



Glorious 16th Year

The Assam Post



PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM GUWAHATI & DELHI

Always with Truth & Justice

RNI REGD. NO. ASSENG 2010/34729 THE ASSAM POST

Vol- XVI Issue No. 300 ■ Thursday, June 04, 2026 ■ Guwahati Edition

E -Paper: centralread.com

Total Pages -12 Rs. 6.00

Brief Post

1000 Protest Staff Reporter, Nagaon, June 3: Thousands of residents of Tanpara in Nagaon's Herapatti area took to the streets on Tuesday in a massive protest against the growing drug menace in the locality. Youths, women, students, and other residents participated in the anti-drug campaign, demanding strict action against those involved in the illegal drug trade.

Amid rising public anger, protesters staged demonstrations at the residences of several persons allegedly linked to drug trafficking. During the agitation, some houses were vandalized, furniture was damaged, and a motorcycle was set on fire.

Local residents alleged that repeated appeals to curb drug-related activities had gone unanswered, while addiction among youths and related crimes such as theft and violence continued to increase.

Police from the Haibargaon Outpost later reached the spot and brought the situation under control. Residents have urged authorities to take strong and sustained measures to eradicate the drug menace and protect the younger generation.

CM Sarma called on President Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan

New Delhi, Jun 3: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma met President Droupadi Murmu in a courtesy call during his four-day visit to New Delhi and briefed her on Assam's remarkable progress as India's fastest-growing economy as well as the government's roadmap for the second term with a strong focus on development and public welfare. The meeting reflected the growing confidence of a state that has emerged as one of the country's most dynamic growth engines and highlighted the commitment of the Assam government to sustain the momentum achieved over the past several years through people-centric governance, infrastructure expansion, social welfare initiatives and economic reforms. The interaction between the Chief Minister and the President



respect, with the formal photograph of both leaders holding a floral basket against the backdrop of the Indian national flags symbolising the spirit of cooperative federalism and

ance while ensuring that economic progress translates into tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary citizens. The courtesy call formed an important part of the Chief

Minister's four-day visit to the national capital, which also includes meetings with the Prime Minister and several Union Ministers. These engagements are aimed at strengthening coordination between the state and central governments and securing greater support for Assam's development agenda. The visit underscores the importance of close collaboration between different levels of government in achieving shared national goals and reflects Assam's growing prominence in the country's development narrative. Following the meeting, Himanta Biswa Sarma described the interaction with President Droupadi Murmu as inspiring and said he was honoured to seek her guidance on Assam's journey of growth and development. The Chief Minister's remarks highlighted the

Contd to Pg 11.

NFR Inducts Advanced Rail-Borne Maintenance Vehicle to Strengthen Infrastructure Up-Keep in Challenging Terrains

Maligaon, Jun 3: Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has further enhanced its infrastructure maintenance capabilities with the induction of a Rail-Borne Maintenance Vehicle (RBMV), designed to undertake critical track and engineering maintenance activities with greater efficiency, precision and safety. The newly procured vehicle will play a vital role in supporting maintenance operations across difficult and strategically important railway sections, particularly in the under-construction and challenging Bairabi-Sairang



Contd to Pg 11.

"Mission Senehjori" Launched to Strengthen Assam's Muga Silk Ecosystem and Empower Weavers

New Delhi, Jun 3: A landmark initiative aimed at revitalising Assam's iconic Muga silk sector, Mission Senehjori, was launched today in New Delhi by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) in association with the Government of Assam. The launch



took place in the presence of the Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa

Mourning in Sivasagar Over the Death of MLA Akhil Gogoi's Mother Priyada Gogoi

Sabir Ahmed, Sivasagar, Jun 3: Priyada Gogoi, the mother of Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi, passed away today in Guwahati at the age of 96. News of her demise cast a pall of grief across Sivasagar.

After learning of her death, hundreds of people from Sivasagar, along with leaders of several community and ethnic organizations, gathered at Akhil Gogoi's residence in Selenghat, Moriani, to offer their condolences to the MLA and his family.

At around 4:00 PM, Priyada Gogoi's mortal remains were brought from Guwahati to her residence in Selenghat. The arrival of her body created an atmosphere of deep sorrow and mourning. Following religious rituals and customary ceremonies, a public tribute program was held.

Among those who paid their last respects were Sringkhal Chaliha, Central Administrative Secretary of Bir Lachit Sena;

Contd to Pg 11.

Dibrugarh BJP Welcomes Passage of UCC in the Assam Legislative Assembly

M Hashim Ali, Corres- spondent, Dibrugarh, **June 3:** Following the passage of the "Uniform Civil Code (UCC)-2026" in the Assam Legislative As-



sembly on May 27 across the state. To

inform the public about the objectives, necessity, and potential impact of the legislation on society, the Dibrugarh District Committee of the

Contd to Pg 11.

Delhi Hotel fire claims 21 lives

New Delhi, Jun 3: Twenty-one people lost their lives and more than 40 others were rescued after a devastating fire broke out at a hotel in Malviya Nagar, Delhi, in the morning, triggering a large-scale rescue and relief operation involving multiple emergency response agencies. The tragic incident sent shockwaves across the national capital and prompted swift action from Delhi Police, Delhi

Contd to Pg 11.

Ramkrishna honoured as Top Grade Artiste

Staff Reporter, Guwahati, June 3: The Sangeet Natak Academy Award 2017 winner Ramkrishna Talukdar was honoured with a Top Grade Artiste by the Information and Broadcasting Department, Government of India (Door Darshan). The honour was confirmed on 3rd of June. This honour is first time confirmed



Contd to Pg 11.

Cannabis Recovered from Truck

Mizanur Rahman, Correspondent, Gossaigaon, Jun 3: Police conducted an operation this afternoon at Srirampur in Gossaigaon, located along the Assam-West Bengal border, and seized a goods-laden truck after carrying out a search. During the search, the police confirmed the presence of banned cannabis (ganja) inside the vehicle. Acting on a secret tip-off, the truck was intercepted at Simultapu near the Assam-West Bengal border. The truck was parked beside National Highway No. 27, around 100 meters from the West Bengal border. The operation was conducted under

Contd to Pg 11.

Special Training on 'Krishi Mapper' held in Udalguri to Strengthen Agricultural Digitalisation

Tapan Sen Gupta, Corres- pondent, Orang, **Jun 3:** In a significant initiative aimed at strengthening technology-driven agricul-



tural governance, the District Agriculture Department of Udalguri on Wednesday organized a special training programme on the effective implementation of the "Krishi Mapper" system at the conference hall of the District Agriculture Officer's office. The

Contd to Pg 11.

Nagaon Electronic Media Association Elects New Office Bearers

Safiqur Rahman, Nagaon, Jun 3: The Nagaon Electronic Media Association (NEMA), one of the leading organizations of electronic media journalists in Nagaon, held its general meeting on Tuesday at its office located on Shankar Mandir Road, Amolapatty.

The meeting was presided over by senior journalist and noted writer Kanak Hazarika. During the session, veteran journalist Manabjyoti Bora was unanimously elected as President, while Jyotiprasad Bora was chosen as the General Secretary of the association.

The meeting also constituted a new executive committee, appointing several journalists to key positions, including vice presidents, organizational secretaries, cultural secretaries, publicity secretaries and executive members.

Apart from organizational matters, members discussed plans for celebrating NEMA's upcoming 16th Foundation Day and deliberated on the formation of a trust to strengthen the association's future activities.

Contd to Pg 11.

HARSHIT DECOR & INTERIOR

OUR GRAND SHOWROOM

YOUR DREAM HOME STARTS HERE. ALL YOUR NEEDS, ONE ROOF.

**BATHWARE FITTING • SANITARY WARE
DOOR FITTING • LOUVERS • PLYWOOD
KITCHEN ITEMS • SUNMICA • WALL PANELS
GI PIPES • LAMINATE • PVC & UPVC
PAINTS • DECORATIVE PANELS
CUSTOM HANDLES • HARDWARE**

PREMIUM BATHWARE & SANITARY

DESIGNER HANDLES & HARDWARE

CONTACT US:
Phone: 94351-48182, 78960-44934
Address: LOKHRA CHARIALI, NEAR SAWAGI PETROL PUMP, NH-37, GUWAHATI - 40
Gmail: harshitdecorinterior@gmail.com

Assam leads sustainable development in Northeast India

Guwahati: Assam is making remarkable strides toward sustainable development under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, embracing a comprehensive approach to minimize its carbon footprint while aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 on climate action through its "Assam 2030 Initiative," launched in 2016. This initiative outlines a well-defined strategy aimed at sustainable development, focusing on critical areas such as climate change mitigation, sustainable consumption, innovation, and environmental conservation. A significant step taken by the state government is the establishment of the Centre for Sustainable Development Goals, which acts as a key institution providing research, technical support, and strategic advice for the successful implementation of SDG-related initiatives. Additionally, Assam has implemented an institutional framework that ensures a systematic approach to SDG implementation, concentrating on capacity building through specialized training workshops while creating robust monitoring and evaluation systems to assess progress effectively. These efforts are supported by SDG-based outcome budgets, ensuring that public funds are allocated efficiently toward sustainability efforts, thereby maximizing the impact of investments made in this crucial area. Conclaves and conferences are regularly held to finalize strategy papers and action plans, reflecting Assam's steadfast commitment to achieving its ambitious sustainability goals. The state's dedication to sustainable development transcends mere policy frameworks, as evidenced by its active participation in various national and international forums. These platforms allow Assam to showcase its progress in achieving SDGs and share success stories with other regions, further enhancing its reputation as a leader in sustainable practices. Among the notable achievements under the Assam 2030 Initiative is the launch of the "Assam Climate Change Management and Adaptation Programme," which focuses on preparing the state for the challenges posed by climate change through comprehensive planning and community engagement. This program emphasizes the importance of local adaptation strategies, which are crucial for enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities in the face of climate-related impacts. Furthermore, Assam has made significant strides in promoting renewable energy, particularly through the establishment of solar power plants across the state, which are pivotal in reducing dependence on fossil fuels and increasing the share of renewable energy in its overall energy mix. This initiative aligns with the state's goal of achieving energy security while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Eco-friendly transportation is another critical area where Assam is making considerable advancements, with the state government introducing various initiatives aimed at reducing vehicular emissions. This includes promoting electric vehicles (EVs) and constructing supporting infrastructure such as EV charging stations, which are essential for encouraging the adoption of cleaner transportation alternatives. The push for eco-friendly transportation is not only aimed at reducing carbon emissions but also at ensuring a sustainable urban environment, thereby improving air quality and public health. Moreover, the state has been actively promoting sustainable agricultural practices, encouraging farmers to adopt methods that are environmentally friendly and resource-efficient. This approach not only aids in preserving the state's rich biodiversity but also ensures food security and livelihood sustainability for Assam's rural population, thereby addressing socio-economic disparities. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has consistently been a vocal proponent of sustainable development, reiterating the necessity of striking a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation. "Our goal is to create a harmonious balance between economic growth and environmental stewardship," he stated during one of the state's sustainability conclaves, emphasizing the integral role of sustainable practices in the state's developmental narrative. Assam's success in sustainable development has been bolstered by its strategic partnerships with national and international organizations,

facilitating knowledge sharing, capacity building, and resource mobilization. These collaborations have yielded impressive results, including a 45% increase in forest cover, a 30% reduction in carbon emissions, a 25% growth in the state's renewable energy sector, and a 20% increase in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, all standing as a testament to Assam's unwavering commitment to its sustainability goals. As Assam continues its journey toward a sustainable future, the state serves as a model for other regions to emulate. Its approach, which prioritizes both environmental conservation and economic development, demonstrates that sustainable growth is not only possible but essential for the long-term prosperity of its citizens. Assam's commitment to sustainability, backed by strong leadership and collaborative efforts, positions the state as a beacon for environmentally conscious development, inspiring other regions to pursue similar paths toward a thriving and sustainable tomorrow. This journey toward sustainability is not without its challenges; however, Assam is tackling them head-on by fostering a culture of innovation and resilience. The government is keenly aware that the effects of climate change and environmental degradation are multifaceted issues that require comprehensive solutions involving all sectors of society. To this end, Assam is engaging local communities in sustainability efforts, ensuring that they have a voice in decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods and environment. By empowering citizens through education and awareness programs, the state is fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards sustainable practices, enabling communities to play an active role in achieving SDG objectives. Educational institutions, NGOs, and local organizations are pivotal in disseminating information and promoting sustainable practices among the populace, thereby creating a more informed and engaged citizenry. Furthermore, Assam is leveraging technology to enhance its sustainability initiatives, utilizing data-driven approaches to monitor environmental changes and the effectiveness of various programs. This technological integration facilitates timely interventions and policy adjustments, ensuring that sustainability efforts remain responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities. The Assam 2030 Initiative is not merely a governmental agenda but a comprehensive framework that involves active participation from all stakeholders, including businesses, civil society, and academia. By creating an inclusive platform for dialogue and collaboration, Assam is ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered in its sustainability strategies, enhancing the effectiveness of interventions while fostering social cohesion. As the state moves forward, it remains committed to building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable urban planning, and ensuring the conservation of natural resources for future generations. The integration of sustainable practices into all sectors of the economy is essential for ensuring long-term viability and prosperity, and Assam is leading by example in demonstrating how proactive measures can yield substantial benefits for both the environment and the economy. The state's holistic approach encompasses a range of initiatives, from waste management and pollution control to biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation, all of which are interconnected and critical for achieving comprehensive sustainable development. In addition to these efforts, Assam is prioritizing the enhancement of water management systems to address the challenges posed by floods and droughts, which are increasingly becoming common due to climate variability. Initiatives aimed at improving irrigation practices and promoting rainwater harvesting are integral to safeguarding water resources and ensuring the agricultural sector's resilience against climate-induced stresses. By investing in smart water management technologies and infrastructure, Assam aims to create a sustainable framework for managing its water resources effectively, thereby contributing to both food security and ecological balance. The state's efforts also extend to community-led conservation initiatives that empower local populations to take charge of preserving

their natural environments. These grassroots movements not only enhance biodiversity conservation but also foster a sense of stewardship and responsibility towards the environment among community members. The role of indigenous knowledge in environmental management is being recognized and integrated into mainstream practices, ensuring that traditional ecological practices are preserved and promoted. In promoting sustainable tourism, Assam is also capitalizing on its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty, developing eco-tourism initiatives that generate employment while conserving the environment. This approach not only attracts tourists but also raises awareness about the importance of protecting natural ecosystems among visitors and locals alike. The Assam Tourism Development Corporation is actively working to create sustainable tourism models that align with the state's broader sustainability goals, showcasing the rich biodiversity and cultural diversity of the region while ensuring minimal environmental impact. The integration of sustainability into educational curricula at all levels is another critical aspect of Assam's development strategy. By incorporating environmental education into school programs, the state is instilling a sense of responsibility and awareness in young minds, preparing the next generation to be proactive stewards of the environment. This educational focus is complemented by community outreach programs that encourage active participation in sustainability initiatives, fostering a culture of environmental consciousness among all age groups. Moreover, the state government is committed to creating a legal framework that supports sustainable development initiatives, ensuring that policies and regulations are conducive to achieving long-term sustainability goals. This involves not only enacting laws that promote environmental protection but also ensuring that these laws are effectively enforced and implemented at all levels of governance. The establishment of environmental courts to expedite the resolution of cases related to environmental violations is a significant step in this direction, reinforcing the government's commitment to upholding environmental standards and ensuring accountability. As Assam continues to advance its sustainability agenda, it is also keeping an eye on the global commitments under international agreements like the Paris Agreement, aiming to fulfill its obligations while showcasing its efforts in combating climate change. The state is actively participating in global dialogues on sustainability, contributing its experiences and learning from other regions to refine its approaches. This engagement not only enhances Assam's visibility on the global stage but also facilitates knowledge exchange and collaboration on sustainability initiatives. Looking ahead, Assam envisions a future where sustainable development is woven into the fabric of everyday life, transcending beyond government initiatives to become a shared responsibility among all stakeholders. By fostering a culture of sustainability that encourages innovation, collaboration, and community engagement, Assam aims to build a resilient and sustainable society capable of navigating the challenges of the future. This holistic vision for sustainable development positions Assam as a trailblazer in the Northeast, showcasing how strategic planning, community involvement, and innovation can work in tandem to create a sustainable future. The state's commitment to environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic viability reflects a growing recognition that sustainable development is not just an option but a necessity for ensuring the long-term well-being of its citizens and the planet. As these initiatives unfold, Assam's story serves as an inspiring example for other regions to emulate, proving that with the right strategies, partnerships, and dedication, a sustainable future is not only achievable but within reach for all. The collective efforts of government, civil society, and the private sector in Assam demonstrate that sustainability can drive progress, create economic opportunities, and improve the quality of life for all, marking the state as a leader in the sustainable development movement.

Skill-Based Education to Empower Students for Better Futures

Guwahati: Skill-Based Education to Empower Students for Better Futures has received a significant boost in Assam as Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya passionately advocated for its implementation, emphasizing the transformative impact it can have on students' employability and entrepreneurial abilities. This initiative aligns closely with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes the urgent need for vocational training, industry-specific skills, and holistic development, thus preparing students to thrive in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing job market. The key highlights of this initiative include the vocationalization of school education, the establishment of skill hubs specifically aimed at addressing the needs of dropouts and students who have fallen out of the education system, and the introduction of impactful programs such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and the Employability Enhancement Training Programme. These programs aim to equip young people with the necessary skills to succeed in various sectors, ensuring that they are well-prepared for the demands of the workforce. During the 11th convocation of Assam Down Town University, held at its Panikhaiti campus, Governor Acharya reiterated the importance of skill-based education as he addressed a gathering of graduates, faculty, and dignitaries. He urged universities to evolve into pivotal centers for developing students' intellectual and practical abilities, ultimately transforming them into job creators rather than mere job seekers. In his address, the Governor articulated the critical role of higher education institutions, stressing that their responsibilities extend beyond merely making students employable; they should strive to cultivate an environment where graduates emerge as innovators and entrepreneurs who can contribute significantly to the economy and society at large. As the Visitor of Assam Down Town University, he underscored that the landscape of employment is undergoing significant changes, and institutions like Assam Down Town University should take the lead in equipping their students with a comprehensive skill set—intellectual, cognitive, and physical—to meet these new challenges effectively. He remarked that education should not only focus on material upliftment but should also aim to enhance moral and intellectual growth, thereby fostering a generation capable of navigating the complexities of modern society. Drawing attention to the graduates, Governor Acharya highlighted education's crucial role in driving societal progress, encouraging students to recognize that knowledge is not merely a tool for personal success but also a potent instrument for community upliftment and transformation. He acknowledged the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, attributing significant advancements in the academic sector to his initiatives aimed at revitalizing India's educational framework, which have paved the way for a more skilled and capable workforce. Referring to India's illustrious educational heritage, Governor Acharya pointed to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a transformative blueprint with the potential to invigorate the nation's academic vigor. He made it clear that the NEP is the first educational policy of the 21st century, encompassing a comprehensive approach to enhance educational quality and accessibility across India. Furthermore, he reminded the audience of India's rich historical legacy in education, citing ancient universities like Takshashila and Nalanda as exemplars of the country's longstanding commitment to learning and knowledge dissemination, which attracted scholars from all over the world. He expressed delight in the university's diversity, noting that students from various states and countries are pursuing their education at Assam Down Town University, which reflects both the cultural richness of the region and its educational strengths. In this context, the Governor also urged the graduating students to honor the contributions of their communities and work towards social betterment, underscoring the importance of giving back to society and addressing the needs of underprivileged populations. This call to action

resonated strongly during the convocation, echoed by Minister of Tourism Jayanta Mallabaruah, who urged the graduates to leverage their skills for the betterment of Assam and its people. The convocation ceremony also witnessed the conferring of honorary degrees, including a D.Litt awarded to Prof. Achyuta Samanta, the founder Chancellor of KIIT and KISS, recognizing his immense contributions to education and social service. A total of 1,610 students received degrees during the ceremony, including 1,202 undergraduates, 382 postgraduates, and 26 PhDs among the recipients. The event not only celebrated academic achievements but also marked a significant milestone in the lives of the students as they prepare to enter the workforce or pursue further studies, reinforcing the essential role of education in shaping future leaders. In summary, the 11th convocation of Assam Down Town University served as a vital platform for promoting the essential role of skill-based education in contemporary society. Governor Acharya's insights underscored the need for educational institutions to adapt to the evolving job market while fostering a sense of responsibility among graduates to contribute positively to their communities. The celebration of the students' achievements reflects a broader commitment to enhancing educational standards and promoting inclusive growth within Assam and beyond, laying the foundation for a generation of skilled professionals poised to meet the challenges of tomorrow. The emphasis on community engagement and social responsibility aligns seamlessly with the overarching goals of national development, ensuring that education remains a driving force for progress and empowerment in India. As these graduates embark on their respective journeys, they carry with them the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to effect meaningful change, embodying the spirit of service and commitment to societal upliftment that Governor Acharya passionately advocated during the convocation. The event underscored the transformative power of education and its capacity to inspire individuals to become catalysts for change within their communities. The vision articulated by the Governor, along with the call for skill-based learning, is integral to building a brighter future for Assam and India as a whole, ensuring that the next generation of leaders is equipped not only with knowledge but also with the empathy and dedication needed to uplift society as a whole. By nurturing both intellectual and practical skills, Assam Down Town University is poised to play a crucial role in shaping the future workforce, fostering innovation, and contributing to the broader socio-economic development of the region. As the university continues to evolve in response to the changing educational landscape, it remains committed to its mission of empowering students to become proactive contributors to society, ultimately leading to a more prosperous and equitable future for all. Through the implementation of skill-based education, the university aims to cultivate a generation of graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped with the practical skills necessary to thrive in a competitive job market, thereby reinforcing the need for ongoing investment in vocational training and skill development initiatives throughout the region. The strategic approach to skill-based education being pursued in Assam is characterized by a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, have the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary for successful careers. By establishing skill hubs, the government is not only addressing

the immediate needs of dropouts and out-of-education students but also laying the groundwork for a more inclusive education system that caters to diverse learning needs and aspirations. The vocationalization of school education is particularly significant, as it enables students to gain hands-on experience and practical skills alongside their academic learning, thereby enhancing their employability prospects upon graduation. Furthermore, collaboration with organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is crucial for effective governance and maximizing the benefits of skill-based education. This partnership is expected to facilitate the sharing of best practices, data-driven insights, and innovative solutions that can enhance the quality and effectiveness of skill development programs across the state. The emphasis on sustainable development and economic growth underscores the need for educational initiatives to align with the demands of the job market, ensuring that students are not only employable but also equipped to drive innovation and entrepreneurship within their communities. Governor Acharya's commitment to this initiative serves as a catalyst for change, fostering an environment where educational institutions can thrive as centers of skill development and innovation. By championing skill-based education, Assam is taking a proactive stance in addressing the challenges posed by unemployment and underemployment, particularly among the youth. The focus on entrepreneurship and job creation is particularly relevant in today's economic landscape, where traditional employment models are being disrupted by technological advancements and changing consumer demands. Therefore, equipping students with the skills necessary to adapt to these changes and seize new opportunities is paramount. The integration of entrepreneurship education into the curriculum further complements skill-based learning, encouraging students to think critically, solve problems creatively, and develop a growth mindset that is essential for success in the modern economy. Additionally, the government is actively promoting initiatives that facilitate internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training opportunities for students, thereby enhancing their practical experience and improving their employability upon graduation. These initiatives are designed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, ensuring that students graduate with the skills and experience needed to excel in their chosen fields. In conclusion, Assam's skill-based education initiative represents a transformative approach to education that seeks to empower students for better futures. By aligning with the National Education Policy 2020 and prioritizing vocational training and holistic development, the state is positioning itself as a leader in educational reform. The collaborative efforts between the government, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders are vital for creating an ecosystem that supports skill development and entrepreneurship, ultimately contributing to the economic growth and social progress of Assam.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Rupphanu Begum W/o Tarajuddin Ali Residing at Vill- Barbala, P.O- Barbala, P.S- Howly, Dist- Barcheta, Assam shall henceforth be known as Rupphanu Begum as declared before the Notary Public/ First Class Judicial Magistrate Barcheta Court vide Affidavit No. 1913/26 Dated. 26/3/26 Rupphanu Begum and Rupaban both are same and identical person.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Tarabhanu Nessa, W/o- Late Nur Hasan, residing at Vill- Radhakuchi Habi, P.O.- Radhakuchi, P.S.- Barcheta, Dist.- Barcheta, Assam, PIN- 781309, shall henceforth be known as Tarabhanu Nessa as declared before the Notary Public, Barcheta/Assam, vide Affidavit No.3005 dated. 20/4/26 Tarabhanu Nessa, Tarabanu Nessa and Tara Bhanu all refer to the same and identical person.

NAME CORRECTION

Through an affidavit before a Magistrate at Nagaon, I declare that my son's actual name is "KAUSHIK BORDOLOI" and his actual date of birth is - 25-02-2008, but in my service book , in the column of Family Member's details where his name and date of birth has been recorded as "KOUSHIK BORDOLOI" Date of birth- 16-02-2008 instead of "KAUSHIK BORDOLOI" Date of birth - 25-02-2008. Gunamoni Bordoloi S/o- Kiran Chandra Bordoloi, R/O- Lungamukh, P.S- Mikirbheta, Dist- Morigaon (Assam)

Tata Motors strengthens alternate fuel leadership in small commercial vehicles & pickups

Mumbai: Tata Motors, India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer, accelerated its push in alternate fuel mobility with the launch of the all-new Intra V40, reinforcing its leadership in the fast-growing small commercial

of max torque, the Intra V40 is engineered to deliver strong performance with superior fuel efficiency for demanding last-mile applications. Its 110-litre CNG tank supports extended range, while the bi-fuel architecture



vehicle and pickup segment. Designed for high-load, high-efficiency operations, the Intra V40 combines CNG + petrol bi-fuel technology with a best-in-class payload of 1,525 kg and a 2,960mm (9.7ft) long load body, enabling operators to maximise earnings while ensuring uninterrupted operations across varied routes. Powered by a 1.2-litre engine delivering 58 bhp of max power and 106 Nm

ensures flexibility across fuel types and uninterrupted operations. Built on Tata Motors' proven platform, it features a modern walk-through cabin, car-like driving dynamics, and front disc brakes for enhanced safety, control, and driver comfort over long operating hours. The vehicle is underpinned by a hydroformed chassis, delivering superior strength, stability, and refinement to ensure

consistent, reliable performance in real-world conditions. Commenting on the launch, Mr. Pinaki Haldar, Vice President & Business Head – SCVPU, Tata Motors Ltd., said, "The shift towards alternate fuels in last-mile cargo transport is accelerating, driven by the need for lower operating costs and greater flexibility. Tata Motors is at the forefront of this transition, with a clear focus on building the strongest and most comprehensive alternate fuel portfolio in the small CV and pickup segment. With the all-new Intra V40, we further strengthen our bi-fuel range and consolidate our leadership in alternate fuel mobility, while our expanding electric portfolio supports a calibrated transition towards greener last-mile transportation." With this launch, Tata Motors offers India's widest bi-fuel portfolio: Ace Pro Bi-fuel, Ace CNG 2.0, Intra V20 Gold, and the all-new Intra V40, spanning the full range of payload segments. Complemented by a rapidly expanding electric range — Ace Pro EV, Ace EV 1000, and Intra EV Pickup, this gives customers unmatched choice across fuel types, payload needs, and operating conditions, positioning Tata Motors as the most comprehensive provider of alternate fuel solutions in the segment. The Intra V40 is backed by Tata Motors' robust ownership ecosystem, including Sampoorna Seva 2.0 for end-to-end lifecycle support and Fleet Edge telematics for real-time insights, predictive maintenance, and uptime optimisation — enabling operators to maximise productivity and returns.

Birla Fertility expands reach in Arunachal with Pasighat hospital partnership

Guwahati: Birla Fertility & IVF, one of India's largest IVF networks, has entered into a strategic partnership with Health Care Hospital, Pasighat to make advanced fertility care more accessible to couples in Arunachal Pradesh. This collaboration marks a significant step towards expanding fertility services in the Northeast and reducing the long-standing dependence on metro cities and distant hubs for fertility treatments.

For patients in Pasighat and neighbouring districts of Arunachal Pradesh, fertility care has traditionally involved repeated long-distance travel, leading to financial strain, logistical challenges, and treatment delays. Through this partnership, key components of fertility treatments, including consultations, scans, ovulation monitoring, and IUI procedures, will now be available locally at Health Care Hospital, Pasighat, under the clinical guidance and protocols of the Birla Fertility & IVF, Guwahati team. This model enables continuity of care while significantly easing the burden on patients and their families.

Beyond clinical access, the partnership also focuses on building awareness and strengthening local medical capacity. As part of this initiative, Birla Fertility & IVF hosted 'Fertility Unscripted', a Continuing Medical Education, CME, programme in Pasighat, aimed at fostering dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration among gynaecologists, fertility specialists, and healthcare professionals from across Arunachal Pradesh and the Northeast. The CME created a platform to discuss evolving fertility treatments, best practices, and multidisciplinary approaches to reproductive healthcare in regions with limited specialist exposure.

Speaking about the collaboration, Dr. Kalpana Jain, Senior Consultant and Centre Head, Birla Fertility & IVF, Guwahati, said, "Advanced fertility care should not be defined by geography. This partnership is about enabling access and ensuring that couples in Arunachal Pradesh can begin and continue their fertility journey without disrupting their livelihoods or lives. By combining our clinical expertise with the strong local presence of Health Care Hospital, we aim to deliver care that is both advanced and accessible, while also empowering local clinicians through ongoing engagement and education." Dr. K Megu, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Health Care Hospital, Pasighat said, "Until now, patients from Pasighat and the surrounding regions had limited local options for fertility care. This collaboration changes that reality by allowing patients to access essential services closer to home, reducing both emo-

tional and practical challenges." Dr. James Modi, Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Health Care Hospital, Pasighat, added, "Timely consultation and the right guidance are critical when addressing fertility related concerns. The availability of specialist fertility services locally will enable couples to seek support sooner and move forward with treatment without unnecessary delays. The academic exchange through the CME further strengthens the ability to deliver informed, ethical, and patient-centric care in a region where specialist interaction has traditionally been limited."

As part of the CME, Dr. Kalpana Jain delivered a session on '10 Pearls for Successful IUI', sharing practical insights from her extensive clinical experience. A panel discussion on 'Recurrent Pregnancy Loss: A Multidisciplinary Approach' was moderated by Dr. James Modi and Dr. Mary Koyu, with participation from leading regional specialists including Dr. J Darang, Dr. A Tayeng, Dr. G Taba, Dr. M Mibang, Dr. K Yirang, Dr. O Jerang, Dr. K Tatin, and Dr. K Megu. Sessions were also led by Mr. Anil Hota on decentralising fertility care through regional collaboration and Dr. Mope Loyi on medical ethics, reinforcing the programme's holistic focus.

The programme concluded with an interactive Q&A session, allowing doctors to discuss real-world clinical challenges and share best practices. Through partnerships such as this, Birla Fertility & IVF continues to work towards reducing stigma, enabling early intervention, and building a trusted network of healthcare professionals in underserved geographies. Birla Fertility & IVF remains committed to its philosophy of 'All Heart. All Science.', combining advanced medical expertise with compassionate care to make fertility care more accessible, informed, and patient-centric.

Himalaya BabyCare Celebrates New Beginnings with the Launch of Golden Baby Gift Pack and a Chance to Win Gold Guwahati, 3 June 2026: Himalaya BabyCare, one of India's most trusted baby care brands, loved by babies, has announced the launch of the Himalaya Baby Golden Baby Gift Pack, a thoughtfully curated essentials pack designed to celebrate auspicious new beginnings while making baby care gifting more meaningful, accessible, and engaging.

In India, gifting for newborns is deeply rooted in emotion and tradition, with gold symbolizing purity, blessings, and prosperity. Building on this cultural insight, Himalaya BabyCare introduces the Golden Baby Gift Pack as a modern interpretation of this tradition, bringing together

trusted baby care essentials in a distinctive gold-themed pack that reflects both care and auspiciousness.

Priced at ₹501, the Golden Baby Gift Pack has been thoughtfully designed as a premium yet accessible gifting option for friends and family celebrating the arrival of a newborn. Curated with gentle baby care essentials in an elegantly presented pack, it offers a special gifting experience for modern parents while practically supporting their everyday baby care needs. Adding an interactive and engaging layer to the launch, the brand has introduced the Himalaya Golden Moments Program, an initiative that encourages parents to celebrate and share their baby's special milestones. Parents can participate by uploading a cherished memory of their baby along with a short story and stand a chance to win a gold voucher worth ₹1,00,000 or a silver voucher worth ₹10,000. Every valid participant will also receive an assured Himalaya BabyCare "My Baby & Me" e-book worth ₹500.

Commenting on the launch, Chakravarthi N. V., Director – BabyCare, Himalaya Wellness Company, said, "At Himalaya BabyCare, we understand that the journey of early parenthood is filled with moments that are deeply personal and worth celebrating. Gifting during this phase is not just about products, but about expressing care, blessings, good wishes, and trust. With the Golden Baby Gift Pack, we aimed to create a thoughtful offering that combines our trusted baby care range in a way that feels special and relevant for such occasions. Through our Himalaya Golden Moments Program, we are also creating a platform for parents to celebrate and share their baby's precious memories, while strengthening our connection with them through moments that truly matter.

The Golden Baby Gift Pack includes Gentle Baby Soap (125g), Baby Lotion (100ml), Baby Powder (100g), Baby Massage Oil (50ml), and Gentle Baby Shampoo (50ml), along with a soft cotton towel. Each product is specifically formulated for delicate infant skin, reinforcing the brand's commitment to gentle, safe, and effective baby care.

With this launch, Himalaya BabyCare continues to strengthen its presence in the baby gifting segment by combining trusted care with culturally relevant storytelling and meaningful consumer engagement.

The golden moments program will be amplified across retail and digital touchpoints, with a seamless participation journey enabled through QR codes leading to a microsite and WhatsApp integration, ensuring a seamless participation experience for parents.

Your Daily Dose of Summer Cool: Dabur Real Coconut Water

Guwahati: As temperatures soar across the country, Dabur India Limited, the country's leading science-based Ayurveda company, is positioning Real Activ Coconut Water as the ultimate natural solution for refreshing hydration with no added



sugar this summer. Packed with natural electrolytes and harvested from the finest coconuts, Real Activ Coconut Water offers a fat-free, low-calorie alternative to sugary carbonated beverages for refreshing hydration. "Real Activ Coconut Water is the perfect summer companion, offering a natural electrolyte boost to combat tiredness and support hydration. It provides a guilt-free hydration experience with no added sugar, while its inherent cooling properties support summer wellness by aiding digestion and promoting skin hydration & health. Now redefined for maximum convenience, our various pack sizes

ensure that this refreshing, healthy ritual is accessible anytime and anywhere for consumers on the go." Mr. Mayank Kumar, Vice President- Marketing, Dabur India Ltd said. "During the peak of summer, most people turn to sugar laden carbonated beverages without realizing each glass has 5 cubes of added sugar. Real Activ Coconut water helps provide refreshing hydration with no added sugar. Real Activ Coconut Water provides 100% coconut water goodness and has naturally present electrolytes. We are committed to providing consumers with a convenient, hygienic, and 100% natural hydration experience that fits seamlessly into their active lifestyles, whether they are at the gym, in the office, or traveling." Ms. Monisha Prasher, G.M. Marketing – Foods, Dabur India Ltd said. Beyond simple thirst-quenching, Real Activ Coconut Water offers a suite of holistic health benefits that support overall summer wellness. Its inherent cooling properties are instrumental in maintaining digestive health and soothing the system against heat-induced discomfort. Furthermore, the beverage acts as an internal hydrator that helps maintain skin health, promoting a natural glow even in harsh weather conditions. Being naturally fat-free and containing no added sugars or artificial flavors, it provides a zero-guilt ritual for those looking to stay fit without compromising on taste or purity. Real Activ Coconut Water is available in 200 ml and 1-liter Tetra Paks and PET bottles. Prices start from Rs. 30 to Rs 178 at leading retail stores, supermarkets, and e-commerce platforms across India.

Ai+ Smartphone Crosses 3 Lakh Units and more than ₹350 Crore Revenue in May 2026

Guwahati: Ai+ Smartphone today announced a major growth milestone, surpassing 3 Lakh units smartphone sales and generating over ₹350 crore in revenue in the month of May 2026 alone. It reflects the growing momentum behind Ai+'s vision of building a new age technology brand from India, one that combines innovation, accessibility and consumer first thinking to reimagine the smartphone experience for a new generation of users. Less than a year since entering the Indian smartphone market, Ai+ Smartphone has emerged as one of the fastest-growing smartphone brands in the country, driven by a simple yet powerful belief: technology should not be a privilege reserved for a few, it should be accessible to everyone. The milestone follows the successful launch of the Ai+ Smartphone Nova2, Nova2 Ultra & NovaFlip in April 2026 which has quickly emerged as a key driver of the brand's growth and reinforced the growing appetite among Indian consumers for technology experiences that combine innovation, design and value.

Commenting on this milestone, Madhav Sheth, CEO, Ai+ Smartphone and Founder NxtQuantum Shift Technologies, said, "Crossing 3 lakh units and over INR 350 Crore of revenue in a single month is not just an important business milestone for us, it is a validation of a larger movement. Our ambition has never been to only sell smartphones," added Sheth. "Our ambition is to help bridge the digital divide gap by making technology more accessible, more transparent, and more trustworthy for millions of people. And we are still at the beginning of that journey." Less than a year since its launch, Ai+ Smartphone has emerged as one of India's

most closely watched technology brands and through a growing portfolio of devices and a series of high-impact consumer initiatives and partnerships, the brand has steadily built momentum around its vision of creating a technology ecosystem from India.

The Ai+ Smartphone Nova2 Series is available exclusively on Flipkart and select retail outlets across India.

About Ai+ Smartphone Ai+ Smartphone is a next-generation brand built in India, delivering reliable and high-performance mobile experiences. Powered by NxtQuantum OS, India's first sovereign mobile operating system. The brand focuses on delivering a clean design, ensuring long battery life, and maintaining trusted software performance, all while keeping prices accessible without compromising the user experience.

From redefining smartphones to pioneering AIoT products as part of the company's Connected Ecosystem, Ai+ Smartphone is creating a new standard for trust, immersive experience, and accessibility. Rooted in a privacy-first architecture and a commitment to equitable access, Ai+ Smartphone stands for more than speed — it stands for India's next era of user-owned, future-ready technology.

About NxtQuantum Shift Technologies NxtQuantum Shift Technologies is a deep-tech Indian company building secure, sovereign digital platforms for a digital-first world. Founded by Madhav Sheth, the company develops NxtQuantum OS, India's first sovereign operating system, and is committed to building technology that is authored in India and globally competitive

Nissan posts 118% domestic sales growth in May, marks third straight month of gains

Guwahati: Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd. (NMIPL) today announced its sales performance, recording strong domestic sales growth of 118% year-on-year in May 2026. The company registered domestic wholesales of 2,948 units in May 2026. Exports stood at 5,023 units during the month, contributing to total wholesales of 7,971 units. This marks the third consecutive month of year-on-year domestic growth for Nissan Motor India, reinforcing the company's continued momentum in the Indian market.

Commenting on the performance, Mr. Saurabh Vatsa, Managing Director, Nissan Motor India Pvt. Ltd., said, "Our third consecutive month of year-on-year domestic sales growth is an encouraging reflection of the trust customers continue to place in Nissan. The response to the All-New Nissan GRAVITE, along with the continued strength of the Nissan Magnite, including the growing adoption of our CNG offerings, gives us confidence in our India strategy. As we gear up for the World Premiere of the Nissan TEKTON, our focus remains on ex-

panding our network footprint, enhancing accessibility, and delivering a stronger customer experience across the country.

Customer interest across Nissan's India line-up continued to remain encouraging, supported by the strong market response to the All-New Nissan GRAVITE. The New Nissan Magnite continues to remain a key pillar for Nissan in India, further consolidating the brand's presence in the competitive compact SUV segment and contributing to sustained customer engagement across key markets.

Nissan Motor India is also gearing up for the World Premiere of the Nissan TEKTON, marking an important milestone in the brand's India growth journey. The upcoming premiere reflects Nissan's focus on expanding its product portfolio and strengthening its presence in one of the world's most dynamic automotive markets. Nissan remains focused on sustaining its domestic growth momentum, expanding its network footprint, and enhancing customer experience across key markets.

TOSHIBA expands Indigenous m-GIS portfolio with delivery of 132kV system to POWERGRID

Hyderabad: Further expanding its indigenous m-GIS portfolio following the launch of India's first 220kV m-GIS system, Toshiba Transmission & Distribution Systems (India) Private Limited (TTDI) today announced the successful delivery of its indigenously developed 132kV m-GIS system to Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID). The development and delivery of the 132kV m-GIS system marks another major milestone in TTDI's ongoing efforts to broaden its indigenous mobile high-voltage solutions portfolio in India. Supplied to POWERGRID to meet utility-specific requirements, this achievement also supports India's continuing journey toward grid modernization, resilience, and indigenization. On this

milestone, Mr. Hiroshi Furuta, Chairman and Managing Director of TTDI said, "We are delighted to further expand our m-GIS portfolio with the delivery of the indigenous 132kV m-GIS system to POWERGRID. This closely follows the successful delivery of India's first indigenous 220kV m-GIS system a few months ago. This compact, highly mobile solution has been developed and engineered in India, reflecting our strong commitment to the Government's 'Make in India' mission. It leverages Toshiba's technology and local engineering capabilities, while meeting POWERGRID's stringent technical and operational requirements. As India's transmission sector evolves rapidly, TTDI will continue delivering customized, high-perfor-

mance solutions that enhance grid availability and resilience." The 132kV m-GIS system was developed by TTDI by leveraging Toshiba's engineering expertise, technology and local manufacturing capabilities in India, while incorporating POWERGRID's product specifications, and technical, quality, operational, and safety requirements. Built to operate reliably under challenging field conditions, the 132kV m-GIS system features a standardized "Connect-Operate-Disconnect-Redeploy" configuration that significantly enhances agility and operational flexibility across the grid. With its compact footprint and modular architecture, the system is optimized for rapid deployment in high-density environments and an expanding transmission ecosystem.

Editorial



MSP Support

The Government has taken a decisive step in farmers' interest by providing Minimum Support Price (MSP) support worth more than 4,800 crore rupees to them, reinforcing its continued commitment to ensuring income stability and price assurance for cultivators across key agricultural regions, as Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan approved the procurement of over 9,000 metric tonnes of sunflower at the MSP in Karnataka for the Rabi crop season for this year, a move that is being widely seen as a targeted intervention aimed at protecting farmers from market volatility and ensuring that they receive fair compensation for their produce, while the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare said that the total MSP value of this approval exceeds more than 69 crore rupees, adding that the decision is expected to ensure that sunflower farmers in Karnataka receive fair and remunerative prices for their produce, thereby strengthening their financial resilience and encouraging sustained agricultural activity in the region, particularly at a time when fluctuations in market demand and pricing pressures often create uncertainty for farmers cultivating oilseed crops, and the initiative also aligns with the broader objective of boosting domestic oilseed production, reducing dependence on imports, and supporting self-reliance in edible oil supply chains, which has been a strategic priority for the government, while in another significant development, the government has increased the maximum procurement limit of gram in Maharashtra for the Rabi 2025-26 season to 8 lakh metric tonnes, a substantial enhancement that reflects the scale of support being extended to pulse growers in the state, with the total MSP value of this decision exceeding over 4,800 crore rupees, indicating the magnitude of financial backing being provided to ensure that farmers cultivating gram are able to secure stable returns for their produce, and this decision is particularly important given the role of pulses in India's food security framework as well as in improving soil health through nitrogen fixation, making their cultivation both economically and environmentally beneficial, while the government has also extended the procurement period for gram in Maharashtra by 30 days, allowing purchases to continue until 29th of May, a measure that is expected to benefit farmers who were unable to sell their produce within the earlier deadline, thereby addressing logistical challenges and ensuring that no eligible farmer is left out of the procurement process due to time constraints or market access issues, and such an extension demonstrates the government's responsiveness to ground realities and its willingness to adapt policy implementation in order to maximise benefits for farmers, especially small and marginal cultivators who may face difficulties in transporting their produce or accessing procurement centres within limited timeframes, while the Ministry said that these steps are aimed at strengthening the agricultural economy by ensuring price assurance and reducing vulnerability to market fluctuations, highlighting the central role of MSP as a policy instrument in safeguarding farmer incomes and promoting agricultural sustainability, and it added that the Government has maintained that ensuring remunerative prices for farmers remains a key priority, a stance that is reflected in a series of initiatives and policy measures undertaken in recent years to enhance procurement operations, expand coverage, and improve efficiency in the delivery of benefits, while these measures are also expected to contribute to greater market stability by preventing distress sales and ensuring that farmers are not forced to sell their produce at prices below the MSP due to oversupply or lack of immediate buyers, thereby creating a more balanced and predictable agricultural marketplace, and the move is expected to not only benefit farmers in Karnataka and Maharashtra directly but also contribute to a broader sense of trust and stability in the agricultural ecosystem, as consistent and timely procurement operations reinforce confidence among farmers regarding the government's commitment to their welfare, encouraging them to invest in better inputs, adopt improved farming practices, and enhance productivity, while also supporting rural livelihoods and boosting economic activity in agrarian regions, and in a wider context, the emphasis on MSP-backed procurement is part of a comprehensive approach to agricultural development that includes investments in infrastructure, irrigation, technology adoption, and market reforms, all aimed at creating a more resilient and competitive agricultural sector capable of meeting both domestic and global demand.

Assam's Educational Progress Must Include Justice for Graduate Teachers

Assam today stands at a transformative moment in its history. Under the leadership of its two-term Chief Minister, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the state has witnessed an era of far-reaching development across multiple sectors. Roads have expanded into previously inaccessible regions, healthcare facilities have improved, administrative reforms have accelerated governance, and educational institutions have undergone substantial modernisation. The vision guiding these changes is clear: Assam must emerge as a stronger, more prosperous, and more educated state capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Among the many achievements of the present government, educational reform deserves special recognition. Education has rightly been treated not merely as a departmental responsibility but as a cornerstone of Assam's long-term development strategy. New schools have been established, existing institutions have been upgraded, recruitment processes have become more transparent, digital initiatives have been introduced, and efforts have been made to improve accountability throughout the educational system. These reforms reflect a genuine understanding that no society can progress sustainably without investing in the intellectual development of its people.

However, every meaningful reform must also have the resolve to identify and address unresolved concerns. Progress is most significant when it is accompanied by fairness, and educational transformation can achieve its full potential only when justice extends not merely to institutions and infrastructure but also to the teachers who form the backbone of the entire system.

Teachers occupy a unique position in society. They are not simply employees performing assigned duties; they are builders of human potential. Every doctor, engineer, scientist, administrator, entrepreneur, and public servant begins their journey under the guidance of a teacher. Educational policies, however ambitious, ultimately succeed or fail in the classroom. Buildings may be constructed, curricula revised, and technology introduced, but the effectiveness of these initiatives depends entirely upon the commitment and motivation of teachers.

Within Assam's educational framework, Secondary Graduate Teachers constitute one of the most important professional groups. They teach students during the crucial adolescent years when academic foundations are strengthened and future aspirations begin to take shape. Their role extends far beyond textbook instruction. They mentor students, maintain academic records, supervise examinations, support school administration, participate in government programmes, and frequently undertake numerous responsibilities beyond their formal teaching duties.

It is therefore both appropriate and necessary that the Government of Assam give careful consideration to the longstanding concerns raised by Secondary Graduate Teachers regarding pay anomalies arising from the implementation of the Assam Services Revision of Pay Rules, 2017.

The issue centres on disparities that emerged following the implementation of ROP 2017. While the objective of the revision was to modernise and rationalise salary structures, the practical outcome has been a situation where teachers appointed before and after a particular period receive significantly different salaries despite possessing identical qualifications, performing identical duties, and serving under the same service conditions.

Over time, annual increments have widened these differences further. Consequently, two teachers working in the same institution, teaching the same subjects and carrying the same responsibilities, may find themselves receiving substantially different salaries solely because of the dates on which they entered service. Such a situation naturally raises serious questions regarding fairness and institutional equity.

For affected teachers, the issue is not merely financial. Salary is also a reflection of professional recognition and institutional respect. When employees performing the same work receive different compensation without any difference in qualifications or responsibilities, dissatisfaction inevitably arises. These concerns affect morale, professional motivation, and confidence in the administrative system.

Importantly, the teachers who have raised these concerns have done so through democratic and lawful channels. They have submitted representations, approached authorities, and sought administrative review while continuing to discharge their duties faithfully. Their demands have largely been framed not as confrontational claims but as appeals for fairness and parity within an established framework of public service.

The matter also invites consideration from a constitutional perspective. Equality remains one of the fundamental principles upon which public administration in India is based. Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution uphold equality before the law and equality of opportunity in public employment. Judicial pronouncements over several decades have consistently emphasised that arbitrary distinctions among employees performing similar duties must be justified by clear and objective criteria. In the case of Secondary Graduate Teachers, the primary distinction appears to be the timing of ap-

pointment rather than any difference in educational qualification, competence, or job responsibility — circumstances that naturally and legitimately encourage calls for a comprehensive review.

A realistic assessment of the issue must also acknowledge the expanding responsibilities of teachers in contemporary society. The role of a teacher today extends far beyond classroom instruction. Teachers are frequently engaged in election duties, census-related activities, awareness campaigns, enrolment drives, examination management, and various government programmes requiring administrative support.

In many schools, especially those operating under amalgamated structures, Graduate Teachers contribute significantly to institutional management and academic planning. They guide students through increasingly complex curricula, address behavioural and psychological challenges among adolescents, and serve as an important bridge between schools and local communities. These responsibilities demand dedication, adaptability, and sustained professional commitment.

Government-appointed committees and educational reviews have on several occasions acknowledged the multifaceted workload carried by teachers. Such acknowledgements strengthen the argument that compensation structures should be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain aligned with actual responsibilities and evolving professional expectations.

The issue of pay anomaly should also be viewed within the broader context of maintaining balance among different teaching cadres. Every educational system requires rational distinctions based on qualifications, expertise, and responsibilities. Such distinctions are both legitimate and necessary. However, when disparities become disproportionate to actual functional differences, concerns regarding equity inevitably arise. Graduate Teachers have argued that successive revisions have altered historical pay relationships in ways that do not adequately reflect the responsibilities associated with their position. Addressing these concerns need not diminish the status or compensation of any other teaching cadre. Rather, the objective should be to create a coherent and balanced pay structure that recognises the contributions of all educators while maintaining fairness across the system.

Another important consideration relates to the preservation of historical pay relative. Salary structures are designed not only to provide compensation but also to maintain consistency between cadres over time. If established relationships are unintentionally disrupted during pay revisions, anomalies can emerge and subsequently widen through annual increments and promotional benefits. Many teachers believe that historical entry-pay norms were not sufficiently protected during the transition to ROP 2017. These concerns are substantial enough to justify a thorough and transparent review by the government.

The timing of such a review is particularly important. Discussions surrounding future pay revision frameworks are expected to gain prominence in the coming years. If existing anomalies remain unresolved, they may become embedded within subsequent revisions, making correction more complicated and financially burdensome. Addressing concerns before future revisions would therefore be both administratively prudent and fiscally responsible.

Beyond questions of salary and administrative procedure lies a broader educational consideration. Research from around the world consistently demonstrates a strong connection between teacher satisfaction and student outcomes. Teachers who feel respected, valued, and fairly treated are more likely to remain committed to their profession, invest additional effort in student development, and contribute positively to institutional culture. Educational excellence depends not only on infrastructure and policy but also on human motivation. A motivated teacher inspires curiosity, encourages creativity, and nurtures confidence among students — benefits that extend far beyond examination results and contribute to the overall development of society.

A constructive path forward would involve the establishment of a transparent review mechanism capable of examining the issue comprehensively. Such a review could analyse historical pay structures, evaluate workload patterns, assess financial implications, study inter-cadre relationships, and recommend appropriate corrective measures. An evidence-based approach would ensure that any decision ultimately reached is both fair and sustainable.

There is every reason to believe that the Government of Assam possesses the administrative capability and political will required to address this matter thoughtfully. The present administration has consistently demonstrated a willingness to undertake difficult reforms, resolve longstanding issues, and engage with complex policy challenges with both decisiveness and care. The concerns of Secondary Graduate Teachers deserve to be approached with that same seriousness and commitment.

The teachers seeking redress are not opponents of reform. On the contrary, they are among the very individuals responsible for translating educational reforms into tangible outcomes. Every improvement in learning standards, every successful examination, and every student

achievement is linked in some measure to the dedication of teachers working throughout the state.

Assam's educational transformation under Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma has rightly earned wide appreciation. The progress achieved in recent years represents a significant chapter in the state's developmental journey. Yet the true strength of any educational system lies not merely in its buildings, policies, or administrative frameworks but in the people who bring those structures to life. The question of pay anomaly among Secondary Graduate Teachers is ultimately a question of fairness, recognition, and institutional justice — a matter that can be examined, understood, and resolved through dialogue and evidence-based policymaking.

As Assam builds new institutions and creates new opportunities for future generations, it must also ensure that the teachers entrusted with shaping those generations receive the fairness and respect they deserve. Educational progress is most enduring when it is built upon a foundation of justice, and the pursuit of that justice remains an essential and inseparable component of Assam's continuing journey of transformation.

As Assam builds new institutions, expands educational infrastructure, modernises schools and colleges, and creates new opportunities for future generations, it must also ensure that the teachers entrusted with shaping those generations receive the fairness, dignity, and professional recognition they deserve. No educational reform can achieve its full potential if the concerns of those who stand at the heart of the learning process remain unresolved. Teachers are not merely employees within an administrative system; they are the architects of human development, the custodians of knowledge, and the guiding force behind the intellectual and moral growth of society.

The remarkable transformation currently taking place across Assam's educational landscape has been made possible not only through visionary policies and substantial public investment but also through the dedication, perseverance, and sacrifices of thousands of teachers working in schools, colleges, and educational institutions throughout the state. Many of these educators have devoted decades of their lives to nurturing students in challenging circumstances, often serving in remote and underserved areas where educational opportunities were once limited. Their contribution to the state's progress extends far beyond classroom instruction; they have played a pivotal role in promoting social mobility, reducing educational disparities, and empowering generations of young people to aspire towards a better future.

It is therefore imperative that educational advancement be accompanied by a commitment to equity and justice within the teaching profession itself. Issues relating to career progression, service conditions, pay parity, promotional opportunities, and professional recognition deserve careful and compassionate consideration. When legitimate concerns remain unaddressed for prolonged periods, they can affect morale and create a sense of uncertainty among educators who have otherwise demonstrated unwavering commitment to their responsibilities. A progressive educational system must strive not only for excellence in outcomes but also for fairness in the treatment of those who make those outcomes possible.

The aspiration for justice among teachers is not a demand for privilege but a request for equitable treatment and acknowledgement of their service. Graduate Teachers, Post Graduate Teachers, Demonstrators, and other educational professionals form an interconnected community whose collective efforts sustain the quality of education across Assam. Ensuring that their contributions are valued and that their grievances receive due attention strengthens the very foundations upon which educational progress rests.

The Government of Assam, under the leadership of the Honourable Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, has consistently emphasised the importance of education as a pillar of development. As the state continues its ambitious journey towards becoming a knowledge-driven and economically vibrant society, there exists a significant opportunity to further reinforce this vision by addressing long-standing concerns within the teaching community. Constructive engagement, transparent policy implementation, and a commitment to fairness can help build an educational environment where teachers feel respected, motivated, and fully empowered to contribute to the state's future.

A society's true commitment to education is measured not only by the schools it constructs, the institutions it inaugurates, or the policies it announces, but also by the value it places on its educators. Assam's progress story is already inspiring in many respects, yet its success will become even more meaningful when every teacher feels that their dedication has been recognised and their service honoured with justice. Educational progress is most enduring when it is built upon a foundation of fairness, mutual respect, and institutional trust. In that spirit, the pursuit of justice for teachers remains not merely an administrative necessity but an essential and inseparable component of Assam's continuing journey of transformation and inclusive development.

Heramba Nath
heramba2222@gmail.com

Rethinking Development in the Age of Climate Crisis



Gautam Sarmah
(gautam.his.rtv@gmail.com)

Human civilization has always evolved in close association with nature. Rivers guided human settlements, forests maintained ecological balance, fertile soil supported agriculture, and clean air sustained life itself. Yet, in the modern era, development has increasingly been measured through economic growth, industrial expansion, urbanization, and technological advancement alone. Consequently, the environment and natural resources, the very foundations of human progress have often been overlooked. Today, nations across the world compete to build larger cities, stronger industries, wider highways, and faster-growing economies. At the same time, however, humanity is confronted with climate change, environmental degradation, resource depletion, and growing ecological uncertainty. This reality raises one of the most significant questions of the twenty-first century: How can economic development be achieved without undermining the natural systems upon which human life depends?

The answer lies not in rejecting development but in redefining it. Development that leaves behind polluted rivers, degraded forests, toxic air, water scarcity, and environmental destruction for future generations cannot be considered genuine progress. Governments must therefore act not only as promoters of economic growth but also as custodians of ecological balance. The strength of a nation should be measured not merely by its industries, infrastructure, or economic output, but also by its ability to protect nature while pursuing development. In the coming decades, success will belong to those countries that achieve growth through foresight, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

The modern world stands at a critical crossroads where economic development and environmental conservation are often portrayed as opposing forces. Every nation seeks to strengthen its economy, improve living standards, and enhance global competitiveness through industries, smart cities, dams, airports, factories, and large-scale infrastructure projects. Development has become a symbol of national progress and global influence. Yet this rapid transformation has also coincided with rising temperatures, polluted rivers, disappearing forests, melting glaciers, devastating floods, prolonged droughts, severe heat waves, and alarming losses of biodiversity.

The central question facing governments today is not whether development is necessary, but rather what kind of development is desirable and at what environmental cost. For decades, many countries treated nature as an unlimited resource available for unrestricted exploitation. Forests were cleared in the name of industrialization and urban expansion, rivers were polluted by industrial waste, mountains were excavated for mining, and the long-term

consequences of fossil fuel dependence were largely ignored. Economic success was measured through production output, infrastructure growth, and GDP expansion, while environmental concerns were frequently dismissed as obstacles to progress.

However, the climate crisis of the twenty-first century has demonstrated that development without environmental responsibility ultimately becomes self-destructive. Economic and environmental policies can no longer be viewed separately because they are deeply interconnected. Environmental degradation directly affects agriculture, public health, water availability, air quality, soil fertility, food security, and economic stability. Environmental protection is therefore not merely a symbolic commitment or an emotional concern; it is a fundamental responsibility of modern governance.

Climate change is now recognized as one of the greatest challenges in human history. Scientific research, including studies conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has repeatedly warned that excessive dependence on coal, oil, and natural gas has increased greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, contributing to global warming. Consequently, cyclones, floods, wildfires, droughts, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events have become more frequent and severe across the globe. Countries such as India are particularly vulnerable because of their large populations, dependence on agriculture, and diverse geographical conditions. In recent years, many Indian states have experienced severe heat waves. Floods in Assam, Bihar, and Himachal Pradesh, cyclones along coastal regions, and growing water shortages in urban centres illustrate how environmental degradation disproportionately affects ordinary people, especially poor and marginalized communities whose livelihoods depend directly on natural resources.

Deforestation represents another major challenge closely associated with development. Across the world, forests continue to be cleared for roads, mining projects, urban expansion, hydropower schemes, and industrial corridors. While development projects are necessary, uncontrolled deforestation creates long-term ecological imbalances. Forests regulate rainfall, absorb carbon dioxide, prevent soil erosion, conserve biodiversity, and sustain indigenous communities. Their destruction threatens both wildlife and ecological stability.

India is home to a remarkable diversity of plant and animal species, many of which are now facing increasing threats. As forests shrink, wildlife loses its natural habitat, resulting in greater human-animal conflict. The growing incidence of elephants entering villages, monkey infestations, and encounters with tigers are all indicators of ecological imbalance. At the same time, indigenous and tribal communities, who have traditionally lived in and protected forest ecosystems, often bear the greatest burden of development projects. Their knowledge of conservation and sustainable resource use remains invaluable, yet their voices are frequently overlooked. Effective environmental governance therefore requires meaningful participation of local communities in decision-making processes.

Water pollution has emerged as another serious environmental challenge. Rivers that once nurtured civilizations are increasingly contaminated by industrial waste, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and plastic pollution. In many urban centres, rivers have ceased to function as sources of life and have instead become channels for waste disposal. Groundwater levels are

also declining rapidly because of excessive extraction and inadequate water management practices.

The conservation of rivers and wetlands is not merely an environmental issue; it is essential for agriculture, fisheries, transportation, public health, and livelihoods. Governments must therefore enforce strict regulations against pollution while investing in river restoration, wastewater treatment, rainwater harvesting, and sustainable water management systems. Air pollution has likewise become one of the gravest challenges of modern urban civilization. Vehicles, coal-fired power plants, industries, construction activities, and industrial emissions have made the air in many cities increasingly hazardous. Children, the elderly, and individuals suffering from respiratory illnesses are particularly vulnerable. Environmental protection is therefore directly linked to public health. Governments that fail to address pollution ultimately place enormous pressure on healthcare systems. Clean air, safe water, and a healthy environment should be recognized as fundamental rights of every citizen.

In this context, the concept of sustainable development assumes great importance. Sustainable development refers to economic growth that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. It does not oppose development; rather, it seeks to make development more balanced, responsible, and environmentally conscious. Modern infrastructure can be developed with adequate environmental safeguards. Industries can adopt cleaner technologies, public transportation systems can reduce emissions, urban green spaces can be expanded, and recycling initiatives can minimize environmental damage. Governments can encourage environmentally responsible construction, sustainable agricultural practices, and energy-efficient technologies.

Renewable energy has emerged as one of the most promising solutions for reconciling development with environmental conservation. Nations across the world are investing heavily in solar power, wind energy, hydropower, green hydrogen, and electric mobility. India, through initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance, has established itself as a significant global leader in the promotion of solar energy. The transition toward renewable energy is not only environmentally necessary but also economically prudent. Fossil fuels are finite resources and often become sources of geopolitical tension. Clean energy, by contrast, enhances energy security, reduces long-term costs, and creates new employment opportunities. Governments should therefore invest more extensively in green technology, research, and sustainable innovation.

However, policy commitments alone are insufficient if implementation remains weak. Many countries possess environmental laws, pollution-control regulations, forest conservation policies, and climate action frameworks, yet enforcement often remains inadequate. Corruption, illegal mining, political pressure, weak monitoring mechanisms, and corporate influence continue to undermine environmental governance. Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), which are intended to evaluate the ecological consequences of major development projects, are sometimes reduced to procedural formalities. Governments must ensure transparency, accountability, and independent scientific evaluation before approving large-scale projects. Irreversible environmental destruc-

tion can never be justified for short-term economic gains.

Urbanization presents another significant challenge. Rapid and often unplanned urban growth has generated severe environmental pressures, including traffic congestion, air pollution, water scarcity, waste-management crises, urban flooding, and the loss of green spaces. Smart development should not simply involve constructing taller buildings; it should focus on creating sustainable and livable urban environments. Environmental movements in India provide valuable lessons in this regard. The Chipko Movement in Uttarakhand and the Silent Valley Movement in Kerala demonstrated that environmental conservation is not opposition to development but rather a demand for responsible development. These movements highlighted the importance of community participation in protecting ecological resources and preserving biodiversity.

The relationship between development and environmental protection is frequently portrayed as a conflict between progress and backwardness. In reality, it is a question of responsibility, survival, and long-term vision. Humanity has reached a stage where the consequences of environmental destruction can no longer be concealed behind short-term economic gains. Floods, extreme heat, shrinking forests, polluted cities, and increasing shortages of clean air, water, and fertile land remind us that nature ultimately determines the limits within which civilization can endure.

Once environmental foundations are weakened, no economy — regardless of its strength, can remain stable in the long run. The true responsibility of governments today is therefore not merely to generate wealth, build infrastructure, or accelerate industrialization, but to ensure development that is sustainable, people-centred, and environmentally balanced. Policies driven solely by immediate profit or political expediency may yield temporary success, but they cannot secure a nation's future. Environmental conservation is also a moral responsibility toward future generations. Forests, rivers, mountains, air, water, soil, and oceans do not belong exclusively to the present generation; they are a shared inheritance connecting the past, present, and future. True progress cannot be measured solely through GDP or economic indicators. It must also be evaluated by the quality of the world we leave behind.

Governments that destroy forests, pollute rivers, and neglect ecological balance in the name of development cannot claim to be building genuine prosperity. Development without environmental responsibility is not progress; it is merely destruction unfolding at a slower pace. A society that protects its forests, rivers, biodiversity, climate, and natural resources ultimately safeguards its people, economy, and future generations. History will not remember us only for the roads, industries, or infrastructure we build. It will also remember how responsibly we preserved the planet for those who come after us. Ultimately, true development is not about conquering nature but about creating a harmonious balance between human aspirations and the environment that sustains life itself.

The writer works at the Department of History, Rabindranath Tagore State University, Hojai, Assam, India.

Guarding Malacca: India's Nicobar Vision



By: Shashanka Das
Email:shashankadasnov1@gmail.com

The Great Nicobar Island project represents one of the most consequential strategic decisions India has taken in the Indo-Pacific in recent decades. Located at the southernmost tip of the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago, barely 40 nautical miles from the Strait of Malacca, Great Nicobar is increasingly being viewed not merely as an infrastructure venture but as a geopolitical instrument. Described by some strategic thinkers as India's "unsinkable aircraft carrier," the island embodies New Delhi's effort to convert geography into influence at a time when maritime competition in Asia is intensifying.

The logic behind the project is straightforward. The Strait of Malacca is among the world's most critical maritime chokepoints, carrying a substantial share of global trade and energy shipments. For China, the route is particularly significant because much of its imported oil and

commercial cargo pass through these waters. This dependence has long been described by Chinese strategists as the "Malacca Dilemma" — the fear that a hostile power could threaten or disrupt these sea lanes during a crisis. India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands sit astride this maritime crossroads, offering a unique vantage point over the movement of ships between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Recent geopolitical developments have reinforced New Delhi's thinking. The disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz during the Iran crisis exposed the vulnerability of countries dependent on distant maritime chokepoints. For India, which experienced economic strain from energy supply disruptions, the lesson was stark: strategic autonomy requires not only military capability but also control over critical maritime infrastructure. The Great Nicobar project is therefore as much about resilience as it is about power projection.

The project envisages a transshipment port at Galathea Bay, an international airport, power infrastructure, and a greenfield township. The deep natural waters around Great Nicobar can accommodate large container vessels, enabling India to compete with regional transshipment hubs such as Singapore and Colombo. Currently, a significant portion of India's cargo is routed through foreign ports, resulting in economic losses and logistical de-

pendence. By creating a world-class maritime hub closer to major shipping lanes, India seeks to capture a larger share of global maritime trade while strengthening its role in regional supply chains.

Yet the economic rationale cannot be separated from the strategic one. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands already host India's only integrated tri-service military command. Facilities such as INS Baaz at Campbell Bay provide surveillance over key sea lanes and support maritime patrol operations. Expanded civilian infrastructure will inevitably enhance military logistics, surveillance capabilities, and operational reach. In an era where ports, airports, and logistics corridors increasingly possess dual-use characteristics, Great Nicobar could become a cornerstone of India's Indo-Pacific strategy.

China is unlikely to ignore these developments. Beijing has spent two decades expanding its maritime footprint through port investments and naval access arrangements stretching from the South China Sea to the western Indian Ocean. While the Great Nicobar project does not threaten China directly, it adds another variable to Beijing's strategic calculations. In any future crisis, India's proximity to the Malacca Strait would provide it with significant situational awareness and potential leverage. Even without physically disrupting shipping, the mere ability to monitor and influence maritime traffic can shape strategic behaviour.

As analysts note, maritime power today often lies not in closing chokepoints but in creating uncertainty around them.

However, strategic ambitions must contend with environmental and social realities. Great Nicobar is one of India's richest biodiversity hotspots. It is home to unique ecosystems, endangered species, coral reefs, and indigenous communities, including the Shompen tribe, one of the country's most vulnerable tribal groups. Environmentalists warn that large-scale construction could irreversibly alter fragile habitats and threaten indigenous livelihoods. Critics also question whether projections regarding tourism and commercial traffic are overly optimistic, citing past examples where infrastructure expectations exceeded actual demand.

The debate reflects a broader dilemma confronting emerging powers: how to reconcile strategic necessity with ecological stewardship. Proponents argue that major powers cannot afford to leave strategically located territories underdeveloped, especially when geopolitical competition is intensifying. Opponents counter that security cannot be pursued at the expense of environmental sustainability and indigenous rights. The challenge for policymakers is therefore not whether to develop Great Nicobar, but how to do so responsibly.

There is also the question of feasibility. The island lies in a highly seismic zone that experienced the devas-

tating 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Large-scale infrastructure projects in such regions require extraordinary investments in resilience and disaster preparedness. Furthermore, transforming a remote island into a global maritime hub will demand sustained political commitment, substantial capital, and long-term commercial viability. Strategic geography may provide an advantage, but geography alone does not guarantee success.

Nevertheless, the direction of India's strategic thinking is unmistakable. Great Nicobar represents a shift from a continental security mindset to a maritime one. It reflects New Delhi's growing recognition that the future balance of power in Asia will be shaped as much by sea lanes, ports, and logistics networks as by armies and borders. The island's value lies not only in its commercial potential but also in its ability to anchor India's presence at one of the world's most important maritime crossroads.

The Great Nicobar project may take decades to realise fully, and legitimate concerns about ecology and indigenous rights must be addressed with seriousness and transparency. Yet its underlying strategic logic is difficult to ignore. In a century increasingly defined by Indo-Pacific competition, India is seeking to ensure that geography becomes a source of strength rather than vulnerability. Great Nicobar is the embodiment of that calculation — an island project with implications far beyond its shores.

India-US Trade deal near completion: Piyush Goyal

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said that India and the United States have finalised most elements of the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement, with negotiations now focused only on a few minor issues, which he described as “commas and full stops”. His remarks come at a crucial stage in the ongoing discussions between the two countries, signalling that the much-awaited first phase of the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) is moving steadily towards completion. According to the Minister, the US negotiating team is currently in New Delhi to hold discussions aimed at finalising the first phase of the agreement, which is expected to lay the foundation for deeper economic engagement between the two nations in the coming years. The talks are being closely watched by industry leaders, exporters, investors and policymakers, as the agreement is expected to strengthen trade ties between two of the



world's largest economies and create new opportunities for businesses on both sides. India's chief negotiator for the talks is Darpan Jain, Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce, while the US delegation is being led by its chief negotiator, Brendan Lynch. The presence of senior officials from both countries underlines the importance attached to the negotiations and reflects the commitment of New Delhi and Washington to conclude the first phase of the agreement at the earliest. The current round of discussions is focused on resolving the remaining issues and finalising the legal and technical details that will form part of the final text of the agreement. Officials from both sides have been engaged in extensive consultations over the past several months to bridge differences and identify areas of mutual benefit. On February 3, India and the United States announced the framework for the first phase of the Bilateral Trade Agreement, marking a significant step forward in efforts to deepen economic cooperation. The framework established the broad contours of the proposed arrangement and provided a roadmap for subsequent negotiations. Since then, both countries have been working to convert the agreed framework into a comprehensive interim trade agreement that can deliver tangible benefits while also serving as a stepping stone towards a wider and more ambitious bilateral trade pact. The two sides are proposed to finalise the details of the interim agreement and take forward the negotiations under the broader Bilateral Trade Agreement across multiple areas. These include market access, non-tariff measures, customs and trade facilitation, and investment promotion. Market access remains one of the key pillars of the discussions, as both countries seek greater opportunities for their businesses and industries. India is interested in securing improved access for its exports in sectors where it enjoys competitive

strengths, while the United States is seeking greater opportunities for its products and services in the Indian market. Non-tariff measures have also been an important area of focus, with both sides discussing ways to reduce procedural barriers and improve transparency in trade-related regulations. Customs and trade facilitation measures are expected to streamline the movement of goods, reduce transaction costs and improve efficiency for exporters and importers. Investment promotion is another important component of the negotiations, with both countries recognising the need to encourage greater flows of capital and strengthen business partnerships. India and the United States issued a joint statement on February 7, finalising the framework of the first phase of the Bilateral Trade Agreement, which is also referred to as an interim trade agreement. The joint statement reaffirmed the commitment of both countries to advance negotiations under the broader India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement and highlighted the shared objective of expanding economic cooperation across a wide range of sectors. The framework represented a major milestone in the trade relationship between the two countries, demonstrating their willingness to work together to address trade concerns and create new avenues for growth. With the framework now in place, both sides are focused on completing the legal text that will formally define the rights, obligations and commitments contained in the agreement. Finalising the legal text is a critical step because it ensures clarity, certainty and enforceability of the provisions that have been negotiated. Trade experts note that while political understanding on broad issues is essential, the legal drafting process often requires careful attention to detail to ensure that the agreement accurately reflects the intentions of both parties. It is in this context that Piyush Goyal's reference to “commas and full stops” assumes significance, suggesting that the major substantive issues have largely been resolved and that negotiations are now concentrated on final refinements. The progress achieved in the talks reflects the growing importance of the India-US economic partnership, which has expanded significantly over the past decade. Trade and investment have become central pillars of the broader strategic relationship between the two countries, complementing cooperation in areas such as technology, defence, energy, education and innovation. Policymakers in both New Delhi and Washington have repeatedly emphasised the importance of strengthening economic ties as a means of supporting growth, creating jobs and enhancing resilience in global supply chains. The proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement is expected to contribute to these objectives by creating a more predictable and supportive environment for trade and investment. The negotiations are taking place against the backdrop of increasing economic engagement between India and the United States. Bilateral trade has grown steadily in recent years, driven by expanding demand, stronger business linkages and greater collaboration across multiple sectors. The United States was the second-largest trading partner of India in 2025-26, highlighting the scale and significance of the commercial relationship. Trade between the two countries covers a wide range of goods and services, including engineering products, pharmaceuticals, information technology services, textiles, agricultural products, machinery and advanced technology solutions. The growing trade relationship has also been supported by increasing investment flows, with companies from both countries expanding their presence in each other's markets. Business leaders have welcomed the progress in the Bilateral Trade Agreement negotiations, viewing the proposed arrangement as an opportunity to reduce barriers, improve market access and enhance competitiveness. Many industry stakeholders believe that an interim trade agreement could provide immediate benefits while creating momentum for broader negotiations in the future.

They argue that improved trade facilitation measures, greater regulatory cooperation and stronger investment provisions could help businesses operate more efficiently and expand their cross-border activities. Exporters, in particular, are hopeful that the agreement will address longstanding concerns related to market access and procedural requirements, enabling them to reach new customers and increase sales. Investors are also closely monitoring developments, as the agreement could create a more stable and predictable framework for economic cooperation. The discussions between India and the United States have involved multiple rounds of engagement at both the political and official levels. Negotiators have worked through complex issues, balancing national interests while seeking mutually beneficial outcomes. Such negotiations typically require extensive consultations with industry groups, government agencies and other stakeholders to ensure that the final agreement reflects a broad range of perspectives. The progress achieved so far indicates that both countries are committed to finding practical solutions and advancing the negotiations in a constructive manner. Officials from both sides have emphasised that the Bilateral Trade Agreement is intended to be comprehensive in scope and capable of supporting long-term economic growth. While the first phase is being pursued as an interim arrangement, it is also viewed as part of a broader process aimed at deepening trade and investment ties over time. The agreement is expected to build confidence among businesses and investors by demonstrating the commitment of both governments to strengthening economic cooperation. It could also serve as a platform for addressing emerging issues in international trade, including digital commerce, supply chain resilience and new forms of economic collaboration. Analysts note that the successful conclusion of the first phase of the Bilateral Trade Agreement would send a positive signal to global markets and reinforce the importance of India-US economic relations. At a time when countries around the world are seeking to diversify supply chains and strengthen economic partnerships, the agreement could help position India and the United States as key partners in promoting growth and innovation. It could also support efforts to expand bilateral trade volumes and create new opportunities for businesses operating in both markets. The emphasis on market access, non-tariff measures, customs and trade facilitation, and investment promotion reflects a recognition that modern trade agreements must address a wide range of issues affecting economic activity. By focusing on these areas, India and the United States are seeking to create conditions that support business expansion, encourage investment and improve the overall ease of doing business. As negotiations enter their final stages, attention is increasingly turning to the timeline for concluding the agreement and implementing its provisions. While officials have not publicly specified a completion date, the remarks by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal suggest that the process is approaching a decisive moment. The fact that discussions are now centred on relatively minor issues indicates that significant progress has already been achieved. Once the legal text is finalised and approved by both governments, the agreement will move towards implementation, opening a new chapter in the economic partnership between India and the United States. The coming weeks are therefore expected to be critical as negotiators work to resolve the remaining details and bring the first phase of the Bilateral Trade Agreement to fruition. The outcome of these efforts will be closely watched not only by policymakers and businesses in the two countries but also by international observers interested in the evolving dynamics of global trade. For India, the agreement represents an opportunity to strengthen engagement with one of its most important economic partners and enhance access to a major market.

Myanmar backs India's security concerns during bilateral talks

New Delhi: Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing has assured Prime Minister Narendra Modi that Myanmar's territory will not be allowed to be used against India's security interests, reaffirming a key commitment that has long remained central to cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. The assurance came during wide-ranging talks held in New Delhi, where the two leaders discussed measures to further strengthen bilateral relations across several sectors, including trade, defence, energy, connectivity, border management, development cooperation and emerging technologies. President Aung Hlaing, who is on a five-day visit to India, held detailed discussions with Prime Minister Modi as both sides reviewed the entire spectrum of India-Myanmar relations and explored new avenues for collaboration aimed at promoting growth, stability and prosperity in the region. Briefing the media after the talks, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the President of Myanmar reiterated the assurance that Myanmar's territory will not be permitted to be used against India's security interests. He noted that Prime Minister Modi, while reaffirming India's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar, stressed the importance of close cooperation between the two countries in addressing security concerns and maintaining peace and stability along their shared border. According to Mr Misri, both leaders underscored the importance of preventing the misuse of sovereign territory for activities inimical to their security interests, highlighting the need for continued coordination between the security establishments of the two countries. Security cooperation featured prominently during the discussions, reflecting the strategic importance of the relationship between India and Myanmar. The issue of certain militant groups operating in India's Northeast from the Myanmar side was also raised by Prime Minister Modi during the talks. The matter is of significant concern for India, particularly because Myanmar shares a long and sensitive border with several northeastern states. Mr Misri said Prime Minister Modi highlighted the importance of ensuring that territories under the jurisdiction of either country are not used by forces seeking to undermine peace and security. The discussions reflected the shared understanding between the two nations that stronger cooperation in dealing with security challenges is essential for regional stability and for the well-being of people living in border areas. Myanmar occupies a strategically important position in India's neighbourhood and serves as a vital bridge connecting South Asia with Southeast Asia. The country shares a 1,640-kilometre-long border with India, touching the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Given this geographical proximity, developments in Myanmar have direct implications for India's security, connectivity initiatives and economic engagement with Southeast Asia. The two leaders therefore devoted considerable attention to issues relating to border management and cross-border cooperation. Discussions focused on improving coordination between border authorities, facilitating legitimate movement of people and goods, and enhancing mechanisms to address security challenges while promoting economic activity in border regions. Alongside security matters, trade and economic cooperation emerged as another major area of focus during the talks. Both countries expressed interest in deepening economic engagement and creating greater opportunities for businesses and investors. The leaders reviewed existing trade ties and discussed ways to further expand commercial exchanges. They acknowledged the potential for stronger cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure development, manufacturing, agriculture, services and digital technologies. Both sides recognised that enhanced economic connectivity could contribute significantly to growth and development in the region while creating employment opportunities and improving livelihoods. Connectivity projects also figured prominently in the discussions. India and Myanmar have been working together on several initiatives designed to improve transport and communication links between the two countries and beyond. Such projects are viewed as crucial for strengthening regional integration and facilitating trade, tourism and people-to-people contacts. During the talks, both leaders emphasised the importance of timely implementation of con-

nectivity initiatives and reaffirmed their commitment to expanding physical and economic linkages. Improved connectivity is expected to play a vital role in supporting India's Act East Policy while also contributing to Myanmar's economic development and regional integration efforts. Cooperation in the energy sector was another key subject of discussion. The two sides explored possibilities for enhancing collaboration in traditional and emerging energy areas, recognising the importance of energy security for sustained economic growth. They also discussed opportunities for investment and partnership in energy-related projects that could benefit both countries. As nations across the world increasingly focus on sustainable development and energy transition, India and Myanmar acknowledged the need to explore innovative approaches that can support long-term energy requirements while contributing to broader development goals. Health and education were identified as important pillars of bilateral cooperation. Both leaders noted the value of strengthening collaboration in these sectors to improve human development outcomes and create greater opportunities for citizens. Discussions included possibilities for expanding educational exchanges, capacity-building initiatives and healthcare cooperation. India has traditionally supported Myanmar through development assistance and training programmes, and both sides expressed interest in building upon these efforts to address contemporary challenges and foster inclusive growth. Emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, also found a place in the agenda of the bilateral talks. Reflecting the growing significance of technology in shaping economic and social development, India and Myanmar expressed interest in forging closer cooperation in critical technologies. The



leaders recognised the transformative potential of artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies and discussed opportunities for collaboration in research, innovation, capacity building and digital development. Such cooperation could help both countries harness technological advancements to improve governance, enhance productivity and support economic growth. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the discussions covered the entire gamut of bilateral issues, underscoring the comprehensive nature of the relationship between India and Myanmar. In addition to trade, economic cooperation and security matters, the talks addressed regional developments and broader geopolitical issues of mutual interest. Both sides exchanged views on the regional situation and emphasised the importance of dialogue, cooperation and mutual respect in addressing challenges facing the region. The leaders reiterated their commitment to maintaining close engagement and working together in regional and multilateral forums to advance shared interests and contribute to peace and stability. Mr Misri observed that President Aung Hlaing's visit has once again reaffirmed the shared commitment of both countries to deepen their long-standing partnership and to work together for mutual benefit, growth and prosperity in the region. He noted that the discussions reflected the strong foundation of trust and cooperation that

characterises India-Myanmar relations and highlighted the determination of both sides to further strengthen this partnership in the years ahead. The visit comes at a time when both countries are seeking to expand cooperation across multiple sectors while addressing evolving regional and global challenges. The strategic significance of Myanmar in India's foreign policy framework was evident throughout the discussions. As one of India's key neighbours, Myanmar plays an important role in facilitating India's engagement with Southeast Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific region. Stable and constructive relations between the two countries are therefore viewed as essential not only for bilateral interests but also for broader regional cooperation and connectivity. Prime Minister Modi's reaffirmation of support for Myanmar's sovereignty and territorial integrity underscored India's commitment to maintaining a strong and respectful partnership with its neighbour. During his visit, President Aung Hlaing also met National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. The meeting provided an additional opportunity for discussions on key issues relating to bilateral ties, particularly those concerning security and strategic cooperation. Given the importance of security coordination between the two countries, the interaction between the Myanmar President and the National Security Advisor was seen as a significant component of the visit. The discussions are understood to have covered matters of mutual concern and explored ways to further strengthen cooperation in addressing security challenges. President Aung Hlaing is accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising several cabinet ministers, senior officials and business leaders, reflecting the importance attached by Myanmar to the visit and the broad scope of bilateral engagement. The presence of business leaders in the delegation also highlights the growing emphasis on economic cooperation and investment partnerships between the two countries. Their participation is expected to facilitate discussions on trade, industry and commercial opportunities, contributing to efforts aimed at expanding economic ties and encouraging greater private-sector engagement. Following the conclusion of his engagements in New Delhi, the Myanmar President is scheduled to travel to Mumbai for business and industry interactions as well as site visits. The Mumbai leg of the visit is expected to provide opportunities for engagement with Indian industry representatives and business communities. Such interactions are likely to focus on exploring avenues for investment, trade partnerships and industrial cooperation, further strengthening economic linkages between the two countries. The visit to Mumbai underscores the importance attached to commercial engagement as a key pillar of the India-Myanmar relationship. The discussions in New Delhi and the broader programme of the visit reflect the multifaceted nature of ties between India and Myanmar. From security cooperation and border management to trade, connectivity, energy, education, health and technology, the relationship encompasses a wide range of areas that are critical to the interests of both countries. The assurance provided by President Aung Hlaing regarding the use of Myanmar's territory against India's security interests was among the most significant outcomes of the talks, addressing a matter of particular importance for India. At the same time, the emphasis on economic cooperation, connectivity and technological collaboration highlighted the shared aspiration of both nations to build a partnership that supports development and prosperity. As India and Myanmar continue to strengthen their engagement, the outcomes of President Aung Hlaing's visit are expected to provide fresh momentum to bilateral relations. The discussions demonstrated a clear willingness on both sides to deepen cooperation, address common challenges and seize emerging opportunities. With strong historical links, geographical proximity and converging interests in regional stability and development, India and Myanmar remain important partners whose cooperation has significant implications for the future of the region. The visit therefore stands as an important milestone in the continuing evolution of bilateral ties, reaffirming a shared commitment to security, mutual respect, economic growth and regional prosperity.

8 chic designer crossbody bags for any occasion

In moments that call for both style and function, the crossbody is the ultimate go-to — it offers hands-free ease while keeping your essentials close. Be it a larger, boxy bag with jeans and a tee for a cool off-duty look, or pairing it with a sleek, preppy mini and heels for a night out, crossbody bags are the kind of accessories that are ready for any occasion. From bold statement pieces to timeless classics, here are eight to consider adding to your collection.

CELINE SMALL LOUISE BUCKET IN RAFFIA & CALFSKIN

For a laid-back yet chic look, reach for Celine's Small Louise Bucket Bag. Its design effortlessly combines rustic raffia with sleek calfskin, providing an ideal accessory for both casual and refined settings. Toss your sunglasses, phone, wallet, and sunscreen into this crossbody for a casual brunch or picnic in the park. The gold finishing also lends the bag a touch of elegance, allowing you to take it on a day in the city as well. The adjustable strap ensures comfort while carrying, making it a versatile choice for various outfits and occasions. Whether you're out on a leisurely day in nature or exploring urban landscapes, this bag keeps your essentials stylishly organised and easily accessible.

DIOR MEDIUM BOBBY BAG IN LATTE BOX CALFSKIN

The Dior Bobby Bag's hobo design is understated enough for every day, but the gold accents and signature military-inspired buckle add a touch of sophistication that elevates any outfit. This crossbody is designed with practicality in mind, offering compartments that easily accommodate essentials such as your phone, two card holders, sunglasses, and a lipstick. Whether you're running errands in the city or heading out for an evening with friends, its versatile style ensures it is both functional and fashionable. The bag's soft Latte Box Calfskin material provides a luxurious feel, so if you're looking for a combination of style and utility, the Dior Bobby Bag is an impeccable choice for your wardrobe.

CHANEL SMALL BOY HANDBAG IN LIGHTYELLOW

A Chanel Boy Bag will always be a closet staple. Renowned for its timeless design and versatility, the Boy Bag seamlessly balances the elegance Chanel is known for with a modern twist, making it ideal for any season. Opt for a butter yellow hue, and you have a fun crossbody that's a cute counter to the brand's more romantic classics. The bag's quilted pattern, synonymous with the storied house, adds a layer of sophistication, ensuring it stands out without overwhelming your look. Suitable for casual day wear or a chic evening out, this bag can easily become the centerpiece of your ensemble or complement other signature pieces in your wardrobe.

HERMES DELLA CAVALLERIA MININI GOLD

A lesser-known gem from Hermes, the Della Cavalleria's curved equestrian-inspired metal clasp undoubtedly takes the limelight. Designed to have a horse saddle-like silhouette, this bag boasts two spacious compartments and a central pocket — perfect to keep all your day-time necessities in. Beyond its practical interior, the bag's striking design, inspired by equestrian elegance, is a celebration of Hermes' rich heritage in craftsmanship and style. This crossbody bag's adjustable strap allows for comfortable wear and can be fitted to your desired length, whether you prefer to wear it across the body or on the shoulder.

THOM BROWNE MINI HECTOR CROSSBODY BAG IN PEBBLE GRAIN

Leave it to Thom Browne to transform a simple crossbody into a fun statement piece. An homage to the designer's beloved dachshund muse, the Mini Hector Crossbody is equal parts whimsical and wearable. Crafted in pebble grain leather with a sleek, structured body, this fun bag strikes the perfect balance between playful and posh. Its unique design not only showcases Browne's signature creativity but also adds an unexpected twist to any ensemble. The Mini Hector is spacious enough to carry your phone and wallet, and with its adjustable strap, adapting it to your preferred style is a breeze. Whether you are heading to a relaxed brunch or an afternoon event, this crossbody bag has got you covered with both style and functionality.

ALAI A LE COEUR BAG

Alaia's Le Coeur bag transforms the classic romantic motif into a modern, subtly edgy statement. With its unique heart shape, this bag effortlessly combines playfulness with sophistication, making it a fun piece to flaunt for a night-out with your best friends. The versatile design allows it to complement a variety of outfits, whether you're dressing up for a chic dinner or keeping it casual with jeans and a trendy top. Its compact size is perfect for carrying all your night-out essentials like your phone, lipstick, and a small wallet. Crafted with attention to detail, the Le Coeur bag stands out as a statement accessory.

LOEWE MINI PUZZLE FOLD TOTE IN SHINY CALFSKIN

The Mini Puzzle Fold Tote from Loewe is not just a bag but an embodiment of versatility and style. Any iteration of Loewe's iconic puzzle bag is always a good idea and the Mini Puzzle Fold Tote is a standout example. Worn on the shoulder, as a crossbody or a hand carry, this roomy bag is perfect to store your phone, keys, wallet, and makeup touch-ups for a day or running errands. It seamlessly transitions from daytime errands to evening outings, fitting perfectly with casual daywear as well as dressier looks.

Hooked on wearables: Is all of this self-monitoring making us paranoid?

Sarah Hills was worried about her heart. Her Oura Ring, a wearable device that tracks users' biometric data, including body temperature, heart rate and blood oxygen levels, was telling her something might be off. The ring provides some of its data in the form of scores, like a "readiness" score that uses "sleep quality, body signals, and activity levels to show how prepared you are to take on the day," according to Oura. Since receiving the ring as a Christmas gift, Hills had begun to compulsively check her stats. If her scores weren't good, the 22-year-old said, she would ruminate. When her stats wobbled this year, she tried to see a doctor. When she couldn't get an appointment soon enough, Hills, a recent graduate of Providence College in Rhode Island, and a friend drove to a pharmacy where she spent US\$50 (S\$64.41) on an at-home blood pressure cuff and monitor to put her mind at ease. "At that point I was, like, 'Oh my gosh, this thing is literally destroying my mind,'" she said. Eventually, Hills was able to see a doctor who told her she was healthy. The doctor did have one recommendation: Consider ditching the ring. In the eternal human quest to know thyself, it's tempting to seize on every bit of information we can glean. If you could know, for instance, not just that you slept 6.5 hours last night but also that 12 per cent of those hours were spent in REM sleep and that your overall "sleep efficiency" — time asleep versus time awake — was 85 per cent, as many pieces of wearable tech can tell you, why wouldn't you? At least that's the attitude of many people in our age of the quantified self, in which collecting sheaves of data about our bodies every day seems to hold the promise of bringing about a happier, healthier life. But what if all of that data is also heightening our stress? Is there a metric for that? While some Oura users say they enjoy the ring as a screen-free way to keep tabs on their bodies, several Oura owners, including Hills, described feeling increasingly anxious after using their devices. Rather than helping them feel more in control of their wellness, the data only made them fixate on potential — and often nonexistent — problems. You could call it Oura paranoia, though the phenomenon is hardly exclusive to any one product: As wearable health technology, including Apple Watches and Fitbits, have become more popular in recent years, some users have struggled with the unintended psychological side effects of the devices. Hannah Muehl, a physician assistant and dietitian in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, said she found that the quantified knowledge that she wasn't sleeping well made it even harder for her to get rest. She purchased her ring after having a baby to track her sleepless nights nursing. "It puts action behind things that should be innate, like reminding you to rest, reminding you sleep, all these things that shouldn't be innate practices," Muehl said. "Making them things that you're trying to hit as a goal — which inherently, if you're working hard toward resting, you're not actually resting." "I just felt like I couldn't do

anything right to make the ring happy," said Abi Caswell, a bakery owner who lives in New Orleans. She got her ring a little over a year ago to use the device's temperature-tracking feature for family planning. She liked the idea of

users and how we actually leverage this technology so the technology is serving us not the other way around," Patel said. He also stressed that users should take care not to compare their biometric data with others'. Some have found



not having "to remember to take out a thermometer every morning," Caswell, 29, said. She described becoming disenchanted with the device while opening her second bakery location. It was an intense period for Caswell, and the ring's regular reminders reinforced what she already knew: "My body was in maximum overdrive," she said. Seeing that spelled out in data only exacerbated her negative feelings, like giving an upset person the wildly unhelpful advice that he or she should just calm down. "It was stressing me out more thinking about how stressed I was," Caswell said, "and how I was not able to give my body and my health the attention that it needed." The proliferation of technology designed to track our biology can also make it easy to forget that human beings are pretty well equipped to do that on our own, said Jacqueline D Wernimont, an associate professor at Dartmouth College in the film and media studies department who specialises in histories of quantification. Wearable technology "takes the authority and knowledge out of the individual and places it in some third party, in a device that then the individual has to consult in order to try to decipher or understand her own body," said Wernimont, who is the author of *Numbered Lives: Life And Death In Quantum Media*. "That in and of itself produces a kind of anxiety," she added. Shyamal Patel, Oura's senior vice president of science, acknowledged that sometimes having access to so much data can be stressful for some users, including himself. Occasionally, he said, he takes breaks from wearing his ring if he is feeling overwhelmed. "I think it's on us as individuals and

that difficult, particularly as social media has amplified stories of people who they say their wearable tech tipped them off to serious medical conditions. "I knew that I had cancer before I was diagnosed because of my Oura Ring," Nikki Gooding, a 27-year-old nurse practitioner in Richmond, Virginia, said in a widely shared TikTok in March. Hunter Woodhall, a Paralympic track star, said his Oura Ring "may have saved my life" after it helped him seek treatment for appendicitis. Gooding, who was later diagnosed with lymphoma, explained how the ring's daily updates alerted her to "major signs of some sort of physical stress." Her temperature was consistently higher than usual, she said in an interview. "Please don't let this scare you!!" Gooding later wrote in a comment on her video, acknowledging a number of people who said Gooding's story was the reason they could never wear an Oura Ring. "I deal with a lot of patients who do have health anxiety, so I understood," Gooding said. These days, Muehl said, she has taken off her ring for good. She's back to using an old-school pedometer to track her steps. Caswell is still wearing hers. She said she checks it only twice a day. Hills abandoned the blood pressure monitor at her parents' house. She still sleeps in her ring a few nights a week. Wernimont said she regularly has classroom discussions with students who are overly reliant on their quantified experience, focusing closely on data and trusting those metrics over their own firsthand experiences and physical sensations. "They're like, 'The device said ...' or 'The monitor said ...,' and I'm like, 'But what did your body say?'"

Commendable Initiative by the Managing Committee of Sri Sri Kali Aithan Spiritual Heart of Dibrugarh: Felicitation of Distinguished Personalities and 65 Students

M Hashim Ali, Correspondent, Dibrugarh, Jun 3: In a special programme organized by the Managing Committee of the historic Sri Sri

cured First Division in the H S Final Examination and the HSLC Examination were felicitated. The meeting was presided over by Bhimakanta

Department of Computer Science, Engineering Science and Technology, Dibrugarh University. Among the distinguished guests present were Aniruddha Dutta, Professor of Manohari Devi Kanoi Girls College, Ratul Burhagohain, Secretary of Dibrugarh Sahitya Sabha and senior journalist; teacher Mami Mahanta; Panchayat President Devajani Chutia; Councillor Usha Gogoi; cultural activists Ruby Gogoi Handique, Bharati Duwara Baruah, Minakshi Das Baruah, and several other prominent personalities. The programme was conducted by Anjan Chetia, Joint Secretary of the Managing Committee. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sashikanta Saikia, Principal of Dibrugarh HBS Kanoi College,



Kali Aithan at the traditional Aithan auditorium in Dibrugarh, meritorious students who recently passed the HSLC and H S examinations with distinction were felicitated. The event was held with the objective of promoting educational and social advancement among the younger generation alongside religious and spiritual pursuits. In addition to honouring students, several distinguished individuals who have made significant contributions to society in various fields were also felicitated by the committee. Moving beyond purely spiritual activities, the committee aims to encourage the emerging generation to develop into responsible citizens and actively engage in various aspects of society. As part of this initiative, a total of 65 students who se-

Handique, President of the Managing Committee. During the programme, Prasanta Phukan, MLA of the Dibrugarh constituency, who has played a significant role in the development of the region and the district and has been closely associated with the Sri Sri Kali Aithan Managing Committee, was accorded a special felicitation on behalf of the committee. Other distinguished personalities honoured for their services to society included Dr. Sashikanta Saikia, Principal of Kanai College; noted personality Gunin Dihingia; senior social worker Anjan Gogoi; and Upen Baruah, former President of the Managing Committee, among others.

The keynote speaker at the event was Dr. Nami Baruah, Head of the

highly praised the committee's initiative. Addressing the students, he said, "Knowing oneself is the beginning of knowledge". Former Minister and MLA Prasanta Phukan also lauded this unique initiative of the Aithan Managing Committee. He stated that everyone should work together for the development of the Aithan and appreciated the committee's positive step toward nurturing the younger generation. He further remarked that the committee is one of the finest management committees in Dibrugarh. The programme was attended by Vice-President Bhuban Dutta, Anjan Gogoi, Sadananda Gogoi, Sunil Roy, Biplab Gogoi, Kushal Saikia, other members of the Managing Committee, and local residents.

Orang Police Organises Cleanliness Drive on National Unity Day

Orang, June 03: In a commendable initiative promoting civic responsibility and social unity, the Orang Police Station on Tuesday organized a special Shramdaan (voluntary labour) programme at Orang Chariali to mark the observance of National Unity Day. The cleanliness drive was conducted with the active cooperation of the Orang Trade Union.

The programme began at around 7:30 AM under the jurisdiction of the 47 No. Mazbat Legislative Assembly Constituency in Udalguri district. During the drive, police personnel, local businessmen and citizens jointly participated in cleaning roadsides, marketplaces, and areas in front of commercial establishments at Orang Chariali. Garbage and waste materials scattered across public places were removed to create awareness about cleanliness and public hygiene.

Among those present were newly appointed Officer-in-Charge of Orang Police Station Manoj Kumar Das, Sub-Inspectors Surajit Hazarika, Jitumoni Kalita, and Diganta Kumar Borah, Lance Naik Biswajit Sutradhar, Traffic Police In-Charge Tapan Paul, Police Constable Kanjana Rabha, Orang Trade Union President Tikaram Sharma, Finance Secretary Pranjal Bora, Assistant Secretary Seemanta Saikia and others.



The Endangered Green

Nature is the daughter of the Earth
Who is uniquely beautiful.
Just like a mother with love
Takes care of her child,
Nature also gives us
Life saving energy,
And takes care of us
Season after season.
When the Earth dresses in green,
The fast growing trees
Look very beautiful,
And a sweet, gentle breeze
Flows in the wind.
But today, because of
Selfish human beings,
Mother Earth's heart is trembling.
The greenery is slowly disappearing.
The temperature is rising,
Breaths are getting shorter,
And Nature's heart is in danger today.
By neglecting Mother Nature,
Humans are inviting their
Own destruction.
World Environment Day is coming,
Let us all make a new promise,
To plant a sapling on Mother Earth's chest
And bring back the beautiful
Festival of greenery once again.

Munmii Bhattacharya
Ph- 8486731180
Guwahati

OECD cuts 2026 global growth forecasts over Mideast war fallout

Paris: The global economic outlook hinges on how long the war in the Middle East lasts, with recession in some countries and sharply higher inflation a real possibility if it drags on into next year, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation



and Development warned on Wednesday (Jun 3). If the conflict proves short-lived, Gulf oil and gas production could gradually return to pre-crisis levels from the third quarter with shortages confined to Asia and cushioned by strategic reserves and shipments from other producers. In that baseline scenario, global growth is projected to slow from 3.4 per cent in 2025 to 2.8 per cent in 2026 before picking up to 3.1 per cent in 2027, broadly in line with the OECD's March forecasts. But if energy disruption persists well into next year, global growth could slow sharply to 2.1 per cent in 2026 and 1.8 per cent in 2027 - rates rarely seen outside major crises such as the 2008 to 2009 financial crash or the COVID-19 pandemic. Some economies could fall into outright recession, with Asian countries reliant on Middle East energy supplies expected to be hit hardest. Higher energy prices could add 0.4 percentage points to global inflation in 2026 and 1.3 percentage points in 2027, likely prompting central banks to hike interest rates by 0.5 to 0.75 percentage points in the short term. In the baseline scenario, the OECD forecast that inflation across

G20 economies would peak at 4 per cent this year before slowing to 3.1 per cent next year with interest rates largely on hold this year and cuts expected next year. Global trade growth is set to moderate following a strong 2025, though robust demand for AI-related goods and investment, especially in Asia, should provide some support.

UNEVEN OUTLOOKS ACROSS MAJOR ECONOMIES

In the baseline scenario, stronger energy exports are expected to support US growth, partly offsetting the drag from higher prices on household purchasing power. Growth is projected to ease from 2.1 per cent in 2025 to 2.0 per cent in 2026 and 1.8 per cent in 2027. In Europe, eurozone growth was seen slowing from 1.4 per cent to 0.8 per cent this year before rising to 1.2 per cent next year as resilient labour markets and higher defence spending help offset government belt-tightening. In Britain, growth is projected to slow to 0.9 per cent this year before recovering to 1.1 per cent in 2027 as global trade stabilises and financial conditions ease. In Asia, China was seen slowing from 5.0 per cent growth in 2025 to 4.5 per cent in 2026 and 4.3 per cent in 2027 with ample energy reserves limiting exposure to oil price spikes. Exports are set to benefit from lower U.S. tariffs and a competitive tech sector, although a property slump remains a drag. Japan is expected to be among the hardest-hit by trade disruptions linked to the Gulf conflict, with growth slowing from 1.1 per cent in 2025 to 0.6 per cent in 2026 before edging up to 0.8 per cent in 2027, a downgrade from March. While subsidies will help cushion the energy shock, the OECD said Japan needs a "clear and credible" plan to rein in public finances over the medium term as interest rates rise.

UK interior minister condemns violent reaction to handcuffed student's murder

London: Britain's interior minister Shabana Mahmood on Wednesday (Jun 3) condemned as "completely unacceptable" violent protests which broke out over the case of an 18-year-old who was handcuffed as he lay dying after his killer falsely alleged a racist attack. The murder of student Henry Nowak last year has dominated headlines in Britain since the sentencing of his Sikh killer on Monday, with the footage of officers ignoring a dying innocent man sparking a political storm about how police treat different ethnicities. The government welcomed a move by police chiefs to review guidelines, which were drawn up in response to well-documented incidents of racism in policing, but denied the existence of a "two-tier" system, a much-discussed topic on social media. "There can be no justification for hijacking this tragedy to stir up violence and disorder," Mahmood said, after protesters clashed with police last night in the port city of Southampton, close to where Nowak was killed. A further protest is planned outside parliament in London at midday (7pm, Singapore time) on Wednesday. Nowak's family called his treatment by police "inhumane and degrading", but in a statement outside court, his father said his death should not be "used to create further division, hatred or tension". Court pathologists found that Nowak would have died of his injuries at the scene regardless of the emergency response. He was handcuffed by officers as he lay dying. They later called an ambulance and performed CPR.

POLICE TREATMENT SPARKS ANGER ACROSS BRITAIN

The populist leader of the anti-immigrant Reform Party Nigel Farage said that Nowak's death showed how police officers gave preferential treatment to ethnic minorities, and that people should respond with "pure cold rage". Elon Musk, the United States billionaire who is a vocal critic of Britain's government, police, and anti-racism and diversity policies, has posted

repeatedly about the case, saying on Tuesday: "Did you know that official police policy requires them to be racist against Whites?" Mahmood on Tuesday said everyone was equal before the law, and urged people to wait for the outcome of an investigation by the Independent Office of Police Conduct into how

the Nowak incident was handled. But the case has already prompted a reassessment. The National Police Chiefs' Council said they were reviewing the language of guidance given to officers, which under the Police Race Action Plan advises officers not to be "colour blind" in their approach and to treat ethnicities differently. "It's right that it should be reviewed, but I think that shouldn't be taken to mean we need to rip up the whole system, we don't," policing minister Sarah Jones told Sky News. Hampshire Police has apologised and said in a statement on Tuesday that one of the officers involved in the arrest had resigned, while three others were being treated as witnesses in the investigation. In the attack last December, Nowak's killer Vickrum Digwa, 23, lied



was sentenced to life in prison on Monday. Farage, whose party is leading in the polls, tried to draw parallels with the 2020 killing of George Floyd in the US, which sparked the Black Lives Matter movement, contrasting it with what he said had been a muted response to the Nowak death. Floyd had said "I can't breathe" as a police officer knelt on his neck for several minutes. At a protest on Tuesday evening, hundreds of people waved flags and held up signs saying "Henry Nowak", "Unite the Kingdom" and "I Can't Breathe". Mahmood called the violence that later followed, when objects were hurled at police, "disgraceful", and said those responsible would face the full force of the law. Two arrests were made, one for assaulting an officer.

has for decades been Pyongyang's main trading partner and a key source of diplomatic and economic backing. Seoul's presidential office said at the weekend that it was aware of Brunson's remarks and has been "maintaining communication at various levels regarding all relevant issues". Local media outlets including News1 and JTBC reported that Seoul has raised concerns with the United States. USFK commander Brunson said in the interview, "When (the Chinese) look out from the east coast of China, what they see is there's Korea, the dagger in the heart of Asia." Brunson also compared Japan to a "shield that's sort of a backstop" against China's regional ambitions, according to a transcript posted by the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College. Beijing's embassy in Seoul last week condemned the remarks as having "truly crossed the line" and "rife with hostility and aggression toward China", asking whether they were authorised by Washington.

Hostilities flare in Iran war, with Kuwait airport hit by drone strike

Dubai: Gulf hostilities flared again on Wednesday (Jun 3), with an Iranian missile attack damaging Kuwait's airport and the US military carrying out strikes near the Strait of Hormuz, as diplomacy between Washington and Tehran showed little progress. The latest flare-up, which sent oil prices up more than 1 per cent, comes with the conflict stalemated in a shaky ceasefire and the Strait of Hormuz largely closed, more than three months after initial US and Israeli strikes on Iran. Kuwait's foreign ministry said that one person was killed in the attack, which caused damage to "vital infrastructure including diplomatic missions". Flights at Kuwait International Airport were suspended and diverted elsewhere until further notice, the state news agency said, citing aviation authorities, after an Iranian drone and missile attack on its T1 building. The attack caused injuries and severely damaged some airport facilities, it added, but gave no further details. Kuwait Airways suspended operations after the attack, the airline said in a statement. Hours after, the Kuwaiti aviation authority said that it would resume flights for Kuwait Airways, its flagship airline. Bahrain's army intercepted three missiles and several drones, it said in a statement. Earlier, the US Central Command said two Iranian missiles shot at Kuwait fell short or broke up in flight, while several ballistic missiles aimed at regional targets failed and three missiles heading for Bahrain were intercepted. Since the conflict began, Iran has repeatedly attacked targets in the Gulf region home to US military bases. Central Command said the US military also downed Iranian drones targeting civilian ships in regional waters and US forces in Kuwait, and carried out strikes on Qeshm Island near the Strait of Hormuz following attempted attacks by Iran. Iran's state media said the elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) attacked the headquarters of the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, as well as an airbase and helicopters in an unspecified regional country. It sent missiles and drones in response to what the IRGC described as a US attack on a communications tower south of Qeshm. Central Command said all the attacks failed, however, and US forces stayed ready to repel "unwarranted Iranian aggression". Last week, Iran and the United States said they had reached a tentative initial agreement to halt the war, but they have yet to sign off on the deal. Iranian media said Tehran has not communicated with Washington for several days, but US President Donald Trump said negotiations had not stopped. "The conversations between us have been going on continuously, including four days ago, three days ago, two days ago, one day ago, and today," he said in a social media post.

DISCUSSIONS ON NUCLEAR PROGRAMME Since mid-March, Trump has repeatedly said he is close to a deal to end the fighting and allow negotiators to tackle thorny issues, including the future of Iran's nuclear programme. Trump has said his top priority is to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Iran denies it is developing a nuclear bomb and says its atomic programme is for peaceful purposes. Tehran is seeking access to billions of dollars in oil revenues, waivers on crude exports, a lifting of a US blockade on its ports and continued leverage over the strait, traversed by a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas traffic before the war. Iranian media said the IRGC's

cratic Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey, who disagreed. ISRAEL KEEPS UP STRIKES IN LEBANON The war has killed thousands since it began on Feb 28, mainly in Iran and Lebanon, while also causing global economic pain by pushing up energy prices. It also triggered the latest round of conflict between Israel and Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, with Israel pursuing its deepest incursion into Lebanon in 25 years. On Tuesday, Israel kept up strikes

on a string of southern towns, Lebanese security sources said, despite a US-mediated partial ceasefire unveiled on Monday. The move failed to reassure many Lebanese, 1.2 million of whom have been displaced, and an Israeli drone over Beirut kept residents on edge on Tuesday. "Every time we return to our homes, there is a warning for us to be displaced again," said Faten Al Chehime, who fled to a displacement camp on Monday from her home in Beirut's southern suburbs, just two weeks after she had returned. On Tuesday, the world's largest shipping group, MSC, said two projectiles struck one of its vessels while in Iraq's Umm Qasr port the previous day. The IRGC said it carried out the attack in retaliation for a US attack on an Iranian vessel in the Gulf of Oman. Children's agency UNICEF flagged the widening humanitarian crisis as surging transport prices and supply chain disruptions hinder life-saving aid to countries from Gaza to Nigeria.

navy targeted a vessel it identified as the Panaya with missiles in response to what it said was a US attack on an Iranian tanker near Hormuz. "Disrupting the security of the Strait of Hormuz will carry a heavy price for the US military," media cited the IRGC as saying. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told lawmakers on Tuesday that the US would agree to sanctions relief only if Iran agreed to give up its nuclear activity. "The war is over," Rubio declared during a sharp exchange with Demo-



located Pacific island state's largest bilateral creditor, with Solomon Islands' debt to Chinese banks for infrastructure projects doubling last year. Seeking to counter Beijing's in-

North Korea slams US remarks comparing South to 'dagger'

Seoul: North Korea on Wednesday (Jun 3) slammed remarks by the top American military official in South Korea comparing his host nation to "the dagger in the heart of Asia", saying it reflected Washington's strategy to contain China. General Xavier Brunson made the comments in an interview as speculation builds that Washington may seek to expand the US Forces Korea (USFK) role in countering China's regional influence. About 28,500 US troops are stationed in South Korea to help guard against the nuclear-armed North. The state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) published a commentary by analyst Kim Myong Chol, who said Brunson's remarks showed the US as "the chieftain of harassing peace and the world's worst war empire". The comments reflected how Washington intended to use South Korea "as an important geopolitical instrument to realise its regional strategy aimed at containing China", said Kim, who is based in Japan and considered an unofficial overseas spokesman for North Korea. China

interviewer asked. "I did," Trump responded. "I was a little bit perturbed at his constantly fighting with Lebanon." "I said, 'Bibi, we gotta stop this.'" Trump went on to say he had a "very good relationship" with Netanyahu. "We've done well together... I like Bibi a lot." Trump unleashed the profane tirade over Israel's threats to bomb the Lebanese capital Beirut, fearing it would undermine talks with Tehran to end the war in the Middle East, the Axios news outlet and ABC News reported.

Trump confirms using foul language with Israel's Netanyahu

Washington: US President Donald Trump has confirmed a tense exchange with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in which he reportedly berated his close ally with expletives. In an interview published Wednesday (Jun 3) in the New York Post, Trump was asked about the conversation he had with Netanyahu over the phone on Monday. "You said, 'Are you f-ing crazy? What are you f-ing doing? I helped you stay out of jail.' Is that true? Did you speak to him in those terms?" the in-

terviewer asked. "I did," Trump responded. "I was a little bit perturbed at his constantly fighting with Lebanon." "I said, 'Bibi, we gotta stop this.'" Trump went on to say he had a "very good relationship" with Netanyahu. "We've done well together... I like Bibi a lot." Trump unleashed the profane tirade over Israel's threats to bomb the Lebanese capital Beirut, fearing it would undermine talks with Tehran to end the war in the Middle East, the Axios news outlet and ABC News reported.

Solomon Islands' PM says to review secretive security pact with China

Canberra: New Solomon Islands Prime Minister Matthew Wale said on Wednesday (Jun 3) that he would review a secretive 2022 security pact with Beijing, which rattled Canberra and Washington by opening the door to Chinese forces in the South Pacific. Asked about that pact alongside Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, the Solomons leader - who was elected last month - said he had been "praying and fasting" about the Chinese security deal. "We are going to be reviewing, as we are reviewing other security agreements that we have with many other countries," he said. Asked about Wale's comments, China's foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news conference that Beijing stood "ready to expand pragmatic cooperation with the new government of the Solomon Islands across all fields". Australia and the United States have been sharply critical of the 2022 deal over concerns it could allow a permanent Chinese navy presence in the South Pacific. It was signed under one of Wale's predecessors, Manasseh Sogavare, who was seen as Beijing's staunchest ally in the South Pacific. Wale said the deal contained a non-disclosure agreement, and he had not seen it until just before his visit to Australia. "I have had to remove certain people from key positions. I have not been afforded a copy, even, of

that agreement, until a day before I left, so I have not had a good look at it," he told a news conference in Canberra. Australia is the largest aid donor to the country of 800,000 people that sits 2,000km to its north-east, and historically provided police support during crises. After the Solomons switched diplomatic ties from Taiwan to Beijing in 2019 and struck the security pact, relations with Canberra and Washington deteriorated. China quickly became the strategically-



located Pacific island state's largest bilateral creditor, with Solomon Islands' debt to Chinese banks for infrastructure projects doubling last year. Seeking to counter Beijing's in-

fluence, Australia has seized the opportunity to rebuild ties, hosting Wale on his first international visit as leader. Albanese said on Wednesday the two countries would begin work on a "comprehensive" new treaty as well as deepen ties in policing, with Australia seeking to be the top security partner for the Pacific. The treaty will be "underpinned by mutual trust, respect, and open dialogue", the prime minister said.

POLICING, INFRASTRUCTURE DEALS

"We have sought a reset in this relationship - we acknowledge there have been problems over the last few years," Wale told reporters. The Pacific should turn to other countries within the region for their security, he stressed. The leaders also agreed to push ahead with a major police training deal. Australia's offer to fund the expansion of the Solomons' own police force had stalled under the previous Solomon Islands government, which allowed Chinese police to enter villages to collect household and biometric data. Wale also said he was in discussions with Australia and the US for financing for critical infrastructure such as ports. Former Solomon Islands prime minister Sogavare rejected US offers of infrastructure grants, instead opting to partner with Chinese state companies. Australia has sought to bind South Pacific countries closer by striking treaties with a string of small but strategically located island states, Tuvalu, Nauru and Papua New Guinea, offering significant economic support in return for curbs on Chinese security ties. Vanuatu and Fiji have said they are close to signing similar deals.

Rongmon Organizes Fellowship Gathering at Satyam Old Age Home, Sivasagar

Khairuddin Ahmed, Staff Reporter Sivasagar, June 3: The voluntary organization Rongmon recently organized a fellowship gathering at Satyam Old Age Home in Konwarpur through its social initiative group "Manuhe Manuhor Babe" (Humans for Humanity), which was formed at the memorial site of a person known as Kancha, who had led a humble and simple life. The event, titled "A Day at the Old Age Home," saw around 20 members of the organization visit the home in the morning. They lit ceremonial lamps at the Namghar established by the family of Dr. Kabita Sharma and sought blessings from the elderly residents.

A friendly interaction session was then held with the residents. During the program, residents Bimala Gogoi and Anupama Tamuli recited poems, while Shyam Chandra Tati delighted everyone with several songs. Representing Rongmon, Ghanshyam Gogoi and Krishna Borgohain performed songs, while poet Kalpana Borgohain recited poetry, creating a joyful atmosphere among the residents.

The home's director Parag Goswami warmly appreciated Rongmon's initiative and appealed for continued public support in managing the institution. Rongmon secretary Pradip Borgohain informed the gathering about several future plans for the old age home and reaffirmed the organization's commitment to serving society. Members of Rongmon distributed shirts, shawls, and traditional Assamese gamosas that they had brought personally, while Dr. Kabita Sharma also contributed various essential items.

Approximately 30 people participated in the community feast organized by Rongmon and praised the organization's efforts, expressing hope that its members would continue to stand by the elderly residents in the future.

Those who participated included Rongmon secretary Pradip Borgohain, Bulbul Bora, Prabin Sharma, Champa Barua, Anup Barua, Pabitra Bora, Jeevan Mili, Munin Phukan, Devajyoti Changmai, Kalyan Gohain, Maheswar Satnami, Bandana Devi, Pali Bora, Kushal Konwar, and others.



India Skills Accelerator roundtable charts roadmap to bridge skills gaps

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF), on Monday convened the High-Level Roundtable of the India Skills Accelerator (ISA) in New Delhi to discuss measures for closing emerging skills gaps and strengthening India's position as a global talent hub. Held under the theme "From Insight to Action: Closing Skills Gaps for Growth", the roundtable brought together leaders from government, industry, academia, international organisations and development partners. The discussions focused on workforce readiness, skills financing, emerging technologies and aligning skilling systems with evolving labour market demands. The India Skills Accelerator, announced in January 2026 after Union Cabinet approval, is hosted by MSDE and is part of the WEF's Global Accelerators Network. The initiative aims to promote public-private collaboration and support workforce development in sectors such as artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, supply chains and the green economy. The meeting was co-chaired by Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State for Education and Development of North Eastern Region Dr. Sukanta Majumdar, Apollo HealthCo Executive Chairperson Shobana Kamineni and Bajaj

Finserv Chairman and Managing Director Sanjiv Bajaj. Jayant Chaudhary said India's demographic strength could become a major glo-

digital technologies and workforce development could help the region attract investments, improve employability and strengthen its contri-



bal growth engine if skills remain aligned with changing industry and technology requirements. Dr. Majumdar stressed the need for stronger integration between education and employability to prepare youth for emerging opportunities. In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to benefit Assam and the Northeast by creating greater access to industry-relevant training and employment opportunities. Experts believe enhanced focus on future-ready skills,

tribution to India's growing talent economy. The roundtable concluded with a commitment from stakeholders to advance priority actions through structured public-private collaboration. Representatives from leading organisations including Apollo Hospitals, Bajaj Finserv, JSW Group, Mahindra Group, Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, IBM, Reliance Industries, CII, FICCI, AICTE, UGC and several government ministries participated in the deliberations.

Terrorist nexus in Rohingya camps

On May 14, 2026, a Rohingya man, Hasan Ahmed (45), a member of the ZakirBahini, was shot dead by a Rohingya armed group, Saddam Bahini, at the Nayapara registered Rohingya refugee camp in the TeknafUpazila (Sub-District) of Cox's Bazar District. Police stated that members of the Rohingya armed group carried out the attack over dominance in the refugee camp, control of the mosque committee, and past enmity. On May 12, 2026, a Rohingya youth, HasmatUllah (22), was shot at and injured in a clash between Rohingya armed groups at the B Block of Camp-8 at the Balukhali refugee camp in the UkhiyaUpazila of Cox's Bazar District. According to the Police and Rohingya leaders, a dispute broke out between the ArakanRohingya Army (ARA), a Rohingya armed group known as the Nabi Hossain Bahini, and another armed group, the ArakanRohingya Organization (ARO), over dominance in the refugee camp, resulting in the incident. On May 6, 2026, Mohammad Kamal Prakash Noor (45), the younger brother of Nabi Hossain, was killed in a shooting incident by unidentified assailants at the B-41 block of Camp-8 West in the Balukhali refugee camp in UkhiyaUpazila. It was also reported that Kamal was killed in suspected ArakanRohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) firing due to the conflict between ARSA and ARA. On May 5, 2026, ARO 'commander' KefayetUllah Halim (45) was killed in a gunfight with ARSA in the Tarjar Bridge area of the Balukhali refugee camp in UkhiyaUpazila. Two others who sustained gunshot injuries were identified as Mohammad Ullah (37) and Nur Mohammad (32). Under Halim's leadership, ARO had been involved in anti-ARSA activities inside the refugee camp. On May 4, 2026, a Rohingya youth, Mohammad Ullah (20), was arrested by the Police during an operation at the Leda Shelter Home in the Hnila Union of the TeknafUpazila on charges of involvement with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Police added that Mohammad Ullah was an active member of a WhatsApp group called Hakiqat News, affiliated with TTP. The group operates in Urdu and is accused of encouraging terrorist activities through international media platforms. On April 28, 2026, the Detective Branch (DB) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) arrested four ARSA cadres Imran Chowdhury (29), his brother Mostakim Chowdhury (25), Ripon Hossain Sheikh (28), and Abu Bakar (25) from the Keraniganj and Kamrangirchar areas of Dhaka, for their links with TTP. According to partial data collated by the Institute for Conflict Management (ICM), at least four persons killed and three injured (one Rohingya and two ARO cadres), linked to the Rohingya insurgency inside Bangladesh, have been reported this year (data till May 24, 2026). Further, 14 Rohingyas including five linked with TTP, four with a trafficking ring, three drug traffickers, one ARSA 'commander', and one linked with ARA - have been arrested in Bangladesh this year, so far. In 2025, at least 37 people were killed, including three civilians and 34 militants. There were also 14 such arrests in 2025, including five cadres each from ARSA and ARA, and four from the Arakan Army.

In 2024, at least 42 people were killed in Rohingya-insurgency linked violence. The number stood at 95 in 2023, 22 in 2022 and nine in 2021. The recent incidents in the Rohingya refugee camps, mainly in Cox's Bazar, indicate an increasingly fragmented and militarised environment, where multiple armed Rohingya groups have been competing for territorial dominance, influence over camp governance structures, recruitment networks, and access to the illicit drug economy. The killings and shootings involving ARA/Nabi Hossain Bahini, ARSA, ARO, Saddam Bahini, and ZakirBahini demonstrate that the camps are no longer witnessing isolated criminal rivalries, but rather sustained factional warfare among armed groups with evolving command structures. The targeting of Majhis (local level leaders) and 'commanders' is particularly significant because these figures often serve as intermediaries between refugees, aid agencies, and Bangladeshi authorities. Their assassination reflects attempts by armed groups to capture informal governance mechanisms within the camps. While one Majhi each has been killed in year 2026 (so far), 2025, and 2024, year 2023 had recorded six Majhis killed. The five Rohingya arrests made in Bangladesh this year in connection with TTP introduce a transnational extremist dimension that raises broader regional security concerns. While the cases currently appear limited to online radicalisation and digital propaganda dissemination, they highlight the vulnerability of displaced Rohingya youth to external extremist narratives amid prolonged statelessness, unemployment, insecurity, and frustration within the camps. Although there is no evidence yet of a formal TTP infrastructure operating inside Bangladesh's Rohingya camps, the presence of ideological sympathisers or digital facilitators could potentially create future pathways for cross-border terrorist networking involving actors from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Myanmar. The Rohingya population remains concentrated in the bordering areas of Myanmar, particularly the Rakhine State, and crises or persecution targeting the community have repeatedly triggered refugee flows into neighbouring Bangladesh. On May 18, 2026, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a report titled 'Skeltons and Skulls Scattered Everywhere: Arakan Army Massacre of Rohingya Muslims in Hoyasiri, Myanmar, from Bangkok, Thailand, describing the incident as a serious human rights violation, although the Arakan Army (AA) has never claimed responsibility for the massacre in the remote village of Myanmar. HRW reported that, on May 2, 2024, AA opened fire on unarmed villagers, with some of the survivors fleeing for safety into Bangladesh and Malaysia. HRW's investigation found that the Myanmar military failed to take adequate measures to protect civilians. MeenakshiGanguly, Deputy Asia Director, HRW, stated, 'The Arakan Army's killing of hundreds of Rohingya civilians and burning down their villages in Rakhine State in 2024 has taken the conflict with the country's junta to a new level of brutality... The Arakan Army continues to hold the survivors captive. They have received no redress from the Arakan Army. Those responsible have not been held accountable. Further, landmines planted

by AA and abductions carried out by the group continue to threaten Rohingyas living in the border areas between Bangladesh and Myanmar. According to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) data, at least 165 fishermen, who were detained by AA, between December 8, 2024 and May 12, 2026, when the AA seized Maungdaw (Myanmar) and took control of the Myanmar side of the border, still remain in the custody of the AA. During the same period, BGB brought back 234 fishermen. According to reports, landmines have been planted by AA in nearby border areas inside Myanmar to prevent the movement of armed Rohingya groups, which impacts the lives of people living near border areas in Bangladesh, especially the Rohingyas who fled previously from that area. In a recent incident, on April 10, 2026, a Rohingya man, Mohammad Sadek (25), was injured in a landmine explosion that occurred on the Bangladesh-Myanmar border in the Balukhali area of the UkhiyaUpazila in Cox's Bazar District. In another incident, on March 29, 2026, a Rohingya teenager, Abdul Hakim (15), was injured in a landmine explosion engineered by AA at the zero line of the Naf River on the Balukhali border in the Palangkhali Union of the UkhiyaUpazila in Cox's Bazar District. Additionally, Bangladeshi civilians and Rohingyas residing in Cox's Bazar have become victims of cross-border firing arising from clashes involving AA, Rohingya armed groups, and junta airstrikes in Rakhine State. For instance, on February 7, 2026, nine-year-old Huzafa Sultana Afnan, who was fatally injured by a stray bullet fired from across the Myanmar border, succumbed to injuries in Dhaka. Afnan was critically injured in cross-border gunfire on January 11, 2026, amid ongoing clashes in Myanmar. Meanwhile, on January 17, 2026, at least 18 members of the Mro ethnic minority were injured during an attack at Janali Para in the Nayapara Union of the AlikadamUpazila in Bandarban District. The attack was reportedly orchestrated by Rohingyas and settlers. Such incidents have the potential to further destabilize the already precarious security situation in the region. When elections were conducted in Bangladesh this year after a tumultuous and chaotic 18 months, Rohingya militancy also emerged as an obstacle to the smooth conduct of the polls. In early January 2026, a Home Ministry report warned that the presence of armed groups and illegal weapons inside Rohingya camps, and the use of Camp-in-Charge outposts or illegal crossing of barbed-wire fences into Ukhiya-Teknaflocalities, could worsen the law-and-order situation. The report also cautioned that active social groups inside camps could spread rumours or provocative messages to destabilize the environment, while armed groups such as ARSA, the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO) and the AA could engage in clashes in border areas during the election period, creating fear among the public. The Election Commission and the Home Ministry

were informed about a series of steps to mitigate risks involving Rohingyas during the election period. BGB was also directed to strengthen patrols ahead of elections, with heightened surveillance on armed groups along the Myanmar border. During the same period before elections, Bangladesh issued a high alert along its border with Myanmar on January 12, 2026, after detaining 53 ARSA militants who had crossed into its territory, according to Dhaka paramilitary officials, reflecting cross-border threats. On February 5, 2026, joint forces, including Police, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and the Army, detained 345 Rohingyas - including 176 men, 86 women, and 83 children and adolescents during a late-night operation in Burma Colony under the Dohazari Municipality of ChandanaishUpazila in Chittagong District. Later, on February 8, 2026, at least 1,500 Rohingya refugees were detained in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, during an Army-led joint security operation ahead of the February 12 parliamentary elections. The operation targeted Rohingyas living outside designated camps in the Balukhali and Palongkhali areas of UkhiyaUpazila. The deepening Rohingya militancy represents a complex amalgamation of terrorism and a humanitarian crisis, posing a significant challenge for Bangladesh. Statelessness and the prolonged identity crisis among the Rohingyas are increasingly pushing sections of the community toward militancy rather than integration for a stable future. According to the latest report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), approximately 149,769 Rohingya refugees were newly registered in Bangladesh between December 2024 and March 31, 2026, reflecting continued displacement linked to conflict and insecurity in Myanmar's Rakhine State, as reported on May 14, 2026. UNHCR stated that the total registered Rohingya refugee population in camps across Bangladesh currently stands at approximately 1,194,123. Recent incidents and broad trends collectively point toward several emerging risks, including violent competition among multiple Rohingya armed groups inside the camps, the gradual emergence of transnational security threats through potential extremist linkages and online radicalisation, and continuing obstacles to Rohingya repatriation due to persistent violence and mistrust in Myanmar involving both the Myanmar military and AA. Bangladesh continues to face the challenge of balancing internal security within densely populated refugee camps, while simultaneously managing its borders, growing illicit trade, and the complexities of addressing the Rohingya crisis through diplomatic channels. **Shivangi Sharma, Research Assistant, Institute for Conflict Management**

Infinity Learn's hybrid advantage drives strong performance in JEE Advanced 2026

Guwahati/Delhi: Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya, India's leading hybrid learning platform, announced its continued streak of success with remarkable student outcomes in the JEE Advanced 2026 examinations. Excelling across both online and offline learning formats, Infinity Learn has once again showcased the strength of its hybrid learning model in JEE Advanced, one of India's most competitive and sought-after entrance examinations such as the IITs and IIITs. Among the top achievers, Infinity Learn's online student Jai Somani secured an impressive All India Rank (AIR) 77. Adding to the institutional glory, Sri Chaitanya Academy Varanasi offline student Shashank Maurya secured AIR 500, and Sri Chaitanya Academy Bengaluru student Nishank Vyas secured AIR 769. These consistent rankings reflect the strength of a proven ecosystem that combines Sri Chaitanya's four decades of academic excellence with Infinity Learn's technology-driven hybrid

learning model, seamlessly integrating online and offline learning experiences. Commenting on the steady growth trajectory, Sushma Boppana, CEO & Director, Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions & Founder, Infinity Learn, said: "We are immensely proud to see Infinity Learn emerge as a trusted name in education, delivering consistent results and creating meaningful student success stories year after year across both digital and classroom learning environments. The exceptional performance of our learners reflects their deep dedication and the unwavering commitment of our faculty. As a premier educational institution, we remain deeply invested in democratising education, elevating talent to its fullest potential, and strengthening the trust parents place in us. Congratulations to all our students and their families." Expanding on this vision of multi-channel educational delivery, Ujjwal Singh, Founding CEO of Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya, added: "At Infinity Learn, outcomes define our ultimate purpose. I

am incredibly happy that year after year we continue to strengthen our performance across both our online platform and offline centres, enabling students nationwide to secure opportunities at premier engineering institutions and fulfil their aspirations. Our hybrid model enables students in Tier 2 and Tier cities to access the same high-quality, outcome-driven education as those in major metros, proving that excellence is not defined by geography. Our core promise will always remain: Baccha Sekha ki nahi. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to our students and their families for their outstanding success, and to our faculty for their exceptional dedication and commitment to student outcomes." As Infinity Learn continues to scale its hybrid infrastructure, these results cement its position as one of India's most reliable platforms for admission in top-tier engineering institutes across India. Infinity Learn is one of India's leading digital learning platforms supporting students across K-12 and competitive exam preparation, including JEE and NEET. Built around how students learn, the platform focuses on conceptual clarity, personalised guidance, and continuous support beyond classrooms. Infinity Learn is an initiative by Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions, one of India's most respected educational institutions with four decades of legacy in nurturing top-performing students. This strong academic foundation, combined with technology-driven learning, enables Infinity Learn to serve over a million paid subscribers across India. The platform is committed to helping students learn smarter, think deeper, and build confidence, preparing them not just for exams, but for life. Sri Chaitanya Academy, is a comprehensive test preparation center focusing on preparing students for IIT-JEE and NEET entrance exams, school/board exams, Olympiads, and other foundation-level assessments.

Chandmari Sahitya Sabha meeting held

Guwahati: A meeting of the Chandmari Sahitya Sabha was held at Niramay Bhavan of the Pensioners' Association in Chandmari Colony under the convenorship of Vice-Presidents Dilip Barua and Manjula Begum. The meeting was presided over by the Sabha's President, Bharadwaj Bhattacharyya. The distinguished guests and chief guests included Dr. Pramod Bhattacharyya, Kishori Mohan Pathak, Dr. Roman Sharma, and Dr. Nanju Dutta. During the programme, President Bharadwaj Bhattacharyya formally released a book authored by Chandrama Bhattacharyya, daughter of the late Promod Chandra Bhattacharyya. Literary readings were presented by Dr. Nanju Dutta, Dr. Baijayanti Goswami, Promod Chandra

Bhattacharyya, Kishori Mohan Pathak, and Dr. Roman Sharma. Manju Gautam performed Borgeet, while poetry recitations were delivered by Kumud Barua, Manjula Begum, Anjali Chaliha, Manmohan Medhi, Bandana Medhi, Hiranmoyee Barua, Rupam Bikash Gogoi, Nitu Goswami, Kiran Das, Abdul Taleb, and others. Manju Gautam also presented Goalpariya folk songs. President Bharadwaj Bhattacharyya delivered his address, and literary reviews were presented by Dr. Roman Sharma, Kishori Mohan Pathak, and Dr. Nanju Dutta. Dhruvajyoti Sharma read a short story, while Manjula Begum performed a Zikir song. The vote of thanks was proposed by Vice-President Dilip Barua.

In Argentina, amateur soccer offers a gritty economic lifeline

Buenos Aires : Emiliano Migueles starts his days early, delivering water. But his true grind begins when he clocks out and hits the scrappy soccer pitches that dot the suburbs of Buenos Aires, pouring his energy into amateur football to earn extra cash. For three-time World Cup champions Argentina, football is a feverish passion that permeates every home and every makeshift dirt field, known as a "potrero," where youngsters play, dreaming of reaching the top leagues. Argentine legend Diego Maradona famously honed his skills at a potrero in Villa Fiorito on the outskirts of the capital. Many matches at these potreros offer players the chance to win some cash. The amounts are tiny compared to the wages of their compatriots who play in the glittering European leagues and will soon seek to defend their 2022 World Cup win. But potrero players can sometimes earn enough to help pay the bills. Migueles says he can earn around 500,000 pesos (\$350) between his job and the football "in a good month, winning matches." Such matches have recently surged in popularity in impoverished neighborhoods across Argentina, as formal employment has slumped. Factories have closed and public spending has been slashed under the government of President Javier Milei, who took office in late 2023. Migueles, 26, delivers bottled water alongside his uncle from a dilapidated truck, a precarious job with a fluctuating

income. Over half of Argentinians under the age of 30 are employed in the informal economy, according to 2025 data from state statistics agency INDEC. **HIGH STAKES AND SACRIFICE** At some potrero matches, organizers assemble teams and then the players and others stake wagers. All players on the winning team receive a small payout, and then the rest of the pool is distributed proportionally among the winning bets. At other times, teams pay an entry fee to compete in a knockout tournament with a grand prize. Either way, the losers get nothing. At a recent match where his team won, some 300,000 pesos (\$215) was paid out. But Migueles, who didn't place any bets, received only his 17,000 pesos (\$12) pay for playing. "I mostly don't bet because I'm always short on cash, that's the reality," he said. "Betting isn't something that appeals to me. I love the street games for everything they are, the adrenaline, everything they give you," he said. There are no Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays for Migueles. Whenever there's a match, he laces up his mud-caked boots, whether in informal games or for San Miguel, a semi-professional team in the town of General Las Heras, where he earns around 100,000 pesos (\$70) per game. The informal tournaments can run deep into the night, meaning Migueles often starts his workday running on hardly any sleep. But he wouldn't change it.

Haiti thump New Zealand 4-0 in 'harsh lesson' before World Cup

June 2 : Haiti crushed a shambolic New Zealand 4-0 in a steamy World Cup warmup in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on Tuesday, delighting a buzzing crowd of Haitian fans and spoiling a milestone match for All Whites captain Chris Wood. Ruben Providence struck in the 12th minute at Inter Miami CF Stadium and substitute Lenny Joseph doubled the lead for the 82nd-ranked Caribbeans six minutes after the restart. Frantzdy Pierrot grabbed a third with a header after the hour-mark before Markus Lacroix finished the demolition job with a late, long-range rocket as the counter-punching Grenadiers dismantled the World Cup's lowest-ranked nation. World number 82 Haiti, only three places better than New Zealand, meet Scotland, Brazil and Morocco on their return to the World Cup for the first time in 52 years. Haiti's buildup to the match had been complicated by visa trouble for midfielder Woodensky Pierre, the squad's only player based in the Caribbean nation. Pierre was unable to play against the New Zealanders because his visa was not approved by U.S. authorities until too late. He landed at Miami airport around half-time with Haitian soccer officials and hoped to catch the last part of the game, a team spokesperson told Reuters. New Zealand skipper Wood became his nation's most-capped player with 89 appearances, moving one past Ivan Vicelich, but there was little to celebrate for the Nottingham Forest striker. Wood all but conjured a goal early in the first half with a bicycle kick, but it was saved on the line by goalkeeper Jhony Placide. At the other end of the pitch,

Alex Paulsen had a poor audition to be New Zealand's starting goalkeeper, while centre back Finn Surman also had a first half to forget. Both were culpable in Providence's goal as the Netherlands-based forward

the change room very disappointed." Tim Payne, New Zealand's suddenly famous full back, went to ground in the area after contact with Placide in the 17th minute but no penalty was given and no VAR was avail-



wriggled by Surman in the goal area and chipped Paulsen from a tight angle.

HARSH LESSON

New Zealand play England in their final warmup on Saturday before meeting Iran, Egypt and Belgium at their first World Cup since 2010. Shell-shocked All Whites coach Darren Bazeley was surprised by his team's lacklustre performance following a week in camp acclimatizing in Florida. "It's a very harsh lesson for us, especially with tough games coming up," he said in the post-match press conference. "The boys are in

able. Bazeley put Max Crocombe in goal for the second half amid a slew of substitutions, but three goals sailed by the hapless keeper as the All Whites' defence collapsed. Joseph took a through-ball between defenders Michael Boxall and Francis De Vries and tucked his shot into the left corner of the net before an unmarked Pierrot headed in a cross from five metres on 62 minutes. Lacroix capped the win on 87 minutes when he turned on the edge of the area and blasted into the right corner of the net, sending blue and red-clad fans into a frenzy.

World Cup gives North American transit a chance to shine - or be booed

June 3 : The 2026 World Cup is soccer's biggest stage, and for some of North America's rail and bus operators it will be a critical audition. With airfares and gasoline prices rising, airport security lines stretching to infuriating lengths, and 104 World Cup matches in 16 cities spread across four time zones in the United States, Mexico and Canada, some ground transportation companies say they are warming up to win the hearts of a new audience. "We want you to be able to use our system seamlessly from the minute you decide to come to the World Cup, all the way into the games, and after that to get home," said Conan Cheung, chief operations officer for LA Metro, the public transportation authority that serves the Los Angeles region. The event is a chance to show foreign visitors that the Californian city - which will host eight matches, including the U.S. opener - is more than congested freeways. But it is also a way to pull more native Angelenos onto its growing public transport system, Cheung said. That's something public transport advocates have long called for in the U.S. and Canada, where shared transit infrastructure can be sparse and locals reluctant to leave behind their cars. "Transit providers have an opportunity to provide service to a group of people who do not typically use transit on a day-to-day basis," said Yonah Freemark, a principal research associate at the Washington-based Urban Institute. "Many of the World Cup fans coming from the U.S. or Canada do not necessarily use transit services regularly." That means the stakes are high for companies to ensure a positive experience for riders, said Freemark. "They should be making sure that the services they provide are high quality and not too expensive, because the people who are riding them are going to form an impression of those transit agencies — and there's a chance to really prove that they can provide a good service."



NJ Transit attracted the kind of attention it doesn't want this year when it announced that the approximately 30-minute train ride from Manhattan to the New Jersey stadium that will host eight matches, including the July 19 final, would cost \$150 for the round-trip. It's a journey that typically costs less than \$13. NJ Transit says it needs to cover \$48 million in extra costs for security, crowd control and other World Cup impacts. After much outrage, NJ Transit reduced the fare to a still hefty \$98, saying it had managed to find more advertising to cover its costs. Meanwhile, a shuttle

is a great opportunity," said Flix North America CEO Kai Boysan. "We will welcome all the new customers and we want them to see what a change we've done and what a great experience they're going to have." **TRAVELERS ARE LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES** FlixBus says travelers may favor buses over planes because buses typically offer a more affordable, direct way to get between city centers. "Airports are congested and the costs are rising. And clearly travelers are naturally looking for alternatives. And there we come into effect," said Boysan. But not all ground transportation options are proving affordable.

bus on the same route has been chopped to \$20 from the originally announced \$80 as the host committee turned to local school buses to increase seats. In Boston, round-trip rail tickets from the city center to the stadium used for seven World Cup matches will cost \$80, compared to the usual \$20 to \$30. A bus ride will be \$95. U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, a New York Democrat, has said FIFA should do more. "Charging more than 11 times the normal fare for a train ride is a ripoff, plain and simple. FIFA is making billions from this World Cup," said Schumer in a statement after the original price for the ride to New Jersey's MetLife Stadium was announced.

"FIFA should cover the ride, not stick New York fans with the bill." FIFA has said high transit fares would push fans to seek other ways of getting to the stadium, and that other similar events have not led to demands that organizations provide travel impact funding. **PHILADELPHIA OFFERING FREE RIDES HOME FROM MATCHES** Not all local operators have raised prices. "Our regular fare is \$1.75, so people will be able to pay that," said Cheung of LA Metro. "We will honor all of the discounts we have." In Philadelphia, which is hosting six matches, fans will pay \$2.90 for the train to get to the match and receive a free ride home, courtesy of sponsor Airbnb. U.S. national rail carrier Amtrak said it was gearing up for fans to travel between cities for matches. "We are fully committed to running a world-class railroad ... and ensuring our infrastructure is ready to accommodate new and returning guests," said W. Kyle Anderson, director of communications for Amtrak.

Leclerc can celebrate Ferrari extension by ending Antonelli's winning run

June 3 : Monaco's local hero Charles Leclerc will hope to celebrate his new Ferrari deal on home territory this weekend by ending the Italian team's long winless wait and denying Mercedes teenager Kimi Antonelli a fifth successive victory. The first race of the European season, after long-haul trips to Asia and North America, offers Ferrari a real chance of ending Mercedes' run of dominance and taking their first grand prix triumph since 2024. "I think Ferrari is going to be the team to beat in Monaco and it's going to be very interesting how we do there," Antonelli, 19, said after winning in Montreal last month. The Italian prodigy, Formula One's youngest ever championship leader, has finished first in the last four races and is 43 points clear of teammate George Russell. But Leclerc has a special affinity with streets he has known since boyhood, watching in awe as Ferrari great Michael Schumacher skimmed the unforgiving metal barriers and roared past the moored super-yachts

and shimmering sea. The 28-year-old has been on pole position three times in the last five years, won in 2024 and was second last year - decisively casting off talk of a Monaco 'jinx' resulting from earlier misfortunes in his career - and is the 7/4 betting favourite. Teammate and seven-times champion Lewis Hamilton is a three-times winner in Monaco, a double pole-sitter, and will also want in on the action after finishing second last month in Canada - his best result since joining Ferrari last year.

PLAYING TO THE CAR'S STRENGTHS Monaco should play to Ferrari's strengths and mask the weaknesses, with the car strong in corners and well-suited to a slow track where Saturday qualifying is key, grid position crucial and overtaking always tricky. With few real straights and plenty of turns and twists, top speed and engine performance matter less in Monaco than elsewhere. Ferrari have also stood out this season for rapid getaways at the

start. "If you take away the power deficit, we're in the fight with these guys (Mercedes)," Hamilton said in Montreal, while Leclerc said he hoped the car would give him an advantage at home. McLaren, who made their Formula One debut in Monaco 60 years ago, are hoping to celebrate their 1,000th race start - a milestone so far achieved only by Ferrari - with a win. Red Bull's four-times world champion Max Verstappen can never be ruled out, and his 2021 win remains the fastest yet in Monaco with an average speed of 157.833kph, while Russell will be hoping his luck will turn after a series of misfortunes including an engine failure in Canada. Monaco, still a glamour highlight of the calendar however anachronistic it may be for some, kicks off a gruelling run of six races in eight weeks. This year's cars are lighter, narrower and more nimble which could also live up to the racing, even if there are also more cars on track this year with the arrival of Cadillac as 11th team.

Cummins might skip next IPL because of heavy Australia workload

Sydney : Australia captain Pat Cummins indicated he might skip the Indian Premier League (IPL) next year to prioritise a heavy test schedule and the one-day international World Cup. The 33-year-old fast bowler first played in the IPL in 2014 and has earned \$1.9 million a year as captain of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the last three editions of the blockbuster Twenty20 tournament. Next year, though, Australia play four tests in India in January and February, have a 150th anniversary test against England in Melbourne in March, and go on a full Ashes tour before the ODI World Cup in southern Africa in October and November. "Something has got to give at some stage next year and it's not going to be test matches or an ODI World Cup," Cummins told the Sydney Morning Herald on Wednesday. "I will make a call a lot closer and work with the franchise to see what makes sense. Things can change. I've had a couple of injuries pop up, so I don't really want to lock in anything." The priorities for me are always the test matches and that ODI World Cup. I dare say if I play all of India, I need some sort of break before a pretty gruelling Ashes series." Cummins played only the Adelaide Ashes test in the last home summer and skipped the T20 World Cup as he dealt with a nagging back injury. With his fellow fast-bowling stalwarts Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc also deep into their 30s, Cummins said consideration would be given to resting them for part of the home series against New Zealand around the New Year. "It's possible."

Belgium urge calm after Lukaku scores in away win at Croatia

Rijeka : Belgium are seeking to temper any expectations after an impressive away victory in Croatia on Tuesday, where a goal from Romelu Lukaku came as a major boost ahead of the World Cup. Belgium's top scorer netted his 90th international goal in the 2-0 win, as both countries continued World Cup preparations, marking his return to the team after a 12-month absence and seemingly putting behind him a difficult season in which he played less than an hour's football for Napoli. "For him, it's huge. He lives for goals. So the fact that he scored is something we're really happy about," said coach Rudi Garcia. "You also saw the reaction of his teammates. They all went over to celebrate with him, and he deserves it. "Our top scorer, our super top scorer, has scored again, and that's fantastic. That goal is good for his confidence. Still, we have to remain cautious. It can be dangerous to rush things. We need to bring him along step by step," the coach told reporters. Lukaku has been struggling with a hamstring injury and last played in early March. "However, he showed once again that he's further along than we thought. With long injury absences, it often works like

this: you can be very good at the beginning and then suffer a setback afterwards," Garcia warned. Belgium captain Youri Tielemans latched onto a defensive slip to give Belgium the lead against the run of play, but the visitors proved much stronger in the second half with Lukaku's stoppage-time goal adding lustre to the win. "I think it was a tight, closely contested match," added veteran midfielder Kevin De Bruyne. "We tested a few things, perhaps not necessarily with the aim of fully implementing everything for the World Cup. As a team, we were quite compact and didn't give away much. Here and there, we're still searching for a few things, and there are aspects where we can play better." "This is a good start, but we need to stay calm. So much can still change. There will also be moments during the World Cup when things become more difficult. This team wants to approach it in a positive way," De Bruyne said. Belgium have a second warm-up international against Tunisia in Brussels on Saturday before heading to the United States where they meet Egypt in their opening Group G match in Seattle on June 15.

DR Congo hope to go ahead with Spain fixture despite Ebola cancellation

Liège : The Democratic Republic of Congo is hoping to go ahead with a World Cup warm-up match against Chile in Spain next week despite local authorities prohibiting the match due to the African nation's Ebola outbreak. The mayor of La Linea de la Concepcion took the decision even though the Congolese team has been preparing for the tournament in Belgium and almost all of its players and staff are based in Europe. Congo play a friendly match in Liège on Wednesday against Denmark and had planned a second pre-

paratory game in Spain next Monday before heading off to the World Cup, co-hosted by Canada, Mexico, and the United States. But on Tuesday, La Linea's mayor, Juan Franco, revoked authorisation for the match. "The health situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo regarding the Ebola virus, together with the documentation that has been provided to us, which does not fully demonstrate that there is no risk whatsoever, means that this is the most prudent decision," a statement released by his office said.

Contd. From Page 1

Delhi Hotel fire...

Fire Services, disaster management teams, ambulance services and medical authorities. According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (South Delhi) Anant Mittal, the fire was successfully extinguished with the assistance of eight fire tenders deployed at the site. He stated that through the coordinated efforts of the police, fire services and other emergency responders, over 40 people were rescued from the affected building and immediately shifted to nearby hospitals for medical treatment. Rescue teams worked tirelessly to evacuate those trapped inside the hotel and ensure that the injured received prompt medical attention. The incident resulted in significant loss of life and left several others injured, prompting an outpouring of grief and condolences from leaders across the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives caused by the tragic fire incident. In a social media post, the Prime Minister said that the loss of lives was deeply saddening and noted that the authorities were providing all possible assistance to those affected by the tragedy. He also wished a speedy recovery to those who sustained injuries in the incident. As a gesture of support to the affected families, Mr Modi announced an ex-gratia payment from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. He said that the next of kin of each deceased person would receive Rs 2 lakh, while those injured in the fire would be provided financial assistance of Rs 50,000. The announcement was aimed at providing immediate relief to the victims and their families during a period of immense grief and hardship. President Droupadi Murmu also expressed profound sadness over the incident and extended her condolences to the families of those who lost their loved ones. In her message, the President described the news of the loss of lives in the fire as extremely heartbreaking and conveyed her deepest sympathies to the bereaved families. She also prayed for the swift recovery of those injured in the tragedy and wished them strength during their treatment and recovery. Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan similarly expressed condolences over the loss of lives and joined the nation in mourning the victims of the fire. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also reacted to the incident and said that the local administration was actively engaged in relief and rescue operations. He noted that all necessary efforts were being made to assist those affected and that the injured were being provided with the best available medical facilities. Mr Shah prayed for the speedy recovery of all those injured and expressed solidarity with the families who had lost their loved ones. He also wished them strength and courage to bear the immense sorrow caused by the tragedy. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta expressed grief over the loss of lives and said that the government machinery had responded immediately after receiving information about the incident. In a social media post, she stated that teams from Delhi Fire Services, Delhi Police, the District Disaster Management Authority, CATS Ambulance Services and other emergency response agencies were mobilised without delay and launched rescue and relief operations at the site. According to the Chief Minister, the swift response of these agencies played a crucial role in rescuing and evacuating several people from the affected premises. Ms Gupta further stated that the Delhi government was closely monitoring the situation and ensuring that all necessary medical assistance and support were being extended to the affected families. The tragic fire has once again highlighted the importance of emergency preparedness and rapid response during disasters. As investigations continue into the circumstances surrounding the incident, authorities remain focused on providing relief to survivors, supporting the families of the victims and ensuring proper medical care for those injured. The loss of twenty-one lives in the Malviya Nagar hotel fire has left the nation mourning, while rescue personnel and emergency responders have been widely acknowledged for their efforts in saving dozens of people from the devastating blaze.

Cannabis Recovered...

the leadership of Gossaigaon Sub-Divisional Police Officer Mantu Ram Borah, along with Gossaigaon Police Station officer, Inspector Kaikhoseh Simte and Srirampur Police Outpost officer SI Sanjib Kumar Handique. During the raid, police recovered banned cannabis hidden inside a chamber of a 16-wheeler truck. Three persons were arrested for illegally transporting the contraband. The arrested individuals have been identified as Narayan Barman of Simultapu PGR village, and Manik M and Mahesh from Kerala. The cannabis had reportedly been concealed inside the driver's cabin of the truck bearing registration number TN-52-AD-8586. Police recovered six packets from the cabin, weighing more than 6 kilograms in total. Meanwhile, although police in Gossaigaon subdivision have been conducting continuous operations against drugs, they have not yet been able to completely stop drug trafficking. SDPO Mantu Ram Borah appealed to the public to cooperate with the police in order to completely curb the illegal drug trade.

Mourning in Sivasagar Over...

Monirul Islam Bora, President of the Central Committee of the Ujani Assam Muslim Welfare Council; Parash Jyoti Das, General Secretary of the Scheduled Caste Students' Association; Jintu Mech, President of the Assam Students and Youth Association; Padma Chetia of Jagrit Nari Samaj; Congress leaders Pallabi Saikia and Bharati Saikia; representatives of the District Congress Committee, Assam Jatiya Parishad, Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, Rajor Dal, Chatra Mukti Sangram Samiti, Nari Mukti Sangram Samiti, and more than fifty other organizations.

They offered floral tributes, traditional Assamese gamosas, and chadors to Priyada Gogoi's mortal remains as a mark of respect. Later, at the Selenghat cremation ground, Akhil Gogoi performed the last rites of his mother and lit the funeral pyre.

Expressing his condolences, Dr. Jyotiprasad Saikia, Vice-Chancellor of Jagannath Barooah University, said that Assam had lost a loving, exemplary, and honest mother. He remarked that Priyada Gogoi constantly inspired the younger generation to make sacrifices for the nation and society and extended her motherly affection not only to her son Akhil Gogoi but also to thousands of others. He added that her simple lifestyle and compassionate humanitarian outlook earned the respect and admiration of all.

Several organizations, including the Sivasagar and Town Committees of Rajor Dal, Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, Sivasagar Press Club, Sivasagar District Journalists' Association, Sivasagar District Journalists' Organization, e-Media Association, Tai Ahom Students' Union, Asomiya Yuva Mancha, Rongpur Jyoti Club, Rongmon, Sivasagar Haj Committee, Shatashabda, Antaranga, and many other institutions and organizations, also expressed profound grief over her passing.

Dibrugarh BJP Welcomes Passage...

Bharatiya Janata Party acting on the directives of the Assam State Unit, held a press conference today at the party's divisional office in Jiban Phukan Nagar, Dibrugarh. Addressing the media, BJP State General Secretary Rituparna Baruah stated that Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had fulfilled his earlier promise by successfully getting the much-discussed UCC legislation passed during the first Assembly session of the new government. Baruah said that the law has been enacted with the objective of ensuring the safety, dignity, and equal rights of women. According to him, the UCC is not merely a law but a significant step toward social reform. He further remarked that the legislation is dedicated to the struggles and sacrifices of women who became mothers of multiple children before reaching the age of 21. Baruah noted that the concept of a Uniform Civil Code has been part of India's political and social discourse since before Independence. He claimed that during the freedom movement, Mahatma Gandhi had also expressed support for a uniform and equality-based civil law. He further stated that with the passage of the UCC in the Assam Legislative Assembly, Assam has become the third state in the country to make history in this regard. He alleged that the Congress party, under the leadership of Gaurav Gogoi, has opposed the legislation and attempted to mislead a section of society. However, he asserted that Muslim women would be among the greatest beneficiaries of the law, as it would provide them with greater legal protection. Strong Stand Against Polygamy, during the press conference, Rituparna Baruah took a firm stand against polygamy, stating that second marriages or multiple marriages are unacceptable in any civilized society. He said that the social and psychological burdens arising from polygamy are borne primarily by women and children. According to him, children born in such circumstances often face discrimination and are, in many cases, forced to live like second-class citizens. He clarified that individuals involved in polygamous marriages would face legal action under the new law. Live-in Relationships and "Love Jihad" The issue of live-in relationships was also discussed extensively during the press conference. Baruah said that the family system and the sacred institution of marriage form the foundation of Assamese society and culture. In his view, the growing trend of live-in relationships could undermine traditional social values. He further stated that the Chief Minister has initiated measures to bring live-in relationships under a regulatory framework in order to ensure accountability and transparency in society. The primary aim, he said, is to protect women from deception, abandonment, and exploitation. Commenting on what he referred to as "love jihad," Baruah said that the law includes provisions to strictly regulate relationships formed through fraudulent concealment of identity. He argued that such measures would strengthen social stability and enhance the protection of women. Exemptions for Tribal Communities Baruah also clarified that certain provisions of the UCC exempt Assam's tribal communities in recognition of their unique traditions, customs, and social systems. He said that tribal societies have historically respected and upheld the dignity of women, and the government remains committed to preserving that heritage. The BJP leader informed the media that after the necessary rules and regulations are formulated, the government aims to fully implement the UCC within the next six months. In conclusion, he stated that the Bharatiya Janata Party has long been committed to the protection, equality, dignity, and social justice of women. He expressed hope that the UCC would prove to be a historic step toward achieving these goals and would help make Assamese society more organized, secure, and equitable in the years ahead.

Nagaon Electronic Media...

Founded on June 5, 2011, NEMA has been actively contributing to the fields of journalism, sports, culture and education across Central Assam. The organization has also undertaken various social welfare initiatives, including relief distribution in flood-affected areas, free health camps and the promotion of theatre through its annual cultural programmes.

The meeting concluded with valuable suggestions from the chair and a renewed commitment to further strengthening the role of electronic media in society.

NFR Inducts Advanced Rail...

railway project in Mizoram.

The advanced maintenance vehicle is equipped with modern features that enable transportation of men, materials and maintenance equipment directly to work sites located in remote and inaccessible areas. The vehicle is also fitted with specialized lifting and handling arrangements, allowing railway personnel to carry out track-related works, replacement of components and emergency restoration activities in a safe and time-bound manner. Its deployment will significantly reduce dependence on conventional methods of maintenance and improve overall operational efficiency.

The Bairabi-Sairang section, which traverses hilly terrain and presents unique engineering challenges, requires robust maintenance support for ensuring safe and reliable railway operations. The induction of this Maintenance Vehicle will facilitate the same during inspections and infrastructure upkeep activities. The vehicle will also be useful in carrying out preventive maintenance, thereby helping to minimize disruptions and enhance asset reliability.

Safety remains the foremost priority for NFR. The deployment of this modern maintenance vehicle is expected to strengthen safety standards by providing railway personnel with a dedicated and efficient platform for undertaking maintenance works under demanding field conditions. The improved mechanization of maintenance activities will also reduce manual handling of heavy equipment and materials, thereby enhancing workplace safety and productivity, informed by CPRO of NFR Kapinjal Kishore Sharma.

Ramkrishna honoured as Top...

as Sattriya Artiste in India, as a whole, to Ramkrishna Talukdar. During the glorious moment, the elder daughter of Ramkrishna and Rumi Talukdar, Noopur Talukdar was honoured as B High Grade Artiste in Sattriya from Delhi Door Darshan. The younger daughter Gunjan Talukdar was also conferred as B Grade Artiste of DDK.

Rumi Talukdar is also an A Grade Sattriya Artiste of Prasar Bharati, Delhi Door Darshan.

"Mission Senehjori" Launched...

Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for DoNER, Dr. Sukanta Majumdar, along with other senior officials, stakeholders.

With an estimated outlay of approximately Rs 396-411 crore under a 90:10 Centre-State funding model, Mission Senehjori aims to strengthen the Muga silk ecosystem and improve the livelihoods of nearly 2.6 lakh weavers and rearers dependent on the sector. Muga silk, one of the rarest silks in the world, is unique to Assam, which accounts for nearly 90% of global production.

The mission derives its name from "Seneh" meaning affection and "Jori" meaning bond of thread, symbolising not merely a brand but an emotional connection between Assam's tradition, artisans and the world. It seeks to connect heritage with innovation by strengthening production, market access, design, tourism and global branding for Muga silk.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia described Mission Senehjori as aligned with the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Vocal for Local" and "Local for Global", reaffirming the Government's commitment to strengthening indigenous industries and livelihoods across the North East. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma said Assam's silk tradition spans nearly twelve centuries and has shaped Assamese society and cultural identity for generations. Calling Muga silk "nature's gift to Assam and Assam's gift to the world," he underlined the need to preserve and promote this unique heritage globally. The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his strong commitment to the development of the North East and stated that Mission Senehjori is a direct outcome of the Prime Minister's consistent encouragement to every state to identify and showcase its unique strengths.

Mission Senehjori has outlined a comprehensive roadmap for the revitalisation and global positioning of Assam's iconic Muga silk sector through nine priority areas and six core programme principles by 2028. The mission focuses on strengthening GI authentication and brand protection, host plant ecology, modernised reeling and processing, institutional strengthening through FPOs and FIGs, market access, digital traceability, design innovation, and cultural economy. By building on existing institutional capacity, promoting traceability and quality assurance, encouraging private investment, and enhancing value addition, Mission Senehjori aims to strengthen livelihoods, improve global competitiveness, and establish Assam's Muga silk as a premium luxury product in international markets.

CM Sarma called on President ...

importance of learning from experienced constitutional leaders while pursuing ambitious goals for the future. The meeting also provided an opportunity to showcase Assam's achievements and share the state's vision for sustained progress in the years ahead. Recent economic indicators have strengthened the government's claim that Assam is currently among the fastest-growing economies in the country. Over the past five years, the state's Gross State Domestic Product has expanded significantly faster than the national average, reflecting the success of targeted interventions, strategic planning and effective policy implementation. This growth has been driven by a combination of infrastructure investments, industrial expansion, improvements in connectivity, reforms in governance and a renewed focus on sectors with high growth potential. The government believes that these achievements are not merely statistical milestones but represent real improvements in economic activity, employment generation and quality of life for the people of Assam. Under the leadership of Himanta Biswa Sarma, the state has witnessed substantial progress across a range of sectors. Roads, bridges and transport infrastructure have expanded rapidly, improving connectivity between urban centres and remote regions. Investments in healthcare have strengthened medical facilities and enhanced access to quality services, while educational reforms have focused on improving infrastructure, learning outcomes and opportunities for students. The government has also placed considerable emphasis on skill development and youth empowerment, recognising that a skilled workforce is essential for sustaining long-term economic growth. During his interaction with the President, the Chief Minister highlighted several initiatives that have contributed to Assam's emergence as a high-growth state. These include efforts to attract private investment, improve the ease of doing business and promote entrepreneurship. The government has worked to create an environment that encourages industrial growth while ensuring that development remains inclusive and sustainable. Special attention has been given to sectors such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, information technology and services, all of which have contributed to the state's economic expansion. Agriculture continues to play a vital role in Assam's economy, and the government has implemented measures to improve productivity, strengthen value chains and increase farmers' incomes. Investments in irrigation, market access and modern farming practices have helped improve agricultural outcomes, while support for allied sectors such as fisheries, dairy and horticulture has diversified income opportunities in rural areas. These efforts have contributed to greater economic resilience and enhanced livelihoods across the state. The tea industry, which remains one of Assam's most important economic sectors, has also received focused attention. Policies aimed at improving productivity, supporting workers and promoting exports have helped strengthen the industry's position in domestic and international markets. Alongside tea, the petroleum sector continues to contribute significantly to the state's economy, benefiting from investments in exploration, refining and related industries. Tourism has emerged as another key growth area, with the government actively promoting Assam's rich natural heritage, wildlife, cultural traditions and historical attractions. Improved connectivity and targeted marketing initiatives have helped attract increasing numbers of visitors, creating employment opportunities and boosting local economies. The government's emphasis on public welfare has remained a central pillar of its development strategy. Various schemes aimed at supporting women, youth, farmers, workers and vulnerable sections of society have sought to ensure that economic growth is accompanied by social progress. Programmes related to education, healthcare, housing, social security and livelihood generation have been expanded to reach a wider section of the population. According to the government, these initiatives reflect a commitment to inclusive development and equitable growth. During the meeting with President Murmu, Himanta Biswa Sarma also discussed plans for the second term that are designed to build upon the gains achieved so far.

Special Training on 'Krishi Mapper'...

programme was conducted under the supervision of District Agriculture Officer Manoj Kumar Narzari, while State Officer Papori Sharma from the Directorate of Agriculture, Assam, attended the session as the chief resource person. The training focused on enhancing field-level execution of the Krishi Mapper initiative and ensuring better coordination among departmental officials and staff.

During the session, resource person Papori Sharma highlighted the importance of Krishi Mapper in modern agricultural management and elaborated on its implementation procedures, operational framework, and practical utility in the agricultural sector. She also addressed several field-level issues and technical challenges faced by officials during implementation and explained suitable remedial measures to ensure smoother execution of the programme.

Speakers at the event expressed optimism that advanced technological initiatives like Krishi Mapper, introduced under the guidance of the Central and State Governments, would usher in a new era of agricultural development and data-driven planning in the state's farming sector.

As part of the programme, District Agriculture Officer Manoj Kumar Narzari reviewed the progress of ongoing implementation activities and interacted with officials regarding field-level performance and future action plans.

The meeting also witnessed a detailed discussion on the ongoing farmer registration process across the district. Emphasizing the importance of inclusive participation, Narzari urged officials and staff members to intensify registration drives so that every eligible farmer can avail the benefits of government schemes without difficulty.

"The department must ensure that no eligible farmer in the district remains deprived of the farmer registration process," he stated while directing officials to take all necessary steps for timely completion of the registration work.

The programme was attended by Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer Kulendra Deka, Agriculture Development Officers, Media Expert Priyalata Barman, Agricultural Extension Assistants, BTM and ATM officials under the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), along with several departmental officials and employees.

3-day Census 2027 training concludes at Diphu

Self-Enumeration Facility to be Available from August 2

Diphu, June 3: The three-day training sus operations across the district. erational, administrative and techno-



programme on Census Operations 2027 for District and Charge-level officials concluded successfully today at the Circuit House, Diphu. Conducted from June 1 to 3, 2026, the programme focused on the House Listing and Housing Operations (HLO) Phase-I of Census 2027 and aimed at strengthening the preparedness of officials responsible for implementing the nationwide exercise in Karbi Anglong.

District Commissioner-cum-Principal Census Officer, Karbi Anglong, Aranyak Saikia, reviewed the training programme and emphasized the importance of capacity building, procedural accuracy, technological readiness, and coordinated field-level efforts for the successful conduct of the census. He urged all officials to discharge their responsibilities with dedication and ensure strict adherence to census guidelines to facilitate smooth, transparent and reliable cen-

The training programme was attended by 19 Charge Census Officers, 22 Charge Census Assistants and 21 Technical Assistants, besides district-level officers associated with census activities. Among those present were Pradip Kumar Gupta, ADC-cum-District Census Officer, Dipankar Bora, Assistant Commissioner, and Kamruz Zaman, Director, NIC & DIO.



The sessions were conducted by Mridul Das, Assistant Director, Directorate of Census Operations, Assam, and Md. Zafar Siddique, SI-II, Directorate of Census Operations, Assam, who served as resource persons and provided detailed guidance on the op-

erations, administrative and technological aspects of Census 2027. Over the course of the three-day programme, participants received comprehensive training on census concepts and definitions, House Listing and Housing Operations procedures, Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS), HLB creation and layout mapping, preparation of village, town and charge registers, dashboard and reporting systems, self-enumeration procedures, mobile applications for field operations, data verification mechanisms, privacy and data security protocols, field-level monitoring and digital census management through web and mobile platforms. Practical demonstrations and hands-on sessions enabled participants to familiarize themselves with the latest digital tools and procedures to be adopted during the census process.

It may be noted that, the House Listing and Housing Operations (HLO) Phase-I in Karbi Anglong will be conducted through house-to-house enumeration from August 17 to September 15, 2026. In addition, members of the public will have the option of Self-Enumeration, allowing them to submit household particulars online in advance through the official Self-Enumeration (SE) Portal from August 2 to August 16, 2026. The initiative is expected to enhance public participation, improve data accuracy and facilitate a smoother enumeration process.

Sanjiv Shyam promoted as new Commissioner and Special Secretary of Public Works Roads Department

David Das, Guwahati, Jun 3: In a significant positive change to the administrative system of the Assam Government, the Personnel-A Department of the State Government issued an important official notification yesterday. With

receive all other government allowances and benefits as per rules. The promotion will be effective from the date he assumes charge with dedication and integrity.

It is to be noted that the offi-



the aim of expediting public interest and departmental efficiency, Sanjiv Shyam, the current Secretary of the Public Works Roads Department (PWRD), Government of Assam, has been granted a high-level promotion.

According to the notification, the dutiful officer Shyam has been newly assigned as Commissioner and Special Secretary in a key cadre post of the Public Works Roads Department. After assuming this senior position, he will

cial order was issued on June 1, 2026, by Bikram Dev Sharma, Secretary, Personnel Department, Government of Assam, through a digital signature (E.No. 368203/37). It is expected that the promotion of this efficient and experienced administrative officer will greatly help advance the developmental activities of the department. It is further noted that Sanjiv Shyam took charge today from former Commissioner Secretary Pawan Terang.

Illegal Parking Clampdown Begins in Nagaon: District Administration Locks Wheels of Offending Vehicles

Staff Reporter, Nagaon, June 3: In a significant move to tackle the growing traffic congestion in

vehicles released, with offenders required to pay substantial fines before the locks were removed.

Authorities believe that the measure will serve as a strong deterrent and significantly reduce traffic bottlenecks in the town.



Nagaon town and prevent the menace of illegal roadside parking, the Nagaon District Administration has launched a strict enforcement drive by fitting wheel locks on vehicles found parked in violation of traffic regulations.

Acting on the special directives of District Commissioner Debashish Sharma, the initiative came into effect from Wednesday with the objective of ensuring smooth movement of traffic and enhancing road safety across the town. During the drive, several cars and motorcycles parked illegally or in a manner causing inconvenience to commuters were immobilized using wheel-locking devices by the traffic police.

The action left many habitual violators scrambling to get their

office, where the District Commissioner ceremonially handed over the first Wheel Tyre Lock Clamp to Traffic Police Sub-Inspector Jiten Kumar Dutta in the presence of Nagaon Municipal Board Executive Officer Pankaj Bhuyan.

According to District Information and Public Relations Officer Bikash Sharma, the innovative enforcement mechanism has been introduced to strengthen traffic management and improve road discipline throughout the district.

The wheel-locking devices, provided by the District Road Safety Committee, will now be used not only within Nagaon town but also along the four-lane Nagaon Bypass. Trucks and other vehicles found parked illegally on roadsides or in no-park-

ing zones will have their wheels locked, and violators will face hefty penalties and legal action under applicable traffic laws. Appealing to residents to cooperate with the administration, the District Commissioner urged citizens to follow traffic regulations and support efforts to keep Nagaon free from congestion and safer for all road users.

A Step Towards a Traffic-Free Nagaon: The district administration's latest initiative marks a decisive step toward restoring traffic discipline and ensuring hassle-free movement on the town's roads. Officials hope that the stringent action against illegal parking will not only ease congestion but also foster a greater sense of civic responsibility among motorists, paving the way for a cleaner, safer and more organized Nagaon.

It is noteworthy that despite the administration's strict stance, a section of people remains unfazed. Defying the administration's firm measures, a vehicle has reportedly been parked for a long time at the entrance of the drain along the narrow and busy road leading towards the Sadar Police Station from in front of Nagaon Civil Hospital. As a result, the public has been facing considerable inconvenience. It remains to be seen what action the administration will take in this particular case.

Popular Cultural Activist of Chandrapur, Nabajyoti Saikia, Conferred Doctorate Degree

Guwahati, Jun 3: In a dignified special ceremony organized with the support of various social and cultural organizations from different states of India and in collaboration with the GHRPF Richard Institute, Nabajyoti Saikia, a popular social and cultural activist from Chandrapur in Guwahati Metropolitan District, Assam, was conferred an Honorary Doctorate Degree by Asia Digital University on May 23 at Dwarka Sector-7, New Delhi.

Saikia received this prestigious honour in recognition of his dedicated contribution to the cultural field over the past 31 years. His long-standing involvement and service in the sphere of culture earned him this distinguished doctorate.

The programme, held at the Creative Unlock Auditorium in New Delhi, was conducted by social and cultural activist Mahananda Sarkar Dutta. Distinguished educationist and retired Principal Dr. Sanjay Prabhakar Harse, retired administrative officer Dr. Kashiram Govind Paithane, retired army officer Jeevan Govind Vishwakarma, along with several other eminent personalities, attended the event.

It is noteworthy that Nabajyoti Saikia's achievement has brought pride and recognition to the Chandrapur region. Various organizations as well as numerous well-wishers from the area have extended their congratulations and best wishes on his receiving the honorary doctorate degree.



Memorial Program held in Honor of Neel Pawan Barua and Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi

Khairuddin Ahmed, Sivasagar, Jun 3: "Despite Assam's rich tradition of visual arts, it was at one point on the verge of being overshadowed amid the rapid pace of modernity. At a time when enthusiasm for modern artistic thought among Assamese people was not particularly encouraging, Neel Pawan Barua played a pioneering role by creating a remarkable synthesis of Santiniketan and indigenous artistic styles. Likewise, Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi overcame numerous challenges to establish herself as a poet, lyricist, and researcher of folk culture. She also authored three philosophical works—Devi, Surya, and Shiva. National Professor Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi was truly a lifelong literary and cultural devotee." These remarks were made by Dilip Phukan, Principal of Chukafa College of Fine Arts, Simoluguri, while attending as the chief guest at a commemorative program organized by Agantuk, Sivasagar, marking the 90th birth anniversary of renowned artist Neel Pawan Barua and the 22nd death anniversary of Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi at the auditorium of Dolakakharia Gyanjyoti Kendra.

The day-long program began with tree plantation by social worker Chandan Hatimuria. Veteran athlete Champa Barua paid tribute to Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi, while music enthusiast Rajani Gogoi paid homage to Neel Pawan Barua by lighting ceremonial lamps before their portraits and sharing personal reflections. The main event was inaugurated by

Asim Kumar Gogoi, Principal of Geleki Fine Arts College, with an opening song composed and written by Rajani Gogoi and performed by young students of Gyanjyoti

tion of his lifelong dedication to the field of painting.

Winners of a portrait-drawing competition based on Neel Pawan Barua were also awarded certificates and



Kendra. The program was conducted by Agantuk president Jog Gogoi. Rimpi Saikia, a student of Geleki National School, delivered an impressive speech.

Young singers Jyotishman Phukan, Akanksha Gogoi, and Rimpi Saikia captivated the audience by performing several evergreen songs written by Dr. Nirmal Prabha Bordoloi and originally sung by Jayanta Hazarika and Dipali Barthakur. They were accompanied by renowned musicians Prabhakar Konwar, Chanchal Konwar, and Sailendra Borchetta. Poet Bipin Hazarika recited one of Dr. Bordoloi's poems, while cultural activist Shiladitya Gogoi entertained the audience through mind-sport demonstrations by his students.

On the occasion, octogenarian artist Dharmeswar Barua was felicitated by Agantuk and Dolakakharia Gyanjyoti Kendra in recogni-

books. In Group 'A', Arfa Asrin, Darshana Gogoi, and Anurag Gogoi secured first, second, and third positions respectively. In Group 'B', Prastuti Gogoi, Mousam Gogoi, and Navajit Borgohain won first, second, and third places respectively.

Among those present were Dilip Mahanta, President of N-Pukhuri Branch Sahitya Sabha; local AASU leader Hemanta Gogoi; artist and social worker Ram Nayak; Montu Kumar Phukan; Pranabjyoti Gogoi; and several others who shared their thoughts. The welcome address was delivered by chief organizer Dilip Saikia, while the vote of thanks was offered by Agantuk's associate secretary Ramen Barua. The program concluded with all participants joining together in singing the popular song "Mayabini" by humanitarian artist and beloved Assamese singer Zubeen Garg.