by chance. When the United States abandoned the dollar's gold convertibility and the Bretton Woods System effectively collapsed, Washington needed another mechanism to sustain the international role of its currency. The oil markets of the Persian Gulf provided that anchor. For decades, this arrangement appeared almost immutable. The dollar anchored the world's most important commodity, and the resulting financial cycle reinforced American influence across global markets. Yet systems built on convenience and habit can appear permanent right until the moment when structural shifts begin to erode their foundations. The system's durability remains clear today. According to data from the International Monetary Fund, approximately 58 per cent of global foreign exchange reserves are held in dollars. Most international commodities are priced in that currency, and the largest capital markets are situated in the United States. These structural strengths are unlikely to fade anytime soon. However, several factors are slowly transforming the world in which the petrodollar system survives. The first change is in the energy market. The American shale revolution has made the country the world's largest producer and exporter of oil, shifting it from its previous role as an importer. This change has altered the strategic partnership between Washington and the Gulf monarchies. The United States is no longer the sole and primary customer

protected by a security umbrella that safeguards energy flows. Instead, it has started competing in some markets. Another pressure emerged from the financial system after the global financial crisis. The 2008 crisis prompted central banks in the United States and Europe to increase liquidity on an unprecedented scale. While these policies stabilised vulnerable economies, they also raised doubts among major reserve holders about whether the long-term sustainability of such purchasing power of stored currencies can be maintained. Diversification becomes an essential strategy for energy exporters, whose sovereign wealth funds are worth hundreds of billions of dollars. The third transformation is the globalising nature of energy needs worldwide. The fastest growth in oil consumption now occurs in Asia. China has become the world's largest importer of crude oil, while India is close behind. As trade patterns shift eastward, financial relations are expected to follow suit. The current upheaval in the Middle East has begun to show how alternative financial solutions can work in practice. Recent tensions around the Strait of Hormuz have revealed how these financial shifts can operate in practice. Some oil shipments moving from Iran toward Asian markets now rely on financial and insurance arrangements that operate outside the traditional Western banking system. In several cases, transactions are settled through China's Cross-Border Interbank Payment System rather than the conventional dollar-based clearing networks. In absolute terms, these volumes remain modest compared to the scale of global energy trade. The dollar continues to dominate the international monetary system, and American financial markets remain unmatched in size and liquidity. However, the symbolism of these transactions should not be underestimated. Oil moving through one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints without interacting with the dollar-based system signifies a break from patterns that have governed the global economy for decades. The petrodollar system was built to prevent such fragmentation. Its strength relied on network effects. Once most energy transactions were in dollars, everyone was encouraged to stay within that system. Importers needed dollars for oil purchases. Exporters reinvested their earnings in dollar assets because those markets offered stability and scale. What is emerging today is not collapse but the gradual appearance of alternatives at its edges. New digital financial innovations, the rise of novel payment systems, and the strategic goals of major powers are expanding the space for transactions outside the traditional system. These trends could have significant implications for international politics if they persist. American geopolitical influence has traditionally been supported by financial power. The dominance of the dollar has enabled Washington to influence global financial behaviour and enforce sanctions with wide-reaching impact. A world where energy transactions involve multiple currencies would increas-

ingly diminish some of that leverage. None of this suggests an immediate end to the dollar's dominance. Monetary systems change gradually, and the United States' advantage built over decades remains strong. What might develop instead is a more diverse financial landscape in which multiple systems coexist rather than a single system that completely dominates. Beneath these economic shifts lies a quieter geopolitical change. The original petrodollar order rested on a strategic understanding between the United States and Saudi Arabia: American security for the Gulf in exchange for a stable, dollar-based oil trade. Today, that balance is evolving. China has become the largest buyer of Gulf energy, and the oil trade is steadily moving toward Asian markets. As energy flows shift eastward, the financial arrangements surrounding them may gradually begin to shift as well. For India, these developments have clear strategic implications. The country's growth relies on dependable energy supplies from the Gulf and stable financial channels that finance those imports. The first lesson is Indian strategic flexibility. Energy security in the coming decades will therefore involve more than securing supply contracts; it will also require the ability to operate across multiple financial channels if global energy markets begin to diversify their currency arrangements. The second lesson, maritime geography, remains equally important. The sea routes linking the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean will remain among the most essential economic pathways today. Protecting these routes and sustaining a credible naval presence in the region will remain a vital element of Indian strategic planning. Lesson three is about balanced diplomacy. India maintains good relations with the United States, the Gulf monarchies, Iran, and major Asian economies that are reshaping global trade. It will require consistency and pragmatic statecraft to sustain this delicate balance while adapting to changing economic conditions. History rarely occurs in clear-cut moments. Global systems evolve slowly through the buildup of technological innovation, economic shifts, and geopolitical competition on established arrangements. The petrodollar order has lasted many years, and its dominance over the energy financial structure remains unquestioned, but the future now appears somewhat less certain. The turmoil in the Middle East being observed has cast that reality in a very peculiar light. Behind the turbulence of geopolitics, a quieter shift in the foundations of global finance is unfolding. Although the transformation may be gradual, its trend remains undeniable. For decades, the dollar served as the operating language of the global energy trade. That role will not disappear quickly. The assumption that oil must always move through a single monetary system no longer appears as certain as it once did. A more plural financial landscape may now be slowly emerging.

Lt Gen AB Shivane

Why America backs Israel every time: Lessons for India and NRIs from the Iran war

They comprise just 2.4 per cent of the United States population. But America's 7.5 million Jews exercise an extraordinarily powerful influence over Washington, Silicon Valley and Hollywood. The American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) was founded in 1954. It has since become one of America's wealthiest — and most feared — lobbying groups. The iron-clad US support for Israel in the Iran war demonstrates AIPAC's vice-like grip over US lawmakers in the Senate and House of Representatives. It is estimated that more than half of America's federal lawmakers have received significant campaign funding from AIPAC. The writ of AIPAC runs wide and deep across American politics, business, technology, film and media. The lobbying group has often been linked to Mossad, Israel's external intelligence agency. In 2005 the Lawrence Franklin case exposed how ties between AIPAC and the Israeli government were allegedly used to gather sensitive intelligence in the US. A report in the International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence, published by Routledge in 2006, revealed the nexus: "On 4 August 2005, U.S. Department of Defense official Lawrence Franklin and former American-Israel Political Action Committee (AIPAC) staffers Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman were indicted on one or several of the following counts: conspiracy to communicate national defense information to persons not entitled to receive it; and conspiracy to communicate classified information to agents of a foreign government, publicly identified as Israel. Franklin pleaded guilty and cooperated with the authorities, and was subsequently sentenced to a 12-year prison term." The report added: "Former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer Arthur S. Hulnick writes that Israel has been a thorn in the heel of the United States. One of the US's closest allies and friends, it has been particularly active at industrial espionage targeted at US firms." The charges were fiercely denied by AIPAC and Israel. It came as no sur-

prise that the Franklin case was eventually dropped. As Politico, the respected and widely-read US online site, reported in 2009: "A federal judge has virtually wiped out the prison sentence of more than 12 years he first imposed on a Pentagon analyst Lawrence Franklin who pled guilty to leaking classified information to two pro-Israel lobbyists. Judge T.S. Ellis reduced the sentence for the former defence official to probation plus 10 months in community confinement, likely a halfway house. Prosecutors had asked the judge to drop the sentence to eight years in light of Franklin's cooperation, while a defense lawyer for Franklin, Plato Cacheris, asked for no sentence at all. Franklin pled guilty to three felony counts involving illegal distribution and possession of classified information. He had been free pending the trial for the two ex-AIPAC officials." What does this have to do with the US-Israel war in Iran? The bipartisan political support for the war suggests that many US lawmakers could be influenced by AIPAC funding. "If you want to win the next election to the Senate or the House of Representatives," as one commentator said, "you have to support Israel on every policy decision that affects it." The Iran war is the latest manifestation of the rule Washington lives by. Donald Trump is instinctively pro-Israel. His son-in-law Jared Kushner is an observant Jew. Trump's daughter Ivanka converted to Judaism in 2009 before her marriage to Kushner. Their children are being raised as Jews. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said publicly that Trump is the most pro-Israel president in US history. The ruling American establishment, ranging from business to entertainment, comprises prominent, successful Jewish-Americans: Sam Altman (OpenAI), Larry Ellison (Oracle), Mark Zuckerberg (Meta), Steven Spielberg (film) and David Solomon (Goldman Sachs). Jewish-Americans are governors of several states (Pennsylvania, Illinois, Colorado and North Carolina). They are well represented in the

Senate (Adan Schiff, Bernie Sanders, Jacky Rosen and Ron Wyden). Their support for Israel is non-negotiable, including prosecution of the Iran war on Netanyahu's timeline rather than Trump's. Contrast this with Indian-Americans. They number over five million, are the most highly educated ethnic group in the US and the wealthiest with a median household income of \$1,55,000 — double the average White household income of \$76,000 and 50 per cent higher than the average household income of Jewish-Americans (\$1,00,000). So why is the influence of Indian-Americans negligible compared to the sway Jewish-Americans have over the US establishment? First, there is no Indian version of AIPAC. Second, Indian-Americans are insular and not deeply integrated into US society like Jewish-Americans of European descent who have been domiciled in the US longer than Indian-Americans. Third, Indian-Americans are disunited and faction-ridden. Jewish-Americans focus single-mindedly on Jewish and Israeli interests. Indian-Americans focus on their own interests, often at odds with India's legitimate interests. This was glaringly showcased during Trump's punitive tariffs on India. Israel was never levied tariffs at all. India has had to walk a fine line in the Middle East war to simultaneously defend its interests in the US, Israel, the Gulf and Iran. With the US there is a valuable strategic partnership. With Israel the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) that passes through Haifa port in Israel forms critical future infrastructure. With the Gulf powers India has to secure the interests of 9.5 million workers and energy supplies. And with Iran there is the Chabahar port that opens the gateway for Indian trade to Eurasia. As I posted on X: "To address Israel's Knesset, stay friends with Iran, buy oil from Russia, buy weapons from America and reset relations with China. Can't think of a single other nation on earth that can do all of the above."

Minhaz Merchant

Bodoland University refutes allegations over PhD degrees, calls reports misleading

Kanak Chandra Boro, Kokrajhar, May 30: Bodoland University Vice-Chancellor Prof. B.L. Ahuja on Saturday strongly refuted recent media reports alleging irregularities in the awarding of doctoral (PhD) degrees by the university, terming the claims baseless and misleading.

Addressing a press conference held at the university's conference hall, Prof. Ahuja clarified that reports claiming the PhD degrees of 127 scholars of Bodoland University



were invalid and that the University Grants Commission (UGC) had summoned the university authorities to Delhi were far from the truth.

He alleged that such reports were part of a deliberate attempt to tarnish the image of Bodoland University, which, according to him, has been making steady progress in the field of higher education and academic excellence.

"The academic standards and procedures followed by Bodoland University are fully in accordance with the guidelines and policies laid down by the University Grants Commission," Prof. Ahuja said.

The Vice-Chancellor further stated that a section of the media had been spreading false and unverified information with the intention of damaging the reputation and credibility of the university.

Clarifying reports regarding a purported UGC summons on May 26, Prof. Ahuja said that the meeting was not a summons but a routine discussion convened by the UGC with representatives of various universities across the country to review academic and administrative matters.

"The meeting was aimed at discussing academic issues and other related matters with university authorities on a common platform. It should not be interpreted as a summons or disciplinary action," he added.

Also present at the press conference were Dr. Ratul Deka of the Department of Assamese and Dr. Janin Musahary of the Department of Political Science, representing the Bodoland University Teachers' Association.

The teachers' representatives also criticized what they described as negative and biased reporting by a section of the media. They alleged that certain vested-interest groups were attempting to create confusion and spread misinformation regarding the university.

The university authorities reiterated their commitment to maintaining academic integrity and urged the public not to be misled by what they termed as unfounded allegations.

Large Quantity of Tobacco Products Seized During Enforcement Drive Near Educational Institutions in Morigaon

World No Tobacco Day Observed Across Educational and Health Institutions in the District

Achyut KR Nath, Morigaon, May 30: In observance of World No Tobacco Day and in line with the provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003, a special enforcement drive was conducted today against the sale of tobacco products within 100 yards of educational institutions in Morigaon town.

The drive, led by Additional District Commissioner (Health) Nitisha Bora, covered Morigaon College and several other educational institutions in the town. Assistant Commissioner Santosh Buragohain, Circle Officer of Morigaon Revenue Circle Kankan Jyoti Saikia, and personnel from the local police also participated in the operation. During the drive, shops and commercial establishments located within the prohibited zone around educational institutions were inspected.

A substantial quantity of tobacco products being sold in violation of the provisions of COTPA, 2003, was detected and seized. Necessary action was initiated against the violators, and the shopkeepers concerned were directed to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Act. The enforcement team also interacted with traders and local residents, creating awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and the legal restrictions on the sale of tobacco products near educational institutions.

It may be mentioned that Additional District Commissioner (Health) Nitisha Bora has

already instructed all Circle Officers of the district to conduct similar drives regularly in their respective jurisdictions to ensure effective en-



forcement of the law and to discourage the sale of tobacco products near schools and colleges.

Meanwhile, the District Tobacco Control Cell, Morigaon, has launched a week-long awareness campaign from May 30 to June 5 to educate people, particularly students and youth, about the adverse effects of tobacco on health as well as the environment.

As part of the campaign, awareness activities were organized in schools, colleges, and health institutions across the district. Since May 31 falls on a Sunday, World No Tobacco Day was observed in advance in educational institutions and healthcare facilities. Drawing competitions on the theme "Effects of Tobacco

on Health" and slogan-writing competitions on "Tobacco and Youth" were organized in schools, encouraging students to reflect on the dangers

of tobacco use. Students across the district also took the No Tobacco Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to a tobacco-free lifestyle and society.

District Nodal Officer of the National Tobacco Control Programme, Dr. Jaya Prabha Bodo, informed that a student-led awareness rally will be taken out tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. from the Office of the Joint Director of Health Services, Morigaon. This will be followed by a public awareness meeting at Pobitora Haat at 11:00 a.m.

The District Tobacco Control Cell has extended a cordial invitation to the public to actively participate in the rally and awareness meeting and join the collective effort towards building a tobacco-free and healthier society.

Fire Breaks Out at Vishal Mega Mart in Sivasagar

Khairuddin Ahmed, Staff Reporter, Sivasagar,

Mega Mart in Sivasagar town. The incident



May 30: A fire broke out this afternoon at Vishal

occurred in the food section located on the

second floor of the shopping complex. Within minutes, thick black smoke engulfed the entire building. According to employees of Vishal Mega Mart, the staff were divided into three groups and, acting swiftly in line with their training, managed to control the fire initially. However, dense black smoke continued to spread throughout the premises.

After receiving information about the incident, the State Fire and Emergency Services rushed to the spot with three fire tenders and launched operations to bring the situation under control. It is suspected that the fire may have been caused by a short circuit. Sources from the Fire and Emergency Services stated that the second floor had no windows and was fully air-

conditioned, which contributed to the accumulation of thick black smoke inside the building. Due to the smoke-filled environment, firefighters had to enter the premises wearing oxygen masks. The fire brigade also used specialized equipment during the firefighting operation. As of the time of filing this report, no casualties had been reported. However, more than ten employees reportedly fell ill due to the incident. The thick smoke that spread throughout the shopping mall caused breathing difficulties for staff members on duty, and they were immediately admitted to a nearby private nursing home for treatment.

Menstrual Hygiene and Management Day Observed in Dibrugarh District Under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme

M Hashim Ali, Correspondent, Dibrugarh, May 30: In observance of Menstrual Hygiene and Management Day under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, awareness programmes were conducted on May 29 and 30 in Dibrugarh dis-



trict. The initiatives were organized by the District Hub for Empowerment of Women under the District Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with the Health Department, Education Department, Panchayat and Rural Development Deptt and the Dibrugarh District Administration. As part of the programme, awareness efforts were carried out during the morning assembly sessions of various schools across the district to educate adolescent girls about menstruation and menstrual hygiene. Simultaneously, women's meetings were organized in different Gram Panchayats to raise awareness among women as well. During these meetings, resource persons from the Health Deptt delivered informative talks covering topics such as the menstrual cycle, myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation, personal hygiene, nutritious food, physical exercise, and other related issues.

Approximately 1,457 adolescent girls and 67 teachers from 14 schools participated in the programme. In addition, around 387 women from five Gram Panchayats attended the women's awareness meetings.

How Saudi-UAE rivalry in Yemen could impact already fragile West Asia

The strategic rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has escalated into a full-scale conflict in the Yemeni theatre. The year 2026 opens with an unsavoury chapter of conflict between two consequential players in the Gulf countries in a different geography where they exercise influence. The simmering tension between the two has metamorphosed into a military confrontation. The southern port of Mukalla has become the epicentre of confrontation. The Saudi forces carried out a targeted airstrike on the port of Mukalla on December 30, 2025. The ships were targeted and were alleged to have carried weapons and been dispatched for the Southern Transitional Council (STC). The UAE was accused of having sent the ships loaded with ammunition to be delivered to STC. STC's separatism focuses on the autonomy and independence of southern Yemen. The UAE, on the other hand, has denied these accusations and asserted that the shipment consisted of humanitarian aid and standard supplies for its forces stationed in southern Yemen. A volley of accusations and counteraccusations ensues, making the matter even more tense. Other developments that took place following this conflict are Yemen's Saudi-backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC)'s cancellation of the defence pact with the UAE and the PLC's accusation against the UAE of encouraging internal strife. Saudi Arabia issues an ultimatum to withdraw UAE forces from Yemen.

Reasons for Rivalry

The Saudi-UAE rivalry is not unfounded. It has strong grounds to antagonise each other. Both countries are wealthy and hold significant influence in the region. Apart from Iran, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are important players in the region, and they attempt to exert their economic influence to assert their hegemony. In the context of Yemen, geography is both an asset and a liability. Yemen's chronic instability largely emanates from its geography. Strategically, it is positioned on the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which connects the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Yemen is located on the southwestern tip of the Arabian Peninsula and shares borders with Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the east. The western part of Yemen touches the Red Sea and the Arabian Sea in the south. It shares the most critical geography that links the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden. The Red Sea trade is very vital, as it handles 12 per cent of global trade, connecting Asia with Europe via the Suez Canal. Critical global commerce takes place here. Houthi's target and disrupt the trade network, making the region's geopolitics tense and exerting their influence. It is a critical supply chain network and an extremely sensitive zone where East Africa and West Asia come into close proximity, separated by the Red Sea. Moreover, the Horn of Africa is a highly unstable

region. The region is largely conflict-ridden. Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Somalia, located on the African side of the Red Sea, and Yemen, on the other, remain entangled in an irresolvable conflict. The game of great powers takes place there, and it is challenging for smaller players to assert their autonomy. Instability is a permanent reality. Given these geographical, geopolitical, and geostrategic factors, Saudi interests in Yemen are primarily focused on security, geoeconomics, and geopolitics. A unified Yemen helps Saudi Arabia to protect its southern border and disable the Houthis' influence. Saudi Arabia has Jeddah Port along the Red Sea to facilitate its export-import activities, but the UAE does not share a geographic border with the Red Sea. The trade route through the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea is crucial for the UAE in terms of its export and import activities. The UAE supports STC forces in exercising their autonomy in southern Yemen. This gives Abu Dhabi strategic control over the maritime route and ports in the region. The Southern Yemeni ports are the Port of Aden, Mukalla, Balhaf, Bir Ali, Shokra and Socotra. They play a crucial role in managing trade and logistics within the supply chain network of the Arabian Peninsula. The UAE extends its interests to STC to gain geopolitical and geostrategic advantage and secure its influence in the region. Export and import are core interests of the UAE. Its economy depends on this. It cannot remain inactive given the critical developments in the region. The UAE and Saudi Arabia are the middle powers in the Middle East. They compete for greater diplomatic, geostrategic, and geopolitical influence in the region. They also guard their interests by all means.

Hadhramaut

Hadhramaut is a significant region in southern Yemen, renowned for its rich history, ancient kingdoms, diverse heritage, frankincense trade, mud-brick architecture, Bedouin culture, ancient trade routes, mountainous terrain, and traditions. STC is accused of having advanced into the Hadhramaut and Mahra provinces. This has spiralled into a new wave of conflict. Riyadh views this region as critical for its national security. Moreover, this region is resource-rich, and around 80 per cent of Yemen's oil reserves are located here. Control over this territory gives STC economic and political control. The region's energy assets are the bone of contention between STC and PLC. In addition, the geostrategic importance of the region makes the place more vital for STC's depth in the region. Whoever occupies the place gives it the bargaining power. STC's control over Hadhramaut will make the southern project complete and weaken the PLC. It helps STC to project power. STC's leverage in the region will be amplified. It will impact the Yemeni government, the Houthis, and Saudi Arabia. The demand

for self-rule will be solidified once this region comes under STC control. Therefore, Saudi Arabia feels rattled. The region is critical and invites irresolvable tension and conflict. This region also bifurcates the Saudi and UAE interests.

Houthi Factor

The Houthis in Yemen are a critical factor. The Iran-backed Shia militant group exercise their influence in northern and western Yemen. The capital, Sanaa, Sa'dah, provinces bordering Saudi Arabia and the Red Sea coastline largely come under its control. It is difficult to determine the extent of terrain it controls. It is no less than a third of the country that is under its control, governing around 70-80 per cent of the population. In a fractured country ravaged by multi-sided conflict, the Saudi-UAE conflict gives fuel to Houthi forces to consolidate power and express their aggression against targeted groups. The growing opposition between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi is likely to strengthen the Houthis' influence in the region.

Southern Transitional Council

The Southern Transitional Council (STC) is a powerful force in Southern Yemen. It holds nearly 52 per cent of Yemen's territory. It demands an independent South Yemeni state. It believes in a two-state solution and protection of Southern Yemen from Houthi militancy and extremism. It fully supports its military wing, Southern Armed Forces. It is a secessionist military and political organisation. Its focus remains on Southern Yemen. The UAE reportedly supports STC in expanding its geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic interests in the region. STC pushed "Operation Promising Future" in December 2025 to exercise control over all eight southern governorates. The intentions of annexing Hadhramaut and Al-Mahrah were on the priority list, recognising their critical importance for STC's rise to power and autonomy. This rattled Saudi Arabia and PLC, who swung into action. The current crisis in Yemen is rooted in the above reason. STC controls major resources and infrastructures in Southern Yemen, most importantly the PetroMasila oil company. Aidarus al-Zubaidi is an STC leader. He occupies a seat in the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) of the central government. The recent action suggests the sidelining of the central government, taking the conflict to a different level. The military response from Saudi Arabia has complicated the situation. STC accuses Saudi Arabia of an air blockade. Landing permissions were denied to the Saudi delegates at Aden International Airport. The Aden Airport is reportedly closed. Meanwhile, the agreement that has come seems fragile. Saudi-backed National Shield Forces have reportedly been allowed to observe the area seized, but the push for withdrawal from those seized provinces bordering Saudi Arabia has not been agreed upon.

Amit Shah orders Demolition of Illegal Border Constructions

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has directed authorities to strictly enforce a “zero tolerance” policy towards illegal constructions within 15 km of the country’s borders and demolish all such structures that have

tempted, narcotics smuggling, encroachment on government and border lands, terror financing channels, and other forms of trans-border crimes that pose long-term challenges to national security; the emphasis of the review



come up over the years, marking a significant and stringent push towards tightening border security and strengthening internal vigilance mechanisms in vulnerable frontier regions of the country; chairing a high-level security review meeting in Bikaner, Mr Shah assessed in detail a wide range of security-related issues concerning the border districts of Rajasthan along the India-Pakistan border, and during the meeting the Home Ministry highlighted that enhanced responsibility has been assigned to district magistrates to ensure legal and financial compliance of banking transactions in border areas by all banks, alongside strict verification of big business establishments, examination of their funding sources, tracking of mule accounts and false companies, identification of fake Aadhaar cards, and tighter control over cross-border smuggling networks that often exploit administrative gaps in sensitive regions; in a comprehensive statement, the Home Ministry said that the border districts have been directed to carry out an in-depth study of the sources, patterns, and networks behind crimes and the drug menace, with a clear mandate to develop lasting and sustainable solutions so that such problems do not resurface in the future, reflecting a shift from reactive enforcement to preventive and intelligence-driven governance models; Mr Shah, while reviewing the overall security architecture, stressed the importance of formulating a 360-degree security cover for every border district involving active participation of citizens, state machinery, and central security agencies, thereby creating a multi-layered and integrated security ecosystem capable of addressing evolving threats in a coordinated manner; he further underscored the critical importance of a unified and coordinated approach to border management involving the Border Security Force (BSF), Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), and the state machinery to effectively address inter-connected issues such as infiltration at-

meeting was also placed on the successful and timely implementation of the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)-II, which has been envisioned as a transformative initiative for strengthening last mile governance in remote border settlements, curbing economic crimes, bridging infrastructural gaps, and supporting the border population through improved connectivity, welfare delivery, and enhanced state presence; Mr Shah also directed officials to ensure 100 per cent saturation of all government schemes in border villages so that no eligible beneficiary is left out of welfare coverage, thereby reinforcing the idea of inclusive governance as a tool of national security and stability in sensitive frontier regions; the Home Minister additionally called for the effective and widespread use of the ‘1930’ call centre mechanism to tackle cybercrimes, particularly in border districts where digital frauds, financial scams, and cyber-enabled offences have been increasing and require rapid response systems for reporting, blocking, and investigation; the Home Ministry statement further elaborated that district-level administrations must strengthen surveillance systems, improve inter-agency coordination, and adopt technology-driven monitoring tools to ensure that illicit financial flows, illegal property holdings, and suspicious transactional patterns are promptly detected and acted upon; in his detailed review, Mr Shah reiterated that border districts cannot be treated in isolation but must function as integrated security zones where governance, intelligence, law enforcement, and community participation work in tandem to create a robust deterrent against criminal and anti-national activities; he also highlighted that illegal constructions within the 15 km border belt not only pose administrative and legal challenges but also have potential security implications, and therefore strict demolition and enforcement actions must be undertaken without delay to restore compliance and ensure disciplined land use

along sensitive stretches; the meeting also reviewed the functioning of banking networks in border areas, with specific instructions that banks must adhere to strict compliance norms, strengthen Know Your Customer (KYC) verification processes, and ensure that mule accounts used for money laundering or illegal transactions are identified and shut down swiftly; further, emphasis was placed on tracing the financial backbone of illegal operations, including identifying shell companies, monitoring suspicious investments, and dismantling financial ecosystems that support smuggling and terror-related activities, thereby cutting off the economic lifelines of such networks; Mr Shah also directed authorities to improve coordination between intelligence agencies and district administrations so that actionable intelligence is converted into timely operational response, reducing gaps that could be exploited by cross-border networks engaged in infiltration or narcotics trafficking; the Home Minister’s review in Bikaner comes in the backdrop of sustained efforts by the central government to strengthen border management infrastructure, improve surveillance mechanisms, and empower local administrations to act as the first line of defence in national security architecture; officials were also instructed to ensure that data-driven policing is adopted in border districts, using digital tools to map crime patterns, identify hotspots, and predict potential security risks, thereby enabling proactive intervention rather than reactive response; the Home Ministry reiterated that the success of border security policies depends heavily on coordination among multiple stakeholders, including central forces, state police, intelligence units, financial institutions, and local governance bodies, all of whom must operate under a unified command framework in sensitive areas; the directive to enforce zero tolerance towards illegal constructions within the 15 km border zone was described as part of a broader strategy to eliminate unregulated activities that could be exploited for unlawful purposes, while also ensuring that development in border areas remains structured, lawful, and security-compliant; the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)-II was also highlighted as a key instrument in transforming border villages into well-connected, economically viable, and socially resilient settlements, thereby reducing vulnerability to external influence and strengthening local communities as stakeholders in national security; Mr Shah further emphasized that border security is not only a matter of military vigilance but also of administrative efficiency, financial transparency, and social awareness, requiring a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to achieve long-term stability; the meeting concluded with a renewed focus on eliminating systemic loopholes that enable illegal activities, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and ensuring that border districts of Rajasthan become models of integrated security governance, where development and defence work in close alignment to safeguard national interests.

NEET-UG 2026

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has intensified its investigation into the NEET-UG 2026 examination paper leak case with the arrest of two more accused, taking the total number of people arrested in the case to 13 so far. The agency said the accused have been arrested from multiple cities including Delhi, Jaipur, Gurugram, Nasik, Pune, Latur and Ahliyanagar as part of its nationwide probe into the alleged leak of the undergraduate medical entrance examination paper. According to the CBI, one of the newly arrested accused is Dr Manoj Shirure, a Latur-based doctor, who allegedly played a key role in facilitating three students, including the son of an accused coaching centre owner, in getting access to the leaked Chemistry questions. Investigators said Dr Shirure allegedly received the leaked questions from another accused, P V Kulkarni, whose role in the case is already under scrutiny by the agency. Officials said the latest arrests indicate the existence of a wider network involving coaching centres, intermediaries and individuals who allegedly coordinated the circulation of confidential examination material before the examination was conducted. The second accused arrested by the CBI has been identified as Tejas Harshadkumar Shah, a physics faculty member at Dr Abhang Prabhu Medical Academy, a Pune-based coaching centre. According to the investigating agency, Shah allegedly obtained the leaked Physics questions of the NEET UG 2026 examination from another arrested accused, Manisha Havaladar. The CBI said both accused were actively involved in securing and distributing portions of the examination paper before students appeared for the test. Investigators believe the accused used personal contacts and networks associated with coaching institutions to gain illegal access to the question papers and then passed them on to selected candidates. The agency has been conducting extensive searches across several states in connection with the case. Officials stated that searches have so far been carried out at 49 different locations, leading to the seizure of several incriminating documents, laptops and mobile phones believed to contain evidence linked to the paper leak conspiracy. Sources associated with the investigation said digital evidence recovered during the searches is being examined carefully to identify communication patterns, financial transactions and possible involvement of additional suspects. The seized devices are also expected to help investigators determine how the leaked questions were circulated among candidates and whether any organised racket was involved in manipulating the examination process. The NEET (UG) 2026 examination, conducted for admission into undergraduate medical courses across the country, was

held on the 3rd of this month. However, the examination later came under intense scrutiny following allegations that portions of the paper had been leaked before the test. The controversy triggered widespread concern among students, parents and educational institutions, eventually leading to the cancellation of the examination. The cancellation affected lakhs of medical aspirants who had appeared for the highly competitive examination with hopes of securing admission into government and private medical colleges. The paper leak allegations sparked protests and demands for strict action against all individuals involved in compromising the integrity of the examination system. Officials said the CBI investigation is focused on identifying every individual linked to the alleged conspiracy and uncovering the full extent of the operation. Investigators are examining the role of coaching institutes and individuals suspected of acting as middlemen in arranging access to leaked question papers for students in exchange for money or influence. Sources said the agency is also probing whether examination officials or insiders had any role in leaking confidential material before the examination. The arrests made so far are being viewed as a significant development in the investigation, especially because several accused are linked to educational institutions and coaching centres associated with medical entrance examination preparation. The case has once again raised concerns regarding the security mechanisms surrounding national-level entrance examinations and the vulnerability of competitive exams to organised malpractice. Education experts and students have expressed concern that repeated incidents of paper leaks undermine public trust in the examination system and place genuine candidates at a disadvantage. Officials familiar with the investigation said the CBI is following multiple leads generated through digital evidence, call records and financial transactions recovered during searches. Teams are also questioning students and individuals believed to have received access to the leaked papers before the examination. Investigators are reportedly examining whether the accused had established a structured network operating across different states to identify candidates willing to pay for advance access to questions. Authorities believe the involvement of individuals from different cities points towards a coordinated operation rather than an isolated incident. The agency has not ruled out further arrests as the investigation continues to expand. The role of coaching centres is being examined closely because several accused arrested so far are either associated with educational institutions or linked to candidates who allegedly benefited from the leaked papers.

Eid-ul-Azha celebrated across country with religious fervour

New Delhi: Eid-ul-Azha, the festival widely known as the occasion of sacrifice, is being observed with deep religious fervour, devotion, and widespread gaiety across various parts of the country today as thousands of devotees gathered in large numbers at mosques, eidgahs, and designated open prayer grounds since early morning to offer Eid namaaz in congregational settings, marking one of the most significant Islamic festivals that symbolises faith, obedience, compassion, and charity, and after the completion of the prayers, people were seen warmly exchanging Eid greetings, embracing one another, and extending messages of peace and goodwill within their communities, thereby reinforcing the spirit of brotherhood and social harmony that lies at the heart of the festival; in the national capital, particularly large congregations were witnessed at prominent religious sites including the historic Jama Masjid, Fatehpuri Mosque, and the Shahi Eidgah, where thousands of worshippers assembled in disciplined rows to perform the special Eid prayers, with imams leading the congregational prayers and delivering sermons that highlighted the values of unity, compassion for the needy, sacrifice in the path of faith, and the importance of maintaining peace and harmony in society, while also appealing to the public to uphold mutual respect among people of different communities and to celebrate the festival in its true spirit of togetherness and communal harmony; similar scenes of devotion and collective prayers were reported from various other cities and towns across the country, where Eid gatherings were held peacefully and with enthusiasm, reflecting the deep cultural and spiritual significance of the occasion, as families dressed in traditional attire made their way to prayer grounds early in the morning, children accompanied elders with excitement, and after the prayers, streets and

neighbourhoods echoed with greetings of “Eid Mubarak,” sweets were exchanged, and charity was distributed among the poor in keeping with the religious tradition of Zakat and Qurbani, which forms a central part of Eid-ul-Azha observances; authorities in multiple regions had put in place elaborate security arrangements to ensure peaceful celebrations, with police deployment, traffic management systems, and surveillance measures being strengthened around major prayer venues to avoid any untoward incident and to facilitate smooth movement of devotees, and officials confirmed that the day’s prayers and gatherings proceeded without disruption in most areas, contributing to an atmosphere of calm and order throughout the country; community leaders and religious scholars, through their sermons and public addresses, reiterated messages of compassion, urging citizens to support the underprivileged, share resources with those in need, and strengthen social bonds, while also emphasising that the essence of Eid-ul-Azha lies not only in ritual sacrifice but also in the moral commitment to selflessness, discipline, and unity within society, and across urban and rural regions alike, the festive spirit was clearly visible as markets remained busy in the days leading up to the festival, with families preparing traditional meals, purchasing gifts, and making arrangements for sacrificial rituals in accordance with religious customs; overall, the celebrations today reflected a harmonious blend of devotion, tradition, and community participation, as people from diverse backgrounds came together in a shared expression of faith and festivity, reinforcing the enduring message of Eid-ul-Azha that emphasises peace, charity, and brotherhood, while the nationwide observance continues into the day with ongoing gatherings, social visits, and acts of generosity that extend the spirit of the festival beyond the prayer grounds into everyday life and community interaction.

PM Modi emphasises effective implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emphasised the need for effective implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 and underlined that the mission should move beyond infrastructure creation and ensure measurable outcomes through regular monitoring, citizen participation and convergence between various stakeholders, setting the tone for a renewed focus on outcomes rather than inputs in one of India’s largest public cleanliness and sanitation initiatives, and reinforcing the idea that governance must translate into visible, verifiable improvements on the ground across both urban and rural landscapes; in this context, Chairing the 51st PRAGATI Meeting in New Delhi, Narendra Modi asked States to expedite the completion of solid waste management-related infrastructure, including waste processing plants and GOBARdhan plants, reiterating that delays in core infrastructure directly affect citizens and weaken the pace of national development, while during the meeting the Prime Minister reviewed seven critical infrastructure projects across the Railways, Power and Road sectors covering nine States worth around 30 thousand crore rupees, highlighting the scale and diversity of ongoing development works and the need for coordinated execution across departments; while reviewing power sector projects, Prime Minister emphasised the need to accelerate rooftop solar adoption across urban areas, with a special focus on cities, residential clusters and public institutions, and he underlined that rooftop solar should be taken up in mission mode to reduce electricity costs, improve energy security and promote clean energy at the household and community level, reinforcing India’s broader transition towards renewable energy and decentralised power generation systems that reduce pressure on conven-

tional grids; while reviewing road and port connectivity projects, it was emphasised that Vadavan Port should be developed as a model of port-led, multimodal development, where every major mode of transport is seamlessly integrated to create a future-ready logistics ecosystem, and Mr Modi said the project should not be seen merely as a port but as a national gateway connected through coastal shipping, inland waterways, dedicated freight corridors, high-speed rail connectivity, highways and airport linkages, thereby ensuring that logistics efficiency becomes a key driver of economic competitiveness and export growth in the coming decades; while reviewing Ken-Betwa River Inter-linking Project, Prime Minister observed that Ken-Betwa project should serve as a model for other States to resolve inter-State water issues through cooperation, timely clearances, technology-based monitoring and mission-mode execution, and States were encouraged to identify similar opportunities where river-linking, water conservation, groundwater recharge and efficient irrigation can be taken up in an integrated manner to ensure long-term water security, especially in water-stressed regions where agricultural dependence remains high and climate variability continues to challenge traditional water systems; the Prime Minister also underlined that the delay in the implementation of public projects leads not only to cost escalation but also deprives citizens of timely access to essential facilities and development benefits, observing that every delay has a direct impact on people’s lives, regional growth and public resources, and he stressed that Ministries, Departments and States must adopt a more proactive and time-bound approach to resolve pending issues, remove bottlenecks and ensure faster execution so that infrastructure delivery aligns

with national priorities and public expectations; Prime Minister also emphasised that innovative use of canal networks should be explored, including the installation of solar panels along canals and over canals for clean electricity generation, stating that this would help optimise land use, reduce evaporation losses, generate renewable energy and create additional economic value from water infrastructure, thereby integrating energy and water systems in a synergistic framework that supports sustainability goals while also enhancing infrastructure productivity; at the beginning of the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary informed that, in pursuance of the directions of the Prime Minister, a system of monthly review of social sector schemes at the State level has also been operationalised, and this mechanism aims to ensure regular monitoring, faster resolution of implementation issues and greater accountability at the State and district levels, with Swachh Bharat Mission being taken up for review at the State level in the first instance to ensure that sanitation outcomes are continuously assessed rather than periodically reviewed; overall, the meeting reflected a strong push towards convergence of infrastructure development, renewable energy expansion, water security initiatives and sanitation reforms under a unified governance framework that prioritises speed, accountability and measurable outcomes, while also reinforcing the central idea that governance reforms must directly translate into improved quality of life for citizens across India, and that mission-mode execution across sectors such as railways, power, roads, ports, water and sanitation is essential for sustaining high growth momentum and ensuring that public investments yield timely and tangible benefits for society at large.

World No Tobacco Day: Protecting Health, Preserving Life, and Building a Tobacco-Free Future

Every year on 31 May, the world observes World No Tobacco Day to raise awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and to encourage governments, communities, and individuals to take effective steps toward reducing tobacco use. The day was established by the World Health Organization in 1987 as a global campaign against one of the greatest preventable causes of disease and death. Since then, World No Tobacco Day has become an important international observance aimed at educating people about the dangers of smoking and tobacco addiction while promoting healthier lifestyles and stronger public health policies.

Tobacco use remains one of the most serious public health challenges in the world. According to the World Health Organization, tobacco kills more than eight million people each year, of which around 1.2 million are non-smokers exposed to second-hand smoke. Despite decades of awareness campaigns, scientific research, and medical warnings, tobacco products continue to claim countless lives every year. Smoking affects not only the smoker but also family members, co-workers, and the wider community through passive smoking and environmental pollution. World No Tobacco Day therefore serves as both a warning and a call to action for humanity.

The history of tobacco dates back several centuries. Tobacco plants were originally cultivated in the Americas and later spread across Europe, Asia, and other parts of the world after colonial expansion. Over time, tobacco became commercially profitable, fuelling the rise of a powerful global tobacco industry. Cigarettes, cigars, bidis, hookahs, chewing tobacco, gutkha, and modern electronic nicotine products gradually became part of social and cultural practices in many countries. Unfortunately, the widespread popularity of tobacco concealed the immense health risks associated with its use.

Scientific studies conducted throughout the twentieth century clearly established the connection between tobacco consumption and severe diseases such as lung cancer, throat cancer, heart disease, stroke, respiratory disorders, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Tobacco contains nicotine, a highly addictive substance that creates dependency and makes quitting extremely difficult. Cigarette smoke contains thousands of harmful chemicals, including tar, carbon monoxide, arsenic, formaldehyde, and many carcinogenic substances. These toxic chemicals damage almost every organ in the human body.

One of the greatest concerns associated with tobacco use is cancer. Lung cancer is strongly linked to smoking, and smokers are significantly more likely to develop this deadly disease than non-smokers. Smoking also contributes to cancers of the mouth, throat, oesophagus, pancreas, bladder, kidney, liver, and cervix. Tobacco weakens the immune system and reduces the body's ability to fight infections and heal wounds. Many smokers experience reduced lung function, breathing difficulties, and chronic coughing. In severe cases, smoking gradually destroys the lungs, leaving patients dependent on oxygen support and long-term medical treatment.

Cardiovascular disease is another major consequence of tobacco use. Smoking damages blood vessels, raises blood pressure, and increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes. The chemicals in tobacco smoke reduce oxygen supply in the blood, forcing the heart to work harder. Even young smokers may develop cardiovascular problems at an early age. Passive smoking also exposes non-smokers to similar risks. Children growing up in smoking households are particularly vulnerable to respiratory illnesses, asthma, pneumonia, and ear infections.

Pregnant women who smoke or are exposed to tobacco smoke face serious risks during pregnancy. Smoking during pregnancy may lead to miscarriage, premature birth, low birth weight, and developmental complications in infants. Babies born to smoking mothers are more likely to suffer from breathing problems and sudden infant death syndrome. These dangers demonstrate that tobacco use affects not only individuals but also future generations.

In addition to health damage, tobacco creates enormous social and economic burdens. Families often spend substantial amounts of money on cigarettes and tobacco products instead of basic necessities such as food, education, healthcare, and housing. Many low-income households become trapped in financial hardship due to tobacco addiction. Healthcare systems around the world also bear heavy costs for treating tobacco-related diseases. Governments spend billions on medical care, disease prevention, and public awareness campaigns.

The tobacco industry has historically used aggressive marketing strategies to attract consumers, especially young people. Advertisements often portray smoking as fashionable, modern, or glamorous. In earlier decades, films, magazines, sports sponsorships, and celebrity endorsements helped normalise tobacco consumption. Although many countries have imposed re-

strictions on tobacco advertising, companies continue to seek new ways to market their products. Attractive packaging, flavoured products, and social media promotions sometimes target adolescents and young adults who may not fully understand the long-term consequences of addiction.

Youth tobacco use remains a major concern globally. Many smokers begin using tobacco during adolescence out of curiosity, peer pressure, stress, or the desire to appear mature. Once addiction develops, quitting becomes difficult. Schools, parents, and communities therefore play a crucial role in educating young people about the dangers of tobacco before they begin experimenting with smoking. Awareness programmes, counselling, sports activities, and positive social environments can help prevent tobacco initiation among youth.

In recent years, electronic cigarettes and vaping products have emerged as serious new challenges in tobacco control. These devices are often marketed as safer alternatives to traditional cigarettes. However, medical experts warn that vaping products contain harmful chemicals, addictive nicotine, and in some cases have been linked to a severe lung condition known as EVALI, or e-cigarette and vaping-associated lung injury. Some studies suggest that young people who begin with vaping may later transition to conventional smoking. Additionally, newer products such as nicotine pouches are gaining popularity among teenagers, raising further public health concerns. The rapid evolution of these products has made regulation increasingly difficult for governments worldwide.

World No Tobacco Day focuses on different themes each year to address specific issues related to tobacco control. These themes may include protecting youth, reducing tobacco marketing, environmental impacts of tobacco cultivation, second-hand smoke, tobacco taxation, or supporting smoking cessation. Through these annual themes, governments and health organisations attempt to engage the public in meaningful discussions and encourage collective responsibility.

Governments across the world have adopted various tobacco control measures to reduce smoking rates. Many countries have implemented laws banning smoking in public places such as hospitals, schools, offices, buses, trains, restaurants, and airports. Such measures help protect non-smokers from passive smoking and create healthier public environments. Graphic warning labels on cigarette packets are another important strategy. These warnings display disturbing images and messages about the health consequences of smoking, discouraging people from tobacco use.

Taxation is considered one of the most effective methods for reducing tobacco consumption. Increasing the price of cigarettes and tobacco products discourages young people and low-income individuals from purchasing them. Research has shown that higher tobacco taxes significantly reduce smoking rates. Governments also regulate tobacco advertising, sponsorship, and promotion to limit the influence of the tobacco industry on society.

The World Health Organization introduced the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, an international treaty aimed at strengthening global tobacco control efforts. This agreement encourages countries to adopt evidence-based measures such as smoke-free laws, public awareness campaigns, restrictions on tobacco advertising, and support for smoking cessation services. Australia, for example, became the first country to introduce plain packaging laws for tobacco products, a measure widely recognised as effective in reducing smoking rates and one that has since inspired similar policies in other nations.

India faces significant challenges regarding tobacco consumption. Smoking and smokeless tobacco products such as gutkha, khaini, zarda, pan masala, and chewing tobacco are widely used in different regions of the country. According to the World Health Organization, tobacco-related diseases cause approximately 1.35 million deaths in India every year, making tobacco one of the leading causes of preventable death in the country. The Government of India has introduced several tobacco control laws, including bans on smoking in public places, restrictions on advertising, and mandatory warning labels on tobacco packages. Educational campaigns and anti-tobacco messages are also regularly broadcast through television, radio, newspapers, and digital media.

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, commonly known as COTPA, plays an important role in regulating tobacco products in India. Under this law, the sale of tobacco products near educational institutions is restricted, and tobacco advertising is prohibited in many forms. Public health authorities and non-governmental organisations continue to work together to raise awareness and support tobacco cessation programmes.

Despite these efforts, many people continue to struggle with nicotine addiction. Quitting tobacco is not easy because

nicotine creates both physical and psychological dependency. Smokers often experience withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, headaches, insomnia, and strong cravings when they try to quit. However, quitting is possible with determination, medical support, counselling, and encouragement from family and friends.

There are many effective methods for quitting tobacco. Some individuals successfully quit through personal determination and gradual lifestyle changes. Others may require nicotine replacement therapy, counselling, behavioural therapy, or prescription medications. Support groups and quitlines can also provide valuable assistance. Doctors and healthcare workers play a vital role in motivating patients to stop smoking and guiding them through the quitting process.

The benefits of quitting tobacco begin almost immediately. Within minutes of quitting, heart rate and blood pressure start returning to normal levels. Within weeks, lung function improves and breathing becomes easier. Over time, the risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer gradually decreases. Former smokers often experience improved energy, better taste and smell, healthier skin, and enhanced quality of life. Quitting tobacco also benefits family members by reducing their exposure to second-hand smoke.

Environmental damage caused by tobacco is another important issue highlighted on World No Tobacco Day. Tobacco cultivation requires large amounts of land, water, fertilisers, and pesticides. Deforestation often occurs to create farmland for tobacco production. Cigarette butts are among the most common forms of litter worldwide and contribute to pollution in rivers, oceans, streets, and public spaces. Toxic chemicals from discarded cigarette filters can contaminate soil and water, harming wildlife and ecosystems.

Child labour in tobacco farming is a serious concern in some parts of the world. Children involved in tobacco cultivation may face exposure to harmful chemicals and nicotine poisoning through skin contact with tobacco leaves. They are also deprived of education and healthy childhood development. Efforts to reduce tobacco production can therefore contribute not only to public health but also to environmental protection and social justice.

Communities and institutions at every level share a collective responsibility in the fight against tobacco. Educational institutions can organise awareness rallies, debates, seminars, and cultural programmes to help students understand the dangers of tobacco and become advocates for healthy living. Healthcare workers serve as frontline defenders by educating patients and providing support for cessation. The media can shape public opinion through responsible reporting and anti-smoking campaigns while avoiding the glamorisation of smoking in entertainment. Religious leaders, community organisations, and families also play vital roles — from discouraging tobacco use at the grassroots level to creating tobacco-free homes where young people are protected from early exposure and addiction.

World No Tobacco Day is not merely an annual observance but a reminder of humanity's shared responsibility to protect health and future generations. Tobacco addiction destroys lives slowly and silently, affecting individuals, families, communities, and nations. The fight against tobacco requires cooperation among governments, health organisations, educational institutions, civil society, and ordinary citizens.

A tobacco-free society may seem difficult to achieve, but continuous awareness, strong policies, medical support, and public participation can significantly reduce tobacco use. Every cigarette not smoked, every young person protected from addiction, and every smoker encouraged to quit represents progress toward a healthier world. The true success of World No Tobacco Day lies not only in speeches and campaigns but in lasting behavioural change and collective commitment.

As humanity continues to advance in science, medicine, and public health, there is growing recognition that prevention is more powerful than cure. Avoiding tobacco is one of the simplest yet most effective ways to protect human health. By choosing life over addiction, awareness over ignorance, and responsibility over harmful habits, society can move toward a future where fewer lives are lost to tobacco-related diseases.

World No Tobacco Day therefore stands as a symbol of hope, awareness, and determination. It reminds the world that health is among humanity's greatest treasures and that protecting it requires courage, education, and collective action. Through sustained global efforts, compassion, and responsible choices, a healthier and tobacco-free future can become a reality for generations to come.

Heramba Nath
herambanath222@gmail.com

WHO-ICHI

New Delhi: The Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, organised a high-level review meeting and consultative discussions on the development of the International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI) and National Health Intervention Codes (NHIC) for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems of medicine during a two-day online programme held on May 25 and 26, 2026, marking another important step towards integrating India's traditional medicine systems with globally accepted health informatics standards and strengthening the role of traditional medicine within international healthcare frameworks. The initiative follows the landmark Memorandum of Understanding and Donor Agreement signed between the Ministry of Ayush and the World Health Organization and seeks to create a globally standardized and scientifically robust coding vocabulary for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani clinical interventions under the WHO-ICHI framework, enabling cross-border data exchange, strengthening clinical research, improving healthcare documentation and supporting interoperability in digital health ecosystems, including future insurance integration for traditional medicine systems. The meeting brought together senior officials of the Ministry of Ayush, technical experts from the World Health Organization, scientists from various research councils, and faculty members from national institutes to deliberate on the roadmap for aligning India's traditional healthcare systems with modern international classification mechanisms used for healthcare data collection and analysis worldwide. The deliberations focused on building a comprehensive coding system capable of systematically documenting interventions in Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems in a structured and universally understandable format, which experts believe would significantly improve the visibility, acceptability and

scientific validation of Indian systems of medicine across global healthcare institutions. The meeting was chaired by Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, who underlined the strategic importance of internationally aligned intervention classifications and stated that the initiative would contribute significantly towards integrating traditional medicine into global health systems while simultaneously strengthening documentation practices and enhancing interoperability in digital health ecosystems. He highlighted that the development of internationally recognised coding standards for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani interventions would help establish a stronger scientific foundation for traditional medicine and support the creation of more evidence-based approaches for treatment documentation, healthcare analytics and patient care systems. According to officials participating in the discussions, the coding framework is expected to provide a common language for healthcare practitioners, researchers, policymakers and insurance systems while facilitating improved international collaboration and comparative research studies involving traditional medicine practices. The inaugural session of the meeting began with welcome remarks by Dr. N. Srikanth, Deputy Director General of the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences, who welcomed participants and emphasized the significance of collaborative efforts in developing standardized classifications for traditional medicine interventions. In her introductory remarks, Dr. Kavita Jain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, highlighted the importance of standardized intervention terminology in strengthening evidence-based traditional medicine systems and promoting greater consistency in documentation and reporting practices across healthcare institutions and research organisations working in the field of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani

medicine. She noted that creating uniform terminology and coding systems was essential for improving research quality, enhancing digital integration and enabling the systematic collection of clinical evidence related to traditional healthcare interventions. Representatives from the World Health Organization also addressed the gathering and discussed the importance of harmonising traditional medicine classifications with global health informatics systems. Dr. Pawan Godatwar, Technical Officer at the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office, and Dr. Geetha Krishnan, Unit Head at GTMC Jamnagar, spoke about the importance of international collaboration in building globally relevant health intervention classifications and strengthening the role of traditional medicine within modern public health systems. The discussions reflected growing international interest in traditional medicine systems and the need for globally compatible mechanisms that can facilitate better data exchange, research collaboration and healthcare integration. During the technical sessions, detailed presentations on the four-level hierarchical coding directories were delivered by the respective research councils responsible for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems. The Ayurveda component, referred to as NHICA, was presented by Prof. Vaidya Rabinarayan Acharya, Director General of the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences, who elaborated on the framework developed for categorising and documenting Ayurvedic interventions under the proposed classification structure. The Siddha intervention classification system, known as NHICS, was presented by Prof. Dr. N. J. Muthukumar, Director General of the Central Council for Research in Siddha, who discussed the methods adopted for standardising Siddha treatment terminology and intervention coding.

Putin accuses Ukraine of deadly attack on student dorm, orders military to prepare options

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday (May 22) ordered his military to prepare options to retaliate against Ukraine for what he described as a drone attack on a student dorm that killed six people and wounded dozens, with 15 still unaccounted for. Putin said the attack had struck the dorm in Starobilsk in Luhansk, a Russian-controlled region in eastern Ukraine. He said Kyiv's military must have known what it was targeting. Ukraine's military denied the Russian accusations and said it had struck an elite drone command unit in the area. It said that Kyiv complied with international humanitarian law. Putin said in his own statement, which was carried by state TV, that there were no military targets near the dorm. "There are no military facilities, intelligence service facilities, or related services in the vicinity. Therefore, there is absolutely no basis for claiming that the munitions struck the building as a result of our air defence or electronic warfare systems. The strike was not accidental; it came in three waves, with 16 drones targeting the same location," Putin told officials. The Russian military had been ordered to draw up options for Moscow to retaliate, he added. Reuters was not able to independently verify what happened. Both sides deny deliberately targeting civilians in the war. Ukraine wants to recapture Luhansk, one of four eastern regions that Moscow unilaterally claimed as its own in 2022 in what Kyiv denounced as an illegal land grab. Yana Lantratova, Russia's human rights commissioner, said that 86 teenagers aged 14 to 18 had been asleep inside the hostel belonging to Luhansk Pedagogical University's Starobilsk college when Ukrainian drones had attacked it during the night. Leonid Pasechnik, the top Russian-installed official in Luhansk, said two people had been pulled from the rubble. Maria Lvova-Belova, presidential commis-

sioner for children's rights, said up to 18 children could still be trapped. Some children being treated in hospital were reported to be in a serious condition. Lvova-Belova said. Lyubov Yakovlevna, a local resident, told Reuters she had heard loud explosions from the attack, which she said had been carried out first by rockets and had targeted what she described as a former base. She said she had then heard drones which had targeted the student dorm causing fires to break out and people to seek shelter in her apartment block. "A shock wave went through our apartment. Nobody could sleep all night. We were watching the fires. I was afraid, I was shaking, it was really terrifying," she said. **KREMLIN CALLS ATTACK "MONSTROUS"** Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called for those responsible to be punished. "This is a monstrous crime. An attack on an educational institution where children and young people are present," he told reporters. Moscow said the UN Security Council would hold an emergency session in New York later on Friday to discuss the incident. Russia's Foreign Ministry said the Ukrainian strike had pulverised the top three of the hostel's five floors. "We call on international organisations, national governments and the global community to give an honest assessment ... and to strongly condemn the bloody terrorist attack," it said in a statement. Photographs and video released by the Russian authorities showed rescue workers stretching one man out of the rubble, severely damaged buildings - one of which appeared to have partially collapsed - and fires still burning. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy last week promised retribution after laying red roses at the rubble of a Kyiv apartment building where a Russian missile strike had killed 24 people, including three children.

Washington: New US Federal Reserve chair Kevin Warsh vowed to be "reform-oriented" as he was sworn in at the White House on Friday (May 22), with US President Donald Trump insisting the central bank chief would be "totally independent". Trump has exerted unprecedented pressure on the central bank to reduce interest rates, attempting to fire a Fed governor and pursuing a criminal probe against Warsh's predecessor Jerome Powell. "I will lead a reform-oriented Federal Reserve, learning from past successes and mistakes, both escaping static frameworks and models, and upholding clear standards of integrity and performance," Warsh said. He called for central bankers to pursue their goals "with wisdom and clarity, independence and resolve", adding that "inflation can be lower, growth stronger, real take-home pay higher, and America can be more prosperous" if they did so. rump, who frequently criticised and insulted Powell, praised Warsh and said he wanted him to be fully independent, before urging the Fed chair to let the economy "boom". "Kevin understands that when the economy is booming, that's a good thing. We want to stop inflation, but we don't want to stop greatness," Trump said. Warsh has backed rate cuts in the past, even as the world's largest economy faces inflation at a three-year high. Supreme Court Justices Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh were among those in attendance on Friday, with the former administering the oath of office to Warsh. The court is due to rule on Trump's attempt to fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook. It is unusual for the chief of the Fed - an independent non-partisan body that sets monetary policy according to a dual mandate on inflation and employment - to be sworn in at the White House. The last central bank chief to do so was Alan Greenspan in 1987, under President Ronald Reagan, whom Warsh referenced in his speech as a role model. At his Senate confirmation hearing, Warsh insisted that he would "absolutely

not" be a puppet for Trump. **BALANCING MANDATES** Warsh will take over a divided Fed facing high

inflation - fuelled by the energy price surge that resulted from Trump's war on Iran - and a labour market showing signs of weakness. The US central bank has a dual mandate to keep inflation to its long-term target of 2 per cent while also maintaining maximum employment. US consumer inflation in April came in at 3.8 per cent, a three-year high, with American households battered by years of above-expected price increases since the pandemic. At a Fed meeting last month, a majority of policymakers indicated that rate hikes may be necessary if inflation remains above the Fed's long-term target. Warsh has argued that productivity gains from artificial intelligence-led innovation will allow the US economy to grow rapidly without adding to inflation. The US unemployment rate has remained relatively stable at around 4.3 per cent for the last year. But job growth - often used as a proxy for economic activity - has seen-sawed between expansion and contraction from month

US Fed chair says will be 'reform-oriented' at glitzy White House swearing-in



to month. That situation - high inflation and inconsistent job growth - has left the Fed in a potentially sticky situation of having to choose

between its mandates. "Kevin Warsh will not be able to deliver the rate cuts that the president wants," said David Wessel, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. "At some point, the president may grow impatient and will begin attacking Mr Warsh as he did Jerome Powell." Warsh takes over at "a time of disruption and rebalancing in the overall authority of the president", said Columbia Law professor Kathryn Judge, whose research focuses on central banking. Potentially adding to Warsh's challenges will be the fact that Powell has chosen to remain on the board as a member - an unusual but not unprecedented move for an outgoing chair. Powell cited threats to the Fed's independence as the reason for his decision. On Friday, White House economic advisor Kevin Hassett said he hoped Powell would soon "step aside" so Warsh could "have complete and easy control of the Fed".

Iran weighs peace proposal, accuses US of 'excessive demands'

Tehran: Tehran accused the United States of "excessive demands", Iranian media said on Saturday (May 23), as US media reports raised the prospect that Washington was mulling new strikes and leaders of the Islamic Republic considered the latest peace proposal. Pakistan's powerful army chief arrived in Tehran on Friday to bolster mediation and US President Donald Trump abruptly changed his plans to skip his son's wedding to stay in Washington due to "circumstances pertaining to government", fuelling speculation that the situation had entered a sensitive stage. Trump has described the stop-start negotiations this week as teetering on the "borderline" between renewed attacks and a deal to end the war, which began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on Feb 28 and led to competing blockades around the strategic Strait of Hormuz that have roiled the global economy. Weeks of negotiations since an Apr 8 ceasefire - including historic face-to-face talks hosted by Islamabad - have still not produced a permanent resolution or restored full access to the strait, choking vast quantities of global oil supply. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in a call with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that Tehran was engaged in the diplomatic process despite "repeated betrayals of diplomacy and military aggression against Iran, along with contradictory positions and repeated excessive demands" by the United States, according to the ministry. US media outlets Axios and CBS News, citing unnamed sources, reported the White House was considering strikes on Iran, although both added a final decision had not been made yet. US officials have repeatedly raised the prospect of renewed action against Iran if a deal were not reached, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio saying on the sidelines of a NATO conference in Sweden that there had been "some progress" towards a peaceful resolution but "things were not there yet". "We're dealing with a very difficult group of people. And if it doesn't change, then the president's been clear he has other options," he said. Pakistan's army chief Asim Munir landed in Tehran on Friday where he met with Araghchi late into the night to discuss "the latest diplomatic efforts and initiatives aimed at preventing further escalation", according to the official IRNA news agency. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei cautioned that the visit did not mean "we have reached a turning point or a decisive situation" with "deep and extensive" disagreements remaining, according to Iran's ISNA news agency. Baqaei said a delegation from Qatar had also held talks with the Iranian foreign minister on Friday. "In recent days, many countries - both regional and non-regional - have been trying to help bring the war to an end ... However, Pakistan remains the official mediator," he said. Pakistan's Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar - who have played a crucial role in mediation between the warring sides - flew to China, Iran's top trading partner, for a four-day visit in which efforts to resolve the Middle East crisis were expected to be discussed. **HORMUZ SQUEEZE** Baqaei said the status of the Strait of Hormuz and a retaliatory US blockade of Iranian ports

Hormuz will keep feeding inflation. US consumer sentiment fell to its lowest level since records began in 1952, with high prices eroding household finances. European Union nations on Friday deemed Iran's blockade "contrary to international law" and made a technical change to expand the scope of its existing Iran sanctions regime to target individuals involved in the closure.

LEBANON FRONT

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman also stressed fighting would need to stop in Lebanon where Israel and Tehran-backed Hezbollah have been clashing despite a ceasefire. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said Israel carried out five airstrikes in the east of the country near the Syrian border, targeting the Nabi Sreij area. Since an Apr 17 truce, Israel has continued strikes, demolitions and evacuation orders in south Lebanon, saying it is targeting Hezbollah, which has also kept up attacks. Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the war on Mar 2 with rocket fire at Israel after Iran's supreme leader was killed by US-Israeli strikes. "The issue of ending the war on all fronts, including Lebanon, is very important," Baqaei said. Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli attacks have killed at least 3,111 people in Lebanon since Mar 2, adding that strikes on the south on Friday killed 10 people, including a child.



were also under discussion. The future of the strategic maritime chokepoint remains a key sticking point, with fears growing that the global economy will suffer as pre-war oil stockpiles run down. Markets nevertheless took some comfort from the signs of diplomacy, with Wall Street rising Friday and the Dow closing at a second straight record high as investors bet talks could eventually produce an off-ramp. Oil prices also rose, however, underscoring fears that disruption in

US Secretary of State Rubio starts first visit to India on heels of US-China summit

Kolkata: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio started his first visit to India on Saturday (May 23), looking to restore ties with a usually like-minded partner a week after Washington's warm summit with China. Rubio began his four-day, four-city tour in the eastern metropolis of Kolkata where the top US diplomat, a devout Catholic, will tour the headquarters of the late Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. Rubio will then fly to New Delhi where he will meet later on Saturday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to the State Department. Before leaving on Tuesday, Rubio will also take part in a meeting of foreign ministers of the so-called Quad - Australia, India, Japan and the US - four democracies seen as a counterweight to China's presence in the Indian Ocean. China has long been suspicious of the Quad, calling it as an attempt to encircle it, and has chastised India in the past for taking part in it. But Rubio's trip comes as President Donald Trump is shaking up traditional assumptions about US priorities. Trump paid a state visit to China last week, where he hailed the reception he received from President Xi Jinping despite limited concrete announcements. Trump in Beijing spoke of the US and China being a "G2" - a formulation that had fallen out of favour in recent years as US allies fear being shut out of Washington's dealings with a rising China. Rubio, who as a senator had championed close ties with India, told reporters on his plane that it would be

the first visit in his life to the country. He is joined on the trip by his wife Jeanette, with whom he will later visit the Taj Mahal, the world-famous monument to love, in Agra. **EYE ON ENERGY** In brief remarks on India at the start of the trip that also took him to Sweden, Rubio called the country a "great ally, great partner" and said the US would be looking to find ways to sell it more oil. India's fast-growing economy is reliant on energy imports and like many countries has been rattled by the US-Israeli attack on Iran, which retaliated by choking off the strategic Strait of Hormuz, sending global oil prices soaring. India has historic ties with Iran but also a growing relationship with Israel, which Modi visited just days before the war. But the conflict has also seen the re-emergence as a key US partner of India's traditional adversary Pakistan, which has positioned itself as a mediator, with its powerful army chief flying Friday to Tehran. The US was a Cold War partner of Pakistan but increasingly took a distance as it prioritised relations with India, seeing the world's largest democracy as a natural partner in a global order marked by China's rise. Trump has turned away from long-held assumptions and warmed to Pakistan, which has lavished him with praise over his diplomacy in its short war with India last year, and has welcomed a cryptocurrency firm owned by the US president's family.

EU deepens ties across Asia Pacific amid shifting global trade landscape

Brussels: The European Union is ramping up efforts to strengthen economic and strategic ties across the Asia-Pacific region, even as it recalibrates trade relations with the United States and China. Despite this week's breakthrough in a trade deal between the EU and the US, questions remain over where Europe fits into an increasingly fragmented global trade order. One major milestone came earlier this year when India and the EU finally concluded negotiations on a long-awaited free trade agreement that first began in 2007. Under the January agreement, India will cut tariffs on more than 96 per cent of EU goods exports, while the EU will remove or reduce tariffs on more than 99 per cent of imports from India. The bloc says annual goods exports to India could more than double by 2032 as a result of the deal. "This is the tale of two giants - the world's second- and fourth-largest economies. Two giants who choose partnership in a true win-win fashion," said European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen. **DIVERSIFYING SUPPLY CHAINS** But India is not the only focus of the EU's Indo-Pacific trade push. The bloc also concluded a major trade agreement with Indonesia last year following years of negotiations, and hopes to finalise deals with Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines by the end of next year. The flurry of deal-making underscores the EU's efforts to diversify

its supply chains and trading partners in the region to better weather geopolitical shocks. The appetite for closer cooperation with Europe has shifted dramatically in recent years, said Kathleen Van Brempt, a Member of the European Parliament and vice-chair of the bloc's committee on international trade. At a panel discussion hosted by the Singapore-based Asia-Europe Foundation in Brussels on



May 11, she noted: "They changed their minds ... they said 'Okay, (it's) difficult with Europe with all this legislation but (Europe is) reliable, a beacon of trust.'" The panel brought together EU officials and Asia experts to discuss cooperation in areas including trade, governance, education and

digitalisation. **INCREASINGLY STRAINED TIES WITH BEIJING** A central challenge for policymakers remains balancing economic security with market openness. China remains the EU's second-largest goods trading partner, with trade amounting to roughly US\$850 billion in 2024 alone. But relations between Brussels and Beijing have become increasingly strained amid disputes over market access, state subsidies and Europe's push to reduce reliance on Chinese supply chains. The European Commission says its strategy is to "de-risk" rather than decouple from China, while pursuing initiatives aimed at boosting Europe's resilience and competitiveness on the world stage. China, however, has said these moves amount to institutional discrimination. Among the measures being considered are plans to phase out what the EU describes as high-risk foreign technology suppliers from Europe's 5G networks. Beijing has called the move protectionist, though some analysts argue there could be a degree of political posturing involved. "We are racking up a lot of leverage and potential frictions against China, and I would say there's only one reason you would do that," said Hosuk Lee-Makiyama, director of the European Centre for International Political Economy - a global economy think-tank based in Brussels. "It's because (here in Europe), we're forced against our will into a deal with China whether we want it or not, because Americans are doing a deal with China." For now, the impact of last week's historic summit between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping for Europe remains uncertain.

Event on breast cancer awareness "UNSTOPPABLE 2:0 – bold brave beautiful" held in Guwahati

Guwahati: Over 200 people gathered at Aniyaa Edition with one heartbeat and one purpose — to stand beside women cancer survivors and celebrate their extraordinary journeys of resilience, strength, and rebirth. "UNSTOPPABLE 2:0 – Bold Brave Beautiful", an initiative by Unstoppable Welfare Trust and Illumis Aesthetic Pvt Ltd, curated by Dr Reema Das Mallik and Nabish Alam, emerged as a stirring evening of awareness, empowerment, healing, and celebration. The event featured an insightful and engaging panel discussion on breast cancer awareness, where experts discussed myths surrounding cancer, early detection, emotional healing, and the latest technological advancements in treatment and care. The session sparked meaningful conversations and encouraged attendees to look at survivorship not through sympathy, but through strength and dignity. One of the most emotional highlights of the evening was the on-stage felicitation of more than 20 women cancer survivors, whose stories moved the audience deeply and reminded everyone present that courage has a human face. Among those honoured were Dr Urmimala Mahanta Baruah, Kadambari Kashyap, Juri

Goswami, Dr Anjana Goswami, Dr Biju Choudhury, Barshashri Das, and Ritika Limbu. Their presence transformed the evening into more than an event — it became a movement of hope. The evening opened on a soulful and culturally rich note with a mesmerizing performance by renowned Sattriya artiste Dr Mallika Kandali. The audience was further enthralled by electrifying performances from Gorisha Nath, an inspiring musical act by cancer survivor Sagarika Sharma, and a graceful dance presentation by popular feature film and OTT actress Archita Agarwal. The event was beautifully anchored by acclaimed Assamese actress Barasharani Bishaya, whose warmth and emotional connect elevated the spirit of the evening. Speaking on the occasion, the organizers reiterated that "UNSTOPPABLE" is not merely a programme, but a continuing mission to create conversations around health, healing, awareness, and emotional support while celebrating the indomitable spirit of survivors. The evening concluded with thunderous applause, teary smiles, heartfelt embraces, and one collective realization — true beauty lies in survival, courage, and the refusal to give up.

Women at the Heart of BCCI's Cancer Care Transformation

Guwahati: At the Dr. B. Borooah Cancer Institute (BCCI), Guwahati, every day is guided by a singular mission — to deliver advanced, equitable, and compassionate cancer care to the people of the Northeast. That mission recently moved forward with the installation of the Halcyon Linear Accelerator, a state-of-the-art radiotherapy system from Siemens Healthineers. More than the commissioning of advanced technology, this milestone reflected BCCI's continued commitment to precision treatment, operational efficiency, and improved patient outcomes. As cancer care increasingly evolves into a multimodal approach combining surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy, radiotherapy continues to play a critical role, with nearly 50 percent of cancer patients requiring it at some stage of treatment. For patients across Assam and neighboring Northeastern states, timely access to radiation therapy has often remained a challenge. Many patients have had to travel to metropolitan cities for treatment, leading to financial strain, logistical difficulties, treatment delays, and, at times, discontinuation of therapy. The installation of the Halcyon Linear Accelerator at BCCI directly addresses this gap. By bringing advanced radiotherapy services closer to patients' homes, BCCI is helping reduce long-distance travel, lower out-of-pocket expenses, and enable patients to continue treatment with greater continuity and confidence. Designed for faster treatment delivery and streamlined clinical workflows, the Halcyon system supports improved patient throughput while maintaining high standards of precision

and safety. For patients and families across the region, this translates into cancer care that is not only technologically advanced, but also more accessible and patient-centric. At the center of this milestone stood a remarkable group of women professionals from BCCI — clinical

leadership was the support of the Siemens Healthineers team. The on-site installation was led by Revathi Krishna, while Jahnnabi Das worked closely with the BCCI Radiation Oncology team to align the technology with the institute's clinical and workflow requirements.



icians, medical physicists, residents, trainees, and technologists — representing the expertise and continuity of care that define the institution. The Department of Radiation Oncology is led by Dr. Mouchumee Bhattacharyya, Deputy Director and Professor and In Charge of the department, whose leadership has played a pivotal role in strengthening radiotherapy services at BCCI. Complementing BCCI's clinical

At the national level, the collaboration is supported by Malti Sachdev. The installation of the Halcyon Linear Accelerator marks an important step in strengthening comprehensive cancer care delivery at BCCI and expanding access to advanced radiotherapy for patients across the Northeast. Together, the teams are shaping a stronger, more inclusive future for cancer care in the region.

Team India wins two silver medals at Taipei Capital Cup 2026

Taiwan, from 26–28 May 2026, by securing two Silver Medals and three Merit Awards across multiple skill categories. Competing against some of the world's finest young skilled professionals from 15 countries across Europe, Asia, the Americas and Oceania, the Indian contingent showcased exceptional technical excellence, reaffirming India's growing stature as a global skills powerhouse. Representing India in five highly competitive skill categories, the competitors demonstrated outstanding proficiency across emerging and industry-relevant domains, reflecting the strength of India's skilling ecosystem and its commitment to nurturing future-ready talent. The contingent was supported by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), which continue to provide world-class training, industry exposure and international benchmarking opportunities to India's youth. At the Taipei Capital Cup 2026, Team India delivered an impressive performance, with Ms. Muskan winning a Silver Medal in Painting and Decorating and Mr. Arjun Sumathi Vijayabashkar securing a Silver Medal in Mobile Applications Development. In addition, Mr. Mohamed Mafaz Poonakannan Rabi Ahamed earned a Merit Award in Software Applications Development, Mr. Suresh Kumar Ganesan Meena received a Merit Award in Digital Construction, and Mr. Md Seraj was honoured with a Merit Award in Automobile Technology, reflecting the strong technical skills and talent showcased by the Indian contingent at the international competition. The Silver Medal winners received a cash prize of 8,000 Taiwan Dollars each, while the Merit Award recipients were awarded 5,000 Taiwan Dollars each. Congratulating the winners, Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of

State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Government of India, said: "Team India's performance at the Taipei Capital Cup 2026 is a proud reflection of the confidence, capability and determination of India's youth. Competing against some of the best talent from across the world, our champions have demonstrated that Indian skills can stand shoulder to shoulder with global standards. Beyond the medals, competitions like these serve as invaluable training grounds, exposing our competitors to international benchmarks and preparing them for even bigger chal-

lenges ahead, including WorldSkills Shanghai 2026. Every such achievement strengthens our resolve to build a globally competitive, future-ready workforce and advances our vision of Viksit Bharat powered by skilled and empowered youth." Congratulating the contingent and mentors, Smt. Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said: "Team India's success at the Taipei Capital Cup 2026 reflects the growing strength of India's skilling ecosystem and the world-class potential of our youth. I congratulate the competitors, experts and mentors for this achievement, and thank our State Governments, industry partners and training institutions whose continued support is helping nurture globally competitive talent. Such international platforms inspire excellence and

strengthen India's journey towards becoming a global skills capital." The Indian contingent participated under the guidance of experienced experts and mentors who played a critical role in preparing the competitors for the international platform. The experts included Mr. Ankur Sharma (Mobile Applications Development), Mr. Aniket Kumar Pathak (Software Applications Development), Ms. Saumya Dwivedi (Painting and Decorating), Mr. Prasanna Prakash Samel (Automobile Technology) and Mr. Shiju Sasidharan (Digital Construction). The preparation journey was further supported by the industry partners including Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai Motors, Kia Motors, BIMLABS Global, YPSVEF by JK Cement, and several other leading organizations. Their collaboration through advanced infrastructure, technical expertise, and industry-led training created a strong ecosystem that enabled Team India to compete among the world's best and showcase the country's growing excellence in skills on the international platform. Team India's success at the Taipei Capital Cup 2026 marks another important milestone in India's journey towards becoming a global hub for skilled talent. The competition served as a valuable preparatory platform ahead of larger international skill competitions, including WorldSkills Shanghai 2026, while reinforcing India's commitment to promoting excellence in vocational education, industry-aligned training and future-ready skills. As India continues to strengthen its skilling ecosystem under the vision of Viksit Bharat, achievements such as these underscore the transformative power of skills in creating opportunities, driving innovation and positioning the country's youth at the forefront of global competitiveness.



growing excellence in skills on the international platform. Team India's success at the Taipei Capital Cup 2026 marks another important milestone in India's journey towards becoming a global hub for skilled talent. The competition served as a valuable preparatory platform ahead of larger international skill competitions, including WorldSkills Shanghai 2026, while reinforcing India's commitment to promoting excellence in vocational education, industry-aligned training and future-ready skills. As India continues to strengthen its skilling ecosystem under the vision of Viksit Bharat, achievements such as these underscore the transformative power of skills in creating opportunities, driving innovation and positioning the country's youth at the forefront of global competitiveness.

Home Ground: How Meghalaya is turning local families into the future of tourism

When travellers visit a new place, they don't always look for scenic spots. They look for genuine human connections. For years, Meghalaya has offered that warmth, rooted in its rich culture and deep hospitality. Today, that warmth is driving economic growth. The numbers tell this story clearly. Shillong recently topped Skyscanner's 2025 Report as the most-searched travel destination in India. It is drawing more visitors than ever under its new tourism identity, Symphony in the Mist. Tourist arrivals have surged from roughly 12 lakhs in 2018 to over 16 lakhs today, and the State has set an ambitious target of 21 lakhs by 2028. In April 2026, NITI Aayog's Divya Bharat: A Window to the Soul of India report added further weight to this momentum. It identified Meghalaya as one of India's few year-round travel destinations with no clear off-season. It highlighted the State's living root bridges, extensive cave systems, and indigenous cultural traditions. The message was clear: Meghalaya is no longer a seasonal stop. It is a destination for all seasons. But recognition alone does not fill a room. As visitor numbers climbed, a serious challenge emerged. Demand was outpacing supply. Many high-potential destinations lacked adequate lodging, and tourist spending went unrealised. The government saw that building massive hotels was not the only answer. Instead, it chose to empower the families who call these hills home. This thinking made the homestay model the cornerstone of Meghalaya's tourism strategy. The government took the first step in September 2023 by launching the Meghalaya Tourism Homestay Scheme in convergence with the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). The scheme gives financial assistance of up to 70% for projects costing up to Rs.10 lakhs. This includes a 35% subsidy under PMEGP and an equal 35% from the State's Tourism

Department, making it accessible to first-time entrepreneurs and rural households. The response was swift. The scheme sanctioned 900 applications. On the ground, more than 490 homestays became operational, creating 1,000 rooms and around 1,500 livelihood opportunities. With this proof of success, the government moved to scale. It launched the Chief Minister's Meghalaya Homestay Mission in September 2025, building on the earlier scheme with greater ambition. The Mission targets 3,000 new homestays and 15,000 direct and indirect jobs by 2028. The support structure improved as well. New homestays can receive a subsidy of up to 70%, capped at Rs.7 lakhs. Existing homestays can claim an upgradation incentive of up to Rs.2 lakhs to improve quality and visitor experience. Early momentum has been strong, with 80 applications already approved across 10 districts, showing participation from every part of the State. These are not just statistics. For people like Damint Kharshandi from Ri Bhoi district, a first-generation entrepreneur and scheme beneficiary, this support changed everything. "The Homestay Scheme gave me the financial confidence to launch my business, which I have successfully expanded," he added. "The State's Meghalaya Tourism branding policy has also brought more footfalls and revenue." His story is becoming a familiar one across the region. It shows that the right support, reaching the right people, multiplies. One such story belongs to Donny Esmond Rapsang. His Friendship Homestay at Umden Umsaitprah, Umroi is a story of resilience and community empowerment. Rapsang once moved between multiple small jobs and businesses to support his family. The Government of Meghalaya's Homestay Scheme opened a new door. With financial assistance of over Rs.9 lakh, he began construction in 2023, completed the homestay in 2024, and opened it to the public in 2025. Today, the homestay supports his household and has created opportunities for local youth involved in its construction and operations. His journey, like Damint's, shows how tourism-based initiatives can strengthen livelihoods, promote self-employment, and empower rural communities. This wide participation reflects what Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Conrad K. Sangma has consistently emphasised. These initiatives are not isolated interventions. They build an ecosystem where homestay owners, local transport providers, food vendors, and tourist guides all grow together. The State treats smaller homestays as just as vital as large infrastructure, spreading the economic benefits of tourism to the grassroots rather than concentrating them at the top. Nowhere is this philosophy more visible than in the State's plans for the upcoming 39th National Games, 2027. Meghalaya intends to house visitors in homestays rather than traditional Games Villages, placing local families at the centre of a national stage. As that moment approaches, the homestay revolution tells a bigger story about how Meghalaya is choosing to grow. By giving ordinary people, the tools to succeed, the Government of Meghalaya is doing more than expanding accommodation. It is building something more enduring — a tourism economy where benefits flow directly to the families who have always been its greatest hosts.

World No Tobacco Day 2026: Cairn Leads Youth Awareness Drive on Tobacco-Free Living in Golaghat

Students from 16 schools participate in awareness initiative promoting informed choices and healthier futures

Golaghat: Marking World No Tobacco Day 2026, Cairn, Vedanta Oil & Gas, in collaboration with the District Narcotics Control Bureau (DNCB), Golaghat, organised an awareness initiative at Borpathar Higher Secondary School to sensitise the youth on the dangers of tobacco use, nicotine addiction, and substance abuse. The programme brought together more than 600 students from 16 high and higher secondary schools across the region, creating a platform for learning, engagement, and collective action towards a healthier future. Aligned with this year's Day theme, "Unmasking the Appeal - Countering Nicotine and Tobacco Addiction," the initiative sought to equip students with the awareness and understanding needed to identify and resist the tactics often used to promote addictive substances among young people. As part of the programme, a block-level quiz competition for students of Classes 9 to 12 was organised in partnership with the District Narcotics Control Bureau. The competition encouraged participants to strengthen their understanding of

addiction, public health, and the broader social impact of tobacco and drug use, while fostering

early awareness among young people. The initiative is part of the company's broader community development efforts in its Hazarigaon operational area, with a continued focus on strengthening health, education, and overall community well-being. Pulin Saikia, Principal of Borpathar Higher Secondary School, appreciated the initiative, highlighting that the programme effectively raised awareness among students on the harmful effects of tobacco and substance abuse. He added that the quiz competition served as an engaging platform for learning and expression, and looked forward to more such initiatives in the future. The programme builds on the company's ongoing efforts to promote public health awareness. On World No Tobacco Day last year, a poster-making competition was organised in Jorhat, encouraging students to creatively highlight the harmful effects of tobacco use and advocate for healthier choices. Such initiatives continue to strengthen community awareness and empower young people to drive positive social change.



healthy competition and awareness. Tobacco continues to be a major global public health challenge and a leading cause of preventable deaths, underscoring the need for sustained engagement and

Barcelona sign England winger Gordon from Newcastle

May 29 : Anthony Gordon's long-held dream of playing for Barcelona became a reality on Friday, with the England winger even showing off a surprise skill, answering questions in Spanish, as he was unveiled by the LaLiga club. Barcelona have signed Gordon from Newcastle United on a five-year contract, the Spanish champions said on Friday. Financial details were not disclosed but British media reported that Barca offered an initial 80 million euros (\$93.14 million) plus add-ons for the 25-year-old. "I was excited to play for Barca (since) I was three years of age," Anthony said, fielding parts of the media conference in fluent Spanish to the surprise of journalists. "I wanted to speak Spanish because, as a kid, I believed I would play football for Barca, believe it or not. I have a physio in Newcastle, and we spoke every day, and I told him 'One day I'll play for Barca, so I want to learn Spanish.'" Gordon netted 17 goals for Newcastle in all competitions this season, including 10 in 12 Champions League games. "He comes to the club after being top scorer with Newcastle United last season and the player who took on most dribbles," Barcelona said in a statement. "Gordon impressed in his three appearances against Barca last season in the Champions League." However, Newcastle struggled to make a mark in the Premier League, where they finished 12th and failed to qualify for European competition. Earlier this month, Newcastle boss Eddie Howe admitted Gordon may have played his final game for the club when the winger was linked with Bayern

Munich, saying there were "discussions that potentially might be happening". However, it was Barcelona who swooped to sign Gordon, who is part of England's World Cup squad. "To play with Lamine (Yamal) and the rest of the players is very exciting for me," Gordon said. "The more players with quality you have around you, the better you're going to be. These players are at the very top level for a reason, they're the best players in the world. They have so much quality, and I'd seen this when we played them at St James's Park. We could not switch the ball." Newcastle drew with Barcelona 1-1 in the Champions League round of 16 first leg at home this season, before losing 8-3 to the Spaniards on aggregate. Signed from Everton in January 2023 for 45 million pounds (\$60.37 million), Gordon made 152 appearances for Newcastle, finishing with 39 goals and 28 assists and helping guide them to League Cup success last year to end a 70-year trophy drought. Gordon's England teammate Marcus Rashford joined Barca on a season-long loan from Manchester United and helped the Catalan club retain their LaLiga title. Rashford provided 14 goals and 14 assists in all competitions for Barcelona, who have not yet made his move permanent. The Athletic reported that Barca hold a €30 million option to sign Rashford but it runs out on June 15. Gordon joins a list of England internationals plying their trade abroad, including Bayern Munich's Harry Kane, Real Madrid midfielder Jude Bellingham and Al-Ahli forward Ivan Toney.

Canada's squad announced, with recovering Davies and high-scoring David included as expected

Toronto : Alphonso Davies will play for Canada at the World Cup, the final squad announcement showed on Friday, relieving the nation's fears that the injured captain wouldn't be better in time. The televised announcement of the 26-man team contained few surprises. As expected, Bayern Munich's Davies is included in the squad, as are other prominent players like Jonathan David of Juventus. "We really think this is our strongest group," said coach Jesse Marsch. Injuries have plagued the Canada team, but a number of recovering players are included in the squad. Much of the chatter around the announcement had been about Davies, who suffered a hamstring injury in the Champions League semi-final against Paris St Germain. Marsch has said Davies would join the rest of the team in Edmonton on May 31, allowing time for his injury to heal. His team mates spent this week training in Charlotte, North Carolina. Davies has been training separately this week, Marsch said. Marsch has struggled with his starting goalkeeper choice, acknowledging he feels "tormented" in picking between Maxime Crepeau of Orlando City and Dayne St. Clair of Inter Miami. His choice is not expected for a few days. The two keepers are friends and joked about how they are handling the stress of the selection process. "We're gonna play rocks-paper-scissors," about who gets to start, St. Clair said on the TSN TV broadcast. Davies is an exception to the general anonymity of soccer players to most Canadians, who favour ice hockey, American-style football, basketball and baseball. The Bundesliga fullback is known to millions, gathering swarms of fans at the 2022 World Cup. David also has a large following in Canada, particularly with its millions of citizens of Italian and Haitian descent. One popular 2022 player is not in the squad: Junior

Hoilett. The longtime squad member has slowed in his 36th year, and Marsch is known to emphasize speed. Marsch, an American, is a prominent coach, having managed both Germany's RB Leipzig in 2021 and England's

FC. Defenders: Moise Bombito from OGC Nice, Derek Cornelius from Olympique de Marseille, Alphonso Davies from Bayern Munich, Luc de Fougerolles from Fulham FC, Alistair Johnston from Celtic FC, Alfie



Leeds United in 2022-23, as well as winning numerous honours in the MLS, both as a coach and a player. Marsch said he wished injuries were not the focus of questions about Canada's prospects, saying the squad is the best Canada has ever had. "Guys are getting healthy," he said. Soccer has become a much more popular spectator sport in Canada in recent years, with English and Spanish football leagues becoming widely followed, a national league forming and Major League Soccer seeing strong fan support. Canada squad: Goalkeepers: Maxime Crepeau from Orlando City SC, Owen Goodman from Barnsley FC (on loan from Crystal Palace FC), and Dayne St. Clair from Inter Miami

Jones from Middlesbrough FC, Richie Laryea from Toronto FC, Niko Sigur from Hajduk Split and Joel Waterman from Chicago Fire FC. Midfielders: Ali Ahmed from Norwich City FC, Tajon Buchanan from Villarreal CF, Mathieu Choiniere from LAFC, Stephen Eustaquio from FC Porto, Marcelo Flores from Tigres UANL, Ismael Kone from U.S. Sassuolo Calcio, Liam Millar from Hull City FC, Jonathan Osorio from Toronto FC, Nathan Saliba from R.S.C. Anderlecht and Jacob Shaffelburg from LAFC. Forwards: Jonathan David from Juventus FC, Promise David from Royale Union Saint-Gilloise, Cyle Larin from RCD Mallorca, and Tani Oluwaseyi from Villarreal CF.

Teen sensation Fonseca comes of age by taming Djokovic at French Open

Paris : Novak Djokovic's latest bid to capture a record 25th Grand Slam title was left in tatters after a stunning third-round defeat by Brazilian teen sensation Joao Fonseca in an entertaining epic at the French Open on Friday. Djokovic's 4-6 4-6 6-3 7-5 defeat meant the 39-year-old Serb's wait to surpass Margaret Court will go on in the twilight of a glorious career, as the draw in Paris opened up further a day after world number one Jannik Sinner's shock exit. Victory in an epic clash lasting four hours and 53 minutes ensured that Fonseca became the first teenager to beat Djokovic at the Grand Slams, as he announced himself as another genuine contender to claim a maiden major crown. "I actually didn't believe I could win the match, I just played and enjoyed being on the court. What an idol we have and what a pleasure it was to step onto the court against him, so I thank him. I'm very happy," Fonseca said. "I was just trying to hit the ball as fast as I could, I mean Djokovic doesn't miss, and we still think he's 20. At the end of the match, he was more fit than me, which is crazy. But I felt as it was getting darker, it was a bit slower, and for me that was better, because I could produce a bit more power, for sure." Fonseca dedicated the hard-fought win to his mother, who was beaming in the stands on her birthday, while Djokovic walked off to a standing ovation from 15,000 fans and hailed his young opponent in his press conference later. "Incredible match to be part of. Obviously a tough one for me to lose, being two sets to love up, but huge credit to Joao for really deserving to win the match," Djokovic said. "I think he, without a doubt, was the better player in important moments in those crucial fourth and fifth sets. Some amazing exchanges and points. He just found

incredible shots, lines. It was amazing. "Not great for me to be facing a player playing at such a level, but I don't think I've done too much wrong with my game. It's just that he was just better."

FIRST-TIME CHAMPION

While Djokovic was less sure about his return next year, Roland Garros will crown a first-time Grand Slam champion, with holder Carlos Alcaraz skipping the tournament due to a wrist injury and Sinner going down early. "He definitely has the potential," a gracious Djokovic said of Fonseca's title chances. Alexander Zverev is another player who will sense a glorious chance after three unsuccessful visits to finals, and the German remained

round.

EARLY MARKER

A week after turning 39, Djokovic began strongly and played like a younger version of himself as he comfortably won five of the opening six games and put down a marker in the first set on a sun-drenched Court Philippe Chatrier. The Serb produced a stunning lob, a couple of heavy forehand winners and two delightful drops in that spell, almost schooling his 19-year-old opponent on the art of playing on Parisian clay, and wrapped up the set after a late Fonseca comeback attempt. Fonseca, who was still in his crib when Djokovic lifted his first Grand Slam title at the 2008 Australian Open, went toe-to-toe with his senior colleague in the next set only to drop his serve in the fifth game. It was the opening Djokovic needed, and the third seed took full control, letting out a roar when he went up 5-3 and pumping his fists after he closed out the set with a sharp passing shot through the middle. Fonseca raised his level to pull a set back and then broke early in the fourth, drawing thunderous applause from his fans, before levelling up the match at two sets all with some fiery ball-striking that at times left Djokovic in disbelief. The Brazilian came from 1-3 down in the decider and showed nerves of steel to stay level after 10 games and then break for a 6-5 lead, which gave him the perfect platform to close out a famous victory with three straight aces. "I just believed I could do the aces, it was crazy," Fonseca said. "I've never done that before. I'm super happy that I could finish like this." Fonseca faces twice runner-up Casper Ruud, who came through his own marathon clash against Tommy Paul with a 4-6 6-7(4) 6-4 7-6(4) 7-5 win.



on course with a 6-4 6-3 5-7 6-2 victory over French hope Quentin Halys. Dutchman Jesper De Jong beat 13th seed Karen Khachanov 7-5 5-7 6-2 6-7(2) 6-2, Spaniard Rafael Nadal downed Alex Michelsen 7-6(2) 6-7(5) 4-6 6-3 6-3 and Czech Jakub Mensik stunned eighth seed Alex de Minaur 0-6 6-2 6-2 6-3. They were joined by Andrey Rublev and Pablo Carreno Busta. There were few surprises in the women's draw as four-times champion Iga Swiatek defeated fellow Pole Magda Linette 6-4 6-4, while Elina Svitolina, Belinda Bencic, Marta Kostyuk and Mirra Andreeva all moved into the next

Captain Latham pleased with win as New Zealand down Ireland ahead of England tests

May 30 : New Zealand captain Tom Latham praised batter Tom Blundell and bowler Nathan Smith as the Black Caps warmed up for their first test against England at Lord's next week with a one-sided victory over Ireland in Belfast on Friday. The tourists won by an innings and 79 runs after putting aside their early struggles with the bat to secure a sizeable victory in the one-off test, with Blundell top-scoring with 186 runs during a 217-run partnership with Rachin Ravindra. "We were put under pressure on that first day - to be four down reasonably early with not many on the board," said Latham after seeing his side fall to 86 for 4 inside the opening 23 overs. "The introduction of Tom absorbed quite a lot of pressure, and be able to put it back on them and form a really good partnership, over 200." New Zealand fin-

ished their first innings on 490 for 8 declared before bowling Ireland out for 179 in their first stint at the crease, with Smith claiming six wickets for 40 runs as the visitors enforced the follow-on. The Irish could amass only a further 232 runs in their second innings to leave the New Zealanders comfortable winners before the first of their three tests against the English throughout June. "A really pleasing performance," said Latham. "We spoke as a batting unit of getting 400-plus in the first innings, and to get what we did and to push towards the back end to give us a chance to bowl before lunch. "Nothing can replicate time on the park and backing days up, so it was a really good test match for us. We'll take a little bit of confidence from that into what we've got coming up in a couple of weeks. But really pleased."

Iran beat Gambia as federation seeks FIFA clarity over visas

Antalya : Iran have asked FIFA to clarify when tournament visas will be issued following the relocation of their World Cup training camp from Arizona to Tijuana, a senior official from the Islamic Republic's national football federation (FFIRI) said on Friday. The national team came from behind to beat Gambia 3-1 in a World Cup warm-up match in the Turkish city of Antalya, days after their tournament preparations were disrupted by a base camp relocation to Mexico following approval from Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and FIFA. Iran are scheduled to play all three of their group matches in the United States but the team's participation in the June 11 to July 19 tournament has been in question since the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in late February. The relocation followed diplomatic friction and visa complications, with Iran now requiring cross-border clearance for their Group G matches against New Zealand, Belgium, and

Egypt in Los Angeles and Seattle. Mehdi Mohammadnabi, first vice president of FFIRI, told Reuters that Iran had written to FIFA seeking a firm answer after earlier applying for visas. "We sent an email to FIFA today and asked them to announce the result as soon as possible, to say on what day the visas will be issued, because we now need both multiple-entry Mexican visas and multiple-entry U.S. visas," Mohammadnabi said. "Based on the latest conversation we had, they replied that the administrative process will most likely be completed this week," he added. Mohammadnabi said FIFA had proposed the Tijuana camp and Iran had accepted the arrangement. "FIFA proposed this camp, and FIFA should tell you what has happened," he said. "In any case, we have accepted this camp, which is in the city of Tijuana in Mexico, and the team is ready to travel, which I think will take place in about a week."

Liverpool sack head coach Arne Slot after underwhelming season

Liverpool parted ways with Arne Slot on Saturday (May 30) after the Dutch manager who won the Premier League title in his first season failed to live up to expectations in a roller-coaster second season where they finished fifth. Former Feyenoord boss Slot replaced Jurgen Klopp in 2024 and the Dutchman impressed in his first season as Liverpool won the Premier League title on the back of Egyptian forward Mohamed Salah's 29 goals and 18 assists in the league. However, his second season at Liverpool transformed from a title defence into a desperate scramble for Champions League qualification while they failed to win a domestic cup, marking a dramatic downturn for the defending champions. Liverpool ended the season in fifth place with 60 points - their lowest tally since the 2015-16 campaign and 25 points behind champions Arsenal - and the club said they had to make the "difficult decision" to part ways with the Dutchman. 'CHANGE IS NECESSARY'

"The contribution Arne has made to Liverpool FC in the time that he has been with us has been significant, meaningful and - most importantly of all to supporters and ourselves - successful," Liverpool said in a statement. "From the moment that we first encountered Arne, it was immediately clear that he is an indi-

vidual who does not merely accept responsibility, he embraces it. "This was evident when he agreed to take over as head coach, when he guided us to the Premier League title and throughout the season just ended when he faced considerable challenges and burdens. "At the same time, we have collectively come to the conclusion that change is necessary in order for the club to keep moving forward. Again, it must be stressed that this is not a decision which has been reached lightly, anything but." Liverpool said the process to appoint a successor is under way, with media reports linking Andoni Iraola to the role after the Spaniard guided Bournemouth to sixth in the league as they qualified for the Europa League for the first time.

NO TROPHY DESPITE RECORD SPEND

Slot was heavily backed in the transfer market last year as Liverpool looked to build on the league title, spending a record £446 million (US\$600.27 million) which included a British record 125 million pounds for Alexander Isak on deadline day. But Liverpool struggled at both ends of the pitch while their once-feared intensity and pressing game - hallmarks of Slot's debut season triumph - visibly declined. Isak's injury problems did not make things easier for the Swedish striker to settle while Florian

Wirtz, another expensive attacking recruit at 116 million pounds, did not score his first goal until after Christmas. He finished the season with five league goals. Slot's relationship with the players also seemed to have broken down when Salah publicly questioned his team selection. Salah accused the club of "throwing me under the bus" while claiming he felt he had been scapegoated for their poor start to the season. The Egyptian forward left the club at the end of the season but not before a parting shot when he urged Liverpool to revive "heavy metal" football and rediscover their attacking identity made famous by Klopp. The writing was on the wall towards the end of the season when he was routinely booed by frustrated Liverpool fans. Slot and the squad also had to contend with the death of Portuguese forward Diogo Jota in a car crash in Spain last year. "He also helped guide the club through one of the most difficult periods imaginable following the loss of Diogo. The compassion and humanity he showed throughout that time said a great deal about him as a person," the club added.

"As such, we can only wish Arne well in the next stage of his coaching career, with our expectation being that he will continue to be successful."

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Myanmar President arrives...

traditions and exchanges. Earlier, Bihar Agriculture Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha accorded a warm welcome to President U Min Aung Hlaing at Gaya Airport upon his arrival in the state. The reception reflected the significance attached to the visit and the importance of strengthening engagement between India and Myanmar at multiple levels. President U Min Aung Hlaing was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising senior officials and Buddhist representatives, indicating the broad scope of the visit and its emphasis on cultural, religious and bilateral cooperation. The presence of senior officials and members of the Buddhist community highlighted the importance of people-to-people contacts and cultural diplomacy in enhancing relations between the two countries. Bodh Gaya has long served as a bridge connecting Buddhist communities from across Asia, and Myanmar has maintained a special relationship with the sacred town through its monasteries, pilgrims and religious institutions. Thousands of devotees from Myanmar visit Bodh Gaya every year to pay homage at sites associated with Lord Buddha, reinforcing a spiritual connection that transcends borders and generations. President U Min Aung Hlaing's visit therefore carries significance beyond ceremonial engagements, symbolising the continued commitment of both nations to preserving and promoting their shared Buddhist heritage. The visit also reflects the broader historical relationship between India and Myanmar, which has been shaped by centuries of cultural interaction, religious exchanges, trade links and people-to-people contacts. Buddhism has remained one of the strongest pillars connecting the two countries, serving as a source of mutual respect and understanding even as bilateral relations have expanded into new areas of cooperation. Observers view the President's visit as an opportunity to further strengthen these historical foundations while exploring avenues for greater collaboration in diverse sectors. The Mahabodhi Temple, where the President offered prayers, remains one of the most iconic symbols of Buddhist faith and attracts pilgrims from every corner of the Buddhist world. For Myanmar, a country with a rich Buddhist tradition and a deeply religious society, the temple holds particular significance. The President's visit to the sacred site resonated with the sentiments of millions of Buddhist followers who regard Bodh Gaya as one of the holiest places in the world. Similarly, the visit to the Sujata Temple underscored the importance of preserving and celebrating the cultural narratives that form an integral part of Buddhist history. Such visits contribute to strengthening cultural awareness and promoting a deeper appreciation of the historical links that unite communities across national boundaries. The scheduled visits to Myanmar Buddhist monasteries in Bodh Gaya are also expected to provide an opportunity for interaction with monks, religious leaders and members of the Myanmar community associated with these institutions. These monasteries serve as important centres of religious learning, cultural preservation and spiritual practice, helping maintain the close relationship between Myanmar's Buddhist community and India's sacred Buddhist sites. The presence of these monasteries in Bodh Gaya stands as a visible reminder of the enduring connections that have developed through centuries of pilgrimage and religious exchange. President U Min Aung Hlaing's engagement with these institutions is likely to reinforce the cultural and spiritual dimensions of India-Myanmar relations while encouraging continued cooperation in preserving Buddhist heritage. The visit comes at a time when both countries continue to recognise the value of cultural diplomacy as a means of strengthening bilateral ties and fostering greater understanding between their peoples. Shared heritage has often served as a foundation for closer cooperation, creating opportunities for dialogue, collaboration and mutual respect. Through visits to important religious and cultural sites, leaders can highlight common values and historical connections that contribute to stronger and more resilient relationships. President U Min Aung Hlaing's visit to Bodh Gaya therefore carries significance not only for religious communities but also for broader diplomatic engagement between India and Myanmar.

Nagaon DC Warns Officials...

Water and Sanitation Committee at the conference hall of the District Commissioner's Office, Sharma emphasized that every household must have access to safe and clean drinking water under the flagship Jal Jeevan Mission.

"Completing a scheme is only one part of the task. Officials must ensure that the local population receives water properly and regularly. They should engage directly with the community, explain the significance of the schemes, and address any issues that may arise after implementation," the District Commissioner said.

Highlighting the need for greater coordination among government departments, Sharma called upon officials to foster a spirit of cooperation and work collectively to achieve the objectives of the mission. He also directed departmental officers to ensure visible progress before the next review meeting.

The meeting reviewed the progress and challenges of various projects being implemented under the Jal Jeevan Mission and Swachh Bharat Mission across Nagaon district. The Executive Engineer of the Public Health Engineering Department presented the latest status of individual schemes through a detailed PowerPoint presentation.

Among those present at the meeting were Mehbub Moktar, Additional District Commissioner Dipankar Barman, representatives of other legislators, and senior officials from various departments, including Public Works (Roads), Irrigation, Information and Public Relations, Assam Power Distribution Company Limited, Education, Health, Agriculture, and Forests.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment to strengthening inter-departmental coordination and ensuring that the benefits of clean drinking water and sanitation initiatives reach every household in the district, in line with the vision of sustainable rural development and improved public health.

Lok Bhavan Assam...

Statehood Day of Goa at a function held at its premises here today.

The programme highlighted Goa's rich cultural heritage, historical legacy, vibrant traditions and its significant contribution to India's progress and unity. The celebration served as a platform to foster greater understanding and appreciation of the unique cultural identities that collectively strengthen the nation's social fabric.

Speaking on the occasion Joint Secretary Lok Bhavan, Arindam Barua, underscored the importance of such observances in promoting national integration and strengthening bonds among the people of different states. He also spoke on the historical and cultural linkages that unite the diverse regions of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Father Josly Fernandes of St. Xavier's School, Pamohi, provided an insightful overview of Goa's history, culture and tourism potential. He highlighted the State's distinct identity, scenic beauty and enduring appeal as one of India's most sought-after tourist destinations.

A documentary showcasing Goa's heritage, art, architecture, festivals and natural beauty was screened during the programme, offering a glimpse into the State's vibrant way of life.

Guwahati Municipal Corporation...

Commissioner Shri Chinmoy Prakash Phookan, and other senior officials of the Corporation.

In a significant step towards enhancing cleanliness and public participation under the Swachh Survekshan initiative, the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) has announced a community-based Swachhata Competition involving Mahila Samitis, Unnayan Samitis, Nagarik Samitis and clubs across the city.

The initiative aims to encourage mass participation and collective responsibility towards maintaining clean and hygienic neighbourhoods. Eligible Mahila Samitis, Unnayan Samitis, Nagarik Samitis and clubs comprising of 100 to 300 households will compete based on various cleanliness and environmental parameters.

The competition will be evaluated on a total score of 150 points, with marks awarded for key indicators including:

- All households should have twin bins (Blue and Green) for waste segregation. (10 points)
- Drains and nallas should be clean and well-maintained. (10 points)
- No open garbage points should exist in the area. (10 points)
- Residents should undertake plantation activities in public areas, roads, and lanes. (10 points)
- Display of social awareness messages on issues such as waste littering, drug abuse, education, health, etc. (10 points)
- No red spots or spitting stains should be visible in the locality. (10 points)
- No open urination points or open defecation by pet animals. (10 points)
- Households should practice home/on-site composting of organic waste. (10 points)
- Committee meetings should have been conducted within the last three months, with proper register maintenance. (5 points)
- Streets should be clean with no visible waste. (10 points)
- No construction materials or construction waste should be dumped on roads or public spaces. (5 points)
- Aesthetic enhancement through purple (colour of Kopou, foxtail orchid) painting of neighbourhood (shops, houses and walls) as decided by the respective Unnayan Samitis (50 points)

To recognize exemplary performance, GMC has announced the following awards:

- 1st Prize: Rs. 3,00,000
- 2nd Prize: Rs. 2,00,000
- 3rd Prize: Rs. 1,00,000
- 3 Consolation Prizes: Rs. 50,000 each

An exceptionally performing samiti will be awarded Rs 500,000.

In addition, all participating Samitis will receive certificates of participation in recognition of their contribution towards building a cleaner Guwahati.

As part of the programme, GMC also plans to appoint approximately 1,000 Swachh Sakhis, each responsible for monitoring around 300 households. Their role will include verifying waste collection practices and promoting adherence to sanitation guidelines at the community level.

To encourage greater public participation in waste management, the monthly household waste collection user fee has been reduced from Rs 50 to Rs 30 while ensuring the continued delivery of efficient door-to-door waste collection services.

The initiative reflects GMC's commitment to fostering community ownership of sanitation and cleanliness while improving the city's performance in Swachh Survekshan. Through active participation of local communities, women-led groups, and residents, GMC aims to create a cleaner, greener, and healthier urban environment for all.

Cachar Administration steps...

Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

During the drive officials inspected various public places and commercial establishments to ensure adherence to the provisions of the Act. A total fine of Rs 5,800 was collected from individuals and establishments found violating COTPA regulations.

The enforcement team was led by Arunabh Choudhury, ACS, Assistant Commissioner and Executive Magistrate, Cachar. Dr. Anindita Chanda, District Nodal Officer, National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) Piyali Chakraborty, District Programme Coordinator, Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), Mousumi Bhowmik, Field Level Coordinator, NCD Cachar and MAbhijit Bhattacharjee, Zonal Coordinator, Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF) also participated in the enforcement drive.

From Silchar Municipal Corporation, Enforcement Inspectors Neetin Kumar Das and Kunal Das also joined the operation and assisted in carrying out the enforcement activities.

The district administration also reiterated its commitment to creating greater public awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and ensuring strict implementation of tobacco control laws in the district. The drive formed part of the broader observance of World No Tobacco Day aimed at encouraging a healthier and tobacco-free society.

This is stated in a press release issued by Regional office of Information & Public Relations Barak valley Zone Silchar Assam.

NFR Achieves First-Ever Maize...

to Rudrapur City station. The movement generated freight revenue amounting to Rs. 30,20,944.

During May 2026, Northeast Frontier Railway registered significant maize loading traffic from stations under Alipurduar Division, strengthening freight movement and contributing substantial revenue earnings. On 15th May 2026, a maize rake was loaded from Tufanganj station to Bathinda in Northern Railway. This was followed by another maize rake from Tufanganj to Khem Karan on 21st May 2026. Further, a maize rake was dispatched from Falakata station to Kharagpur on 26th May 2026. The three rake movements collectively earned freight revenue of around Rs 90.19 lakh. The successful execution of this new freight movement highlights the growing importance of railways in strengthening agricultural supply chains and enhancing inter-state trade connectivity. It also reflects the continuous efforts of Northeast Frontier Railway towards promoting rail as a reliable, cost-effective and eco-friendly mode of transportation for agricultural commodities. Northeast Frontier Railway remains committed to expanding freight operations and facilitating efficient logistics solutions for farmers, traders and business communities. Such initiatives are expected to further encourage commodity transportation through railways while contributing to regional economic development and sustainable freight mobility, informed by CPRO of NFR Kapinjal Kishore Sharma.

2 teenagers missing from...

saying they had some special work. Today marks two days and there is no trace of the two youths. Despite family members searching along with relatives in various places, they have been unable to find any clue. This has caused great worry for both families. The families urgently appeal that if any well-wisher finds any information regarding the whereabouts of the two teenagers, they should contact the Itachali police outpost or these phone numbers: 8403822407 or 9954851088.

1st meeting of District Task...

country as well as in Jorhat district, was held today in the conference hall of the District Commissioner's office. The meeting was chaired by the Additional District Commissioner cum Mariani Co-District Commissioner, Shri Abhijit Gogoi. He called upon the health department as well as the concerned departments to play an active role to make this massive immunization drive completely successful.

In the meeting, the Additional Chief Medical and Health Officer (Family Welfare) of the district, Dr. Dipankar Hazarika, detailed the preparations being made by the district health department for the successful implementation of this National Immunization Day-2026 to be held on June 28. Under this campaign, every child from birth to 5 years of age in Jorhat district will be administered the polio vaccine. To achieve the goal of establishing India as a completely polio-free country, the Government of India has undertaken this special program so that not a single child is left out of receiving the polio vaccine.

Under the National Immunization Day to be held from June 28 to June 30, health workers will go door-to-door to provide the polio vaccine, and arrangements will also be made to provide the polio vaccine to children at Anganwadi centers, schools, and other public places. The district health department has appealed to every parent to ensure their child without falling prey to any kind of superstition regarding the administration of Pulse Polio. On the other hand, departments like Education, Labor, Transport, Social Welfare, and other concerned departments have been urged to extend full cooperation for the successful implementation of this special immunization program. Notably, the polio vaccination drive will be carried out under each health block in the district with the cooperation of various departments such as Social Welfare, Labor, Education, Transport, etc.

This important preparatory meeting was attended by Jorhat Zilla Parishad President Surajit Saikia, District Joint Director of Health Services Dr. Dilip Dev Sarma, Additional Chief Medical and Health Officer (Public Health) Dr. Bhaktimoy Bhattacharya, Head of the Department of Pediatrics at Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH) Professor Dr. Manab Narayan Baruah, Sub-divisional Medical and Health Officers of all Block Primary Health Centres of the district, Medical Officers of Urban Primary Health Centres, Heads of other concerned government departments, District Programme Manager of National Health Mission, and District Media Expert, along with the Block Programme Managers.

5 Suspected Dacoits...

the presence of local witnesses. During the search, police recovered several suspicious articles believed to be commonly used in house-breaking and dacoity operations. The seized items included a yellow-coloured iron hydraulic cutter, a small cutter, a knife, a V-shaped iron rod, an iron rod, two black masks, a hacksaw with blade, a plastic rope, and two black helmets. The occupants of the vehicle were identified as Md Sahidul Islam (43), Md Narjul Islam (28), Md Faijul Haque (24), Md Ismail Ali (24), all residents of Rangolu area in Nagaon district, and Abdul Khalil (25) of Doboka in Hojai district. During preliminary interrogation, police found the circumstances surrounding the possession of the recovered articles highly suspicious. Based on the nature of the seized equipment and other available inputs, investigators suspect that the group was heading towards Nagaon with the intention of committing a dacoity.

All recovered articles, along with the vehicle, were seized on the spot in accordance with legal procedures. The five suspects were subsequently brought to Borghat Outpost for further interrogation and necessary legal action. Police officials stated that the successful operation reflects the effectiveness of intelligence-based policing and proactive surveillance measures aimed at preventing serious crimes before they occur. Further investigation is underway to ascertain whether the apprehended individuals are linked to any previous criminal activities in the region.

IIT Guwahati Hosts Commemorative...

importance of strategic leadership in shaping future-ready institutions and societies. Speaking during the event, Brig. Grewal said, "In the rapidly changing global landscape, every Indian citizen is an integral part of national security. In modern times, fields such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, satellites, maritime domains, and critical infrastructure are the new-age warfare battlefields that need to be protected. Therefore, it is essential for citizens, especially the youth, entrepreneurs, technologists, and cyber professionals, to remain informed, resilient, and prepared to contribute in their respective capacities."

Brig. Grewal emphasised the significance of teamwork, and innovation in overcoming complex challenges and underscored the vital contribution of educational institutions in strengthening the nation's development journey. He said, "India's greatest strength lies in its young and intelligent human resource, which will continue to play a defining role in safeguarding the nation in the years ahead. With the help of new-age technologies, India is now more secure than it has been in over three decades, and we need to keep our guards up for the safety and security of our country."

Another key highlight of the event was a video tribute honouring the sacrifice and dedication of every individual involved in Operation SINDOOR.

Mr. Dilip Boro, Head of Section, Diversity and Equality Cell of IIT Guwahati, concluded the event with a vote of thanks in the presence of Prof. Anil Saikia, Associate Dean (Administration), and other members of the IIT Guwahati community.

The event created a platform for the students, researchers, and faculty members of the IIT Guwahati community for intellectual exchange with a distinguished military leader. It also provided an opportunity to gain broader perspectives on leadership values and the shared responsibility of institutions in driving national progress.

Cachar District Administration intensifies flood mitigation efforts through eviction drive

Encroachment-free access to facilitate faster restoration of Rangirkhal and Longaikhal drainage channels in Silchar

Silchar, May 30: In a significant step towards strengthening flood manage-



The ongoing restoration of Rangirkhal and Longaikhal is expected to significantly enhance the water-carrying capacity of these vital drainage channels, enabling more effective stormwater discharge and reducing the risk of urban flooding. The project is also expected to contribute to improved drainage management across several adjoining localities of Silchar town. The district administration has reaffirmed its commitment to undertaking all necessary measures to mitigate flood risks and safeguard public infrastructure and residential areas during the monsoon period.

This is stated in a press release issued by the Regional Office of Information and Public Relations, Barak Valley Zone, Silchar, Assam.

ment measures and improving urban drainage infrastructure, the Cachar District Administration on Saturday carried out an eviction drive along Ashram Road near Sunlight Hospital. The operation was conducted under the leadership of the Circle Officer, Silchar Sadar Revenue Circle, Arnab Baruah, ALRS, with active support from the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Cachar, the Water Resources Department, the Public Works Department (Roads), and the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL).

The drive was undertaken to remove encroachments from government land that had been hindering the movement and deployment of heavy machinery engaged in the ongoing desilting and restoration work of the Rangirkhal and Longaikhal drainage channels. The clearance is expected to facilitate the smooth execution of restoration activities and accelerate the progress of the project.

The initiative forms part of the district administration's broader strategy to improve the efficiency of urban drainage systems and strengthen preparedness against waterlogging and flood-related challenges during the monsoon season.

monsoon period.

This is stated in a press release issued by the Regional Office of Information and Public Relations, Barak Valley Zone, Silchar, Assam.

North East Public School, Rowta Celebrates 10th Foundation Anniversary

Tapen Sen Gupta, Correspondent, Orang, May 30: North East Public English School, a leading educational institution of the greater Rowta area under the 47 No. Mazbat Legislative Assembly Constituency in Udalguri district, celebrated its 10th foundation anniversary with great enthusiasm and cultural vibrancy.



Established in 2016, the school has successfully completed a decade of educational service. The entire campus witnessed a festive atmosphere as students from different classes performed colourful dance and musical presentations, making the celebration memorable and lively.

The programme was inaugurated with the ceremonial lighting of lamps by the school's Chairman Dr. Maheshwar Brahma and Chief Guest Varun Kumar, Commandant of the 23rd Battalion of the Border Security Force (BSF), Lalpul. Speaking on the occasion, the BSF Commandant praised the institution for bringing a positive educational transformation to the educationally backward Rowta areas.

Students who excelled in the recently declared HSLC and Higher Secondary examinations were felicitated during the programme. Chairman Dr. Maheshwar Boro stated that equal importance is given to Assamese and Bodo languages along with English-medium education. He also highlighted that student strength has grown from 200 in 2016 to over 1,200 today due to the dedicated efforts of the teachers and management.

Kanoi College, Dibrugarh Hosts State-Level Inter-College Quiz Competition 'Saptajyoti'

Jorhat Engineering College Wins Top Prize of Rs 20,000

M Hashim Ali correspondent Dibrugarh, May 30: "Saptajyoti" is not

merely a quiz competition; it is a confluence of knowledge, memory, and inspiration. Quiz competitions play a significant role in developing students' intelligence, IQ, and competitive spirit. These remarks were made by former minister and current MLA of the Dibrugarh Legislative Assembly constituency, Prasanta Phukan, while attending as the chief guest at the inaugural session of the state-level inter-college quiz competition titled "Saptajyoti." The competition was organized in memory of the seven students of Hostel No. 7 of Assam Engineering College, Jalukbari, Guwahati, who lost their lives in a tragic road accident on May 29, 2023. The event was organized by the Dibrugarh District Committee of

the Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Samiti in collaboration with the Internal Quality



Assurance Cell (IQAC) and the Dept of Sociology of HBS Kanoi College (Autonomous). The programme was held at the Lalchand Kanoi Auditorium of Hanumanbux Surajmal Kanoi College, Dibrugarh. MLA Phukan stated that although the concept of quizzes has evolved into a modern format over time, quiz culture in the form of general knowledge question-and-answer sessions existed in earlier times as well. He was warmly welcomed from the main entrance with traditional gayan-bayan performances and enlivened the gathering by sharing examples of old humorous quizzes. The programme commenced with a Borgeet performance by artist Shibani Konwar. Addressing the gathering, the MLA emphasized that quiz competitions encourage knowledge-seeking and foster a competitive attitude among students. He further observed that quizzes play an important role in assessing a person's intelligence and IQ and noted that the concept of quizzes has transformed with time. The event was anchored by Karishma J.K. Vaishnavi, Assistant Professor of the Department of Sociology, Kanoi College. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sashikanta Saikia, Principal of Kanoi College and President of the Dibrugarh District Committee of the Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Samiti, said that the grief caused by the untimely demise of the seven students could be transformed into strength through such noble initiatives. He stated that the primary objective of the programme was not only to honour the memory of the deceased students but also to promote knowledge, intellectual growth, and a com-

petitive mindset among students. Ad-

ressing students from various educational institutions across Assam, Dr. Saikia advised them to value time in order to achieve success. He also called for the formation of quiz clubs throughout the state, noting that quiz activities have a profound impact on students' mental and intellectual development. Delivering the welcome address, Anil Deka, father

of the late student Niyor Deka, said that Saptajyoti was not merely an event but an emotional tribute connected to the memories, pain, and dreams of the seven departed students. He added that the initiative seeks to nurture knowledge, logical thinking, empathy, and a spirit of healthy competition among the younger generation. Students from various institutions across Assam, including the National Institute of Technology, Silchar, Jorhat Engineering College, Cotton University, and Assam Medical College, participated in the competition. The quiz was conducted by Dipankar Kaushik, Deputy Editor of the Assamese daily Dainik Assam. Among those present at the programme were the parents of the seven deceased students, Kanoi College Vice-Principal Dr. Partha Ganguly, IQAC Coordinator Dr. Dipankaj Gogoi, Academic Council Member Secretary Dr. Jyoti Prasad Phukan, former Kanoi College faculty member Sudakshina Das, Vice-President of Dibrugarh Moina Parijat Ranjan Dutta, along with numerous distinguished guests and more than 300 students. In the competition, Jorhat Engineering College secured the first prize and received a cash award of Rs 20,000. The team from NIT Silchar won the second prize of ₹15,000, while Shiksha Valley School, Dibrugarh, claimed the third prize and received Rs 10,000. It may be noted that every participant in the competition was awarded a certificate, and two audience members also received special prizes. The vote of thanks was delivered by Upen Goswami, a member of the Lachit Puthi Bhoral, Guwahati.

Human-Elephant Conflict:: 2 Killed, including Woman, in wild Elephant attack at Kachua

Staff Reporter, Nagaon, May 30: Panic and grief swept across Kachua in Assam's Nagaon district after two people, including a woman, were killed in separate wild elephant attacks during the early hours of Saturday.

According to reports, a herd of wild elephants created havoc in Rangalu and Kandapara villages under Kachua Police Station at around 4 a.m. The deceased have been identified as Hanufa Khatun (45) of Rangalu Basti and Sahaj Uddin (42) of Kandapara.

Sources said that Hanufa Khatun was tragically dragged out of her house by a wild elephant and killed. In another incident, Sahaj Uddin lost his life in an elephant attack in Kandapara village.

Soon after receiving information, personnel from the police and forest department rushed to the spot, assessed the situation, and recovered the bodies for post-mortem examination. Reports also indicate that at least two other persons sustained injuries in the attacks.

The twin fatalities have triggered widespread fear and mourning across the region. Local residents expressed strong resentment

against the Forest Department, alleging negligence despite repeated warnings about the movement of wild elephants in the area. Villagers claimed that they had informed the Kampur Forest Range Office about the presence of the elephant herd on Thursday night, but no effective preventive measures were taken.

Wild elephant depredation has become a recurring problem in Kachua and adjoining areas. Residents alleged that the Forest Department has repeatedly failed to drive elephant herds away from human settlements, leaving villagers vulnerable to attacks.

Demanding immediate intervention, local people urged the government to provide adequate compensation to the families of the deceased and implement effective measures to protect residents from the growing menace of wild elephants.

Notably, with the latest incident, the death toll from wild elephant attacks in Nagaon district has risen to five within the last fifteen days, raising serious concerns over escalating human-elephant conflict in the region.



White Bucks (White Deer) fighting inside an enclosure at the Assam State Zoo-cum-Botanical Garden in Guwahati on Saturday, May 30, 2026. PIX BY - RUPJYOTI SARMAH

3 Day faculty development conclave on NEP 2020 begins at Bodoland University

Kanak Chandra Boro, Kokrajhar, May 30: A three-day faculty development conclave and training programme on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 commenced at Bodoland

University in the presence of leading academicians, education administrators and faculty members from various colleges across the BTC region. Among those present were

skill-based education. They highlighted the need for teachers to adapt to the evolving educational framework and contribute towards improving the quality of higher education.



University on Saturday.

The programme is being organized jointly by the Education Department of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) and Bodoland University with the objective of enhancing academic standards and equipping educators with the latest developments in higher education.

The inaugural session was held at the Jwhlwao Nileswar Brahma Auditorium of Bodoland

Bodoland University Vice-Chancellor Prof. B.L. Ahuja, Registrar Dr. Prahlad Basumatary, BTC Additional Chief Secretary Pranjit Kumar Owari and several college lecturers and education experts.

Addressing the gathering, the speakers emphasized the importance of the National Education Policy 2020 in transforming India's education system through innovation, multidisciplinary learning and

feature a series of technical sessions, expert lectures and interactive discussions focusing on curriculum reforms, innovative teaching methods, research, and academic excellence.

The three-day programme is expected to benefit a large number of educators and contribute significantly to strengthening the higher education ecosystem in the Bodoland Territorial Region.

Retired Principal Layan Ch Saharia passes away

Paban Kumar Kalita, Correspondent from Sipajhar, May 30: Retired Principal of Barampur Higher Secondary School Layan Chandra Saharia passed away at his Bordoulguri residence. He was 71 and left behind his wife, two daughters and one son. As one of the leading social activist he was actively associated with Darrang district Academic Council, Undivided Darrang district Kalita Jana Gosthi Sanmilan, Phutkitali Yuvak Sangha, Bordoulguri Sahitya Sabha and several other social organisations. He was one of the former president of Bordoulguri Sahitya Sabha. His death is widely mourned in the entire locality. Dr Paramananda Rajbanshi, MLA, Sipajhar Legislative Assembly Constituency, Bordoulguri Sahitya Sabha, Barampur Higher Secondary School, Undivided Darrang district Kalita Jana Gosthi Sanmilan, Pensioners Association, Parag Saharia, state executive member, All Assam Students Union have expressed their condolences on his death.

