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## China 'Super Dam' not a threat to Brahmaputra flow: Analysis

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06:** Chief Ministers Pema Khandu (Arunachal Pradesh) and Himanta Biswa Sarma (Assam) have strongly disagreed on whether China's "Super Dam" will affect the Brahmaputra River's flow in India. While Khandu has called it a "ticking water bomb", Sarma downplays the fear. Who is right?

While the mega dam will undoubtedly give China the capability of weaponising the water of Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet), it is unlikely to make any consequential alteration to the river flow, according to an analysis by India Today's Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) team. China says its new mega dam will help neighbouring countries manage flood situations better. But experts also back the findings of the analysis.

Brahmaputra is a complex river system, consisting of several tributaries. Its mainstream traverses a total distance of 2880-km. Out of which, 56% falls in



Tibet, 43% in India and 337-km in Bangladesh. The majority (nearly 50.5%) of the river's catchment area falls in Tibet, where two functional dams on Yarlung Tsangpo are operational.

### Dams on Brahmaputra River

A river's flow is sustained by mountain springs, glacial melt, upland wetlands or peat bogs, aquifers and perennial tributaries. Though most of these sources of water fall in China-controlled Tibet, Brahmaputra gets an esti-

mated 70% of its water from rainfall. As with many major rivers, Yarlung Tsangpo appears as a stream at its point of origin near Mount Kailash but continues to grow in size further downstream. It becomes the mighty Brahmaputra after absorbing three tributaries, Luhit and Dibang near Assam's Sadiya.

### Territorial analysis of Brahmaputra basin

Yarlung Tsangpo's contribution to Brahmaputra's total flow is barely 10-15%, Delhi-based Observer Re-

search Foundation (ORF) Dr. Nilanjan Ghosh says. "So the problem might not be with scarcity but with surplus," he said, hinting at possibility of China suddenly releasing water from the dam to flood areas in India. "Although it is a very remote possibility since it's a run-of-river project."

Data shows the river's annual mean discharge jumps significantly after entering India, indicating that its major sources lie more in India than in China. Over 31 billion cubic meters

(BCM) of water flows annually at Nuxia in Tibet, few hundred kms upstream of "Super Dam" site. Its discharge increases to 78 BCM at a point where the river leaves China, further to 185 BCM at Pasighat in Arunachal Pradesh and 526 BCM in Guwahati's Pandu in Assam.

### Brahmaputra River water flow

Data compiled by researchers Sayanangshu Modak & Nilanjan Ghosh shows Brahmaputra River basin receives more rainfall in parts falling in India. For example, the mean annual rainfall record at Tibet's capital Lhasa is pegged at 400 mm, which rises to 767 mm at Tuting near the Tibet border and 1561 mm in Guwahati.

### Mean annual rainfall in Brahmaputra basin

The diverse precipitation patterns are attributed to factors like climate, altitude, temperature, pressure, latitude and orography. While the northern parts of Tibetan plateau remain dry, its southern parts received *Contd. P.3*

## Manku 2<sup>nd</sup> Arunachal female to be allotted to Indian Foreign Service

\* Dr Messar appointed to IRS (Income Tax)



By AO News Service  
**ITANAGAR, Aug 06:** Bullo Manku and Dr Zing Messar of Arunachal Pradesh have been allotted to Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Revenue Service (Income Tax) respectively after they cracked UPSC Civil Services Examination 2024.

Tenzin Chonzom, who had cleared Civil Services Exam in 2021 with 584 All

India rank, was allotted IFS. The appointments have triggered widespread celebration in the state, with Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein leading congratulating the duo and describing their success as a beacon of inspiration for young aspirants.

"Manku and Messar's success in UPSC serves as a powerful source of inspiration for young minds in

the state. Wishing both of them continued success and fulfillment as they embark on their journeys in public service," Mein said in a statement.

Hailing from Hong village in Lower Subansiri district, Manku secured an All India Rank-645. She completed her schooling at Ziro Frontier English School and Balijan VKV before graduating from Delhi's St. Stephen's College. She later earned a master's degree from English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU).

Dr Messar hails from Mirem village in East Siang district. He is a medical graduate and son of late Tajong Messar, a former engineer of state's power department and Opung Darang Messar. He secured an All India Rank-846 in his third attempt at the exam.

## 50 take part in Siyom River rafting



By Staff Reporter  
**ITANAGAR, Aug 06:** M/s Kabos Adventure in collaboration with Youth Affairs Department organized a rafting-cum-cleaning expedition in Siyom River in Siang district on Wednesday to promote adventure sports and environmental consciousness among the youth.

The initiative aimed at promoting river rafting as a viable avenue for youth em-

ployment and recreation by involving them actively in adventure-based activities that can offer skill development and livelihood opportunities.

Fifty participants during rafting also conducted cleanliness drive along the river bank from Paki Piggo to Pangin Sangam to create awareness about importance of river and environmental cleanliness.

Siang DC PN Thungon,

during flagging off ceremony, advocated preservation of ecosystem of Siyom River through organized cleaning activities.

The participants embarked on an adventurous along the river navigating through its rapid strides while enjoying the scenic beauty of the surroundings. They were taught rafting techniques and safety measures earlier to improve their skills and ensure safety.

## Missing man's body found in river

By Staff Reporter  
**ITANAGAR, Aug 06:** The body of one Tamin Dirang, 22, who was missing for last four days, was retrieved from Parang river in Papumpare district after an intensive search operation.

A missing report was filed by Nabam Takam Hina of Epo village of Sagalee subdivision at police station on August 3 last that Taming Dirang who had gone for fishing in the river at 7 am did not return and had gone missing, police sources said.

An joint intensive search and rescue operation, on receipt of the information, was conducted by a police



team led by OC SI Joram Takap, NDRF personnel and local villagers under supervision of SP Taru Gusar in Parang river, but failed to find him. But, the search operation by locals, relatives and well wishers resumed on Wednesday and the body was recovered, police said.

The mortal remains were handed over to his relatives for conducting last rites, police said, adding it was suspected to be drowning case and a unnatural death case (No.04/25 U/S 194 BNSS) was registered at Sagalee Police Station and further probe launched.

## DNGC principal gifts 6,000 books to students



**ITANAGAR, Aug 06:** Dera Natung Government College (DNGC) has been gifting his books free to students, an initiative of its principal Dr. M. Q Khan to evoke widely appreciation as an example for others, particularly authors to follow.

It has been observed that a free gift to dear students/alumni of any educational institutions (colleges & uni-

versities)/ aspirants of any competitive examinations of Arunachal Pradesh are cordially invited to avail this golden opportunity of getting English books written by Dr. M.Q. Khan, reads his YouTube channel.

The initiative started in early 2023 in different occasions, like of NCC Day, NSS Day, College foundation day, Indian Constitution Day and others.

Around 350 books covering 16 different titles have been donated to Arunachal Press Club (APC) library and 340 to Ane Home Library of Itanagar Women Police station.

So far around 6,000 books have been donated to inculcate reading habits among state students and youth for a noble cause.

Dr. Khan told this daily that his mission *Contd. P.3*

## Army responds swiftly to Menchuka fire mishap, saves lives and homes



**GUWAHATI, Aug 06:** The

Indian Army responded with urgency and precision to a devastating fire that broke out in Menchuka town of Shi Yomi district. Demonstrating synergy, cooperation and selfless service, the Army's relief

efforts not only controlled the blaze but also saves precious lives and homes.

On receiving the distress call, a dedicated relief column comprising two officers, five junior commissioned officers (JCOs) and 86 other ranks had rushed

to the site. Braving challenging conditions, the team worked relentlessly to defuse the fire to prevent it from spreading to densely populated area. Their timely action prevented the loss of lives and protected many homes that stood in harm's way.

Beyond firefighting, the Indian Army went a step further by providing immediate humanitarian assistance. Essential supplies, including food, water and basic necessities, were given to the affected families, many of whom had lost their homes *Contd. P.3*

## Khandu-Tasing spirit go-getter DC Thungon for early SUMP execution



Mighty Siang River



Anglo-Abor War memorial

The Upper Siang Hydroelectric Project or Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) is the biggest hydroelectric power project planned in Upper Siang district, whose planning was commenced by the NHPC in April 2009 to build various hydro dams in phases over a span of 15-20

years. The main dam is being built across Siang River, which dam reservoir on completion would hold 9 billion cubic meters of water and generate around 11,000-MW, to become the largest hydroelectric dam in India.

On 9.06.2000 midnight, centurion town Pasighat, HQs of East Siang district, was submerged by 30-feet flood water of Siang River when people were fast

asleep. The catastrophic flood, caused by reported collapse of a hydropower dam over Yarlung Tsangpo (Siang) River in Tibet, had left a trail of devastation and claimed seven lives. Experts, however, termed it as "water bomb" used by China to test India's preparedness. It is worth mentioning here

that Siang flood washes away paddy fields and erodes huge land every year. The Siang flood has eroded around 3.5-km of community land during past three years, impacting Borguli, Seram, Kongkul, Namsing, Mer and Gadum villages along a 25-km stretch from Old Borguli to Siang-Brahmaputra confluence. This erosion has led to significant damage, including the loss of

farmland, infrastructure like a higher secondary school, a football field, girls' and boys' hostels, and a sericulture farm and homes, forcing some villagers to relocate. That is why Siang Flood Warriors (SFW) formed by

social worker Gekong Pertin along with Mebo Industrial Estate Sawmill Union had built 16 spurs and 3 guide bunds to mitigate the erosion. Despite such, the flooding and erosion continue to be a serious threat, with locals *Contd. P.8*

### Commitment visible



"Riga is a historic the second largest village in the state with around 3,000 population, 1,800 voters and four polling stations, after Hong village of Lower Siang district. There are 26 major tribes in the state, including Adi, besides over 100 sub-tribes, like Padam, Miyong, Bokar and Pasi, but Riga is the original hub of Miyong with historical importance.

"A decision taken by such a large village sends a louder positive message, which neutralised all rumours doing rounds that consents of 2/3 villagers were taken by making payment. Villagers have done it willingly without any pressure. Riga is one of the eight affected villages and its decision is a positive development which would spread across the district. The media would send the right message about this positive development," DC P.N. Thungon had said responding to question as to why Riga village is in news for the last few months.



Onus to ensure decorum on passengers and airlines

The shocking incident of a senior army officer assaulting four SpiceJet staffers at Srinagar airport deserves to be condemned. The episode refocuses the nation’s attention on passenger rage as well as airline staff behaviour. The incident was reportedly triggered by a pre-boarding argument between SpiceJet staffers and an officer carrying more than twice the weight allowed for cabin baggage. The officer, Lt Col Ritesh Kumar Singh, posted at the High Altitude Warfare School in Gulmarg, was on his way to Delhi on flight SG-386 on emergency leave when the incident took place. It has been alleged that after assaulting the staff, Singh rushed through the boarding gate without completing the formalities mandated by regulations—a gross violation of aviation safety protocols. While a first information report has been registered against Singh at the Budgam police station under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for what SpiceJet described as a “murderous assault”, he too filed a complaint against the airline, alleging mistreatment by the airlines staff that caused him to miss his flight.

When incidents like these occur, it is easier to blame the person who has caused grievous injuries to others—in this case, the army officer. But what is shocking is that Singh belongs to a force that boasts of high discipline in civil spaces. The Indian Army has acknowledged the incident, promising full cooperation with the authorities investigating the case. A statement from the army headquarters stressed that the Indian Army was “fully committed to maintaining discipline and mutual respect in all civil spaces across the country”.

However, it must also be noted that as the number of air passengers shoots up, so will the frequency of heated interactions with the airline staffers serving them. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, India’s domestic passenger traffic grew 6.12 percent to 161.3 million in 2024 from the previous year. While passengers—whatever be their backgrounds—need to realise that rules and regulations pertaining to air travel are of utmost importance for the overall safety of flights, airline staffers too must understand that among the hordes of flyers there may be many who could be high-strung while travelling. The need is for the latter to interact with the former in a manner that avoids violent flashpoints like this unfortunate incident.

History today

- 2016 United States men's 4 × 100 m freestyle relay team wins the final in 3:09.92 at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, earning Michael Phelps his record 19th Olympic gold medal
- 2017 England breaks a 19-year drought in a home Test cricket series against South Africa, beating the Proteas by 177 runs in the 4th Test at Old Trafford; Moeen Ali scores 75 not out and takes 5/69
- 2018 "Crazy Rich Asians," the first Hollywood film with an all-Asian cast, starring Constance Wu, Henry Golding, and Michelle Yeoh, premieres in Los Angeles
- 2018 Australia's population reaches 25 million according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics
- 2018 China bans the release of the Winnie the Pooh movie "Christopher Robin" after the character is used to mock Chinese President Xi Jinping
- 2018 CW Network announces that Ruby Rose is cast as the lesbian superhero Batwoman
- 2018 Jason Mraz partners with Fathom Events for the release of "Jason Mraz - Have It All The Movie"
- 2018 Mendocino Fire becomes the largest recorded fire in California's history at 290,600 acres, overtaking the 2017 Thomas Fire
- 2018 Swedish furniture brand Ikea opens its first store in India in Hyderabad
- 2019 Bodies of two teenagers at the center of a huge manhunt and suspected of killing three people on remote British Columbia roads are found after apparent suicides
- 2019 Largest single-state immigration raid in Mississippi as nearly 700 people are arrested
- 2019 Wanda Vázquez becomes Puerto Rico's third governor in a week after her pre decessor Pedro Pierluisi is removed by the Supreme Court
- 2020 Cardi B releases the single "WAP," featuring Megan Thee Stallion, which debuts at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100
- 2021 As part of the winning American 4 × 400 m relay team in Tokyo, Allyson Felix takes her total to 11 Olympic medals and becomes the most decorated female Olympian in track and field history
- 2021 Dutch athlete Sifan Hassan wins the 10,000 m gold medal in 29:55.32 at the Tokyo Olympics to claim the 5/10 km double
- 2021 Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra makes history by winning his country's first-ever Olympic track and field gold with a throw of 87.58 m in Tokyo
- 2021 Kevin Durant, with 29 points, leads the USA to his third and the team's fourth consecutive Olympic men's basketball gold medal with an 87-82 win over France in Tokyo
- 2022 Brandon Sanderson's Kickstarter for the "Cosmere RPG" game becomes the most successfully funded game in Kickstarter history, raising \$41.7 million
- 2022 Ceasefire comes into effect in Gaza after 43 people are killed in three days of violence between the Israeli military and Palestinian Islamic Jihad militants
- 2022 US Senate passes sweeping Inflation Reduction Act, an economic package designed to combat climate change, address health care costs and tax large corporations
- 2024 MLB Philadelphia Phillies slugger Kyle Schwarber ties career highs with three home runs and seven RBIs in a 9-4 win over the Dodgers in Los Angeles
- 2024 Panipak Wongpattanakit of Thailand successfully defends her Olympic 49 kg title, defeating Guo Qing of China 6-3, 2-3, 6-2 in the final at the Paris Games
- 2024 Thailand's Constitutional Court outlaws the Reformist Party, barring it from forming a government in 2023, along with politicians including Pita Limjaroenrat
- 2024 Thousands of peaceful counter-protesters hold rallies around England in response to the previous week's violent anti-immigrant protests
- 2024 Three Taylor Swift "Eras Tour" concerts in Vienna, Austria, are canceled after authorities uncover a planned terrorist attack and arrest three people
- 2024 WHO confirms a deadlier strain of the mpox virus (formerly Monkeypox) has spread to four neighboring countries of the Democratic Republic of Congo: Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya

HELP US TO HELP YOU

The members of Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) and the Arunachal Press Club (APC) have unanimously taken the following decisions applicable for newspapers published from Arunachal Pradesh:

In view of too many appointment orders, formation of unions and forums beginning from colony, village level to state level, congratulatory and thank you notes clogging up various newspapers offices published from the state, the APC and APUWJ unanimously deem it fit to set a standard for accepting such releases for printing.

Henceforth, releases pertaining to appointments and resignation of various office bearers of any organisation, formation of organisations, **congratulatory and thank you notes** and intimation of programme would not be entertained.

Press releases containing demands not addressed to the state government/ authorities concerned; bandh announcements not addressed to the Deputy Commissioner/ District Magistrate; demands made to the state government but not addressed to the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary or the Minister concerned; and payment demands addressed to the editor instead of the HoDs concerned will not be entertained under any circumstances from any quarter.

In light of the constant menace of bandh calls given by various organisations/ unions etc and its subsequent withdrawals which has become a public nuisance, it will be mandatory for such bodies to convene a press conference in Itanagar to address media persons before declaring any bandh at Capital Complex. Failure to do so will result in non-publication of their 'news'.

**Condolences** will not be entertained anymore unless the person in question was a prominent personality **at the state level**. Anything else can go as obituary/paid news.

**NOTE:** Unsolicited telephonic or personal enquiries shall not be entertained. Any attempt to influence the above rules shall tantamount to interference and may invite legal actions. Therefore, the newspapers request all sections of society to co-operate for independent functioning of the media in the state in their own interest.

SC ruling on divorce evidence: Balancing privacy and fairness



Kaleswaram Raj

Truth is the complex, indispensable foundation in individual litigations, including matrimonial disputes. Yet, it is not easy to unravel the realities involved in a case. British scholar Terry Eagleton said, “Courtrooms, like novels, blur the distinction between fact and fiction... The jury judge not on the facts, but between rival versions of them.” However, what is presented to the court by way of evidence matters, for knowing the truth.

Recently, the Supreme Court, in a judgement authored by Justice B V Nagarathna, held that even secretly recorded telephonic communications of a spouse are admissible in evidence in a matrimonial dispute. The court held that such conversations cannot claim immunity from judicial scanning on privacy grounds. The court emphasised a litigant’s right to a fair trial, which is a facet of Article 21, while negating the privacy arguments, also based on Article 21.

The case has a curious trajectory. The husband filed a divorce petition with allegations of cruelty in the family court in Bathinda, Punjab. Among other materials, the husband placed memory cards/ chips of mobile phones, compact discs, and conversation transcripts as evidence before the court. He claimed that he had recorded certain conversations between the wife and the husband between 2010 and 2016, which were contained in these materials, and he sought their admission as evidence. The family court accepted the request. Aggrieved by this, the wife moved the Punjab and Haryana High Court, which allowed the petition and set

aside the family court order. The husband challenged the High Court order before the Supreme Court. The top court has now reversed the High Court’s order and revived the permission granted by the family court.

Collection of evidence by snooping is like a ‘sting operation’ in matrimony. Its ethical aspects could always be debatable. In the real world, no genuine intimate relationship would involve a secret recording of conversations to use it as evidence in a future litigation. This is particularly true in a husband-wife relationship. As Justice Nagarathna rightly notes, “snooping between partners is an effect and not a cause of marital disharmony”. This was the court’s answer to the apprehension expressed by the amicus curiae that the indulgence to such evidence might unsettle spousal harmony.

The court was examining the scope of Section 122 of the Indian Evidence Act, which says that one cannot be compelled to disclose any communication to his or her spouse, and it is impermissible to reveal such communication, when there is no consent. The exception to this general stipula-

tion is also in the very same provision. It says that in suits between the spouses or prosecution against one of them, this embargo does not apply. The Supreme Court decoded the section and held that the exception carved out in Section 122 makes it clear that matrimonial conversations could be adduced as evidence in support of the plea by a party to dispute, even if those are recorded clandestinely.

The privacy concerns raised in the case are unacceptable. In a private litigation, any evidence will have certain traits of privacy. A private litigation rests upon private materials. Shutting off such materials would forestall a full-fledged judicial investigation into the dispute. That is why Section 122 provides for the exception to its disclosure ban. It states explicitly that there is no impediment in looking into the spousal conversations “in suits between married persons, or proceedings in which one married person is prosecuted for any crime committed against the other”. The exception reflects the imaginative intelligence of the lawmaker.

The rationale of the law is clear and simple. In a dis-

pute between husband and wife, no spouse should be disarmed on account of the provision when they want to rely on the personal communication between them to prove a point. According to Article 21 of the Constitution, the right to life and personal liberty guaranteed cannot be taken away “except according to procedure established by law”. Thus, a fair trial is an essential component of Article 21 rights.

Though in the *Puttaswamy* verdict (2017) the Supreme Court held that the right to privacy is part of Article 21, it did not say that such a right is absolute. It remains a qualified right. Section 122 of the Evidence Act permits adducing the relevant evidence. This scheme of the Evidence Act is followed verbatim in the *Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam*, 2023, which was enacted long after the *Puttaswamy* judgement. Parliament reiterated Section 122 of the old Act as Section 128 in the new one, endorsing the provision’s pragmatism and realism on evidence.

The morality of the method employed in the collection of evidence is different from the value of

the evidence so collected. If the element of deception is so severe that it nullifies the value of evidence, that too can be suggested by way of cross-examination or counter-evidence in the case. For example, if one were made to act in a certain way or to speak certain things, it can very well be explained. The Supreme Court judgement does not foreclose such procedural courses available for the other party. Again, if a person wants an in-camera trial, the courts are empowered to do so, by which the content of oral evidence can be kept away from public gaze. The court can also withhold the identity of the contesting parties even in a published judgement, in appropriate cases.

The Supreme Court judgement is comprehensive. It quoted the view of the Madras High Court in *Ayyanar Padayachi* case (1970), which said that the provision in the Evidence Act “protects the individuals and not the communication”. The Supreme Court has analysed the law by contextualising it appropriately. It relied on the earlier verdict in *Yusufalli Esmail Nagree vs Maharashtra* (1967), which held that in the absence of duress, coercion or compulsion, a tape-recorded conversation is admissible in evidence to prove the allegation of corruption.

The recent judgement offers significant lessons for the public as well. An unfortunate matrimony leads to unpleasant litigation with equally unpleasant procedures. The wiser course in such a situation will be to settle the dispute amicably, except when there are compelling circumstances like blatant violation of rights, to carry on the fight.

Mumbai, Malegaon Verdicts: Collective National Failure



On July 21, 2025, after 19 years, the Bombay high court found 12 accused in the July 11, 2006 train bombing case not guilty of the offence under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

Ten days later, a special court in Mumbai acquitted all seven accused in the Malegaon bomb blast case of 2008.

The verdicts produced less outrage than what happened when Jessica Lal’s killer was acquitted due to ‘deficiency in the investigation’ in 2011, 12 years after the murder.

The murder of 187 people in Mumbai and 6 dead in Malegaon failed to prick the conscience of the candle-light march brigade.

The Bombay high court verdict and the special court verdict represents collective national failure.

The blame must be shared by the investigating agencies, the government of the day and the nation at large.

While many countries like the United States that

faced the threat of terrorism seem to have successfully prevented any repetition, we seem to continue to suffer the scourge of terrorist violence, the latest being the **Pahalgam killing of the tourists** on April 22, 2025.

India has been facing the scourge of terrorism since the 1980s.

The West woke up to this menace only after the 9/11 terror attacks.

The British had a taste of terror when London was shaken with bomb blasts on July 7, 2005 in which 52 people died.

The train bombing case acquittals and the Malegaon case verdict based on legal technicalities raises the larger question of India’s approach to terrorist violence.

This is not a problem peculiar to India but has a global dimension.

The basic problem in our case is that we have approached the issue of terrorism with measures legal, police, military, political and psychological in isolation from each other.

There has been a perceptible lack of a combined holistic approach.

One reason the West seems to have succeeded more than us is this difference between a coordinated action versus several agencies and departments doing their own thing.

I was fortunate to participate in a six day workshop in Salzburg, Austria in 2007. The participants included legal luminaries like Justice Sandra O’Connor, the first woman judge appointed to the US supreme court, the British attorney general, many legal luminaries, counter-terrorism experts as well as police and intelligence operatives.

The theme of the workshop was ‘Democracy, Rule of Law, Human Rights In The Age Of Terrorism’.

The dilemma posed by transnational crimes and the difficulties in defining the terrorist’s status and tracking them across borders was debated threadbare.

My contribution was essentially to draw attention to the following:

\* Terrorism mainly emanates from developing countries.

\* Al-Qaeda and such like organisations that the West faces are NGOs, in a sense that it is out of government control.

\* India on the other hand faced terrorists created, trained, financed and controlled by a neighbouring country.

\* In the developing world, the institutions of State are weak. Nothing should be done to weaken them further.

\* Terrorism cannot be dealt with using ‘normal’ criminal law and needs special provisions.

\* A model law balancing human rights concerns without affecting the fight against terrorism is possible and needed.

\* Since terrorism is transnational, it has to be dealt at the global level. Individual countries cannot deal with the menace successfully.

Despite having faced the problem of terrorism for over four/five decades, I have not come across a

single effort where the judiciary, the police, intelligence and military elite sat together and debated the issue.

The various arms of the State seem to have almost an antagonistic view of each other’s role.

While the judiciary is concerned with the letter of the law and human rights, the other wings of the government often turn a blind eye to legal and human rights. As there is no dialogue, a middle path eludes us.

India faces a peculiar problem unique to us and probably Israel. We face terror groups that have full access to the resources of a functioning State, in our case Pakistan and in Israel’s case, Iran.

Essentially, terrorist violence in India is committed by another State in our country.

How do the police gather evidence and prepare a case when the planners and implementers have already fled to Pakistan!

State supported terrorism and murder being tried under MCOCA (Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act) is ludicrous.

These are no gangsters but State operatives and even military men at times. This is like trying a case of poisoning as a case of food adulteration.

In both these cases we erred in trying it under the anti gangster act, instead it should have been tried as waging war against India!

It seems that after four decades we have finally found the gumption to call a spade a spade and hold the Pakistani State responsible for acts of terror in India. That was the biggest gain of Operation Sindoor.



## Assam govt committed to bringing down child marriage to zero by 2026: CM Sarma

**GUWAHATI, Aug 06:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said that his government is committed to bringing down child marriage to zero by 2026.

“We have renewed our tirade against child marriage. With the launch of Nijut Moina 2.0, four lakh girl students will save themselves from the scourge of child marriage while fulfilling their dreams of being academically empowered. We are committed to bring down child marriage to zero by 2026,” Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The Assam Chief Minister on Wednesday launched Nijut Monia 2.0, starting the state-wide distribution of forms for the scheme at a central function held at Birinchi Kumar Barua Auditorium in Gauhati University.

It may be noted that under the scheme, in the year 2025-26, four lakh students covering Higher Secondary, Under Graduate, Post Graduate, and B.Ed will be given monthly financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 1,000 (HS), Rs. 1250 (UG), and Rs. 2500 (PG).

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma said that ‘Nijut

Moina’ is a scheme which serves as a source of hope and fulfils the aspirations of the girl students of the state.

“Considering the potential of the scheme towards bringing about large-scale social changes, the parameter of Nijut Moina 2.0 has been expanded to bring more beneficiaries under it,” he said.

Though Nijut Moina 1.0 covered state universities and provincial colleges, the Chief Minister said that steps have been made to bring Central Universities in the state, namely Tezpur University and Assam University, into its ambit.

“Last year, 1.60 lakh girl students benefited from the scheme. However, this year, four lakh girls will be given financial assistance under the scheme,” the Chief Minister said.

CM Sarma said that Nijut Moina 2.0 will cover girl students of first and second year of HS, first and second year of UG and first and second year of PG.

“In the next year, the final year students of UG will be brought under the ambit, thereby ensuring 100 per cent coverage of girl students under the scheme. Subsequently,

Nijut Moina will cover 10 lakh girl students,” the Chief Minister added.

CM Sarma moreover, said that for parents who wish to educate their daughters but face financial constraints, Nijut Moina would serve as a source of hope and inspiration.

He said that the Nijut Moina scheme will now cover students of state universities and students enrolled in self-financing courses.

The Chief Minister, moreover, said that schemes like Orunodoi and Nijut Moina are benefiting students across all castes, tribes, and religions.

“The Government is putting in sincere efforts to open doors of opportunities and brighter futures to the students. The growing number of colleges and universities has broadened the chances for students, enabling them to pursue diverse educational paths without limitations. Today’s Assam is self-reliant, determined and full of aspirations. The youth of the state are actively contributing to nation-building. The growing number of colleges and universities has widened the opportunities for students, enabling them to

pursue diverse educational paths without limitations,” he said.

The Chief Minister said that Assam has travelled a long way in its education sector.

“Today, 25 Medical Colleges exist in various stages, over 25 Universities, close to 400 colleges and much more. The upcoming Swahid Kanaklata Baruah University will be another feather in its cap. From IIT to AIIMS, from National Forensic University to IIIT, from Sainik School to Navodaya Vidyalaya, Kendriya Vidyalaya to Adarsha Vidyalaya, every institution of eminence has spearheaded an academic revolution in the state. The presence of universities and medical colleges with respect to the density of the population, today, Assam stands as one of the top 10 states of the country. Therefore, in this changed landscape, students, especially the girls, need to come forward and lend their hands in realising a New Assam,” the Chief Minister said.

The applications thus distributed should be submitted to the institutions, and the data are to be uploaded via SCERT, Darpan and Samarth Portals. (Agency)

## Army ...

*From P.I...* and hearth in the incident. This comprehensive response highlights the Army’s enduring commitment to the well-being of citizens in remote and sensitive regions.

The swift intervention at Menchuka is yet another testament to the Indian Army’s ethos of service, sacrifice and nation-building and reaching out to local communities with compassion, preparedness and unwavering resolve.

Moreover, after cloudburst devastated at Harshil, near Dharali in Uttarakhand on Wednesday, 150 personnel of Indian Army had reached the site within 10 minutes and begun rescue operations. 15–20 persons were y evacuated, injured were given treatment at Harshil Indian Army medical unit. However, Search and rescue operations continued to locate and evacuate any stranded persons. (PRO)

## NIELIT upgrades...

*From P.I...* NIELIT director In-charge R.K. Bigensana Singh, in his keynote address, enlisted NIELIT’s role in promoting digital literacy and various courses offered by it. He encouraged students to stay up-to-dated with latest advancements in AI and emerging technologies through this upgraded centre.

DNGC HoDs underscored relevance of the computer lab-3 in present digital age.The NIELIT was set up in 2019 with a laboratory having 20 computers with internet access. The upgraded lab now has 50 internet-enabled computers and offers various courses round the year for college students.

## WCDD-RGU ...

*From P.I...* ‘Protect the most vulnerable, especially women and children, in communities from the adverse impacts of climate change including ensuring distributive justice.’

The report was submitted to WCD Commissioner Mimum Tayeng, who lauded RGU team for the findings which present a significant roadmap towards inclusive work to tackle climate change in future. She also highlighted importance of collaborative, inter-departmental research involving sectors, like agriculture and health to integrate gender perspectives into climate action policies.

“The WCDD is committed to the holistic development of women and children. Through such research studies, we aim not only to highlight the vulnerabilities of women to climate change but also to empower them as active agents of change,” she said.

This initiative underscores the state’s commitment to gender-sensitive climate resilience and reinforces the importance of academic partnerships in shaping informed, inclusive and future-ready policy frameworks.

WCD Director T.W Thongon, deputy director Chadan Tangjang, CDPOs D.K Thungon & Gyati Loder, SHEW Yakang Nani & research fellow Tadu Sampi were also present, according to an official release.

## DNGC...

*From P.I...* has gained a lot and continue till his retirement from service in July 2026. “I wish such initiative should be carried out by others for brighter future of our youth,” he added.

## SC orders states to reserve private school quota for orphans



**NEW DELHI, Aug 06:** In a key order, the Supreme Court on Wednesday directed State governments to issue notifications allowing orphaned children to receive free education in private schools under the 25 per cent quota for children of weaker sections and disadvantaged groups.

A Bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and KV Viswanathan noted that States like Meghalaya, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, and Delhi have already issued notifications in this regard. Therefore, it ordered other States to do the same within four weeks.

“Delhi, Meghalaya,

Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat... have already issued notifications to include orphans within the definition of Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act; other States shall also issue the same notification. Such exercise shall be completed within four weeks,” the Court ordered.

Further, the Bench directed the States to undertake a survey of orphaned children who have been granted admissions to schools and those who have been rejected. The survey must record the reasons for denial of admission, the Court stressed.

“While this survey is

done, simultaneous efforts should be made so that such (orphan) children are admitted to schools,” the Court added.

The Bench passed these directions while dealing with a plea filed by advocate Poulomi Pavini Shukla seeking directions for standardised education, reservation, and a survey to count the orphan population in India.

She highlighted the lack of official data regarding orphaned children and said that it showed the country’s indifference towards a vulnerable section of society.

Shukla appeared before the court today and argued that the Indian government does not maintain a count of orphaned children in the country, and the only reliable data comes from NGOs and independent organisations such as UNICEF, which estimate 29.6 million (2.96 crore) orphaned children in India. After considering the case, the Court said that the petition requires consideration and passed directions to the States. (Agency)

## Considerable interference by executive in appointment process of judges: Ex-SC judge

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06:** Former Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B Lokur on Wednesday said there had been a considerable interference by the executive in the appointment process of judges.

He was speaking at an event organised by The Global Jurists on the topic ‘Morality in Judiciary, A Paradigm or a Paradox’.

“Now, about the appointment of judges. We have had a lot of problems in the recent past. There has been, I think, a considerable interference by the executive in the appointment process,” he said.

“The Memorandum of Procedure (MOP) was finalised a long time back. But despite the MOP, which was, by the way, drafted in consultation with the Government of India, there have been all kinds of problems in its implemen-

tation,” Justice Lokur added.

In the appointment of judges, the former the former apex court judge said, “I believe, for reasons, that it has nothing to do with his merit. But it has something to do with a few cases that they decided,”.

He said that if the appointment process of judges was in the hands of the executive, “a kind of mischief” could be played.

“You can appoint some person in the beginning, and a senior person can be kept pending for about six months or seven months so that he loses or he or she loses the seniority, and this is what is happening. Outstanding advocates who should have been appointed are not being appointed,” Justice Lokur said.

He said the process of making the appointment process less opaque needed to

be deliberated upon.


“Opaque not only from the side of the collegium of the high court or the collegium of the Supreme Court, but also from the side of the government,” Justice Lokur said.

He said that at present there were two impeachment motions pending against judges, one against Justice Yashwant Varma in the Parliament and the second against Justice Shekhar Yadav with the Rajya Sabha Chairperson. PTI

### NAME CHANGE

I, Shri Tarh Karmey, have changed my name from Tarak Karme to Tarh Karmey vide an affidavit No 9832 Dtd 24/06/2019 in the court of Judicial Magistrate, Itanagar, Dist.: Papum Pare.

Henceforth, I shall be known as Shri Tarh Karmey for all purposes.



**GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH**  
**DEPARTMENT OF POWER**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (E),**  
**TRANSMISSION DIVISION NO. II**  
**132/33 KV SUB-STATION, CHIMPU, ITANAGAR-791113**

E-mail: [exentdii@gmail.com](mailto:exentdii@gmail.com)

NIT/RFP No. **TD-II/RFP/2025-26/01**  
**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER/RFP**  
**DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING (DBC)**

The Executive Engineer (E), Transmission Division No. II, Department of Power, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar, invites e-tender/Request for Proposal (RFP) through Domestic Competitive Bidding for providing “**Transaction Advisory Services for Restructuring of various Power Utilities towards Public Private Partnership Model**” in Arunachal Pradesh. For details, please visit [www.arunachaltenders.gov.in](http://www.arunachaltenders.gov.in) and search for tender ID: **2025\_DOP\_2659**. Subsequent changes/ modifications/ notifications/clarifications, if any, shall be uploaded in the above e-portal only.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer (E)**  
Transmission Division No. II,  
Department of Power,  
Government of Arunachal Pradesh,  
Itanagar

**DIPR/ARN/005496/2025**

### PUBLIC UTILITY

Route	Departure	Schedule	Distance (KM)	Fare
<b>NIGHT SERVICES</b>				
Itanagar-Shillong	4.00 pm	Daily	516	550/-
Ita/Nlg-Daporijo	12 noon	Daily	399	560/-
Itanagar-Khonsa	1.00 pm	Monday & Thursday	677	740/-
Itanagar-Namsai	1.00 pm	Daily	655	690/-
Itanagar-Bomdila	4.30 pm	Daily	350	420/-
Itanagar-Aalo	2.30 pm	Daily	325	420/-
Itanagar-Dimapur	3.00 pm	Daily	460	460/-
Itanagar-Liromoba/Kamba	1.00 pm	Daily	350	460/-
<b>DAY SERVICE</b>				
Itanagar-Guwahati	6.00 am	Daily	395	420/-
Itanagar-Pasighat	6.00 am	Daily	270	300/-
Itanagar-Pasighat	11.00 am	Daily	270	300/-
Itanagar-Aalo	6.00 am	Daily	325	420/-
Itanagar-Lilabari	3.30 pm	Daily(Except Sunday)	80	220/-
Itanagr-Bomdila	6.00 am	Alternate day (Except Thursday)	350	420/-
Itanagar-Jote	6 am & 12 noon	Daily (Except Sunday)	30	60/-
Naharlagun-Leporiang	7.00 am	Alternate day (Except Saturday)	145	240/-
Nlg-Pakke-Kessang	6.00 am	Alternate day (Except Sunday)	165	270/-
Naharlagun-Sonajuli	11.00 am	Daily(Except Sunday)	43	100/-
Naharlagun-Balijan	1.00 pm	Daily(Except Sunday)	87	110/-
Naharlagun-Hawa camp	12 noon	Daily(Except Saturday)	78	120/-
Naharlagun-Kakoi	1.00 pm	Daily(Except Sunday)	85	140/-
Naharlagun-Gohamukh	1.00 pm	Daily(Except Friday)	134	160/-
Itanagar-Roing (Sumo)	6 AM	Daily	-	1000/-
Itanagar-Koloriang(Sumo)	6 AM	Daily	372	550/-

**ENQUIRY/CONTACT NOS.-**  
**1.Itanagar Counter (9774034571 / 8729868842)**  
**2. Naharlagun Counter (03602351490)**

**GUWAHATI, Aug 06:** As India commemorates ten years of National Handloom Day, its story is no longer just about heritage - it’s about economic resilience, women empowerment and local innovation. Cairn Oil & Gas, a part of Vedanta Ltd, is proud to be playing a vital role in the revitalization of the region’s handloom sector, according to a release.

India’s handloom sector stands as a symbol of self-reliance and cultural pride. Cairn is working to strengthen Assam’s handloom ecosystem through inclusive and community-led development efforts.

In Assam, weaving is a way of life and women artisans are now driving a grassroots transformation for generations. Supporting this shift on the ground, Cairn has been enabling rural women in Assam to turn their skills into sustainable

livelihoods. Through dedicated handloom centres set up in partnership with the Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM), Cairn is helping unlock new opportunities for women in villages like Borchapori (Golaghat) and Agchamua (Jorhat), the release stated.

What began as modest intervention in Borchapori has now grown into a community-led movement for handloom ecosystem revival. Over 3,000 women are currently engaged through self-help groups, producing traditional gamusas that are purchased by the Government of Assam, under the Swanirbhar Naari scheme.

“Before the handloom centre opened, weaving was just a tradition passed down to me. Now, it’s my livelihood. I feel proud to contribute to my family’s income. We are not just making cloth—we are shaping our futures.” commented a Self-Help Group

Member, Borchapori.

According to the release, another newly operational centre in Agchamua is expected to further strengthen this ecosystem, offering training, infrastructure, and income opportunities to nearly 300 more women. This will help boost productivity and benefit the women from nearby villages of Maibelia, Agchamua, and Paschamua in Assam. This is another milestone in Cairn’s journey of fostering sustainable livelihoods and building aatmanirbhar communities in the North East region while also popularising this rich cultural form of art.

“At Cairn, we believe true development happens when local communities lead the change. The women of Assam are breathing new life into age-old traditions, transforming handloom into a vehicle for progress, pride, and financial independence. We’re

honored to support this movement,” said the spokesperson, Cairn Oil & Gas.

This initiative reflects Cairn’s broader commitment to inclusive development, ensuring that economic progress is not only sustainable, but deeply rooted in local realities. The handloom centers are not just production units; they are spaces of learning, collaboration, and transformation—where women lead, create, and grow, the release stated.

The Art of Handloom in Assam is more than just a craft, it is the living thread that weaves together the soul of its people, their history and their identity. As India celebrates a decade of National Handloom Day, Cairn stands in solidarity with the women of Assam who are weaving more than cloth - they are weaving futures filled with dignity, purpose, and pride, the release added. (Agency)

rescue and relief tasks while combat engineers were clearing debris and restoring mobility in Dharali. Search & rescue dogs are deployed at Harsil and more en route from the Remount and Veterinary Centres.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that around 190 people have been rescued from the Dharali area, following themassive flash floods and landslides in the area. Speaking to the media, CM Dhami reaffirmed that both the Centre and

the state Govt are fully committed to making arrangements for the victims, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also assured to provide all possible help. Before reaching Dharali, Dhami undertook an aerial survey of the flood-ravaged areas and reviewed the rescue operations from disaster control room in Uttarkashi. Notably, politicians across party lines today expressed grief at the devastation caused by flash floods in Uttarkashi.

**UTTARKASHI, Aug 06:** A deluge of mud and silt after a devastating cloudburst has swept away the village of Dharali, resulting in five fatalities. Rescue operations by the Army, NDRF and SDRF are in progress.

A 28-member group of tourists, comprising natives of Kerala, including 20 settled in Maharashtra, has gone missing following catastrophic mudslides triggered by a cloudburst in Uttarkashi. Relatives reported that the tourists last made con-

tact as they set out from Uttarkashi to Gangotri, a route that was later hit by deadly landslides and flash floods.

So far, 15 people have been rescued from Dharali to Bhatwari through helicopter rescue. Two seriously injured soldiers were also airlifted and shifted to the ITBP hospital. The two jawans have been identified as Rifleman Keshav and Rifleman Virendra.

Over 225 Army personnel, including infantry and engineering teams are on ground for search,

## China ‘Super Dam’ not a threat...

*From P.I...* some rainfall due to moisture making its way through the Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Canyon, the deepest on the planet, Chinese researchers wrote in a 2015 paper.

**Mean monthly rainfall in Brahmaputra basin at different locations**

Even during the lean season of November-March, Brahmaputra’s flows remain significantly higher in India than in Tibet, as per Modak-Ghosh’s research. Moderate rainfall in Arunachal Pradesh during this period keeps recharging the Brahmaputra.

Nonetheless, the dam will most likely reduce the Brahmaputra’s flow during peak lean months by around 10%, as per researchers of Indic Researchers Forum. “Yet, India’s strategic countermeasures, like Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), can store water to buffer such reductions,” says the forum’s Srinivasan Balakrishnan. But, the SUMP is still in preparation phase and faced opposition from locals.

Some also fear that China could divert the river water from the dam to its arid regions in eastwest. Such an effort would require extensive tunnelling through high-altitude plateaus and seismically active zones, a feat described as technically unviable in the foreseeable future due to extreme elevation differences and logistical barriers.

“The dam’s primary design, involving 20-km-long tunnels through the Namcha Barwa peak, focuses on hydro-power generation, diverting half the river’s flow for electricity, not large-scale water transfer,” says Balakrishnan. He also cites a 2017 report that said even pumping water to nearby plateaus was impractical, as it would likely flow back into rivers, not deserts. (India Today)

**China’s damming Yarlung Tsangpo on**

Everything about Medog Hydropower Station in Tibet, built at a cost of 1 trillion yuan (\$137 billion) sounds like a monster. Its capacity to annually generate 300 billion KM-hours of power, three times than 22,500-MWThree Gorges Dam, currently the largest hydropower dam in the world. The ability in engineering behemoth in the world’s deepest canyon, harnessing the power of the mighty Yarlung Tsangpo River as it flows from the Tibetan glaciers, around the Great Bend in Tibet’s Medog County and then rushes down a 50-km stretch, during which it drops 2,000 metres.



# India, Philippines elevate ties to strategic partnership; friends by choice, says PM Modi

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** India and the Philippines are friends by choice and partners by destiny, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday as the two countries elevated their ties to the level of strategic partnership, with a greater thrust on increasing interaction among the armed forces.

A five-year plan of action under the strategic partnership and adoption of terms of reference for negotiations on a preferential trade agreement between the two countries were among the key outcomes announced by New Delhi after Prime Minister Modi and President Ferdinand R Marcos Jr held bilateral talks here.

The announcement of the strategic partnership was made after “wide-ranging and productive” talks between the two leaders at the Hyderabad House, and a day after the navies of the two countries conducted a joint exercise off the Philippines coast.

“India and the Philippines are friends by choice and partners by destiny. From the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, we are united by shared values. Ours is not just a friendship of the past, it is a promise to the future,” Modi said with Marcos Jr by his side.

The two countries signed

nine pacts, including on declaration and implementation of strategic partnership, terms of reference for talks among the armies, air forces and navies of the two countries and for cooperation on peaceful use of outer space.

The prime minister said the Philippines is an important partner in India’s Act East Policy and ‘MAHASAGAR’ (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision.

“We are committed to peace, security, prosperity and a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. We support freedom of navigation in accordance with international laws,” Modi said.

“It is a matter of pleasure that today we have decided to elevate our relations to the status of a strategic partnership. A comprehensive action plan has also been formulated to translate the potential of this partnership into results,” he said.

India and the Philippines are celebrating 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations and the two leaders released a postage stamp to commemorate the occasion.

Modi also thanked the Philippines government for condemning the April 22

Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed 26 lives, and for standing with India in the fight against terrorism.

The prime minister said the enhanced defence relations between the two countries are a symbol of deep mutual trust.

“As maritime nations, maritime cooperation between the two countries is both natural and essential. We have been working together in humanitarian aid, disaster relief, search and rescue,” Modi said.

He said under the development partnership, India will increase the number of Quick Impact Projects in the Philippines and will also cooperate in the development of sovereign data cloud infrastructure.

“Today, when the president is in India, three ships of the Indian Navy are participating in a naval exercise in the Philippines for the first time,” Modi said.

The prime minister said the trade between the two countries was increasing in a sustained manner and crossed USD 3 billion.

“To further strengthen trade ties, it is our priority to review the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement at the earliest. We have also decided to work towards a bilateral preferential trade agreement,” he said.

Modi said Indian compa-

nies are active in the sectors of information and digital technology, health, automobiles, infrastructure, and minerals. In the sector of science and technology, joint research is going on in areas from virology to artificial intelligence and additive manufacturing, he added.

The prime minister said the science and technology cooperation plan between the two countries will add momentum to this partnership.

Modi also said that work will be done to start a direct flight between Delhi and Manila this year.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in a post on X, termed the elevation of ties to the level of strategic partnership “an affirmation of our deepening Indo-Pacific cooperation, as we mark 75 years of diplomatic relations.”

MEA Secretary (East) P Kumaran, at a special press briefing here on the ongoing visit of President Marcos, said the Philippines has made “visa-free entry possible for Indian tourists up to a period of 14 days”.

“We expect that these measures would bolster our tourism exchanges, commercial linkages, and people-to-people interactions,” he said.

The MEA official said an Air India flight is expected before the end of this year, and the inaugural flight is likely in October.

Asked if BrahMos missiles figured in the talks, Kumaran said, “Yes, there was a discussion on defence cooperation between the two leaders, export of defence platforms including BrahMos.”

Kumaran also fielded several queries related to the just-held India-Philippines bilateral naval exercise off the Philippines.

“Our position on the South China Sea is clear and consistent. We consider the South China Sea as a part of global commons, and we support freedom of navigation, overflight in the region and legitimate commerce through the waters of the South China Sea,” the Secretary (East) said.

“India has an abiding interest in peace and stability in the region, and our position is based on the UN Convention of the Law of the Seas, UNCLOS 1982,” he said.

Earlier in the day, President Marcos was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Later, he also paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat. PTI

## PM Modi expected to visit Japan, China later this month

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to travel to Japan and China beginning around August 29, people familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

In the first leg of his trip, Modi is expected to visit

Japan to hold annual summit talks with his Japanese counterpart.

From Japan, he is likely to travel to China to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

If the visit to China takes

place, then it will be the PM Modi’s first trip to the country after the eastern Ladakh border standoff. The SCO summit will be held from August 31 to September 1. There is no official word on Modi’s planned visit to Japan and China yet. PTI

## 1,621 people died in rain, lightning strikes from Apr-July: Govt

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** More than 1,600 people died due to rain and lightning during the four-month period from April to July this year, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai shared the data in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.

Based on information received from various state governments and union territories, 1,626 people died due to rain and lightning strikes till July 31 in 2025-26, he said, adding that the Ministry of Home Affairs does not centrally maintain the data of damages due to disasters. Lives of 52,367 animals were also lost due to hydro-meteorological disasters and 1,57,817.6 hectares of crop area was affected during this period, the minister said.

Rai said the central government has approved ‘Mitigation Project on Lightning Safety’ for a total financial outlay of Rs 186.78 crore for 50 lightning-prone districts of 10 states — Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

“The aim of this project is to help reduce the mortality of human beings, loss of livestock and damage to infrastructure due to lightning. The project also aims to develop self-reliance through research, development, manufacturing and technological advancements in the field of lightning risk management,” he said. He said the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, has established a

lightning location network with 112 sensors spread over the country to accurately locate and detect the occurrence of lightning.

As each sensor can have a coverage radius of 200 to 250 km, the whole country is now covered by this network, he added.

Rai said that by using valuable information from the lightning location network, a mobile app, ‘DAMINI: Lightning Alert’, has been developed. It gives the exact location of current lightning strikes around user location and issues the lightning warning for a 20 and 40 square kilometre radius in advance.

Rai said the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has established a

comprehensive system for the seamless monitoring, forecasting and dissemination of warnings for thunderstorm and lightning hazards.

“This system enables location-specific monitoring down to the district and city levels, with temporal resolution ranging from minutes to hours. It currently operates a ground-based lightning detection network comprising 102 sensors strategically distributed across India,” he said.

Rai said the IMD issues thunderstorm and lightning warnings up to five days in advance, leveraging Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) models and synoptic-scale analysis.

“These forecasts are provided in multi-hazard colour-coded formats at the meteorological sub-division and district levels, and are updated every six hours. In addition, IMD provides colour-coded nowcasts for thunderstorms and lightning at district and station levels, updated every three hours.

“These nowcasts are based on satellite imagery, radar observations and data from the ground-based lightning detection network,” he said. PTI

## PM Modi expected to visit China for first time since 2020 border standoff

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to travel to Japan and China beginning around August 29, people familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

In the first leg of his trip, Modi is expected to visit Japan to hold annual summit talks with his Japanese counterpart.

From Japan, he is likely

to travel to China to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

If the visit to China takes place, then it will be PM Modi’s first trip to the country after the eastern Ladakh border standoff.

Following the standoff, the first formal meeting between PM Modi and President Xi Jinping was held in

Kazan in Russia in October last year during the BRICS Summit.

That meeting came soon after both countries announced a disengagement of troops along the border.

The SCO summit will be held from August 31 to September 1. There is no official word on Modi’s planned visit to Japan and China yet. (Agency)

## Sexual violence by parent tears through foundational fabric of familial trust: SC

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** Observing incestuous sexual violence by a parent “tears through” the foundational fabric of familial trust, the Supreme Court has upheld a man’s punishment for raping his minor daughter.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and Sandeep Kumar called the dignity of women “non-negotiable” while asking the legal system not to permit repeated intrusion into that dignity under the “guise of misplaced sympathy” or purported “procedural fairness”.

Justice, the August 4 order said, must not be limited to conviction and must include restitution.

The top court further directed Rs 10.50 lakh to be paid to the survivor as compensation under the state of Himachal Pradesh.

“Incestuous sexual violence committed by a parent is a distinct category of offence that tears through the foundational fabric of familial trust and must invite the severest condemnation in both language and sentence. The home, which should be a sanctuary, cannot be permitted to become a site of unspeakable trauma, and the courts must send a clear signal that such offences will be met with an equally unsparing judicial

response,” the order read.

The apex court said entertaining a plea for leniency in a case of this nature would not merely be misplaced, it would constitute a betrayal of the court’s own constitutional duty to protect the vulnerable.

“When a child is forced to suffer at the hands of her own father, the law must speak in a voice that is resolute and uncompromising. There can be no mitigation in sentencing for crimes that subvert the very notion of family as a space of security,” the bench said.

The top court was acting on the appeal of the man against a Himachal Pradesh High Court decision upholding his conviction and sentence under Section 6 (sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 and Section 506 (criminal intimidation) of IPC.

The court said such offences deserve severest condemnation and deterrent punishment.

To pardon such depravity under any guise would be a travesty of justice and a betrayal of the child protection mandate embedded in our constitutional and statutory framework, the verdict added.

The bench went on to

quote Manusmriti, as saying, “Yatra nryastu pkjyante ramante tatra devyat, yatraitaastu na pkjyante sarvstrata apha kriy (where women are honoured, divinity flourishes and where they are dishonoured, all acts become fruitless).”

The top court said this verse reflects not merely a cultural principle but a constitutional vision.

The court rejected the man’s prayer for interim bail saying, “Our judicial conscience does not permit casual indulgence in a prayer for interim relief of bail where the conviction has been rendered.”

The bench said entertaining petition would mean betrayal of the constitutional promise made to every child in the country.

“It would be a judicial insult to the sanctity of womanhood and a blow to every mother who teaches her child to believe in justice.”

The order continued, “When a father who is expected to be a shield, a guardian, a moral compass, becomes the source of the most severe violation of a child’s bodily integrity and dignity, the betrayal is not only personal but institutional. The law does not, and cannot, condone such acts under the guise of rehabilitation or reform.” PTI

## RBI sticks to its 'pause, pray and proceed' policy again

**MUMBAI, Aug 06 :** On Wednesday, the central bank’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously decided to hold its breath, leaving the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 5.5%.

With inflation firmly showing signs of easing, the central bank divined a 3.1% inflation rate for FY26, down from 3.7% projected earlier, while real GDP growth rate is left unchanged 6.5%.

Predictably, there was no joy on Dalal Street with Sensex and Nifty trading flat. Having frontloaded policy rate cuts of 50 bps in its previous review in June, the MPC also unanimously voted to retain its policy stance at neutral, which allows the central bank to raise or reduce rates. Yet, the market continues to believe in the low rate fantasy, insisting that the path for rates firmly remains downwards.

A potential rate cut is anticipated in October or later, once data on festive demand, agricultural output, and global trade uncertainties are resolved. Right now, the US is throwing us a curveball as far as tariffs are concerned and preliminary estimates peg a 20-40 bps hit on our FY26 GDP. But it could be even sharper, should President Donald Trump continue to whack us with further punitive levies. Moreover, fuel inflation will take a turn for the worse, should India give in to the US’ demands to stop importing Russian oil. For now, the government is standing firm on maintaining its trade ties with Russia.

Meanwhile, a status quo on rates was widely expected, though a few argued for a 25 bps rate reduction in August to avoid a so-called Type 2 errors.

According to SBI Research, such an error occurs when the central bank fails to reject the null hypothesis, assuming that the inflation undershoots is temporary, and hence does not cut rates. In reality, inflation remains persistently low and output gap continues to weaken. (Agency)

## Over 6.3 lakh calls received on National Helpline Against Atrocities on SCs, STs since 2020: Govt

**NEW DELHI, Aug 06 :** The National Helpline Against Atrocities (NHAA), set up to address complaints of atrocities against SCs and STs, has received over 6.34 lakh calls since its inception, according to government data shared on Wednesday.

Responding to a written question in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale said the toll-free helpline (145666), operational since 2020, aims to provide grievance redressal and raise awareness about legal provisions for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Sched-

uled Tribes (STs). The highest number of calls, at over 3.4 lakh, were received in 2023.

Uttar Pradesh (UP) accounted for the lion’s share of complaints with more than 3.4 lakh calls between 2020 and July 2025, followed by Bihar (59,205) and Rajasthan (40,228). Delhi also recorded a high number of calls at over 29,000.

The helpline received 6,34,066 calls across states and Union Territories up to July 31.

The data revealed a significant increase in usage over the years, with just over 6,000 calls in 2020 and more than 1.05 lakh in 2024.

## Cong trying to provide reservation to Muslims in guise of 42% quota to BCs: Sanjay Kumar

**HYDERABAD, Aug 06 :** Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Wednesday accused the Congress government in Telangana of trying to provide reservations to Muslims in the guise of 42 per cent quota to backward classes.

Congress had promised 42 per cent quota to BCs, but was now allocating 10 per cent of it to Muslims in the name of Muslim BCs, he said in a statement.

Taking potshots at the dharna held by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and other Congress leaders in Delhi seeking Presidential assent to the BC quota bills passed by the Assembly, Kumar alleged that the protest was actually aimed at securing the votes of the

minorities.

With 10 per cent cent reservation given to Muslims, backward classes would be left with only 32 per cent quota, he said.

“In fact, the Modi government is already implementing 27 per cent reservation to BCs. The backward classes would only get five per cent (extra) reservation with the BC bills passed by the Congress government. They are trying to implement 10 per cent quotas for Muslims in the guise of BC bills,” he said. The ‘BC Declaration’ announced by Congress ahead of 2023 Assembly elections is turning out to be a ‘Muslim Declaration’, he alleged.

Observing that the BJP would support if the full 42

per cent reservation benefit is passed on to the intended classes, he said, otherwise, the party would fight against the BC bills.

“The Muslim reservation should be removed immediately. Otherwise, we will teach a lesson to Congress. The day is not far when the entire Hindu society, along with the BCs, would revolt against Congress,” he said.

Accusing the Congress of shedding crocodile tears for BCs, he asked whether the grand old party had ever made a backward class leader as Prime Minister.

He further asked whether the Congress made a BC leader as Chief Minister despite being in power for about 50 years in undivided Andhra Pradesh.

It is to the credit of the

BJP that it gave the first-ever BC Prime Minister (PM Modi) to the country, besides appointing 27 ministers belonging to backward communities in the Union Cabinet, he said.

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Wednesday held a protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi to demand Presidential assent for the Backward Classes reservation bills passed by the state legislature.

The Telangana Assembly passed two bills in March to enhance BC reservation to 42 per cent (from 23 per cent) in education, employment and local bodies.

The bills were forwarded to the governor and are currently awaiting Presidential assent. PTI

Uttarakhand are standing with the affected people — those who have suffered losses or those who have lost their kin — as government, brothers and family. Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) has told me that the Centre, the Army and others are providing all assistance. He has assured all support,” he said.

The prime minister also said the Centre’s first priority is to save each and every person and extend all help to the affected individuals, Dhama said. PTI

Dhama said the state government employees are doing their work. “I am also camping here. Till all rescue work is streamlined and they catch speed, I will stay put here and monitor everything,” he said.

The chief minister said it would be the government’s endeavour to organise the Dharali village which has been affected by the natural disaster. Help will be extended to each and every individual of the village, he said.

“All of us from

they will be evacuated very soon,” he added.

“After the incident which took place yesterday, 190 people have been rescued from there. All of them are safe and are at secure places,” he said, adding, “The injured have been admitted to hospitals while some have been sent to the military camps and higher centres.”

Five people have been killed and several have been injured in the flash flood which hit Dharali on Tuesday.

## 190 people rescued from Uttarkashi's Dharali village: CM

**UTTARKASHI, Aug 06 :** Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama on Wednesday said 190 people have been rescued from Uttarkashi’s Dharali village which was hit by a flash flood triggered by a cloudburst that struck the upper catchment of the Kheer Ganga river.

Talking to PTI Videos here, the chief minister said plans are being prepared to evacuate the pilgrims stuck in Gangotri Dham through Nelong Valley. “All arrangements have been made and



## China tackles chikungunya virus outbreak with wide range of measures as thousands fall ill

**TAIPEI(TAIWAN), Aug 06 :** An outbreak of the chikungunya virus in China has prompted authorities to take preventive measures from mosquito nets and clouds of disinfectant, threatening fines for people who fail to disperse standing water and even deploying drones to hunt down insect breeding grounds.

More than 7,000 cases of the disease have been reported as of Wednesday, focused largely on the manufacturing hub of Foshan near Hong Kong, which has reported only one case. Numbers of new cases appear to be dropping slowly, according to authorities.

Chikungunya is spread by mosquitoes and causes

fever and joint pain, similar to dengue fever, with the young, older people and those with pre-existing medical conditions most at risk.

Chinese state television has shown workers spraying clouds of disinfectant around city streets, residential areas, construction sites and other areas where people may come into contact with virus-bearing mosquitos that are born in standing water.

Workers sprayed some places before entering of office buildings, a throwback to China's controversial hardline tactics used to battle the COVID-19 virus.

People who do not empty bottles, flower pots or other outdoor receptacles can be subject to fines of

up to 10,000 yuan (USD 1,400) and have their electricity cut off.

The US has issued a travel advisory telling citizens not to visit China's Guangdong province, the location of Donguan and several other business hubs, along with countries such as Bolivia and island nations in the Indian Ocean. Brazil is among the other countries hit hard by the virus.

Heavy rains and high temperatures have worsened the crisis in China, which is generally common in tropical areas but came on unusually strong this year.

China has become adept at coercive measures that many nations consider over-the-top since the

deadly 2003 SARS outbreak. This time, patients are being forced to stay in hospital in Foshan for a minimum of one week and authorities briefly enforced a two-week home quarantine, which was dropped since the disease cannot be transmitted between people.

Reports also have emerged of attempts to stop the virus spread with fish that eat mosquito larvae and even larger mosquitos to eat the insects carrying the virus.

Meetings have been held and protocols adopted at the national level in a sign of China's determination to eliminate the outbreak and avoid public and international criticism. PTI

**TOKYO, Aug 06 :** Global shares were mostly higher in muted trading Wednesday as investors awaited a slew of earnings reports to assess how companies have been affected by US President Donald Trump's tariffs.

France's CAC 40 added 0.2 per cent in early trading to 7,638.46. Germany's DAX edged up 0.2 per cent to 23,902.83. Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.3 per cent to 9,166.47. The future for the S&P 500 was up 0.2 per cent while that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 0.4 per cent.

Among Japanese companies reporting financial results on Wednesday, automaker Honda Motor Co said its profit declined to about half the level of a

year earlier despite strong sales in North America. Toyota Motor Corp and electronics and entertainment company Sony Corp report their results later this week. In Asian trading, Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 rose 0.6 per cent to finish at 40,794.86. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 added 0.8 per cent to 8,843.70. South Korea's Kospi was little changed, gaining less than 0.1 per cent to 3,198.14.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose less than 0.1 per cent to 24,910.63, while the Shanghai Composite gained 0.5 per cent to 3,633.99. On Tuesday, the S&P 500 fell 0.5 per cent and the Dow industrials lost 0.1 per cent. The Nasdaq composite fell 0.7 per cent.

A weaker-than-expected report on activity for US businesses in services industries like transportation and retail has added to worries that Trump's tariffs may be hurting the US economy. But conversely, such indicators raise hopes the Federal Reserve may cut interest rates. The pressure is on companies to report bigger profits after the US stock market surged to record after record from a low point in April. The big rally fuelled criticism that the broad market had become too expensive.

For stock prices to look like better bargains, companies could produce bigger profits, or interest rates could fall. The latter may happen in September, when the Fed has its next policy

meeting.

Expectations have built sharply for a rate cut at that meeting since a report on the US job market on Friday came in much weaker than economists expected. Lower interest rates would make stocks look less expensive, while also giving the overall economy a boost. The potential downside is that they could push inflation higher.

In energy trading, benchmark US crude rose USD 1.14 to USD 66.30 a barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, added USD 1.15 to USD 68.79 a barrel.

In currency trading, the US dollar slipped to 147.59 Japanese Yen from 147.61 Yen. The Euro cost USD 1.1606, up from USD 1.1579. PTI

## Pakistan will not develop closer ties with US at the cost of China: Chinese experts

**BEIJING, Aug 06 :** As US President Donald Trump has ramped up his country's ties with Pakistan, China's all-weather ally, Chinese strategic experts say Islamabad understands the limits given his strategy to contain Beijing's global influence.

Last month, Pakistan's army chief, General Asim Munir, made his first official visit to China since assuming office as field marshal. His visit came shortly after a rare five-day trip to Washington, where he attended a private luncheon with Trump. That meeting culminated in Trump's announcement of enhanced US-Pakistan cooperation in various fields, including an oil deal.

According to a recent "Economist" article, the outcome of General Munir's US visit marks a shift in American foreign policy, with implications not only for India but also China and the Middle East.

During his time in Beijing, General Munir met with Vice President Han Zheng, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and senior members of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), though not with President Xi Jinping. This contrasts with his predecessor, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who met Xi during his 2018 trip to China.

While official readouts from Munir's meetings emphasised diplomatic niceties and reiterated strong bilateral ties, Beijing's perception of the Trump-Munir rapport remains unclear — especially given Trump's overt strategy to curb China's rise as a global power.

Beijing has its concerns

considering the decades-long investment fostering an all-weather relationship with Pakistan.

Two Chinese senior strategic experts PTI spoke to outlined for the first time China's view on the emerging new Washington-Islamabad strategic paradigm in the broader context of Trump's geopolitical strategy.

"Pakistan will not develop its relations with the US at the cost of its relation with China," Hu Shisheng, Director of the Institute for South Asian Studies at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, said. "Pakistan will not be that easily hooked by Trump," Hu, regarded as an expert on South Asian politics, said.

Jesse Wang, a research fellow at Huaxia South Asia Economic and Cultural Exchange Centre of China, said "on the surface, Trump's candy to Pakistan looks like a disturbance to China, but actually, cannot affect the structural stability of the Sino-Pak relationship". "The US intervention has created short-term geopolitical noise but is unlikely to shake the foundation of China-Pakistan dependence," he said.

"For Pakistan, 'make profits both ways' economically is a rational choice, but its security and infrastructure lifelines are tied to China closely, and the strategic balance has not tilted," Wang said.

Both argue that China-Pakistan ties are structurally far deeper for Islamabad to breakaway to forge another similar relationship.

Historically, Pakistan's ties with the US and China

have largely unfolded in parallel over long periods without cancelling each other out, Hu said, in an apparent reference to Pakistan joining the American war against the then Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 and the Afghan war thereafter.

"The China-Pakistan relationship is a unique bilateral bond that has withstood the test of time," he said.

"Of course, the Trump team expects to see Pakistan getting away from China but Pakistan will not buy the story," he said. "Pakistan's strategic value or bargaining position with the US depends on Pakistan's close relations with China," Hu said.

Wang said Trump's advances to Pakistan bared Washington's policy towards South Asia.

"For China, the US-Pakistan cooperation has exposed the US' intentions in South Asia, and has also forced China to accelerate regional mechanism building," he said.

"The Sino-Pak relationship is like an 'alloy steel' — external pressure has instead prompted it to evolve into a higher strength and the US' wedge strategy will ultimately be constrained by Pakistan's balancing wisdom and the complex geopolitical reality in South Asia," he said.

On Trump's new harsh policy towards India, both the scholars said the US policy is still evolving.

On Trump's rhetoric with threat to impose high tariffs on India, Hu said it does not signify that the Trump team denies India's geostrategic importance.

Rather, it stems from the

Trump administration's urgent desire for India to play a substantive role in bolstering the US supremacy and countering China's rise," he said.

Essentially, it reflects Trump's extreme frustration with India's insistence on "strategic autonomy", he said.

"Furthermore, this aligns with Trump's art-of-the-deal approach: applying maximum pressure to secure desired concessions," Wang said.

If India holds firm with strategic resolve, Trump may well revert to a more conciliatory stance towards the country, he said.

"After all, regarding constraining China's rise, the US harbours higher expectations for India than for its formal allies, recognising India's superior comprehensive strength for this role," he said.

Alternatively, India could pressure the Trump team by accelerating rapprochement with China, he said.

Wang said since the Clinton administration, as India's position in the US national security strategy has continuously risen, successive US presidents have shown increasingly refined strategic sensitivity in handling bilateral relations with India, but this trend is currently rapidly weakening.

Trump has completely abandoned the logic of "strategic altruism", marking a fracture in the "structural expectations" and a sharp turn in the "strategic dependence" in India-US bilateral interactions, which may prompt India to reassess the substantive value of its friendship with the US, he said. PTI

## Trump envoy Witkoff meets Putin ahead of Russia-Ukraine peace deadline, the Kremlin says

**MOSCOW, Aug 06 :** Russian President Vladimir Putin held talks with US President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff in Moscow on Wednesday, the Kremlin said, days before the White House's deadline for Russia to reach a peace deal with Ukraine or potentially face severe economic penalties that could also hit countries buying its oil.

The meeting between Putin and Witkoff lasted about three hours. Neither side gave an immediate readout of the talks. Earlier, Witkoff took an early morning stroll through Zaryadye Park, a stone's throw from the Kremlin, with Kirill Dmitriev, the Russian president's envoy for investment and economic cooperation, and footage aired by TASS showed.

Dmitriev played a key role in three rounds of direct talks between delegations from Russia and Ukraine in Istanbul in recent months, as well as discussions between Russian and US officials. The negotiations made no progress on ending the three-year war following Russia's invasion of its neighbour. Trump's deadline for Putin ends on Friday. Washington has threatened "severe tariffs" and other economic penalties if the killing doesn't stop.

Trump has expressed increasing frustration with Putin over Russia's escalating strikes on civilian areas of Ukraine, intended to erode morale and public appetite for the war. The

intensified attacks have occurred even as Trump has urged the Russian leader in recent months to relent.

Overnight from Tuesday to Wednesday, Russian forces hit a recreational center in Ukraine's southern Zaporizhzhia region, killing two people and injuring 12, including two children, regional Gov Ivan Fedorov said Wednesday.

Russian forces launched at least four strikes on the area and initially attacked with powerful glide bombs. "There is zero military sense in this strike. Only cruelty to intimidate," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a post on Telegram. Russia also struck the Ukrainian power grid and facilities for heating and cooking gas, Zelenskyy said, as Ukraine makes preparations for winter.

Western analysts and Ukrainian officials say Putin is stalling for time and avoiding serious negotiations while Russian forces push to capture more Ukraine land. A Russian offensive that started in the spring and is expected to continue through the fall is advancing faster than last year's push but is making only slow and costly gains and has been unable to take any major cities. The situation on the front line is critical for Ukrainian forces but defenses are not about to collapse, analysts say.

On Tuesday, Trump said "we'll see what happens" regarding his threat to slap tariffs on nations that buy Russian oil, which could

increase import taxes dramatically on China and India.

"We have a meeting with Russia tomorrow," Trump said. "We're going to see what happens. We'll make that determination at that time."

The president said that he has not publicly committed to a specific tariff rate.

Stepping up diplomatic and economic pressure on the Kremlin risks stoking international tensions amid worsening Russia-US relations.

The Washington-based Centre for European Policy Analysis warned in an assessment this week that there are "clear signs that the Kremlin is preparing for a broader confrontation with NATO," including a military build-up along Russia's western flank with alliance countries in recent years.

Putin has strengthened Russia's military ties with China, North Korea and Iran. NATO, meanwhile, said Tuesday it has started coordinating regular deliveries of large Western weapons packages to Ukraine. European allies and Canada are buying most of the equipment they plan to transport from the United States. The Trump administration is not donating any arms to Ukraine.

Putin has given no hint that he might be ready to make concessions. Instead, the Russian leader and senior Kremlin officials have talked up the country's military strength.

Putin announced last week that Russia's new hy-

## UK PM Keir Starmer unveils fund to lure youth away from screens into 'real world'

**LONDON, Aug 06 :** British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Wednesday unveiled a GBP 88 million youth services package to lure young people away from screens and reconnect with the world around them through real-world outdoor activities. The Building Creative Futures fund covers greater access for schoolchildren to extra-curricular activities such as sport, art and music, debating or volunteering to support wellbeing and essential skills in addition to a regular school day.

A 'Better Youth Spaces' programme is planned to improve youth club infrastructure, including new gym equipment and climbing walls, in areas with the highest levels of child poverty. "Growing up today is hard for young people. As they navigate their way through the online world, too often they find themselves isolated at home and disconnected from their communities," said Starmer.

"As a government, we

have a duty to act on this worrying trend. Today's investment is about offering a better alternative: transformative, real-world opportunities that will have an impact in communities across the country, so young people can discover something new, find their spark and develop the confidence and life skills that no algorithm can teach," he said. "Through our Plan for Change, we're backing parents by not only protecting our young people online, but giving them the support and opportunities they deserve so no child falls through the cracks," he added. Other aspects covered under this funding package will include a Local Youth Transformation pilot — an GBP 8 million programme to support local authorities to deliver a high-quality out-of-school offer. It will provide the tools, guidance, and funding to assess, improve, and invest in impactful local youth offers.

Over a million additional

hours of youth work in areas with high rates of anti-social behaviour is planned as part of a joint investment with the National Lottery Community Fund. And, under the Uniformed Youth Fund, thousands of new places will be created in youth organisations like the Scouts, Guides and Volunteer Police Cadets in areas with unmet demand for such activities. "We know that strong local youth services are the bedrock of thriving communities that give our young people safe spaces to learn, grow and reach their potential," said UK Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy.

"Today's announcement is just the beginning. As we develop our National Youth Strategy ahead of its launch this autumn, we are already delivering on our Plan for Change by putting young people at the heart of our mission-led government, ensuring they have the support and opportunities they deserve so that no one is left behind," said the Brit-

ish Indian minister.

The National Youth Strategy, to be published in the coming months, will be based on inputs from over 20,000 young people to set out a long-term vision for the government's youth policy. It builds on efforts around a new national network to build strong partnerships between schools, local clubs and national governing bodies to identify and break down barriers to sport and dance for children who are less active. New guidance to support schools to offer equal access to high-quality extra-curricular activities will also be published later this year, Downing Street said.

The Labour Party government hopes that expanding youth provision will also have an impact on tackling child poverty and ensuring that every child, no matter what their circumstances or where they live, has the opportunity to participate in sports, arts and other extracurricular activities. PTI

## 'Natural disasters caused \$135 billion in economic losses in first half of 2025'

**ZURICH, Aug 06 :** Natural disasters caused \$135 billion in economic losses globally in the first half of 2025, fuelled by the Los Angeles wildfires, reinsurer Swiss Re said Wednesday. Swiss Re, which serves as an insurer of insurance companies, said first half losses were up from the \$123 billion in the first half of 2024.

The Zurich-based reinsurance giant estimated that of this year's first half losses, \$80 billion had been insured — almost double the 10-year average, in 2025 prices. The Los Angeles blazes in January constitute the largest-ever insured wildfire loss event by far, reaching an estimated \$40 billion, said Swiss Re.

It said the "exceptional loss severity" of the fires was down to prolonged winds, a lack of rainfall and "some of the densest concentration of high-value single-family residential



property in the US". Swiss Re said losses from wildfires had risen sharply over the past decade due to rising temperatures, more frequent droughts and changing rainfall patterns — plus greater suburban sprawl and high-value asset concentration. "Most fire losses originate in the US and particularly in California, where expansion in hazardous regions has been high," it said.

Before 2015, wildfire-related insured losses made up around one percent of all natural catastrophe claims, but now account for seven percent.

**Hurricane season ap-**

### proaching

Insured losses from severe thunderstorms amounted to \$31 billion in the first half of 2025.

The second half of the year is usually more costly for insurers due to damage during the North Atlantic hurricane season.

If current loss trends continue, global insured losses from natural catastrophes in 2025 could exceed the Swiss Re Institute's projections of \$150 billion. "The strongest lever to increase the resilience and safety of communities is to double down on mitigation and adaptation. It's here that everyone can help reduce losses before

they occur," said Swiss Re's group chief economist Jerome Haegeli.

"While mitigation and adaptation measures come at a price, our research shows that, for example, flood protection measures such as dykes, dams and flood gates are up to 10 times more cost-effective than rebuilding." The March earthquake in Myanmar figured among the major natural disasters in the first six months of the year, with the tremors felt in neighbouring Thailand, India, and China.

In Thailand alone, insured losses reached \$1.5 billion. Overall, while natural disasters caused \$135 billion in economic losses in the first half of 2025, man-made disasters — which include industrial accidents — caused another \$8 billion in losses, of which \$7 billion were insured losses. (Agency)



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Q1. The ratio of the length and width of the national flag of India is  
Answer: 3:2

Q2. The ratio of width and length of the national flag of India  
Answer: 2:3

Q3. What is the color of the 'Dharma Chakra' made in the middle of the national flag of India?  
Answer: dark blue

Q4. How many spokes are there in the wheel of the National Flag of India?  
Answer: 24

Q5. Who among the following designed the national flag of independent India?  
Answer: Pingali Venkayya

Q6. The National Anthem of India is  
Answer: Jan Gan Man

Q7. The author of the National Anthem of India is  
Answer: Rabindranath Tagore

Q8. When and where was the national anthem 'Jana-Gana-Mana' sung for the first time?  
Answer: 1911 in Calcutta

Q9. How long does it take to sing the National Anthem of India 'Jana-Gana-Mana' in its entirety?  
Answer: 52 sec

Q10. The national song of India is  
Answer: Vande Mataram

Q11. The author of the national song of India is  
Answer: Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

Q12. The duration of the singing of the National Anthem of India is  
Answer: 65 seconds

Q13. When was the national song of India 'Vande Mataram' sung for the first time?  
Answer: In 1896 AD

Q14. India's national song 'Vande Mataram' is compiled from which book?  
Answer: Anand Math

Q15. What starts with the daily programs of All India Radio and Doordarshan?  
Answer: the National anthem

Q16. Which part of the National Pillar at Sarnath has been taken as the National Emblem?  
Answer: top part

Q17. Which of the following animal is not visible in the National Emblem of India?  
Answer: Deer

Q18. How many lions appear in the National Emblem of India?  
Answer: Three

Q19. The coat of arms of India is taken from the lion pillar established by Ashoka the Great at Sarnath. How many lions are there in the main pillar of this coat of arms?  
Answer: Four

Q20. Which Samvat has been recognized as the National Samvat of India?  
Answer: Saka era

Q21. National Panchang based on Shank Samvat is the first month  
Answer: Chaitra

Q22. National Panchang based on Shank Samvat is the last month  
Answer: Phalgun

Q23. The national animal of India is  
Answer: Tiger

Q24. Before the tiger was the national animal of India  
Answer: Lion

Q25. The national bird of India is  
Answer: Peacock

Q26. What is the national motto of India?  
Answer: Satyameva Jayate

Q27. Which is the national heritage animal of India?  
Answer: Elephant

Q28. The national sweet of India is  
Answer: Jalebi

Q29. The national fruit of India is  
Answer: Common

Q30. The national script of India is  
Answer: Dev Nagri

Q31. The national tree of India is  
Answer: Banyan

Q32. The national currency of India is  
Answer: Rupee (?)

Q33. The national game of India is  
Answer: Hockey

Q34. When is Partition Vibhishika Memorial Day celebrated?  
Answer: 14 August

Q35. When did Alexander the Great attack India?  
Answer: 326 B.C.

Q36. With whom was the main war Alexander in India  
Answer: With Porus

Q37. What was the ancient name of Ujjain?  
Answer: Avantika

Q38. Who was the founder of the Nand dynasty?  
Answer: Mahapadmananda

Q39. By whom was the first foreign invasion in ancient India?  
Answer: By Iranians

Q40. Which emperor's name was Devan Priyadarshi  
Answer: Emperor Ashoka

Q41. Which was the ruler of ancient India who adopted Jainism in his last days?  
Answer: Chandragupta Maurya

Q42. Whose contemporary was the author of Arthashastra  
Answer: Chandragupta Maurya

Q43. When did the revolution take place in Bareilly?  
Answer: 1857 AD.

Q44. How many times the National Emergency was declared in India?  
Answer: 3

Q45. When was Dandi March done?  
Answer: March 12, 1930

Q46. Who was the founder of the Gupta dynasty?  
Answer: Chandragupta

Q47. In which year Sikkim joined the Republic of India?  
Answer: 1975

Q48. Where did Gandhiji's Dandi March begin?  
Answer: Ahmedabad

Q49. Mahatma Gandhi started his political activities in India earlier  
Answer: Champaran

Q50. The first Indian satellite Aryabhata was launched in.  
Answer: 1975

Q51. What is the southernmost point of India  
Answer: Indira Point

Q52. Where is Indira Point located?  
Answer: in the Nicobar Islands

Q53. What was the old name of Indira Point  
Answer: pygmalion point

Q54. What is the northernmost point of India  
Answer: Indira call

Q55. Which are the Indian states touching the border of India and Myanmar?  
Answer: Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram

Q56. Which are the Indian states touching the border of India and Bangladesh?  
Answer: Mizoram, Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, and P. Bengal

Q 57. How many states of India join the border of the neighboring country?  
Answer: 17

Q58. Which is the Indian state surrounded by Bangladesh on three sides?  
Answer: Tripura

Q59. Which country is in the near east of India –  
Answer: Bangladesh

Q60. Which country is in the west near India  
Answer: Pakistan

Q61. Which sea is in the south-west of India  
Answer: Arabian Sea

Q62. The hills of Purvanchal separate India from which country?  
Answer: from Myanmar

Q63. Which gulf is in the south-east of India  
Answer: Bay of Bengal

Q64. Which ocean is in the south of India?  
Answer: Indian Ocean

Q65. Which state has the shortest coastline  
Answer: of Goa

Q66. By what name is the eastern seaboard of India is known  
Answer: Coromandel Coast

Q67. What is a place of India in the world in terms of area  
Answer: seventh

Q68. What is the place of India in the world in terms of population  
Answer: Second

Q69. Which is the line between India and Afghanistan  
Answer: Durand line

Long laptop use on lap, phones in pocket may cause male infertility: CU-IRM study

A joint study by the genetics research unit of Calcutta University's department of zoology and the Institute of Reproductive Medicine (IRM), Kolkata, has found that keeping mobile phones in trouser pockets and keeping laptops on laps for long hours may significantly increase the risk of male infertility and even impotence.

The five-year study, launched in 2019, was led by Professor Sujay Ghosh (Calcutta University), with support from Dr Ratna Chattopadhyay (IRM), Dr Samudra Pal (CU), Dr Pararb Paladhi (IRM), and Dr Saurav Dutta (CU).

A copy of the findings was made available to PTI on Wednesday.

"Male patients who visited IRM for infertility treatment were invited to participate in the study. We excluded cases involving diagnosed female infertility and obstructive male infertility (caused by anatomical defects). The study focused exclusively on cases of idiopathic male infertility (infertility of unknown origin), specifically those with azoospermia (absence of sperm in semen) or oligozoospermia (low sperm count)," the study said.

Patients with known infectious diseases identified through genetic diagnostic tests were also excluded. Approximately 1,200 patients were enrolled in the study, Ghosh said.

Participants were interviewed using a comprehensive questionnaire covering various aspects of lifestyle, habits, addictions, dietary preferences, sexual history, occupation, and psychological factors — collectively termed epidemiological data, he told PTI.

The responses were filtered through appropriate statistical tests to eliminate repetition and false reporting.

Participants then provided semen and blood samples. DNA was extracted from both sources

and subjected to next-generation sequencing (a high-throughput genetic analysis technique) to identify mutations.

Several gene mutations were identified, which were then analysed in conjunction with the epidemiological and lifestyle data using suitable statistical models, he said.

The findings revealed that men who carried specific genetic mutations had a significantly higher risk of infertility when frequently exposing their lower body to electronic devices such as mobile phones and laptops.

"It was found that keeping laptops on the lap or storing mobile phones in trouser pockets creates a high-intensity electromagnetic field. Prolonged exposure of testicles to such fields — and associated heat — was found to cause considerable damage to the delicate tissue....within the testicles, leading to the death of sperm-producing cells. This damage appears to be more severe in individuals with specific gene mutations and particularly concerning for younger men, who represent the heaviest users of such electronic devices," the study noted.

"Those who maintain prolonged direct body contact with these gadgets are considered the most vulnerable," it added.

Ghosh said, "Living systems normally possess self-repair mechanisms; however, natural mutations in our genome — often unknown to us — can compromise these repair systems, preventing recovery from damage caused by electromagnetic fields. Therefore, it is essential to exercise caution. We should use electronic gadgets judiciously and adopt a healthier lifestyle," it added.

The men, whose samples were analysed, were in the age group of 20-40 years, and the team studied their lifestyle, diet, workplace risks and any addictions. PTI

Analysis of scientific literature reveals organised fraud growing faster than legitimate science

A new analysis has uncovered strategies, including fabricated research and paid authorships and citations, by which organised scientific fraud is increasing and undermining the integrity of science at a rate faster than that at which legitimate science is growing, according to researchers.

Research groups collude to publish papers across multiple journals that often get retracted upon being discovered, results of the analysis, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, show.

Researchers, led by those from Northwestern University in the US, also found "brokers" serving as middlemen who enable a mass publishing of fraudulent papers in compromised journals and organised groups evading quality-control measures, such as journal de-indexing.

Indexing a journal in a database of scientific literature improves its visibility and makes it easily discoverable to researchers and the public, while de-indexing removes it.

The authors wrote, "Our results reveal some of the strategies that enable the entities promoting scientific fraud to evade interventions," which is "enabling the number of fraudulent publications to grow at a rate far outpacing that of legitimate science".

The team analysed datasets involving retracted research papers, editorial records and instances of image duplication.

Most of the data came from aggregators, which are platforms that gather, index and organise scientific papers and books, and make them searchable and accessible to researchers and public. The study looked at 'Web of Science' (managed by Clarivate), 'Scopus' (by Elsevier) and 'PubMed' (by the US' National Institutes of Health), among others.

Instances of and concerns surrounding misconduct in science -- which can include plagiarism, reporting fake data, a lack of quality control over a research submitted for editorial review, among others -- typically look at single individuals, the researchers said.

However, the team's analysis instead uncovered sophisticated global networks of individuals and entities, which systematically work together to undermine the integrity of academic publishing, they said.

Coordinated efforts involving 'paper mills', brokers and infiltrated journals were found.

'Paper mills' refers to individuals or groups who churn out large numbers of low-quality manuscripts -- featuring fabricated data, plagiarised content and sometimes physically impossible claims -- which are sold to academics wanting to quickly publish new work, the researchers explained.

"These networks are essentially criminal organisations, acting together to fake the process of science. Millions of dollars are involved in these processes," senior author Luis A. N. Amaral, professor of engineering sciences and applied mathematics and an expert in complex social systems, Northwestern University, said.

Amaral added that more scientists are getting caught up in paper mills, through which they can also "buy citations" and "appear like well-reputed scientists when they have barely conducted their own research at all".

A citation of a research is a means of acknowledging the work and crediting its authors. Citations are critical for academic integrity and add credence to a research paper.

Amaral added, "Science must police itself better in order to preserve its integrity. If we do not create awareness around this problem, worse and worse behaviour will become normalised. At some point, it will be too late, and scientific literature will become completely poisoned."

The researchers underscore the importance of addressing the issues before artificial intelligence infiltrates scientific literature more than it already has.

"If we're not prepared to deal with the fraud that's already occurring, then we're certainly not prepared to deal with what generative AI can do to scientific literature," said first author Reese Richardson, a postdoctoral fellow in Amaral's laboratory, Northwestern University.

"We have no clue what's going to end up in the literature, what's going to be regarded as scientific fact and what's going to be used to train future AI models, which then will be used to write more papers," Richardson said. PTI

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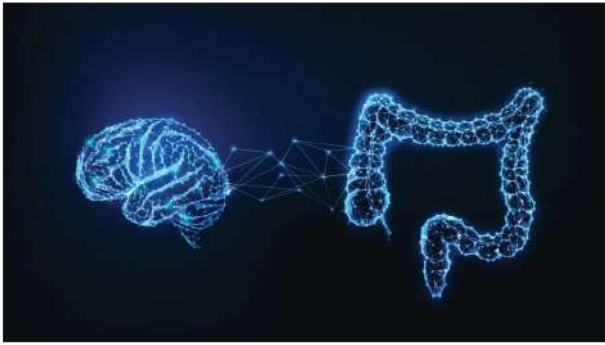
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Scientists uncover hidden gut ‘sense’ that talks to your brain



In a breakthrough that reimagines the way the gut and brain communicate, researchers have uncovered what they call a “neurobiotic sense,” a newly identified system that lets the brain respond in real time to signals from microbes living in our gut.

The new research, led by Duke University School of Medicine neuroscientists Diego Bohórquez, PhD, and M. Maya Kaelberer, PhD, and published in *Nature*, centers on neuropods, tiny sensor cells lining the colon’s epithelium. These cells detect a common microbial protein and send rapid messages to the brain that help curb appetite.

But this is just the beginning. The team believes this neurobiotic sense may be a broader platform for understanding how gut detects microbes, influencing everything from eating habits to mood — and even how the brain might shape the microbiome in return.

“We were curious whether the body could sense microbial patterns in real time and not just as an immune or inflammatory response, but as a neural response that guides behavior in real time,” said Bohórquez, a professor of medicine and neurobiology at Duke University School of Medicine and senior author of the study.

The key player is flagellin, an ancient protein found in bacterial flagella, a tail-like structure that bacteria use to swim. When we eat, some gut bacteria release flagellin. Neuropods detect it, with help from a receptor called TLR5, and fire off a message through the vagus nerve — a major communication line of communication between the gut and the brain.

The team, supported by the National Institutes of Health, proposed a bold idea: that bacterial flagellin in the colon could trigger neuropods to send an appetite-suppressing signal to the brain — a direct microbial influence on behavior.

The researchers tested this by fasting mice overnight, then giving them a small dose of flagellin directly to the colon. Those mice ate less.

When researchers tried the same experiment in mice missing the TLR5 receptor, nothing changed. The mice kept eating and gained weight, a clue that the pathway helps regulate appetite. The findings suggest that flagellin sends a “we’ve had enough” signal through TLR5, allowing the gut to tell the brain it’s time to stop eating. Without that receptor, the message doesn’t get through.

The discovery was guided by lead study authors Winston Liu, MD, PhD, Emily Alway, both graduate students of the Medical Scientist Training Program, and postdoctoral fellow Naama Reicher, Ph.D. Their experiments reveal that disrupting the pathway altered eating habits in mice pointed to a deeper link between gut microbes and behavior.

“Looking ahead, I think this work will be especially helpful for the broader scientific community to explain how our behavior is influenced by microbes,” said Bohórquez. “One clear next step is to investigate how specific diets change the microbial landscape in the gut. That could be a key piece of the puzzle in conditions like obesity or psychiatric disorders.”

Nap break improves performance by converting short-term task data into long-term memory Study

A new study explains a possible reason why sometimes taking a nap break helps people perform better when they resume a task -- during sleep, short-term information related to the task at hand is converted into long-term, stronger memory, researchers found.

The team, led by researchers from Harvard Medical School, US, monitored brain activity of 25 participants as they were learning a typing sequence, followed by taking a nap.

During sleep, areas in the cortex -- brain's outermost layer that helps with higher-level functions such as memory -- that were active while the participants worked showed more rhythmic, repetitive patterns, indicating that information related to the task is being processed, the team found.

The results, published in the Journal of Neuroscience, also show that an increased number of brain waves in these areas of the brain's cortex were related with an improved performance of the participants following the nap.

"During sleep, cortical brain areas active during training had more rhythmic activity. Increased brain rhythms in these areas correlated with how much participants improved in the task after the nap," the authors wrote.

Further, the researchers found that performance during learning was linked with an increased activity during sleep in brain regions known to help with executing a movement -- possibly representing the memory of the task.

However, performance after a nap was linked to an increased activity during sleep in brain regions known to help with planning a movement, which the authors suggested may help improve functioning in future.

"Brain rhythms occur everywhere in the brain during sleep. But the rhythms in these regions increase after learning, presumably to stabilise and enhance memory," author Dana Manoach, professor of psychology in the department of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, said.

Starving tumors makes cancer treatment work better

Cancer cells and tumors do not exist in a vacuum. Far from the isolation and self-sufficiency of the fictional Wakanda, tumors develop in and alter the nearby milieu of immune cells, connective tissue, blood vessels and a sea of proteins and carbohydrates that provide structure and other supportive functions.

Cancer cells interact with this neighborhood — which scientists term the tumor microenvironment — in many ways, including obtaining extra resources needed to fuel their unchecked growth. Like a fishing trawler deploying its net, pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) cells reform their cell surfaces to grab additional nutrients from the jelly-like substance between cells called the extracellular matrix.

This cellular scavenging process — known as macropinocytosis — affects the area surrounding the tumor, making the connective tissue stiffer and preventing immune cells from reaching the tumor.

Scientists at the NCI-Designated Cancer Center at Sanford Burnham Prebys published findings July 24, 2025, in *Cancer Cell* demonstrating that blocking macropinocytosis reshapes the tumor microenvironment to be less fibrous and to allow more access to immune cells. These changes made immunotherapy and chemotherapy more effective in treating PDAC tumors in mice.

The researchers started by observing cells in the tumor microenvironment called fibroblasts that typically form connective tissue and produce many components of the extracellular matrix that are captured during macropinocytosis. In the presence of a tumor, some nearby fibroblasts are coerced to become cancer-associated fibroblasts (CAF) that help tumors grow.

"These CAFs are among the cells surrounding the tumor, and they will support tumor growth by providing metabolites and growth signals, as well as helping in other ways," said Yijuan Zhang, PhD, a staff scientist at Sanford Burnham Prebys and lead author of the study.

The scientists found that blocking macropinocytosis exacerbated the metabolic stress experienced by CAFs that are deprived of glutamine, one of the 20 amino acids used to build proteins throughout the body. Because PDAC relies upon glutamine much more than other cancers, CAFs in the pancreatic cancer tumor microenvironment are routinely starved of glutamine. After preventing pancreatic CAFs from using the same scrounging strategy as PDAC tumors, the scientists observed a change to a different subtype of CAF marked by the expression of genes that promote inflammation.

"Most pancreatic CAFs are myofibroblasts that promote stiffness and density in the tumor microenvironment and make it more difficult for immune cells and drugs to reach the tumor," said Cosimo Commisso, PhD, senior author and interim director and deputy director of the institute's cancer center. "Our experiments led to a subtype reprogramming with fewer myofibroblasts and more inflammatory CAFs, and we wondered how this change would affect the overall tumor microenvironment."

The research team found that significant changes in the tumor neighborhood resulted from preventing macropinocytosis in CAFs.

"There were fewer deposits of collagen that make the tumor microenvironment stiff or fibrotic, more access for CD4+ and CD8+ T cells to infiltrate the tumor, and vascular expansion, which means a widening of blood vessels that can promote drug delivery," said Zhang.

The investigators then wanted to see how these tumor microenvironment modifications might make a difference for patients with PDAC and other cancers that rely on macropinocytosis for fuel. They tested the effects of combining a treatment to block macropinocytosis with immunotherapy and chemotherapy.

"Infiltrating T cells are rich in a cell surface protein called PD-1 that dampens the immune response, so we combined a macropinocytosis inhibitor called EIPA with an anti-PD-1 antibody," said Commisso. "We found it significantly suppressed tumor metastasis and prolonged mouse survival."

"Our findings were similar when using EIPA as a pretreatment before using the chemotherapy gemcitabine," said Zhang. "In addition to synergistically suppressing tumor growth in mice with PDAC, it also reduced the spread of micrometastases in the lungs."



HOROSCOPE



ARIES  
(Mar 21-Apr 19)

Difficult predicaments could arise today if you try to exert your will over others without having the most honorable intentions, Aries. It could be that you're using someone else's fear of you to control him or her. This doesn't make for a healthy relationship. Try not to snap at others. Make allies, not enemies, and you'll find that you will have nothing to fear.

GEMINI  
(May 21-Jun 21)

There may be a great deal of fuss over something that seems quite insignificant to you, Gemini. Try to see the beauty and importance of everything around you. At the same time, make sure you give yourself enough credit for being the person you are. Egos are apt to go through a bit of a transformation that will affect the way you react to the outside world.

LEO  
(Jul 23-Aug 22)

Feel free to speak more loudly today, Leo. You'll find that things fall into place more easily if you speak your thoughts outwardly and directly in the presence of others. Bring your internal power under your control instead of becoming a victim of the control games played by others. Your sincere heart is easily manipulated, so be careful that you aren't getting the short end of the stick.

LIBRA  
(Sept 23-Oct 22)

Add more sunshine to your day, Libra. It may be time to stir up your inner passion and let it speak with greater confidence than you have been lately. Make sure you heal yourself by letting the people around you hear your truth loud and clear. Don't play games in order to please others. Stay true to yourself above all else.

SAGITTARIUS  
(Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Don't dwell on your fluctuating moods today, Sagittarius. Look at the larger trends and how positive elements are coming together in your favor. Stay optimistic and remember that you were put here for a reason. Respect and honor your values by staying in tune with yourself and the world around you. There's a profound power in your stillness, so cherish all moments of silence.

AQUARIUS  
(Jan 20 - Feb 18)

Try not to lose sight of your own projects or desires, Aquarius. There's a great deal of power and manipulative energy in the air today that could throw you off course if you aren't careful. Have confidence in yourself and don't back down if things get too confrontational. Take control of the car you're driving instead of just coasting haphazardly down the hill.

TAURUS  
(Apr 20-May 20)

The fire within you is raging today, Taurus, and you should be careful how you wield this power. Be proud and triumphant. Walk with your shoulders back and head high. Freedom is important, but make sure that others don't interpret it as you not caring about a person or situation that's actually quite meaningful to you. Let your heart speak openly and honestly.

CANCER  
(Jun 22-Jul 22)

Things are coming to a critical point for you today, Cancer, and you may find that other people openly object to your actions. It's OK to be a bit selfish if the situation is appropriate. Look at yourself in the mirror and be proud of the person you see. Try not to get lost in the group or think that your personal success and happiness depend on the success of others.

VIRGO  
(Aug 23-Sept 22)

You should bask in a glorious splendor today, Virgo. There's a great deal of power at your disposal. You'll find your ego is healthy, charged, and ready for the battlefield. Work lovingly with the energies that surround you. There's a great deal of fire in the air that will aid your pursuit of happiness. Don't settle for anything less than the best, because you're worth it.

SCORPIO  
(Oct 23-Nov 21)

You'll find that your spark can easily turn potential energy into kinetic energy, Scorpio. Don't underestimate the power of your words. Realize the profound impact they have on others and take responsibility for their consequences. Try to use them sparingly if you can. Speak half as much as you normally would, but make each sentence resonate twice as powerfully.

CAPRICORN  
(Dec 22 - Jan 19)

This is your day to shine in all your glory, Capricorn. There's no need to hold anything back. You'll find that you have a great deal of love to share. Your heart is likely to go to extremes today in order to prove its love, passion, and affection. Make sure that this energy that's so true to your core is appreciated and reciprocated by the people with whom you share it.

PISCES  
(Feb 19 - Mar 20)

Recharge today by getting outside and stretching your arms to the sky, Pisces. Be proud and courageous. You have the power to turn an unhealthy situation into a positive one, but first you must get rid of all self-doubt. If you don't have confidence in yourself, it will be hard for others to have confidence in you. Make sure you let the world know exactly where you stand.

FIND THE WORDS!!

G F C F R L X N M I T T E N S P B B T E  
Q R A K W Y X G A T D J L W Y A N M S W  
W T Q D K P P Y I V G R B T I E G U H A  
A I S C Y Q Z H F H L Y K Y B P I M I T  
L U E E W P L V C P S R K C Q P U P R C  
L S S S M K W E V I Q M J P R D A U T H  
E P S Q J E L Y Q K S Y W F Y X U N J F  
R T A F S M P V X B I R B T T J D S T W  
B G L F D H S C G A J R V R E M E B C S  
M M G Y Q Y O W G V L Z S O I Y V P Y S  
U R L T P B J E E K O H A U T S X S X S  
W A E R S G A V S A S B U S S T J E S E  
T I G I Q W C Q X B T J Q E H R G V U R  
V N B K G S K M J S F E M R I O H W E D  
F C G S J C E L P F A N R S R H Y B Q J  
C O W O L Y T B L O U S E C T S I Z N J  
L A J U M P E R V S V T O V X O F H M M  
A T S B G V X Y G E Z B M T E N N I S W  
Z F S O C K S S B U Z Y X I J M X Y M X  
A O F S J C G E K D Q T T Y B C A B C L

1. skirt 2. jacket 3. trousers 4. socks 5. shoes 6. pants 7. raincoat  
8. umbrella 9. shirt 10. dress 11. mittens 12. sweater 13. blouse 14. shorts  
15. tennis 16. tshirt 17. suit 18. jumper 19. glasses 20. watch 21. tie

Matt Smith to play villain in Shawn Levy's 'Star Wars: Starfighter'

From the fantastical realm of “House of the Dragon”, Matt Smith has now taken a detour to space by joining the Shawn Levy-directed film, “Star Wars: Starfighter”.

Smith will be joining Ryan Gosling and Mia Goth, in the movie that promises to explore the “Star Wars” universe five years after “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker”. While he will play the antagonist, specific details about his role have been kept hidden, reported Variety.

The English actor had revealed in 2021 that he was part of “The Rise of Skywalker” but his scenes ended up on the chopping board.

Smith has had a prosperous career, especially as the Eleventh Doctor in the beloved long-running British sci-fi television series “Doctor Who”. Additionally, Smith starred in Netflix’s “The Crown”, for which he received an Emmy nomination. He now plays Daemon Targaryen in the “Game of Thrones” prequel “House of the Dragon”.

Levy recently directed “Deadpool & Wolverine”, which broke box office records for the highest grossing R-rated film. Levy has explored science fiction before in his Netflix film “The Adam Project”. He also directed the eight episodes of the streamer’s popular sci-fi series “Stranger Things” across four seasons.

“Star Wars: Starfighter” is set to release on May 28, 2027.

FIR for transmitting obscene material registered against actor Shwetha Menon

A case for publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form has been registered against Malayalam film actor Shwetha Menon on a complaint based on certain scenes in some of her past movies, police said on Wednesday.

Police said that no case was initially registered on the complaint by Martin Menachery, but he later went to court seeking registration of an FIR.

Following the court’s direction, an FIR, under section 67 (publishing or transmitting obscene material in electronic form) of the Information Technology (IT) Act and provisions of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act was filed on Tuesday, an officer of Ernakulam Central police station said.

The complaint has alleged that there were obscene scenes in some of her past movies and these are being circulated on social media and various online sites, they said. PTI

Prime Video announces new series 'ANDHERA'



Prime Video announced the global premiere of its upcoming supernatural horror series, ‘Andhera’. Headlined by Priya Bapat, Karanvir Malhotra, Prajakta Koli, and Surveen Chawla, the series also features Vatsal Sheth, Parvin Dabas, and Pranay Pachauri in prominent roles.

The series is set to premiere on Prime Video on August 14.

Produced by Ritesh Sidhwani, Farhan Akhtar, Kassim Jagmagia, Mohit Shah, and Karan Anshuman under the banner of Excel Entertainment, the eight-episode riveting drama is written by Gaurav Desai, Raaghav Dar, Chintan Sarda, and Karan Anshuman, and directed by Raaghav Dar.

Blending chilling investigative drama with supernatural horror, ‘Andhera’ promises an immersive, edge-of-the-seat visual experience.

“Making Andhera has been one of the most fulfilling experiences I’ve had,” shares creator Gaurav

Desai. “I’ve always been drawn to horror and the supernatural, so finally putting something out there in these genres feels surreal.

From the start, the idea was to create something that wasn't just scary, but stayed with you—something that made you uneasy

in a quiet and lasting way,” he added.

Directed by Raaghav Dar, you can watch ‘Andhera’ from August 14. PTI

'In Search Of The Sky' to premiere at Toronto International Film Festival 2025

The debut feature In Search Of The Sky by Indian filmmaker Jitank Singh Gurjar has been officially selected for the prestigious 50th edition of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), to be held from September 4–14, 2025. The film, a poignant Braj-language indie drama, is the only Indian film this year to be featured in TIFF’s Centrepiece program, which showcases bold, contemporary global cinema.

Shot in the spiritual heartland of India - at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj and villages in Madhya Pradesh - the film tells the deeply emotional story of a mentally unstable young man and his aging, poverty-stricken parents who set out on a pilgrimage to seek healing at one of the world’s

largest religious gatherings. A Quiet Film with a Powerful Soul

Directed and co-written by Jitank Singh Gurjar, In Search Of The Sky (originally titled Vimukt) is a raw and heartfelt narrative exploring human fragility, faith, and the desperate hope for redemption. The story is brought to life by theatre-trained actors Nikhil Yadav, Raghvendra Bhadoriya, and Meghna Agarwal.

The project is the result of a creative collaboration between Pooja Vishal Sharma (Writer/Producer), Shelly Sharma (Cinematographer, Creative Director & Executive Producer), and Gurjar. The film is produced by Canvas Creations in association with Summit Studios and Rihla Films.

Rajesh Tailang, Sheeba Chaddha on their friendship: We have known each other for more than 10 years

They first met a decade ago for an ad shoot in Allahabad that Rajesh Tailang remembers and Sheeba Chaddha seems to have forgotten, but it’s a friendship that has clearly stood the test of time.

The actors, two of the most famous faces in the streaming space, have reunited as on-screen couple for a third time in ZEE5’s “Bakaiti” after “Mirzapur” and “Bandish Bandits”.

Asked about their great chemistry on these shows, Tailang said, “We’ve known about it for years”.

“We have known each other for many years. I knew about her even before that as she worked with many of my friends. In fact, I saw one of her theatre productions as well. We also met during an NCPA workshop. She has forgotten all these things but I remember everything,” the actor told PTI.

Chaddha joked, “This is the first time you are telling me about this.”

“It has been more than 10 years that we have been working together,” Tailang said, calling Chaddha “amazing”.

“Not just me, everyone says this. Working with her is fun but challenging. The way she details out her work, as an actor, you

have to be aware of it and react accordingly,” he said.

Chaddha is equally effusive in her praise of Tailang.

“In whatever work we have done together, he is so well entrenched in that character that it makes your work easy as a co-actor. I feel easy while working with him... This will be our third outing together as actors. I don’t know his or how he arrives at it, but ‘Mirzapur’ particularly, his work is amazing.

“With him, you don’t have to cross a distance to arrive somewhere. It’s really very safe space for me as a co-actor and it’s him he creates that just by being himself,” she said.

“Bakaiti”, a colloquial term for ‘idle chatter’, is a slice-of-life family drama about a middle class family in Ghaziabad and their everyday struggles.

“It’s about everyday problems of our lives that we all go through. You will find the sights, smells and syntax very familiar. For the lack of a better word, it is very relatable,” Chaddha said.

Tailang said it will remind viewers of their homes where even little things lead to big discussions.

“It is a slice-of-life story of a family,” he added. PTI

Director Jitank Singh Gurjar shared his excitement: “In Search Of The Sky is a film rooted in India’s rural truth. To see it premiere at TIFF’s 50th edition is nothing short of a miracle for a small indie like ours. We made this film with honesty and heart, and this recognition motivates me to continue telling such stories.”

Producer and co-writer Pooja Vishal Sharma added: “This film is a miracle made from sweat, belief, and the collective vision of a few passionate individuals. TIFF’s recognition is deeply moving and gives hope to indie creators like us.”

Shelly Sharma, who captured the film’s haunting beauty during live Mahakumbh crowds, reflected: “We had thou-

sands of people in every frame who didn’t even know they were part of our film. That’s the kind of cinema we made - real, chaotic, and beautiful.”

Behind the Film: The Journey and the Message

In Search Of The Sky explores a world where faith becomes the last hope for those forgotten by society. Its narrative is inspired by real encounters - from abandoned mentally challenged children to the silent struggles of rural parents burdened by love and helplessness.

The film’s logline encapsulates this struggle: A poverty-stricken elderly couple take their mentally unstable son on a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to the Maha Kumbh, seeking healing and redemption. PTI

Bengali movie 'Ahana' in official section of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne

‘Ahana’ (The Light Within), the debut Bengali feature movie by short film director Promita Bhowmik, has been officially selected in the prestigious ‘Indian Film Festival of Melbourne’ 2025.

After receiving the news from the festival directorate, Bhowmik said on Wednesday that she is honoured.

“I am very happy to know that my film will now reach the Australian audience. Hope ‘Ahana’ will be loved by the viewers in a globally recognised platform like IFFM,” she said.

The IFFM 2025 will showcase a variety of Indian cinema, including fea-

ture films, documentaries and short films from August 14-24.

The film is slated to be screened on August 24 in the IFFM, the festival directorate posted on its website.

‘Ahana’ has a woman protagonist who challenges patriarchy.

Ahana had also been selected in the competition section of the ‘Best Film Category’ of Washington DC South Asian Film Festival 2025, Indo German Film Week 2025 (Competition Section), Kolkata International Film Festival 2024 (Competition Section - Bengali Panorama), Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival

Copyright can't be claimed on common themes, says HC; junks plea against film 'Dream Girl 2'

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday dismissed a writer’s plea alleging copyright infringement by producer Ekta Kapoor’s Balaji Telefilms of the Ayushmann Khurrana-starrer Hindi film ‘Dream Girl 2’, noting protection cannot be granted for common themes and plots.

A bench of Justice R. Chagla noted copyright and protection cannot be sought for common movie plots or themes and dismissed the plea filed by film writer Ashim Bagchi, whom it also asked to pay Rs 10 lakh to five defendants (Rs 2 lakh each) for making frivolous claims.

Justice Chagla referred to the 1993 Hollywood movie ‘Mrs Doubtfire’ which employed gender disguise as a core theme/idea, the subject around which ‘Dream Girl 2’ is centred.

Bagchi, in his petition, had claimed the 2023 movie ‘Dream Girl 2’ was a copy of a similar script penned by him in 2007.

In 2023, the high court had refused to grant any interim stay on the release of the movie, maintaining that Bagchi had approached it at the eleventh hour.

The court, after hearing the writer’s plea, dismissed it on Wednesday.

Justice Chagla, in the judgment, said the plaintiff (Bagchi), by alleging copyright infringement, was seeking a monopoly over matters in which ex-facie no copyright subsists to begin with.

These features are neither original nor capable of protection under the law of copyright as they are mere themes/concepts/ideas, the HC observed.

Referring to Hollywood movie ‘Mrs Doubtfire’, which employed gender disguise as a core theme/idea, the HC said the plaintiff’s script, which is based on such common themes, cannot be considered to be novel. PTI

Kajol-starrer 'The Trial' back with new season in September



Aamir Ali.

The Trial revolves around Noyonika Sengupta (Kajol), a stay-at-home mother and law school graduate who had given up her career to prioritise her family. After a decade, when her husband Rajiv (Jisshu Sengupta) is accused of corruption and involve-

ment in a sex scandal, she has no option but to get back to work to support her family.

The story follows Noyonika’s journey as she tries to reestablish her legal career, taking on the hardships head on while seeking justice for her clients and her husband.

Over the course of eight episodes, the series effectively explores legal complexities and draws inspiration from real-life cases and characters reported in the news.

In Season 2, Kajol’s Noyonika will face new challenges after finding a strong foothold in the field of law.



# Chennaiyin FC suspends operations due to uncertainty surrounding ISL



**NEW DELHI, Aug 06:** Indian club football appeared to be in complete crisis as Chennaiyin FC on Wednesday suspended its operations in view of the uncertainty surrounding the Indian Super League, days after Bengaluru FC and Odisha FC decided to stop paying salaries to their first-team players and staff.

Chennaiyin’s decision came a day before a crucial meeting between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) top brass and eight ISL clubs on Thursday. Chennaiyin FC is, however, unlikely to have a representation in the meeting as the club is not among the signatories calling for such a move.

“In the light of the continuing uncertainty surrounding the future of the ISL, Chennaiyin FC has taken the extremely difficult decision to temporarily pause club operations,” the Chennai-based club said on its social media handle.

“These are never easy decisions to make, and ours has come after much thoughtful consideration and careful deliberation. The challenges of being a stakeholder in Indian football are well recognized.

“This is not a step we take lightly. It affects people we care about deeply. The welfare of our players, coaches, staff and their families remains a priority, and we are in constant communication with them as we face this together.”

The two-time ISL champion side “hope that this pause will be short-lived and that we can return to doing what we love as soon as there is clarity for all clubs”.

“Throughout this uncertainty, our commitment to the growth of Indian football, upon which this journey began remains as strong as ever. To our loyal supporters, your passion and belief have always inspired us. We ask for your understanding as we navigate this challenging period, and we look forward to better days ahead,” it added.

“At Chennaiyin FC, we are more than just a football club. We are a family. Like any family, we support each other in difficult times. However we must remain true to the core values on which this club was built and which we have always strived to uphold.”

Last week, ISL side Odisha FC took the decision to suspend paying salaries to its first-team players and staff.

Late on Monday, Bengaluru FC indefinitely suspended contracts of its first-team players and staff amid the continued uncertainty over the ISL, which remains on hold.

The club, home to legendary striker and former India captain Sunil Chhetri, said the lack of clarity on the League’s future left it with no choice but to take this “difficult” decision.

“In view of the uncertainty

surrounding the future of the Indian Super League season, Bengaluru Football Club has taken what is a very difficult decision of indefinitely suspending the salaries of the players and staff belonging to the first team,” the Bengaluru club had said in statement.

“Running and sustaining a football club in India has always been an uphill climb, one we have put everything aside made, season after season.

“However, the lack of clarity on the League’s future leaves us with no choice but to take this step. The future and well-being of our players, staff and their families is of utmost importance to us, and we are in touch with them as we wait for a resolution,” the statement added.

Bengaluru FC also urged both the AIFF and FSDL to resolve the impasse at the earliest.

“We urge the AIFF and FSDL to end this impasse swiftly. The uncertainty benefits no one, and a prompt resolution is vital for the future of Indian football,” the club said.

The ISL was put on hold by its organisers, Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL), due to the unresolved status of the Master Rights Agreement (MRA) with the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

The current 15-year MRA between FSDL and AIFF, signed in 2010, expires on

December 18.

Amid the growing uncertainty, eight ISL clubs have written to the AIFF expressing concern about their future. The AIFF’s top brass is scheduled to meet the CEOs of the eight clubs on Thursday to discuss the situation.

The letter, calling for a “constructive dialogue” with the AIFF, was signed by Bengaluru FC, Jamshedpur FC, FC Goa, Hyderabad FC, Kerala Blasters, NorthEast United FC, Odisha FC and Punjab FC.

The three Kolkata-based clubs — Mohun Bagan Super Giant, East Bengal, Mohammedan Sporting — as well as Mumbai City FC and Chennaiyin FC were missing.

Last month, AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey had assured that the 2025-26 ISL season would be held, but stopped short of confirming a start date.

On July 11, FSDL officially announced that the 2025-26 ISL season had been put “on hold” due to uncertainty surrounding the MRA renewal. The ISL usually runs from September to April.

Following a directive from the Supreme Court, the AIFF has been asked not to negotiate new terms of the MRA (with FSDL) until a final judgment is delivered in the AIFF draft constitution case. A ruling is expected soon. PTI

# Indonesia hold India in AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers opener

**YANGON (Myanmar), Aug 06:** India were held to a goalless draw by Indonesia in their opening Group D match of the AFC U-20 Women’s Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers here on Wednesday.

The Young Tigresses have one point in the group, which is currently topped by hosts Myanmar, who defeated Turkmenistan 6-1 at the same venue, earlier in the day.

An intense midfield battle began right from the kick-off, as both sides looked to assert their dominance. India managed to settle into the game early on, as they were able to pass it around in the opposition half, often creat-

ing chances down both flanks.

Neha’s sixth-minute cross from the left wing deceived the Indonesian defence, leaving Pooja and Sulanjana Raul on the chase at the far post. A simple touch could have posed serious questions to Indonesia goalkeeper Alleana Ayu Arumy, but the ball eluded everyone.

As the clock ticked past the half-hour mark, Sulanjana and Pooja tried their luck from long range. While the former’s effort missed the target by inches, the latter saw her shot fly straight into Alleana’s hands.

Neha looked lively down the left flank after the change of ends, but the In-

donesia defenders worked in unison to isolate the former and gain possession of the ball.

With a little over 20 minutes left, India began to press high in order to induce some panic among the Indonesia defence.

Sibani Devi Nongmeikapam intercepted a pass in the attacking third and cut it back for substitute Babita Kumari, who had replaced Neha. The latter, however, was unable to get a touch on the ball. Minutes later, Sibani looked to find Babita again with a cross from the left, but Alleana collected it calmly.

Indonesia’s only notable chance of the match came in the 87th minute, when substitute Ajeng Sri

Handayani bounded past the India defence and attempted to place the ball at the far post.

India goalkeeper Monalisha Devi Moirangthem, however, got down low to make a save before Thoibisana Chanu Toijam cleared.

India had two good chances in injury time, both off free-kicks by Anju Chanu Kayenpaibam, one from each flanks. While both the free-kicks were on target, the Indonesia goalkeeper managed to palm them away.

The Young Tigresses will square off against Turkmenistan in their second match at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on Friday. PTI

## IMC, ASEZ ink MoU to jointly restore depleting environment

**ITANAGAR, Aug 06:** Itanagar Municipal Corporation (IMC) and Save the Earth from A to Z (ASEZ) have signed a (MoU) to collaborate for environmental restoration, present pressing ecological issues. The MoU was signed by ASEZ Itanagar representatives in presence of Mayor Tamme Phassang, to address urgent environmental threats, like ecosystem degradation, pollution and biodiversity loss and climate change through clean-up, ecosystem restoration projects and awareness drives.

Young minds brimming with zeal took a remarkable step, Phassang said in admiration, and termed it as a shining example of Jan Bhagidari. The MoU not only outlines plans to empower students with practical environmental responsibilities but also emphasizes collaborative research, local stakeholder involvement and global outreach through ASEZ’s Earth Recovery Project. The MoU reflected a united resolve for Itanagar to witness active role of youth in environmental governance.



**GUWAHATI, Aug 06:** Royal Global University (RGU) student Zahid Mamud (MSc Physics) has received funding from prestigious CERN, European Organization for Nuclear Research. The grant will support his participation in an international training in Spain.

The, CERN, set up in 1954 with headquarters in Meyrin, Switzerland, a western suburb of Geneva, located on the France-Switzerland border. It is an intergovernmental organization that operates the world’s largest particle physics laboratory.

Zahid has been selected to at-

tend the CAS course on ‘Introduction to Accelerator Physics’, slated in Santa Susanna, Spain, during September 21 to October 4 next. A former INSPIRE Fellow, Zahid’s selection reflects his unwavering dedication, academic brilliance and commitment to advance in the field of physics.

Delighted over this achievement, RGU Vice Chancellor Prof. A K Buragohain said, “Zahid’s recognition by CERN is a proud moment for the university as it highlights the quality of our academic environment and global potential of our students.”

This remarkable opportunity places him among a select group of emerging physicists worldwide, contributing to the cutting edge of nuclear research, according to RGU release.

## Khandu-Tasing spirit go-getter DC ...

*From P.I...* expressing concerns about lack of adequate Govt support to tackle such recurring natural calamity.

In 2006, media had reported that the NHPC was planning to relocate and scale down the project due to concerns on flooding upstream by China. The situation reversed due to construction of many tall dams/massive storage reservoirs in the river basin area effecting river’s natural flow regime in downstream India. The SUMP was declared a national project in 2008 by the GoI, but agitation by local communities due to concerns about displacement and ecological damage delayed its execution and its pre-feasibility report (PFR) is still not prepared.

Thus, in 2025, NHPC planned to conduct the survey for PFR for site selection. The dam height is nearly 300 meters above the river bed level at dam location to store water up to 750 m MSL. The back waters of the reservoir would touch the foot of Medog Hydropower Station (60,000 MW) being built on the upstream river in Tibet by China so that adequate flood buffer is maintained to safely discharge peak floods by upstream dam failures due to earthquakes, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods and massive landslides.

The SUMP reservoir would act as a regulating basin to release continuous flows downstream according to the river flow regime when the water released from China’s upstream mega power station is regulated or intermittent as per needs of power generation on daily and weekly basis. The SUMP on completion would serve as a boon for the affected people of East Siang district for which Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Pangin MLA-cum-RD Minister Ojin Tasing have been perusing the agitating villagers to consent for construction of the project willingly. CM Khandu has defused the concern about 11,500-MW capacity of the dam saying, before conducting the PFR, it would be wrong to quantify its capacity.

Siang, the 21<sup>st</sup> district, derived from mighty Siang River, created by bifurcating West Siang and East Siang districts consisting of Rumgong-Kaying and Boleng-Pangin Assembly Constituencies with Pangin as its district HQs, was inaugurated on 27.11.15 by then Chief Minister Nabam Tuki. Siang district geographically, located almost in the centre of Siang belt of Arunachal Pradesh and predominantly inhabited by Adi tribe with PN Thungon as its deputy commissioner, has been in the news, since the Govt proposed to develop the SUMP.

DC Thungon, amidst the negative vibes, has been winning hearts with his go-getter attitude, known for not accepting ‘No’ for any act for greater welfare of the people and the state, for which the people’s opinion has been tilting in favour of the SUMP.

On **August 5**, Riga, the largest village in the Adi belt, during a huge public gathering, organized by Riga Village Siang Upper Multipurpose Project Development Committee (SUMPDC), attended by Riga Monku SUMPDC chairperson Tamuk Talom, Riga circle chairperson Tarung Taboh, chairperson Riga Mobuk and Taping Tali, announced their MoU signed with the GoAP a week to facilitate conduct of survey for the PFR.

On **May 23**, it was DC Thungon, who at Boleng was instrumental in signing of MoU by angkang (Kumku) villagers under Riga circle with the GoAP to allow conduct of PFR. DC Thungon, on behalf of the GoAP and Pangkang leaders Taba Tamut and Bakin Tali, on behalf of villagers, had signed the MoU in presence of Panchayati Raj, State Transport and Cooperation Minister Ojing Tasing, Hydropower joint secretary Hage Lailang & CE Atek Miyu and state BJP general secretary Nalong Mize.

The MoU assured a development package of <sup>1</sup> five crore for infrastructure improvement, health services and livelihood programmes in next three years, to be implemented by a newly formed village development committee, comprising of project-affected families for their benefits.

On **July 12**, 300 Riga villagers had signed a MoU with the GoAP to support conduct of the PFR after a meeting at Itanagar in presence of CM Khandu, Minister Ojing Tasing and Chief Secretary Manish Kumar Gupta. CM Khandu had said that more than 80% of residents had pledged their support and reiterated to hold deliberations with all likely project affected families after conduct of the PFR. The GoAP remains committed to seeking and acting upon public opinion and seeking public consent at every stage of pre-construction activities for the SUMP, he had assured.

Tasing had informed that the MoU was signed after over six months’ detailed parleys with all Riga households. Riga is the maternal village for most of the Minyong tribes, and that migrants of Riga in the past had set up 47 other villages, while continuing to maintain close familial and emotional ties with Riga, he had said, and hoped that other villages, including those sharing a common past, would also support conduct of the PFR.

On **July 25**, 98 households of Riew village had given their consent for the PFR by singing a MoU at Itanagar in presence of Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, Minister Tasing, chief secretary Manish Kumar Gupta, Siang DC Thungon and Riew villagers. Riew is the second-largest village in Siang belt and consenting households constitute nearly 62% of total population, marking a turning point in public response to the mega-dam project that once faced stiff resistance.

Welcoming the development, Mein, who also holds the power portfolio, had said the development marks another important milestone in the GoAP’s transformative hydropower initiative, a journey which he termed is rooted in “dialogue, understanding and mutual respect.”

“Being a democratic country with a people-friendly Govt, we believe in taking the people’s confidence and making them equal partners in development. Through awareness, technical education and trust-building, we’ve brought communities onboard,” he had said, adding SUMP reflected the GoAP’s broader commitment to sustainable and inclusive development.

The Siang people are known for their bravery as proved during 1911-12 Anglo-Abor War memorial in Kekar Monying Kebang village in Siang district. The statue, unveiled by Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein on 01.09.23 in presence of descendants of the heroes and freedom fighters of the war, serves as a tribute to often-overlooked heroes of Arunachal Pradesh who played a crucial role in the Battle of Kekar Monying, courageously opposing invasion of their territory by the British forces. The memorial stands as a poignant reminder of the Battle of Kekar Monying’s historical significance of Adi warriors valiantly confronting the British forces.

DC Thungon, being a bureaucrat, would be transferred on completion of his tenure, but his ground works would help SUMP to stand tall which would remain engraved in state history for the people to recall...*kya migam they?*

# Father of Public Health’ Dr Jampa retires leaving a legacy to emulate



**NAHARLAGUN, Aug 06:** Arunachal Pradesh Epidemiologist Dr. Lobsang Jampa, who after serving in health department for 28 years and 3 months to earn the sobriquet ‘Father of Public Health’ retired from service on July 31 last. Health Services Director Dr. Marbom Basar and senior officers, including Dr. Komling Perme and health directorate officials gave a heart-touching farewell to him wishing him a peaceful retired life.

Appointed as State Epidemiologist in 1999, his leadership was instrumental during several major health crises, including Avian Influenza outbreak (2005), Swine Flu and COVID-19 pandemic, where his strategic coordination and tireless efforts in outbreak response, containment, and public education earned widespread recognition.

Fondly remembered for his fieldwork during early 2000s, when road connec-

tivity was still a major challenge, Dr. Jampa personally had led outbreak investigations across remote corners of the state, including Parsi-Parlo, Sunpura and Menchuka. His hands-on approach, scientific acumen, and unwavering commitment earned him State Gold Medal-2015 in recognition of his outstanding service to the health sector.

Pioneering contributions of Dr. Jampa, a stalwart in public health, shaped the health landscape of the state. His trailblazing career and transformative impact were responsible for establishing the disease surveillance in the state. He was also a persistent advocate for systemic improvements in public health governance and played a key role alongside Dr. Alok Yirang and Dr. Pekba Ringu to enhance retirement age of Govt doctors to 62 years, during the tenure Development Commissioner Satya Gopal.

Under his stewardship,

numerous ICMR-supported studies were successfully implemented, including research on Herpes Simplex, Hepatitis B screening in Anjaw, India Diabetes Study (2012 & follow-up in 2022–2023) and groundbreaking study on Paragonimiasis (lung fluke disease).

A visionary institution-builder, Dr. Jampa was pivotal in facilitating land acquisition for patients in Vellore and National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) at Hollongi, overseeing construction of a protective boundary wall to safeguard the NCDC, spearheading establishment of Health Emergency Operation Centre (HEOC) at TRIHMS toeing International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005, laying groundwork for state’s Public Health Cadre, a structural reform that promises to shape the future of health governance.

He was instrumental in successful implementation of major national health

programmes and schemes, including establishing 12 District Dialysis Units under Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme and three more units underway; led rollout of Chief Minister Organ Transplant Scheme, 2018 which has facilitated over 200 successful kidney transplants, actively monitored and guided NP-NCDC, IDSP, HWC, NPCCHH, NRCP and National Viral Hepatitis Control Programmes.

Dr. Jampa brought vision, integrity and an unmatched dedication to improving public health services across the state, which were fondly recalled by his colleagues, particularly his humility, relentless work ethic, and mentorship to younger professionals.

Though he retired on attaining age of 62, but he left behind a towering legacy that continues to inspire the department for times to come, according to an official release.