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– Editor

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## 100 Bathou Thansalis to receive financial support this year: CM



Dispur, April 6: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma attended the open session of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the Dularai Bathou Goutham (All Bathou Mahasabha), held at Pthalikuchi in Tamulpur. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Sarma observed *see page 10*

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**RIHA AXOM SILK**

New Mission Market, Dr. Huge Road, Nagaon (Assam)

আমাৰ ইয়াত উন্নত মানদণ্ডৰ তথা আধুনিক ডিজাইন প্ৰসিদ্ধ  
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**Contact No : 6002613811**





### No--88 Prayer

O Hari, You are the last resort of the helpless.  
You are free from anxiety,  
The Master of the infinite power.  
You are the Satya,  
Sanatana, Sadasiva.  
I beg pellucid salvation at Your feet.  
O Hari, let my mouth never avoid  
The Super pellucid praise of Your name.  
O Krishna, be benevolent to me to have service to Your feet.  
O the triumphant Rama,  
The sea of mercy  
This time mercy me, please.  
I worship Your fearless feet.  
O Master Damodar, send my worldly illusion far away.  
O Jadava, the offshoot of the Jadavas.  
Govinda, the destroyer of Mur  
O Mukunda, I immersed in the sea of ignorance,  
Come and rescue me.  
O the life and Master of the Jadus,  
I serve your feet.  
O Rama, donot abandon me  
Give me the way to give interest at Your feet.  
O the triumphant master of the Jadus,  
I attach myself to your feet  
I beg pellucid devotion through hearing and singing.  
O the Saviour of the poor, rescue your servant.  
I bite grass with my teeth and touch Your feet.  
O Murari, donot avoid me.  
Karunamaya, the sea of mercy and kindness,  
We are unfit for Your mercy.  
O Rama-Krishna, Hari, Govinda,  
Merciful and  
The Master of the poor,  
We beg easy shelter at Your feet.  
O Govinda, my soul,  
Please take me for Your servant.  
Keep me in the company of Your servants.  
Except it, we beg nothing from You.  
O the victorious Jadava,  
You are the Saviour of those, beyond any master,  
Holding grass with teeth, I beg at Your feet the company of the pious ones  
O Rama-Krishna, Hari, Govinda,  
I became Your servant.  
I have taken shelter at Your fearless feet,  
Rob our worldly illusion.  
O Govinda, Gopal, Gopinath,  
Donot stop Your mercy  
And kindness for me.  
In this infinite sea, I get no way  
And immersed in this violent sea.  
O Hari  
O Hari,  
Rama-Krishna Narayana,  
Relieve me from the worldly illusion.

O Gopinath, donot abandon me  
Removing Your net of worldly illusion,  
Provide me shelter at Your feet.  
O benevolent Gopal, You look after all,  
Take care of me lest I donot lose my pleasure and intellect at Your feet.  
O Rama Roghupati, You are the latest resort of the helpless.  
Let my mind remain at pleasure of  
the blossoming --honey of Your feet.  
O the victorious Jadupati,  
I took shelter at Your feet.  
Having heard the honest words,  
I selected the sensation of Your name,  
The Saviour of the fallen ones.  
O my hearty God, Madhava,  
The benevolent son of Daivakee,  
The bosom friend to the poor, the sea of mercy,  
I salute Your feet.  
O ever joyful Rama, Hari, Krishna,  
Take me for Your slave.  
O Hari, You are the sea of pleasure,  
We the beggars, beg a drop of joy.  
The destroyer of Modhu,  
The master of the Roghus,  
My salvation is at Your feet.  
O Rama, give me the shade of Your sunny feet,  
Just then, I may be saved from Your illusion.  
Biting grass with my teeth,  
I touch the feet of Hari,  
And beg a small drop of Your mercy.  
O Lord, be merciful to me, my Rama,  
Setting Your feet in my lotus- heart,  
O Jadumoni, I shall sing the praise of Your name.  
O Hari Narayana, the helpless ones cry out,  
Be merciful to them.  
O Narayana, I call You repeatedly,  
Let my mind immerse in the lotus- feet of Hari.  
O Narayana, might our mind immerse at Your feet, Rama.

■ Rita Borua  
99545-94823

## Assam Becomes Third Fastest Growing State Of India

**Guwahati :** Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday announced that Assam currently happens to be the third-fastest growing state of India with a GDP growth rate of 7.94% at constant prices. CM Sarma took to his official X handle to inform about this significant achievement, attributing the state's constant growth to the government's pro-investor policies and continued investments in infrastructure, institutions & individuals. Reflecting on the state's rapid transformation, the Assam CM went on to claim that this meteoric rise seemed far-fetched a few years ago. According to government data, the economic indicators of the state have witnessed a sharp rise.





# Morigaon District Administration Briefs Media on Panchayat Election Preparations



**Lipika Bora, Morigaon :** With the State Election Commission announcing the dates for the 2025 Panchayat Elections, the Model Code of Conduct has been enforced in the Gaon Panchayat areas under Morigaon district. In a press briefing held at the District Commissioner’s conference hall, Morigaon Deputy Commissioner and District Election Officer, Debashish Sharma, informed media representatives about the ongoing preparations for the upcoming election. He stated that the administration is fully committed to conducting a free and fair election. To ensure compliance with the Model Code of Conduct, various monitoring teams such as the flying squad, static surveillance teams, expenditure monitoring committees, and enforcement cells have been activated. Sharma also appealed to the public, through the media, to cooperate in

ensuring peaceful elections. In response to a query, Sharma mentioned that the venues for vote counting have not yet been finalized but will be announced within a couple of days. He further added that around 5,346 officials and staff will be deployed for election duties, including a 10 percent reservation for women. Additional Deputy Commissioner Dr. Sangeeta Barthakur also addressed the press and shared detailed information regarding the district’s preparations. According to the State Election Commission’s schedule, the Panchayat Election in Morigaon district will be conducted in the second phase on May 7, with polling from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. The counting of votes is scheduled for May 11 starting from 8:00 AM. Morigaon district has a total of 7,00,430 voters, com-

prising 3,54,785 male, 3,45,632 female, and 13 third-gender voters. A total of 972 polling stations will be set up. The district includes 12 Zila Parishad constituencies, 5 Anchalik Panchayats, 84 Gaon Panchayats, and 840 wards. Nomination forms will be accepted from April 3 to April 11, between 11 AM and 3 PM. Scrutiny of nomination papers will take place on April 12, and the list of valid candidates will be published the same day. Candidates may withdraw their nominations by 3 PM on April 17, after which the final list of candidates will be released. Nomination filing venues for different constituencies have been specified. Candidates from Mayong, Jagi Bhakatgaon, Deosal, and Dharamtul Zila Parishad constituencies can file nominations at the Jagiroad Sub-Division Office in Jagi Bhakatgaon. Candidates from Bhuragaon, Rajagadhowa, Moirabari, and Laharighat constituencies can submit nominations at the Laharighat Sub-Division Office in Rajagadhowa. Candidates from Kushatoli-Nij Gerua, Bhurbandha, Danduwa, and Charaibahi-Chabukdhora constituencies can file at the Morigaon DC Office. For Anchalik Panchayat nominations, Mayong Anchalik Panchayat candidates may file nominations at the Mayong Revenue Circle Office, Mayong Development Block Office, and Jagiroad Sub-Division Office. Bhuragaon Anchalik Panchayat nominations will be accepted at the Laharighat Sub-Division Office.

# The Fear of Ghosts

■ Satabdi Sarmah  
Amolapatty Nagaon

Have you ever seen a ghost? I must admit, I've always been curious to encounter a real ghost, just like some older folks claim to have done. However, we live in an era of scientific inquiry, where there's no room for beliefs in black magic, ghosts, and other superstitions. People often share stories about ghostly encounters on deserted roads, under large trees, or near riverbanks. But how many of you have actually seen a ghost at 2 a.m. on the balcony of a building? During my school days, I would often play with my friends, and we'd explore the abandoned hostel on campus. The hostel had been in disrepair for years, and its closed windows seemed to beckon us. We'd run towards the hostel, stop at a particular window, and push the curtain. To our surprise, the curtain would move as if someone inside was pushing it from their side. It was an eerie experience, but we enjoyed the thrill and would quickly retreat to our classroom. As I reflect on those childhood experiences, I realize that our curiosity about ghosts was just a natural part of growing up. In reality, there were no ghosts; just our imagination and the thrill of exploration. Nowadays, some people still believe in ghosts and rely on babas' prophecies. However, the truth is that there's no concrete evidence to support the existence of ghosts. "Sometimes, when you're reading late at night and suddenly turn around, you might feel like someone is watching you. That's just the fear of ghosts playing tricks on your mind. There's no need to be alarmed; it's just your imagination at work."

# Drama Performed



**Amulya Borah, Kaliabor :** As the people of the state gear up to embrace Rongali Bihu, an exceptional event "Bakultalot Biyoli Bela" was held at Barigaon in Kaliabor. Two plays each performed on Open-Air stage on the occasion of the 95th birth anniversary of artist Harendra Nath Sharma. The two plys were performed without using modern sound and light . The play "Rengoni" by kocal artists and "Jengrai" of Mangaldoi has performed the play " Chon Pora Brindabon " . Under the open sky, the audience enjoys the two plays sitting on the ground

# Ashokastmi Mela at Shilghat

**Amulya Birah, Kaliabor :** On the occasion of holy Ashokashtami on April 5 , this time too, there is a rush of devotees from different parts of Assam at Shilghat in Kaliabor to bathe in the mighty Brahmaputra. "According to legend, on the Shuklashtami tithi of the month of Sawan, a little water of the Ganga flow through the mighty Brahmaputra. There is a popular belief that bathing in this water body on Suklastomi, destroys sins as well as attains virtue.""Like previous years, this time too, many people throng to bathe in the Brahmaputra at Shilghat. Apart from bathing , with the gathering , a mela also held wih six days from April5 to April10.

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# Significance of Bohag Bihu

## ■ Satyabrata Borah

Bohag Bihu is one of the most joyful and loved festivals in Assam. It is the beginning of the Assamese New Year and is celebrated with great energy and happiness. People wait for this festival all year because it brings hope, new beginnings, and lots of cheer. Bohag Bihu is also known as Rongali Bihu. It marks the arrival of spring, when nature becomes fresh, green, and full of life. The air becomes pleasant, flowers bloom, and everything around looks beautiful.

This festival mainly takes place in the month of April. It is the time when farmers get ready for the new crop season. Agriculture is a very important part of life in Assam. So, when the time to sow the new seeds comes, people celebrate it with excitement. Bohag Bihu shows the deep bond between people and nature. It brings everyone closer to their roots, reminding them of the importance of the earth, water, and sky. It is not just a festival; it is a way of life for many.

During Bohag Bihu, people wear new clothes and clean their homes. They believe that a clean and fresh environment brings good luck. Traditional Assamese clothes like mekhela chador for women and dhoti-kurta for men are worn with pride. People decorate their homes with flowers and leaves. The whole atmosphere becomes festive. There is laughter, music, and the sound of drums and flutes everywhere.

One of the most beautiful things about Bohag Bihu is the Bihu dance. Young boys and girls perform this dance in open fields, under trees, and even in courtyards. Their faces shine with joy as they sing and dance. The movements are graceful, and the music is full of life. The songs sung during the Bihu dance are called Bihu geet. These songs talk about love, nature, and the joy of being alive. They have been passed down from generation to generation and still hold the same charm.

Food also plays a big role in Bohag Bihu. People prepare many traditional dishes like pitha, laru, and jolpan. These are made with rice, coconut, jaggery, and milk. Sharing food with family, friends, and neighbors adds warmth to the celebration. It is a time when no one feels left out. Everyone is welcome to join the feast and enjoy the moment. It is a festival that spreads unity and love.

Bohag Bihu also includes many customs that are followed with great respect. On the first day, cattle are washed and taken care of. This day is called Goru Bihu. People take their cows to the river or ponds, clean them, and offer them special food. They believe that cows are part of the family and should be treated with kindness. The next day, called Manuh Bihu, is for humans. People take baths with special oils, wear new clothes, and seek blessings from elders. Young people touch the feet of their elders and receive their blessings for a good life.

Another sweet part of this festival is the gift-giving. People make or buy gamusas, which are traditional hand-woven towels, and offer them to elders or loved ones as a mark of respect and love. These simple acts make the bond between people stronger. In a world that moves fast, such traditions help people slow down and connect with each other from the heart.

Bohag Bihu is also a time when people feel proud of their culture. Many events and fairs are held during this period. People come together to perform plays, music, and dance. These cultural events keep the traditions alive and help the younger generation learn about their roots. School children, college students, and even adults take part in competitions and programs. It becomes a time of learning, fun, and togetherness.

What makes Bohag Bihu even more special is that it does not belong to any one religion or group. People from all walks of life join in the celebrations. There is no barrier of caste, religion, or class. It is truly a festival of the people. It teaches everyone to live in harmony, to help each other, and to find joy in simple things.

Nature plays an important role during Bohag Bihu. The green fields, blooming flowers, and singing birds all seem to celebrate with the people. It reminds us to take care of the environment, to respect the trees, rivers, and animals around us. Festivals like Bohag Bihu teach us that nature and humans are connected in many ways.

Children enjoy this festival a lot. They get to eat tasty food, wear new clothes, and watch the colorful dances. They learn about their culture in a fun way. Elders share stories from the past, and younger ones listen with wide eyes. It becomes a time when sto-

ries, songs, and values are passed on from one generation to the next.

Bohag Bihu also brings happiness to people living far away from their homes. Many Assamese people who live in other parts of India or even abroad feel a strong pull towards their roots during this time. They try to celebrate it in their own way, connecting with other Assamese people, cooking traditional dishes, and dancing to Bihu songs. Even if they are far from home, the spirit of the festival brings them close.

In villages, the festival has a special charm. People go from house to house singing Bihu songs, playing instruments, and spreading joy. It is a sight to behold. The fields, trees, and even the wind seem to dance along with them. The whole village comes alive. No one is alone during Bohag Bihu. Everyone belongs. That is the magic of this festival.

For many, Bohag Bihu is not just a celebration. It is a memory of childhood, of family, of simpler times. It is a reminder that happiness can be found in music,

food, and laughter shared with loved ones. It teaches values like respect, love, kindness, and gratitude. These values stay with people even after the festival is over.

As times change, some things about Bohag Bihu also change. New styles of music and dance are added. Social media plays a role in how people share their celebrations. But the heart of the festival remains the same. It is still about togetherness, joy, and a fresh start. It still brings smiles to faces young and old.

Bohag Bihu gives a break from the busy life. It lets people breathe, dance, sing, and just be happy. In a world where everyone is running, it offers a moment to pause and enjoy. It reminds us that life is not only about work and stress. It is also about festivals, families, and friendships.

So, the significance of Bohag Bihu is deep and meaningful. It brings people closer to their land, their culture, and each other. It adds color to life and fills the air with hope. It is a celebration of the past, present, and future. It is a time to smile, to sing, and to celebrate being alive.

## Jorhat-Dibrugarh NH Project To Be Completed By December 31: CM Sarma

**Guwahati :** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that the Jorhat-Dibrugarh section of the National Highway is set to be completed by December 31, 2025. The announcement was made via his official X handle after a meeting with Krishan Kumar, Managing Director of the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL), on April 7 in New Delhi. CM Sarma reiterated the dedication to the implementation of promises made to the people by saying, "This is another promise given to the people which will be fulfilled much before the elections." The meeting was dedicated to examine the progress of various proposed and ongoing infrastructure projects across Assam. Among the important projects under focus was building a four-lane 19.28-km-long bridge across the Brahmaputra River between Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya. This, when completed, will be India's longest bridge. Furthermore, the Chief Minister and NHIDCL officials examined the ambitious Rs. 25,000 crore Guwahati-Silchar Expressway that was expected to cut down travel time substantially and improve connectivity among Assam's major cities. Other important projects were the proposed underwater Numaligarh-Gohpur tunnel, the first one in the Northeast.





# Bohag Bihu: Old Meets New

■ Lalit Nath  
Itakhola

Renowned litterateur, historian, author, educator and Bihu culture researcher Dr. Leela Gogoi, in his unique book Bihu Eti Samiksha, wrote, "The Bihu narrates the history of the past, reflects the evolution of the present and foretells the future." His profound observation makes it clear that Bihu is not merely a festival, it is a tradition deeply intertwined with the lives of the Assamese people—an eternal heritage that has embraced the cultural elements of the past while adapting to the pace of time. It seamlessly integrates the glorious heritage of the past, the journey of the present and the hopes and aspirations of the future. Hence, Bihu is a colourful chronicle of time that keeps the culture of the community alive, eternal and dynamic. Bihu is such a culture that reflects the fundamental way of life, beliefs, practices and ethos of the Assamese community in an evolved and organized manner.

Bohag Bihu is a traditional folk festival of the Assamese people, rooted in the agrarian society. The fundamental significance of this festival is deeply intertwined with the agricultural practices of human society. Various cultural elements, rituals, songs, dances and folk customs of Assamese life have emerged from this agricultural culture, flourishing into a rich heritage. Therefore, Bohag Bihu is not merely a festival, it is a living portrait of the Assamese philosophy of life. Born in an ancient agrarian society, the Bihu festival is closely connected to the land, agriculture and livelihood. It embodies the celebration of productivity, abundance and joy.

With the passage of time, Bihu culture has evolved.

Today, Bihu is no longer confined to a rural, nature-centric celebration. The influence of urban civilization, globalization and modernity has brought a new form to the festival. Hence, today's Bihu is not exclusively rural or nature-centric. Bihu functions, stage performances, various competitions and digital media have given Bihu widespread publicity.

Bohag Bihu is the festival of the heart for Assamese people. In harmony with the colours and forms of nature, Bihu brings new hope to the hearts of Assam's people. Over time, society's structure has also changed. In the past,

people sang Bihu songs by the riverbanks, under the shades of trees, near forests, and in the midst of vast fields-

Potharor majote Aahator talote  
Ami Bihu mora thai,  
Bonore dewota Amak  
nojokaba  
Okole nijanot pai.

On the first day of Bohag, the village youths would roam around playing the dhol, pepa, and kah to ward off excess rain, drought, storms and lightning while praying for increased crop production. On the day of Bihu, the common people would bless the king in his own house and in return, the king would accept their service, saying,

The people are the true rulers.  
Swargadeu olale Batchorar  
mukholoi  
Duliyai patile dola,  
Kano jilikile Mokore kundole  
Gat gomchengor chola.

After the arrival of the British, stage performances of Bihu began. With the rise of the anti-British national movement, national festivals also started being celebrated. The celebration of Bihu underwent changes due to scientific and economic transformations. Villages collectively organized Bihu meetings, leading society on the path of progress.

With advancements in technology, the traditional form of Bihu began to experience the influence of modernity. For the first time, the lively tunes of Bihu could be heard on the radio. The Bihu programmes broadcast by All India Radio, Guwahati, spread across Assam, resonating in every home. The melodies of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, Khagen Mahanta, Dipali Barthakur and Dipen Baruah enchanted the mountains, valleys, towns and cities of Assam.

Next came the era of gramophones. Gramophones initiated a new phase in the preservation and dissemination of music. Through records, the soulful Bihu songs of popular singers reached nearly every household in Assam. As time progressed, cassettes and tape recorders became the most popular medium for listening to Bihu songs in the 1980s and 1990s. Cassette players and recorders brought forth numerous Bihu albums, blending traditional folk music with modern tunes. Later, CDs and DVDs replaced cassettes, offering superior sound quality.

In the digital age, Bihu is not just a festival but a global cultural identity. YouTube, Spotify,



JioSaavn, Facebook, Instagram Live, and other digital platforms have given Bihu and its music boundless reach. Assamese people living abroad can now sit in front of their screens and enjoy Bihu programmes from Assam, humming along to Bihu songs—a common sight today.

Even in this age of technological advancements, the core essence of Bihu remains deeply rooted in the Assamese agrarian culture and fertility beliefs. The sounds of dhol, pepa, gogona, and taal still stir the hearts of every Assamese. The fusion of traditional with modern digital music has enriched the soul of Bihu, offering a creative and contemporary experience.

E-commerce platforms have made traditional attires like gamusa and mekhela chador easily accessible, enabling Assamese expatriates to celebrate Bihu wherever they are. Digital platforms have opened new pathways for identifying Bihu among the younger generation and have brought the works

of talented artists closer to the people. Assamese Bihu dance and dhol playing have even entered the Guinness World Records.

Yet, amid these digital advantages, the heartfelt essence, social harmony and communal celebration of Bihu seem to have faded somewhat. Earlier, Bihu was a festival of strengthening bonds and sharing joy together. Nowadays, Bihu celebrations often seem restricted to media coverage, videos and reels uploaded on digital platforms, giving an impression that Bihu is celebrated more for show.

Despite this, the message of joy, harmony and unity that Bihu has carried through generations remains unchanged. The traditional sounds of dhol, pepa, gogona and taal continue to echo, evoking deep emotions in the hearts of Assamese people. The fusion of traditional and modern music has enriched the essence of Bihu, keeping it alive, vibrant, and relevant for future generations. **Mobile : 99541-39493**

## The Pulse of Peace

Not thunder, not flame,  
but a whisper carved in shade—  
a slender spine of ink“dancing where chaos fades.  
No banners, no drums,  
just silence stitched with thought.  
Peace doesn't march—  
it writes, it hums, it knots.  
Where blades forget the ground,  
the pen remembers sky—  
etching soft revolutions  
on pages drifting by.  
It bleeds in curves,“not wounds, but wings—  
a quiet architecture  
of remembering things.  
Letters fall like rain,  
gentle, persistent, clear—  
truth spills in rhythm,  
not in fear.  
A single stroke  
can cradle storms,  
unmake the noise,  
reshape the norms.  
Not victory's cheer,  
but a lullaby's trace—  
the pen, still pulsing,  
in the quiet space.

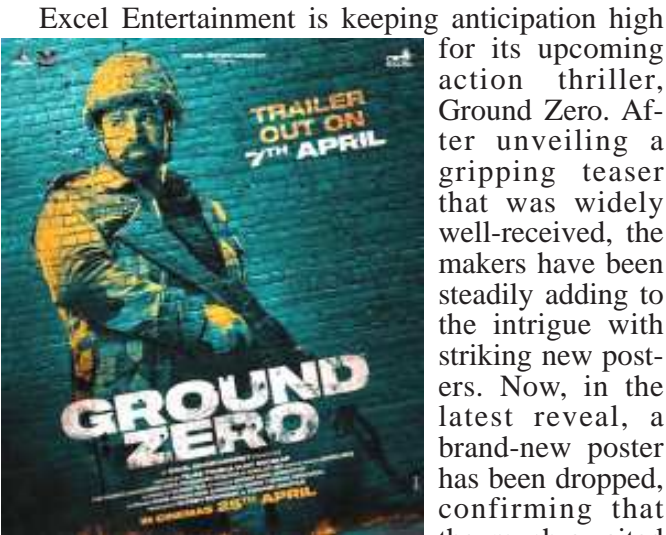


**Mobile : 7002797540**





## Emraan Hashmi stands tall in Ground Zero’s new poster against a war-torn wall



Excel Entertainment is keeping anticipation high for its upcoming action thriller, Ground Zero. After unveiling a gripping teaser that was widely well-received, the makers have been steadily adding to the intrigue with striking new posters. Now, in the latest reveal, a brand-new poster has been dropped, confirming that the much-awaited trailer will arrive on April 7. Starring Emraan Hashmi as BSF Commandant Narendra Nath Dhar Dubey, Ground Zero is inspired by true events and showcases a high-stakes military operation. With each update, the excitement surrounding the film continues to grow, making it one of the most anticipated releases of the year. Adding to the authenticity, the grand trailer launch will be attended by Real BSF Deputy Commandant Narendra Nath Dhar Dubey, alongside Emraan Hashmi, Sai Tamhankar, and the film’s makers. The presence of a real-life officer further deepens the film’s immersive experience and reinforces its commitment to realism. Excel Entertainment presents an Excel Entertainment Production, produced by Ritesh Sidhwani & Farhan Akhtar. Directed by Tejas Deoskar, the film is co-produced by Kassim Jagmagia, Vishal Ramchandani, Sundeep C Sidhwani, Arhan Bagati.



## Fans meet Salman Khan post Sikandar’s debacle

Request the star to work with Kabir Khan and Ali Abbas Zafar

Exactly a week ago, Salman Khan’s much-awaited film Sikandar was released and it failed to meet the expectations of most viewers. Instead of defending the star’s choices, his huge fan base began voicing their displeasure about Sikandar and Salman Khan’s recent choice of films. They began making various trends on X (formerly Twitter), hoping that Salman Khan would pay attention to them. And as luck would have it, Salman Khan found out about the fan’s woes. A meeting took place yesterday, on April 5, where some fans were able to meet the superstar. A source told Bollywood Hungama, “The meeting was attended by Salman Khan, his manager Jordy Patel, business head Vikram Tanwar and fans. The fans openly voiced their displeasure about Sikandar and that his other recent films have not been up to the mark. They also showed their trends on X and how they have been incessantly tweeting as they care for him big time and want



him to make better choices.” The source added, “Salman was moved by the love and care from his fans. He confessed that from the nascent stage, he felt something was off about Sikandar and that it was not the way a big film should be made. However, he promised that he would now do films that would make his fans happy.”

## Jacqueline Fernandez grieves the demise of her mother Kim Fernandez after she passes away in Mumbai

In heartbreaking news from the world of entertainment, actress Jacqueline Fernandez’s mother, Kim Fernandez, passed away on Sunday after a brief period of hospitalization. She had been undergoing treatment at Lilavati Hospital in Bandra following a severe stroke in March. While several media outlets have confirmed the sad demise, the Fernandez family is yet to issue an official statement. Kim Fernandez had been battling serious health complications since the stroke that occurred during the last week of March. She was urgently admitted to the Intensive

Care Unit (ICU) at Lilavati Hospital, where she had remained under close medical supervision. In light of her mother’s deteriorating condition, Jacqueline had opted out of a scheduled IPL performance in Guwahati, ahead of the match between Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders, to be by her side. At the time, a source close to the actress was quoted in a report by Hindustan Times, saying, “Jacqueline’s mother is still in the ICU and recovering, as the family waits for updates from the doctors. During this difficult time, Jacqueline has chosen to stay by



her mother’s side and will unfortunately miss the IPL performance.” Known to be extremely close to her mother, Jacqueline has often credited Kim Fernandez for being her emotional anchor and support system.





From page 1

## 100 Bathou Thansalis to receive

that the All Bathou Mahasabha, founded on 15 May 1992 under the leadership of Rupnath Basumatary and Baneswar Basumatary, has had a significant impact upon the religious, spiritual, cultural, and linguistic consciousness of the Bodo community. He expressed respect for these founding figures and for all individuals who have remained associated with the Mahasabha since its establishment. The CM observed that the customary practices, religious rites, and ceremonial traditions of Assam’s indigenous communities, including those of the Bodo people, have contributed meaningfully to the cultural corpus of the state and to the wider ethnocultural landscape of the nation. He remarked that the acknowledgement, safeguarding, and systematic promotion of these cultural attributes constitute an immediate priority. In addressing this necessity, he stated that the Government of Assam has established a distinct administrative body - the Department of Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture - tasked with the sustained support, advancement, and conservation of tribal and indigenous religious and cultural systems. He further noted that this department has already commenced various initiatives specifically directed towards the safeguarding of traditional spiritual and religious frameworks. Referring to the state administration’s earlier commitment at Thelamara, Dr Sarma mentioned that financial support has been provided to 200 Bathou Thansalis over the past two years, as part of an initiative to assist 500 such religious sites. He stated that an additional 100 Bathou Thansali would receive assistance within the current year. Moreover, he announced the allocation of 15 crores — with 5 crores assigned to each — for the construction of three substantial Bathou Thansali and Heritage Centres at Goreswar, Chirang, and Ghoramara or Tezpur. He also said that a Namghar would be constructed on the premises of the new Assam Bhawan in New Delhi, where a Sijou tree would be planted. These undertakings, he added, would be pursued in collaboration with the All Bathou Mahasabha, with the aim of enhancing public awareness of the historical and spiritual significance of the Bathou tradition. The CM reiterated that cultural and spiritual traditions constitute essential foundations of personal and collective identity. He emphasised that such traditions offer guidance for a principled and purposeful mode of life. Addressing the younger generation of the Bodo community, he underscored their responsibility in sustaining and advancing their cultural and religious heritage. The event was attended by Member of Parliament Rwngrwa Narzary, Member of the Legislative Assembly Jolen Daimary, Speaker of the Bodoland Territorial Council Legislative Assembly Katiram Boro, Chief Executive Member of the Bodoland Territorial Council Pramod Boro, as well as other council members and invited dignitaries.

## Endangered Eagle From Mongolia Returns To Kaziranga For Fifth Consecutive Year

**Kaziranga :** An endangered Pallas' fish eagle, known as Ider and tagged in Mongolia, returned to Assam's Kaziranga National Park for the fifth straight year to breed. The return of the bird to the park points to the park's vital status as a habitat for migratory birds. The male eagle, identified by the ring code "A25," was first tagged on August 21, 2020, at Buuntsagaan Lake in Central Western Mongolia by the Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre

(WSCC). Scientists from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) confirmed Ider's presence in Kaziranga on March 16, 2025. Pallas' fish eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*) is listed as "endangered" on the IUCN Red List, with a strongly declining population throughout Central and South Asia. Estimates at present indicate that there are between 2,500 and 9,999 mature individuals. Sonali Ghosh, Field Director of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger

Reserve, noted that Ider exhibits a unique "reverse migration" pattern, breeding in India during the winter months and returning to Mongolia during the non-breeding season. Kaziranga, spanning 1,302 square kilometers, is situated along the Central Asian Flyway, a major migratory route that supports hundreds of bird species. In the recent 6th Kaziranga Waterbird Count in January 2025, as many as 124 species of birds were counted, comprising more than 112,000 birds. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma admitted the eagles' return, pointing out the importance of highlighting Assam's contribution to bird migration on a global platform.



## Assam Govt Allocates Funds For Bihu Committees: CM Sarma

**Guwahati :** The Assam government has approved a financial package of Rs 1.5 lakh for each of the 3,000 Bihu committees across the state, as part of its annual assistance program. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma made the announcement on Monday while addressing reporters in New Delhi. He confirmed that the funds, sanctioned by the Finance Department, are expected to be disbursed within the next two to three days. Sarma said, "We have today sanctioned Rs 1.5 lakh for Bihu committees from the Finance Department. The committees will get the money in the next two to three days." The money is provided as a support to enhance the cultural festivities related to Bihu, an important festival in Assam. However, the Chief Minister noted that new applications for funding will not be accepted this year due to the enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct in light of the upcoming panchayat elections. "Because of the Model Code of Conduct in place for the panchayat elections, we cannot accept any new applications. Only the 3,000 committees that have received support in previous years will be eligible," he explained. This decision underscores the government's commitment to supporting traditional celebrations while adhering to electoral regulations. The financial assistance is anticipated to aid the committees in organizing various Bihu festivities, which play a vital role in Assam's cultural heritage.





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