

Brief Post

India-US Trade Talks

New Delhi, Jun 4: India continues to engage with the United States on trade-related issues as negotiations advance on both the proposed Section 301 tariff measures and a broader bilateral framework agreement aimed at strengthening economic ties between the two countries. The latest developments come after the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) completed investigations into import-related measures involving 60 economies, including India, and proposed the imposition of additional tariffs on imports.

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Girl hurt by youth

Achyut KR Nath, Correspondent, Morigaon, Jun 4: The Nalbari's Mukalmua incident has not been subsided yet another love related incident shocked Morigaon. The incident came to light when the scorned lover Ribul Ali allegedly attacked the girl with a sharp knife for discontinuing the love relationship with him.

According to information, the accused Ribul Ali oppressed the girl for cut off the love relationship with him for many a days due to which Ribul Ali was angry with her and attacked her with a sharp knife at her home at Mikirbheta. The family members alongwith local public filed an FRI at Mikirbheta PS in respect of this incident.



Assam Governor Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya along with the Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, DoNER Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, along with the Hon'ble Governors and Hon'ble Chief Ministers of the eight North Eastern states attends the 73rd NEC plenary session at Shillong on 4th June 2026.

CM Sarma inducts 12 ministers to strengthen governance

Staff Reporter, Guwahati, June 4: The Government of Assam is set to witness a significant expansion of its Council of Ministers as twelve Members of the Assam Legislative Assembly will be sworn in as Cabinet Ministers on 5 June 2026 at 12:45 PM. The swearing-in ceremony marks an important step in strengthening the state's administrative framework under the leadership of Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma. The ministers-designate include Ashwini Ray Sarkar, Ashok Singhal, Bimal Borah, Biswajit Daimary, Jayanta Malla Baruah, Kaushik Rai, Keshab Mahanta, Krishnendu Paul,

Nilima Devi, Pijush Hazarika, Dr. Ranaj Pegu and Sushanta Borgohain. Their induction into the Council of Ministers reflects the government's continued emphasis on effective governance, balanced representation and accelerated development across Assam. The incoming ministers bring with them extensive political experience, strong grassroots connections and a long record of public service, factors that are expected to further strengthen the functioning of the government and enhance service delivery to the people. The cabinet expansion highlights the Assam government's commitment to

building a capable and inclusive team that can address the diverse aspirations of citizens from different regions and communities. By bringing together experienced leaders and dynamic representatives, the government aims to ensure greater focus on priority sectors such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, rural development, agriculture, youth welfare and cultural preservation. The move is also seen as an effort to improve coordination among departments and accelerate the implementation of key developmental programmes. Over the past several years, Assam

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Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways Carries Out Study visit to NFR

Maligaon, Jun 4: A high level Dr. C. M. Ramesh, Hon'ble



Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways, comprising Members of Parliament from both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and chaired by

Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) is undertaking a study visit to Gangtok, Kolkata and Rishikesh from 04th to 09th June

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District Administration Cachar and District Health Society intensify preparations for National Immunization Day

SILCHAR | June 4: In a concerted effort to strengthen child health protection and



sustain the district's polio-free status, the District Administration, Cachar in collaboration with the District Health Society, Cachar, convened a District Task Force Committee (DTFC) meeting on National Immunization Day (NID) at the New Conference Hall of the District Commissioner's Office, Cachar here on Thursday.

The meeting was presided over by Monjoyoti Kutum, ACS, Additional District Commissioner (incharge Health), Cachar.

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DC Darrang emphasised on preserving heritage

Paban Kumar Kalita, Correspondent from Sipajhar, Jun 4: The District Commissioner Darrang Ayushi Jain IAS has visited the historic Patharughat Memorial along with the Co-District Commissioner Sipajhar and Circle Officer of Patharughat. During the visit the District Commissioner reviewed the condition of the memorial and emphasised on the importance of preserving and promoting the rich historical and cultural heritage of Darrang district. The District Administration remaining committed to safeguarding heritage sites of historical significance and ensuring that the sacrifice of the Patharughat martyrs continue to inspire future generations and spread the motto of patriotism. The Patharughat Memorial stands as a solemn tribute



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District Task Force Meeting Held for National Immunization Day (Polio Campaign) in Barpeta District

Barpeta, Jun 4: In preparation for the AMSA House, Barpeta, under the chairmanship of the ADC (Health), Barpeta.



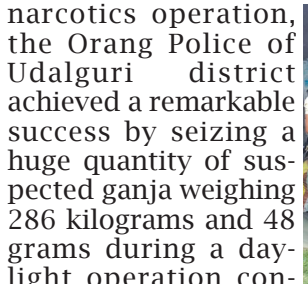
The meeting was attended by representatives from various concerned departments, including Education, Social Welfare, DIPR, APDCL, and Health officials of Barpeta district. The purpose of the meeting was to review preparedness and ensure

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the upcoming National Immunization Day (NID), which will be observed as Polio Day on 28th June 2026, a District Task Force (DTF) Meeting was held today at

Orang Police Achieve Major Breakthrough, Over 286 Kg of Ganja Seized in Broad Daylight

Tapan Sen Gupta, Correspondent, Orang, Jun 4: In a major anti-narcotics operation, the Orang Police of Udalguri district achieved a remarkable success by seizing a huge quantity of suspected ganja weighing 286 kilograms and 48 grams during a daylight operation conducted at Dhanshri Ghat on Thursday.



The operation was carried out under the leadership of newly appointed Officer-in-Charge Manoj Kumar Das, who recently assumed charge of Orang Police Station

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BJP's Development Agenda Wins Hearts in Assam: CM

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

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

Samaguri also focused heavily on BJP's achievements and the numerous welfare programs that the party has implemented during his tenure as Chief Minister. One of the key initiatives highlighted by Sarma was Mission Basundhara, a scheme launched in 2021 with the objective of addressing land-related issues for residents across the state. This program has proven particularly impactful in Samaguri and other constituencies, as it seeks to streamline land documentation and resolve disputes that have long hindered the region's progress. Sarma emphasized that this initiative is just one of many that demonstrate BJP's commitment to addressing the problems that have been neglected by previous governments. The Mission Basundhara program, according to Sarma, has resonated deeply with the people, as it has provided them with a sense of empowerment and ownership over their land, which has been a long-standing issue in rural areas. Sarma's speech also underscored the broader goals of the BJP in terms of infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and security. He pointed to his government's efforts to strengthen Assam's infrastructure through road construction and bridge repairs, which are aimed at improving connectivity and providing better access to essential services.

These projects are expected to boost economic activity and facilitate trade and commerce within Assam and beyond, ultimately leading to a more prosperous state. Sarma also mentioned the educational reforms under his leadership, including the conversion of state-funded madrasas into regular schools, a move that aims to modernize education in the state and provide better opportunities for the youth. The healthcare sector also received significant attention during Sarma's address, as he discussed the expansion of medical services, particularly in rural areas. He cited the development of new medical facilities and the recruitment of more healthcare professionals as part of the government's plan to improve access to quality healthcare for all residents. Sarma also emphasized his commitment to security and law and order in Assam, where he has taken strong measures against insurgent groups and organized crime. His tough stance on terrorism and security-related issues has garnered both support and criticism, with some praising him for restoring stability to the region, while others argue that his methods can be too aggressive. The Chief Minister's remarks during the rally in Samaguri resonated deeply with the crowd, particularly his call for voters in both Samaguri and Bihali to back the BJP candidates in the bye-elections. Sarma expressed his confidence that the party's developmental agenda and governance model would result in substantial improvements for these constituencies, urging the electorate to make their voices heard by voting for BJP. He concluded his speech by calling on the people to recognize the importance of these bye-elections, which will

play a crucial role in determining the future direction of Assam and solidifying the BJP's presence in the state. Sarma's campaign in Samaguri and Bihali marks a critical moment in the BJP's political journey in Assam, as the party seeks to expand its influence and deepen its roots across the region. The bye-elections in these constituencies are being closely watched as a litmus test for the BJP's support base in Assam, and Sarma's leadership will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping the outcomes. His government's initiatives have sparked both praise and controversy, and as the elections approach, the Chief Minister's outreach to voters will continue to be a key factor in BJP's strategy to secure victories in these constituencies. As Sarma looks to the future, he remains focused on his vision of an Assam that thrives under the principles of development, governance, and welfare. His leadership has been characterized by a mix of bold initiatives and firm policies, and while not everyone agrees with his approach, it is clear that Sarma's influence remains strong. The outcome of the Samaguri and Bihali bye-elections will have a lasting impact on the state's political landscape, as it will determine whether the electorate believes in the BJP's promise of growth and prosperity, or whether the opposition's claims of exploitation and neglect will resonate more strongly with the voters. The coming weeks will be crucial for Sarma and the BJP as they continue to fight for the people's mandate and work toward building a better Assam.

Assam's Skill Development Program Gets Major Boost

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

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

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

DECLARATION

I, Md. Amzad Ali S/o Md. Abdus Samad Miah, residing at Vill- Shoriatpur, P.O.- Showpur, P.S.- Kalgachia, Dist.- Barpeta, Assam, shall henceforth be known as Md. Amzad Ali as declared before the Notary Public, Barpeta, vide Affidavit No.2671 (C/15/2026 dated.19/05/26.

Amzad Ali and Md. Amzad Ali both are same and identical person

DECLARATION

I, Meher Ali, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that my actual and correct name is Meher Ali, which is duly recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 314827761800, as well as in my EPIC Card bearing No. JBM1117595 under 11 Mankachar LAC and in all other relevant documents and records. However, due to an inadvertent mistake, my name has been recorded as Mohammad Meher Ali in the passport of my son, namely Mohammad Taher Ali, bearing Passport No. N5445633 issued by the Regional Passport Office, instead of my actual and correct name "Meher Ali".

I further declare that the names Meher Ali and Mohammad Meher Ali refer to one and the same person, i.e myself.

Name correction

I, JAHENARA BIBI, D.O.B.09/04/1985 W/o - LATE MAJIBAR RAHMAN, R/o-Village -SINDURAI PART ii, "Po.Belguri, "Ps. AGOMONI, Dist-Dhubri (Assam), declared before Magistrate on 26/05/2026, Dhubri that in AGVB, Halakura Br. VIDE A/ C.7148026008523 my name has been inserted as JAHANARA BIBI instead of my correct name JAHENARA BIBI.

That's why, JAHENARA BIBI and JAHANARA BIBI is the same and one person i.e my self.

Name correction

I, KRISHNA SINGHA, D.O.B.10-08-1956 W/o - LATE SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGHA, R/o -SAHUPARA, MANGDU, BASTAR, CHHATTISGARH, PIN-494001, declared before Magistrate on 23/04/2026, Dhubri that in the land recorded, Vide Dag No.279 patta no. 305 of village-BIDYARDABRI PART -iii, under Agomoni Rev. Circle my name has been recorded as KOSHNA RANI SINGHA instead of my correct & actual name KRISHNA SINGHA. But my deceased husband name has been recorded as SUBHASH SINGHA instead of correct & actual name SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGHA.

KOSHNA RANI SINGHA and KRISHNA SINGHA is the same and one person i.e my self. SUBHASH SINGHA & SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGHA is the same and one person i.e my deceased husband.

Amazon partners Kaziranga National Park, bringing conservation message home Environment Day

Guwahati: This World Environment Day, Amazon India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve to enable the Kaziranga Eco Shop to sell its eco-conscious products on Amazon.in through the Amazon Karigar programme. Owned and operated by the Kaziranga Forest Department, the Kaziranga Eco Shop offers over 230 products made from water hyacinth, reclaimed wood, eco-paper, and handwoven textiles, crafted by local communities around Kaziranga. Signed between senior representatives of Amazon India and the Field Director of the reserve, the collaboration aims to bring conservation-led craftsmanship from the heart of Assam to customers across India, while helping create sustainable livelihoods for the communities that call Kaziranga home. As part of the initiative, Amazon will onboard the Kaziranga Eco Shop onto Amazon.in under the Amazon Karigar programme and provide support with initial training on how to sell on Amazon.in, help improve discoverability, and potentially drive sustainable sales growth. The collaboration will also include support in imaging and cataloguing, and co-created marketing initiatives, including participation in the Amazon Karigar storefront. Commenting on the collaboration, Dr Sonali Ghosh, IFS, Field Director, Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve Kaziranga Forest Department said, "Kaziranga has long been recognised for its rich biodiversity and conservation efforts and through this collaboration, we are also able to highlight the role local communities play in sustaining this ecosystem. By bringing products made by communities in and around the region to a wider customer base, this initiative will help create sustainable livelihood opportunities while encouraging environmentally conscious craftsmanship rooted in the region's natural heritage." Highlighting the importance of this collaboration,

Aruna Daryani, Director – Sales, Amazon India said, "At Amazon, we are committed to enabling local artisans, weavers, and community enterprises to reach customers across India through e-commerce. Our collaboration with Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve is a testament to that belief. By onboarding the Kaziranga Eco Shop onto Amazon.in through the Karigar programme, we are presenting customers across India with the opportunity to actively support wildlife conservation and the livelihoods of local artisan communities. We are proud to work with an institution as iconic as Kaziranga and look forward to empowering the Eco Shop grow its reach, its sales, and its conservation impact." Under the MoU, Amazon and Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve will work together to increase market access and online visibility for the Kaziranga Eco Shop across India. The collaboration will showcase eco-conscious, locally made products to customers nationwide while creating greater awareness of conservation-led enterprises. Every purchase made through the Kaziranga Eco Shop directly contributes to supporting wildlife conservation initiatives and community livelihoods associated with Kaziranga. The collaboration reflects a shared commitment to promoting sustainable products, supporting local communities, and leveraging e-commerce to create new opportunities for conservation-linked enterprises in India. The Amazon.in marketplace is operated by Amazon Seller Services Private Ltd, an affiliate of Amazon.com, Inc. (NASDAQ: AMZN). Amazon.in seeks to build the most customer-centric online destination for customers to find and discover virtually anything they want to buy online by giving them more of what they want – vast selection, low prices, fast and reliable delivery, and a trusted and convenient experience; and provide sellers with a world-class e-commerce marketplace.

Flipkart introduces GRWM GRWM Fashion Sale

Guwahati: Flipkart, India's home-grown e-commerce marketplace, has launched 'GRWM GRWM', its latest fashion-led sale designed to turn the shopping experience into a cultural moment for India's digital-first consumers. Inspired by the globally popular GenZ trend "GRWM" (Get Ready With Me), reimagined with an interesting Indian twist pronounced as "Garam Garam," the campaign gives Flipkart Fashion's flagship end-of-season sale a fresh, trend-first identity. Moving beyond the conventional perception of clearance-led sales, the campaign celebrates what's new, trending, and culturally relevant. It further reinforces Flipkart's commitment to bringing the next 200 million Indians online for fashion through its growing ecosystem of marketplace sellers and homegrown D2C brands. With participation from leading fashion brands, emerging D2C labels, marketplace sellers, and a growing cre-

ator ecosystem, GRWM GRWM elevates fashion-forward shopping with 10 Lakhs+ trendy products, over 50 international and homegrown brands, exciting shopping rewards, including Scratch Cards, Supercoin offers, etc., delivering a high-energy fashion shopping experience catering to all popular ranges of styles and budgets for consumers across Bharat. From baggy jeans to Korean trousers, floral dresses to palazzo sets, and top international and D2C brands, the campaign brings together millions of consumers across the country. Speaking about the campaign, Kapil Thirani, Vice President, Flipkart Fashion, said, "Fashion discovery today is increasingly influenced by creators, communities, and digital culture, especially among Gen Z consumers. With GRWM GRWM, we are reimagining the traditional end-of-season sale to reflect how young India discovers and engages with fashion today, moving towards a more fresh, trend-first and culturally relevant shopping experience. From personalised recommendations and aesthetic-led destinations, to a curated mix of aspirational and value-driven brands, the sale brings the latest styles to customers across Bharat. As we continue to democratize fashion for the next wave of Indian consumers, this is another step towards making fashion more accessible, relevant, and inclusive for all." This year's sale will witness bigger engagement in the Creator Ecosystem with 1000+ creators driving fashion-led content across Meta and YouTube over a two-week period, while also earning commissions through the campaign. Flipkart has also unveiled two new TVC films that creatively capture the urge for non-stop scrolling, driven by the excitement of discovering big deals on big brands during the GRWM GRWM Sale.

ion today, moving towards a more fresh, trend-first and culturally relevant shopping experience. From personalised recommendations and aesthetic-led destinations, to a curated mix of aspirational and value-driven brands, the sale brings the latest styles to customers across Bharat. As we continue to democratize fashion for the next wave of Indian consumers, this is another step towards making fashion more accessible, relevant, and inclusive for all." This year's sale will witness bigger engagement in the Creator Ecosystem with 1000+ creators driving fashion-led content across Meta and YouTube over a two-week period, while also earning commissions through the campaign. Flipkart has also unveiled two new TVC films that creatively capture the urge for non-stop scrolling, driven by the excitement of discovering big deals on big brands during the GRWM GRWM Sale.

HDFC Bank Parivartan helps save over 3.26 lakh acres farmland

Guwahati: On World Environment Day, HDFC Bank, through its CSR programme Parivartan, in partnership with CII Foundation, announced a landmark milestone in its Crop Residue Management (CRM) initiative, 88% of 3,78,425 acres of farmland have been saved from stubble burning across Punjab and Haryana in the 2025 season. Reaching 86,000 farmers across more than 380 villages in Ludhiana and Sangrur districts of Punjab and Fatehabad district of Haryana, the programme is a comprehensive and impactful private-sector-led effort to tackle agricultural air pollution in North India. Stubble burning after the paddy harvest is among the contributors to the severe air pollution that blankets North India every winter, disrupting life and aggravating chronic heart and lung diseases. Burning one tonne of paddy straw, generated in approx. 1/3rd of an acre farm, releases three kilograms of particulate matter into the atmosphere, while also stripping the soil of essential nutrients. Despite a 53% reduction in burning incidents in Punjab and Haryana in 2025, small and marginal farmers continue to face barriers in accessing machinery and managing residue within tight inter-seasonal windows. Launched in October 2023 in Ludhiana and expanded in 2024 to Sangrur and Fatehabad, the three-year programme is implemented by CII Foundation across 380 villages. To date, 8 villages have eliminated stubble burning entirely, and 174 have achieved over 90% non-burning compliance. Speaking about the milestone, Nusrat Pathan, Head – CSR, HDFC Bank, said, "Stubble burning is not simply an agricultural habit – it is a systemic challenge rooted in economics, access, and awareness. HDFC Bank Parivartan's partnership with CII Foundation has addressed all three dimensions simultaneously. By making machinery accessible to farmers through cooperative tool banks, driving behaviour change through sustained community engagement, and introducing ex-situ solutions like biogas and composting, we have built a model that delivers environmental outcomes alongside real savings for farmers.

On World Environment Day, we reaffirm our commitment to scaling this impact further." The programme's success is anchored in a community tool bank approach: over 450 pieces of farm machinery, including Balers, Super Seeders, Smart Seeders, Mittar Seeders, were procured and donated to more than 140 farmer cooperatives and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), making these available to farmers at an affordable rental cost. 800 tractors were deployed on hire for small and marginal farmers during the peak stubble burning period. Use of machinery enables in-situ residue management, mulching and incorporating paddy straw into the soil while also completing soil preparation, sowing of wheat seeds and fertiliser application in a single operation – reducing stubble management and sowing costs from Rs. 2,000–Rs. 2,500 per acre to approximately Rs. 800–Rs. 1,200 per acre, while also improving soil fertility and reducing dependence on chemical fertilisers in the long run. Farmers unable to adopt in-situ straw management methods could use Balers machines to mechanically collect, bundle and dispose of straw in a quick time. Over 30 village youth were mentored and supported with provision of Balers machines to initiate small businesses on paddy straw aggregation, supply chain management and value addition. Eighteen paddy straw-based small biogas units have been installed, and two bio-pelletization plants and one bio-fertiliser plant are being established under the program to enhance ex-situ straw management. Farmers' participation and sustained behaviour change was brought about through thousands of village-level meetings, farmer awareness sessions, and training programmes conducted in partnership with the Agriculture Department. Chandrakant Pradhan, Lead – Climate Resilience, CII Foundation, said, "What makes this programme exceptional is the depth of community ownership it has generated. Farmers who once had no alternative to burning now champion in-situ management and actively encourage their neighbours.

Mittal Motocorp inaugurates state-of-the-art Royal Enfield Dealership in Narengi

Guwahati: Mittal Motocorp officially inaugurated its brand-new authorised Royal Enfield dealership at Narengi, Guwahati. The showroom was inaugurated by Regional Business Manager Mr. Soumya Sankar Bhuyan and Mr. Mahendra Mittal in the presence of Mr. Kunal Mittal, Mr. Vinit Mittal, and Mr. Lokesh Mittal, marking a significant milestone in the region's automotive landscape and establishing a premium destination for motorcycle enthusiasts across Assam. Strategically located near Maria Public School, Narengi, the state-of-the-art dealership has been designed to offer customers the complete Royal Enfield brand experience under one roof. The facility provides world-class sales, service, and spare parts support, ensuring convenience and a seamless ownership experience for riders and enthusiasts alike. Royal Enfield, the world's oldest motorcycle brand in continuous production, has been crafting distinctive mid-sized motorcycles since 1901. Renowned for its rich heritage and spirit of exploration, the brand has inspired generations of riders to embark on memorable journeys and adventures. The new showroom prominently showcases Royal Enfield's iconic range of motorcycles, including the time-

less Classic 350, the legendary Bullet 350, the agile Hunter 350, the comfortable long-distance cruiser Meteor 350, the adventure-

Autozone, an authorised Maruti Suzuki dealership, and Mittal Eicher, a VECV Trucks and Buses dealership, the group has now

across the region. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Vinit Mittal said, "Guwahati is the gateway to the Northeast, a region

motorcycling." Mr. Mittal further added that beyond retail operations, the dealership offers routine maintenance and



ready Himalayan 450, and the powerful twin-cylinder models — the Interceptor 650 and Continental GT 650. The dealership venture is spearheaded by brothers Mr. Vinit Mittal and Mr. Lokesh Mittal, who bring over 15 years of experience in the automobile sector through the SBM Group. Having successfully established a strong presence in the industry with Mittal

entered the premium two-wheeler segment with Royal Enfield. This strategic expansion reflects the group's vision of delivering comprehensive mobility solutions across multiple vehicle categories. Today, SBM Group proudly offers mobility solutions ranging from two-wheelers to 22-wheelers, reinforcing its commitment to serving diverse transportation needs

that truly lives and breathes the spirit of motorcycling. Our goal is not just to sell motorcycles but to cultivate a vibrant riding community where enthusiasts can connect, share experiences, and explore the breathtaking landscapes of Assam. Through this dealership, we aim to create a destination that celebrates the passion, freedom, and lifestyle associated with

comprehensive after-sales services, ensuring customers receive professional support throughout their ownership journey. The showroom and workshop are now fully operational and open for test rides, bookings, and service appointments. "Our motto is to deliver best-in-class service and create an exceptional riding experience for every customer."

No.DPRD/BTC/15th FC/Bak-10/2025-26/ Dated Kokrajhar the 4th June, 2026

NOTICER INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders with a validity period of 90 (ninety) days from the date of receipt in prescribed from affixing non-refundable court fee stamps of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five) only subsequently to be drawn up in printed F-2 form are hereby invited from the Govt. registered PWD (Roads/ Building), P&RD, Irrigation/ Water Resources / PHE Others Govt. Contractor's under Class-I (A, B, C), Class-II and Class-III category from approved firm according to tender limit of eligibility for the following works under the award of 15th FC (RLBs) Untied Basic Grant for the Financial year 2024-25 (1st & 2nd Inst.) during 2025-26 and will be received in the office of the undersigned up to 2.00 pm on 26/06/2026 and will be opened on the same date and place at 2.15 pm in the presence of willing contractors or their authorized agents.

Sl. No.	Name of Dev. Block	Name of Scheme	A/A amount (Rs. In Lakh)	Tender Amount (Rs.)	Earnest Money (ST, SC, OBC- 1% & Gen-2%)	Cost of Tender in Rs.
1	Tihu-Barama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Barama VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
2	Tihu-Barama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Debachara VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
3	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Bangnabari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
4	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Barabri VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
5	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Bathouपुरi VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
6	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Bhogpara VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
7	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Chaibari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
8	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Adalbari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
9	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Amabari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
10	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Athiabari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
11	Baska	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Chanbarikhuati VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
12	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at No.1 Dakhin Howly VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
13	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at No. 2 Pub Howly VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
14	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at No. 3 Paschim Howly VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
15	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at No. 4 Uttar Howly VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
16	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at No. 5 Mairajhar Pather VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
17	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Barphena VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
18	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Godhuligaon VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
19	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Golagaon VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
20	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Jalagaon VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
21	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Rabanguri VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
22	Jalah	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Jalah VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
23	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Bahbaru VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
24	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Banmaja VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
25	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Chunbari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
26	Gobardhana	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Dhekijajani VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
27	Dhamdhama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Angardhowa VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
28	Dhamdhama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Baganpara VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
29	Dhamdhama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Bagulamari VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-
30	Dhamdhama	Installation of 9 mtr. Solar High Mast light at Ghoramarai VCDC	8.50	Rs.8,41,668/-	ST,SC,OBC- 1% & Gen-2%	Rs. 252/-

Time of Completion :- 3 Months
Pre-Bid meeting date & time :- 19/06/2026
Details NIT may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the Contractors or their authorized agent up to 12.00 Noon on all working days from 4/06/2026 to 26/06/26 in the office of the undersigned on payment of in the form of Banker cheque/ Demand draft of any nationalized Bank (Preferable SBI) duly pledged to the Director, P&RD, BTC, Kokrajhar. The Cost of tender (Non-Refundable) must be in the form of Demand Draft/ Banker Cheque of a Nationalized Bank drawn in favour of the Principal Secretary, BTC, Kokrajhar and payable at SBI, Kokrajhar to be deposited 0.03%.

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

IPR(BTC)/C/2026-27/428

Editorial

Defence Ties Strengthen

India-Algeria Joint Commission agrees to further enhance defence cooperation during inaugural meeting in New Delhi as the first meeting of the Joint Commission between India and Algeria was held in New Delhi, marking a significant step forward in the deepening strategic engagement between the two nations, with both sides agreeing to further expand defence cooperation activities between the two countries, including discussing issues of mutual interest in the areas of training, military exercises, medical cooperation and defence industries, thereby laying the groundwork for a more structured and forward-looking partnership that reflects the evolving geopolitical realities and shared priorities of both countries, while the meeting symbolised not only the strengthening of bilateral defence ties but also the growing convergence between India and Algeria in terms of their approach to regional security, capacity building, and technological collaboration in defence sectors, and during the discussions, emphasis was placed on enhancing professional exchanges between the armed forces of both countries, promoting joint training initiatives, and exploring opportunities for coordinated military exercises that can improve interoperability and mutual understanding, while also focusing on medical cooperation within the armed forces framework, which is increasingly recognised as an important dimension of defence collaboration, particularly in the context of humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations, and the two countries signed the Rules of Procedure for Monitoring the Implementation of India-Algeria Defence Cooperation, which will serve as the guiding framework for the meetings of the Joint Commission, ensuring that future engagements are conducted in a systematic and accountable manner, with clearly defined mechanisms for review and follow-up, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and continuity of bilateral cooperation efforts, and the meeting was co-chaired by Shri Amitabh Prasad, Joint Secretary (International Cooperation), and Kaid Nour Eddine, Major General and Chief of Staff of the Algerian Navy, reflecting the high level of representation and commitment from both sides to advance defence ties, while the Indian delegation included officials from the three Services, Headquarters, Integrated Defence Staff, Department of Defence Production, Defence Research and Development Organisation, Armed Forces Medical Services, and the Ministry of External Affairs, highlighting the comprehensive and multi-institutional nature of India's approach to defence cooperation, which integrates operational, technological, diplomatic, and industrial dimensions into a cohesive framework, and the presence of representatives from diverse sectors underscores the intent to move beyond traditional defence engagement towards a more holistic partnership that includes co-development, co-production, and innovation in defence technologies, while defence relations between India and Algeria have been growing steadily since the signing of the Defence Memorandum of Understanding in 2024 and are further strengthened by high-level visits from both sides, indicating a sustained commitment to building long-term strategic ties that are mutually beneficial and aligned with the broader foreign policy objectives of both nations, and this visit by the Chief of the Algerian Navy is an important milestone in India-Algeria defence relations and reinforces the commitment of both sides to work jointly in areas of mutual interest, serving as a platform to review past progress, identify new opportunities, and address challenges in the implementation of existing agreements, while also fostering greater trust and understanding between the defence establishments of the two countries, and prior to the meeting, Major General Kaid Nour Eddine paid tribute to the martyrs by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial, a gesture that reflects respect for India's fallen soldiers and symbolises the shared values of sacrifice and service that underpin military traditions across nations, and such ceremonial acts often play an important role in strengthening diplomatic relations by reinforcing mutual respect and solidarity, while the Algerian delegation will also hold talks with representatives of the defence industry during the visit, opening avenues for collaboration in defence manufacturing, technology transfer, and industrial partnerships, which are increasingly becoming central to modern defence cooperation as countries seek to enhance self-reliance while also leveraging global expertise, and this engagement with industry stakeholders is expected to facilitate dialogue on potential joint ventures, procurement opportunities, and research collaborations, particularly in areas such as naval systems, surveillance technologies, and advanced defence equipment, where both countries have complementary strengths and shared interests, and in the broader context, the strengthening of India-Algeria defence ties reflects a wider trend of India expanding its strategic partnerships beyond its immediate neighbourhood, engaging with countries in Africa and other regions to build a network of cooperation that supports its vision of a stable and secure global order, while for Algeria, closer defence ties with India offer opportunities to diversify its partnerships and benefit from India's growing capabilities in defence production, training, and technology, and as both countries continue to navigate a complex and dynamic international security environment, such partnerships are expected to play a crucial role in enhancing their resilience and preparedness, while also contributing to regional and global peace and stability, and the outcomes of the inaugural Joint Commission meeting are likely to set the tone for future engagements, providing a clear roadmap for the expansion of defence cooperation and ensuring that the partnership continues to evolve in line with the changing needs and priorities of both nations, thereby reinforcing the foundation of trust, collaboration, and shared strategic vision that defines India-Algeria relations.

A FIVE THOUSAND YEAR WARNING

Nature, environment and climate through world literature

Zahid Ahmed Tapadar

There is a moment near the beginning of the world's oldest story when a king stands at the edge of a great forest and hesitates. Gilgamesh of Uruk faces the sacred Cedar Forest and feels something no empire has ever extinguished: awe at the natural world, and the terrible desire to master it. He enters. The axes fall. The trees come down. Something ancient is lost — and five thousand years of literature has not stopped mourning it since. Literature had already begun keeping the record of what we owed the Earth, of what we were losing, and what the consequences would be if we forgot.

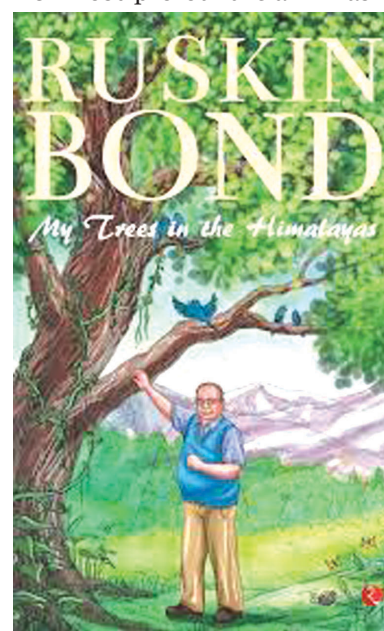
The earliest literary traditions share a remarkable ecological consciousness. The 'Prithvi Sukta' of the 'Atharvaveda' declared the covenant plainly: *Mata Bhumi Putroaham Prithivyah* — "The Earth is my mother; I am her son." Ancient Indian literature viewed nature not merely as a setting but as a living presence. In the *Ramayana*, forests such as Chitrakuta, Dandakaranya, and Panchavati are integral to the narrative. Rama's exile unfolds amidst rivers, mountains, trees, and wildlife, reflecting a profound harmony between human life and the natural world. The epic portrays forests as places of refuge, wisdom, spiritual growth, and moral testing, revealing an ecological imagination deeply embedded in Indian literary tradition.

Kalidasa, perhaps the greatest nature poet in world literature, gave that bond its most luminous expression: in Meghaduta a cloud carries a lover's grief across mountains and rivers; in Ritusamhara, India's six seasons become mirrors of human desire and longing. Homer's seas mirror fate in *The Odyssey*; Virgil's farmland embodies civilisation's debt to seasonal grace in the *Georgics*; Li Bai and Du Fu transformed mountain mist into meditations on impermanence; and Matsuo Basho compressed eternity into a haiku — "An old silent pond / A frog jumps into the pond — / Splash! Silence again." In Indigenous storytelling across Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Northeast India, forests and seasons were living relatives. Mamang Dai said it plainly: "The land is memory."

The Industrial Revolution transformed not only landscapes but consciousness. William Blake heard in the "charter'd Thames" the sound of "mind-forg'd manacles" — the mental chains that allowed human beings to accept the world's destruction. The Romantics reacted ecologically. Wordsworth urged: "Come forth into the light of things, / Let Nature be

your teacher." Shelley addressed the West Wind: "Drive my dead thoughts over the universe / Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth." Tolstoy wrote that "one of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between man and nature shall not be broken." Thoreau declared: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately" — and that "we can never have enough of nature." Rabindranath Tagore wrote in 'Gitanjali' and 'Stray Birds': "The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world." He founded tree-planting festivals at Santiniketan, turning ecological care into cultural practice a century before the word environmentalism existed.

Yet the harmony celebrated by Wordsworth, Thoreau, Tagore and countless writers before them was steadily eroding. The advance of industrial civilization transformed rivers into industrial channels, forests into commodities, and landscapes into resources. By the mid-twentieth century, this estrangement from nature had become impossible to ignore. Charles Dickens had already documented polluted cities, and Thomas Hardy lamented the destruction of rural life. Then came Rachel Carson. Her 'Silent Spring' (1962) opened with a fable of a town where one spring, no birds sang. Her most profound claim was deceptively simple:



"In nature nothing exists alone." She wrote: "Man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself." Silent Spring changed laws, reversed policies, and helped birth the modern environmental movement. Ecocriticism, emerging as a formal discipline from the 1970s, recognised that literature does not merely reflect environmental reality but creates the conditions under which people can see it, feel it, and act.

When the world began to warm in earnest, literature faced its greatest challenge: making a planetary crisis personally felt. J.G. Ballard imagined submerged cities in 'The Drowned World' (1962). Frank Herbert's 'Dune' explored water scarcity and desert ecology. Octavia Butler's 'Parable of the Sower' (1993), set in a burning California of the 2020s, predicted what scientists now document. Margaret Atwood named it "the everything change" — her 'MaddAddam trilogy' (2003-2013) warning that "the people in the chaos cannot learn what they are doing

to the sea and the sky and the plants and the animals." Cormac McCarthy, in 'The Road' (2006), showed the aftermath: "nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before." Barbara Kingsolver brought the crisis home through displaced monarch butterflies in 'Flight Behavior' (2012). Richard Powers, in 'The Overstory' (2018), made trees the true protagonists, insisting that "the only thing that can change a person's mind is a good story." Kim Stanley Robinson, in 'The Ministry for the Future' (2020), told COP26 as the first novelist to address a UN climate conference: "We are in a science fiction novel that we are all co-writing together."

No account of climate literature is complete without voices from those closest to the consequences. Ruskin Bond has chronicled the Himalayan landscape across decades with a tenderness that is itself ecological witness. In 'Rain in the Mountains', 'Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra', 'The Book of Nature', 'My Trees in the Himalayas', 'The Cherry Tree', and 'The Blue Umbrella', forests, rain, birds, and rivers are rendered with such loving precision that their loss will already have been mourned in language. "And when all the wars are over," Bond wrote, "a butterfly will still be beautiful."

Arundhati Roy, in 'The God of Small Things' and her essay 'The Greater Common Good', insisted that the silencing of rivers and the silencing of people are the same act of power. Amitav Ghosh, in 'The Hungry Tide', made the Sundarbans a microcosm for the global emergency, and in 'The Great Derangement' (2016) declared: "The climate crisis is also a crisis of culture."

Mamang Dai, Tamsula Ao, and Easterine Kire of Northeast India, alongside 'Ngugi wa Thiong'o' and Chinua Achebe in 'Things Fall Apart', encode the same truth: the health of the land and the health of the people who belong to it are one indivisible condition.

From the Cedar Forest of Gilgamesh to the disappearing Sundarbans, from Kalidasa's monsoon rains to McCarthy's ash-grey skies, literature has worshipped nature, mourned it, warned against its destruction, and imagined the possibility of transformation. Scientific data can measure the carbon in the atmosphere. Literature makes us feel what it means — in the silence of a birdless spring, in grey ash where forests once grew, in the splash of a frog and the silence that follows. The Earth has been speaking for five thousand years. The question is whether, this time, we will finally heed its call.

Contact: 94015-51455

India and the Netherlands: Building a Strategic Partnership for the Future



Siddharth Roy

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the Netherlands may not have generated the dramatic headlines often associated with summit diplomacy, yet it could prove to be one of India's most consequential engagements with Europe in recent years. The visit elevated India-Netherlands ties to the level of a "strategic partnership" and produced 17 concrete outcomes spanning semiconductors, renewable energy, water management, higher education, mobility, health, customs cooperation and agriculture.

At a time when the world is grappling with fractured supply chains, climate emergencies, energy insecurity and geopolitical uncertainty, the significance of this partnership lies not merely in symbolism but in practical cooperation. The Netherlands may be geographically small, but it is one of Europe's leading centres of technology, logistics, water engineering and innovation. India, on the other hand, represents scale, market potential and a rapidly expanding technological ecosystem. Together, the two countries are attempting to build a partnership that is future-oriented and resilient.

Among the most significant outcomes of the visit was the roadmap for the India-Netherlands Strategic Partnership for 2026-2030. This is important because India's engagement with Europe is increasingly shifting from transactional trade ties to long-term strategic cooperation. The Netherlands occupies a vital position in Europe's economic architecture. Rotterdam is Europe's largest port,

Dutch companies are global leaders in semiconductor technology, and the country has pioneered innovative solutions in climate adaptation and sustainable agriculture.

One of the key highlights of the visit was the semiconductor agreement between Tata Electronics and Dutch firm ASML to support India's semiconductor fabrication project in Dholera, Gujarat. In an era where semiconductors determine technological sovereignty, India's attempt to build domestic manufacturing capabilities has become a strategic necessity. The COVID-19 pandemic and global geopolitical tensions exposed the vulnerabilities of concentrated semiconductor supply chains. By partnering with the Netherlands, India seeks access not only to advanced technology but also to trusted supply networks.

Equally important was the emphasis on green energy and climate transition. The two countries agreed on a roadmap for green hydrogen cooperation and established joint mechanisms on renewable energy and energy transition. India's ambitious clean-energy targets require international technological collaboration, financing and research support. The Netherlands, with its expertise in offshore wind energy and sustainable industrial systems, can become an important partner in India's energy transition journey.

Perhaps the most strategically relevant aspect of the visit for India's future lies in water management cooperation. Prime Minister Modi's visit to the iconic Afsluitdijk dam in the Netherlands underlined India's growing interest in Dutch expertise in flood control and coastal engineering. The Letter of Intent concerning technical cooperation on Gujarat's Kalpasar project demonstrates India's intention to learn from Dutch innovations in managing water resources.

This cooperation is particularly relevant for flood-prone States such as Assam and Bihar. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma himself noted that Dutch water gover-

nance models could be useful for Assam's riverine challenges. With climate change intensifying floods, river erosion and sea-level rise, India must invest heavily in climate-resilient infrastructure. The Netherlands offers lessons in long-term planning, scientific water governance and integrated infrastructure management.

Agriculture and dairy cooperation also emerged as important pillars of the partnership. The establishment of Indo-Dutch Centres of Excellence in flowers and dairy training reflects the Netherlands' globally recognised strengths in agricultural innovation. Despite limited land availability, the Netherlands has become one of the world's largest agricultural exporters through advanced technology and efficient farming methods. India can benefit significantly from such expertise, especially in improving productivity, cold-chain systems and sustainable farming practices.

The visit also focused on people-to-people and academic ties. Agreements on higher education, migration and mobility, and cooperation between Indian and Dutch universities indicate that the relationship is expanding beyond government-to-government engagement. Skilled mobility partnerships are becoming increasingly important in a world facing demographic imbalances and talent shortages. India's large skilled workforce and the Netherlands' demand for high-quality professionals create natural complementarities.

Another noteworthy aspect was the cultural dimension of the visit. The restitution of the Chola copper plates to India carried symbolic importance. In recent years, India has intensified efforts to recover stolen cultural artefacts from abroad. Such gestures strengthen trust and cultural goodwill between nations.

The broader geopolitical context also explains the importance of the visit. Europe today is seeking to diversify economic and strategic partnerships amid uncertainties created by the Ukraine conflict, tensions with China and disruptions in global supply chains. India, meanwhile, is expanding its partnerships with European countries while

maintaining strategic autonomy. The India-Netherlands partnership fits into this larger realignment.

Importantly, the visit signals India's growing emphasis on issue-based diplomacy rather than ideological alignment. Cooperation in semiconductors, critical minerals, renewable energy, logistics and technology reflects India's pragmatic foreign policy priorities.

However, declarations alone do not guarantee success. Many bilateral agreements announced during high-level visits often remain under-implemented. The true test of this strategic partnership will lie in institutional follow-up, investment flows, technology transfer and project execution. India must ensure that such agreements translate into tangible domestic gains, especially in infrastructure, manufacturing and climate adaptation.

Prime Minister Modi's Netherlands visit demonstrated that diplomacy today is increasingly about building partnerships for future challenges rather than merely managing present crises. In a fragmented and uncertain world, India's engagement with technologically advanced and innovation-driven countries like the Netherlands can strengthen its developmental ambitions and strategic resilience.

The visit may not have dominated global headlines, but its long-term significance could be substantial. In many ways, India and the Netherlands are attempting to craft a partnership that reflects the priorities of the 21st century i.e. sustainability, technological cooperation, resilient supply chains and climate preparedness. That makes this visit not merely successful, but strategically timely.

The writer is a Civil Engineer, Short Story Writer, Columnist, Consultant (invitee) to Rashtriya Raksha University (under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India) and a Contemporary Affairs Commentator. Guwahati, Assam

Could Usha Vance, a practising Hindu, be next US First Lady?

United States Vice President JD Vance is widely regarded as the heir apparent to US President Donald Trump. Vance has few rivals in the MAGA (Make America Great Again) universe. Cuban-origin Secretary of State Marco Rubio doesn't have Vance's appeal in the deep red states where the next US presidential elections will be won or lost. Rubio's central role in the US attack on Venezuela has not endeared him to America's large Hispanic, Spanish-speaking population. Congressional mid-term elections in 2026 will show which way the political wind is blowing. Trump has often hinted that Vance could be his successor to lead the Republican party into the 2028 presidential election. He has reluctantly abandoned his own bid for a third term which the US Constitution expressly prohibits. Trump knows time is running out on his presidency. The US Supreme Court will soon deliver its verdict on whether Washington's trade tariffs are lawful. A defeat for Trump in America's highest court could tar the remaining three years of his term. By January 2027, attention will anyway swing away from 80-year-old Trump to the 2028 presidential primaries. Vance is likely to be the Republican nominee but a Vance win is not guaranteed. Recent opinion polls show the Republican party could lose the House of Representatives to the Democrats in 2026. The Senate is likely to stay with the Republicans, albeit with a reduced majority. Vance himself is not popular with the mainstream Republican party. His background as a southern hillbilly jars with many Americans. Though the US has always had a racist core, that core has been mainstreamed by Trump and his White supremacist followers. Vance belongs to this demographic but he is also married to Indian-origin Usha Chilukuri, whose family migrated to the US from Andhra Pradesh in the 1980s. Usha has a bachelor's degree in history from Yale University, a master's degree in philosophy from Cambridge University and a doctorate from Yale Law School. She had a stellar legal practice till 2024 when she resigned to, as she said, "care for our family". Usha is a practising Hindu but her three mixed-race children are being brought up as Christians. They attend church regularly. Usha herself has resisted pressure to convert to Christianity. Vance was an evangelical before converting to Catholicism. Social media abuse directed at Usha has peaked ever since it became clear that she could be America's next First Lady if Vance succeeds Trump as president in the 2028 presidential election. It is a measure of rising animosity against Indians in MAGA-led America that the country was comfortable with a Black First Lady in Michelle Obama but not a Hindu First Lady. This is a consequence of the Christian nationalism that has fuelled the MAGA movement. Charlie Kirk, who was assassinated last year, led the movement. Nick Fuentes has taken

over his mantle but has even more incendiary views. He is anti-Jew and anti-Islam and a vocal admirer of Adolf Hitler. American politics is now a MAGA snake-pit with hate and abuse proliferating on social media, from X and Instagram to YouTube and podcasts. If he wins the Republican primaries as the party's presidential nominee in 2028, Vance's politics will come under intense scrutiny. Vance has frequently decried growing Islamic influence in Western Europe. Like Trump, Vance is splenetically anti-immigration. But unlike Trump and other members of the Trump cabinet, he does not vent his spleen against legal migrants. He reserves that for unchecked immigration into Europe. At his landmark address at the 2025 Munich Security Conference in February 2025, Vance warned an audience of top European political and military leaders: "Free speech, I fear, is in retreat." Vance was referring to censorship of conservative and religious speech across Western Europe but especially in Britain. Like Trump too, Vance has been strongly critical of London Mayor Sadiq Khan whom he blames for allowing Islamists free rein in the British capital. Vance is more favourably disposed towards India. During a visit to New Delhi last April, Vance took his family to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Vance called Modi "a great leader" and said that it was an honour to meet him. He added that the prime minister was "incredibly kind to my family". But make no mistake. If he does win the US presidency in 2028, Vance will be bound by US policy that regards India as a potential long-term adversary. When US policymakers speak of the India-US relationship as one of the most defining of the 21st century, what they mean is that India's inevitable growth to become the world's third largest economic power can pose a future geopolitical challenge for the US that needs to be managed. Washington was so focused for decades on the Cold War with the Soviet Union that it overlooked the rapid emergence of China as a greater economic and technological threat than the Soviet Union was. China's GDP nearly doubled from \$6.1 trillion in 2010 to \$11.23 trillion in 2016, catching Washington unawares. With global institutions projecting India's GDP to close the gap with both the US and China by 2050, Washington does not want to be taken by surprise by a second Asian challenger it underestimated. This realisation is at the heart of America's self-image of a global hegemon. India's policy of strategic autonomy grates on Washington. Whether JD Vance and Usha occupy the White House, or a Democrat wins the next presidential election, US policy on India will continue to reflect its hegemonistic instinct.

Monjorika Bose

Tributes to Mr Abedur Rahman 1 February 1943 – 8 May 2026

With profound sadness and enduring gratitude for a life well lived, we remember the life and legacy of my grandfather, Mr. Abedur Rahman who passed away at the age of 83 in the early morning of 8th May 2026.

Born in the village of Samota to a humble agrarian family, he exemplified the power of determination, intellect, and perseverance. Among many siblings, he distinguished himself through his exceptional academic achievements at a time when education and opportunities were limited. His remarkable abilities eventually led him to Cotton College, and later to



forhat engineering college, laying the foundation for a distinguished professional career that would leave a lasting imprint on the state of Assam.

As a Superintending Engineer in the Public Works Department, he served during a pivotal period in the state's development and urbanization. Through decades of dedicated public service, he played an important role in the planning and execution of infrastructure projects that helped shape modern Assam and Guwahati. Roads, bridges, and public works that continue to serve countless people today stand as reminders of his contribution to the growth and progress of the region. Even after his retirement in 2001, his commitment to public service endured, and he continued to contribute professionally as Chief Engineer at ASTC until 2016.

Yet his legacy extends much far beyond

his professional accomplishments.

A man of deep generosity and community spirit, he devoted himself to the welfare of others. He contributed land and resources toward the construction and improvement of community and religious institutions and gave selflessly to causes that benefit future generations. Through professional public service or private acts of kindness, he believed that a meaningful life was one lived in service of others.

Despite his many achievements, he remained a simple man at heart. As he described his own life as full, content, and satisfactory, a life blessed with meaningful work, a loving wife, three children, grandchildren, a warm home, and the simple joys of everyday living.

And to us, his family, he was much more than his titles or accomplishments.

He will be remembered for his calm and composed nature, gentle presence, and unwavering kindness. We remember him sitting in the sunshine, sharing fruit with us, his grandchildren watching television at a volume that definitely only he found reasonable, and expressing his affection in the way he knew best, through food. Ensuring that everyone around him had eaten well was always among his greatest concerns. He delighted

Has UN become obsolete? Why India needs its own sphere of influence

Donald Trump has just signed an executive order withdrawing the US from 66 global organisations, more than half of them affiliated with the United Nations. Enter the most controversial strategic neologism of this brand new year: the Donroe Doctrine. "The Monroe Doctrine is a big deal, but we've superseded it by a lot, a real lot. They now call it the Donroe Doctrine," Trump proudly exclaimed, referring to the Monroe Doctrine declared by US President James Monroe in 1823. This was a foundational American foreign policy stating that European powers should not further colonise or interfere in the freshly independent states of the Western Hemisphere, and in return the US would stay out of European internal affairs.

The United States has used this doctrine for decades to exert its influence across the Western Hemisphere, including Latin America. Now, with the so-called "Donroe Doctrine", what America is essentially saying is that the Western Hemisphere is its backyard, to be controlled through influence. Russia, meanwhile, has its own backyard in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and parts of Central Asia. China has its own sphere encompassing Taiwan, Central Asia, and parts of South-East Asia. So the obvious question is: where does India land in all of this, and is the United Nations all but dead as a sphere of influence?

The idea of the United Nations was born from catastrophe. In 1945, as the smoke of World War II still hung over Europe and Asia, the UN proposed something radical: collective security, moral restraint, and the replacement of brute force with dialogue. Eighty years later, this promise feels less like a living apparatus and more like a sepia-toned charter framed on a wall. Respected in theory, ignored in practice.

The uncomfortable question is no longer whispered in diplomatic corridors; it is asked openly in policy circles.

Is the UN still relevant in a world increasingly governed by raw power, regional dominance, and selective morality?

Let us forgo the polite euphemisms. The world today operates not under a rules-based international order, but under a spheres-of-influence system.

The United States, of course, dominates the Western Hemisphere economically, militarily, and to a large extent institutionally. NATO, the IMF, and the World Bank act, more often than not, as extensions of American strategic interests. Washington invokes international law when it suits its objectives and sidesteps it when it does not. Kosovo, Iraq, and Libya are stark reminders of this reality. Russia, for its part, has long abandoned the illusion of multilateral consensus. Moscow views the post-Cold War order as a Western imposition and has reverted to a blunt, territorial understanding of power. Ukraine is not simply a conflict; it is a declaration by Russia that geography, history, and force matter more than UN resolutions. Russia's repeated vetoes in the Security Council are not aberrations; they are a system working exactly as designed for great powers.

Then there is China. Beijing speaks the language of multilateralism while steadily hollowing it out. From the South China Sea to global supply chains, China builds parallel institutions, reshapes norms, and asserts its red

lines firmly, with little regard for international opinion. The UN, in this context, becomes a stage for optics rather than outcomes. To be fair, the UN's dysfunction is not accidental; it is structural. The Security Council, with its five permanent members and veto

a technological hub, and a critical player in the Indo-Pacific. Yet its global doctrine remains reactive rather than declarative. India navigates carefully, as always, balancing ties with the US, managing tensions with China, and maintaining a fruitful relationship with Russia, but it rarely articulates a clear vision of the world it seeks to shape.

That may no longer be sufficient.

If the UN reflects yesterday's power map, and great powers increasingly ignore it, India must stop waiting for institutional reform and start defining its own framework. Call it a doctrine, a charter, or a strategic worldview. It may be time for India to develop its own "Indosphere of influence".

Such a doctrine does not reject the UN. Instead, it acknowledges its limitations while building alternatives. First, issue-based coalitions must replace rigid alliances. India's participation in forums such as the Quad demonstrates that flexible, interest-driven partnerships are more effective than ideological blocs. Second, India must lead the Global South, not as a slogan but as a strategic constituency. Development finance, digital public infrastructure, climate adaptation, and health security are areas where India has both credibility and capability. Third, India should openly advocate for multipolar realism: a world in which power is dispersed, sovereignty is respected, and interventionism is restrained, regardless of who practises it. This means calling out Western hypocrisy without becoming apologetic about Russia or indulgent towards China. India must invest in norm-setting, not merely norm-following. Whether it is AI governance, cyber warfare, space security, or maritime law, the next generation of global rules is being written now. Sitting quietly at the table is no longer an option.

So, is the United Nations outdated? In many ways, yes. It no longer governs the world; it mirrors it. But that does not make it irrelevant. It remains a diplomatic arena, a humanitarian coordinator, and a moral reference point, even if an imperfect one. The real danger lies in pretending that the UN still delivers justice, balance, or restraint on its own. It does not. Power does. India already exerts significant influence over Nepal and Bhutan, but an Indosphere of influence must stretch across South Asia and South-East Asia, while standing firm against China's attempts to thwart the same. The world of SAARC is over, and the future of BRICS seems shaky at best. In a world of spheres, India must form its own circle of power.

For India, this moment presents both danger and opportunity.

India has historically believed in multilateralism, non-alignment, and strategic autonomy. From leading the Non-Aligned Movement to championing decolonisation, India has often positioned itself as the moral conscience of the developing world. But morality without leverage rarely shapes outcomes. Today's India is no longer a hesitant postcolonial state. It is a nuclear power, a major economy,

reflects the geopolitical realities of 1945, not 2026. Africa has no permanent seat, nor does Latin America. India, despite being the world's most populous country and a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, remains outside the charmed circle. This veto system ensures that no major power will ever be held accountable through the UN. War crimes investigations stall. Ceasefire resolutions collapse. Humanitarian catastrophes are debated endlessly while bodies pile up. The UN does not fail because it lacks information; it fails because it lacks authority over those who matter most. Yet abolishing or bypassing the UN is neither realistic nor desirable. For smaller nations, the UN remains the only forum where their voices, however faint, are formally acknowledged. The problem is not the UN's existence; it is the illusion that it still arbitrates global power.

Monjorika Bose

A New Day

By Dr. Risheswar Thengal Saikia

These are troubled times—
days dark and restless,
black as moonless nights,
where shadows linger longer than hope.

The world is unwell.
Every corner echoes
with the triumph of deception,
a silent race where people compete
to outwit, outmaneuver, and wound one another.

Truth stands abandoned,
helpless and surrounded,
like Abhimanyu trapped within a labyrinth,
brave, yet alone against overwhelming odds.

And so, I carry a pin in my pocket.
Whenever honest words
struggle to escape my lips,
I fasten them shut—
bound by the attachments of life,
the temptations of the world,
and the fear of what truth may cost.

These days, every morning begins with a smile,
yet by dusk that smile is bruised,
stained by the wounds of reality,
until it becomes unrecognizable.

Yes, the world is ill.
And truth remains vulnerable.

Yet still, every Bohag arrives
to the rhythm of beating drums,
bringing a new year,
a new dawn,
a new promise.

For beyond every season of darkness
waits a horizon of light.
Beyond every weary night
a fresh morning gathers courage to bloom.

And so we wait—
for a new day,
for a kinder world,
for hearts that choose love over deceit,
for a song of life that never surrenders.

Because hope, like spring,
always finds a way to return.
And somewhere in the distance,
a new day is already rising.

Myesha Khan
Granddaughter

Govt to replace Wholesale Price Index with Producer Price Index System

New Delhi: The Government of India has decided to gradually phase out the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and replace it with a comprehensive Producer Price Index (PPI) system, marking a significant step towards modernising the country's inflation and pricing data framework and aligning it with global best practices. The move is expected to bring greater accuracy, transparency and broader coverage in the measurement of producer-level price movements across various sectors of the economy. The decision reflects the government's continued efforts to strengthen statistical systems and ensure that economic indicators remain relevant to the evolving structure of the Indian economy. According to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the government has approved the revision of the base year of the Wholesale Price Index from 2011-12 to 2022-23, a change that takes into account the substantial transformations that have occurred in the economy over the past decade. Officials noted that the revision is necessary to better capture contemporary production patterns, consumption trends, industrial growth and changes in the structure of trade and manufacturing. The updated framework is expected to provide policymakers, businesses, researchers and investors with a more representative picture of price movements within the economy. The Ministry stated that while the transition towards the Producer Price Index will begin with the introduction of the revised series, the Wholesale Price Index will continue to be published for a limited period in order to facilitate a smooth shift to the new system. Considering the extensive usage of WPI in contracts, commercial agreements and price escalation clauses across industries, the government has decided that the revised WPI series will be released alongside the Producer Price Index for five years from the date of launch. After this transition period, the Wholesale Price Index will be discontinued. Officials explained that the five-year window has been provided to ensure that users, including government departments, public sector undertakings, private businesses and financial institutions, have sufficient time to adapt their systems and contractual arrangements to the new benchmark. The Ministry emphasised that this phased approach will minimise disruptions while enabling stakeholders to gradually integrate the Producer Price Index into their operations. The Producer Price Index is widely regarded internationally as a more comprehensive measure of inflation at the producer level because it tracks changes in prices received by producers for their goods and services before they reach consumers. By introducing the PPI, India joins several major economies that rely on producer price indicators to assess inflationary trends and evaluate economic conditions. Experts believe that the adoption of the PPI framework will improve the quality of economic analysis and support more informed policymaking. The Ministry further highlighted that the revised Wholesale Price Index and the new Producer Price Indices are scheduled to be released on the 15th of this month. The launch will rep-

resent an important milestone in India's statistical and economic reforms agenda. The revised series has been designed to provide broader and more accurate representation of economic activity, reflecting structural changes that have taken place across sectors including manufacturing, agriculture, mining and services. One of the most notable features of the revised index is the significant increase in the number of items covered under the new series. The Ministry stated that the number of items included in the revised WPI has increased from 697 to 957. This expansion is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of economic activity and price movements across a wider range of products and industries. The inclusion of additional items reflects the growing diversity of India's production landscape and the emergence of new products and sectors that have gained importance in recent years. Officials believe that broader coverage will improve the reliability and representativeness of the index, making it a more effective tool for economic analysis and decision-making. The revision of the base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23 also acknowledges the rapid pace of economic change witnessed during the intervening years. Since 2011-12, India has experienced significant developments in manufacturing, technology, infrastructure, logistics, digital commerce and industrial production. The economy has become more diversified and integrated with global markets, making it necessary to update statistical indicators to reflect these realities. By adopting a more recent base year, the government aims to ensure that the index remains aligned with current economic conditions and production structures. Economists have often pointed out that periodic revision of base years is essential to maintain the relevance and accuracy of economic indicators. The transition from WPI to PPI is also expected to strengthen India's ability to monitor inflationary pressures at different stages of production. While consumer price indices measure changes in prices paid by consumers, producer price indices focus on prices received by producers. This distinction allows policymakers to identify cost pressures earlier in the production chain and assess their potential impact on consumer prices. As a result, the new framework could contribute to better inflation forecasting and policy formulation. Industry representatives have welcomed the government's decision to provide a transition period, noting that many contracts and agreements currently reference the Wholesale Price Index for determining price adjustments. The continued publication of WPI for five years is expected to help businesses revise contractual arrangements in an orderly manner without creating uncertainty. At the same time, the availability of both WPI and PPI during the transition period will allow users to familiarise themselves with the new methodology and understand differences between the two indices. The Ministry indicated that extensive preparatory work has been undertaken to develop the revised indices. This has included consultations with stakeholders, data collection efforts, methodologi-

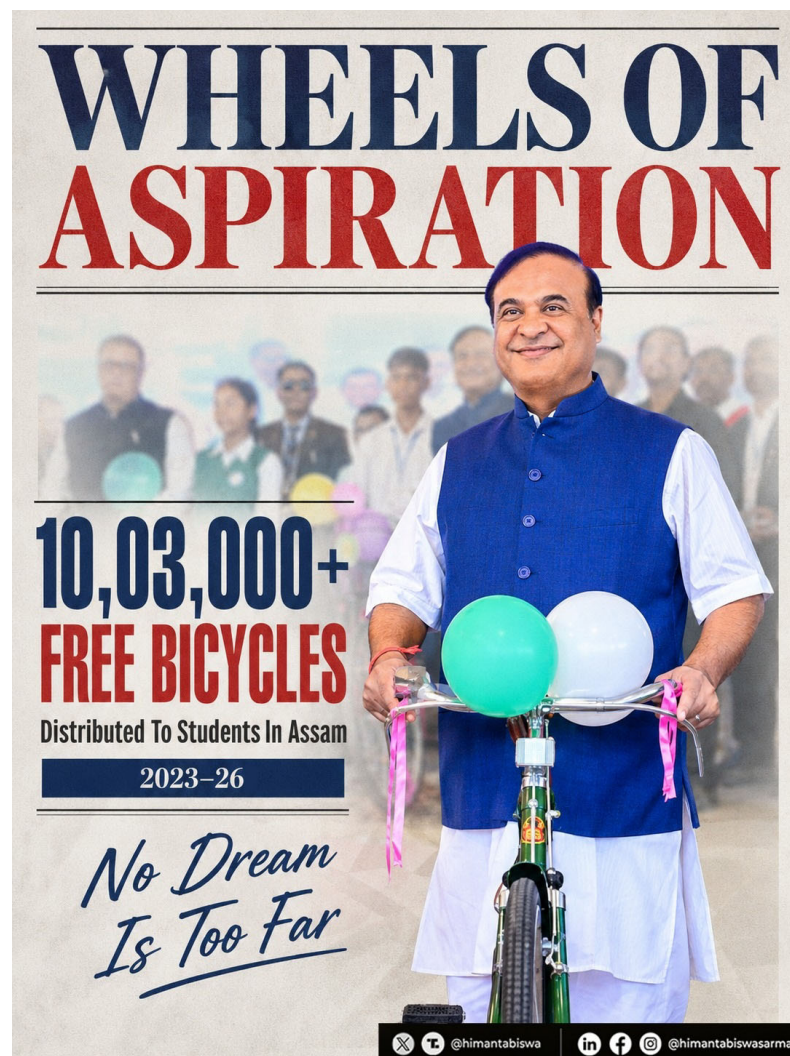
cal improvements and the incorporation of international best practices. The objective has been to create a modern pricing framework capable of supporting the needs of a rapidly growing and evolving economy. Officials noted that the Producer Price Index will offer a more comprehensive view of producer-level inflation by covering a wider range of economic activities. This broader scope is expected to enhance the usefulness of price statistics for government agencies, businesses and researchers. The reform also aligns with the government's broader agenda of strengthening institutional capacity and improving the quality of economic data. Reliable and up-to-date statistics play a critical role in economic planning, investment decisions and policy development. By modernising its inflation measurement framework, India aims to ensure that key economic indicators continue to provide meaningful insights into market conditions and economic performance. Analysts believe that the introduction of the Producer Price Index could enhance India's statistical credibility and bring its practices closer to those followed by leading economies around the world. The move may also facilitate international comparisons and improve understanding of inflation dynamics within the Indian economy. The increase in item coverage from 697 to 957 under the revised WPI demonstrates the government's commitment to capturing a more accurate representation of production activity. New products, emerging industries and evolving economic sectors are expected to be reflected more effectively in the updated series. This expansion is likely to improve the sensitivity of the index to changes in market conditions and provide a more detailed picture of price trends. The government's decision to maintain parallel publication of WPI and PPI for five years reflects a balanced approach that combines reform with continuity. It recognises the practical importance of WPI while simultaneously paving the way for the adoption of a more advanced and globally recognised system. The transition strategy is expected to reduce adjustment costs and provide confidence to stakeholders who rely on price indices for various purposes. As the country prepares for the release of the revised Wholesale Price Index and the new Producer Price Indices on the 15th of this month, attention is focused on how the new framework will shape economic analysis and policy discussions in the years ahead. The introduction of the Producer Price Index marks a significant development in India's statistical evolution and reflects the government's commitment to modernising economic measurement systems. With broader coverage, an updated base year and a carefully planned transition process, the new framework is expected to provide a stronger foundation for understanding inflation trends, supporting policy decisions and promoting informed economic planning. The reform represents an important step towards ensuring that India's pricing data framework remains aligned with the needs of a dynamic and rapidly changing economy while maintaining continuity for users who depend on the Wholesale Price Index in their day-to-day operations.

Free Bicycle Scheme Drives Educational Progress Across Assam: CM

Guwahati: The Assam government under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has taken a transformative step to strengthen secondary education by providing free bicycles to every Class IX student studying in state-run and provincialized schools, a progressive initiative that directly addresses transportation barriers in rural and remote regions where long distances to educational institutions have traditionally contributed to higher dropout rates after Class V. The forward-thinking "Wheels of Aspiration" campaign reflects the administration's strong commitment to inclusive education, youth empowerment, and equitable access to learning opportunities for every child across the state. Since its expanded implementation, the program has successfully distributed more than one million bicycles between 2023 and 2026, building upon earlier schemes that initially supported girl students and now extending benefits to all learners regardless of gender. By removing the hurdle of commuting hardships, this measure enables students to attend classes regularly, participate actively in academic pursuits, and complete their secondary education with greater confidence, consistency, and determination. The initiative represents a practical intervention designed to address one of the most significant challenges confronting students in geographically dispersed and economically disadvantaged areas. For years, many students in rural Assam were compelled to walk several kilometres daily to reach their schools, often navigating difficult roads, adverse weather conditions, and limited transport facilities. Such challenges frequently resulted in irregular attendance and, in numerous cases, forced students to abandon their studies altogether. Recognising these realities, the government introduced the bicycle distribution program as a people-centric solution capable of delivering tangible and measurable benefits on the ground. The policy demonstrates a proactive governance approach that seeks to identify obstacles faced by citizens and implement effective measures to overcome them. The provision of bicycles has emerged as one of the most impactful educational support initiatives undertaken in the state, significantly improving access to schools and encouraging greater participation in secondary education. Students who once spent hours commuting now reach their classrooms more efficiently, conserving both time and energy that can be devoted to learning, skill enhancement, extracurricular engagement, and personal development. Families from humble backgrounds have welcomed the initiative, viewing it as a valuable support mechanism that reduces financial burdens while simultaneously motivating children to continue their education. In areas where public transport infrastructure remains limited or unavailable, bicycles have become a dependable mode of transportation that empowers students to pursue their academic goals without interruption. The administration's vision places education at the centre of holistic development and human capital formation. Consequently, the bicycle distribution initiative is being implemented alongside broader reforms aimed at strengthening the educational ecosystem throughout Assam. These efforts include school infrastructure improvement, enhanced classroom facilities, teacher capacity building programs, digital resource integration, improved learning materials, scholarship support, and targeted welfare interventions designed to create a more enabling environment for students. Such coordinated actions ensure that educational progress is not limited to a single dimension but encompasses every aspect necessary for academic success and long-term growth. The government believes that meaningful educational transformation requires comprehensive support systems capable of addressing both academic and non-academic challenges. The bicycle program exemplifies this philosophy by focusing on a practical obstacle that previously prevented many students from fully benefiting from available educational opportunities. The initiative has contributed to noticeable improvements in enrollment and retention rates across government schools. School authorities and teachers have observed higher attendance levels, increased punctuality, stronger classroom participation, and greater student engagement following the distribution of bicycles. Many educators report that students who previously arrived late due to lengthy walks now attend classes on time and display improved concentration during lessons. These positive outcomes underscore the effectiveness of targeted interventions in addressing educational disparities and creating favourable conditions for learning. By reducing transportation-related barriers, the government has strengthened the connection between students and educational institutions, enabling a more stable and productive academic experience. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has emphasized that the initiative forms an integral part of the government's commitment to making quality education truly accessible and eliminating every pos-

sible obstacle that hinders student progress. According to the government's vision, education must not be constrained by geography, economic circumstances, or infrastructural limitations. Every child, irrespective of background, deserves an equal opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed. The universal expansion of the bicycle distribution program reflects this commitment to balanced development and social equity. Earlier phases of the scheme successfully enhanced girls' participation in secondary education, helping address gender disparities and encouraging families to prioritize schooling for daughters. Building on that success, the current model extends benefits to all students, ensuring that boys and girls alike receive equal support. This inclusive strategy strengthens community confidence in government schools and encourages parents to invest in the educational

academic atmosphere within schools. The government's sustained focus on human capital development positions Assam as a leading example of educational reform and inclusive growth. Recognising that education is the foundation of long-term socio-economic progress, the administration continues to prioritize initiatives that expand access, improve quality, and strengthen outcomes. Additional supportive measures, including bicycle maintenance assistance, road safety awareness programs, and integration with other welfare schemes, further amplify the effectiveness of the initiative. These complementary efforts ensure that beneficiaries can use their bicycles safely and efficiently while maximizing the program's long-term impact. The comprehensive nature of the strategy reflects careful planning and a deep understanding of the factors influencing educational participation. In remote and hilly terrains of Assam, where access challenges remain particularly pronounced, the bicycle distribution program has proven especially beneficial. Students living in distant villages often face significant transportation difficulties that can discourage regular attendance and limit educational attainment. By bridging the gap between aspiration and opportunity, the initiative enables talented young learners from underserved regions to compete on more equal terms with their urban counterparts. Access to education becomes more practical and attainable, allowing students to focus on academic achievement rather than transportation concerns. This reduction in inequality represents one of the program's most important contributions to educational development and social progress. The administration continues to monitor implementation closely, working with schools, district authorities, and local communities to ensure effective delivery and continuous improvement. Feedback mechanisms help identify challenges, refine operational processes, and maximize program efficiency. Such responsiveness demonstrates a governance model rooted in accountability, innovation, and results-oriented action. The bicycle distribution drive reflects a broader philosophy of development that prioritizes people-centric solutions capable of generating meaningful and lasting change. By addressing everyday challenges faced by students and families, the government strengthens public trust and reinforces its commitment to inclusive growth. Every bicycle distributed carries with it the promise of knowledge, progress, and empowerment. It symbolizes a pathway toward greater educational attainment, enhanced self-confidence, and improved life opportunities. For countless students across Assam, the bicycle is more than a means of transportation; it is a vehicle of aspiration that helps transform dreams into achievable goals. As beneficiaries continue their educational journeys, the positive effects of the initiative are expected to extend far beyond individual outcomes, contributing to stronger communities, a more skilled workforce, and a more prosperous state. Through consistent policy support, strategic resource allocation, and sustained commitment to educational advancement, the government is steadily elevating literacy levels, improving enrollment ratios, strengthening retention rates, and nurturing a future-ready generation capable of contributing meaningfully to Assam's development. The "Wheels of Aspiration" campaign stands as a shining example of how targeted and practical interventions can drive systemic change in education. It embodies the spirit of responsive administration dedicated to public welfare, social justice, and inclusive progress. The initiative illustrates that relatively simple solutions, when designed thoughtfully and implemented effectively, can produce transformative outcomes for large sections of society. As Assam continues its journey toward educational excellence and human development, the bicycle distribution program will remain an important milestone in the state's reform efforts. Its success demonstrates the power of visionary leadership, community-focused policymaking, and sustained investment in youth empowerment. By ensuring that no student is left behind due to avoidable transportation barriers, the government is laying a strong foundation for future generations to achieve their full potential. The initiative not only prevents potential dropouts but also cultivates resilience, determination, discipline, and ambition among students, creating conditions for sustained educational success and socio-economic advancement. As these efforts gain further momentum, Assam is poised to achieve new milestones in secondary education completion, learning outcomes, and overall human development. The bicycle distribution program continues to inspire confidence among students, parents, educators, and communities, reaffirming the state's commitment to building an educated, skilled, empowered, and prosperous future for all.



aspirations of their children. The initiative also carries broader social and developmental implications. Beyond improving school attendance, regular cycling promotes physical fitness, healthier lifestyles, and greater independence among young learners. Students gain confidence as they travel to school independently, develop time-management skills, and become more active participants in their educational journeys. The use of bicycles further contributes to environmental awareness by encouraging sustainable modes of transport that reduce dependence on motorized vehicles where feasible. These additional benefits align with the government's broader objectives of fostering responsible citizenship, healthy communities, and environmentally conscious development practices. Assam's educational landscape has witnessed steady advancement through innovative and student-focused measures such as the bicycle distribution initiative. The provision of free bicycles serves not merely as a logistical aid but also as a powerful symbol of aspiration, empowerment, and opportunity. For many students, receiving a bicycle represents a significant milestone that reinforces their connection to education and motivates them to pursue excellence. The program sends a clear message that the government values the dreams and potential of every child and is willing to invest in practical solutions that support their success. Teachers across institutions have highlighted the positive transformation generated by the initiative, noting increased enthusiasm among students and a more vibrant

How well do you know your mandarin oranges? We break down 5 popular varieties for you

If you celebrate Chinese New Year, you'd probably be stocking up on mandarin oranges by now. Even if you don't, it's still pretty hard to miss boxes of them in supermarket aisles, such

as FairPrice's, and sitting in pairs next to the cash register in Chinese shops and restaurants. Other than sounding auspicious ("gum" in Cantonese sounds like gold, while "ju" in Mandarin is a homophone for togetherness), mandarin oranges are also a sweet, healthy treat – or at least make you feel more virtuous after bingeing on bak kwa and pineapple tarts. Just how healthy are mandarin oranges? Every 100g of the citrus fruit has about 53 calories, 13g carbohydrates and 1.8g fibre, according to Jaclyn Reutens, a clinical and sports dietitian with Aptima Nutrition and Sports Consultants. But if you're banking on mandarin oranges to up your Vitamin C intake, you'll do better with the other oranges such as the valencia and navel varieties instead. "To get your recommended Vitamin C intake, you will need to eat about three mandarin oranges," said Reutens. That's because the mandarin variety only has 27mg compared to valencia orange's 48mg and navel orange's 59mg for every 100g of fruit. Mandarins also contain comparable amounts of nutrients such as bone-boosting calcium as well as potassium for maintaining blood pressure, heart rhythm and fluid balance as the other orange varieties. When peeling mandarins, retain some of the white, fibrous threads or pith to eat, advised Reutens. "They may taste slightly bitter but they pack a good amount of fibre, potas-



sium and flavonoids." You don't have to worry about developing a phytozoar from eating too much pith if you chew well and limit the oranges to two or three each day. The best place to store whole mandarin oranges is the refrigerator, where they can last up to two weeks, said Reutens. If you have a big-enough airtight container, even better. Put the unpeeled oranges in the container, then place it in the fridge to keep for up to a month, she suggested. While most mandarin orange varieties are generally sweet and juicy, some can be tangier than others or have different floral notes. Certain varieties can also have less pith and fewer seeds. And with so many varieties to choose from (including the old-school Swatow) and more new hybrids with each passing year (such as Japan's Jelly Orange and Korea's Red Pearl or Red Hyang), it can get confusing. Here's a look at some mandarin orange varieties:

1. RED BEAUTY

- Flavours: Very juicy, sweet and less citrusy
- Seeds: None.
- Skin: Matte, thin skin that gives off a floral scent when peeled. Comes off in satisfying, long strips.
- Place of origin: China.

Red Beauty, also known as "Hong Mei Ren", is reminiscent of a fragrant and juicy pomelo. There is very little pith and even the membrane separating each segment is very thin. So be careful when you're prying this delicate beauty apart because the juicy, caviar-

like pulp can't wait to burst or tumble out.

2. PAPANAN

- Flavours: Juicy, sweet, citrusy with hints of grapefruit.
- Seeds: Mostly seedless.
- Skin: Thin and adheres a little to the flesh.

Place of origin: China.

Papanan is more citrusy than Red Beauty. It also has juicy, caviar-like pulp but they are better held together by a sturdier membrane, so each segment is easier to separate. Not a lot of pith either. By the way, those leaves and stems are real, okay? Tip: Pull the stem off and you have a ready-made hole that helps you get started with the peeling.

3. PONKAN

- Flavours: Juicy, sweet with hints of pomelo.
- Seeds: Mostly seedless.
- Skin: Glossy, puffy peel. It is the easiest of the lot to peel.
- Place of origin: Taiwan.

Ponkan tastes like the quintessential mandarin orange: Juicy, sweet, citrusy and with a scent that reminds you of Chinese desserts that use dried orange peel. This variety is actually a mandarin orange-pomelo hybrid, so its puffy rind is reminiscent of a pomelo. It is also larger than the other favourite, the Lukan, and is easy to peel. Not much pith either.

4. LUKAN

- Flavours: Juicy and sweet with bright acidic notes.
- Seeds: Some seeds.
- Skin: Matte, thin, smooth and very easy to peel.
- Place of origin: China.

If it looks like a matte and more wrinkled version of the Ponkan with a slightly flattened top and bottom, it is likely the Lukan. The Lukan is a popular choice if you prefer a slightly more citrusy Ponkan. The wrinkly peel, which feels barely attached to the flesh, can shrug right off in one (or maybe, two) complete piece. Little pith but watch for the seeds.

5. KINNO

- Flavours: Sweet, sharp and tart.
- Seeds: Many.
- Skin: Smooth and glossy but adheres to the flesh. Leaves a lot of pith behind when peeled.
- Place of origin: Pakistan.

Kinno or Kinnow has a sharp-sweet flavour and great if you enjoy a more citrusy orange. The juicy pulp and aromatic zest also make it ideal for drinks, cocktails and cooking. Ask if the Kinno you see is the low-seed version as it can come with numerous seeds.

Crafting gold in the clouds: The enigmatic world of Zacapa rum

The best stories often begin with an unexpected twist. For Lorena Vasquez, that twist was her leap from pharmaceutical chemistry and food science to crafting luxury rums with the close-knit community at Ron

Zacapa. Originally from Nicaragua, Vasquez made Guatemala her home in the 1970s. Since joining Zacapa in 1984 as master blender, she has become a trailblazer in the world of premium rum. Drawing on the brand's unique Guatemalan roots and Solera system aging method, Vasquez embraced its artisanal practices, working closely with her team to refine and enhance the rum's quality. What began as a small-batch tribute

has evolved into a rum renowned worldwide. On Dec 12, 2024, Singapore welcomed Ron Zacapa, with its debut celebrated at Sushisamba, Sugarhall and other fine establishments.

FROM SMALL-BATCH LEGACY TO GLOBAL ICON
Zacapa's story began in 1976, when the rum was created to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the town it is named after. Nestled 112km from Guatemala City, Zacapa derives its name from the Nahuatl word meaning "on the river of grass", reflecting the verdant landscapes that surround it. At Zacapa, Vasquez is at the heart of the operation. Her role spans the entire production spectrum – overseeing quality control, classifying rums and keeping a close eye on market trends. She also leads research into new technologies and experiments with production processes, from exploring barrel types to refining maturation techniques. What distinguishes Vasquez is her ability to blend modern technology with the artisanal heritage that defines Zacapa. "Zacapa is a rum produced in Guatemala, a unique country with diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity and environment," she shared. By combining traditional craftsmanship with innovative tools, Vasquez transforms Zacapa into a sophisticated expression of Guatemala's rich history. Among her many responsibilities, Vasquez takes on one particularly distinctive task: Selecting the sugarcane for Ron Zacapa. "The difference starts from the quality of sugarcane grown at home to produce the virgin honey," she said. Unlike most rums made from molasses, Zacapa uses the first press of virgin sugarcane, harvested from volcanic, mineral-rich soil, to create its signature sweet and smooth character.



AGED ABOVE THE CLOUDS
The magic doesn't end there. Vasquez points to several other elements that define Zacapa's quality. "Fermentation and distillation are unique to Ron Zacapa, as is the aging at high altitudes in the house above the clouds and the Solera system adapted by Zacapa," she explained. The journey begins with the use of a specific strain of pineapple yeast during fermentation, which brings out delicate aromas and flavours in the sugarcane juice. After distillation, the spirit is aged in select casks using the traditional Solera system, a method introduced by the Spanish over 500 years ago. Vasquez has adapted this process, blending barrels that once held whiskey, sherry and fine wines to craft a rum with nuance and depth. Her boldest innovation, however, lies in the decision to move Zacapa's aging process to the highlands of Quetzaltenango. At an altitude of 2,300m, the cool, moist air of this "house above the clouds" allows the rum to mature slowly, developing its celebrated complexity and depth. Each bottle of Zacapa is adorned with a handwoven petate band of dried palm leaves, a nod to the Mayan legacy dating back to 1400 BC and an emblem of the people and place that shape this rum.

A TOAST TO GUATEMALAN GOLD
Two standout expressions exemplify Vasquez's pursuit of perfection: Zacapa XO and Zacapa No 23. Reflecting on her approach to blending, Vasquez shared: "The first thing we define is the profile we are looking for in the rum, and then we look for the best barrels that will help us achieve the desired aromas and flavours."

Dr. Dilip Nath of Chhaygaon Conferred Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Award

Guwahati, June 4: In a solemn and prestigious ceremony organized with

Dr. Nath, a resident of Chhaygaon, received this honour in



recognition of his long-standing contributions to society and culture spanning nearly 35 years, along with his active involvement in the field of journalism for about 26 years. The award ceremony was held at the Creative Unlock Auditorium in New Delhi and was conducted by socio-cultural activist Mahananda Sarkar Dutta. Distinguished educationist and retired Principal Dr. Sanjay Prabhakar Harse, retired administrative officer Dr. Kashiram Govind Paithan, retired Army officer Jeevan Vishwakarma, and several other eminent personalities were present on the occasion.

It is noteworthy that by receiving the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Award, Dr. Dilip Nath has brought pride to South Kamrup. Various organizations, institutions, well-wishers, and prominent individuals of the region have extended their heartfelt congratulations to him on this achievement.

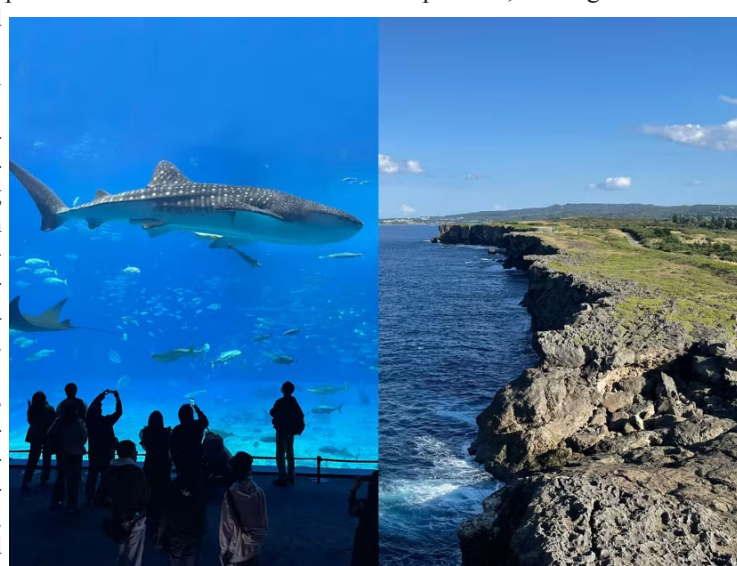
Okinawa travel guide: What to see, do and eat on Japan's southernmost prefecture

It is no secret that Singaporeans love visiting Japan. And we are not the only ones. According to the Japan National Tourism Organization, the country welcomed more than 36.8 million tourists in 2024, up from about 32 million in 2019. No doubt, popular spots included Tokyo, Kyoto, Niseko and increasingly, Fukuoka. But if you want to escape the crowds, head to Okinawa, the country's southernmost prefecture, a five-hour direct flight from Singapore, and less than three hours by plane from Tokyo. You do overhear the occasional Singlish being spoken, and will cross paths with tourists mostly from Korea and Taiwan, but safe to say, you don't have to deal with massive crowds.

Okinawa Prefecture consists of hundreds of islands in a chain stretching over 1,000 kilometers from Kyushu to Taiwan. It encompasses three major island groups: the Okinawa Islands, Miyako Islands, and Yaeyama Islands. Okinawa's main island is the largest and most populated island in the prefecture. Thanks to its geographical location, Okinawa enjoys a humid subtropical climate with cool temperatures all year round, ranging from 16 degrees Celsius to 29 degrees Celsius. I visited Okinawa's main island in December 2024, enjoying its warm winter. Had I visited in the summer months, there would be the option of working up a tan on its many beaches. But there was still plenty to see and do during my stay there. The best way to get around is by car. My week-long visit also gave me the chance to see why Okinawa is considered part of the Blue Zone – from its warm stable temperatures, to its food, which consists of plenty of vegetables, spending time in nature and the general laid back vibe of the island.

GOCAPEHOPING
Okinawa is an archipelago with a complex geological history, characterised by the many capes made from limestone formations that date back 200 million years with dramatic coastal land-

scapes shaped by erosion and sea-level changes. Here are three recommended capes to visit. Begin your adventure at Cape Manzamo, a 20m-high limestone cliff that offers breathtaking panoramic views of the East China Sea and surrounding islands. It is said that the 18th century Ryukyu King Shokei praised it as "a field large enough for ten thousand people to sit on", hence its name. Cape Manzamo features a distinctive cliff that resembles an elephant's trunk, creating a whimsical and photogenic landscape. At the northernmost point of Okinawa's main island is Cape Hedo, offering views of both



the Pacific Ocean and East China Sea. Be warned that it is super windy here. The cape was part of an ancient watchtower network for spotting ships, and is home to wildlife such as the Okinawa rail flightless bird and the Ryukyu long-tailed rat. With little light pollution in the area, Cape Hedo also comes highly recommended for stargazing, but beware the steep cliff edges and the presence of snakes. The third cape I'd recommend visiting is Cape Zampa, on the western coast of central Okinawa, with its steep cliffs, volcanic rock formations, and crashing waves that create a dramatic landscape. You know you have arrived in the area, when you see a giant Shisa statue. Standing at 8.75m tall, it is the largest in Japan. Shisa are traditional guardian creatures from Okinawan mythology, deeply rooted in the cultural landscape of the Ryukyu Islands, resembling a cross between a

lion and a dog. Cape Zampa is also home to a 30 m tall lighthouse, one of 16 "climbable lighthouses" in Japan and the only one on Okinawa's main island. For 300 years, visitors can climb up 99 steps to reach the top, for a panoramic view of the East China Sea, Kerama Islands and the surrounding landscape. MEET OKINAWA'S MOST FAMOUS FISH AND A NATIVE BUTTERFLY

If there is an image that is representative of Okinawa best, it would have to be that of Jinta, the whale shark in the Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium, who has been at the aquarium since 1995. The 30-year-old fish holds the world record for being the longest-reared whale shark in an aquarium. While some may argue that Jinta belongs in the ocean and not in a tank, he has been instrumental in the aquarium's goal to study whale shark ecology and potentially achieve successful breeding, which has never been accomplished in aquariums worldwide. Besides Jinta, another attraction is the southern blue manta rays, the first to be bred successfully by an aquarium. The Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium is one of several attractions in the Ocean Expo Park built in commemoration of the Okinawa International Ocean Exposition held in 1975. It is easy to spend a day here, from watching dolphins leap through hoops, to visiting the other attractions such as the Native Okinawan Village and Omoro Botanical Garden, a reproduction of the villages of Okinawa during the Ryukyu Kingdom period. I popped into the Tropical Dream Center, which feels like Gardens by the Bay and the National Orchid Garden rolled into one. There are over 2,000 orchids on display, as well as greenhouses where tropical and subtropical flowers are grown. While the flowers are pretty and many Singaporeans would be familiar with them, the Center's hidden attraction is its butterfly park, which houses the Tree Nymph butterfly, the largest in Japan, with a wing span of over four inches and found exclusively in Okinawa.

EXPLORING RYUKYU CASTLES

While mainland Japan was ruled by shogunates, Okinawa was part of the Ryukyu Kingdom, a prosperous maritime state that existed from 1429 to 1879. In 1879, Japan formally annexed the Ryukyu Kingdom, abolishing the monarchy and establishing Okinawa Prefecture.

Peace deal hopes boost Wall Street stocks despite latest US strikes

New York: Wall Street stocks mostly rose Tuesday (May 26), lifting the S&P 500 and Nasdaq to fresh records on hopes for a Middle East peace deal.

The gains came despite a jump in Brent oil prices after US military strikes on Iran prompted worries about a military rebuttal from Tehran. "Risk-on winds are dominating Wall Street today as progress on the US-Iran negotiations raises optimism concerning a sustained retreat in crude oil and yields," said Jose Torres of Interactive Brokers. "A potential peace deal, which is offsetting the adverse impact of some overnight tensions between both nations' militaries, would materially strengthen business fundamentals and the economic outlook." While the Dow edged down from last week's records, both the S&P 500 and Nasdaq finished at new all-time highs. One big mover was chip company Micron, which piled on nearly 20 per cent following a favourable analyst report from UBS that extolled the company's connection to the artificial intelligence boom. Micron's surge Tuesday made it the latest tech giant worth more than US\$1 trillion. While Wall Street was closed on Monday, stock markets had rallied elsewhere and crude futures dropped below US\$100 a barrel after reports that an Iran deal might come within days. That was before US forces said they had attacked missile sites in southern Iran and boats trying to lay mines. Iranian state media reported overnight blasts in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, near the Strait of Hormuz, and the country's Revolutionary Guards said its forces had downed a US drone entering

its airspace and had fired at an F-35 fighter jet. "The US terrorist army, continuing its illegal and unjustified actions since the ceasefire ... has, in the past 48 hours, committed a gross violation of the ceasefire in the Hormozgan region," the Iranian foreign ministry said. Despite the strikes, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Tuesday that a deal remained within reach. But he remained firm on the Strait of Hormuz, the key oil and gas shipping route which Iran is seeking to control. Brent North Sea crude, the international benchmark, jumped almost 4.5 per cent Tuesday to edge back above US\$100 a barrel before pulling back a bit. In Europe, Frankfurt and Paris closed off around one per cent with London ending just 0.2 per cent ahead as traders returned after a long holiday weekend in Britain. British oil giant BP topped the losers' chart, off more than four per cent after it unexpectedly removed Albert Manifold as chairman only months into his tenure, citing "serious concerns" about governance standards, oversight and conduct at the company.

AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould focused on the Iran situation as he noted that "continued doubts about the potential for a deal and an overnight pre-emptive US strike on Iran mean any euphoria is being kept in check." In Asia, Seoul's stock market hit a new record high above 8,000 points as chipmakers, carmakers and shipbuilders continued to outperform. In Europe, investors were quick to express disappointment at Ferrari's unveiling of its first electric model, with shares in the Italian luxury carmaker skidding six per cent.

A rare public trial opens in Paris child abuse case as parents seek a national wake-up call

Paris: Parents' groups in France called Tuesday (May 26) for more attention to long-ignored child abuse scandals as a rare public trial opened of a school assistant accused of sexually assaulting nine small children in Paris. Inspired by Gisèle Pelicot's decision to make her harrowing drug and rape trial public, the parents of the children agreed to open the proceedings. In France, trials involving minors are usually held behind closed doors. According to their lawyers, some parents said they were following the example of Pelicot and her motto that "shame must change sides" to abusers, not victims. The Paris case emerged in April 2025 after several children told their parents they allegedly had been sexually abused at a nursery school. The defendant, 36, who has not been publicly identified, is accused of assaulting children while supervising them in bathrooms, during lunch breaks and in after-school care between August 2024 and April 2025. He has denied any sexual abuse against children. The children were between 3 and 5 years old at the time. They do not have to attend the trial. A judge has read their testimonies to investigators. The defendant is also accused of sexually harassing two co-workers and sexually assaulting one of them. He faces up to 10 years in prison. His lawyer would not speak with The Associated Press before the trial. Barka Zerouali, co-founder of parents' group MeToo Ecole, or MeToo School, said at a protest outside the courthouse that "there needs to be a national wake-up call at some point." Protesters carried a banner reading: "Because no child should be afraid to go to school." Families said the trauma of the alleged assaults was compounded by what

they described as a struggle to be taken seriously by authorities. An initial warning raised by a mother months earlier was apparently ignored by the school. Rebecca Royer, a lawyer representing several families, said that "what we are expecting is a real turning point

including 31 over suspicions of sexual violence. While teachers in France are employed by the government in state-run schools, school assistants and after-school activity leaders are hired by city authorities. Grégoire, elected in March, has made combating child abuse



in child protection, meaning we expect the government and municipalities to implement real measures to protect children, but also to provide real resources." Similar cases in Paris and across France have drawn media attention in recent months. Paris prosecutor Laure Beccau last week said investigations were underway involving 84 nursery schools, about 20 elementary schools and about 10 daycare centers in the capital. Paris Mayor Emmanuel Grégoire said 78 school and after-school staff members have been suspended in the city since the beginning of 2026, in-

cluding 31 over suspicions of sexual violence. While teachers in France are employed by the government in state-run schools, school assistants and after-school activity leaders are hired by city authorities. Grégoire, elected in March, has made combating child abuse an "absolute priority" and unveiled a 20 million euro (\$22 million) plan to address what he described as "major dysfunction" in the city's school supervision system. He pledged to immediately suspend any school employee suspected of abusing children. Before being elected, Grégoire publicly revealed that he had been sexually abused as a child while attending elementary school between the ages of 9 and 10. Child abuse became a major issue in the mayoral campaign after a series of allegations involving public schools emerged earlier this year.

Search continues for 7 villagers trapped in flooded Laos cave

Bangkok: A search operation for seven villagers trapped inside a flooded cave in central Laos entered its seventh day on Tuesday (May 26), as rescuers encountered difficult terrain and weather as they tried to reach the group whose condition remains unknown. The villagers entered the cave in Xaisomboun province on May 19, but heavy rain triggered flash flooding that blocked the exit, according to Lao and Thai rescue teams involved in the operation. The Lao organisation Rescue Volunteer for People, which is working closely with the local authorities, posted on its Facebook page that Tuesday's operation plan includes exploring air shafts above the cave in hopes of identifying possible access points, and locating the trapped people. Rescuers from neighbouring Thailand also arrived at the site over the weekend to assist the operation. Experts from Thailand who aided the dramatic 2018 retrieval of a youth football team from a Thai cave joined rescue efforts on Monday to extract the seven people, Laotian state media said.

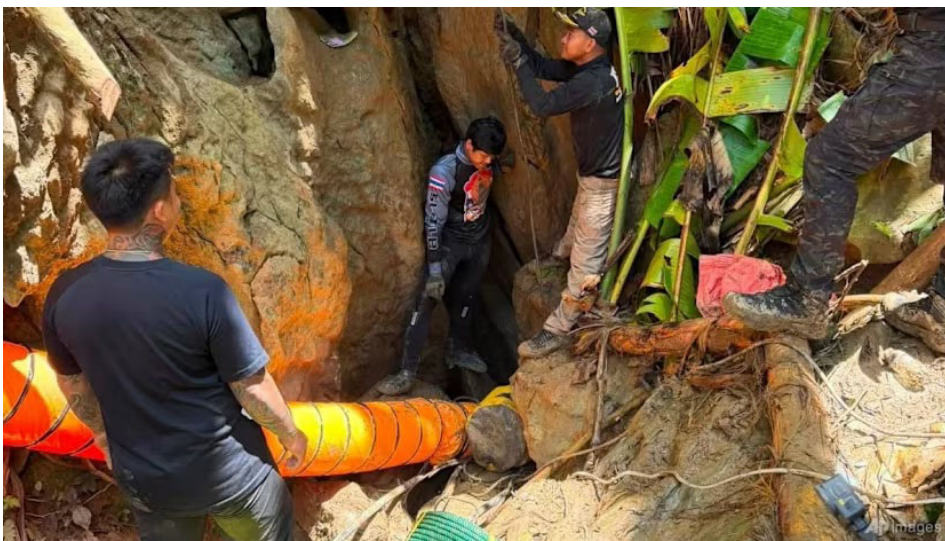
CHALLENGING CONDITIONS HAMPER RESCUE EFFORTS

According to rescuers, divers have navigated about 100m into the flooded, narrow cave. They believe the villagers may be trapped about 30m beyond the furthest point currently accessible. They are working to pump water out of the cave to aid the search efforts. The site is in a remote area of Xaisomboun province's Longcheng district, which is about 120km north of the capital, Vientiane. Rescuers at the scene have detailed on social media the challenging mountainous terrain and heavy rain that are hampering the operation.

Videos shared online by Thai rescuers showed that reaching the cave's entrance requires a steep hike on foot of roughly 4km. The entrance is also steep and rocky, and barely wide enough for a single person to climb through at a time. Inside, rescuers must go through muddy passageways, flooded sections and narrow tunnels that forced them to crawl forward.

VILLAGERS WERE REPORTEDLY MINING

There has been no official confirmation on why the villagers went into the cave, although the rescuers involved said that they went in to look for gold deposits. Bounkham Luanglath



of the Lao rescue group has told the Associated Press that the cave was frequented by local residents looking for gold, although authorities had repeatedly warned them against entering the cave out of safety concerns. The average per capita income in Laos of about US\$2,000-2,500 is among the lowest in Southeast Asia, and it is even lower in underdeveloped rural areas. Laos is not known as a major gold producer, but its mining industry is sizable considering the country's developing economy. The mining sector is fueled by foreign direct investment, largely from

neighbouring Thailand and China. Copper is a major export, and mining for rare earth elements, needed for most modern technologies, has become more common in Laos recently. The Lao Foreign Ministry on Tuesday said it has no official information to share with the media. The Southeast Asian nation is a one-party communist state with no organised opposition and the government keeps a tight lid on information.

CAVE RESCUES ARE RISKY BUSINESS

The news quickly drew headlines in Thailand because of its resemblance to the dramatic 2018 cave rescue in northern Thailand, where 12 boys and their soccer coach were trapped for more than two weeks before being safely rescued in an operation that became a global sensation. A former Thai navy SEAL diver was killed during the search and rescue effort. A new tragedy occurred earlier this month, with five Italian divers found dead after they went missing while diving into a cave in the Maldives. A Maldivian military diver who was part of the recovery team was killed during the high-risk operation to retrieve their bodies. A major health risk of being trapped in a cave is cold conditions quickly leading to hypothermia. The body can cope for weeks without food, but clean water is necessary to prevent dehydration. A contaminated water supply could cause diarrhoea, hastening dehydration. Declining oxygen levels cause symptoms similar to altitude sickness and, in the long run, can damage the lungs and other organs, while carbon dioxide buildup causes exhaustion and eventual unconsciousness. Constant darkness disrupts time perception and the body's circadian rhythms. It also causes extreme sensitivity when the eyes have to adjust again to light.

Iran partially restores internet access after months-long shutdown

Paris: Iranian authorities partially restored internet connectivity Tuesday (May 26) after an almost three-month shutdown imposed against the backdrop of the war against Israel and the US, said a monitor, a senior official and sources inside the country. The shutdown left Iranians largely cut off from international networks, with only a domestic intranet working for daily tasks like shopping, ride-hailing and education. "Live metrics show a partial restoration to internet connectivity in Iran on day 88," of the shutdown, monitor NetBlocks said on X, saying it was "unclear" if this meant a permanent end to the "longest nationwide internet shutdown in modern history". Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said in a post on X that the "first step toward free and regulated access to cyberspace has been taken," adding that the demands of Iranians "will be fulfilled." State news agency IRNA and Fars news agency said "full international internet connectivity has been restored" for users of fixed broadband services, but this had not been confirmed by internet monitor NetBlocks. Witnesses inside Iran also told AFP that mobile internet remains cut but home internet with Wi-Fi had been restored, even though VPNs were still needed to access some social media. "A few minutes ago I could open international websites using my home internet provider," said a 22-year-old woman from the western city of Kermanshah, asking not to be named. A user in Tehran said the internet service for his company in Tehran has been restored but "mobile connection remained the same" without any access. Others reported that general access remained extremely patchy.

"LONG WAY TO GO"

The shutdown imposed when war erupted on Feb 28 followed a similar blackout im-

posed from Jan 8 as the country was rocked by mass anti-government protests. Activists said that the January closure was aimed at masking the scale of a crackdown on the protests, which left thousands dead according to rights groups, as well as preventing more demonstrations.

Doug Madory, head of internet analysis at US network monitoring firm Kentik, said the partial restoration needed to be kept "in perspective". "Iran has a long way to go to get back to pre-Jan-8 levels of traffic volumes," he wrote on X. The shutdown had also caused considerable debate inside Iran with the administration of President Masoud Pezeshkian - regarded as a more moderate figure - impatient to end a measure which was also hugely damaging for the economy. However Pezeshkian by no means has the final say on such issues. Yaghoob Rezaadeh, member of Iran's national security commission at the parliament, told the Hamshahri daily Monday that the final decision on such issues "rests with the Supreme National Security Council" under hardliner Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr. Iran's judiciary earlier Tuesday suspended a fledgling presidential body that had ordered the restoration of the internet. The Special Headquarters for Organising and Governing the Country's Cyberspace was formed on May 12 by Pezeshkian. The body had on Monday reached a decision to "restore the internet" in Iran, according to government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani, after local media reported that Pezeshkian had decreed the measure.

Supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who has yet to appear in public since his father and predecessor Ali Khamenei was killed at the start of the war, meanwhile is in theory the country's number one figure.

US and Armenia sign partnership agreement ahead of Armenian election

Yerevan: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan signed a strategic partnership agreement in Yerevan on Tuesday (May 26), less than two weeks before parliamentary elections in the South Caucasus country. Rubio's visit comes as Russia has threatened to exert economic pressure on Yerevan for its growing ties to the West by raising prices Armenia pays for Russian gas if the country turns away from integration with Moscow. On Jun 7, Armenia votes in an election pitting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Civil Contract party against an array of opposition parties, many of which are pro-Russian. Rubio and Mirzoyan also signed a framework agreement on critical minerals and another on cooperation on a proposed 43km transit corridor across southern Armenia that would give Azerbaijan a direct route to its exclave of Nakhchivan and into Turkey, Baku's closest ally. Dubbed the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP)", the corridor is a key part of a peace agreement reached last August between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which have been at war on-and-off since the late 1980s. No formal peace

deal has been signed. The route would better connect Asia to Europe - bypassing Russia and Iran - at a time when US President Donald Trump has expressed interest in critical minerals deals with resource-rich Central Asian countries to the east of the South Caucasus region. The mining of iron, copper and zinc and other minerals is also a major sector of Armenia's economy.

STRAINED TIES WITH RUSSIA

"We are going to be able to work together to make sure that both of our countries, both of our economies, are going to have reliable access to these critical minerals," Rubio said at the signing ceremony on Tuesday. Under Pashinyan, Armenia has pursued closer relations with the West, including adopting a law last year to launch its accession process to the European Union. Yerevan drew Russia's ire after it hosted a high-profile EU summit earlier this month. Armenia is heavily dependent on Russia and Iran for energy supplies, and would be hard-hit by the increase in gas prices referred to by the Kremlin. Russia this week banned imports of Armenian flowers, mineral water and brandy in another signal of its displeasure at Yerevan's warming ties with the West.

Israel says targeted new Hamas armed wing chief in Gaza strike

Jerusalem: Israel said it targeted the new chief of Hamas' armed wing in a strike in Gaza on Tuesday (May 26), just days after his predecessor was killed in a similar attack in the Palestinian territory. "Under the direction of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz, the IDF has just carried out a strike in Gaza targeting Mohammed Odeh - the new commander of the military wing of the Hamas terrorist organisation and one of the architects of the October 7 massacre," a joint statement issued by Netanyahu and Katz said. Odeh was appointed as chief of the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades after his predecessor Ezzedine Al-Haddad was killed in a strike in Gaza earlier in May. Gaza's civil defence agency, which operates as a rescue service under Hamas, said that a woman had been killed in an Israeli airstrike in the Rimal neighbourhood in western Gaza City. "Odeh served as head of Hamas intelligence during the Oct 7 massacre and was appointed approximately one week ago as successor to Ezzedine Al-Haddad," the statement from Netanyahu and Katz said. "Odeh was responsible for the murder, abduction, and injury of numerous Israeli civilians and IDF soldiers," it said. In the aftermath of the Oct 7 assault, Netanyahu

pledged to target and eliminate the masterminds behind the attacks, which, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures, resulted in the deaths of 1,221 people. Israel's retaliatory response in Gaza has killed at least 72,803 people, according to the territory's health ministry, which operates under Hamas authority.

The United Nations considers these figures to be reliable. Since Hamas's cross-border assault, the Israeli military and intelligence services have waged a campaign targeting the group's senior political leaders and militant commanders in Gaza and across the region.

During the war triggered by the Hamas attacks, Israel has claimed responsibility for assassinating several Hamas leaders, including the group's former political chief Ismail Haniyeh. Israeli soldiers also killed Yahya Sinwar, who was widely regarded as a key mastermind behind the Oct 7 attack. Mohammed Deif, the longtime commander of Hamas's armed wing and considered an architect of the attack, was also killed during the war. Israeli strikes have also targeted Hamas operatives in Lebanon, as well as senior Iran-backed Hezbollah commanders allied with the group, including former Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah.

Avocados cultivation and horticulture awareness programme conducted at Pangin Village

Pangin: A public awareness and community engagement programme focusing on avocado farming, horticulture techniques, and the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) was successfully conducted in Pangin Village, Arunachal Pradesh. The targeted outreach initiative aimed to promote scientific horticulture practices while



strengthening community understanding regarding the developmental significance of SUMP in the region. The grassroots awareness drive, which commenced in Pangin on May 27, focused on encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and enhancing awareness regarding the long-term developmental benefits associated with SUMP. The programme witnessed active participation from villagers and households, who attended the sessions and engaged in discussions related to farming opportunities, infrastructure development, regional progress, and community welfare. The programme was held in the presence of Chief Guest Ms. Leniya Pertin, Horticulture Development Officer (HDO), Boleng, Siang District. During the session, she shared valuable insights on advanced avocado cultivation methods, scientific horticulture practices, and sustainable farming techniques aimed at improving agricultural productivity and livelihood opportunities for local farmers. She also

emphasized the importance of adopting modern agricultural methods to strengthen long-term rural development and economic sustainability. The event was also attended by Mr. Oyar Gao, Senior Public Leader; Tatop Panor, Youth Leader. Their presence encouraged active interaction and meaningful participation among the villagers throughout the programme. The organising team further facilitated open interaction sessions that allowed community members to directly raise queries and share their local perspectives regarding horticulture development and the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project. More than 25 participants actively took part in the programme, engaging in meaningful discussions on avocado farming techniques, crop management practices, infrastructure development, and community welfare. Following the interactive sessions, comprehensive SUMP information booklets were distributed among the villagers by the respective Chief Guests to promote transparent communication and strengthen public understanding of the initiative. By encouraging direct dialogue between technical experts, local leadership, and residents, the programme successfully strengthened awareness and informed participation regarding both sustainable horticulture practices and the Siang Upper Multipurpose Project in the Pangin region. The initiative also played an important role in promoting community engagement, improving awareness on modern agricultural opportunities, and fostering a better understanding of the project's long-term developmental objectives.

Renault records ninth consecutive month of wholesale growth

Guwahati: Renault India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Renault Group, recorded its ninth consecutive month of wholesale growth in May 2026, extending a strong growth streak that began in September 2025. Between September 2025 and May 2026, Renault India achieved cumulative wholesales of 38,225 units, reflecting a robust 46% growth compared to the same period last year. In May 2026, Renault was one of only two passenger vehicle manufacturers in India to record positive re-

tail sales growth, according to VAAHAN data. The company also reported a 64% year-on-year increase in wholesales during the month, underscoring the strength of customer demand and Renault's growing presence in the Indian market. The sustained growth momentum reflects Renault India's continued focus on delivering products that resonate with Indian customers while strengthening its position in one of the world's most competitive automotive markets.

Generali Central Life Insurance donates life-support ambulances to strengthen healthcare

Guwahati/Jorhat: Generali Central Life Insurance, a leading private life insurer and the lead insurer in Sikkim, has announced its support for Sir Thutob Namgyal Memorial (STNM) Hospital through the donation of two fully equipped life-support ambulances. This initiative reinforces the company's commitment to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and enhancing emergency response services in the region. Since 2022, Generali Central Life Insurance is the lead insurer for Sikkim driving efforts towards financial literacy and long-term financial protection across the state. Reaffirming its commitment to being a Lifetime Partner and driven by a strong commitment to Sikkim, this initiative moves beyond protection and insurance, reflecting that real partnerships are built by supporting communities in their most critical moments. Thutob Namgyal Memorial Hospital in Gangtok, the largest healthcare institution in Sikkim, will see a significant boost to its emergency response capabilities with the addition of ambulances equipped with advanced life-support systems, serving Gangtok and surrounding regions. Designed to enable faster and efficient patient transfers, particularly from remote and hilly areas where access to medical care remains a challenge, these ambulances will help bridge a critical healthcare gap. For the people of Sikkim, they ensure timely care when it matters most, while easing the burden on healthcare providers and improving overall response efficiency. Speaking on the initiative, Mr. Alok Rungta, MD and CEO, Generali Central Life Insurance said, "At Generali Central Life Insurance, we see our role as going beyond protection to being a trusted Lifetime Partner. At its core, life insurance is about standing by people in moments that matter most. The ambulances are a step towards ensuring timely care reaches communities when it matters most, especially in critical situations, while reinforcing our commitment to improving access to healthcare and emergency response. As we look ahead, our focus is on building a stronger, more inclusive ecosystem in the state, expanding financial literacy, deepening insurance access in underserved communities, and partnering closely with local institutions to drive long-term

impact. Through continued investments in community outreach and grassroots distribution, we aim to play a meaningful role in strengthening the financial resilience and well-being of every household in Sikkim." Sharing his views on the initiative, Mr. Mahendra Pradhan, Director - Finance & Nodal Officer, Government of Sikkim, said, "We welcome the addition of these advanced ambulances, which underscores Generali Central Life Insurance's commitment to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and enhancing access to critical medical care in remote parts of the state. Beyond this contribution, the company has played a significant role in advancing insurance awareness across Sikkim, reflecting its deep commitment to the well-being and financial security of our people. As we work towards achieving 'Insurance for All' in Sikkim by 2027—well ahead of India's national target of 2047—active participation and collaboration from all stakeholders will be essential. Partnerships such as these are instrumental in helping us realize this shared vision of inclusive protection and care for every citizen." Highlighting the importance of this action, Shri G.T. Dhungel, Hon'ble Health Minister, Government of Sikkim said, "This initiative is a strong example of how partnerships can enhance public healthcare delivery. The addition of these ambulances will improve emergency response and help ensure timely medical attention across Sikkim. We commend Generali Central Life Insurance for this meaningful contribution." Noting how important timely access is, Mr. Sarvesh Kumar Mishra, Chief Third Party Distribution Officer, Generali Central Life Insurance, said, "In a state like Sikkim, strengthening last-mile connectivity is critical not just for financial protection, but also for enabling timely healthcare support. Initiatives such as the deployment of advanced life-support ambulances play an important role in bridging these gaps for communities in remote areas. At Generali Central Life Insurance, our focus has been on building a robust, on-ground distribution ecosystem that improves awareness, accessibility, and trust. As the lead insurer in the state, we continue to work closely with

local institutions and stakeholders to deepen insurance penetration and ensure protection becomes an integral part of everyday financial planning." The insurer also organized a blood donation camp at the hospital, further reinforcing its commitment to supporting community health and well-being. The initiative aims to bring healthcare closer to people, seamlessly linking financial protection with access to essential health services. Elaborating on the larger impact of the community-focused effort, Ms. Geetanjali Chugh Kothari, Chief Marketing Officer, Generali Central Life Insurance and India Project Head for Sikkim said, "Since 2022, we have focused on driving insurance awareness and improving life insurance penetration across Sikkim through targeted campaigns, on-ground workshops and community engagement initiatives designed to strengthen financial literacy. The ambulance donation stands as a strong testament to our commitment to community well-being, ensuring timely access to critical healthcare support while reinforcing our focus on creating meaningful, on-ground impact." Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Ruth Yonzan, Medical Superintendent, Sir Thutob Namgyal Memorial Hospital said, "We are deeply grateful to Generali Central Life Insurance for this impactful support. In a state like Sikkim, where terrain can delay access, these life-support ambulances will significantly strengthen emergency care. This partnership brings us closer to ensuring timely, quality care for every resident." As the lead insurer for Sikkim, Generali Central Life Insurance has driven a focused effort to deepen insurance penetration by enhancing awareness and simplifying access across urban and rural markets. Under its Rural and Social Sector Obligations mandate, Generali Central Life has extended insurance coverage to over 6,500 lives in Sikkim as of May 31, 2026. This has been done in close alignment with the Government of Sikkim, regulators, and key institutions such as National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, state police, and Gram Panchayats, supporting IRDAI's vision of 'Insurance for All by 2047'.

How to prevent summer breakouts

Wondering why your skin is breaking out in the summer? If you struggle with acne, you're certainly not alone. In fact, it is the most common skin problem in India. With the hot and humid summer, your skin becomes prone to many skin troubles. But the most common skin problem that troubles a lot of people is acne. Acne is a common problem with several underlying causes. The excessive heat, sweat, and humidity that our body produces during summer months intensify oil production, which clogs pores with dirt, grime and debris that leads to more breakouts during this season. Summer skin is prone to infections as dust, oil, heat and humidity create the perfect environment for pores to clog and acne-causing bacteria to grow. As many oil-producing glands are on the forehead, nose, and chin, this area — the T-zone — is where a person is most prone to pimples. A pimple starts when the pores in the skin become clogged with a type of oil called sebum, which normally lubricates the skin and hair. When sebum accumulates, it causes the formation of comedones (blackheads). "Some people are genetically prone to breakouts, but heat and sweat can significantly clog skin pores and stimulate an overgrowth of not just bacteria, but yeast that normally lives on skin, making your skin vulnerable to acne-causing debris and bacteria. Whether you have acne-prone skin or you deal with those pesky pimples. The good news is that there are ways to prevent and treat common skin problems with gentle herbal creams and gels, essential oils, natural supplements, and some simple lifestyle changes. Try to Keep Your Hands Off Your Face: It can be very tempting, but touching, picking or scratching your pimples will irritate the skin, may make pimples worse and can spread to other areas. Every time your fingers meet your face, they transfer dirt and oils. It's a hard habit to break, but an important one. Do not squeeze your pimples. Your hands aren't always clean, and dirt under your fingernails and improper squeezing can cause acne to spread or lead to further infection. Pimples and blackheads shouldn't be picked at, scratched or pierced. This usually leads to further inflammation and the spread of germs on neighbouring skin. Also, this will leave a bad pigmented scar. Ideally, stay away from irritating products, remain patient, and develop a regular skin cleansing regimen. One of the most basic tips for how to get rid of acne is simply to keep your hands to yourself.

Turmeric Powder: One of the best and simplest turmeric facial masks is to simply mix one teaspoon of turmeric powder with two to three teaspoons of plain yoghurt and one tsp of plain honey. Mix it well and make a paste of it. Apply this paste on the face and other affected areas and leave it to dry in a natural environment. You can use it two or three times a week. Just remember one thing: never expose your body to the sun's rays after applying this. It may give you a reverse result. It gives the best results at night. Curd & turmeric mixture can not

only remove all your acne, pimples or freckles, but it can also give you a fair, smooth skin. Mix one part lemon juice with one-half part turmeric powder. Then stir the two ingredients together to make a smooth paste. Apply the paste on the face using a cotton pad and wash with cool water after 30 minutes. Lemon juice is a natural antiseptic and antibacterial agent. It also helps to even out skin tone, which can reduce the appearance of older acne scars. Hot turmeric milk (Haldi doodh) is a traditional healing recipe in India. Just add a teaspoon to a cup of hot water and drink it daily night before going to bed. It will treat acne, provide a glow to your skin and aid indigestion. Milk contains lactic acid that has a mild exfoliating effect. This mixture can keep your skin acne-free and make it soft.

Eat a healthy Diet: The relationship between diet and acne has been debated for years. Recent research suggests that any foods with a high glycemic index, such as white bread, sugary soft drinks, cakes, doughnuts, pastries, candies, sugary breakfast cereals, greasy foods and other processed foods, etc., that cause a spike in insulin can lead to inflammation and an acne flare. Regular consumption of high GI foods raises insulin levels, which may stimulate sebum production and inflammation, and raise androgen levels—all of which contribute to acne. These studies suggest that a low-glycemic, healthy, balanced diet, such as fruits, barley, soybean sprouts and fibre-rich food, vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole or minimally processed grains, may be helpful for individuals with acne-prone skin.

Neem Leafs: Take some Neem Bark and soak it for 5 minutes in the water. After that, apply the paste only to the affected area. Do it regularly every 2 weeks, and you will see your such a spotless, acne free fair skin without any side effects. Take two tablespoons of neem powder and sandalwood powder each, and add a little water and one tablespoon of rose water to make a paste. Apply it as a face pack and leave it on for 20 minutes. Wash with cool water and wipe clean. Alternatively, you can use fresh leaves if you want. Boil neem leaves in water and filter the water from the leaves. Once it cools down. Mix sandalwood in neem water to form a thin paste. Apply to the face and neck, and leave to dry for 15 minutes, then wash with clean water. Boil about 20 neem leaves in half a litre of water till the leaves are soft and discoloured, and the water turns green. Strain and store in a bottle. Dip a cotton ball into it and wipe your face.

Stay hydrated: Dehydration also gives your skin a dull appearance and promotes inflammation and redness. If you're hydrated, your body may signal your skin's oil glands to produce more oil, making it easier for acne sores to heal and reducing the overall risk of outbreaks. Daily intake of eight glasses of clean and nor-

mal water /juice, soup, coconut water, and Lassi magically clears your skin. Being hydrated also ensures new skin cells develop correctly as sores heal. Drink more after exercise, if you're pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you spend time in a hot, humid environment.

Lemon: The simplest and most ubiquitous of ingredients, lemon juice is one of the most effective and inexpensive at-home acne remedies.



Lemon juice is the best natural cleanser. Take a lemon and put its juice in a bowl. Take some cotton, and with the help of it, apply it to the face. Leave it until it gets dry. Wash it off. If you have dry skin, then use it only once a week. Other ingredients like sandalwood, basil (tulsi), mint (pudina), and neem (margosa) can be used to treat eruptive conditions of the skin, like acne. They can be good protective and preventive treatments for oily skin. Mix a few drops of lemon juice with honey and apply twice daily to the affected areas, let it absorb for over 15 minutes, and wash your skin with fresh water. Moisturize: Moisturising is a very important part of treating acne, as moistened skin tends to loosen sebum built up inside pores. Many acne products contain ingredients that dry the skin. When your skin becomes dry, your body makes more oil. The extra oil can clog your pores, which may lead to more breakouts, which is another reason to keep skin balanced by applying a moisturiser. The right moisturiser can prevent your skin from becoming dry and irritated. Hydrating the skin surface can rebalance oil glands and help control acne and improve healing. Always buy a lightweight, oil-free moisturiser that won't clog your pores. Applying it after you wash helps to maintain hydration in your skin. The author is international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India

Shahnaz Husain

Navachar Mantra launched to boost grassroots innovation and entrepreneurship

Guwahati: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) on Wednesday launched 'Navachar Mantra', a national initiative aimed at identifying, nurturing and scaling grassroots innovations and early-stage enterprises across India, with a special focus on Tier-2, Tier-3 towns and rural regions. The programme was launched by Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for



Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, at IIT Delhi. The initiative will be implemented by the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) in partnership with the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), IIT Delhi as the technical knowledge partner. Speaking at the launch, Chaudhary said India should not only manufacture products but also lead the world in technologies imagined and developed in the country. He urged young innovators to pursue ideas driven by pur-

pose and passion, adding that Navachar Mantra seeks to create an ecosystem where such innovators can thrive. The initiative targets innovators working in sectors such as AgriTech, HealthTech, EdTech and Skilling, Climate and Sustainability, Rural Commerce and MSME Enablement. Applications are open until July 5, 2026, through a dedicated digital platform. Selected participants will undergo a year-long mentorship programme featuring investor interactions, innovation showcases, webinars and business development support. In Guwahati, the programme is expected to create fresh opportunities for startups and innovators from Assam and the Northeast. Entrepreneurs working on agriculture, rural commerce, sustainable technologies and skill development solutions could benefit from national-level mentorship, funding exposure and market linkages, helping regional innovations scale beyond local markets. The launch event also featured a fireside chat with leading entrepreneurs, including founders of Droom, Mobikwik, Fruvetech and Easiogy Solutions, who shared insights on innovation, resilience and scaling businesses. Senior officials from MSDE, IIT Delhi, NIESBUD and FITT, along with representatives from industry, academia and the startup ecosystem, attended the event.

Prothomesta Neuro care and Chikitsa Clinic launches Neurology OPD

Guwahati: Prothomesta Neuro care, New Delhi, announced the launch of their exclusive Neurology OPD services in partnership with Chikitsa Clinic, Guwahati. The OPD Services were launched in the presence of Dr Biplab Das, Director - Neurology & Interventional Neuroradiology, Prothomesta Neuro care and Batra Hospital, New Delhi. Dr Biplab Das will be available on 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month from 11:00 AM to :00 PM at Chikitsa Clinic, Guwahati, for primary consultations and follow-up, eliminating the need for travel to metro cities. Patients in and

around Guwahati can now consult for super specialist opinions pertaining to various neurological disorders and management including stroke management, and epilepsy surgery. Dr Biplab Das, Director - Neurology & Interventional Neuroradiology, Prothomesta Neuro care and Batra Hospital, New Delhi, said "People often come to us with conditions such as headache, migraines, sudden or acute onset of dizziness or unconsciousness, trouble walking, loss of balance, sensation or coordination, trouble seeing with one or both eyes.

Holdings Leinster and top-ranked Glasgow on collision course for URC title

June 4 : Holders Leinster and 2024 champions Glasgow Warriors are on course to meet in the United Rugby Championship final later this month, with both teams having home advantage against South African opposition in Saturday's semi-finals. Leinster, who have won the annual competition between Irish, Italian, Scottish, South African and Welsh sides a record nine times, will host the Stormers in Dublin after Glasgow face the Bulls at Murrayfield. Glasgow, by virtue of finishing the regular season in top place, will have home advantage for the final on June 20 if they overcome the Bulls, who have been runners-up in three of the last four editions. However, Glasgow have had to move the match to Edinburgh because their Scotstoun Stadium is being modified and expanded to host the Commonwealth Games' athletics next month. Glasgow, whose URC triumph two years ago came against the Bulls in Pretoria, are braced for a bruising physical battle. They have a potential crisis at scrum-half after George Horne hurt his hand in Friday's quarter-final win over Connacht at Scotstoun, while Jamie Dobie has been out since injuring his shoulder playing for Scotland against England in mid-February. "Plan A when you play the Bulls is it's going to be a man test and there's no shirking that. If you don't match it, you're in trouble. They bring a tremendous amount of physicality," said Warriors attack coach Nigel Carolan in the build-up to the semi.

BULLS HAVE LOST TWICE AWAY TO GLASGOW THIS SEASON The Bulls have the best percentage of away success among the South African teams in the competition but it is just over 50 per cent, indicative of how taxing the long travel can be. They have already lost twice to Glasgow at Scotstoun this season in the URC in October and 25-21 in the European Champions Cup last 16 in April. "Glasgow defend very well. So our patience with the ball will have to improve. But it's two quality sides, so the margins will be so small," predicted Bulls coach Johan Ackermann. Leinster will be looking for URC success to make up for the disappointment of losing last month's Champions Cup final to Bordeaux-Begles. "It is something we'll revisit at the right time, but we were a little bit off in Bilbao, and it's just about making sure that we're at our very best now this week to hopefully put ourselves in a position to get into another final," said their Ireland lock James Ryan. Stormers travelled to Dublin without flyhalf Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu, who hurt his ankle in their quarter-final win over Cardiff last Saturday. "It's a big blow," said the Cape Town team's coach John Dobson. "But whenever we take a knock, this group tends to pull together and fight."

Manchester : Manchester City chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak has revealed Pep Guardiola "quit 100 times" during a decade at the club before leaving at the end of the season, drawing a line under one of the most successful managerial reigns in English football. In a wide-ranging interview with City's in-house media, Al Mubarak said Guardiola repeatedly half-heartedly flirted with leaving over the years, only to be persuaded to continue - until the moment he knew the decision was final. "Inevitably over these last 10 years we've had a lot of ups and some downs. And in the downs, he must have quit 100 times," Al Mubarak said. "There's the story as you all know, 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf.' In the case of Pep, when he says I quit, it doesn't mean he's quitting. You don't take it that seriously, you have to manage him. "I always had a very clear understanding with Pep, because of that analogy of the 'Boy Who Cried Wolf': whenever he quits I will always convince him to come back until the time where I know it's actually the real moment Pep decides actually it's time. "There's the moments that are not real and he actually needs someone to bring him back. And there was always going to be one moment where it was going to be real." Al Mubarak said that as well as becoming close friends with Guardiola he was also the Spaniard's pseudo "psychiatrist", pulling him back from the brink in the down times. Guardiola's threats to quit finally became real this season, Al Mubarak said, bringing to a close a 10-year tenure he described as "exceptional." "We reached that, and I knew it and that's why I didn't fight it," he said. "In this particular (moment), I think he knew, and I knew that

he knew ... I did not fight this at all because I knew this was the time he actually meant it." The 55-year-old Guardiola claimed 20 trophies with City including six Premier League titles and the Champions League

not just the team but an entire league. And Pep has done that here." Despite Guardiola's exit, Al Mubarak insisted City's trajectory would continue upward, and they will appoint the "right manager" for a seamless



before closing his career at the end of a season that saw his side finish league runners-up and win the FA Cup and League Cup. His departure followed a spell in which City established themselves as the dominant force in English football, reshaping the tactical landscape in the process. "He changed English football," Al Mubarak said. "You look at the way the league has evolved ... the way football is played in this league from 10 years ago to today. In my view it's unquestionable, his influence over the game. He has left his thumbprint over this league. "Very few managers in football will come in and change

transition. "We are far from peaked," he said. "We are used to, because it's in our DNA, winning. This is a club that is designed, built to win. What Pep has given us has taken us to the next level. "We've gone through a very thoughtful and structured process and the team is convinced - and I am convinced, rest assured - that we will bring in the right manager for this Club. "Very soon we'll announce it and you will be very comfortable that we have selected and brought in the best manager possible for this club." Guardiola's former assistant Enzo Maresca is his expected successor.

NBA-NBA Europe on schedule for 2027 launch, Silver says

June 3 : NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said the league remains on schedule to launch NBA Europe in October 2027, with final bids for permanent franchises due by the end of June and awards expected as soon as autumn. The league has seen record interest in the proposed competition and the NBA is working closely with FIBA on the project, which would mark the league's most ambitious international expansion, Silver told a press conference ahead of Game One of the NBA Finals. "We are very much on schedule," he said. "It is our hope and anticipation that the league will launch in the '27-28 season in Europe. We are on track." The planned league is expected to feature 16 teams, including 12 permanent franchises and four additional spots available through a qualification process for clubs across Europe, Silver said. The NBA's push into Europe comes amid growing international influence on the league. Silver said roughly 15 per cent of NBA players are European, including top stars like 22-year-old Frenchman Victor Wembanyama, who will lead the San Antonio Spurs against the New York Knicks in the Finals.

EUROLEAGUE DISCUSSIONS ONGOING The proposed NBA Europe competition would enter a market currently anchored by the EuroLeague, which encompasses most of the continent's basketball powers, including Olympiacos, Real Madrid, Fenerbahce and Barcelona. Silver said discussions with EuroLeague were continuing and that the NBA hoped to find a way to integrate operations with the existing competition. But he made clear the NBA was prepared to proceed regardless. "It's our hope that we can find a way to integrate these operations with the EuroLeague, but we will move forward either way," Silver said. According to Sports Business Journal, EuroLeague clubs would need to pay be-

tween \$500 million and \$1 billion for permanent NBA Europe franchises, though those commitments have yet to come.

OWNERSHIP QUESTIONS

Silver also said the issue of whether current NBA players could invest in NBA Europe teams remains unresolved and would need to be discussed with the National Basketball Players Association. Los Angeles Lakers guard Luka Doncic is part of an investment group trying to bring an NBA Europe team to Rome. Active NBA players are prohibited from owning NBA teams while playing in the league. "That has not been resolved yet," Silver said. "Part of the determination will be what the basketball relationship will be between these teams and NBA Europe and the NBA. That obviously could complicate things if current NBA players were owners." Silver said the NBA was separately continuing discussions about possible expansion in the United States, with Las Vegas and Seattle remaining the league's focus. He said the NBA Board of Governors was expected to decide by the end of the calendar year whether to expand to one or both cities, though he added expansion was not guaranteed.



Socceroos Herrington and Geria out to make most of first World Cup call-ups

Oakland : Lucas Herrington and Jason Geria were born 14 years apart and have taken very different journeys to the World Cup, but both are determined to put their best foot forward after making the cut for the Australia squad. Herrington, at 18 the youngest player in the Socceroos squad and 11th youngest in the tournament, has enjoyed a meteoric rise since his professional debut only 17 months ago. "It's special to be at a World Cup at a young age," the centre half said after training at Australia's tournament base on Wednesday. "I want to do the best I can to help the country, make the country proud. And I'll do that every time I step onto the field. And every minute I get." Herrington is no stranger to the United States, having played every minute of all

15 games for the Colorado Rapids during the first half of his first Major League Soccer (MLS) season this year. "I probably wouldn't have come if I didn't get those minutes in Colorado," he said. The Brisbane-born defender made his debut for the national team in March but has made enough of an impact to be brought to the U.S. for the World Cup. Herrington is committed to staying grounded, paying credit to the support of the staff, teammates like veteran goalkeeper Mathew Ryan, and his parents, who will be travelling to Vancouver for Australia's first game against Turkey on June 13. If Herrington's rise has been meteoric, Geria's international career has been very much a slow burn. The 33-year-old right back, who qualified to

play for Uganda through his parents, was first capped by then Australia coach Ange Postecoglou in 2016. He missed out on the 2018 and 2022 World Cup squads but got the call from Tony Popovic after his former coach at Melbourne Victory took over the Socceroos in late 2024. Geria won his second cap eight years after his first and has since become a regular in Popovic's squads. "I'm just very grateful that this opportunity has come and that I persisted in working as hard as I did for as long as I did, and believing that one day something like this could happen for myself," he said. "I'm still pinching myself, honestly, that I'm part of the final 26 in here in base camp and in preparing for a World Cup."

Malaysia FA approves reforms after AFC criticism

Kuala Lumpur : The Football Association of Malaysia on Wednesday approved a sweeping overhaul to its regulatory structure, shortly after the regional governing body, the Asian Football Confederation, said it had found widespread weaknesses in the association's governance and operations. The AFC in January said it would conduct a review into FAM after the association was accused by world soccer body FIFA of using doctored documentation to field seven naturalised players in an Asian Cup qualifier against Vietnam last year. FAM has denied wrongdoing and said it was investigating a technical error. • In March, the AFC overturned Malaysia's qualify-

ing wins over Nepal and Vietnam, effectively ending the country's chances of advancing in the tournament. • In an audit report released on Wednesday, the AFC said FAM scored less than two out of five in most major areas reviewed including governance, legal, finance and football development, and described the weaknesses as systemic throughout the organisation. • The association had also been operating without getting its budget formally approved since 2016, despite it being a regulatory requirement, AFC Deputy General Secretary Vahid Kardany said while presenting the report at a FAM extraordinary congress meeting.

Guardiola "quit 100 times" before final exit, says Man City chairman

Konate opens up on depression after deaths of Jota and father

June 4 : France defender Ibrahima Konate said on Wednesday he battled depression following the deaths of Liverpool teammate Diogo Jota and his father while continuing to fulfil his football duties. Portugal forward Jota and his brother Andre Silva died in a car crash last July, while Konate's father, Hamady, passed away in January after a long illness. "There are low points, there's depression. You can suffer from depression in football too; there's no need to be ashamed to say so," Konate told France Inter radio. "It's true that I've often heard players say they were suffering from depression and that fans or people on the outside didn't understand because they were earning a lot of money. But that's

rubbish and you shouldn't say that." The 27-year-old, who confirmed earlier this week he will leave Liverpool this summer, said Jota's death had taken a heavy toll on him. "It devastated me. I didn't have any interest in anything else at that point," he said. "You go back to football because you have no choice. We're employees at a club that pays us every month, so we have duties. "We had no choice but to go back on the field and play for him and his family - as well as ourselves. There's no way of getting over it, but you learn to live with it." At the same time, Konate was coping with his father's illness, leaving him unsure how to balance personal grief with professional commitments.

Man City consider legal action after Real Madrid candidate's Haaland pledge

Manchester : Manchester City are considering legal action after Real Madrid presidential candidate Enrique Riquelme said he would sign the Premier League club's Norway striker Erling Haaland if elected. Riquelme, a renewable energy entrepreneur challenging incumbent Florentino Perez, made the pledge during an appearance on Spanish television on Wednesday,

where he held up a Real Madrid shirt bearing Haaland's name. "The stories which have emerged from Spain regarding the future of Erling Haaland are untrue," a City spokesperson said on Thursday. "There is no chance of this happening and there is no contractual clause to enable it. We are considering legal action for the use of our player's image in this context."

Argentines go into World Cup with atypical mood: tempered hopes

Buenos Aires : Felipe Mujica is heading into this month's soccer World Cup feeling less anxious than usual. Mujica, a 39-year-old architect in Buenos Aires, typically watches World Cup matches yelling and swearing, getting so tense that "frankly, it's not good to be near me," he admitted. But this time around, Argentina is defending its 2022 Qatar title, the pressure is off and he may actually enjoy watching the games, he said. "We were waiting for 30 years to get another World Cup and after winning it the expectations are lower," he said. "I don't want to say it doesn't matter, as we get closer to the date it matters more, but we have a different kind of calm." In three-time World Cup winner Argentina, soccer fever is unusually tempered less than two weeks before the 2026 World Cup kicks off in North America. While billboard advertisements featuring Argentine football hero Lionel Messi and the national squad are plastered across Buenos Aires, the temperature is less feverish than in 2022. Then, "Muchachos, Ahora Nos Volvimos a Ilusionar" (Boys, We Are Now Going to Dream Again), a song that evoked Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi, became the country's much-sung World Cup anthem. The pressure was so high then because it was widely seen as Argentina's last chance to win a World Cup under the leadership of Messi, whose intelligence on the field and dribbling prowess made him the dominant global football player of his generation. In December 2022, Buenos Aires came to a halt as several million Argentines filled highways, overpasses and the streets in the euphoria that followed Argentina's victory in Qatar, its first since Maradona led the team in 1986. "No one expects that to be exceeded," said Diego Murzi, an Argentine sociologist who stud-

ies soccer. "That World Cup was very intense, and I doubt it will be repeated."

'NOT IMPOSSIBLE'

The feat would be remarkable: if Argentina wins again, it would be only the third country to clinch consecutive World Cups after Italy (1934 and 1938) and Brazil (1958 and 1962). Bookies generally rank Argentina as the fifth favorite, with a Goldman Sachs model reducing the team's chances by what the bank called a "winner's slump" effect, or the tendency of defending champions to underperform at the following World Cup. "The truth is that it's very difficult, but well, not impossible, right?" said Argentina's coach Lionel Scaloni in an interview published on Instagram by CONMEBOL, South American soccer's governing body. Advertisers have done their best to convince Argentines that lifting that trophy again is still possible. In a World Cup commercial for popular beer Quilmes, a young man tells his friends at a pizzeria that they are "screwed." But then Argentine retired basketball star Manu Ginobili turns up to remind them that in the 2004 Athens Olympics he scored a winning basket moments before the final buzzer, sending his team on a run to the gold medal. At age 38, this will be Messi's sixth - and almost certainly last - World Cup. "Here in Argentina we know that it is his last World Cup but it's something we don't want to believe," said Tato Aguilera, a sports journalist in Buenos Aires. "We want to continue that illusion that Messi is immortal and that Messi will keep playing until he's 55 years old, something that won't happen." As for that tempered atmosphere? That could quickly change once the whistle blows. "Remember that an Argentine can get fired up in two minutes," said Aguilera.

Regional Committee of Sanskritik Mahasabha, Formed at Duliajan Under the Initiative of Dibrugarh District Committee

M Hashim Ali correspondent Dibrugarh, June 4: The Sanskritik Mahasabha, Assam has been organizing various

Executive President; Sataranjan Chutia, Organizing Secretaries Basanta Kumar Saikia, Treasurer Munu Bhuyan, Cultural Sec-



cultural activities over the past sixteen years. In this regard, a public meeting was held on June 3 at the premises of the No. 1 Jagun Pathar Namghar in Duliajan under the chairmanship of Pramod Dutta, President of the Dibrugarh District Committee. During the meeting, the Duliajan Regional Committee was formally constituted. The meeting was attended by several distinguished personalities, including Bhupen Saikia, honorary member of Sanskritik Mahasabha, Assam and former district president; Binod Kumar Bora, Central

Steering Committee; Madan Neog, President of the Rajgarh Regional Committee; and many other well-known and respected citizens of Duliajan. In their presence, a strong regional committee named the Duliajan Regional Committee was formed under the Dibrugarh District Committee. The office-bearers of the newly formed committee are: Mrinali Bhuyan Bordoloi, President Munin Dolakashariya and Pradip Kumar Gogoi, Vice Presidents Jibakanta Gogoi, General Secretary Dipali Tamuli and Junu Dutta, Assistant Secretaries Junu Dutta and

retary Jubilee Gogoi, Magazine Editor Uma Chetia, Office Secretary, The Executive Members include Arup Bora and Bimal Gandhia. The Advisory Board comprises Bhupen Saikia, Binod Kumar Bora, Ranjit Mohan, Rita Dutta, Dilip Bordoloi, B.B. Bora, Babul Saikia, and Ratul Sonowal. According to Chandanjyoti Kalita, Secretary of the Dibrugarh District Committee, the regional committee was formed in the presence of more than fifty people who had gathered from different parts of the greater Duliajan area.

Contd. From Page 1 - - - - - Parliamentary Standing...

2026. The visit underscores the national importance accorded to railway infrastructure development, connectivity enhancement and capacity augmentation across the country, particularly in the Northeastern region.

As part of the study visit, the Committee visited key project sites of the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Line Project on 04th June 2026, including railway stations, tunnels and bridges and obtained first-hand insights into the progress of this landmark connectivity initiative. IRCON informed the Committee that the 44.96-km Sivok-Rangpo Railway Line, which will provide the first rail connectivity to Sikkim, is targeted for completion by December 2027 and has achieved 77% physical progress so far. The delegation also visited the Rangpo Railway Station site and Tunnel No. 14. The Committee was accompanied by Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava, General Manager of NFR, Divisional Railway Manager of Alipurduar Division along with senior Railway officials from Headquarters, NFR (Construction), IRCON and RITES Limited.

On 05th June 2026 at Gangtok, the Committee is scheduled to hold an informal discussion with the General Manager, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) and the Chairman & Managing Director, IRCON International Limited, on the subject "Expansion of Rail Network in North-east and Union Territories" with special emphasis on the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Line Project. The interaction is expected to provide valuable insights into the ongoing efforts to strengthen rail connectivity, enhance transportation infrastructure and foster sustainable socio-economic development across the Northeastern region.

The study visit underscores the national importance attached to strengthening railway infrastructure in the Northeastern region. The discussions are expected to highlight the transformative role of railway connectivity in enhancing regional integration, improving accessibility and supporting socio-economic development in remote and strategically important areas. Upon completion, the Sivok-Rangpo Railway Line Project is expected to provide Sikkim with direct rail connectivity, facilitating faster movement of passengers and freight while creating new opportunities for tourism, trade and economic growth. The interaction will also provide an opportunity to deliberate on cross-border railway connectivity initiatives and the unique engineering and infrastructure challenges associated with railway construction in the Northeastern region.

The Committee's visit reflects the continued focus of the Government of India and the Ministry of Railways on expanding rail infrastructure and improving transportation networks across the country. Such interactions and field visits play an important role in facilitating informed discussions on key infrastructure initiatives and reinforcing the shared commitment towards strengthening rail connectivity, supporting regional development and accelerating economic growth.

Northeast Frontier Railway remains committed to the timely execution of railway infrastructure projects and to realizing the vision of enhanced connectivity, inclusive development and greater prosperity for the people of the Northeastern region, informed by CPRO of Kapinjal Kishore Sharma.

DC Darrang emphasised...

to the martyrs of Patharughat Uprising popularly known as 'Patharughat Ran' one of the earliest peasant movement against British colonial rule in Assam. On 28 January, 1894 several peasants lost their lives protesting against the imposition of enhanced land revenue marking the site a symbol of sacrifice, courage and resistance against injustice.

District Administration Cachar...

Dr. Sumona Naiding, Joint Director of Health Services, Cachar, Rahul Ghose, District Programme Manager, Dr. M. I. Barbhuiya, Additional Chief Medical & Health Officer (FW), Cachar, Dr. Arkadeb Kar, Surveillance Medical Officer, World Health Organization (WHO), Mithun Johari, Inspector of Schools, Cachar, Bappa Deb, Deputy DEMO, Debasish Shome, President, Rotary Club Silchar 2026, Gourav Paul, President, Rotary Club Silchar 2027-28, representatives from the Social Welfare Department, Deshbandhu Club and officials from various health institutions and block-level health offices across the district also participated in the meeting.

Welcoming the participants, ADC (incharge Health) Monojyoti Kutum, underscored the significance of National Immunization Day as a vital public health initiative aimed at safeguarding every child against poliomyelitis. He stressed the importance of coordinated action among all stakeholder departments and organizations to ensure that no eligible child is left uncovered. He called upon all concerned agencies to work with dedication, efficiency and a sense of collective responsibility to achieve the objectives of the Pulse Polio campaign and maintain the district's commitment to child health and welfare.

A comprehensive PowerPoint presentation on the global status of polio eradication and vaccination was delivered by Dr. Arkadeb Kar, Surveillance Medical Officer of the World Health Organization who highlighted the current global epidemiological scenario, achievements made in polio eradication, emerging challenges and the critical importance of maintaining high immunization coverage to prevent any resurgence of the disease.

Detailed discussions were also held on planning, preparedness, interdepartmental coordination, community mobilization and implementation strategies for the forthcoming National Immunization Day. Special emphasis was laid on effective micro-planning and active participation of all stakeholder departments, particularly the ICDS network to ensure maximum outreach and coverage of eligible children in every corner of the district.

During the meeting, President of Rotary club Silchar, Debasish Shome also highlighted the significant contribution of Rotary International towards the global fight against polio was also highlighted. He also stated that Rotary's commitment to immunization dates back to 1979 when nearly six million children were vaccinated against polio in the Philippines, an initiative that laid the foundation for Rotary becoming a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative launched in 1988. He informed that polio eradication continues to remain Rotary's flagship humanitarian service project worldwide.

He further stated that Rotary Club Silchar has been rendering valuable services through its Permanent Immunization Centre at Trunk Road, Silchar and will also extend cooperation with District Health society and District administration cachar by promoting routine immunization and child health initiatives etc.

It's worth mentioning that to achieve the target of vaccinating 2,78,073 children in the 0 to 5 years age group, Cachar district has planned a total of 1,335 vaccination booths, including 1,208 General Booths, 59 Difficult Booths, 28 Institutional Booths, 38 Transit Booths and 2 Mobile Teams. For successful execution of the programme, 5,280 frontline workers, 267 supervisors and Medical Officers have been deployed across the district.

Notably, as per the action plan, Pulse Polio Booths will be operational on 28th June, 2026, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, where vaccination teams will administer two drops of bivalent Oral Polio Vaccine (bOPV) to all eligible children below five years of age. This will be followed by intensive house to house visits over the next two days to ensure that every eligible child is reached and no household remains uncovered.

While speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sumona Naiding, Joint Director of Health Services, Cachar, directed all concerned health officials to formulate and implement a robust and result-oriented strategy to ensure complete vaccination coverage of all children below five years of age, including those visiting or temporarily residing in the district during the campaign period. She emphasized that meticulous planning, vigilant supervision and effective field-level execution would be crucial to achieving the goal of universal immunization coverage.

Earlier, Dr. M. I. Barbhuiya, Additional Chief Medical & Health Officer (FW), Cachar, urged all line departments, particularly the ICDS Department and Health Department personnel, to extend their fullest cooperation and commitment towards the programme. He highlighted that coordinated efforts at every level would be instrumental in ensuring that every eligible child receives the life-saving vaccine and that the campaign successfully fulfils its objective of protecting children from polio.

The meeting concluded with a collective resolve from all participating departments and stakeholders to work in close coordination and ensure the successful implementation of National Immunization Day across Cachar district.

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

Orang Police Achieve Major...

on June 1. Acting on a confidential tip-off, the police team launched a swift operation around 11:20 AM and intercepted a Mahindra XUV vehicle bearing registration number AS-01-GF-6706 while it was travelling from Mazbat towards Borjhar.

During a thorough search of the vehicle, police recovered the massive consignment of ganja concealed inside. The operation team included Surajit Hazarika, police constable Kanjana Rabha, 27th APBn battalion personnel Utpal Sutradhar and Mahananda Boro, along with Home Guard Manik Dey.

Following the seizure, police arrested one suspect in this connection. The seized narcotics and the vehicle used for transportation have been taken into police custody, and further investigation is currently underway to trace possible links to a larger drug trafficking network.

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India-US Trade...

from these economies under Section 301 of the U.S. Trade Act of 1974. The proposed tariffs, which are separate from duties imposed under Section 232 and certain other product-specific measures, are part of a broader effort by the United States to address concerns related to trade practices and market access. The USTR has also proposed a special arrangement for textile and apparel products under which a specified volume of imports from selected economies could enter the United States at reduced tariff rates, providing a measure of flexibility for exporters in sectors that are highly dependent on the American market. However, the proposed tariff measures have not yet been finalized, and the USTR has initiated a consultative process to gather feedback from stakeholders before taking a final decision. Interested parties have been invited to submit requests to participate in a public hearing until June 22, 2026, while written submissions and supporting evidence can be filed until July 6, 2026. A public hearing has been scheduled for July 7, 2026, during which industry representatives, trade experts, business associations, and other stakeholders will have an opportunity to present their views on the likely impact of the proposed tariffs. Following the hearing and review of the evidence received, the USTR will determine the final scope and structure of the measures. For India, the developments are particularly significant because the United States remains one of its largest trading partners and a key destination for exports spanning sectors such as pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, information technology services, textiles, apparel, gems and jewellery, chemicals, and agricultural products.

CM Sarma inducts 12 ministers...

has recorded notable progress in multiple sectors under the leadership of Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma. The state has undertaken a range of welfare initiatives aimed at improving the lives of citizens while also focusing on economic growth, infrastructure expansion and administrative reforms. Programmes supporting women, youth, tea garden communities and entrepreneurs have received significant attention, contributing to broader socio-economic development. With the induction of twelve additional Cabinet Ministers, the government is expected to further strengthen its capacity to implement policies efficiently and respond more effectively to public needs. Leaders such as Pijush Hazarika and Dr. Ranaj Pegu are expected to contribute significantly through their experience in governance and public welfare, while Ashok Singhal and Keshab Mahanta bring valuable administrative expertise that can support key government initiatives. The inclusion of Nilima Devi also underscores the importance being placed on women's representation and empowerment within the state's governance structure. At the same time, the induction of Ashwini Ray Sarkar, Bimal Borah, Biswajit Daimary, Jayanta Malla Baruah, Kaushik Rai, Krishnendu Paul and Sushanta Borgohain adds further depth to the government's efforts to ensure broad-based participation in decision-making and development planning. The expansion comes at a time when Assam continues to focus on major priorities including infrastructure development, flood management, employment generation, skill development, tourism promotion and investment attraction. The government has consistently stressed transparency, accountability and results-oriented governance, and the addition of new ministers is expected to support these objectives by enabling quicker decision-making and stronger departmental oversight. Political observers view the move as part of the government's broader strategy to enhance administrative efficiency while maintaining momentum on ongoing development projects. The BJP-led NDA government received a strong mandate from the people, reflecting public confidence in its vision and policies. The induction of these twelve legislators into the Cabinet is being seen as a reaffirmation of the government's commitment to serving all sections of society and ensuring that development reaches every corner of the state. The new ministers are expected to play an important role in advancing flagship schemes, addressing local concerns and strengthening implementation mechanisms across sectors. Their collective experience and leadership are likely to contribute to the state's continuing efforts to achieve inclusive growth and long-term prosperity. As Assam moves forward with its development agenda, the expanded Council of Ministers is expected to provide renewed energy and greater administrative capacity to meet emerging challenges and opportunities. The swearing-in ceremony on 5 June will therefore not only mark the induction of twelve new Cabinet Ministers but also symbolize the government's determination to build a stronger, more prosperous and self-reliant Assam through effective governance and sustained public service.

District Task Force Meeting...

coordinated implementation of the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme. During the meeting, it was informed that Polio Sunday will be observed on 28th June 2026, during which eligible children below five years of age will be administered Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) at designated vaccination booths across the district. Subsequently, from 29th to 30th June 2026, house-to-house visits will be conducted to cover children who may have missed vaccination on the booth activity day.

Special transit vaccination activities will also be carried out on all three days, from 28th to 30th June 2026, at bus stands, railway stations, marketplaces, and other transit points to ensure that no eligible child is left out.

This year, the target population for the campaign in Barpeta including Bajali districts is 2,79,536 children under five years of age.

The meeting was also attended by the Jt. DHS, Barpeta, Additional CM&HO (FW), Barpeta, District Immunization Officer, Barpeta, and officials from the District Programme Management Unit (DPMU), Barpeta.

The ADC (Health), Barpeta, emphasized the importance of inter-departmental coordination and community participation to achieve 100% coverage and ensure the success of the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme.

Nalbari gears up for Census 2027

**Mascot unveiled
3 day long Training conducted**

Nalbari, June 4: Nalbari District administration (CMMS) has been developed as an integrated component of

sions. Additional District Commissioner, Circle Officers, Block Development Officers, Executive Officers of Nalbari Municipal Board and Tihu Municipal Board, Technical Assistants of Municipal Boards among District functionaries attended the training. Dr. Nijora Sarma, Joint Director of Directorate of Census, Assam and Arpan Debnath was master Trainers of this training.

It is mentionable that on last 28th May, 2026 the Mascot "Vikash" and "Pragati" was unveiled in Integrated DC Office, Nalbari by Nibedan Das Patowary, the District Commissioner in presence of Bibekananda Das, Senior Superintendent of Police, Pranab Dutta Goswami, Chief Executive Officer, Nalbari Zilla Parishad, Sudip Nath and Namrata Das, Additional District Commissioners, Circle Officers and Juri Kalita, Assistant Commissioner of Nalbari.

District Administration, Nalbari invites cooperations from general public for smooth and flawless conduct of Census 2027.



gears up for smooth and flawless conduct of Census 2027. Ensuing Census 2027 will make extensive use of digital technology to enhance the quality, efficiency and timeliness of data collection and dissemination. In the forthcoming Census, data will be collected through digital mode, marking a significant and transformative step towards the modernisation of the Census process. To effectively manage and monitor the various Census-related activities, a dedicated web-based Portal, namely the Census Management and Monitoring System

will facilitate end-to-end management of entire Census operations, including creation of users at various levels, handling of training modules, creation of Houselisting Blocks (HLB) and its description and Supervisory Circles, allocation of Supervisory Circles and HLBs, the generation of appointment letter & ID cards of Enumerators and Supervisors, preparation of Village/Town/Charge Registers and the near real-time monitoring of field operations. In addition to the Houselisting Block Creator (HLBC), Web Mapping Application, has

been developed as an integrated component of CMMS to facilitate geotagging and demarcation of HLBs created in CMMS. Thus providing better implementation and strengthening the overall monitoring of coverage during Census operations.

To follow the above system and guidelines District Administration, Nalbari Conducted District level training for District functionaries, 3 day long training with effect from 2nd June to 4th June, 2026 in the conference hall of Integrated DC Office, Nalbari. Nibedan Das Patowary, the District Commissioner inaugurated the training ses-

World Environment day begins with Suhan Mullick Friend of Rhino at GaneshbUdyan

Guwahati, Jun 4: We are facing global warming due to deforestation and lack of awareness against the eco-friendly products. Therefore we must continue plantation whenever we get time to better safe and green Earth express by Pradyut Bordoloi MLA at the Saplings distribution ceremony organised by Suhan Mullick Friend of Rhino at GaneshbUdyan, Ganeshguri Near Hanuman Mandir. Pradyut Bordoloi MLA cum Former Minister of Assam govt also extended to greetings to Suhan Mullick Friend of Rhino who always campaign save Rhino Save Earth from early ages and abilities to continue plantation work etc. At the inaugural ceremony Pradyut Bordoloi freely distributed saplings to the public gathered in the presence of Senior Journalist



Dipak Sarma, Assam Lutad editor Dr Arindom Prince Panging, Mausumi Begum Councillor, GMC, Nabin Chandra Sarma, Paresh Boah, MD, Province College, Muktar Hussain, MD Dispur HS School, Alakesh Kashyap, Ranger Kamrup

Social Forestry Assam, Naba Kaman Managing Director- NE Hygiene Solutions, Rana Chaudhary, Maziful Mullick active Social Worker and other dignitaries respectively on 4th June. The free plant distribution drive will be remaining on the 5th June 2026 World Environment day too.

Suhan Mullick, Friend of Rhino urges all citizens of Guwahati city to collect precious saplings and make a beautiful green and peaceful smart City endeavour.

Udayan Seva Sansthan to Organize Free Service Camp During Ambubachi Mahotsav

Guwahati, Jun 4: The sacred Ambubachi Mahotsav at the revered Kamakhya Temple is set to commence on June 22. As every year, lakhs of devotees and pilgrims from across India and abroad are expected to visit the shrine during the festival.

To serve the devotees, the social service organization Udayan Seva Sansthan has been providing free purified drinking water, sherbet, glucose, and ORS during the Ambubachi Mahotsav for the past nine consecutive years. Continuing this tradition, the organization will once again set up a special ser-

vice camp for five days, offering these facilities free of cost to all visiting devotees.

According to Manoj Roy and other office bearers of the organization, this large-scale service initiative, dedicated to Maa Kamakhya, has been made possible through the generous support of local residents and well-wishers. They have appealed to all members of society to extend financial assistance and come forward as volunteers to help ensure the successful operation of the service camp this year.

Guided by its motto, "Ser-

vice is the Highest Religion," Udayan Seva Sansthan remains committed to selflessly serving devotees during the Ambubachi Mahotsav.

Donation Details
UDAYAN SEVA SANSTHAN
UCO Bank, Odalbakra Branch
A/C No.: 28250110058039
IFSC: UCBA0002825
UPI ID: 9957337667@okbizaxis

Udayan Seva Sansthan has appealed to people from all walks of life to participate in this noble service initiative and contribute towards making the Ambubachi Mahotsav a grand success.

Distribution of equipment to 102 Village Defence Committees at Rupahihat Police Station

Rashidul Hoque, Rupahihat, Jun 4: To strengthen and make the security system in rural areas more rigorous, the Rupahihat Police Station under Assam Police has taken a commendable initiative. Under the initiative of the police station, a program was organized to distribute necessary equipment to the presidents and secretaries of the registered Village Defence Committees of the area. Under this program, a total of 102 registered Village Defence Committees under Rupahihat Police Station were provided with various essential tools for performing their daily duties. According to the police, the distributed items will particularly help the members of the Village Defence Force in effectively conducting night patrols and other auxiliary duties during the day. The members of the Village Defence Force were delighted to receive this equipment from the police administration.

In the absence of modern equipment, various problems often arose in carrying out night patrols or controlling crime. The assistance provided by Suruj Dutta, the officer of Rupahihat Police Station, will make the process of fulfilling their responsibilities and duties much easier and more effective than before. This exceptional and people-oriented initiative of Rupahihat Police Station has been unanimously appreciated by the aware public of the entire region as well as the village defence force.

Retired Engineer Dilip Baruah of Dibrugarh Passes Away in Delhi

M Hashim Ali correspondent, Dibrugarh, June 4: Dilip Baruah, a retired engineer and resident of Bairagimath in Dibrugarh, passed away in Delhi yesterday at the age of 76 after suffering from health-related ailments for some time. Baruah retired in 2011 from the post of Engineer in the Air and Water Pollution Control Board. Born in Dhalaibil of Sonitpur district, he completed his primary education there before pursuing his high school and college education in Guwahati. He later obtained higher education in Guwahati and subsequently joined the Pollution Control Board. After retirement, Baruah remained actively associated with the Greater Padum Nagar Namghar and several other local social organizations. Known for his amiable nature and gentle speech, his demise has cast a deep shadow of grief across the entire region. His last rites were performed yesterday evening at the Nigambodh Crematorium in Delhi in the presence of family members and well-wishers.

He is survived by his wife, son, daughter and son-in-law, relatives and numerous admirers.

Poor road conditions irk people

Achyut KR Nath, Correspondent, Morigaon, Jun 4: The general public and the teachers who regularly travel from Morigaon and Jagiroad to Gagalmari, Kotahjari Sikabori, Batobori ME school, Kanfala, via Basanaghat Manipur, Gasaguri, Udori are suffering a lot due to pathetic condition of road. Around 15 km road that connecting from Morigaon to Kotahjari has been running under poor condition as surface of the road being damaged. The general public and the students of near by localities have been suffering most. It is alleged that said areas are predominantly tribal dominated localities. The condition of the Tribal people is so pathetic. They are just living by hook or by crook by fishing, mazie and paddy cultivations specially. The condition of the households under BPL, is not anything but congenial to abode in the said localities. The students have to travel to Morigaon, Udari, Gasaguri for education at secondary schools through the pathetic condition of the road. Two terms of BJP government have ruled over the constituency but development in the locality is still a farcry in the tribal dominated areas. Besides though the said localities fall under the jurisdiction of Tiwa Autonomous Council (TAC), despite the development is being a questioned in the said localities.



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Rag pickers look for recyclable materials next to cows and greater adjutant storks at the biggest disposal site in Guwahati on June 4, 2026. Photo by - Rupjyoti Sarmah