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in Kopili River
After Drowning Incident

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Reflects on a Decade of Develop-
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Guardian Minister Reviews Development and Disaster Preparedness in Dima Hasao, Stresses Accelerated Growth

Haflong, June 12: A high-level departmental review meeting was held today at the Conference Hall of the Chief Executive Member (CEM), North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC), Haflong, under the chairmanship of Shri Krishnendu Paul, Honourable Minister of Public Health Engineering (PHE), Hill Areas Development, Barak Valley Development and Guardian Minister of Dima Hasao. The meeting commenced with the felicitation of the Guardian Minister, followed by a welcome address delivered by Principal Secretary Partha Jahari, ACS. Senior officials, elected representatives and heads of various departments attended the important review session aimed at assessing developmental progress and preparedness measures across the district. Acting on the directives of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, the Guardian Minister undertook a comprehensive review of the preparedness of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) in view of the ongoing monsoon season. Special emphasis was laid on readiness to tackle floods, storms and landslides, which frequently affect the hill district. Additional Deputy Commissioner Shaurya Sharma briefed the meeting on the mitigation strategies, emergency response systems and rapid deployment mechanisms established to minimize risks and ensure public safety. Highlighting the immense potential of Dima Hasao, Krishnendu Paul stressed



the need for fast-tracked development across sectors, describing tourism as a key engine for economic growth and revenue generation. He expressed confidence that under coordinated efforts of the government and local administration, Dima Hasao would scale new heights of progress and prosperity. The meeting also deliberated extensively on issues related to water resources, including spring discharge storage and growing concerns of water stress in several parts of the district. The Chief Engineer of PHE called for stronger coordination with NCHAC to ensure the effective implementation of the Har Ghar Nal Se Jal initiative. MLA Rupali Langthasa highlighted the unique geographical and logistical challenges faced by hill districts and stressed the importance of conducting proper surveys under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes. Responding to the concerns, the Guardian Minister assured that he would personally review defunct JJM projects and directed close coordination between the Public Works Department (PWD)

and PHE for timely execution of works. Addressing sanitation and waste management issues, Joint Secretary Rebecca Changsan presented an overview of the existing waste disposal mechanism and recommended the deployment of motorized collection vehicles in place of tricycles to improve efficiency and coverage. In a strong message on accountability and transparency, the Guardian Minister directed authorities to initiate strict penal action against defaulting contractors involved in PWD projects and tenders. He emphasized that negligence and delays in developmental works would not be tolerated and that exemplary action should be taken to ensure greater responsibility among contractors. The review meeting was attended by Debolal Gorlosa, Chief Executive Member of NCHAC; Smt. Rupali Langthasa, MLA; Mohet Hojai, Chairman of NCHAC; Executive Members, Dhriti Thaosen and Shri Donpaignon Thaosen; other Executive Members and Members of Autonomous Council (MACs); T.T. Daulagupu, ACS, Secretary, Hill Areas Department; Principal Secretary Partha Jahari, ACS; Deputy Commissioner Gayatri Devidas Hyalinge, IAS; Senior Superintendent of Police Ripunjoy Kakoti, APS, Pallab Kumar Das, Chief Engineer (Water), PHE, Bhaskarjyoti Sarmah, Chief Engineer (Sanitation), PHE, A.K. Ilias Ahmed, ACS, Additional District Commissioner; heads of departments and other senior officials.

Search Continues for Missing Man in Kopili River After Drowning Incident



Haflong, June 10: A search operation is underway to trace a missing person who reportedly drowned in the Kopili River at Eleposh, near Assam Quarry under New Sangbar Block in Dima Hasao district on June 9. According to sources from the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), personnel of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) from Dima Hasao and Hojai districts conducted an extensive search operation on Wednesday to locate the missing individual. However, despite continuous efforts by the rescue teams, the body could not be recovered

till the filing of this report due to the strong water current in the river. Officials stated that the search operation is continuing. The missing person has been identified as Mohan Bahadur Magar (65), a resident of Alipur, Assam Quarry, under P.O. 3 Kilo and Umrangso Police Station. He is survived by his wife, Dil Kumari Pradhan. Authorities have appealed to residents living near riverbanks to exercise caution, especially during periods of high water flow. Further details are awaited as rescue teams continue their efforts to locate the missing man.

Challenge to Change: Dima Hasao Reflects on a Decade of Development Under Debolal Gorlosa

Haflong, June 10: A grand function celebrating the completion of ten years of Debolal Gorlosa's leadership as Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC) was held at the newly inaugurated District Library Auditorium Hall in Haflong on Tuesday. The occasion served not only as a celebration of a decade in office but also as a reflection on the remarkable transformation witnessed across Dima Hasao under his stewardship. A major highlight of the programme was the release of a commemorative souvenir titled "Rise of A New Era – A Decade of Service for Peace, Prosperity, Unity and Development." The publication chronicles the achievements, developmental milestones, welfare initiatives and transformative journey of Dima Hasao during the last ten years under the leadership of Shri Debolal Gorlosa. The souvenir was formally unveiled in the presence of dignitaries, public representatives and community leaders, drawing appreciation from those in attendance. Addressing a packed gathering comprising elected representatives, government officials, apex bodies,

village headmen, student organizations and citizens from various communities, Gorlosa expressed profound gratitude to the people of Dima Hasao for their continued support and confidence throughout his decade-long journey in public service. He particularly thanked the people of Dehangi constituency for their unwavering trust that paved the way for his rise to leadership. Reflecting on the district's past, the CEM recalled that Dima Hasao was once frequently in the news for political instability, insurgency-related concerns and developmental challenges. He emphasized that transforming the district into a peaceful, progressive and development-oriented region had been his foremost responsibility. Over the last ten years, he said, significant strides have been made in strengthening road connectivity, improving public infrastructure, expanding welfare schemes, promoting education, and creating opportunities for the youth. Highlighting the importance of unity and inclusive development, CEM Debolal Gorlosa appealed to all communities, irrespective of their size and background, to work together for the collective advance-

ment of the district. He stressed that sustainable progress can only be achieved through mutual co-operation, social harmony and a shared vision for development. Paying tribute to several departed colleagues and public leaders, including late MAC Subrata Thaosen and late Samuel Changsan, the CEM acknowledged their contributions towards the district's growth and development. Looking ahead, Debolal Gorlosa announced that several major development projects are in the pipeline and reaffirmed his commitment to accelerating infrastructure development, improving connectivity and enhancing public services across Dima Hasao. He also assured that employment opportunities would continue to be provided strictly on merit and encouraged young aspirants to work hard and prepare themselves for future opportunities. Speaking on the occasion, NCHAC Chairman Mohet Hojai described the past decade as a period of unprecedented transformation. He recalled the difficult circumstances prevailing in 2016 when Dima Hasao faced political uncertainty and law-and-order challenges. Ac-



ording to him, under the leadership of Debolal Gorlosa, the district has witnessed a remarkable transition from instability to peace, development and administrative efficiency. MLA, Haflong (ST) constituency Rupali Langthasa also congratulated Debolal Gorlosa on completing a decade in office and wished him continued success and good health. Describing him as her mentor and inspiration, she credited much of the district's developmental momentum to his visionary leadership. The celebration witnessed the presence of Executive Members, Members of Autonomous Council (MACs), Principal Secretaries,

Heads of Departments, representatives of apex bodies, village leaders and student organizations, all of whom joined in recognizing a decade of leadership that has significantly contributed to reshaping the socio-economic and developmental landscape of Dima Hasao. The event concluded with a renewed call for unity, peace and collective participation in the district's continuing journey toward inclusive growth and prosperity, reflecting the spirit captured in the commemorative souvenir—"Rise of A New Era: A Decade of Service for Peace, Prosperity, Unity and Development."

Nari Shakti driving India's progress, says PM Modi

PM Modi: Women-led development yields visible results

New Delhi, June 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday praised India's Nari Shakti (women power), describing it as a vital pillar of nation-building and highlighting the significant contributions of women across diverse sectors of society. In a series of posts on X, the Prime Minister said that the strength and achievements of Indian women are enhancing the prestige of the nation. Referring to a Sanskrit verse, he stated that women are the creators, foundation and embodiment of power in all three worlds, underlining their indispensable role in society. "India's women power is the cornerstone of nation-building. Today, our mothers, sisters and daughters are enhancing the glory of Mother India through their exceptional talent and skills across every field," he wrote. Highlighting the achievements of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government over the past 12 years,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the administration has consistently worked to advance women-led development, with visible results across multiple sectors.



He noted that women are increasingly making their presence felt in areas such as financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, education, healthcare, sanitation, housing, sports, science and governance. According to the Prime Minister, the government's initiatives have been guided by the principles of dignity, opportunity and em-

powerment, creating an environment in which women can realise their full potential and contribute more effectively to the nation's progress. The remarks came shortly after a

meeting of NDA allies held as part of events marking 12 years of the NDA government at the Centre. The comments also assume significance at a time when the government is pushing for the implementation of women's reservation in Parliament and state legislative assemblies through the women's reservation law.

Expressing satisfaction over

the growing achievements of women, Modi particularly highlighted their success in science, space research and innovation. He said the increasing participation of women in emerging sectors, including drone technology, is opening up new opportunities and reshaping the country's development landscape.

The Prime Minister also emphasised the government's support for Self-Help Groups (SHGs), describing them as an important vehicle for promoting financial independence among women and strengthening grassroots economic empowerment. The NDA government, led by Prime Minister Modi, has been advocating the implementation of women's reservation in Parliament and state legislative assemblies, viewing it as a significant step towards enhancing women's representation in governance and accelerating the advancement of Nari Shakti across the country.

'Enforcement of PCPNDT Act must be done strictly'



New Delhi, June 12: The Supreme Court has come down heavily on the socially entrenched patriarchal bias for a male child and covert use of sex-selection methods. On Thursday, it said that the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act must be strictly enforced until societal mindset changes. A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra pointed to schemes like "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao", "Janani Suraksha Yojana" and "Ladli Lakshmi Yojana" as evidence of ongoing efforts to address the systemic bias against girls in a patriarchal set-up. The court noted that while progress has been made, significant work still remains to be done. "The preference for a male child continues to plague our society. Legislation alone cannot change mindset, but the PCPNDT Act is a vital instrument to check sex-selective practices," the bench observed. Hearing a plea on effective implementation of the 1994 act, the court said illegal sex determination persists through unregistered machines and clandestine clinics despite the ban.

It directed authorities to carry out regular inspections, take strict action against offenders and run awareness campaigns to counter social bias. "Until the mentality changes, the law must be enforced in letter and spirit. The goal is prevention, not just punishment," the bench added.

Congress rules out 'merger' talks with Mamata



New Delhi, June 12: The Congress on Thursday dismissed reports of a merger with Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) and termed it 'baseless rumours'. Addressing a press conference, Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal said that discussions during a recent meeting with former West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee were about national issues, and the issue of 'merger' did not figure. "Abhishek and Mamata ji met Sonia and Rahul Gandhi. That is part of INDIA bloc meeting." "This is a total rumour. We have made it clear. The news of a merger is completely wrong and baseless," said Venugopal after a meeting with general secretaries, in-charges and state unit chiefs.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, senior leader Rahul Gandhi, and others attended the meeting.

Congress a 'sinking ship'; more political space for BJP if Opposition parties consolidate: Fadnavis

Maharashtra, June 12: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday claimed that the Congress is a "sinking ship" and that he doesn't think any Opposition party would want to board it. Fadnavis was responding to questions on speculation about the merger of Mamata Banerjee-led TMC and Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) with the Congress. Opposition consolidation will mean the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will get more political space, he told reporters here. "Congress is a sinking ship, and no one ever sets foot on a sinking ship. But if anyone does, we have nothing to lose," the CM



stated.

Fadnavis said the BJP has adopted a wait-and-watch approach. "Even if Opposition parties step into the Congress,

which is a sinking ship, we will get more political space," he added. On Wednesday, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut had suggested that parties like the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Nationalist Congress Party (SP), formed after their leaders quit the Congress, should return to the fold of the Grand Old Party so as to create a strong alternative to the BJP.

Raut on Thursday said NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar should take a lead in merging the smaller parties back with the Congress. His comments came after the drubbing faced by the TMC in the West Bengal assembly elections held recently.

Amit Shah 'breaking' Opposition parties to 'engineer' two-thirds LS majority for BJP: Congress



New Delhi, June 12: The Congress on Friday accused Home Minister Amit Shah of trying to "engineer" a two-third majority for the BJP in the Lok Sabha and said he is busy breaking Opposition parties while making a "complete mockery of democracy" but his "evil designs" will not succeed. In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said,

"Never before has anybody tried to engineer a two-third majority for his party in the Lok Sabha as the Union Home Minister is desperately doing these days in the run-up to the Monsoon Session of Parliament." "The self-styled Chanakya had been humiliated on April 17, 2026, when the NDA could not get the requisite two-third majority and the dangerous Constitution Amendment Bill dealing with delimitation had been rejected by a convincing margin," Ramesh said.

Stung by that resounding defeat, Shah is now busy breaking Opposition parties and making a complete "mockery of democ-

racy", he alleged. "The fight is on. His evil designs must not and will not succeed," Ramesh asserted. His remarks came after it emerged that dissident TMC MPs will meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday to stake claim to be recognised as the "real TMC". Rebel MP Jagadish Chandra Barma Basunia gave this information, claiming that 19 MPs are currently backing the faction.

Basunia, the MP from Cooch Behar and among the lawmakers seeking to support the NDA in the Lok Sabha, told PTI that the group would meet the Speaker on Monday. The TMC is facing a crisis follow-

ing its defeat in the West Bengal assembly polls and a rebellion that has significantly weakened its organisational and legislative strength. Last week, more than two-thirds of the TMC's MLAs -- 58 out of 80 -- broke away from the official legislature party and secured recognition as the principal opposition bloc in the West Bengal assembly under expelled legislator Ritabrata Banerjee. The rebel camp has since claimed that its strength has risen further. The crisis later spread to Parliament, with rebel MPs led by Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar claiming the support of more than 20 Lok Sabha mem-

Hoax bomb threat delays Lucknow-Delhi IndiGo flight



Lucknow, June 12: A Lucknow-Delhi IndiGo flight was delayed on Friday after a bomb threat turned out to be a hoax shortly before departure, sources said. The flight, carrying around 180 passengers, was scheduled to leave Lucknow for Delhi at 10.45 am.

Sources told PTI the crew of the aircraft received information about a possible bomb threat on board. Following the alert, the aircraft was halted at the apron while security personnel launched checks of the plane and surrounding areas as a precautionary measure, sources said.

Another source told PTI that a tissue paper with "bomb" written on it was found inside the lavatory of the aircraft, triggering panic. However, officials later confirmed it was a hoax. No bomb or any harmful substance had been found in the aircraft during the inspection, the official said.

Manipur CM gives 'red card to child labour', calls for universal education

Imphal, June 12: On the occasion of World Day Against Child Labour 2026, Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh called on the public to pledge that every child should be in school, learning and growing, instead of joining the workforce. Speaking on this year's theme, "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults," Khemchand Singh noted, "It reminds us of our collective responsibility to protect childhood and guarantee every child access to quality education and opportunities."

On his official Facebook page, he wrote, "Together, let us build a future where every child can learn, play, and thrive." Officials reported that academic research on child labour in Manipur highlights the prevalence of children working in informal, non-hazardous sectors such as domestic service, hotels, restaurants

(often referred to as "hotel boys"), and local shops. Key studies indicate that the problem is driven largely by poverty, illiteracy, and migration. Unlike heavy industries, these informal roles predominantly employ working children between the ages of 14 and 18. Most cases are found in the Imphal West and Imphal East districts, followed by Bishnupur, Senapati, and Thoubal. A significant number of working children are engaged as domestic helpers, street vendors, and handymen in small repair shops.

While traditionally discouraged by local social norms, the practice remains prevalent among marginalized groups and migrant families seeking basic livelihoods. Under the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, the provisions are strictly enforced. The law completely prohibits the em-

ployment of children below the age of 14 in any occupation or process.

For adolescents aged 14 to 18, employment is strictly prohibited in designated hazardous occupations and processes. Employers who violate these laws face strict penalties, including mandatory imprisonment for a minimum of three months (extendable up to one year) or heavy fines starting from Rs. 10,000.

The Social Welfare Department of Manipur, in coordination with the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights, continuously conducts district-level surveys to identify, monitor, and rescue exploited children.

The state also utilizes the Government of India's PENCIL Portal to track complaints and effectively enforce child protection legislation.

Rescued children are often supported through local Child Welfare Committees and



provided care, rehabilitation, and skill-development opportunities in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

ZPM failed on clean governance promise: Mizoram Congress

Aizawl, June 12: Mizoram's opposition Congress on Friday launched a scathing attack on the ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), accusing it of failing to deliver on its commitments to clean and transparent governance and systemic reforms. Addressing a political session at the Congress Bhavan here, senior Congress vice president Lalnunmawia Chuaungo said that the previous Mizo National Front (MNF) government headed by Zoramthanga was rejected by voters in the last Assembly elections in 2023 because people were dissatisfied with its handling of public funds. The ZPM came to power in the Assembly elections after it promised transparent and accountable governance and administrative reforms, he said. "The ZPM, however, failed to deliver on those commitments and instead continued the bad practices it had earlier criticised during the MNF government," the former state Chief Secretary said. He alleged that the practice of issuing tenders only after deciding who should receive contracts and the excessive use of restricted tenders have continued and even intensified under the present ZPM administration. Chuaungo further alleged that departmental works and contracts awarded through work supervisors to favoured individuals have become increasingly common. He also alleged that the ZPM government has attempted to weaken anti-corruption mechanisms by changing provisions related to the Mizoram Lokayukta Act and granting general consent to the CBI, issues which the Congress had previously raised.

The Congress leader further accused the Chief Minister's

Office (CMO) of concentrating powers to approve all restricted tenders and major contracts, which, according to him, could create more problems than improve governance. Highlighting Mizoram's financial dependence on central transfers, Chuaungo said the state has benefited significantly from the Centre, receiving substantial funds every year for development. He pointed out that Mizoram's budget estimate for 2026-27 stands at Rs 17,496.91 crore, which is over Rs 9,458 crore higher than the Rs 8,038.39 crore estimate in 2016-17.

However, he said the state's own revenue contribution remains limited, with only Rs 2,759.75 crore, less than 16 per cent of the total budget, expected to come from state-owned tax revenues and other internal resources. The remaining funds are largely sourced from the state's share of central taxes, Finance Commission allocations, central grants, and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, he said. Claiming that Mizoram has been a major beneficiary of central tax devolution, the Congress leader said the state received the equivalent of Rs 56,000 per person from the state's share of central taxes in 2025.

He also claimed that for every Rs 100 Mizoram contributes to the Centre in direct taxes, the state receives approximately Rs 3,583 in return, making it a major beneficiary of central transfers. "Chief Minister and ministers are only custodians of public money. The funds entrusted to them do not belong to them and must be used fairly and according to law. They cannot be used for personal gain or to favour selected individuals," Chuaungo said.

Northeast states seek tailored roadmap from oil to industry

Guwahati, June 12: The chief ministers of all eight northeastern states on Friday pitched region-specific development priorities ranging from oil and gas exploration and industrial incentives to connectivity, tourism and human development during a high-level meeting convened by NITI Aayog. The interaction, chaired by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Ashok Lahiri, brought together the chief ministers of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura to discuss development challenges, policy innovations and growth opportunities in the region.

A key theme that emerged from the discussions was the need for greater flexibility in central schemes and for policies tailored to the Northeast's unique geographical, ecological and socio-economic realities. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma highlighted the recently signed tripartite agreement between the Centre, Assam and Nagaland to resume oil and gas operations in disputed border areas, describing it as a model of cooperative development.

He also claimed that Assam has emerged as the country's fastest-growing state and stressed the need for balanced

regional development. Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio underlined the state's potential in oil and gas exploration, agriculture and infrastructure development while seeking continued financial support and improved market access for products such as Nagaland coffee. Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma showcased the state's "Transformation Journey 2032" vision and called



for stronger inter-state collaboration in trade, exports and environmental sustainability. He also emphasised the importance of externally aided projects in accelerating development and improving human development outcomes.

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu highlighted the state's hydropower potential and stressed the need for investment in skill development and

capacity building. He also shared governance initiatives aimed at improving service delivery and grievance redressal. Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma focused on tourism and sought greater support for the state's Ginger Mission, while advocating more flexibility in centrally sponsored schemes. He said tourist arrivals in the state had increased significantly over the past four years.

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang stressed the importance of tourism, digital infrastructure and commercially viable air connectivity, while calling for the continuation of the North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS) to boost investments and employment. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha highlighted challenges arising from the state's geography and international borders, seeking stronger trade and connectivity infrastructure. He identified bamboo, rubber, textiles, pharmaceuticals and tourism as key sectors for future growth. Manipur Chief Minister Y. Khemchand Singh focused on rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, stressing the need for robust monitoring mechanisms to ensure timely implementation of housing and recovery projects.

Assam: Six minors rescued from trafficking bid ahead of World Day Against Child Labour

North Lakhimpur, June 12: North Lakhimpur: Six minor boys were rescued at the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border after they were allegedly being trafficked for construction work in Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting concerns over child labour and trafficking on the eve of World Day Against Child Labour. The minors, along with an adult, were rescued by members of the Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) at Ruksin Gate near Murkongselek while they were waiting for Inner Line Permit (ILP) passes to enter Arunachal Pradesh.

According to AJYCP leader Gyan Sarma, who led the operation, the group arrived at Murkongselek railway station on the 15613 Guwahati-Murkongselek Lachit Express at around 8.30 am on June

11. The minors were allegedly brought from Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar and Barpeeta districts by traffickers and were being taken to a construction site in Arunachal Pradesh. The rescued boys reportedly told AJYCP members that they had been promised daily wages of Rs 500 for masonry work. Sarma said the minors were unable to provide clear details about their home addresses.

He further alleged that traffickers regularly use the Lachit Express route to transport workers from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh via Murkongselek. The incident comes days after seven youths from Assam's Sadiya were rescued from a construction site linked to the Lower Dibang Hydroelectric Project in Roing, Arunachal Pradesh, where they allegedly faced starvation, physical

abuse and inhuman working conditions. The latest rescue has renewed concerns over the trafficking of children and vulnerable workers for labour in Arunachal Pradesh. Activists alleged that many victims are subjected to exploitative working conditions, irregular wages and physical abuse. Observed annually on June 12, World Day Against Child Labour this year carries the theme: "Red Card to Child Labour: Fair Play for Children, Decent Work for Adults."

The issue was also discussed at the 6th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour held in Marrakech in February, which adopted the Marrakech Global Framework for Action against Child Labour, aimed at strengthening efforts to address the root causes of child labour and protect children's rights.

Editorial

From National Transformation to Local Progress: A New Era for Northeast India and Dima Hasao

The story of India's development over the past decade is increasingly reflected in the changing landscape of the Northeast. Once perceived as a distant frontier, the region has today emerged as a vital contributor to the nation's growth story. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi completes twelve years in office and Debolal Gorlosa marks a decade as Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC), there is a compelling parallel between national vision and local execution that deserves recognition. Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal recently observed that the Northeast has undergone a historic transformation under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. The region, once characterized by neglect, connectivity challenges and limited economic opportunities, is now viewed as India's "Ashtalakshmi" and a gateway to Southeast Asia. Massive investments in roads, railways, airports, waterways and digital infrastructure have altered the developmental trajectory of the Northeast, bringing it closer to the mainstream of India's economic progress. Assam, in particular, has witnessed unprecedented changes. Improved connectivity, strengthened peace and stability, enhanced welfare delivery and recognition of the state's rich cultural heritage have contributed to a renewed sense of confidence among its peo-

ple. Landmark projects such as the Bogibeel Bridge, inland waterways development on the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers, the Numaligarh Bio-Refinery expansion, the Namrup Fertiliser Project and the upcoming semiconductor plant at Jagiroad are reshaping Assam's economic future. These developments have not only generated employment opportunities but have also positioned the state as a key driver of India's vision for a developed nation by 2047. The impact of this broader developmental framework can be seen vividly in Dima Hasao. The completion of ten years of leadership by Debolal Gorlosa as CEM of NCHAC offers an opportunity to reflect on how national policies and local governance can work hand in hand to deliver meaningful change. A decade ago, Dima Hasao often made headlines for political instability, insurgency-related concerns and developmental deficiencies. Today, the narrative has changed significantly. Under the leadership of Debolal Gorlosa, the district has witnessed substantial improvements in infrastructure, road connectivity, public services, welfare delivery and administrative efficiency. More importantly, peace and stability have gradually become the foundation upon which development initiatives have flourished. The release of the commemorative souvenir,

"Rise of A New Era – A Decade of Service for Peace, Prosperity, Unity and Development," aptly captures the spirit of transformation that the district has experienced. The publication chronicles the journey of a region striving to overcome its historical challenges and build a future anchored in progress and inclusivity. Just as the Modi government emphasizes citizen-centric governance, transparency and welfare-driven development, Dima Hasao's transformation reflects a localized version of the same developmental philosophy. Roads reaching remote villages, educational opportunities expanding for youth, welfare schemes touching the lives of ordinary citizens and improved public infrastructure all signify a district moving steadily toward progress. Yet, while achievements deserve celebration, they must also inspire renewed commitment. The future of Dima Hasao depends on sustaining this momentum through continued investment in infrastructure, tourism, and healthcare, education and employment generation. The district's extraordinary natural beauty and strategic location offer immense potential for tourism-led economic growth. However, this requires improved accommodation facilities, better transportation networks, digital connectivity and environmentally sustainable development practices.

Equally important is the preservation of social harmony and unity among the district's diverse communities. Development can be truly meaningful only when it is inclusive and benefits every section of society. The call made by Debolal Gorlosa for collective participation and cooperation among all communities is therefore both timely and essential. As India advances toward the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047, regions like Dima Hasao will play a crucial role in shaping that future. National policies provide direction, but their success ultimately depends on effective implementation at the grassroots level. The progress witnessed in Dima Hasao over the last decade demonstrates what can be achieved when visionary leadership, public support and developmental commitment converge. The transformation of the Northeast under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the evolution of Dima Hasao under Debolal Gorlosa stand as powerful reminders that development is not merely about infrastructure or economic statistics. It is about creating opportunities, fostering peace, strengthening communities and instilling hope. The journey is far from complete, but the foundations of a new era have undeniably been laid—an era defined by peace, prosperity, unity and sustainable development.

4,399 days: A historic mandate, transforming India

On June 10, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the longest-serving elected prime minister in India's history, completing 4,399 consecutive days in office and surpassing the previous record held by Jawaharlal Nehru. This milestone is not merely about longevity in office. It is a reflection of the extraordinary trust that the people of India have placed in one leader and one vision across three successive general elections. In 2014, India voted for change. In 2019, it voted for performance. In 2024, it voted for continuity, confidence and the promise of a developed India. Few democratic leaders anywhere in the world have secured such a sustained and emphatic endorsement from their people. At a time when many democracies are grappling with instability, fractured mandates and frequent political transitions, India has demonstrated the strength that comes from decisive leadership backed by popular legitimacy. The world's largest democracy has shown that political stability and democratic accountability can go hand in hand.

Over the last twelve years, India has undergone a transformation that has touched virtually every aspect of national life. From financial inclusion and social welfare to infrastructure, digital governance and economic reform, governance has increasingly become synonymous with scale, speed and transparency. Hundreds of millions have gained access to banking, housing, sanitation, clean cooking fuel and healthcare. Roads, railways, airports and logistics networks have expanded at an



unprecedented pace, creating the foundations of a modern and aspirational India. The Digital India revolution has placed India at the forefront of technology-enabled governance. Today, India leads the world in real-time digital payments, possesses globally admired digital public infrastructure and has emerged as the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. Technology is no longer the privilege of a few; it has become an instrument of empowerment for millions. Equally significant has been the rise of women-led development. Through greater financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, education and grassroots participation, women have become central stakeholders in India's growth

story. Their empowerment is no longer viewed as a social objective alone but as a national development imperative.

India's growing stature on the global stage has been another defining feature of this era. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has emerged as a trusted voice in global affairs and a reliable partner in trade, technology, development and humanitarian assistance. Whether during crises, international negotiations or global economic transitions, India today speaks with confidence and is heard with respect. The journey has also been marked by a strong commitment to innovation and sustainability. India's renewable energy capacity

has expanded dramatically, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are being embraced at scale, and pioneering conservation efforts have demonstrated that development and environmental stewardship can advance together. Yet the significance of this moment extends beyond policy and governance.

Prime Minister Modi's journey, from humble beginnings to becoming India's longest-serving elected prime minister, is a testament to the strength of Indian democracy itself. It reflects a nation where public service, perseverance and dedication can take an individual from the grassroots to the highest elected office. Having served for more than twelve years as chief minister of Gujarat and twelve years as prime minister, Narendra Modi has now spent nearly twenty-five years as an elected head of government. Few leaders in modern democratic history have enjoyed such longevity while continuing to command such broad public support. History will remember the number—4,399 days. But future generations may remember this period for something far greater: the transformation of India into a more confident, capable, connected and globally influential nation. Today is not only a milestone in the life of one leader. It is a milestone in the democratic journey of India. A moment that reflects the trust of 140 crore Indians. A moment that celebrates continuity, stability and development. A moment that reaffirms the collective resolve to build a Viksit Bharat. 4,399 days. Three mandates. One vision. A stronger India.

Generali Central Life expands Sikkim footprint with healthcare infrastructure push



Guwahati/Jorhat: Generali Central Life Insurance has strengthened its presence in Sikkim through a healthcare-focused community initiative, donating two advanced life-support ambulances to Sir Thutob Namgyal (STNM) Hospital in Gangtok. The move highlights the insurer's strategy of combining insurance penetration with broader social infrastructure development in the state where it has served as the lead insurer since 2022.

The ambulances, equipped with advanced life-support systems, are expected to improve emergency response capabilities and patient transportation across Sikkim's challenging hilly terrain, addressing a key healthcare accessibility gap in remote regions.

Industry observers view the initiative as part of Generali Central Life's efforts to deepen engagement in Sikkim while supporting the state's goal of achieving "Insurance for All" by 2027. The company has already extended insurance coverage to more than 6,500 lives in the state under its Rural and Social Sector Obligations mandate as of May 31, 2026.

Alongside the ambulance donation, the insurer organised a blood donation camp at STNM Hospital, drawing strong community participation. The company said the initiative reflects its commitment to linking financial protection with access to essential healthcare services.

Over the past four years, Generali Central Life has expanded awareness campaigns, grassroots outreach programmes, Gram Panchayat-level engagement, village activations and financial literacy drives across urban and rural markets in Sikkim. Working closely with the state government, NABARD, police and local institutions, the insurer has focused on improving insurance awareness, accessibility and long-term financial resilience, creating a scalable model for inclusive growth and market expansion in the Himalayan state.

Vi-Meta partnership highlights growing value of trusted digital infrastructure

Mumbai: Vodafone Idea (Vi) and Meta have launched Silent Mobile Verification (SMV) capabilities for Vi subscribers across WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram, underscoring the increasing economic importance of secure digital infrastructure in India's rapidly expanding online ecosystem.

The network-based authentication technology enables users to verify their mobile numbers in the background without manually entering verification credentials, switching between applications or waiting for OTP messages. The service will be available across multiple user journeys, including new registrations, mobile

number validation, login and re-login, account recovery and authentication during security checks.

The partnership reflects a broader industry shift toward network-based verification systems as businesses and governments seek stronger safeguards against digital fraud and identity-related risks. By validating requests directly through Vi's telecom network, SMV aims to reduce friction in user onboarding while improving security and customer experience across Meta's platforms.

Abhijit Kishore, CEO of Vodafone Idea Limited, said telecom networks are increasingly becoming critical en-

ablers of safer digital experiences. Meta India Managing Director and Country Head Arun Srinivas said the initiative represents an important step toward making verification simpler, seamless and more secure for users.

Analysts view the launch as a milestone in the development of telecom network APIs and trusted digital infrastructure, sectors expected to play a larger role as India's digital economy expands. Vi said it plans to extend such capabilities to additional applications and advanced trust-based use cases, including enhanced authentication, fraud prevention and intelligent risk-based verification solutions.

Xiaomi launches Xiaomi 17T with Leica-powered camera and flagship features



Guwahati: Xiaomi India has launched the Xiaomi 17T smartphone, introducing a new flagship device co-engineered with Leica that combines advanced photography, immersive display technology, powerful performance and long-lasting battery life.

The Xiaomi 17T features a Leica-powered triple-camera system led by a 50MP main sensor and, for the first time in the Xiaomi T Series, a Leica 5x periscope telephoto camera. The device also debuts Leica Live Moment and Leica Live Portrait features, designed to capture motion, emotion and cinematic portrait shots with greater depth and realism.

The smartphone sports a 6.59-inch 1.5K AMOLED display with up to 3500 nits peak brightness and a 120Hz refresh rate. Xiaomi said the device incorporates its new Vision Care technology and has received TÜV Rheinland Intelligent Eye Care Certification for enhanced viewing comfort. Powered by Xiaomi HyperOS, Xiaomi HyperAI, Google Gemini and Circle to Search with Google, the Xiaomi 17T is backed by a 6500mAh silicon-carbon battery with 67W HyperCharge support. The handset is available in Violet, Blue and Black colour options.

In Guwahati, the launch is expected to intensify competition in the premium smartphone segment, where demand for AI-powered devices and advanced camera technology has been growing steadily. Retailers believe the Leica branding, attractive financing options and assured buyback programme could appeal to young professionals, content creators and technology enthusiasts across the Northeast. The Xiaomi 17T is priced at ₹59,999 for the 12GB+256GB variant and ₹64,999 for the 12GB+512GB model. Customers can avail an instant bank discount of ₹5,000, reducing the effective prices to ₹54,999 and ₹59,999 respectively. Buyers will also receive exchange benefits, a complimentary assured buyback programme and premium digital subscriptions. The smartphone will go on sale from June 10 through Amazon, Xiaomi's official website and retail stores across India.

TRAI drive test flags network gaps on Assam highway stretch

Guwahati: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released the findings of an Independent Drive Test (IDT) conducted along the Lanka-Narainpur Railway Bridge stretch on NH-27 and NH-627 in Assam, providing a detailed assessment of mobile network quality offered by telecom service providers in the region. Conducted between March 10 and 18, 2026, under the supervision of TRAI's Kolkata Regional Office, the exercise covered 189.7 km of highway routes and seven hotspot locations. The drive test evaluated critical quality parameters such as network coverage, call drop rates, call setup success rates, speech quality, call silence instances, and data download and upload speeds across 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G networks. Among operators, Reliance Jio recorded the highest average download speed of 88.21 Mbps, followed by Airtel at 66.50 Mbps, Vodafone Idea at 16.84 Mbps and BSNL at 4.86 Mbps. Airtel led upload performance with 13.63 Mbps, while Jio, VIL and BSNL recorded 6.61 Mbps, 3.99 Mbps and 3.10 Mbps, respectively. The report also identified coverage gaps and dropped calls across operators, with VIL recording the highest number of dropped calls at 21. The drive covered areas including Bamun Gaon, Dijabora, Mupa, Didaodip, Retzol and Damchara, while hotspot assessments were conducted at seven locations along the Lumding-Silchar Road corridor and Tinali Bazar. In Guwahati, the findings are significant for businesses, logistics operators, digital service providers and consumers who depend on reliable connectivity across Assam's transport network. Improved telecom performance along major highways can support smoother digital transactions, e-commerce growth and business communication, strengthening economic linkages between Guwahati and other commercial centres in the Northeast.

TRAI said the findings have been shared with telecom operators for necessary corrective measures and service improvements.

Renault Duster Turbo TCe 100 records fuel efficiency of 19.41 km/l

Guwahati: Renault India on Friday announced that its new Duster Turbo TCe 100 has achieved an ARAI-certified fuel efficiency of 19.41 km per litre, highlighting the company's focus on combining performance with fuel economy in the competitive SUV segment.

The automaker said the Duster Turbo TCe 100 is powered by a turbocharged petrol engine that delivers 100 PS of power and 160 Nm of torque. Paired with a six-speed manual transmission, the powertrain has been designed to offer responsive performance, smooth drivability



and improved fuel efficiency across varied driving conditions.

Dr. V. Vikraman, Chief of Re-

nant Engineering, Renault Group India, said the certification reflects Renault's emphasis on practical en-

gineering and customer value. He noted that the Turbo TCe 100 engine uses turbocharging and efficient combustion technologies to deliver strong fuel economy while maintaining responsive performance.

Renault said the new Duster TCe 100 is built on the all-new RGMP platform, with the engine and powertrain specifically engineered and calibrated to suit the platform's dynamics. The company described the powertrain as exclusive to the Duster and designed to provide a balanced driving experi-

ence.

In Guwahati, the fuel-efficiency figure could strengthen the Duster's appeal among SUV buyers in Assam and the wider Northeast, where rising fuel costs remain a key consideration for consumers. Industry observers believe the combination of turbocharged performance and improved mileage may help Renault attract both urban and long-distance drivers in the region.

Renault India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Renault Group, manufactures its vehicles at its Chennai facility with an annual production capacity of 480,000 units. The company has a nationwide network of nearly 638 sales and service touchpoints, including more than 200 Workshop on Wheels locations.

Malabar Group report highlights expanding impact of Hunger Free World initiative

Mumbai: Malabar Group has spotlighted the growing impact of its flagship social responsibility initiative, Hunger Free World, with the release of a rehabilitation impact report that demonstrates how a daily meal can serve as a catalyst for broader social transformation. Released on World Hunger Day, the report, "Impact Stories: How a Daily Meal Opens the Door to a Transformed Life", outlines the outcomes of the Street Meal Distribution Programme, implemented by Thanal. What began as an effort to provide nutritious meals to individuals facing hunger has evolved into a structured outreach model that facilitates healthcare access, rehabilitation, shelter support, dignity restoration and family reunification.

The programme currently operates across 20 states in India and nine countries, including six GCC countries, the United States, the United Kingdom and Zambia. Through its Street Meal Distribution Programme and Micro Learning Centres, Hunger Free World reaches approximately 1.43 lakh beneficiaries.

Commenting on the initiative, M. P. Ahamad, Chairman of Malabar Group, said regular meal outreach helps establish trust with vulnerable communities, creating opportunities for long-term intervention and support. "A meal may appear simple, but when it is de-



livered consistently and with human attention, it becomes much more than food," he said.

The report highlights several success stories, including the rehabilitation of an elderly man in Nagercoil, support for a bedridden individual in Kumbakonam, assistance for a distressed woman in Chennai, a family reunification effort connecting Udipi and Chennai, and medical care and shelter placement for a physically challenged senior citizen in Tiruchirappalli.

The initiative forms part of Malabar Group's wider CSR framework, under which the company allocates five per cent of its net trading profit towards programmes focused on hunger eradication, education, healthcare, housing, women empowerment and environmental sustainability. The report underscores how sustained corporate investment in community welfare can generate meaningful and measurable social outcomes.

MSDE opens daycare facility at Kaushal Bhawan to support working parents

Guwahati: In a move aimed at promoting a more inclusive and employee-friendly workplace, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education, Shri Jayant Chaudhary has inaugurated a new daycare facility for the children of employees at Kaushal Bhawan, the headquarters of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

Spread across nearly 600 square metres, the facility has been designed to provide a safe, nurturing and child-friendly environment for children aged between six months and six years. It includes sleeping and resting areas, play and activity zones, learning resources,

child-friendly furniture, hygienic washrooms, and dedicated feeding and baby-changing rooms. The centre will be managed by trained caregivers and support staff.

According to the ministry, the initiative seeks to help



working parents balance professional responsibilities with family commitments while creating a more supportive work culture. Officials said the facility reflects the government's commitment to building family-friendly institutions and fostering em-

ployee well-being.

Senior officials present during the inauguration included Secretary Debashree Mukherjee, Director General (Training) Dilip Kumar, NCVET Executive Member Prof. (Dr.) Ashok Kumar Gaba, Additional Secretary Niranjan Kumar Sudhansu, and other representatives from MSDE, DGT, NCVET and NSDC. In Guwahati, the initiative highlights a growing focus on employee welfare and workplace inclusivity across government and corporate sectors. Human resource experts in Guwahati believe similar childcare facilities could encourage higher workforce participation, particularly among working mothers, while setting a benchmark for modern workplace practices in the region.

TVS Motor chairman congratulates PM Modi on milestone tenure

Guwahati: Chairman of TVS Motor Company, Sudarshan Venu, has congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on becoming the longest-serving Prime Minister in India's history, describing his tenure as a period of transformative change and long-term national development.

In a statement, Venu said the past 12 years under Modi's leadership had marked a "paradigm shift" for the country. He said the period witnessed rapid economic growth, inclusive development, social upliftment and the implementation of long-term reforms across sectors.

Venu noted that the government had focused on strengthening India's self-reliance and creating a foundation for sustained progress. He praised the Prime Minister's leadership, describing him as a visionary and decisive leader guiding the country toward the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047. "We applaud Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi for becoming the longest serving Prime Minister of India. His tenure has been a paradigm shift," Venu said.

He added that India was steadily moving towards greater self-sufficiency under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initia-



tive and expressed confidence about the country's future growth trajectory.

Venu said citizens and industry alike were privileged to be led by a leadership committed to long-term national development and expressed optimism about the journey ahead.

India sends 14 skilled workers to Mauritius under mobility partnership

Guwahati: The Government of India on Wednesday sent a fresh batch of 14 skilled workers to Mauritius under the India-Mauritius Government-to-Government (G2G) Labour Mobility Framework, marking another step in expanding overseas employment opportunities for Indian youth through a structured and transparent mechanism.

The workers were flagged off by Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education. The departure follows the successful placement of the first batch of Indian workers already employed in Mauritius under the programme. Officials said another 33 candidates are currently undergoing work permit and documentation procedures.

Addressing the candidates, Chaudhary said Indian professionals are increasingly being recognised globally for their talent, professionalism and adaptability. He said trusted government-to-government partnerships are helping create safe and aspirational pathways for international employment while ensuring worker welfare.

The initiative is being implemented under the Memorandum of Understanding on Employment of Workers signed between India and Mauritius in May 2023. The selected candidates come from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, bringing experience in retail, logistics, hospitality, customer service and technical trades.



Facilitated by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the programme supports recruitment for Super U Mauritius, a leading retail chain. The workers will be employed in retail operations, inventory management, food preparation and electrical maintenance under three-year contracts offering annual compensation of around ₹4 lakh to ₹4.5 lakh along with accommodation, transport, medical coverage and other benefits.

In Guwahati, the initiative highlights growing international demand for skilled Indian workers and may encourage more youth from Assam and the Northeast to pursue industry-aligned skill training. Experts believe such overseas employment opportunities could boost interest in vocational education and create new pathways for workforce mobility from the region.

The flag-off event was also attended by Shri Niranjan Kumar Sudhansu, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, along with other officials associated with the programme.

TVS Motor launches premium retail channel TVS Paddock to elevate ownership experience

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company has announced the launch of TVS Paddock, an exclusive retail channel dedicated to its premium motorcycle portfolio, as the company seeks to strengthen its presence in India's fast-growing premium mobility segment.

The new retail ecosystem aims to provide customers with a bespoke ownership journey by combining immersive brand experiences, personalised consultations, specialised service capabilities and enhanced aftersales support under a single platform. The initiative marks a key milestone in TVS Motor's premium mobility strategy and reflects changing consumer preferences for personalised and experience-driven products.

TVS Motor said the new retail philosophy brings together motorcycles, community engagement, merchandise, accesso-

ries, customisation options and brand experiences under one roof. Designed by London-based retail design agency Checkland Kindleysides, the network has been developed to offer a seamless customer journey from product discovery to long-term ownership.

Announcing the initiative, TVS Motor Company Chairman Sudarshan Venu said premium motorcycle customers are increasingly seeking deeper engagement, communities and personalised experiences. He said TVS Paddock is aimed at redefining premium ownership through innovation, customisation and immersive customer interactions.

TVS Paddock will feature dedicated consultation and customisation zones, premium community spaces, digital retail solu-

tions, specialised service facilities and immersive merchandise experiences. The company said the retail network is inspired by its philosophy of precision performance and engineering mastery, rooted in over four decades of motorsport heritage.

In Guwahati, the launch is expected to strengthen interest in premium motorcycles among affluent buyers and enthusiasts in Northeast India. Industry observers believe enhanced retail experiences, community engagement and customisation options could help accelerate demand for premium two-wheelers in the region as consumer aspirations continue to evolve.

TVS Paddock is scheduled to be rolled out in the second quarter of FY27 through an exclusive premium retail network across key markets.

TRAI drive test flags network gaps in Meghalaya, highlights data speed performance

Shillong: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released the findings of an Independent Drive Test (IDT) conducted across East Jaintia Hills and West Jaintia Hills districts, as well as along the Ratha Cherre Khasia Punjee-Jowai stretch of NH-6 in Meghalaya, to assess the quality of mobile network services offered by telecom operators.

The drive tests, carried out between March 11 and March 16, 2026 under the North East Licensed Service Area (LSA), covered 213 km of city routes, 98.9 km of highways, 10 hotspot locations and a 0.5 km walk test. Conducted under the supervision of TRAI's Regional Office in Kolkata, the exercise evaluated key quality parameters including network coverage, call drop rates, call setup success rates, speech quality, download and upload speeds, latency and packet loss.

According to the report, Reliance Jio recorded the highest average download speeds, reaching 97.89 Mbps during city drives and 122.77 Mbps on highway routes. Airtel also delivered strong performance with download speeds of 72.24



Mbps in city areas and 88.50 Mbps along highways. BSNL and Vodafone Idea (VIL) reported comparatively lower data throughput and higher instances of weak signal strength in several locations.

The tests also revealed coverage gaps and dropped calls across networks. During city drives, BSNL recorded 34 dropped calls and VIL 30, while Jio reported only two dropped calls. Along

highway routes, VIL registered the highest number of dropped calls at 10.

The drive covered areas including Jowai, Khliehtyrshi, Nartiang, Shangpung, Sutunga and Rachai, while highway testing was conducted along NH-6 through Ratachera, Umkiyang, Sonapur, Lad Rymbai and Mukhla. Hotspot assessments included government offices, educational institutions, hospitals and commercial locations.

In Shillong, the findings are significant as consumers and businesses in Meghalaya's commercial hub increasingly rely on high-speed mobile connectivity for digital payments, online services and e-commerce. The report is expected to influence customer preferences and encourage telecom operators to strengthen network infrastructure across the state, including Shillong and adjoining districts. TRAI said the findings have been shared with the respective telecom service providers for corrective action and service improvements. Detailed reports are available on the TRAI website for public access.

TVS Motor hosts environment workshop, releases nature-focused sustainability reports



Guwahati: TVS Motor Company hosted a multi-stakeholder workshop on World Environment Day 2026, bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, academics and sustainability experts to discuss nature-positive and climate-resilient

business growth.

Organised in partnership with UN Global Compact Network India at the TVS Institute for Quality and Leadership in Anekal, Bengaluru, the event was held under the theme "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future."

The workshop was attended by Karnataka Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Eshwar B. Khandre, UN Global Compact Network India Executive Director Ratnesh Jha, TERI Director General Dr Vibha Dhawan, representatives from PwC, TERI School of Advanced Studies, and senior sustainability leaders from across industries.

During the event, TVS Motor released a white paper titled "Nature Capital as a Strategic Business Imperative in India," developed jointly with PwC and TERI School of Advanced Studies. The paper examines the role of ecosystem services such as water, biodiversity, soil health and climate regulation in supporting business resilience and long-term

value creation.

The company also published its inaugural Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)-aligned report, "Mobility in Harmony with Nature," becoming one of the first automotive companies in India to adopt the framework.

TVS Motor said the report reflects its efforts to integrate nature-related risks and opportunities into business decision-making. The company highlighted its sustainability achievements, including three Indian plants attaining Zero Waste to Landfill and Net Water Positive status, around 97 per cent renewable energy use in Indian operations, and continued investments in electric mobility, recycling and circular economy initiatives.

Tata AIG launches MediCare Reserve with health cover up to ₹5 crore



Mumbai: Tata AIG General Insurance Company has launched MediCare Reserve, a new health insurance solution aimed at helping customers enhance their health coverage as medical needs evolve. Built on a Super Top-up structure, the plan offers coverage ranging from ₹5 lakh to ₹5 crore, with aggregate deductible options between ₹3 lakh and ₹50 lakh.

A key feature of the product is the 'Waiver of Aggregate Deductible', which allows eligible policyholders to transition to a comprehensive health insurance policy after five consecutive policy years without fresh underwriting. The company said the plan is designed to provide long-term and flexible health protection while addressing rising healthcare costs. MediCare Reserve also includes optional benefits such as 'TransiCare Wallet', which offers financial protection during job transitions, 'Pocket Protect' for prolonged hospitalisa-

tion expenses, and a Consumables Benefit covering specified non-medical costs incurred during treatment. The plan is targeted at working professionals aged 18-55 years who rely on employer-sponsored Group Medical Coverage (GMC), as well as Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) visiting the country.

Pankaj Shrivastava, Head - Agency & Health at Tata AIG, said the product combines affordability with long-term protection and aims to make health insurance more flexible and future-ready.

Tata AIG currently operates through more than 260 branches, over 100,000 agents, and a network of more than 13,000 hospitals across India, supporting cashless treatment and claims services. The company, a joint venture between the Tata Group and American International Group (AIG), is celebrating 25 years of operations in India this year.

Jayant Chaudhary flags off five solar skill vans to boost digital inclusion and employability

Guwahati: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary has flagged off five new Solar Community Hub Skill Vans aimed at expanding digital access and future-ready skilling across India.

The initiative has been developed by Dell Technologies in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and is being implemented by the Learning Links Foundation. The new solar-powered skill vans will operate across Uttar Pradesh, Delhi-NCR, Karnataka, Telangana and Maharashtra, delivering AI-enabled learning, technology access and employability pathways to youth, women and underserved communities.

Equipped with laptops, interactive screens, internet connectivity and AI-enabled learning tools, the vans will support more than 50 vocational, higher education and community institutions. The programme is designed to provide customised

skilling modules aligned with emerging market demands and prepare learners for future job opportunities.

Speaking at the launch, Jayant Chaudhary said the initiative reflects a shared commitment to making technology and opportunity accessible across India. Dell Technologies India President and Managing Director Manish Gupta said the project demonstrates how collaboration between government, industry and communities can help create a future-ready workforce.

In Guwahati, the initiative is expected to support the North-east's growing digital economy by improving access to technology and skill development. Industry observers believe such mobile learning hubs can help bridge skill gaps, improve employability and strengthen the talent pipeline for emerging sectors in the region.

Since its launch in FY23, the Solar Community Hub programme has reached 18 districts across 14 states and directly impacted 2.67 million beneficiaries. Globally, the initiative op-



erates 63 skill vans across 12 countries.

Axis Max Life declares Rs 2,530 crore bonus for over 21 lakh policyholders

Guwahati: Axis Max Life Insurance Ltd., formerly known as Max Life Insurance Company Ltd., has announced a participating (PAR) bonus of ₹2,530 crore for eligible policyholders for the financial year 2025-26, marking its 24th consecutive annual bonus declaration.

The insurer said the bonus will benefit more than 21 lakh eligible participating policyholders and will begin to be distributed from July 2026. With this latest declaration, the company's cumulative bonus payout over the past 24 years has reached ₹18,377 crore. According to the company, the size of its PAR Fund increased from ₹74,119 crore



in FY25 to ₹79,003 crore in FY26. The fund has recorded a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17 per cent over the last decade, reflecting sustained growth in its participating business portfolio. The annual bonus declared by the company has risen steadily over the years, increasing from ₹1,469 crore in FY22 to ₹1,604 crore in FY23, ₹1,826 crore in FY24, ₹2,135 crore in FY25 and ₹2,530 crore in FY26.

Axis Max Life's participating products offer various bonus options, including cash bonus, reversionary bonus and terminal bonus. The products also provide policyholders with features such as bonus accumulation, partial withdrawal of accumulated bonuses, paid-up additions and premium offset without affecting the basic sum assured. In Guwahati, the higher bonus declaration could strengthen consumer confidence in participating life insurance products, particularly as customers increasingly seek long-term savings and protection solutions amid growing financial awareness in the region.

TVS Apache RTR 310 presented to India's fastest sprinter Gurindervir Singh

Guwahati: TVS Motor Company on Wednesday presented a TVS Apache RTR 310, the fastest street performance motorcycle in the Apache lineup, to India's fastest 100m sprinter Gurindervir Singh in recognition of his sporting achievements. The company said the gesture celebrates a shared commitment to speed, precision and excellence, bringing together India's fastest athlete and the fastest TVS Apache motorcycle. Gurindervir recently created history in Indian athletics by clocking 10.09 seconds in the men's 100m race at the Federation Cup, setting a new national benchmark. TVS Apache, which has built a global community of over 6.5 million customers across 90 countries, said the Apache RTR 310 represents the brand's performance-focused DNA, drawing from over four decades of TVS Racing heritage. The motorcycle is designed with a lightweight architecture, agile handling characteristics and streetfighter styling aimed at performance enthusiasts. Vimal Sumbly, Head Business – Premium, TVS Motor Company, said the association reflects the shared philosophy of constantly pushing limits. "Mr. Gurindervir Singh's commitment to excellence mirrors our own, making this more than an association. It is the coming together of two icons of speed," he said.

Expressing gratitude, Gurindervir Singh said the Apache RTR 310 embodies the values he pursues on the track, including speed, precision and the determination to improve continuously.

The recognition could further strengthen the appeal of premium performance motorcycles among young buyers. In Guwahati, where demand for sports and performance-oriented motorcycles has been steadily rising, such brand-athlete associations are expected to boost interest in premium offerings like the Apache RTR 310 among enthusiasts and aspiring riders.

AirAsia strengthens crisis response with counselling partnership in Malaysia

Guwahati: AirAsia X (AirAsia Group) has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Board of Counsellors Malaysia (BOC) to strengthen its emergency preparedness and crisis response capabilities through professional psychosocial support across its regional network. The agreement was formalised in Kuala Lumpur in the presence of Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development Lim Hui Ying and AirAsia Group Chief Safety & Quality Officer Captain Saravanan Subramaniam. The partnership aims to integrate psychosocial support into the airline group's humanitarian assistance and emergency response framework. Under the collaboration, both organisations will work together on emergency response preparedness, deployment of registered counsellors during crises, psychosocial first aid (PFA), disaster response exercises and specialised training programmes for AirAsia personnel across all operating units.

BOC will provide trained counsellors to assist employees, survivors, victims and family members affected by emergencies or crisis situations throughout AirAsia's operational network. The partnership will also focus on strengthening emergency response protocols through simulation exercises, knowledge-sharing initiatives and capability development programmes. Group Chief Operations Officer Captain Suresh Bangah said the collaboration reinforces AirAsia's commitment to safety and the well-being of guests while ensuring timely care and assistance during challenging situations. BOC CEO Tuan Haji Sadli bin Osman said the initiative would enhance psychosocial support services and humanitarian response capabilities within the aviation sector. In Guwahati, the move highlights the growing importance of passenger welfare and crisis management standards in the aviation industry. With air connectivity expanding across Northeast India and Southeast Asia, airlines strengthening emergency preparedness and mental health support mechanisms are expected to boost passenger confidence and support long-term growth in the regional aviation market. The agreement also provides for AirAsia to facilitate transportation and logistical support for counsellors deployed during emergency situations, training programmes and simulation exercises across destinations within its network. The initiative reflects the shared commitment of both organisations to promote safety, resilience and compassionate care as key pillars of crisis management.

Assam's concert economy could unlock ₹700 crore in economic value over five years

Guwahati: Assam's emerging live entertainment sector has the potential to generate more than ₹700 crore in cumulative economic impact over the next five years, according to a new report released by BookMyShow, Assam Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. (ATDC) and EY-Parthenon. The report, "The Assam Blueprint: Turning Live Music Economy into a Tourism Multiplier", positions Assam as a case study in how live entertainment can evolve into a powerful economic growth engine.

The analysis uses Post Malone's first-ever India solo headline concert in Guwahati in December 2025 as a benchmark. The event generated an estimated ₹43 crore in economic impact, including ₹32 crore in direct spending within Assam and nearly ₹5 crore in GST revenue. Despite airline disruptions, the concert drew more than 20,000 attendees, with 53 per cent travelling from outside Guwahati and representing over 200 cities and towns across India.

A key finding of the report is the sector's strong multiplier effect. For every ₹100 spent on tickets, visitors spent an additional ₹899 on accommodation, travel, dining, shopping and local services. Hotels recorded a 30 per cent rise in occupancy, transport demand increased by over 50 per cent, while restaurants, cafés and retail outlets reported significant gains in footfall and sales.

The report also highlights wider economic spillovers. Around 2,500 personnel were employed across security, hospitality, logistics, production and venue management, while local businesses participated in staging, branding, food and beverage, infrastructure, payments and sustainability operations. Visitors also travelled to destinations such as Kaziranga National Park, Majuli, Kamakhya Temple and



Sivasagar, extending tourism benefits beyond Guwahati.

According to the report, Assam's Concert Tourism Policy, single-window facilitation through ATDC, infrastructure investments, hospitality expansion and development of local talent ecosystems are creating the conditions for sustained growth. Guwahati recorded a 188 per cent increase in live-event footfalls in 2025 and hosted 55 ticketed events, underlining the city's growing role in India's experience economy.

With global acts such as Guns N' Roses scheduled to perform in Guwahati on November 17, 2026, the report concludes that Assam is increasingly positioning itself as a strategic entertainment and tourism hub, offering a replicable blueprint for regional economic development through live entertainment.

Škoda brings all-new Kodiaq RS to India, bookings open from June 22

Guwahati: Škoda Auto India has announced the launch of the all-new Kodiaq RS, expanding its performance-focused RS portfolio in the country. Bookings for the seven-seater luxury SUV will open on June 22, 2026.

The Kodiaq RS combines high-performance engineering, seven-seat practicality and enhanced all-terrain capability through its 4x4 drivetrain. The launch builds on Škoda's more than 50-year RS legacy and over 125 years of motorsport heritage, bringing the iconic Rally Sport badge to a seven-seater SUV in India for the first time.

Announcing the launch, Ashish Gupta, Brand Director, Škoda Auto India, said the RS badge enjoys a strong following among Indian enthusiasts. He noted that the latest Octavia RS sold out within 20 minutes of its launch last year

and described the Kodiaq RS as the quickest Škoda model introduced in India. "It blends performance, space, and 4x4 capability into a bold, unmistakable expression of our rac-



the Kylaq, Kushaq, Slavia, Kodiaq and Octavia RS, set an India and Asia Book of Records mark for the fastest multi-car relay by a single manufacturer at the CoASTT circuit in Coimbatore.

In Guwahati, the introduction of the Kodiaq RS is expected to strengthen Škoda's appeal among premium SUV buyers in Northeast India, where demand for capable all-terrain vehicles continues to grow. The combination of luxury, seven-seat versatility and performance could attract customers seeking a premium alternative in the region's expanding SUV segment.

Globally, Škoda delivered over 1.04 million vehicles in 2025, while Škoda Auto India recorded a 107 per cent year-on-year growth with sales of 72,665 cars and expanded its presence to more than 335 customer touchpoints across 185 cities.

Tripura's female LFPR jumps to 45.9%

Agartala, June 12: Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday said the state's female labour force participation rate has risen to 45.9 per cent in 2025 from 37.5 per cent in 2022, registering an increase of 8.4 percentage points over the past three years. Addressing the 11th Governing Council Meeting of NITI Aayog on the theme "Human Capital for Viksit Bharat", Saha highlighted a range of initiatives undertaken by the state government to promote women's economic empowerment, education, healthcare and skill development. The Chief Minister said nearly 4.96 lakh rural women are currently associated with 55,676 self-help groups across the state. He noted that initiatives such as the Samridhhi Campaign have improved access to institutional credit for women-led enterprises and self-help groups, while



efforts are underway to integrate SHG-based micro-enterprises into the formal MSME sector. Saha said the state has established SHE Skills and Entrepreneurship Centres in women's Industrial Training Institutes and introduced the Tripura Women Entrepreneurship Policy 2025 to encourage greater participation of women in business and economic activities.

He also said the government has taken steps to facil-

itate women's participation in night-shift employment with appropriate safety measures. Highlighting broader development indicators, Saha said Tripura has adopted the long-term development vision "Lakshya 2047" in line with the national goal of Viksit Bharat 2047. He added that the state's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) has doubled over the past six years. In the education sector, the Chief Minister cited initiatives such as Mission

Mukul, NIPUN Corners, smart classrooms and tinkering laboratories. He said 84 schools are being upgraded under the PM SHRI scheme, while 125 model schools have been established under the Vidyajyoti programme. On healthcare, Saha said more than three lakh beneficiaries have been covered under the Poshan Tracker initiative, while a School Health Mission has been implemented in selected institutions.

The Chief Minister also highlighted investment proposals worth over Rs 30,000 crore received during the past year, with projects exceeding Rs 8,000 crore already under implementation. He said progress in skill development, digital governance, tourism promotion and startup incubation continues to support Tripura's human capital development strategy.

NSCN (IM) demands terror tag for Kuki militants

Dimapur, June 11: The NSCN (IM) has demanded that the Government of India immediately outlaw Kuki militant groups and their affiliated village volunteers, and formally designate them

constituted crimes against humanity and a grave violation of human dignity.

The organisation said it would pursue efforts to ensure that those responsible for the killings are brought to justice.

ma on grieving families and communities," the statement said. The NSCN further alleged that the deliberate targeting of civilians, use of extreme violence and desecration of the dead amounted to acts of terrorism.

It said groups accused of committing such acts should be stripped of political legitimacy and warned that failure to act against them could undermine prospects for justice and peace. Calling for immediate intervention, the organisation urged the Centre to act decisively against the groups and enforce the law against those found responsible.

The statement also criticised the conduct of Indian security forces, alleging that they had acted against Naga women protesters, student activists and village guards while failing to prevent the alleged killings of Naga civilians. Questioning what it described as a disparity in the treatment of different groups, the NSCN said such actions raised concerns about the principles of justice, equality and protection that the Government of India is constitutionally bound to uphold.



as terrorist organisations following the alleged killing of six Naga captives. In a statement, the NSCN/GPRN strongly condemned what it described as the "barbaric killing" and "grotesque mutilation" of the victims, alleging that the acts

"Even in times of conflict, universal moral norms demand absolute respect for the deceased. The deliberate desecration of human bodies serves no purpose other than to spread terror, weaponise fear, and inflict deep psychological trauma

Meghalaya launches tax waiver scheme for commercial vehicles

Guwahati, June 11: The Meghalaya government has launched a One-Time Settlement (OTS) Scheme offering substantial waivers on taxes and penalties to commercial vehicle owners in a bid to clear long-pending transport dues. The scheme was launched by Deputy Chief Minister and Transport Minister Sniawbhalang Dhar in Shillong after receiving approval from the state cabinet. Under the scheme, commercial vehicle owners can avail an 80 per cent waiver on outstanding Motor Vehicle Tax and Goods and Passenger Tax dues, along with related penalties. A 90 per cent waiver has also been offered on penalties linked to Fitness Certificates. Dhar said the scheme covers outstanding liabilities accumulated over several years, regardless

of when they originated, and will be implemented in accordance with the formula approved by the government.

According to the Transport Department, total outstanding dues across the state are estimated at nearly Rs 1,100 crore, including around Rs 900 crore in fitness certificate penalties alone. Officials estimate that the government could recover between Rs 180 crore and Rs 200 crore if vehicle owners avail themselves of the scheme. Government data shows that around 65,000 vehicles have pending Motor Vehicle Tax dues, while 12,642 vehicles are liable for Goods and Passenger Tax payments. More than 57,000 vehicles also have outstanding penalties related to Fitness Certificates. The scheme will remain open until August



31, 2026. Dhar said vehicle owners would have to continue making regular quarterly or monthly payments under existing regulations after the scheme ends, adding that such waiver programmes cannot be introduced frequently. On the proposed Vehicle Scrapage Policy, the minister said the government is putting the necessary systems in place and that the policy will be implemented after the required groundwork is completed.

Mizoram police seize drugs worth ₹2.34 cr

Guwahati, June 11: Mizoram Police have seized narcotics worth approximately Rs 2.34 crore in two separate anti-drug operations conducted in Saitual and Champhai districts, officials said on Wednesday. In the first operation, Saitual Police intercepted a KIA car on Tuesday near the outskirts of Keifang while it was travelling from Manipur towards Aizawl. A detailed search of the vehicle led to the recovery of 71 packets of suspected opium fluid, concealed inside the car.

Two Rajasthan natives, Somraj (36), the driver, and Kailash (28), were arrested in connection with the seizure. Police said the recovered opium fluid weighed 45.871 kg and was valued at around Rs 2.29 crore. A case has been registered against them under Sections 18(b), 25 and 29 of the NDPS Act. In a separate



incident on June 8, personnel at the Khankawn Check Gate in Champhai district stopped a vehicle travelling towards Aizawl for routine inspection. One passenger, Vanlalnghaka (36), a resident of Champhai district, was found behaving suspiciously, prompting a search. Police recovered two soap cases containing heroin hidden inside a pair of red Reebok shoes kept in his black rucksack. The contraband weighed 29 grams and was estimated to be worth around Rs 5.8 lakh. A case has been registered at Champhai Police Station under Section 21(b) of the NDPS Act in connection with the second seizure.

Tripura court summons Abhishek Banerjee, other TMC leaders



Guwahati, June 11: Agartala: A court in Tripura's Khowai district has summoned several senior Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders, including Lok Sabha MP Abhishek Banerjee, Rajya Sabha MP Dola Sen and party leader Kunal Ghosh, in connection with a case registered during the party's political activities in the state in 2021. Public Prosecutor of Khowai District Court Abhijit Bhattacharjee said the case stems from an incident that occurred after police arrested 14 TMC workers in Khowai and produced them before a court.

According to the prosecution, a group of TMC leaders and supporters allegedly engaged in misconduct with police personnel during the episode. The allegations also include an attempt to damage property at Khowai Police Station. Bhattacharjee said a case was registered by police and subsequently placed before the court of the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM),

Khowai. After examining the case records, the court took cognisance of the matter and initiated proceedings against the accused persons.

He said former West Bengal Education Minister Bratya Basu, who was also named in the case, challenged the proceedings before the High Court and was later discharged. "The remaining accused persons will face legal proceedings in accordance with law," the prosecutor said. According to court records, summons were issued in April this year directing the accused to appear before the Khowai District Court.

The court has fixed June 22 for their personal appearance, Bhattacharjee said. The case relates to developments during the Trinamool Congress's efforts to strengthen its political presence in Tripura ahead of subsequent electoral contests. Several senior leaders of the party had visited the state during that period and participated in organisational programmes.

Shaheen Afridi likely to miss WI and England Tests



Lahore, June 10: Pakistan's experienced fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi is unlikely to be picked for the forthcoming Tests in the West Indies and England this year to manage his workload and he is not pleased with the situation. Pakistan will play Tests in Tarouba (from July 25) and Port of Spain (from August 2) during the Caribbean tour before travelling to England where they are scheduled to play a three-Test series, starting August 19.

Shaheen, 26, leads the national ODI squad. "The selectors and management believe that it is better if Shaheen's workload is managed and he focusses more on white-ball cricket from here on," one source said. The source also confirmed that the fast bowler himself was not happy with this thinking as he is still young and is keen to play more Test matches.

Shaheen, who has played 34 Tests for his 126 wickets, has in contrast appeared in 77 ODIs and 103 T20 Internationals since his debut back in 2018. But the selectors have already been keeping him out of the Test side for sometime now and since December, 2023 Shaheen has played in just 7 Tests although Pakistan during this period competed in 16 five-day games. Another source said that the white ball head coach, Mike Hesson had also backed the decision to manage the workload of Shaheen who recently led his team to a 2-1 win over Australia in the home ODI series.

The source said that the selectors had decided to give other pace bowlers, who have been performing well in domestic cricket, more chances to play in Test matches notably Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Abbas, and Khuram Shehzad. Pakistan's biggest problem in recent times has been a shortage of genuine pacers, who can clock 140kph and it has seen them struggle badly in Tests. It also forced them to prepare slow turning tracks at home.

India Retains No. 1 Men's ODI Spot in ICC Annual Update

Following the update, India have slipped from 119 to 118 points, while New Zealand have gained two points to move up to 113

Dubai, June 11: India have maintained their top spot in the ICC Men's ODI Team Rankings after the annual update, although their advantage over New Zealand has narrowed from eight rating points to five. Following the update, India have slipped from 119 to 118 points even as New Zealand have gained two points to move up to 113. The reigning World Cup champions Australia are in third position with an unchanged 109 points.



The only change in the top 10 positions is that South Africa (102) have overtaken Pakistan (98) to fourth spot.

However, there is a notable change in the gap between ninth-placed Bangladesh and the West Indies, which

has increased to 10 points. In other shifts, Ireland have leapfrogged Zimbabwe to 11th position, the USA have moved above Scotland to 13th spot, and the United Arab Emirates are now ahead of Canada in 19th place.

India are also top ranked in the ICC Men's T20I Rankings after the annual updates carried out last week while Australia are at the top of the Test rankings. Australia are No. 1 in both the Women's ODI and T20I lists.

Ronaldo misses big chances in Portugal's World Cup warmup win over Nigeria

Leiria, Portugal, June 11: Portugal is heading to the World Cup on the back of a 2-1 warmup win over Nigeria and some regrets for star striker Cristiano Ronaldo. The 41-year-old Ronaldo failed to add to his men's-record international haul of 143 goals despite being presented with clear-cut chances with just the goalkeeper to beat in both halves in Leiria on Wednesday.

The five-time world player of the year was substituted off in the 65th minute, having been given longer on the field than every other outfield player to start the match for Portugal. Ronaldo will be making his record-tying sixth



appearance at a World Cup.

Francisco Conceição, one of the 11 replacements to come on for Portugal, grabbed the 75th-minute winner by cutting in from the right and curling a shot into the far corner. Pedro Neto

gave Portugal the lead in the 23rd. Akor Adams equalized for 14 minutes later for Nigeria, which had failed to qualify for the World Cup. Portugal is in Group K at the World Cup with Congo, Uzbekistan and Colombia.

Ja'Kobe Tharp Breaks 110m Hurdles World Record at NCAAs

Los Angeles, June 11: Ja'Kobe Tharp clocked 12.75sec to smash the 110m hurdles world record during heats at the NCAA collegiate athletics championships in Eugene, Oregon, on Wednesday. Tharp wiped out the long-standing previous record of 12.80sec set by fellow American Aries Merritt in Brussels on September 7, 2012. The performance, run with a legal tailwind of one meter per second sec, also shattered Grant Holloway's NCAA collegiate record of 12.98sec set in 2019.

The 20-year-old Auburn University standout came into the meeting with a personal best of 13.01sec. He took more than a quarter of a second off that mark. "I knew I had that in my legs," Tharp told reporters. "But it wasn't on my bingo card before this meet, not at all." Tharp said he felt like he was "going pretty fast". "The last three hurdles were kind of iffy," he said. "I was like, 'Whoa, I'm coming up kind of fast'. "I thought maybe 12.97 or 12.98 and match the (NCAA) speed record. But to see that ... I'm speechless, seriously." While he did not have a world record in mind, Tharp said he "really wanted to make a statement". Having achieved that he can now focus on Friday's final, in which he'll try to become the first athlete since Olympic champion Holloway in 2019 to win a second straight NCAA crown in the event. "I'm trying to focus on what's here in front of me," he said. "I've still got to finish it in two days, so I'm still focused on that."

Hyderabad to host second season of Archery Premier League this October

New Delhi, June 11: Hyderabad is set to become the center of the archery world this October as the Archery Premier League (APL) arrives in the City of Pearls for its second season. From October 8 to 18, People's Plaza on Necklace Road will host eleven days of elite competition, bringing together six franchise teams and many of the world's finest archers for a sporting spectacle. Initiated by the Archery Association of India (AAI), and backed by the Government of Telangana, Season 2 builds on the success of a landmark inaugural edition in New Delhi last year. The league will once again bring Olympic champions, world champions, world number ones, and some of the biggest names in archery to Indian shores, as Hyderabad prepares to host a world-class sporting spectacle. Leading Indian archers include former World No 1 and four-time Olympian Deepika Kumari, four-time Olympian Atanu Das, 2023 Compound World Champion gold medallist Ojas Deotale, top compound archers Jyoti Surekha, Abhishek Verma and Olympian Ankita Bhakat, alongside an elite field of international stars. Launched in 2025 with the objective of strengthening India's Olympic medal prospects in archery, the APL was conceived as a platform that enables

Indian archers to compete in a high-performance environment.

The league for the first time brings together recurve and compound archers both men and women shooting together in competitive conditions while introducing a unique 15-second shot clock, five



seconds shorter than the 20-second limit used in Olympic and World Archery competitions—placing an added premium on speed, composure and decision-making under pressure. "We are delighted to bring the Archery Premier League to Hyderabad for

Season 2 and are grateful to the Government of Telangana for its support in making this possible. The city has a rich sporting culture, a deep appreciation for excellence, and the energy to host an event of this scale. The inaugural season demonstrated not only the immense potential of archery as a spectator sport but also the value of creating a platform where Indian archers can compete alongside the world's best. As we build on that foundation, our focus remains on strengthening India's archery ecosystem, providing world-class competitive opportunities for athletes, and inspiring the next generation of talent. We are confident that Hyderabad will provide the perfect stage for a memorable second season," Anil Kamineni, APL director, said.

The 11-day tournament will feature six franchises — Mighty Marathas, Rajputana Royals, Prithviraj Yodhas, Kakatiya Knights, Chero Archers and Chola Chiefs — with a total of 48 Indian and international archers competing across recurve and compound disciplines. Each team will field a mixed squad of eight archers, with the competition following a double round-robin format. The top four teams at the end of the league stage will advance to the semi-finals, culminating in the final on October 18.