

# After battering Philippines, Typhoon Kalmaegi moves toward Vietnam

MANILA, Nov 6 (AP)

PHILIPPINE President Ferdinand Marcos Jr declared a state of emergency on Thursday after Typhoon Kalmaegi left at least 114 people dead and more than 100 missing in central provinces in the deadliest natural disaster to hit the country this year.



Residents walk along debris along a shoreline after Typhoon Kalmaegi caused devastation in communities at Talisay City, Cebu province, central Philippines, on Wednesday. (AP)

The deaths were mostly from drowning in flash floods and 127 people were still missing, many in the hard-hit central province of Cebu. The tropical cyclone blew out of the archipelago on Wednesday into the South China Sea.

Authorities in Vietnam, meanwhile, braced on

Thursday as Kalmaegi approached. The country's financial hub, Ho Chi Minh City, faces a heightened risk of severe flooding as high tides would coincide with the expected heavy rainfall from the typhoon, forecasters warned.

High tides are expected on the Saigon River, while parts of the city could see up to 100 mm of rain, which authorities warned could inundate low-lying areas.

In the Philippines, the typhoon's onslaught affected nearly 2 million people and displaced more than 560,000 villagers, including nearly 4,50,000 who were evacuated to emergency shelters, the Office of Civil Defence said.

Among the dead attributed by officials to Kalmaegi were six people who were killed when a Philippine air force helicopter crashed in the southern province of Agusan del Sur on Tuesday. The crew was on its way to provide humanitarian help to provinces battered by the typhoon, the military said. It did not give the cause of the crash.

Kalmaegi dumped about one-and-a-half months' worth of rainfall in just a day on Tuesday in metropolitan Cebu, state forecaster Benison Estareja said.

# Navy Chief Admiral Tripathi commissions survey vessel INS Ikshak in Kochi

KOCHI, Nov 6 (PTI)

CHIEF of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi commissioned INS Ikshak, the Indian Navy's third indigenously designed and built Survey Vessel (large) here on Thursday.

Addressing the commissioning event, Tripathi said that INS Ikshak is the Indian Navy's tenth platform to be commissioned in 2025.

He called Ikshak another milestone for the Indian Navy and India's shipbuilding enterprise.

According to him, the maritime domain is currently undergoing a profound transformation—driven by geopolitics, technology, and tactics.

"The seas are witnessing sharper competition for influence, resources, and connectivity. The rise of new technologies, contestations over critical minerals, and evolving patterns of maritime trade are redrawing the strategic map across the oceans," he said.

He quoted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, "When the globe's seas are rough, the world looks



for a steady lighthouse. India is well poised to play that role with strength and stability," and said that the Indian Navy embodies this vision.

"Today, Indian Navy's growing operational capabilities, expanding reach and extensive cooperative initiatives with like-minded nations underscore India's role as a first responder and preferred security partner in shaping a free, open, and inclusive global commons across the region," he said.

He said that the Indian Navy's survey ships fulfill the mission

of making the seas knowable, navigable, and safe to India and its maritime partners.

"To fulfill this role, Ikshak, like her predecessors Sandhayak and Nirdeshak, is equipped with state-of-the-art hydrographic systems, advanced ocean-mapping tools and a vast array of specialised equipment," he said.

He said that last year alone, the Indian Navy's survey ships rendered hydrographic assistance to Mauritius and Vietnam.

"INS Sandhayak, the lead ship of this class, commissioned on

03 Feb 2024, has recently completed an important deployment to Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, showcasing the Indian Navy's hydrographic and ship-building capabilities," he said.

He said that the Indian Navy has transitioned from a buyer's navy to a builder's navy.

"As a result, the ships being commissioned—be it the most advanced P17A frigates, Shallow Water ASW craft, or Survey Vessel Ikshak—carry nearly 80 per cent indigenous content, a testament to the Indian Navy's commitment to Atmanirbhar Bharat in action," he added.

Vice Admiral Sameer Saxena, Chief of Southern Naval Command, and PR Hair, CMD Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), also spoke on the occasion.

Vice Admiral Rajaram Swaminathan, Controller Warship Production and Acquisition, also took part.

INS Ikshak's Commanding Officer, Captain Tribhuvan Singh, read out the Commissioning document.

## Afghanistan and Pak exchange fire as peace talks begin in Istanbul

Islamabad/Kabul: Afghan and Pakistani troops briefly exchanged fire along their shared border on Thursday, both nations said, on the same day talks to find a lasting peace restarted in Istanbul. Each nation blamed the other for starting the exchange of gunfire near Spin Boldak, an Afghan border town towards the south of their 2,600-km frontier. There were no reports of casualties, and spokespeople for both sides said they remained committed to a ceasefire and continued dialogue in Istanbul.

Militaries from the South Asian neighbours previously clashed last month, with dozens killed in the worst such violence since the Taliban returned to power in Kabul in 2021. Both sides signed a ceasefire in Doha on Oct 19, but a second round of negotiations in Istanbul last week ended without a long-term deal, due to a disagreement over militant groups hostile to Pakistan operating inside Afghanistan.

"We hope that wisdom prevails and peace is restored in the region," Pakistan's defence minister Khawaja Asif told reporters on Wednesday. He said Islamabad was pursuing a "one-point agenda" of convincing Afghanistan to rein in militants attacking Pakistani forces across their shared border; allegedly with the Taliban's knowledge. Pakistan and the Taliban had for decades enjoyed warm ties, but relations have deteriorated sharply in recent years. REUTERS

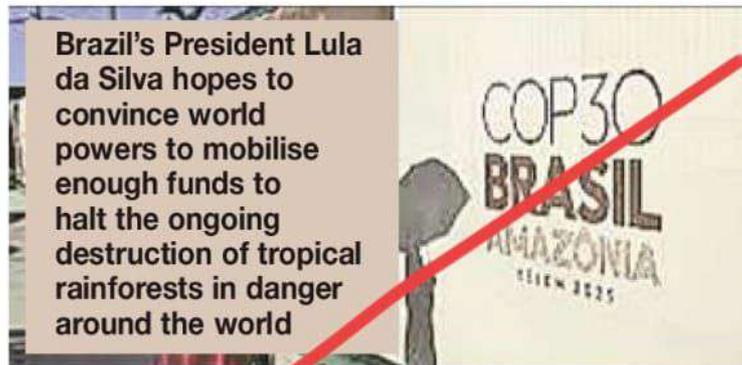
# UN climate summit kicks off in Brazil

BELEM (Brazil), Nov 6 (AP)

WORLD leaders descending on the United Nations annual climate summit in Brazil this week will not need to see much more than the view from their airplane window to sense the unfathomable stakes.

Surrounding the coastal city of Belem is an emerald green carpet festooned with winding rivers. But the view also reveals barren plains: some 17 per cent of the Amazon's forest cover has vanished in the past 50 years, swallowed up for farmland, logging and mining.

Often called the "lungs of the world" for its capacity to absorb vast quantities of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that warms the planet, the biodiverse Amazon rainforest has been increasingly choked by wildfires



and cleared by cattle ranching.

It is here on the edge of the world's largest tropical rainforest that Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva hopes to convince world powers to mobilise enough funds to halt the ongoing destruction of climate-stabilising tropical rainforests in danger around the world and make progress on other critical climate goals.

Organisers are hoping this year's Conference of Parties — known less formally as COP30 — will yield commitments of money and action to support the goals laid out at previous such meetings, billing it as the "Implementation COP."

But they'll have to overcome reduced participation from the world's biggest emitters as the heads of the world's three biggest

polluters — China, the United States and India — will be notably absent. These tensions are on display as a preliminary leaders' gathering gets underway on Thursday before formal UN climate talks kick off next week.

President Donald Trump, who withdrew the US from the Paris climate accord the same day he entered office, won't send any senior officials. China will send its Deputy Prime Minister, Ding Xuexiang. That leaves the rest of the summit's leaders — including UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and French President Emmanuel Macron — to confront not only the consequences of an intensifying global climate crisis but a daunting set of political challenges.



# 64.66 pc voting recorded

PATNA, Nov 6 (PTI)

**IN THE** "highest ever" voter turnout in Bihar, nearly 65 per cent (64.66 pc) of 3.75 crore electorates exercised their franchise on Thursday across 121 constituencies in the first phase of the Assembly elections, which marks the beginning of a closely watched high-stakes contest that is seen as a litmus test of the ruling NDA's popularity.

In a statement, the Election Commission said the first phase of the Assembly elections concluded peacefully "in a festive mood with the highest-ever voter turnout of 64.66 per cent in the history of Bihar".

The NDA, which has been in power in the State for 20 years, except for a few brief interruptions, is banking on its image of "sushasan" (good governance) in contrast to the alleged "jungle raj" of the RJD-Congress combine, while the Opposition bloc relies on anti-incumbency and the unprecedented "jobs-for-every-home" promise of its CM candidate, Tejashwi Yadav, to outperform the ruling alliance.

The polls for the 243-member Assembly are being closely watched not only for their local implications but also as an early indicator of the political mood ahead of 2029, and follow the

highly controversial Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll by the EC, which came under attack from opposition parties for alleged "rigging" and "manipulation" of voter lists.

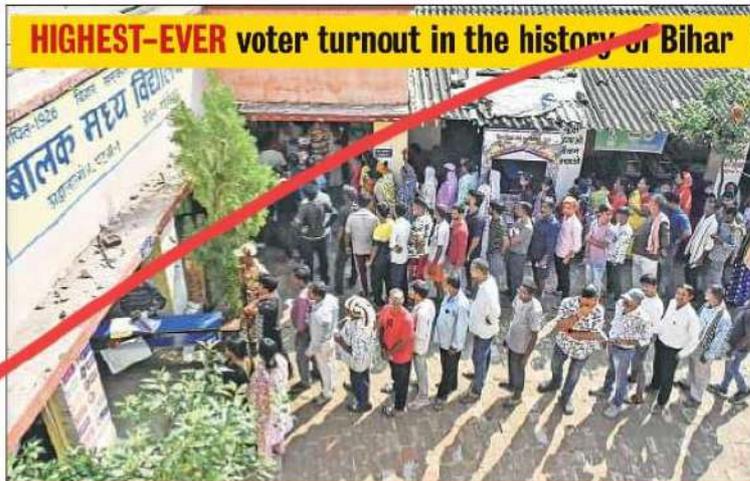
The second and the last phase will be held on November 11, and the counting will take place on November 14.

Stakes are high for both the ruling NDA and the Opposition INDIA bloc, with several key leaders, including RJD's Yadav, Deputy CMs Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, besides a slew of ministers, being among the 1,314 candidates in fray in this phase.

Stray incidents of violence, including an alleged attack on Sinha's vehicle, were reported from some areas during the polling.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed rallies in a couple of constituencies going to polls in the second and final phase, felt that the noticeably high number of women turning up to vote was a good sign for the NDA.

"Mothers, daughters, and sisters have been the worst sufferers of 'jungle raj'. Today, they seem to have put up a fortress around polling booths to prevent the return of 'jungle raj'," Modi remarked.



Voters wait in queues to cast votes at a polling station during the first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections, in Patna on Thursday. (PTI)

The NDA hopes that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's record, along with recent welfare measures such as 125 units of free power, Rs 10,000 cash transfers to over 1 crore women, and an increase in social security pensions, will help counter anti-incumbency.

However, the Opposition dismissed the boasts of the BJP-led coalition and hoped that

people would vote for a change.

There have also been allegations and counter-allegations from both sides on the polling day.

A notable feature of this election has been the presence of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party, which the former political strategist believes could emerge as the proverbial dark horse.

Kishor has caught public imagination with his promise of making the State "among the top-ranking ones in the country", and to this end, he has not shied away from making a few bold statements, including his announcement that he intends to scrap the prohibition law, which has been bleeding the state dry.

Politics in Bihar is as much

about numbers as it is about castes. Caste and community loyalties remain crucial, with Yadavs, Kushwahas, Kurmis, Brahmins, and Dalits shaping outcomes in key constituencies.

**VOTER SLIP NOT MANDATORY, 12 ALTERNATE IDS VALID FOR BIHAR POLLS:** AS VOTING for the first phase of the Bihar Assembly elections is underway on Thursday, the Patna District Administration issued a clarification amid social media claims that some voters were being denied entry to polling booths for not carrying their voter slips.

In an official statement on X, the District Administration Patna said. "The issue has been resolved."

The voter slip is not mandatory. Voters can use any one of the 12 alternative photo identity documents apart from the EPIC (Voter ID) to cast their vote."

According to the Election Commission of India (ECI), acceptable documents include Aadhaar card, MGNREGA job card, passport, PAN card, driving license, smart card issued by RGI under NPR, pension document with photo, and health insurance or service ID cards, among others.