



The Assam Tribune

79 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE NATION
PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM GUWAHATI & DIBRUGARH

RRN-1127/57 TECH/GH - 104/2015-2017, VOL. 79, NO. 80, GUWAHATI, SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017, Pages 20

Price Rs. 6.00



NEWS CAPSULE

Nahid fatwa

NEW DELHI, March 24: The BJP today demanded stern action against those responsible for issuing fatwa against tez singer Nahid Afrin. The issue was raised during the Zero Hour in Lok Sabha by BJP MP Om Birla. - Sp Correspondent

Dibrugarh fire

NEW DELHI, March 24: A devastating fire early this morning at 5:22 AM at 22 shops and five residential houses at Nalapadre here. The fire took a menacing turn after a cooking gas cylinder burst. Several fire tenders were rushed to douse the fire. - Staff Correspondent

NEET centres

NEW DELHI, March 24: With over 40 per cent rise in the number of students registering for National Entrance-cum-Eligibility Test (NEET) this year, the CBSE has decided to conduct the exam in 23 more cities. - PTI

The Assam Tribune on Internet
<http://www.assamttribune.com> &
<http://epaper.assamttribune.com>

Controversy over Muivah declaration

No compromise on State's territorial integrity: CM

KALYAN BAROOAH

the Centre regarding the demand of Nagaland.

TALKING NEW DELHI, March 24: Following the raging controversy over NSCN(I-M)'s sensational declaration of territorial integration of all Naga-inhabited areas in the Northeast, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today clarified that no discussion has taken place with

reacting to Muivah's speech that newsmen said the State Government was silent on the issue. The Assam Government's silence is a dangerous signal for the State, he said.

"When we had also demanded on a number of occasions that the Framework Agreement signed between the Centre and the NSCN(I-M) be made public. We had also brought this

to the notice of Congress president Sonia Gandhi," he said.

"The then Congress-led states, including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur, were kept in the dark and even the Nagaland Government was not taken into confidence," he said. "We had our doubts and we had suspected that the Centre had made serious compromises," he added.

(See page 9)

AASU, APCC ask Centre to make pact public

STAFF REPORTER

the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) too on the issue.

BOTH AASU AND APCC have reacted to the March 21 announcement made by T. Murah, the general secretary of the Isaac-Muivah (IM) faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) that the Framework Agreement has paved the way for a Greater Nagaland envisioned by it by integrating Naga-inhabited areas of Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh with Nagaland.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) said that though it is for an amicable solution to the vexed Naga tangle, it would not accept any solution to the problem at the cost of Assam.

The geo-political integrity of Assam should remain intact. Not a single inch of Assam's land would be given away to arrive at a solution in this regard, it asserted. It has demanded bold steps from the BJP-led State Government to safeguard (See page 9)

'Suicide attack' near Dhaka airport

DHAKA, March 24: A young man, suspected to be a suicide bomber, blew himself up at the international airport in Dhaka today, nearly a week after a similar attack on a nearby camp of Bangladesh's elite Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) force.

The man, said to be in his 30s, blew himself up in front of a police outpost near the Shahjalal International Airport.

"The young man died on the spot," the police officer said.

She added that no law enforcer was injured in the blast.

The attack comes a week after a similar attack on a nearby RAB camp on March 17. Security was tightened at airports and prisons across Bangladesh after the attack.

A suspected suicide attacker was shot dead at a RAB check post in Khilgaon on the following day. - PTI

Rajnath reviews NE security scene

NEW DELHI, March 24: Home Minister Rajnath Singh today reviewed the security situation in the Northeast and directed officials to enhance vigil along the international borders in the region.

During the hour-long meeting, the Home Minister was given a detailed presentation on the prevailing situation in

the Northeast, especially militancy in the region.

Singh was also told about the steps taken to ensure peace, especially in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur; the four states considered to be affected by insurgency, official sources said.

The Home Minister directed senior security officials to enhance vigil along the international borders in the Northeast, they said.

The borders of China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal touch the northeastern region.

Top officials of the Home Ministry, intelligence agencies and paramilitary forces attended the meeting. - PTI

Governor reviews steps for Namami Brahmaputra

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: Governor Banwarilal Purohit today took stock of the last minute preparations for the successful celebrations of the first ever Namami Brahmaputra Festival being organized across 21 districts from Sadiya to Dibruri by the Government of Assam.

Commissioner and Secretary to Transport Department Ashutosh Agnihotri and Managing Director of ASTC Anand Prakash Tiwari today paid a visit to Rai Bhawan and apprised the Governor of the steps the State Government has taken to make Namami Brahmaputra a unique event. The Governor asked them to ensure food preparation so that all aspects of festival right from cultural programmes, indigenous sports meet, exhibitions of local and traditional handicrafts and handlooms, tea festival to business meets are addressed properly. They presented a badge bearing logo of Namami Brahmaputra to Purohit.



BPO scheme

NEW DELHI, March 24: The Government of India has launched North East BPO Promotion scheme (NEBPS), to incentivize setting up of 5,000 seats for BPO and ITES operations in the region. - Sp Correspondent

JOCOSERIOUS



Finally, the arrest of Biswas has raised our face value.

1 TIME YEAR-END OFFER!
FOR LIMITED PERIOD ONLY.

Vibes®
SLIMMING + BEAUTY + LASER

FLAT
50+10%
OFF*

on all Slimming, Beauty & Laser Packages.

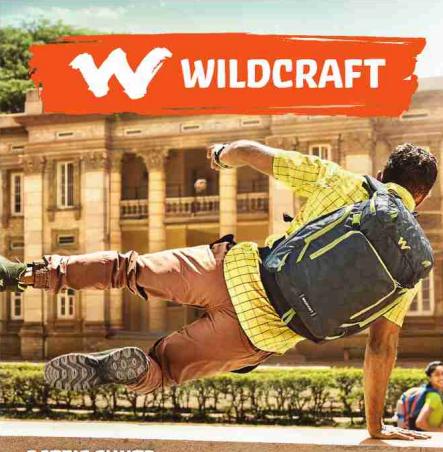
HEAD-TO-TOE SALON SERVICES @ ₹ 999

OFFER ENDS ON 31st MARCH, 17

SPECIALIZED TREATMENTS

- Botox & Fillers • Anti-ageing Treatment • Anti-acne Treatment
- Moles & Warts Removal • PRP Treatment • Thread Lift • Chemical Peels
- Darma Roller • Glutathione Whitening Treatment • Meso Therapy

GUWAHATI | ASCU Tower, 2nd Floor, Bhubaneshwar Barua Road, Opposite B. Borodah College, Ulubari. (M); 8254056533, 8254266009.



GATE'S SHUT?
READY TO FLY
READY FOR ANYTHING



wildcraft in
SPORT CLOTHING FOOTWEAR
Extra padded
back & shoulder
Breathable
back system
Anti-stress
design

Available at: Wildcraft Outlets, Leading Department Stores, Leading Online Portals and all Authorised Dealers.
For enquiries Sapan, 9437925253, Avail: 9272402553.
Email: customerscare@wildcraft.in; corporapress@wildcraft.in

**অসমীয়া নৰবৰষৰ প্ৰাক্ষণত
ইভেই ৰঙলীলা উৎসৱ**

Grand i10 ₹ 55,000*
Savings up to ₹ 50,000*
EON Savings up to ₹ 50,000*
Savings up to ₹ 25,000*

Special offer for Govt. employees (pensioner and serving) upto ₹ 10,000*

I10 Savings up to ₹ 50,000*	Elite i20 Savings up to ₹ 25,000*	Active i20 Savings up to ₹ 25,000*	Xcent Savings up to ₹ 55,000*	Verna Savings up to ₹ 90,000*	SantaFe Savings up to ₹ 25,000*
--------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------------------

PROMISE
Complete peace of mind with 102% automatically service contracts and 90 days credits across 613 cities.

GUWAHATI: Akash Hyundai, Ph: 8876512641, 8876512641; Saaraghat Hyundai, Ph: 0361-2673104, 9884018241; Nonstop: 9864339005, Guwahati Club: 8135972359; Sonapur: 7097269117; Tinsukia: Hyundai, Ph: 0362-2666377; Barpeta: 9864192020; Bongaigaon: 9864192020; Silchar: 9864192020; Dibrugarh: 9864192020; Meghalaya: 9435124688 & 9435124689; Barpeta: 9435179156; Koniang: 9435179156; Dhemaji: 9435179156; Gauhati: 9435179156; NAGAON: Akash Hyundai, Ph: 7399000004, 03672225022; Jagiroad: 7399000017; NORTH LAKHIMPUR: Mandona Hyundai, 9435098127; TALUKA: Borah Hyundai, Ph: 9556914312; TEZPUR: Krishna Hyundai, 91270183; JORHAT: Krishna Hyundai, Ph: 9435098132, 9285685202; BOKAKHAT: Krishna Hyundai, Ph: 9435053330; SILCHAR: Singh Hyundai, Ph: 0362-227701, 7578008186.

For CSD/DGS&D/Bulk Purchase please mail to parag@hml.net or call at 7086075043

Shiv Sena MP 'grounded' for hitting Air India staffer

NEW DELHI, March 24: In an unprecedented step, Air India and all private carriers on Thursday refused to fly Shiv Sena MP Ravinder Gaikwad for assaulting an airline employee.

But the Lok Sabha member from Osmanabad in Maharashtra remained defiant and refused to apologize for repeatedly beating and trying to push off Air India officer R Sukumar from the aircraft on Thursday.

"Air India and member airlines have decided to ban this MP from flying on all our flights with immediate effect," the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) said in a statement.

"We believe that exemplary action should be taken in such incidents to protect employee morale and public safety," added FIA Associate Director Ujjwal Dey.

The Indian Commercial Pilots Association also sought an unconditional apology from Gaikwad and threatened to direct its members "not to operate any flight which has Gaikwad on board".

The Sena leader earlier vowed to fly back to Pune but Air India cancelled his ticket. Besides Air India, the airlines which won't allow Gaikwad to fly as FIA members are IndiGo, Jet Airways, SpiceJet and GoAir. AirAsia and Vistaar, which are not with FIA, joined them.

The decision was taken a day after Gaikwad thrashed Sukumar repeatedly with a slipper after he was forced to travel in economy class from Pune to Delhi despite holding a business-class ticket.

Amid speculation that Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray had sought an explanation from Gaikwad, the MP dared Delhi Police to arrest him and also alleged that it was Sukumar who hit first. Air India has said it was examining the possibility of creating a "no fly" list of unruly passengers.

It also lodged FIRs against Gaikwad – for assaulting a shift manager and delaying a scheduled flight to Goa.

When Gaikwad refused to de-board, Sukumar said he first requested the MP in English to get off the plane but was told to speak in Hindi.

When he began to speak in Hindi, Gaikwad flared up and hit him with his slipper. All though Thursday, Gaikwad boasted how he hit the staffer with his slipper "25 times".

"I will not apologize. Why should I? It's not my mistake. They should apologize first, then we will see."

Gaikwad also shot off complaints to Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju and Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan demanding an inquiry into the incident.

FIA's Dey said: "We believe an assault on any one of our employees is an assault on all of us and on ordinary law abiding citizens of our country who work hard to earn a living."

Vistara said it was "in full solidarity" with Air India.

Gaikwad "will be barred from flying in any of our flights with immediate effect", it said. "Disruptive and abusive behaviour by passengers is a serious issue and cannot be tolerated." – IANS

AVOID BRIGHT SCREENS WITHIN 1-2 HOURS OF YOUR BEDTIME



The blue light emitted by your phone, computer & TV is especially disruptive. You can minimize the impact by using devices with smaller screens or by turning the brightness down. But, it's better avoided!



A health awareness initiative by
Interio MATTRESS

To know more, log on to www.sleepat10.com

Maharashtra doctors end agitation, 135 patients die

MUMBAI, March 24: Following a stern warning by the Bombay High Court on Friday, doctors in government and private hospitals across Maharashtra agreed to withdraw their agitation amid revelations that at least 135 patients died in Mumbai in the past five days.

As per the court orders, the doctors are expected to resume normal duties by 8 am on Saturday in all government hospitals in the State.

Taking a serious view of flouting of its orders on Thursday, the High Court today served an ultimatum to the Maharashtra Association

of Resident Doctors (MARD) to either join duties or face termination proceedings.

Chief Justice Manjula Chelluri and Justice GS Kularki observed that "the doctors are taking undue advantage of us and our sympathy."

"If you (doctors) keep stretching the matter like this, then public will come and hit you. You are creating such an atmosphere," the bench said.

They made it clear if this attitude of the doctors continued, then the hospital managements were free to take action against them, including termination of services.

"We think we made a mistake yesterday by showing them sympathy and appreciating their work," the bench noted.

The BrihanMumbai Municipal Corp (BMC) told the court that in the past five days of doctors' agitation, 135 patients lost their lives

in Mumbai's government hospitals, including 53 in KEM, 48 in Sion LTMG and 34 in Nair due to non-availability of emergency services.

Following a strict deadline of 3 pm set by the court, the MARD filed an affidavit stating that it had failed to convince its members to withdraw their mass leave agitation and MARD had no objections if the government takes action against the doctors.

Shortly afterwards, the 40,000-strong Indian Medical Association (IMA) of Maharashtra also announced withdrawal of the agitation by its doctors in private hospitals and general practitioners.

Earlier, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis made a fervent appeal to the medics to resume work and reprimanded them for forgetting their (Hippocratic) oath to serve the sick and needy. – IANS

EM'S TO BE BORN BY THE DEVELOPER.

Leaders live by innovation and at Alphathum you will find it in every face. We put your money to good use and make sure that you just pay 20% of the time of booking and the 20% of the time of possession and never pay again.

THIS IS A LIMITED PERIOD OFFER. AVAIL IT BEFORE IT ENDS.

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF LEADERS

BOOK YOUR OFFICE AT 5LAC* & PAY NOTHING ELSE



ALPHATHUM
MADE FOR LEADERS
Sector 50, Noida
www.alphathum.com



Spaces ranging from
570 & 850 Sq.Ft onwards

9560282461



FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT

Lease And Sale
Financial Services

Direct Investment

JINDAL STEEL & POWER



a reputed School for
XI and famous Coaching
Center for Coaching
BUT I'M WORRIED

No time to Study
No relation between my
School topic
& Coaching Center topic
My concepts are not clear....

SAI VIKASH
‘MY TEACHERS’
are explaining the
concepts from basics to
advanced level.
I have ample time
to prepare.
SO, I’M CONFIDENT
about my future.....

Class XI admission tests March 26 & April 9

Classes start from April, 21

Exam Centers : GUWAHATI

P.D. chalika road, Silpukhuri, Guwahati-03 ;
9207090915, 11, 13

JORHAT

Raja Maidam road, Jorhat ; 9207090914, 8753944464

SILCHAR

Sonai road Silchar ; 9085081908, 9854033314

KOKRAJHAR

MCM Woodland English Medium High School, Kokrajhar,
Opp. Prasanti Lodge ; Call:B.B. Prashad-9435026771

SC seeks Govt response to lifetime poll ban on convicts

NEW DELHI, March 24: The Supreme Court on Friday gave the Central Government a week to file their response to a plea seeking life-time ban on contesting election for those convicted of serious offences as it was told that the matter has already been referred to the constitution bench.

The bench of Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Navin Sinha granted the time as government counsel told the court that the response has been finalised as the matter has already been referred to the constitution bench.

Appearing for the PIL petitioner, BJP leader Arswini Kumar Upadhyay, senior counsel Vikas Singh said that the Election Commission has supported the plea of banning a convicted person from contesting election for life.

In his PIL, the Bharatiya Janata Party leader has sought direction to the government to provide adequate infrastructure to setup special courts to decide criminal cases against elected representatives, public servants and members of judiciary within one year and to debar those convicted from the legislature, executive and judiciary for life in spirit of Article 14 read with Article 15 and 16.

He also sought direction for the implementation of the electoral reforms as recommended by the Election Commission, Law Commission and National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution to ensure free and fair election in spirit of Article 324. The court has fixed April 18 as next date of hearing. – IANS

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment,
Government of India

FREE COACHING FOR

MBA ENTRANCE (CAT NOV-2017)

CIVIL SERVICES (UPSC JUNE-2018)

A student should satisfy the following criteria:

- Should belong to SC / OBC
 - Must have a family income of Rs.6.0 Lakh p.a, or less
 - Graduates or students in Final Year and Pre-Final Year
- Stipend Amount that students will get:
- Rs.2500/- p.m. for 9 months (MBA Entrance)
 - Rs.2500/- p.m. for 12 months (Civil Services)

Academic Partner:
CPL Pvt. Ltd.



FOR ENROLMENT CALL ON : 88284 35393

DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL JORHAT

"Under the aegis of Delhi Public School Society, Delhi"

A School of wonder and possibilities



GRAND LAUNCHING

ON 29TH APRIL, 2017

FOR GRADES KG I - VII | SESSION 2017 - 2018

+91- 7575950950 , 7575960960

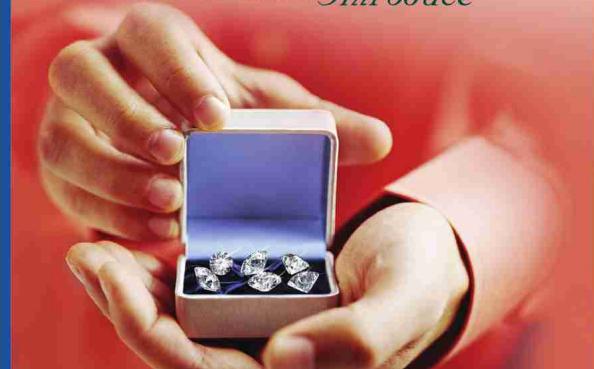
ADMISSION FORMS AVAILABLE IN THE CITY OFFICE

CITY OFFICE ADDRESS : SR Crystal Plaza, Near Eleye Cinema Hall, Gar Ali, Jorhat - 785001

SCHOOL CAMPUS ADDRESS : Borbhet, Naanghar Road, Rowrahjan, Jorhat - 785006

STAY AWAY FROM NEGATIVE PUBLICITY AND FALSE PROPAGANDA.
VISIT OUR SCHOOL CAMPUS TO SEE THE PROGRESS.
HURRY! LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE

WE HAVE COMPLETED 60 YEARS OF SERVICE & TRUST
ON THIS PROUD OCCASION WE Introduce



Dazzling six. Happy mix.

Six Unique Advantages



Plan No.: 841 UIN: 512N307V01

Money Back: Every 4th year | **Extended Cover:** 50% of Basic Sum Assured | **Extended Cover Period:** Half of the policy term after maturity | **Auto Cover:** Risk cover continues during the period while premium is yet to be paid | **Sum Assured under a Policy:** ₹100,000 to ₹500,000 | **Policy/Premium Term:** (16/10), (20/12), (24/15) | **Min. Age at entry:** 14 years (completed)

Contact your agent/branch or visit our website www.licindia.in or SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Beware of Spurious Phone Calls/Emails and Unauthorised/Unjustified Offers.

IRDAI wishes to inform that IRDAI or its State Level Committees do not review or authorise the sale of any kind of insurance or financial products. IRDAI does not approve Boxes. Public incoming such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint along with the details of the phone call number.

LIC India Forever IRDAI Regd. No. 512
For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read the sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.



LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

Har Pal Aapke Saath

UC0316-2956EN6



LOCAL FORECAST:
Generally cloudy sky.
Rain/thundershower is likely to occur.
Maximum and minimum temperature is most likely to be 26°C & 18°C respectively on Saturday.
TEMPERATURE:
Max 32.0°C
Min 16.8°C

Award for city scribe

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: City-based journalist Abdul Gani received the prestigious Laadli Media Award on Thursday. The eighth edition of the Laadli Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity (Northern and Eastern Region) was given to him for the 'best web feature' in the English language.

The web feature, 'When All Become One,' focuses on the efforts of a group of village women led by conservationist Purmina Devi Barman to conserve the endangered greater adjutant stork at Dadara in Kamrup district. The story appeared in [www.nezine.com](#).

"In his efforts to highlight the role of women in conservation, Abdul Gani is awarded the Laadli Media and Advertising Award for gender sensitivity," read the certificate. The award ceremony was held at Chimmaya Mission in New Delhi on Thursday evening.

"It's always great to get your works recognised. I am happy especially because of these wonderful women. They set an example for thousands of others across the country and beyond. I dedicate this honour to these women. I would also like to thank Purmina Devi Barman for her support," said Gani.

The award carries a certificate and a trophy.

Rehabilitation programme for ex-militants launched

CORRESPONDENT

JALUKHARI, March 24: Swabhalamban, a rehabilitation training programme for surrendered militants, was inaugurated at the State Institute of Panchayat and Rural Development (SIPRD) complex, Kalihiukhi today. Swabhalamban is a scheme undertaken by the State Home Department in association with SIPRD, Assam. Around 16,000 surrendered militants (ULFA and NDFB) will benefit from the scheme.

Under Swabhalamban, initially 102 cadres (surrendered) will be given five days' training on various skills like organic farming, DTP, cold storage chain, pisciculture, painting, electricity works, etc. The entire batch of 16,000 surrendered militants will be given training on various skills in phases, in three years' time, as was announced by Finance Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma in his budget speech of 2017-18.

MGVK Bhanu, Additional Chief Secretary, Panchayat and Rural Development Department, in his address, said, "The surrendered

cadres are very emotional and sensitive and therefore, we have to deal with them sincerely through this project of Swabhalamban. Most of the surrendered cadres are either rickshaw-pullers or daily labourers, as the government could not meet their expectations. And through this unique scheme, the government is committed to delivering the promises."

DGP Mukesh Sahay said, "The scheme itself defines its main objective to be self-dependence because it will bring self-respect and can contribute something valuable for

the nation, and I hope that this scheme will encourage the other militants to come to the mainstream society. It is not important whether one is rich or not, but one should be self-dependent, which is the main objective of this rehabilitation scheme." He further expressed the hope that this small step would be a great leap for the future.

Pallab Bhattacharjya, ADGP, SB, in his speech, said, "The objective of the scheme is to train the surrendered extremists. The project will try to build up these surrendered cadres both mentally and physically.



A cuckoo sings on a tree in Guwahati on Friday. – UB Photos

APSC results

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: The APSC today declared the results of the viva voce for the posts of lecturers of nursing colleges of Assam under the Health & Family Welfare Department. There are 18 posts. The results have been uploaded on the website.

Meeting

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: An urgent general meeting of the NRHM Employees Association (NEA) has been convened at Bishnu Nirmala Bhawan near Latsali playground at 10 am tomorrow. The organisation's president had urged all members and well-wishers to be present in the meeting.

Puppet day

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: City-based Surojit Academy celebrated the World Puppet Day on March 21 at the District Library here.

The Media Adviser to the Chief Minister, Hrishikesh Goswami, inaugurated the event. Actor Dinesh Das and Regional Director of ICCCR Assam Dr SP Kakati Barora were present as the special guests.

He added, "All the ferrys

Admin meet reviews Namami Brahmaputra fest preparedness

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: The Kamrup Metro district administration today held a meeting at the Circuit House here to review the arrangements for the ensuing Namami Brahmaputra festival.

Several issues were discussed during the meeting and a few decisions were taken, said Kamrup Metro DC Dr M Angamuthu.

"The NH 37 and various arterial roads like MG Road and AT Road will be cleaned and spruced up by the PWD (Roads) and the Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) in the run up to the festival. Cleanliness and hygiene maintenance will be done by the GMC, while filling up of potholes and repair-related works will be carried out by PWD (Roads)," said the DC.

He added, "All the ferrys

that will be uninterrupted power supply during the festival. Volunteers and civil defence personnel will handle crowd and other emergency services," said Dr Angamuthu.

Emergency Services department. The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) will coordinate with all the stakeholders."

NDRF and SDRF will place rescue boats and other emergency items ready.

Dr Angamuthu said that various socio-cultural organisations and trade associations have been requested to clean their premises in the run-up to and during the festival.

"Necessary sanitation and hygiene provisions will be made by the GMC and the Public Health and Engineering (PHE) department and they will also ensure provision of adequate drinking water. There will be medical aid facilities by the health department, including setting up of a riverine boat clinic," said the DC. He added that riverine security will be the responsibility of SP (River Police).

"There will be uninterrupted power supply during the festival. Volunteers and civil defence personnel will handle crowd and other emergency services," said Dr Angamuthu.

After the drill, a debriefing session was held where the gaps in response and measures for improvement were discussed.

The outcome of this project will have a great impact on these cadres that will at least restrict them in joining the organisation outside the nation."

Around 650 surrendered cadres are present in the training programme today. Hemanta Narzary, Principal Home Secretary, Government of Assam; AMM Zakir, Director SIPRD; Bijoy Hazarika, All Assam Ex-ULFA Coordination Committee secretary and Ranjan Daimary (Junior), coordinator (NDFB), were present in the daylong programme.



APDCL requests the people of ASSAM to observe the "Earth Hour"
On 25th March'2017, Saturday by switching off the lights (except most essential lights) from 8.30p.m. to 9.30p.m. as a support to the WWF India.

CAS/2017/25

Admission Notification-2017

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS SCIENCES

Approved by AICTE, New Delhi

UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, MEGHALAYA

MBA

Eligibility : Graduation in any discipline with 45% marks in aggregate (5% relaxation for Reserved Category). Admission will be based on ERDF-MAT or with valid score in MAT/CAT followed by GD/P

Duration : 2 years

BBA

Eligibility : HS10+2 in any discipline with 45% marks in aggregate (5% relaxation for Reserved Category).

Other UG Courses: Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, English, Political Science, Psychology, English, Sociology, B.Ed., BCA, B.Com, BA(Hons), LLB(H) & Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPT)

PG Courses : Physics, Chemistry, Biotechnology, Botany, Zoology, MCA, M.Com, MSW, Mathematics, Electronics, Eng. Science, English, Wildlife, Geology, Economics, Sociology, Education, Geography, Political Science, M.Sc.; Library Sc., International Studies, Rural Development & Public Administration.

Unique Features :

► Coaching for IAS & NET

► Amity Center

► Hostel Facility

► ATM Facility

► Shramikus Service

► Sports Complex

For Online Application & Details : www.ustm.ac.in

Campus : Techno City, King Road, Barakpur, G.S. Road, 9th Mile, Ri-Bhoi, Meghalaya

Ph. 0361-2895830/ 9598 444 00 / 09640-23066, E-mail : ustm2011@gmail.com

Mock drill conducted at city school

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: A ward-level mock drill was conducted at South Point School, Baraspara here today. The drill was held specifically to test the preparedness and response activities of all the

stakeholders like the district administration, community police, SDRF, NDRF and civil defence.

Mla from Guwahati East constituency, Sudhartha Bhattacharya and MLA from Guwahati West constituency Ramendra Narayan Kalita witnessed the entire

operation.

State Project Coordinator of ASMA Rajib Prakash Baruah, Kamrup Metro Additional Deputy Commissioner Pulak Mahanta and other senior officials participated in the mock drill as observers.

The Fire and Emergency

services took the lead role in the drill and created a simulated situation of fire that broke out at South Point School.

After the drill, a debriefing session was held where the gaps in response and measures for improvement were discussed.

CWRC photo exhibition in city

STAFF REPORTER

and the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) with international partners.

"It is an appreciable initiative of the CWRC.

The never-ending effort for securing wildlife is the strength of the centre. I have personally witnessed the activities. Through its specialised wildlife care service, the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) for protecting wildlife,

at the State Art Gallery here.

The CWRC is a jointly-run wildlife care facility run by the Assam Forest Department.



Minister Pramila Rani Brahma after inaugurating the exhibition. – AT photo

Medical camp tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: The Sri Parimala Rani Alumini of Assam under Sri Satyendra Nath Baruah, and NE, after successfully conducting several free medical camps in the past six months, will conduct another free medical camp on dermatology at Sri Madhumati Temple, Rupnagar, on March 26.

The camp will be held from 10 am to 1 pm. It will be led by Dr Chayanika Kalita, Dr Abhishek Lohia and other experts from the Dermatology Department of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH).

Preliminary examination of the conditions will be done free of cost and the patients will be given free medication if required. Also, the patients may be asked to return for follow-up if necessary, a press release stated.

COME EXPERIENCE HAND WOVEN FABRICS

SILK FAB CITY

EXHIBITION-CUM-SALE

of exquisite silk handloom fabrics

Venue: Asian Palace G.S. Road, Ulubari Guwahati - 781007

20th March - 02nd April, 2017

will remain open on all days including Sunday

from 11.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

ENTRY FREE

Silk Sarees • Furnishings • Salwar Suits
• Dress Materials • Dupattas • Stoles

Training prog for cold chain technicians

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: A two-day training programme was organised by the United National Development Programme (UNDP) for cold chain technicians and vaccine and cold chain managers of all the districts of Assam at Khamraha here recently.

The training was conducted to orient the district health staff on the implementation of temperature loggers which will be installed in all the electrical cold chain equipment where vaccines are stored in the government health facilities from the State level to the primary health centre level.

These temperature loggers are remote temperature monitoring devices which will continuously record the temperature of the equipment 24x7 and send the information to the server at regular intervals to ensure real-

time temperature monitoring of all the equipment from anywhere.

"The installation of the temperature loggers will help us in ensuring that our vaccines are stored at appropriate temperature at all times and there will be continuous monitoring of all the equipment from the State and district levels," said Dr RI, Nunisa, Joint Director of Health Services (UHP).

The training programme was also attended by C B Bhattacharjya, Senior Project Officer, UNDP, stated: "The UNDP is supporting the Government of Assam in streamlining vaccine and logistics management by implementing the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) and more than 1,000 temperature loggers will be installed across Assam."

Enrich The Indian Handicrafts

An Initiative of Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India

Exquisite Display - Cum - Sale

Handcrafted Products from Various Clusters of India

at

Deshbhakta T. R. Phookan Indoor Stadium Building, B. Barooah Road, Guwahati

25th to 29th March, 2017 | 11:00 am - 9:00 pm



National Centre for Design and Product Development

Ph : 031-23341273, 23341262, Web: www.ncdpd.in

MAJOR PRODUCT CATEGORIES ON DISPLAY

• Embroidery Craft

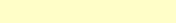
• Natural Fiber Craft

• Hand block printing

• Wood Craft

• Painting

• Printed Textiles



Indian Handicrafts

Magic of Gated Heritage

MESSAGE FOR TODAY

Each person must live their life as a model for others.

— ROSA PARKS

The Assam Tribune**Namami Brahmaputra**

For the people of Assam as well as of the North-east, the Brahmaputra river has been through millennia a dominating presence sustaining their cultures and shaping their imaginations. No aspect, geomorphic, historic, ethnic, political, religious, commercial or cultural, has remained untouched by the overwhelming impact made by this mammoth river. In the past the presence of this river system had resulted in this region retaining its geopolitical centrality, political independence and economic self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, during the British rule it was reduced to a remote outpost, a peripheral position it retains even today. The creation of East Pakistan (later to become Bangladesh) and the truncation of the Brahmaputra-Ganga water route had enhanced the sense of being cut off from the mainstream. Even though belatedly, it has now been accepted that the rejuvenation of the Brahmaputra and re-establishment of trade routes across it fanning out both east and west, is the key to removing the feeling of stagnation and alienation this region has been gripped with. This is the *cordon d'Ère* for celebrating the festival titled Namami Brahmaputra by the Assam Government. The festival is being held with the laudable purpose of placing renewed focus on this all-sustaining river, project it as a corridor linking the east and west to facilitate trade thereby attract investors to this region, as well as to boost tourism by highlighting the river's potential in attaining this objective.

However, while the concept itself might be worthwhile, how it is translated into actual gains will finally determine its success or failure. Whether enough thought and planning has gone into a festival of such magnitude is debatable, as witnessed by the controversy at the very commencement regarding the theme song. Acting as it had in the primordial past as a highway of migration, the Brahmaputra was directly responsible for the unparalleled ethnic and cultural diversity of the people of the North-east. It would have been more apt if the song, rather than projecting the features of those who lent it voice, had reflected more on the dwellers and the cultural mosaic they present. Similarly, last minute announcements of possible dignitaries who might visit the festival site hint at the piecemeal rather than holistic nature of planning. The organizers too have not come out with specific details on the nature of activities that will take place during the festival's duration, the number of entrepreneurs from outside or tourists that will participate, etc. Broaching in greater details about such aspects would not only help clarify to the masses what the festival is all about, but also the specific gains that would accrue to the region in holding a festival involving reported expenditure. Every well-wisher of the North-east would be hoping that Namami Brahmaputra would transcend mere obeisance to the mighty river and bring tangible material gains for the region.

TB eradication

It is a matter of serious concern that TB — which is now totally curable — should be having such a high incidence in the State. While the TB mortality rate has come down substantially in recent decades, the wide prevalence persists. As per official data, of the nearly 1.6 lakh suspected TB cases screened last year, 37,140 were found to be positive. While health experts tend to view it as a positive trend with more people coming out to get themselves screened, the factors behind such large-scale incidence need to be assessed and addressed. Along with curative interventions, preventive measures should also reach the masses. This calls for intensifying the TB eradication programmes being implemented by the Government. It is to be noted that the incidence of TB is higher in tea garden areas, and this warrants prompt interventions in such vulnerable pockets. Government initiatives apart, there is also an urgent need to boost campaigns concerning advocacy, communication and social mobilization in the State, especially among the vulnerable communities, for effective control of TB. This is because many diseases in Assam or elsewhere in the country are rooted in a social context — something that often prevents medical science to deal effectively with the roots of these illnesses. The Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme being implemented across the nation would also do well to pay attention to such constraints. Equally imperative is to have adequate primary health-care delivery so that the desired objectives can be achieved. The administration of the new TB drug, Bedaquiline, on a patient in Assam last year, thereby making it the country's first State to launch the 'wonder drug', was a major breakthrough; such taking recourse to latest interventions is a must in a high-risk State like Assam. Bedaquiline happens to be the first new medicine for TB in more than 40 years, and is expected to deliver a lasting impact in treatment of drug-resistant TB. Given that growing drug resistance of TB patients is emerging as a serious concern in the State, the development augurs well for long-term TB control.

The overall health care scenario in the State, especially in the rural areas, has been one of neglect — something testified to by the pathetic state of the public health care institutions as also the exodus of patients to outside the region seeking advanced treatment. The poor health-related indices of the people of the region compared to national averages also expose the persisting deficiencies in health care. The problem is most acute because both elementary and advanced medical care falls well below the desired levels. While institutions for advanced medical treatment are an urgent necessity, of equal importance is to have dependable health care set-ups at different levels. Many of the interior areas of the State still do not have access to even the basic health care facilities. Bringing the entire populace under standardized medical care, therefore, ought to be a top priority with the Government.

Silapathar incident: a sinister ploy

■ Indrajit Kalita

The concept of a composite Assamese society involving so many castes, races and religions experienced a serious setback with the lesser-known Nikhil Bharat Bangali Udhusha Samanay Samiti (NBBUSS) launching an attack on the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) office at Silapathar. The agitators of the Samiti ransacked the Union's office and damaged the esteemed 'Swahid Bedi' (martyrs' column), an act completely derogatory and humiliating. Targeting the apex body of students seems suicidal since the people of the State still maintain a strong emotional bond with the body, and hence the State-wide protest against the act is quite usual, given the said attitude maintained by people.

Perhaps the most potent of all the causes inflaming the supporters of the NBBUSS is the demand for amendment of the Citizenship Act, prime objective being the facilitation of the move of according legal status to Hindu Bangladeshis in the State. Alongside this, striking off the system of D-voters, freeing the Hindu Bengalis kept in detention camps, and thus defying the sanctity of the historic Assam Accord are the few controversial demands the Samiti would like to materialize. Championing these causes would definitely foster much intolerance among people, besides problematizing the process of updating the National Register of Citizens (NRC). Although the Assam Accord does not have constitutional safeguard, the cut-off date, viz., March

25, 1971, set by it for detecting and deporting foreign nationals has garnered mass support. And it is observed that people from various quarters unanimously agree to have a permanent solution to the problem of influx, which has incurred irreparable losses on all fronts so far. To address the problem, the NRC is required to be updated with no favouritism or religious bigotry. Any consideration into a single, particular religious sect costs the fabric of democracy and secularism as well.

Unfortunately, this is what seems to be in the agenda of central leadership finding their echo, at times, in the statements of the State leaders. Voicing out communalism is uncompromisingly derogatory since it bears every possibility of shaking the socio-cultural ties of people. If the political stalwarts take recourse to such a stance, the general masses would develop a self-assuring, but narrow course of action, and this was noticed in the Silapathar episode that is yet to regain normalcy.

The vandalism created by the enraged supporters of the NBBUSS has sparked off much repercussions across the State, and a retaliatory and anti-Bengali sentiment is brewing up among people. Indeed any generalization regarding the Bengali-speaking people that they are the

least knowledge about the ground realities of the State, and simply engage in provocative remarks that are taken into belief by a select few lacking in far-sightedness. Interestingly, most of the instigators are found to have good nexus with political leaders, especially of the saffron brigade. As Hinduwa ideology is quite strong with the party, the instigators avail the opportunity to satisfy the demand

votaries of the controversial NB-BUSS does not hold logic. The course of action the Samiti adopted is being detested by every Bengali household, and they must now be happy to see the masterminds operating behind the scene inside the bar as Subodh Biswas has been apprehended by Assam Police a couple of days ago from West Bengal. As it is noticed, the Samiti is predominantly the think-tank of a few individuals hailing from Kolkata. They have the

of according citizenship to Hindu Bangladeshis with no consideration into the regulations relating to the update of the NRC. Equally disheartening is the rumour that Bengali-speaking people are being ill-treated in strong measures, and denied of due privileges and opportunities. This is simply humiliating since there is no case as such in which the long-staying Bengali communities have turned out victims to discrimination or any step-motherly attitude. In fact, the rumour has been designed to grow a sectarian stance with the agenda of fulfilling non-sexual demands at the cost of land, property and nationality of the existing inhabitants.

If the supporters of the NBBUSS unnecessarily stick to the issue of Hindu Bangladeshis, much unrest is likely to come up since any move towards religious polarization, sentimental as it always has been, would break down the age-old bonds in the region. Although religious polarization works in most parts of North and West India, and the large political bodies take advantage of this, the North-eastern region, most particularly Assam, is an abject exception. Here the strategy of satisfying goals at the cost of the other does not hold water, given the self-assuring culture most people would like to sustain. Once a particular religious group is given preference, the rest will sit idle, and strict opposition will rise on all fronts complicating the scenario.

Measures to control road accidents needed

■ Pradip Kakati

The increasing number of road accidents in the State in the last couple of years has seen the alarm bells ringing. Almost every day, we come across various reports in the media on road accidents occurred throughout the State wherein a number of people lost their lives with hundreds others injured. Some remains disabled for the rest of their life. Who is to be blamed for such road accidents? No doubt most of the road accidents occur due to the negligence of the drivers particularly of the public vehicles. In addition, there are some other reasons also like unscientific road conditions, lack of proper street lighting, rash driving, drunk driving, lack of knowledge and ignorance of traffic rules, poor enforcement of laws and poor road conditions, etc. It is high time for the competent authority to study seriously the main causes and evolve remedy to avoid road accidents in future. With the concerted efforts from all sections of people and departments like Traffic Police and Transport, road accidents would be minimized.

It has been observed that after

the occurrence of any road accident, the public resort to various agitation programmes including blockade of road to register their protest for hours/days together and ultimately call off the agitation on the assurance given by the district authority or any other competent authority. But surprisingly, no concrete steps are taken as assured by the competent authority. People suffer hours together during such agitation programmes, particularly road blockades; especially the ambulances carrying patients are the worst sufferers due to such road blockades for hours together.

According to the statistics of the Central Road Transport Authority, during the last three years in Assam, there were 21,314 road accidents with 7,347 people including 1,755 children losing their lives in road accidents. In addition, 20,177 people were injured. It may be recalled that in the last week of February, 2017, around 50 innocent people lost their lives with more than 100 people left injured in road accidents across Assam. Considering the increasing road accidents in the State, the State Government, particularly the law imple-

menting authorities like the Traffic Police and the Transport Department should analyse the causes of road accidents and ensure implementation of traffic rules stringently and punish those who break the safe driving rules severely. It is sure that if the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act are implemented strictly, road accidents will be minimized to a large extent.

In contrast, it is seen that the law-enforcing agencies hardly take any precautionary action to control the menace in the state.

Only after the occurrence of any fatal road accident, the authorities concerned start verification of documents of all types of vehicles

including driving licences. In case any irregularities are found, they realize fine from the vehicle owners and the drivers. Is such imposition of fines sufficient to control road accidents? Mere imposition and realization of fines from the violators of the Motor Vehicle Act will not at all help to curtail road accidents unless stringent action like cancellation of permit of the public vehicles as well as driving licences are taken.

Media reports have revealed that in our State, road accidents are the cause behind 50.4% of the

deaths as against the national average of 36.4%. Statistics reveal that unscrupulous elements in the license issuing department help in implementation of traffic rules stringently and underhand people to get driving licences. It is unfortunate that in Assam, on an average, 21 road accidents occur every day and 11 persons lose their lives. In Assam there were 7,721 road accidents during 2016 in comparison to 7,295 during 2015 and 7,144 in 2014. Likewise, according to the National Crime Records Bureau, during 2015 and 2014, 4,331 and 5,853 people lost their lives respectively in road accidents.

Though every year the State Government observe Road Safety Week in the month of January to educate and develop awareness among all section of people to reduce road accidents with various programmes, it has not been sufficient to control the rising trend of road accidents. Mere observation of the week in a year will not reduce the number of road accidents. The concept of road safety is a continuous process and it should not be confined to the customary Road Safety Week alone. Most of the road accidents occur during night or wee hours on the highways since most of the drivers seldom follow the traffic rules and regulations.

Rash driving, overtaking at break-neck speed, driving under the influence of mind-benders are some other causes of road accidents. Pedestrians are also responsible for the spurt in road accident rate since many of them, especially the youths, are seen walking and crossing busy streets using headphones or cell phones.

It is high time the authorities concerned took the issue seriously and implemented all the existing rules and regulations of the Motor Vehicles Act stringently. The Traffic Police should also step up vigil to book the traffic rule violators. Mere imposition of fines from the offenders will not serve the purpose. Mobile patrolling particularly on the highways should be intensified to crack down on rash driving and the speed limits of all types of vehicles should also be strictly monitored. To control drunk driving which is one of the main causes of road accidents, the authority responsible for traffic management should use breath analysers, especially on the highways, and impose heavy fines on the violators. No doubt it is a tough job but such precautions will certainly help control road accidents.

Illegal influx and declassified CIA report

Letters to the EDITOR

Sir, — This has a reference to the news item 'Over 11 lakh Bangla nationals entered NE during 1971-'83' (AT, March 20). The declassified CIA report that revealed that at least six lakh Bangladeshi nationals entered Assam during 1971-1983 needs to be taken seriously by our Government. Over the decades, the people of Assam have been urging the governments both at the Centre and in the State to take steps to prevent the inflow of Bangladeshi nationals to Assam and to deport all the illegal Bangladeshi migrants from Assam. As per the Assam Accord, the Bangladeshi nationals that entered Assam after March 25, 1971 would face deportation and the Government would take steps in this regard. The previous Congress Government in Assam was never serious on the issue of illegal Bangladeshi migrants and it took no concrete action to deport them. As per reports, still, the movement of Bangladeshi nationals in the PB-2 with GP Rs 2,200. All of our 310 new recruits are

going on. Until and unless the Indo-Bangladesh border is properly sealed, the migration of Bangladeshi nationals to Assam will continue.

The declassified CIA report is necessarily a real eye-opener for both the Central and the State governments. Now, nobody can dispute the number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants in Assam. That a large number of illegal Bangladeshi migrants are living in Assam is a fact. Now, the responsibilities to detect and deport them from Assam are on the shoulder of the current BJP-led Government in Assam. Yours etc., MAHESWAR DEKA, Rangiya, Pay Commission

Sir, — Through your esteemed daily, we would like to draw the attention of the authority concerned towards our grievance that has been stimulated by the 7th Pay Commission recommendations and subsequent approval of the State Government. We have been selected by the Gauhati High Court in 2013 for appointment as LDA/Copyist/Typist in the subordinate courts in the

India-Bangladesh border is

graduates with some additional qualifications as stipulated in the advertisement published by the High Court. Now the recently (in 2017) recruited junior accounts assistants (who are graduates) of the district treasury establishments are awarded a pay revision by the 7th pay panel by fixing their pay revised pay at PB-2 with corresponding GP of Rs 2,900 and ours is revised against the existing GP of Rs 2,200; whereas both categories of employees are Grade-III employees of the respective district establishments with requisite qualifications (graduation) as per the advertisements concerned. Why should we be deprived of our benefit? The High Court and the Finance Department are requested to look into the matter at the earliest. Yours etc., ANIMESH BORAH AND OTHERS, Golaghat.

MoU with SBI

Sir, — We highly appreciate the State Government decision to release the first instalment of arrear before the Assamese new year celebrations begin. But the decision of State Government regarding the

signing of the MoU with SBI for sanctioning of housing loan, education loan, etc., creates confusion among the Government employees. At present, the State Government employees are drawing salary not only through their SBI accounts but from other nationalized banks of their choice due to the implementation of the new system of online payment directly from Government treasures. Due to the signing of the MoU with SBI, the intending employees who want to avail loans will have to draw salary only through SBI accounts. The Government should rethink over their decision of signing MoU with only SBI. Other banks are also contributing a lot for the development of the State. Nowadays, it is only the service which matters. The Government should sign contracts with other nationalized banks also so that the employees can choose the bank/branch from which they want to avail the loan. Otherwise, the employees will be compelled to open new accounts with SBI. Yours etc., SANJIB KUMAR NAYAK, Nagaon.

Ali Aye Ligriang

Sir, — The Mising of Assam celebrate the Ali Aye Ligriang festival on the first Wednesday of the Assamese month of Fagun. But it has been observed that some people and organizations celebrates this Mising national festival even after the scheduled date, sometimes even beyond the month of Fagun. It is therefore my request to all the people concerned not to encourage such delayed celebrations of Ali Aye Ligriang. It is time to stop these kind of wrong culture in our society. Yours etc., JITTEN PAYENG, Guwahati.

BDO exam

Sir, — It is a good step by the APSC to cancel the previously-held BDO exam entirely. The candidates can now start afresh without any prejudices in their mind. The old candidates need not worry over this decision. They should encourage such a bold step taken by the APSC. Yours etc., AN ASPIRING CANDIDATE, Guwahati.

Articles (within 1000-1100 words) and Letters to the Editor for publication in the editorial page may be sent to the email ID: editor@assamttribune.com.

Tarun Duvarah award to Paul, Khargoria

GUWAHATI, March 24: Tarun Duvarah Memorial Oil India Award - 2016 will be given to renowned actor Bishnu Khargoria and eminent terracotta artist Dharendra Nath Paul on March 26 at a function in Rabindra Bhawan.

The award has been earlier presented to Jahanu Barua, Nilpawan Barua, Biju Phukan, Ramesh Barua, Benu Misra, among others. Governor of Assam Banwarilal Purohit will be the chief guest of the occasion, added a statement. — Staff Reporter

Showroom

GUWAHATI, March 24: Former Chief Minister Pranlal Kunwar Mahanta today inaugurated an e-showroom at Patharpara. The showroom will exclusively deal in 'E-Rickshaw' brand, a press release stated. — Staff Reporter

Call for focus on people with disabilities

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: With hardly any mention of accessibility for persons with disabilities, the Smart City mission, which is greatly reliant on technology, might widen the digital divide for the disabled people, ageing communities and others, feel experts while asking for a greater focus on accessibility for all in the Smart Cities.

Guhatali is among the 20 cities of the country to be developed as Smart City in the first phase.

Crusader for disability rights Jawed Abidi at a roundtable on inclusive Smart Cities and associability for the persons with disability stressed that disability should no more be seen as an isolated condition with increasing number of people acquiring some forms of disabling condition due to old age.

Organised today by the National Centre for Promotion of Employ-

ment for Disabled People and Shishu Sarothi, the roundtable stressed the importance of integrating elements of universal design for better accessibility right from the design and development stage so that the issue does not get cornered despite having proper legislation in place.

SMART CITY MISSION

It needs mention here that the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act passed in 2016 has provisions to ensure accessibility in all public buildings (both government and private) within a prescribed time frame.

"Since the legal mandate is already there and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also thrice his weight behind the cause with accessible India campaign, we need the right level of sensitisation and planning for executing things," Abidi said.

Ravi Kapoor, Additional Chief Sec-

retary, Industries and Commerce, in his address, said that timely sensitisation of the policy makers and also the corporate is necessary to prepare a blueprint to create a greater focus on accessibility in the Smart City mission, which will also include minimising the digital divide.

retary, Industries and Commerce, in his address, said that timely sensitisation of the policy makers and also the corporate is necessary to prepare a blueprint to create a greater focus on accessibility in the Smart City mission, which will also include minimising the digital divide.

Analysing the global trends in accessible Smart Cities, James Thurston, vice president, Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies, said that as the global community has recognised access to technology as a basic human right, the digital inclusion is impacting people in the right way.

While attending the programme, Director of Social Welfare SS Meenakshi Sundaram said that the Smart City solution must be de-

signed keeping in mind different economic strata of society. Managing Director of Guwahati Smart City Limited, Manavendra Pratap Singh stated that different perspectives would be incorporated, including the accessibility for persons with disabilities, to make Guwahati a Smart City in every sense. "The Smart City concept has no hard and fast definition. The mission envisages making citizen service delivery more efficient. The more inclusive it is, the more successful it would be called."

In his welcome speech, executive director of Shishu Sarothi Arman Ali stressed a collaborative effort on the part of all the stakeholders for ensuring the convenience of all. "A place which is accessible for the persons with disabilities, would certainly be more accessible for the other people, that would definitely result in a win-win situation for all," he said.

Workshop on robotic surgery

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: In a first-of-its-kind development that paves the way for introducing robotic surgery in the North East, doctors from across the region underwent a four-day hands-on experience on the Vinci Surgical Robotic System (BBC), at Dr B Boruah Cancer Institute (BBCI), Guwahati.

The four-day workshop that was organised by BBCI in collaboration with Bengaluru-based Vattikuti Technologies, concluded today. Over 100 doctors from different parts of Assam and the neighbour-

ing states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya participated in the event to receive an experience of working with the surgical robot.

Da Vinci is currently the only surgical system in the world for clinical use. It is available in many advanced hospitals in developed countries and also at a few centres in India. The workshop was organised with installation of the fully automated robotic system with console, simulator and operating instruments to sensitise doctors from the North East.

"Robotic surgery is a rapidly evolving new surgical technology with several ad-

vantages over conventional open and laparoscopic surgery," Dr AC Kataki, Director BBCI, told *The Assam Tribune*.

The process also causes less trauma to the patient, minimises blood loss, reduces complications and has a shorter hospital stay for the patient. It is more ergonomic and comfortable to the surgeon since he controls the robot from a console and gets a highly magnified 3D view. The robot carries out all manoeuvres as controlled by the surgeon, through a wider range and much higher precision than can be achieved by human hand, and also eliminates jerks and tremors.

Popular talks held for promotion of physics

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: The Department of Physics, Arya Vidyapeeth College recently arranged a series of popular talks for promotion of physics knowledge and dissemination of information among the students.

In one such talk, Prof Sourabha Basu from IIT Guwahati spoke on the subject 'Role of Symmetries in Fundamental Physics'. Prof Basu discussed in detail the various symmetries that are prevalent in different branches of physics like Condensed Matter Physics and High Energy Physics. "Though in certain cases symmetries can be broken too, but in general, symmetry plays a very important role in Nature," he observed.

Prof Basu, who is also the Dean of the Outreach Education Programme of IIT Guwahati, explained lucidly to the students the programme and elaborated how they could take advantage of such a programme for development of their career.

Prof DK Choudhury, former executive president of the Physics Academy of North East (PANE), was the guest of honour on the occasion.

In another talk, Dr Subir Sarkar, a faculty member of the Department of Physics of Arya Vidyapeeth College, delivered a talk, 'Digitisation – its Past and Present' with particular reference to digital cashless

transaction, various advantages of a digital approach and the recent demonstration.

A detailed discussion on app downloading like paytm etc, its installation and execution was another highlight of the event.

Dr Sarkar also discussed the Digital India Mission, which is aimed to improve digital literacy. Dr Amar Saikia, Principal of Dispur Sevaika, was the guest of honour on the occasion.

A participant at One-Act Play Competition organised to mark the 2nd death anniversary of noted actor Indra Borthakur on Friday. — UBS Photos

Sanmilita Mahasangha flays Centre over Citizenship Act

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: The Assam Sanmilita Mahasangha, which has been fighting a legal battle in the Supreme Court on the validity of Section 6 (A) of the Citizenship Act, today came down heavily on the Narendra Modi-led BJP government at the Centre for not submitting an affidavit before the Supreme Court in favour of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Mahasangha's working president Maturi Rahman said that in connection with the organisation's PIL (562/2012), the then Mamnoon Singh-led Congress government submitted an affidavit which goes against the United Nations Declaration on the rights of the anti-Assam rule of the BJP and be cautious," he added.

"The people should be conscious of the anti-Assam rule of the BIP and be cautious," he added.

Importance of judicious use of water stressed

GUWAHATI, March 24: World Water Day was observed by NABARD, Assam Regional Office on March 22 with a variety of programmes including poster campaign, putting up of hoardings and a discussion by a panel of experts on water use, said a delayed press release here. The aim of the observance was to create awareness among the stakeholders about the importance of water and its judicious utilisation/management, adoption of available technologies for augmenting productivity per unit of water use, promoting investments in water efficient technologies, rain water harvesting and improved water management practices.

Smt RK Baruah, CGM, NABARD welcomed all the stakeholders including State Govt officials, bankers, NGOs, farmers' clubs and sought cooperation in the initiatives aiming at augmenting productivity in the agriculture sector.

Dr Subhashis Dutta from IIT Guwahati, an expert in the field of water management, focused on water issues, challenges and the way forward with special reference to the River Brahmaputra basin and the hilly terrain in the region. He also laid stress on recharge pattern, proper usage of groundwater, quality of water, which would lead to increased production in the State.

The National Water Campaign was formally launched by Dr HK Biswas, Chairman, NABARD through a video conference from Mumbai.



Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
Guwahati - 781039, Assam

Sealed quotations are invited from the IRDA registered service provider for establishing Marine cum Storage Erection Insurance Policy Contract for IIT Guwahati.

For detailed specifications, terms and conditions, please visit our website at <http://www.iitg.ernet.in/home/tender/19>. Corrigendum in regard to this Tender, if any, will be published/ intimated in the above mentioned website only.

Sd/-
DR (S&P)



NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
ASSAM

Date: 24/03/2017
CORRIGENDUM & EXTENSION NOTICE

FOR PRINTING & CONDITION INCORPORATED IN TENDER NO. NHM/HMIEC-BCC/RefEO/2018-172973/P3/21927 dated 15-03-2017 for Printing & Supply of Poster, Flip Chart & Leaflets etc. has been amended. The details of amendments can be obtained from the website www.nhmassam.in which should be taken note of prior to submission of bids. All other terms and conditions of the tender referred to above shall remain unchanged. End date of submission of tender is hereby extended upto 30/03/2017. Sd/-
Mission Director, NHM, Assam



BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)
Notice Inviting e-tenders

TENDER NOTICE NO: D-25/BSNL/GHC/415
Dated: 24-03-2017

The Executive Engineer, BSNL Civil Division, Panbazar, Guwahati, (Phone No 0361-2540322) invites on behalf of BSNL, online item rate on two bid system for following work: NIT No. 280/BSNL/GHC/16/17- Name of the work "C/0 40 M (4 legged) light weight narrow base tower including Foundation, Excavation, Piling and Anti-seismic work in Guwahati University, Campus Jalukbari, Guwahati" (2nd call). Estimated cost: Rs.18,54,159/-, Earnest Money: Rs.21,70/-, Period of completion: 2 (Two) months and Last time and date of submission of bids: as 15.00 Hrs. on 28.03.2017.

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <http://www.tenderwizard.com/BSNL>. The press notice is also available on www.assam.bnsl.co.in



FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA
Zonal Office : NEZ, G.L. Publications Building,
G.S. Road, Guwahati-781007

NO: SEC/9(3)/MEZ/2016/555 Date : 24-03-2017
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Applications are invited for awarding of contract to successful tender for engagement of Security Agencies for providing round the clock Integrated Security Solutions (Man Guard & Electronic Security Systems) by utilizing existing CCTV cameras and other security systems installed in the depots under the FOI, FSD-Binsukiri, Changsar, Dimapur and Sangaijor gocown complex on pilot basis for a period of 3 (three) years extendable by another Two Years (one + one).

Details are available for download in the website www.fci.gov.in & www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app

Interested Prospective Tenderers may also participate in the pre-bid meeting on 23/03/2017 at 10.00 hrs. Prior intimation of participation in pre-bid meeting on 30-03-2017 and/or 31-03-2017 through e-mail to agmavne.fci@gov.in will be solicited.

Sd/-, Executive Director (Zone) FCI, ZO (NE)

UNIVERSITY WORKS DEPARTMENT
GAUHATI UNIVERSITY
GUWAHATI - 781014
Corrigendum

(Ref.: NIT No.T/16-17/498 dated 16.03.2017)

It is for information of all concerned that the detail Tender Document for the Work of "Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Off-Grid Rooftop Solar Power Plants at Various Buildings of Gauhati University" published on G.U. website on 23/03/2017 at 10.00 hrs. has been revised due to certain technical grounds, and accordingly date of submission of tenders has been rescheduled on 20.00 pm of 21.04.2017 and issuance of revised detail tender documents will be from 27.03.2017 up to 08.04.2017 from the office of the undersigned during office hours. Further, revised name of the work stands as "Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Grid Interactive Rooftop and Small SPV Power Plants with proposed capacities totaling 1500 KWp at different buildings with the campus of Gauhati University". Those who have already collected the earliest tender document are requested to collect revised tender document as mentioned above. They need not submit tender again.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, I/c Gauhati University



Central Bank of India
"CENTRAL" TO YOU SINCE 1914

Under Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, Gauhati Branch under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with the Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers and Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the same within 60 days (sixty days) from the date of receipt of the said notice with future interest and incidental charges.

The Borrowers/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, Notice is hereby given to the Borrowers / Guarantors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with the Rules 8 & 9 of the said Rules.

The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, Gauhati Branch.

The Borrower/Guarantor's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name of the Borrower /Guarantor / Branch 1. M/S SANKARDEV COMMERCIAL PVT. LTD (Borrower)

2. Sri Khandirna Talukdar (Director)

3. Sri Devabratra Talukdar (Director)

Date and Amount of 13(2)Notice 24/03/2015, Rs. 69701934/- Plus Interest and other charges

Date and amount of Possession Notice u/s 13(4) 20/03/2017, Rs. 79695309/- Plus Interest and other charges

Details of Property - 1.) EM of Land 5 building & hypothesis of entire plant & machineries, Furniture & Fixture, Misc other Fixed assets etc of the shopping mall "The Cube" erected out of the bank finance & borrower's margin component erected at Plot of land measuring 2 katha 12 leches under Dag no 959/0/2417(N), Plot no 32(O)/120(N) Ground Floor, Basement & Four Upper floors located at villiLengang Mora-Belora ChirangBasil,GSRoad,Guwahati surrounded by North-Plot of Santonzo Construction Ltd, South-Plot of Santonzo Construction Ltd, East-Deepak Park Mills, West-Plot of Santonzo Construction Ltd, North-Plot of the same M/s Sankardev Commercial Pvt Ltd

2.) Landed property measuring 3katha 5 leches under dag no 337/502 Patta no 87 situated at Villi Jatis Vinayak Path,Lakhimi Nagar, Main Road surrounded by North-NagenKalta ,South-BirenSaikia, East-Bhagya Talukdar,West-Vinayak Path, Guwahati,Assam standing in the name of M/s Sankardev Commercial Pvt Ltd.

Place: Guwahati Branch Date: 24/03/2017

AUTHORISED OFFICER,
CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

**Baksa Nepali
Sahitya Sabha
Conference**
ANN SERVICE

MUSHALPUR, March 24: The eighth triennial conference of the Baksa district committee of Asom Nepali Sahitya Sabha will be held on March 25 and 26 at Devkota Sangha Office, Kalipur.

The first day's programme includes a cleanliness drive, hoisting of sashra flag, smriti tarpans, plantation, multilingual poets' meet, district delegate meeting and cultural evening.

The programme on March 26 includes career counselling and open session. Hari Gajirel, president and Rudra Baral, secretary of the Asom Nepali Sahitya Sabha will be present in the meeting, besides Natyantau CK Shrestha of Kalmpong, litterateur Kiran Kumar Rai, Biswajit Daimary (RS MP), Immanu Musahary (local MLA), Padam Bahadur Chauhan (former minister), Ganesh Kachari and Deben Boro (EMs of BTC) besides others. Om Chhetry, DID Little Master, singer Barun Gurung from Darjeeling and TV artist Mohan Chetry will be the special attractions of the second cultural night.

**Sadou Asom
Devalaya
Sangha meet**

GUWAHATI, March 24: An executive meeting of Sadou Asom Devalaya of Panbazar, under the presidency of Prof Hitendra Nath Bhattacharya, resolved that the 10th general meeting of the Sangha will be convened at Bileswar Devalaya of Nalbari district by this year-end, a press release stated.

During discussion in that meeting, the general secretary, Suresh Ch Bhattacharya also expressed serious concern about the Assam government's apathy towards the development of the age-old heritage Dol-Devalayas of the State, which are facing various problems for want of funds. He urged the Government to come forward with new schemes to uplift the temples.

**One killed
in mishap**
CORRESPONDENT

BAIHATA CHARIALI, March 24: One person was killed on the spot in a road accident at Salma village under Baihata Chariali police station on National Highway 15 this morning. According to reports, the accident took place when a Maruti Alto (AS 01 BB 8020) proceeding from Mangaldoi road to Baihata Chariali hit a roadside tree. Baihata Chariali police has identified the deceased as Upjal Bora (45), an inhabitant of Gurumow village and pharmacist of Goreswar mini PHC.

OBITUARY

Maheswar Deka
GUWAHATI, March 24: Maheswar Deka, a resident of village Barkarkharia under Karara mouza of Kamrup district passed away on March 18, 2017 at his residence. He was 82.

He leaves behind one elder brother, three sons, one daughter and a host of relatives including grand sons and daughters. He was a good cultivator. His wife had predeceased him.

**Dr Kali Prasad
Saikia**

GUWAHATI, March 24 - Dr Kali Prasad Saikia, former professor and head of the ENT department, Gauhati Medical College and an alumnus of AIIMS, New Delhi, passed away on March 23 at 3.30 pm.

A resident of Kumarpara, Guwahati, Dr Saikia was associated with various socio-cultural activities. He left behind his wife, two sons, two daughters-in-law, grandchildren and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

Namami Brahmaputra festival

Jogomaya ghat to get floating stage at Dhubri

CORRESPONDENT

DHUBRI, March 24: The historic Jogomaya ghat will get a floating stage to promote the culture and traditions of the district during the Namami Brahmaputra festival.

The district administration has confirmed that two large size vessels have been brought to the Jogomaya ghat, which will be transformed into a stage for the festival. It was also ensured that the stage will be floating in the mighty river and ar-

rangements will be made to carry the audience and the performers to the stage constantly from the banks.

However, the administration will also make sitting arrangements for the audiences in the banks of the river and the floating stage will be placed in such a way that audiences from both the banks can witness the performances.

"We have planned that all the cultural and traditional performances in the evening will be staged in this temporal

floating arrangement, where we will join two vessels and make it a stage," said Deputy Commissioner of Dhubri Dibrugarh Chaudhary, in an event for releasing the schedule of the festival.

He added, "The stage will have limited sitting arrangements and many people will hesitate to travel by a boat to the stage. So arrangements have been made to enjoy the performances from the banks."

He also said that if the weather does not permit the artistes

to perform, they will be shifted to another stage that will be built in the main venue of the festival at Raja Prahlad Chandra Barua playground, Dhubri.

Meanwhile, the administration is all set to make the festival a grand event and confirmed that the Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal will inaugurate it on March 31.

The administration has also organised a few symposiums and seminars on the literature, culture, history and heritage of the undivided Goalpara and

in Dhubri and the Ashoka Ashrami Mela begins on the last day of the Namami Brahmaputra festival. During this festival, hundreds of devotees throng Dhubri town to take a dip in river Brahmaputra and Godavari.

"Although that day there will be chaos in the town due to both the festivals, we are sure we can control it. The police administration has been given the responsibility to ensure peace during the festivals," Chaudhary added.

Thousands bid tearful adieu to Abhijit Sarma in Jorhat



Admires at the funeral procession of former State Health minister Abhijit Sarma, in Jorhat on Friday. - UB Photos

CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, March 24: A day after his death in Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, thousands of friends and relatives, representatives of various organisations and locals of Jorhat thronged the residence of former Health Minister of the State Abhijit Sarma on Thursday afternoon at DCB Road here to bid final farewell to the departed soul.

Besides being a good organiser since his college days, Sharma was widely known as a successful philanthropic tea planter of the State who always cared a lot for the welfare of the workers of his tea estates.

His mortal remains were flown from Delhi to Jorhat airport and was taken from the airport to his home with a procession by the members of AASU, Asom Sahitya Sabha, Sadou Asom Karmachari Parishad, AJYCP and many other local organisations of Jorhat. Sharma was cremated with State hon-

our at Tarajan Crematorium of the city at 5pm.

Paying floral tributes to the departed soul at Jorhat airport, his admirer and State Water Resources minister Keshab Mahanta said that the death of Sarma caused irreparable loss to the AGP as well as the State as he never compromised with the regional interest of the State during his lifetime.

He was elected as the MLA of Jorhat in 1985 and became the Health Minister of the State and he never contested poll twice. Since his days in school, Sarma was associated with social works and later played a very significant role in Assam Agitation as an active office-bearer of AASU of undivided Sivasagar district.

It is to be mentioned that he could arouse the regional sentiments of the people of the State very successfully and rallied thousands in Jorhat to raise their voices against the discriminatory attitude of the then government towards the indigenous people.

Expressing condolence over his death, former Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta offered floral tributes to Sarma at his residence who was closely associated with him since the period of Assam Agitation and never quit the regional party though he never contested twice. Mahanta said that the strong will and never-compromising political attitude of Abhijit Sarma will encourage everyone of AGP to work for the welfare people of the State.

Hundreds of members of tea planters organisations including ATPA, ABITA and the Jorhat units of AASU, AJYCP, Asom Sahitya Sabha and political parties including AGP, BJP, Congress and several other social organisations offered their floral tributes to Sarma before his cremation.

Expressing condolence over his death many sports organisations, academic institutions and businessmen of Jorhat closed their offices and establishments on Thursday afternoon.

Expressing condolence at Sarma's death, former Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta offered floral tributes to Sarma at his residence who was closely associated with him since the period of Assam Agitation and never quit the regional party though he never contested twice. Mahanta said that the strong will and never-compromising political attitude of Abhijit Sarma will encourage everyone of AGP to work for the welfare people of the State.

Hundreds of members of tea planters organisations including ATPA, ABITA and the Jorhat units of AASU, AJYCP, Asom Sahitya Sabha and political parties including AGP, BJP, Congress and several other social organisations offered their floral tributes to Sarma before his cremation.

Addressing the health awareness meeting as the appointed speaker, Dr Nirmal Ch Beryia, SDM & HO, Mangaldoi explained various aspects of the disease tuberculosis (TB) including its symptoms, its prevention, medical treatment and importance of public awareness.

Cachar registers 75 per cent institutional delivery rate

CORRESPONDENT

health Activists (ASHA) 2017 organised by the District Health Department under the National Health Mission at the Silchar Medical College and Hospital on Thursday.

Addressing the ASHA workers PARMAL Suklabaidya said "this is day to honour the mothers in the form of ASHA workers who render selfless service in the rural areas." He has asked the Cachar Deputy Commissioner S Viswanathan to make arrangements to allot a room for the ASHA workers in all the hospitals and health centres in the district.

According to records, while the MMR across the State before the commencement of NRHM recorded 490 per 1 lakh pregnant women, the numbers scaled down to 301 in 2015. In a similar manner, the IMR rates declined from 66 per lakh to 56 per lakh population.

These facts were brought forth during the 2nd convention of Accredited Social

services rendered by the ASHA workers.

Cachar Deputy Commissioner S Viswanthan in his speech said that in the past 18 months since his joining almost 25 cases of MMR were registered every month which has been reduced to seven cases a month now. He credited the ASHA workers for bring the MMR rates to this level.

Dr R Das, Joint Director of Health Services Cachar has urged the ASHA workers to keep the momentum to bring the MMR and IMR rates to zero.

Meanwhile, noted oncologist and director of Cachar Cancer Hospital Dr Ravi Kannan has urged the Cachar district administration to assign the ASHA workers in disseminating messages of the ill effects of cancer in the district. In his words 60 per cent cancer is caused due to consumption of tobacco which can be reduced if information regarding cancer cure is spread far and wide.

Health awareness, free eye screening camp organised

CORRESPONDENT

MANGALDAI, March 24: In connection with the celebration of World TB Day on Friday, a health awareness and free eye screening camp was organised by voluntary organisation Crystal Vision in Dolbari High and Middle school at Boranaigaon village under Paschim Mangaldoi Development Block.

Addressing the health awareness meeting as the appointed speaker, Dr Anjana Thiravai, Ophthalmic Surgeon from Sijapuri PHC and paramedical staff of the hospital carried out eye screening of more than 100 students of the two above-mentioned educational institutions.

He pointed out how the germs of the disease even attack children and its negligence may prove fatal. The meeting conducted by Pankaj Kumar Saharia, Head Master, Dolbari High School was also addressed by Binod K Deka, Head Master, Dolbari ME school, office bearers of Crystal Vision Mayukh Goswami and Sekhar Mazumdar, among others.

On the other hand in the free eye screening camp, Dr Anjana Thiravai, Ophthalmic Surgeon from Sijapuri PHC and paramedical staff of the hospital carried out eye screening of more than 100 students of the two above-mentioned educational institutions.

first "Satyagrahi" of Darrang district, freedom fighter and veteran advocate Tapeswar Sarma, freedom fighter and president of the then district Congress party, Tankeswar Sarma, "Niti Kabi" Dhani Bora, Pundit Bireswar Sarma, Pundit Banikanta Deka, Adhyaksh Ranjit Bhattacharya etc., were some of the prominent students of the school during the early part of 20th century. Hereafter also, this institution has created several numbers of students who have been able to show their talents in different aspects in India and abroad.

It is a matter of great pleasure that the people of village Byaspara along with its ex-students are going to celebrate the 'Post Centenary Platinum Jubilee' (Uttar Satabarsha Maha Rajat Jayanti) of Byaspara Prathamik Bidayalay on March 25 and 26.

187 years of Byaspara Prathamik Vidyalaya

YOTISH KUMAR SARMAH

entrusted on him.

It is learnt that he had to learn English to report matters in English in Calcutta. After a detailed investigation on this chapter, it has come to the notice that a few persons like Byas Pandits or Ojas were purely based on the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Since these songs did not have any script they could not easily kept in mind. In this context, we can take the name of some old books of "Sachipat" written in Kaitheali language found in the residence of some prominent personalities of Byaspara.

After observing some important fact and figures, we have come to know that the famous Byas-Oja "Chando" was born in the year 1800 AD. The son of "Chando Oja", Bhumiudhar Sarma was appointed as "Muktian" by the British and he had to move to Calcutta to report on matters



CAPSULE**Tata Motors**

NEW DELHI, March 24: Tata Motors will raise up to Rs 500 crore via issuance of non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis. – PTI

Indian Bank

COMBATORE, March 24: Public sector Indian Bank today opened a branch in Kovaiyurupur in the city, taking the number to 88 in Combatore zone, comprising four districts. – PTI

PNC Infratech

NEW DELHI, March 24: PNC Infratech today said it has emerged as the lowest bidder for NHAI's two highway projects worth Rs 2,720 crore in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. – PTI

Sun Pharma

NEW DELHI, March 24: Drug major Sun Pharmaceutical Industries today said Spain-based Almirall SL has sought regulatory approval from the European Medicines Agency for a new drug named Tidrakizumab. The drug is being evaluated for the treatment of moderate-to-severe plaque psoriasis, the two companies said in a statement. – PTI

SpiceJet

NEW DELHI, March 24: Budget airline SpiceJet, which has surpassed Jet Airways to become the country's second-most valued aviation company, continues to retain the position today. – PTI

IDFC Bank

NEW DELHI, March 24: Private lender IDFC Bank today said its board will meet next month to consider raising funds through non-convertible debt securities on private placement basis. – PTI

JSW Steel

NEW DELHI, March 24: Fach Ratings today affirmed JSW Steel Ltd long-term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at 'BB+' and said that the outlook remains negative. – PTI

Carlyle Group

NEW DELHI, March 24: Asset management firm Carlyle Group picked a minority stake in supply chain services company Delhivery Private, with existing investor Tiger Global also upping its exposure, for a combined investment of more than USD 100 million. – PTI

Reliance Cap

NEW DELHI, March 24: Reliance Capital, part of Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group, today announced the completion of transfer of its commercial finance division into a separate wholly-owned subsidiary. – PTI

Volvo Auto

NEW DELHI, March 24: Volvo Auto India will increase prices of vehicles across its model range by upto 2 per cent from April. The increase is due to rise in input costs which affects all models sold in India, the company said in a statement. – PTI

Reckitt Benckiser

NEW DELHI, March 24: UK-based FMCG major Reckitt Benckiser expects online sales in India to account for 10 per cent of its total sales in the country by 2020. – PTI

Declare black money by March 31, warns I-T Dept

NEW DELHI, March 24: With the scheme to declare unaccounted income coming to an end on March 31, the Income Tax Department today warned black money holders to make use of the remaining period or face penalty.

"Why wait till March 31, 2017? Declare your black money now or get penalized later," the Income Tax Department said in an advertisement in newspaper Dailies here.

It asked black money holders to declare their unaccounted income under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) scheme till March 31. They can make the deposits in the form of cash or in an account with a tax, surcharge and penalty totaling upto 49.90 per cent, it said.

The Income Tax Department has ensured complete confidentiality and immunity in respect

of the declarations made under the scheme.

Mandatory deposit of 25 per cent of the unaccounted income will be made in PMGKY. The deposits will be interest free and have a lock-in period of four years.

The department warned that it has all the information about the deposits made by people and non-declaration of unaccounted income will be liable to tax, surcharge and cess at the rate of 77.25 per cent along with penalty, prosecution and enforcement actions.

"As the last date is approaching, the Government is going all the way to make non-tax-compliant declare their income under PMGKY," tax expert Pritam Mahore told this news agency.

"Success of PMGKY will depend on how much money is disclosed till March 31," he said. – IANS

Banks, insurance cos keen to partner with IPPB

NEW DELHI, March 24: Nearly 100 firms, including SBI, LIC and MTNL, have approached the Department of Posts for partnership with the newly-launched India Post Payments Banks.

While the department is in

approached the Department of Posts for collaboration with India Post Payments Banks." Sinha said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

As only one bid was received on the e-procurement portal, the tender process was cancelled on September 22, 2016," the Minister said.

Afterwards, a modified tender was issued by October 17, 2016, which attracted two bids which were currently under evaluation.

"Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India, Mumbai is providing consultancy to the Department and in involved in preparing the bid documents," Sinha added. – PTI

"Many companies have approached the various stages of discussions with them, decision on formal partnerships will be taken after carefully evaluating the value proposition for the common man."

To another question, the Minister said that two bids have been received in response to a tender to select a system integrator for IPPB.

Nearly 100 firms, including SBI, LIC and MTNL, have approached the Department of Posts for partnership with the newly-launched India Post Payments Banks.

While the department is in

Use of digital tech to push biz growth: Study

NEW DELHI, March 24: Adoption of advanced digital technologies in India can bolster revenue by up to 27 per cent, drive employment by 84 per cent and enhance significantly access to overseas markets for small and medium businesses, says a study.

"In India, adoption of advanced business digital technologies can lead to increase in revenues by upto 27 per cent, increase in employment by upto 84 per cent and enhance access to international markets by upto 65 per cent for small and medium business (SMBs)", the ASSOCHAM-Deloitte study said.

Digital infrastructure can also help leverage technologies like telepresence, that, in turn, reduce the travel need for businesses, resulting in cost savings.

Increased levels of digital technology use can improve employee satisfaction and collaboration, leading to a more productive workforce, it added.

"In India, it is estimated that employees in SMBs with advanced digital engagement are 8.7 times more likely to collaborate than offline businesses," noted the study titled 'Digital India: Unlocking the Trillion Dollar Opportunity'.

The Government has taken several measures to improve ease of doing business in India. Services such as e-Biz portal, KYC and other e-governance initiatives have started to contribute to the improvement in ease of doing business and this is expected to further improve, it added.

"Availability of digital infrastructure will help companies drive significant efficiencies, reduce time to market (new products, new markets) by digitising their core operations and supply chains," it pointed out.

The implementation of telepresence and cloud computing technologies under Digital India will lead to reduction in carbon emissions.

"For example, telepresence can eliminate 20 per cent of the business travel, leading to reduction in carbon emissions by 1.08 million tonnes globally. Use of cloud storage for documents will significantly reduce the consumption of natural resources like paper," it added. – PTI

Indian equities close with gains, bank stocks surge

MUMBAI, March 24:

Healthy buying in banking stocks pushed the Indian equity markets higher on Friday, coupled with broadly positive European indices, a marginally strong rupee and foreign funds' inflows.

The key indices provisionally closed the day's trade in the green.

The Nifty 51-scrip Nifty of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) rose by 21.70 points or 0.24 per cent to 9,108 points.

The barometer 30-scrip sensitive index (Sensex) of the BSE, which opened at 29,350.60 points, provisionally closed at 29,421.40 points (at 3.30 p.m.) – up 89.24 points or 0.30 per cent from the previous close at 29,332.16 points.

The Sensex touched a high of 29,539.85 points and a low of 29,350.17 points during the intra-day trade.

The BSE market breadth was marginally bearish – with 1,471 declines and 1,346 advances.

On Thursday, the benchmark indices closed the day's trade with gains of more than half a per cent each on short covering. – IANS



Ravi Kapoor, Additional Chief Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Assam, addressing the 'North East(India)-CLMV Business Summit' organised by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry along with the Services Exports Promotion Council and International Chamber for Service Industry at Hotel Radisson Blu in Gauhati on Friday. – UB Photos

TRAI rejects telecom panel's contention on promo tariffs

NEW DELHI, March 24:

Telecom regulator TRAI has rejected Telecom Commission's contention that free promotional offers allowed by it are responsible for the industry's failing financial health and lower licence fee payments to the Government.

TRAI is drafting a response to the Telecom Commission's letter dated February 23 on the lines that tariff and tariff orders, solely under the regulator's purview, need to be reviewed in the broader context of the telecom regulator.

The telecom regulator is likely to send next week its response to the Telecom Commission, the highest policy-making body of the sector.

As per TRAI Act, tariffs are

under the purview of TRAI. If anyone has an objection to tariff orders, they are free to approach the telecom tribunal TDSAT," a TRAI official said.

TRAI is also expected to take the line that the Government's objective cannot be revenue maximisation. "Higher tariffs can lead to greater accruals for the Government from licence fees, but there is social obligation. So, revenue reduction should not be seen with a myopic view, but in the context of larger policy objectives and longer-term interest of consumers," the source, who is familiar with the development, said.

Stressing that competition in the telecom sector had resulted

in better tariffs and services for consumers, the source said.

"Competition may be disruptive, but it also leads to cheaper tariffs for consumers."

Defending its stance on allowing Reliance Jio to extend the promotional offers, the source said, "TRAI had sought the Attorney General's opinion on the matter, and the latter has also opined that TRAI was correct in not blocking the offers".

"See how data usage has grown, how user base itself has increased. That also augurs well for the Digital India and the drive towards cashless economy. Further, some of our recommendations, which we believe will grow the sector, are still pending with the Government," the source pointed out.

Notices issued against 140 cases under benami law

NEW DELHI, March 24:

The Government has issued notices in 140 cases involving properties with a value of Rs 200 crore under the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) law.

"Show-case notices for the provisional attachment of benami properties have been issued in 140 cases involving properties with a value of Rs 200 crore. Out of these, provisionally attachment has already been affected in 124 cases," Minister of State for Finance Santosh Kumar Gangwar said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

"The benami properties attached include deposits in bank accounts and immovable properties."

The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016, came into effect from November 1, 2016.

Though the Benami Transaction (Prohibition) Act, 1988, has been on the statute book for more than 28 years, the same could not be made operational because of certain inherent defects, the Minister said.

To provide an effective regime for prohibition of benami transactions, the said Act was

amended through Benami Transaction (Prohibition) Amended Act, 2016, he added.

The amended law empowers

specified authorities to provisionally attach benami properties that can eventually be confiscated.

If a person is found guilty on this count by the competent court, he will be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term not less than one year, which may be extended upto 7 years and is also liable to pay fine that may extend to 25 per cent of the fair market value of the property. – PTI

ED initiates probe in 36 cases

NEW DELHI, March 24:

The Enforcement Directorate has initiated investigation in 36 cases against ponzi companies during the last three years, the Parliament was informed today.

"The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has taken up investigation in 36 cases against ponzi companies under the provisions of the Money Laundering Act (MLA) 2002 during the last three years," Minister of State for Finance Santosh Kumar Gangwar said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

Based on the complaints received, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has ordered investigation through Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) into affairs of 185 companies involved in ponzi, chit

cases (RCs) related to chit fund and ponzi schemes in many parts of the country, he said.

In reply to another question, Gangwar said a total of 29 lakh debit cards were subjected to malware attack last year through ATMs that were connected with the systems of Hitachi.

According to RBI, SIS, the forensic investigation agency had submitted the final report of investigation to Hitachi which was shared with it by Yes Bank on February 9. – PTI

toyota luxury brand Lexus enters India with 3 models

NEW DELHI, March 24: Japanese auto major Toyota's luxury brand Lexus today entered India with the launch of three models priced upto Rs 1.09 crore (ex-showroom).

Lexus introduced the RX Hybrid model priced at Rs 1.07 crore, RX F Sport hybrid at Rs 1.09 crore and ES 300h hybrid sedan priced at Rs 55.27 lakh (all prices ex-showroom). The company also unveiled its top end SUV LX450d, but didn't announce price, along with the fifth generation Lexus RX which would be available for sales from next year.

Lexus is entering the Indian market with an aim to tap the growing number of luxury customers, specially those Toyota customers who are looking to upgrade.

"Toyota manufactures Camry hybrid already in India. Many of the customers are looking to upgrade. Therefore, it is the right time for Lexus to enter the In-

dian market so that our customers don't go to other brands," Lexus International President Yoshihiro Sawa told this news agency yesterday.

"The Indian luxury customers are growing and it's part of our future strategy to tap them," he added.

The company will start retailing the products from four dealerships – Delhi, Gurugram, Mumbai and Bengaluru – to start up in the country. Additionally, it will also establish service centres at Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kochi.

Lexus India Senior Vice President Akitoshi Takemura said they will have to first see the response in the country before taking a call on having local manufacturing in India.

"There is scope for local manufacturing, we support Prime Minister's 'Make in India' initiative, but for the time being we are just starting operations. We will

have to see how the market functions. If volume consolidates and reaches a critical level, then we may think of local manufacturing," Takemura said.

At present the models would be imported from Japan, he added.

When asked about competition in the luxury segment with established brands like Audi and Mercedes already present for more than a decade, Takemura said the they would first like to establish in the country and would not go for big numbers.

"Our pricing position is higher than JL.R or German brands. We haven't set a sales target as such and would like to create Lexus brand in the country," he said.

When asked about synergy with Toyota brand, he said that some of the existing dealers would also be able to provide servicing facilities to the Lexus customers. They are already experienced on providing service to Toyota Camry hybrid customers. – PTI



Union Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Harsh Vardhan presenting the 43rd NRDC Meritorious Invention Awards at a function in New Delhi on Friday. – UNI

Releasing on the last day of the current month, *Othello*, the keenly anticipated Assamese film, is expected to usher in a new trend in Assamese cinema. A cinematic revelation of sorts, it has already received a clutch of awards and honours, including the National Award for Best Film in Assam in 2015 and selection to the Indian Panorama. The film consistently impressed critics and discerning cine-goers in a number of film festivals, both in India and abroad.

Produced by Manabendra Adhikary, under the banner of Artha Films, the story-screenplay of this film has been penned by Ranjit Sarma.

The pressing need for any filmmaker is a writer with a strong visual and aesthetic sense. The theory that the screenplay is paramount holds perfectly true in the case of *Othello*. Those who have seen the film are highly impressed with the script, its character delineation and plot structure. It was a well-deserved recognition when Ranjit Sarma received the Best Screenplay Award in 2014 in the Indian Cine Film Festival for the film. He was discovered by a distinct group of filmmakers for his aesthetic sensibilities. He has written screenplays for several critically acclaimed and award-winning films, most notably Bidyut Chakraborty's *Rag-Brag* and *Nisiddu Nadi*, Manju Bora's *Babubhav* and *Anyo Ek Jatra*, Sanjeev Hazarika's *Mimangsa*, etc. One rarely hears of anyone being held in such high esteem by veteran and contemporary filmmakers.

The film is a directorial debut of Hemanta

OTHELLO

A Film by Hemanta Kumar Das



Kumar Das, who has made several serials in the past. In recent years, the film industry has seen a flowering of new directors who have brought their own vision and perspective. Hemanta was influenced a great deal by Padum Barua, the director of landmark Assamese film *Ganga Chilomir Pakhi*, noted cine-journalist Pobitra Kumar Deka and film critic from Bengal, Rajat Ray. The moment Hemanta was handed the script, he knew

straightaway that he had found exactly what he was looking for in terms of plot, characters and form.

After the first schedule went off smoothly, the film went into rough weather financially. Director Hemanta Das handed over the reins to businessman Manabendra Adhikary, a film-buff himself, who produced the film under his production banner Artha Films. Although there were reported clashes and disagreements dur-

ing the production and post-production stage between the producer and director, there is no love lost between them now, as the film is all set to hit the screens on March 31.

Othello has been reasonably successful in communicating with the critics and audiences alike in the festival circuit. It's hoped that the film will leave the same impression upon its release at the theatres. However, this film is no remake of Shakespeare's *Othello*, but only a tangential evocation of the Bard's classic play

of jealousy, love and obsession. *Othello*, *The Moor of Venice* depicts the plight of a coloured hero in a White-dominated society. The Assamese *Othello*, on the other hand, is accursed with a skin disorder, too, and that forces him to live in some sort of anonymity from the mainstream of dark-skinned people. He is juxtaposed by the call girl – female protagonist, an old Alzheimer's patient Bankim, and his cook and one-time jail inmate of a Leftist party — Pabitra. There is another twist when a terrorist arrives to seek shelter with his mother Pabitra. This twist in the story reveals the intricacies of the Left Movement of the past, terrorism of the present and the sufferings of the innocent in the armed conflict, and how in the midst of it all, life still goes on.

The film wouldn't have reached its artistic heights without the genuine contributions of the artists and technicians. The cast of artists in *Othello* includes Arun Nath, Runu Devi, Bibhuti Bhushan Hazarika, Jupitora Bhuyan, Arup Baisya, Prithviraj Rabha, Bina Patangia, Kalpana Kalita, child artiste Zubin Das, Jayoti Bhuyan, Gunakar Dev Goswami, Kasturi Phukan, Jun Jun Borah, etc. It has been cinematographed by Nahid Ahmed with the Red MX camera, with the background music scored by Tarali Sarma, while the art direction is by Joyti Shankar Bhattacharya and Gautam Das. Edited by Raju Gogoi, the film's costumes are by Lakumon Gogoi and makeup is by Babi Chakraborty. While Diganta Khandu is the film's DI colourist, the sound designing has been done by Dipak Dutta and Bijoy Nath at the Joyti Chitraban Studio.

Sattriya festival



Satkara (A Society for Propagating Sattriya Culture) organised a festival of Sattriya Dance 'Smaranexxi 2017', dedicated to *Niriyaratna Dr Jagannath Mahanta* on March 16 at Parjat Academy. A local gathering of around 400 enthusiasts attended this festival, wherein an art exhibition titled *Jor Gura Sonkor*, by illustrious artist Manik Das, and a craft exhibition by the students of Parjat Academy was also organised.

The festival commenced with Utam Teron, Principal of Parjat Academy, delivering the welcome speech, followed by Bhadra Krishn Goswami's inaugural speech. Prominent writer and former DGF Harekrishna Deka graced the occasion, sitting beside guests Shriya Hazarika, vice president of the Srimanta Sankaradeva Lalakshmi, and Sankar Prasad Kakati Bora, Regional Director of ICCR, Guwahati.

The winners of the All Assam Sattriya Dance Competition, held at Satkara in the previous year – Nandine Kashyap, Dixita Bora, Aunnessa Dutta, Purbashree Bhattacharya, Anannya Mahanta – performed beautifully, while sharing the stage with prominent dancer Bedanta Bikash Dutta in a solo performance. The exposure to this national dance form instilled a sense of association with the divine in the crowd, who watched the show with great enthusiasm.

The vision of Dr Jagannath Mahanta to propagate Sattriya culture among the present generation has been further brought to light by his beloved student Meenakshi Medhi, the founder of Satkara. The society plans to organise another All Assam Sattriya Dance competition in the loving memory of *Niriyaratna Dr Jagannath Mahanta* this year, and the winners will be given the stage to perform in the 2018 edition of Smaranexxi.

Cinema Sowar Ananda – A book on cinema

Cinema Sowar Ananda, a collection of essays on cinema with a difference, written by Pradyut Kumar Deka, filmmaker and cine-journalist of repute has been recently released. The essays deal with various aspects of cinema, like brief sketches on the life of legendary filmmakers of the world, facts on filmmaking, Academy awards, cinema with universal appeal and incidents of various kinds related to films and artists. The preface to the book has been written by Dr Hiren Gohain.

Incidentally, Pradyut Kumar Deka, son of well-known film writer and critic late Pabitra Kumar Deka, is deeply associated with the screen and stage. He made his debut as writer and director with *Dhonia Tirodabore*, which received three State film awards, including the Best Director Award in 2010. This book has been published by Arclight.

Prarthana Choudhury's new song



Mumbai-based, Guwahati-born singer Prarthana Choudhury was honoured with the 'Best Female Singer' Award at the 5th Artist Aloud Music Awards held by Hungama Music, in Mumbai, last year for the original Hindi composition *Kaisi khudgarzi*, which was written, tuned and sung by her.

She was also amongst the five contestants of the music-reality TV show *Sur Sagar*, recently aired by DD National, and the No.1 amongst all female contestants. She was amongst the select few artists invited to perform at the first-ever Jagriti Singh Music Festival held last year, in Mumbai.

minor *akashots* has been released by Zee Music. It is one of the very few independent Assamese music-videos released by Zee Music. The concept behind the song is that 'love' can happen to anyone, anywhere!

Moromland Asom Awards – 2017

A number of prominent personalities from different fields of the State have been honoured with awards on March 5 at the District Library Auditorium, under the auspices of Moromland news, a fortnightly publication. The awarded artists included Brajen Bora (Lifetime Achievement Award), *Hajo Panchatirtha* (Best Documentary), *Mahatmar Chakuponi* (Best Play), Rajitlak Barthakur (Best Actor), Aronita Saikia (Best Co-actress).

A highlight of the award function was the felicitation of a number of speciallyabled and blind singers.



Local Kung Fu 2 seeks crowd funding

For the grand success of *Local Kung Fu*, the makers are ready with the sequel of the film – *Local Kung Fu 2*. With *Local Kung Fu 2*, director Kenny Basumatary has adapted William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* for the silver screen. To be released in April this year, the film has been shot in both Assamese and Hindi and is currently in the final stages of post-production. Interestingly, *Local Kung Fu 2* will be the first ever sequel in Assamese cinema.

To fund the post-production, Kenny Basumatary has now started a crowd-funding campaign. Hosted by Wishberry, the campaign aims to collect Rs eight lakh for colour grading, music, dubbing and sound. The campaign has picked pace and already collected Rs 2.86 lakhs from 139 backers. Interestingly, if the target of Rs eight lakh isn't achieved, all the money will be returned to the backers. "If that happens, we will be back at the same place as now, and we'll probably have to postpone the release to August-September at least," said director Kenny Basumatary.

The actor was interacting with reporters at the launch of a 'Virtual Reality' lounge at PVR ECX that would allow movie-goers a different experience as they wait for the film to begin on the traditional silver screen.

"It is a mind-blowing experience to go through the VR experience. But being an actor, I fear that it might take away the audiences from movie theatres," Ranbir added.

The actor awaits the release of Anurag Basu's *Jugga Jassoo* and Rajkumar Hirani's untitled biopic of Sanjay Dutt, later this year.

Ranbir's inspiring journey

Ranbir Kapoor, who will be playing the role of Sanjay Dutt, in a biopic directed by Rajkumar Hirani, has said the journey of playing Dutt has been an inspiring one. The actor also added that he has never put on so much weight for a role before.

"It has been an inspiring journey for me to be playing Sanjay Dutt for the silver screen. I have never put on so much weight before and now plan to reduce some weight for the next phase of shooting," Ranbir said.

The actor was interacting with reporters at the launch of a 'Virtual Reality' lounge at PVR ECX that would allow movie-goers a different experience as they wait for the film to begin on the traditional silver screen.

"It is a mind-blowing experience to go through the VR experience. But being an actor, I fear that it might take away the audiences from movie theatres," Ranbir added.

The actor awaits the release of Anurag Basu's *Jugga Jassoo* and Rajkumar Hirani's untitled biopic of Sanjay Dutt, later this year.

Kangana replaces director from Lakshmi Bai biopic?

In a sudden move of sorts, Ketan Mehta's dream to make *Rani Lakshmi Bai* may have been destroyed. While the filmmaker continued to talk about how ambitious he has been about the film, now Kangana Ranaut has decided to take forward the film without the director.

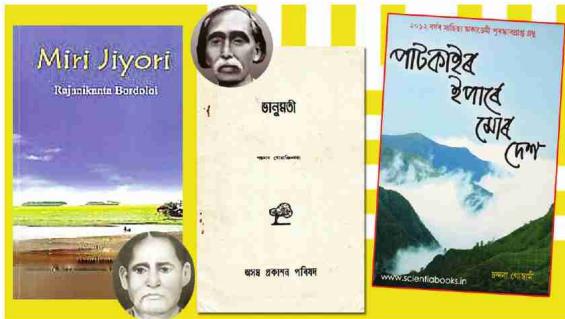
It is a known fact that even amidst her other film commitments like *Rangoon*, Kangana Ranaut had taken time out to prepare for *Rani Lakshmi Bai* and it has been over two years since the film has been in the pre-production stage.

Now, we hear that in a sudden twist of events, the film has been re-titled *Manikarnika* (the real name of Rani Lakshmi Bai) and now will be directed by *Gabbar Is Back* director Krish. It is apparently written by SS Rajmouli's father KV Vijayendra Prasad, who has also penned the popular film *Babubali*.

Reportedly, a top studio is keen on financing and backing the film. It is believed that the film revolves around an ordinary girl, who, when trapped in difficult times, decides to fight her battle, which is when she discovers her warrior within her.

On the other hand, Ketan Mehta has been planning to make a film on Rani Lakshmi Bai for years now and had initially roped in Sushmita Sen to play the lead role, few years ago. But the film failed to materialise back then and he was excited to revive his ambitious venture with Kangana Ranaut. But it seems that once again his film has faced a roadblock and now it seems unlikely that the filmmaker will make it, since Kangana Ranaut has already decided to green light the film, minus him.

Between the pages



By the end of the 19th century, while western literature showcased its creativity through the concepts of Post-Modernism, fictionalisation of history and diplomatic affairs between two provinces, etc., the regional literature of India also went with the parallel flow. In this respect, Assamese literature made a unique contribution for its readers. Back then, when writing Assamese novels became a trend among the littérateurs of pre-independent era, the Assamese community received enormous contributions from writers of varying genres. Most of the novels, though, were based on the history of the Ahom era, Kalita, Koch, Kachari dynasties, tribal life in Assam, etc., dealing with Assamese life down the ages. Even today, the habit of writing historical novels by Indian writers has not faded away; rather, novels of this genre are wholeheartedly acknowledged by readers.

The trend of writing Assamese novels was kickstarted by Padmanath Gohain Barua through his novels *Bhanumoti* (1891) and *Lahori* (1892). In 1891, by writing a

novel based on the Kamrup region, Lakshminath Bezbaroa added to this nascent journey of Assamese literature. Being his only novel, *Padum Kuwari* depicts the life of Assam in the late 18th century. Portraying the great revolt against the Ahom rule by the inhabitants of the then Kamrup, it takes us into the days of centurie-old Assamese history. Such a novel not only creates an impact on a reader, but also serves as an archive on the major rulers of Assam by aiding the researchers to find the reliefs of Assamese kingdom after the Ahoms and Kalitas, river and raining systems, etc. Published in 1891, this historical novel connects the diplomatic relationship between major rulers of greater Assam in the 18th century, where the revolt of 1795 was illustrated through the best manifestation of fiction.

Known as *Upayash Samrat* or the 'king of novels' in Assamese literature, novelist Rajanikanta Bordoloi is a name with an enormous reputation in Assamese literature. His romantic novel *Miri Jiyori* mirrors Assamese life through the words of romance, prevailing orthodox trends persisting

in a society, rustic, yet advanced thoughts of tribal life in Assam, etc. The riverine landscape with boats, rustic culture, traditional songs of the Miri (Mishing) tribe near Lakhimpur in Assam, trends of disputing social ills, etc., are the salient points found in this historical novel, which broke the convention of depicting kings and queen in a historical novel. This epic saga of romance between child-hood lovers Jonkie and Panoi enthrals every reader's heart, and the brutal life sentence to the same young couple leads every reader to tears. Known as the first novel in Assamese literature based on tribal life, the 1894-published *Miri Jiyori* has been widely recognised all over the world. Moreover, Rajanikanta Bordoloi's literary journey consists of other novels like *Manomoti* (1900), *Rakhoi Liguri* (1930), *Nirmal Bhakat* (1927), *Tamreswar Mandir* (1926), *Rangilee* (1925), *Doudua Dron* (1909), etc.

In *Manomoti*, Bordoloi portrays the brutal effects of the Burmese (Man) invasion in the 19th century, which left Assamese life in disarray. Through the historical character of Manomoti, the courage and will-power

of Assamese women is displayed. In the fictionalisation of the historic Burmese invasion, such a wonderful novel makes every Assamese mesmerised by the culture, tradition and humanity of their ethnic descendants.

Published in 1909, Rajanikanta Bordoloi's other historical novel *Doudua Dron* portrays the great revolt by brothers Haradutta and Biradutta of greater Kamrup region against Badan Chandra Barphukan, whose mischievous conspiracy and negligence left Kamrupians in despair. Through this novel, we get a crystal clear picture of the persisting autocracy in the then Ahom era, which resulted in unrest. Covering the rulers from the Koch Dynasty, the North Indian kingdoms and the British rule, this novel created a national standard in Indian novels with a historical background. On the other hand, through the novel *Rangili* (1925), Bordoloi depicts the decline of the Ahom era, which began in 1815.

Even today, after almost a century, the fictionalisation of history is still predominant in Assamese literature. Most of the historical facts and stories have been crafted as folklore, songs, drama, etc. In this regard, the 2008-published Chandana Goswami's debut Assamese novel *Pathair Ipare Mor Desh* can be named, which is based on the life of Assam, starting in the 13th and 14th centuries. At a time when the kingdom of East Kamrup started to decline and the great Brahmaputra Valley witnessed the rise of several smaller kingdoms, the invasion of Bengal kings in this valley rapidly grew. Amidst this political instability, how the Ahoms came and created a greater Assamese nation through their ruling system is the story behind the 2012 Sahitya Akademi-winning novel *Pathair Ipare Mor Desh*.

In course of time, literature has met a new phase of universal accomplishment through the act of translation, digitisation, audio versions, etc. In Assamese literature, too, such books with greater importance should be made available in all such formats, so that this regional language can enjoy global appeal.

In the present-day context, obesity is a much talked-about topic in our society. For many, it is a serious concern, while some others, have made use of this problem to create profit-making businesses. This simple idea was transformed into a lively and interesting play *Papa Pet Ka Sawal* staged at the Gypsy Guild, Mangaldoi, a premier local cultural organisation on February 20. It was a special evening for the drama lovers of Mangaldoi – as they could enjoy a play that has been directed and acted by none other than Jayanta Gadekar, an NSD passport and a very dedicated and outstanding drama activist of Maharashtra. He has also acted in several Bollywood films, including *Buddha Hoga Tera Baap, Don and Roudy Rathore*, among others.

It was a solo presentation by Gadekar and it ran for 75 minutes.

The role, played by Gadekar, was that of a father who promises to his little child that he would get into shape

to match his child's role model – a superhero. He tries his level best to keep his promise. But in reality, it becomes next to impossible to change an existing lifestyle. He relies on all possible sources of information and advice to get fit. It turns into a hilarious roller coaster ride, revealing many unrealised truths. When a family discord needs to be addressed, he realises that shedding the extra kilos from the body is far easier than shedding the extra baggage we carry on our mind.

Gadekar, with his powerful acting proficiency, held the interest of the audience till the last dialogue was delivered. It not only offered full entertainment to the audience, but also spread a strong message against mutual ha-

tred, discontentment, disbelief, misuse of money and time in the name of being perfect from the external point of view, whereas in reality, we forget to become perfect from the innermost part of our hearts and minds.

The play, presented under the banner of Shanti Pathya Bahu Uddesha of Maharashtra, was assisted in sound and light by Dhanji Boro of Guwahati. Later, speaking on the occasion, Jayanta Gadekar informed that he was on a tour to the North-East and he had earlier presented his play in Guwahati, Nagpur and Tripura. On behalf of the Gypsy Guild, its president Hirun Kr Das and Secretary Jayanta Deka felicitated the eminent cultural activist with a memento and a traditional Assamese gamucha.

the colosseum

■ Neelopal Deka

side screen

- Picture Clue: Identity this legendary singer. (Lorentz Pathak, Chowkazar, Nalbari)



unities

From Shajid Khan, Tenga –

- Which William Shakespeare play depicts the scene of Hermia and her lover Lysander lost in an enchanted wood and surrounded by fairies?
- Name the Marathi film, set against the backdrop of farmers' suicides in India, which won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Marathi in 2015.
- What term and type of comedy is derived from the French word for stuffing?

do-re-me

- In which Dickens novel was Miss Havisham jilted on her wedding day? (Saifdar Khan, Hospital Road, Tenga)
- The *Hipodæsha* collection of stories is based on which ancient book? (Jaishnav Madhav, Maharishi Vidya Mandir)

ANSWERS

- John Lennon 2) Jodhpur 3) Gandhiva 4) Clouds 5) Bowline 6) A Midsummer Night's Dream 7) Ringan 8) Farcical 9) Great Expectations 10) Panchatantra

11) Manish Malhotra 12) Haryana 13) Albert Einstein 14) Poseidon 15) Prima Facie.

BOOKSHELF

Through historic lens

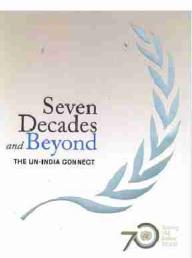
Mridumoloy

Since the formation of the United Nations in 1945, India has been an integral member of this international forum, playing its part in promoting peace, cooperation and the rule of law across the globe. The year 2015 marked the 70 years of the foundation of the world body and to trace the journeys of India and UN, enriching each other over the past seven decades, here comes this commemorative volume titled *Seven Decades and Beyond: The UN-India Connect*, which through a historic lens also brings to the fore the lesser-known links between these two entities.

Published in an almost two-year extensive process of consultation with academics and experts, this volume explores three broad aspects of India-UN association. These are 'India at the United Nations' – the policies and positions of the Indian Government at the main organs of the UN; 'United Nations of the People' – the various partnerships and people that have brought the UN into direct contact with the Indian public; and 'United Nations Agency Profiles' – the various specialised agencies and organisations that have been part of India's development story, as India was a part of theirs.

Celebrating the 70 eventful years of the UN and India's association with this global body, the book rightly contains 70 chapters on 70 themes, broadly dealing with peace, human rights, sustainable development, people, partnerships, outreach programmes and various UN organisations. Incorporation of a large number of photographs, many of them rare, brings the narrative alive. And amid this large ensemble of informative chapters are eight memoir pieces by eminent Indians who have made history at the United Nations. With their insightful narratives, Arundhati Ghose, Chinmaya R Gharakhan, Hardip Singh Puri, Kiran Bedi, Nitin Desai, Lt Gen Satish Nabar, Shashi Tharoor and Virendra Dayal add colour to the volume.

The book is undoubtedly an important record of India's membership and role in the United Nations – right from the global body's politically momentous origins to its ever-growing profile in the 21st century in this fast-changing world.



Seven Decades and Beyond: The UN-India Connect
A compilation
United Nations Information,
Centre for India and Bhutan,
Price: Not mentioned

A Rabha heritage

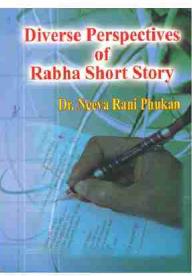
Dr Parag Kumar Bhattacharyya

Rabha literature has maintained a long history since its emergence from Chinese language and developed at the rising spot of the river Howang Ho and the river Yantze Kiang. In the long run, the Rabhas, migrated to the Northeastern part of India and settled in Assam. Because of the absence of the script, the real spirit of Rabha literature is to be comprehended in its plethora of songs, ballads and folk tales, which have survived till today. Against this backdrop of Rabha literature, some short stories by Rabha writers have been illustrated especially by Neeba Rani Phukan in her recently published work, *Diverse Perspectives of Rabha Short Story*. She traces the history of the Rabha short story from the advent of the literary journal *Bodong Duppia* (1961). Samir Singh Rabha, the enthusiastic editor of the magazine, was himself a creative writer. Along with him, a host of writers contributed stories to the magazine, but they cannot be justly appreciated if judged according to modern standards. It was not until the publication of the literary journal *Champai* (1978) that the modern era of Rabha fiction emerged. Dr Phukan surveys the history of Rabha short stories from the publication of the *Champai* era, under three heads – the Pre-Champai era, the *Champai* era and the Post-Champai era.

The *Pre-Champai* era mainly includes the stories written before the publication of *Champai* and published in *Bodong Duppia*. In the *Champai* era, the most remarkable writer was Listi Rabha Ranjhang. He is not merely a storyteller, but also a social reformer who uses fiction as a platform for social appeal. Prakash Rabha deals with the romantic theme with physical exhilaration. The stories of Maheswar Rabha and Duryudhan Rabha betray the social condition prevailing in the Rabha society with an effusion of wit and humour.

It is during the post-Champai era that the Rabha short story comes to flourish. This new group of writers include Junu Rabha, Prabin Kumar Rabha, Mahavir Rabha, etc. The last chapter of the book deals with a host of writers who make a sharp departure from the trend of the short stories of the previous era.

The Rabhas have cultivated a rich heritage which naturally bestows a permanent value on their short stories. The writer of the book has made a keen observation of it and concludes that this rich heritage affords a permanent value to the short stories of Rabha literature.



Diverse Perspectives of Rabha Short Story
Dr Neeba Rani Phukan
Asian Views Dot Net, Guwahati,
Price: Rs 295/-

prelude

Symphonic Poem or Tone Poem is the 19th and 20th century genre of programme music for orchestra. Symphonic poems are generally in one movement and are usually associated with ideas from paintings, poems, dramas, natural landscapes, or other extramusical sources. Such ideas may range from literal portrayals, as of a locomotive in Pacific 231 (1923) by Arthur Honegger, to the non-specific and evocative, as in *Les Preludes* (1854) by Franz Liszt. The impulse towards the extramusical was an important part of musical Romanticism. Its leading early proponents were Hector Berlioz and Liszt, who was influenced by Berlioz and who originated the term symphonic poem, contrast to the sonata form of classical music, based on a purely musical sequence of exposition, development, and recapitulation, the form of the symphonic poem is often derived from the character or "plot" of the extramusical programme. The symphonic poem's exploitation of harmony and instrumental colour for expressive pur-

poses led to innovations in harmonic progressions and in the uses and combinations of instruments. In the 20th century, fewer symphonic poems were written, as composers placed new emphasis on concise, abstract musical forms and smaller instrumental ensembles. Some composers have imposed rigorous formal structures on their symphonic poems.

E-mail your questions with answers to: colosseum@assamtribune.com or post at: THE COLOSSEUM, Mosaic, Saturday Supplement, The Assam Tribune, Guwahati-781003 or SMS at: 9664102417. Send your name in each SMS.

harmonisers

From Jayanta Topadar, Dhemaji –
2) Name the city in India known as the City of Seven Gates.
3) Name the mighty bow wielded by Arjuna in the *Mahabharata*.
4) Nephophobia is the fear of which natural formation?
5) Which knot is sometimes referred to as 'King of the knots' because of its importance?

the colosseum

■ Neelopal Deka

side screen

- Picture Clue: Identity this legendary singer. (Lorentz Pathak, Chowkazar, Nalbari)



unities

From Shajid Khan, Tenga –

- Which William Shakespeare play depicts the scene of Hermia and her lover Lysander lost in an enchanted wood and surrounded by fairies?
- Name the Marathi film, set against the backdrop of farmers' suicides in India, which won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Marathi in 2015.
- What term and type of comedy is derived from the French word for stuffing?

do-re-me

- In which Dickens novel was Miss Havisham jilted on her wedding day? (Saifdar Khan, Hospital Road, Tenga)
- The *Hipodæsha* collection of stories is based on which ancient book? (Jaishnav Madhav, Maharishi Vidya Mandir)

ANSWERS

- John Lennon 2) Jodhpur 3) Gandhiva 4) Clouds 5) Bowline 6) A Midsummer Night's Dream 7) Ringan 8) Farcical 9) Great Expectations 10) Panchatantra

11) Who is the only Indian designer to have twice styled Michael Jackson? (Dwaiyan Ashok, Faculty High School)

12) In which present State is Kurukshetra, where the *Mahabharata* war is believed to have been fought? (Santana Singh, Hailakandi)

13) Which great thinker collaborated with Sigmund Freud to write the 1933 book *Why War?* (Manjiti Das, Mangaldoi)

14) In Roman Mythology, Neptune is the equivalent to which Greek God? (Saifdar Khan, Tenga)

crescendo

- Which Latin term, usually applied to legal evidence, means 'at first sight'? (Saifdar Khan, Tenga)

The Assam Tribune
SHOPPERS' CORNER



GARMENTS

raymond
FINE FABRICS
SINCE 1945
AUTHORIZED DEALER:
R.D. Store
Babu Bazar, Guwahati-1
Ph: 0361-2544538 / 12984
www.rdstore.in
Tailoring by Experts

This space can be
Rs 6,000/-*
* Rs. 6,000/- per insertion.
Minimum of 4 insertions.
For booking contact- 95085-17169

DIGITAL PLAZA
a multi brand electronics store
ডিজিটেল প্লাজা
0% INTEREST Assured GIFT!
Easy EMI
32" Led TV Offer Price Rs. 12900/-
LG SAMSUNG SONY BLUE STAR HP
Air Conditioner 0% INTEREST on EMI
Free Stabilizer & Installation etc.
Cell : 88220 30000 / 98540 72769
Zoo Road, Opp. A.I.D.C, Besides Havells Galaxy, Ghy-24
98540-00466 / 97063-72910 / kmarketing21@gmail.com

EASY FINANCE 0% INTEREST EMI OFFER
MOBILE / LAPTOP / LED / AC / FRIDGE / W. MACHINE
M. OVEN / INVERTER / CHIMNEY / WATER PURIFIER
0% Down Payment
Selected Products
Exchange Offer
AC / TV / FRIDGE / W. MACHINE

BUY BEFOR PRICE HIKE
All Brands AC in One Roof
VOLTA'S / LG / BLU STAR / IFB / HAIER
O GENERAL / DAIKIN & many more.
• 0% Int. Finance Facility Available
• Installation in Same Day
• Exchange Facility Available
For best deal contact:
AC WORLD
Your cooling partner ISO 9001-2008
G.S.Road, Ganeshguri, Beside Flyover
Ph: 9706030304 / 84265, 9954229644

Home Plaza
Cell : 88220 30000 / 98540 72769
Kalapahar Colony Bazar, Lokhra Road, Ghy. 18
Mandatory Documents : Pan Card / Bank Pass Book Last 3 Month Update
Photo 1 Copy, Cheque 2 Copy & Guwahati Local Address Proof

Asaan
serve the society
PHARMACY + & DEPARTMENTAL STORES
Near Sunderpur Bus Stop, Zoo Road, Guwahati - 781005
- 9127333737, 7896401321

BIO TOILET

In Association with
D.R.D.O. Technology
Bio-Toilets
REPLACEMENT OF SEPTIC TANK
★ Human waste converted into water
READY MADE
FAC TOILET CABINS
Available in various sizes
IWC (with ceramic pan), EWC, Urinal & Bath
Dimension: 7' x 3' x 4'
FRONTIER SALES CORPORATION
Third Floor, Temple Tower, Christian Basti,
Opp. News Line, G.S. Road, Guwahati-781005, Assam.
Email: info@frontierin.net, Ph: +91 70890 21001

WATER PURIFIER

Iron Removal Filters, Spare Parts
DEALER ENQUIRIES WELCOME.
Multifunction Valves Strainers E-Dose
Pentair Water (Distributors NE region)
FOR BEST PRICES, CALL: 98640-67028

PLYWOOD

Trust the Name That's
National™
Since 1951
National LAMINART™
EXCLUSIVELY AVAILABLE AT
REFLECTIONS N.S. ROAD, CHAIPURUL GUWAHATI-781006
Email id: Info@balajigrp.com

tynor Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Aids & Health Supports
BODY BELTS & BRACES CERVICAL AIDS KNEE & ANKLE SUPPORTS WRIST & FOREARM PRODUCTS
World Class Standard Support ▶ Relief ▶ Heal Available at all leading Surgical Stores and Pharmacies...

BOOKS & JOURNALS

অসমীয়া গ্রন্থপ্রকাশন আমাৰ নথতাৰ উপহাৰ
বিশিষ্ট গবেষকৰ যজ্ঞত কুমাৰ চৰকাৰীৰ
একুকি মননীয়।
দৃষ্টিগোচৰ লাইভ
আৰু অন্যান্য গন্ত
সাহিত্য কলাম
প্ৰকাশিত দিন: ১২০১২
মূল্য: ₹ ২৫০ টকা

অসমীয়া গ্রন্থপ্রকাশন আমাৰ নথতাৰ উপহাৰ
বিশিষ্ট কথাশিখী পৰবৰ্তী বৰষুদেৰ
এমুঠি বাস্তকীয়া গন্তৰ সংকলন
অৱশ্যক
বৰষুদ
সাহিত্য কলাম
দিন: ১২০১২
মূল্য: ₹ ২৫০ টকা

সাহিত্য-প্ৰকাশৰ অনবদ্য অৰদান
বেজৰ বৰুৱা-গুৰুৱলী
তিনিওটা খণ্ড একেলগে পাৰ
সাহিত্য-প্ৰকাশ
ট্ৰিভুভ বিল্ডিং, ওৰাহাটী-৩
ফোন: + ২২৬১৩৫৫, ২২৬১৩৬০, ২২৬১০১২
● উৎকৃষ্ট গ্ৰন্থ আমাৰ লক্ষ্য ●

উপন্যাস সন্দিত বজনিকান্ত বৰদলৈৰ উপন্যাস
ৰহদৈ লিগৰী
মূল্য: ₹ ১০০.০০ টকা
সাহিত্য-প্ৰকাশ
ট্ৰিভুভ বিল্ডিং, ওৰাহাটী-৩
ফোন: + ২২৬১০৫৫, ২২৬১৩৫৫/৩০

■ Weel Chairs ■ Commode ■ Walkers ■ Crutches ■ Walking Sticks etc
■ Wheelchairs ■ Commodes ■ Walker ■ Crutches ■ Walking Sticks etc
Authorized Distributors & Wholesalers
INDO FOREIGN SURGICO INFOS ESTD-1949
Ph.: 0361-2540888, 2514888, 91-9435199011, +91-9864800888
e-mail: infos@ingrengroup@yahoo.co.in
WE HAVE A LOT TO OFFER IN HEALTH CARE.

DIGITAL MFP Giving Shape to Ideas
HOME USE BOOST PRODUCTIVITY, REDUCE COST, GO GREEN
FROM 16 ppm to 85 ppm
DRAFT available on Gmail portal.
TOP CLASS DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT
WORLD TOP CLASS SERVICING - WINDOWS/LINUX/CITRIX support.
DEALER ENQUIRY SOLICITED
Call: 9854034032, 8011600656, Konica Minolta Authorized Channel Partner: S.D. Communications.

KITCHEN APPLIANCES

slazek
KITCHENS by
asianpaints

KITCHEN | ACCESSORIES | HARDWARE
KITCHEN CONCEPT
87, B.K. Kakati Road, Rehbari, Guwahati-781008, Assam
Mob: 9435551231, 9706009253, 9864601548
Email: kitchenconcept.tgh@gmail.com | www.modularkitchenguwahati.com

100% DEPENDABLE... Caps
That's our guarantee!
Oriental
Introducing MULTI UTILITY chimneys with essential APPLICATIONS
Auto Platinum Plus Brio

False Ceiling
Door
PVC Modular Kitchen
Price Starts @ 19990/- onwards
Authorized Distributor: **ASHOK INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE**
51, S.R.C.B. Road, Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-781001
Ph: 9435109232, 9707066008, E-mail: siosaaivind@gmail.com

RONGALI BIHU DHAMAKA
MRP ₹ 23,990
Offer Price ₹ 15,500
Suction 105mm/hr
Push Button Control
CFL Lamp 2x5W
Tender 3D T2S2 LTW 90
MRP Rs. 1999/-
Distributor: NORTH EAST TRADE PROMOTERS, Guwahati
Ph: 9435109252, 7578009701, 9706738427 Toll Free - 1800 209 3484

Sales & Service: Barpeta-98643 20229 | Dibrugarh-98540 77057 | Golaghat-98540 77051 | Jorhat-98540 77052 | Silchar-98540 77053 | Hojai-98643 20229 | 88129-14151 | Howly-98643 20229 | Lohit-98640 57415 | Nagaon-98643 20229 | 98599 41091 | Nalbari-98643 20229 | Morigaon-98643 20229 | 98599 41091 | Pathasala-98643 20229 | Sivasagar-98640 57415 | Tezpur-94355 08221 | Tinsukia-98641 58083

Trade enq. 9435146909/9435559956 Toll Free: 1800 103 4646

This space can be yours for only
Rs 6,000/-*
* Rs. 6,000/- per insertion. Minimum of 4 insertions.
For booking contact - 95085-17169

Sintex presents
PORTABLE TOILET & SEPTIC TANK
Corporates may also contact for their CSR activity

Sintex presents
BINS & CONTAINERS
Authorized Distributor: **ASHOK INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE**
51, S.R.C.B. Road, Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-781001
Ph: 9435109252, 9707066008, E-mail: siosaaivind@gmail.com

For Advertising, Please Call: 95085-17169

Modi meets MPs ahead of Gujarat polls

NEW DELHI, March 24: Ahead of the assembly elections in Gujarat this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today held a meeting with MPs from his home state and asked them to work overtime as public servants to fulfil people's expectations.

Besides MPs from Gujarat, parliamentarians from Goa, Rajasthan, Daman & Diu and Andaman & Nicobar islands were also present in the informal meeting with Modi over breakfast at his residence here.

"Modi asked MPs to work overtime to fulfil expectations of the people and told them to make people aware about various initiatives taken by the Centre for public welfare," said an MP who was present at the meeting.

Later in a statement, the BJP said that the Prime Minister has requested MPs to use digital platforms for doing transactions and also connect with social media to reach out to the people. He also told MPs that they should spread the message among people about the Centre's welfare schemes. The MPs also apprised Modi about development works in their respective constituencies. — PTI

Mega BJP meet in Delhi today

NEW DELHI, March 24: The Delhi BJP is banking on its mega convention of booth-level workers here, to be addressed by Amit Shah tomorrow, to reinvigorate the party's ranks ahead of the municipal polls in the national capital.

The party's Delhi unit chief Manoj Tiwari today said BJP president Amit Shah's "interactive session", in presence of a number of Union ministers, will enthuse the workers, around 65,000 of whom are expected to attend tomorrow's convention.

Union ministers Venkiah Naidu, Nirmala Sitharaman and Sanjeev Balyan are likely to address the gathering at Ramlila Maidan, which will begin at 10 am.

Booth-level workers are at the very core of the BJP's electoral success and its connect with the masses across the states. Five in-charges from each booth will be present at the convention," Tiwari said.

The BJP has dubbed the group of five booth-in-charges as "Panch Parmeshwar", saying these "workers will walk like 'panchs' towards getting administrative justice for people". — PTI

India, US to work in tandem against terror

WASHINGTON, March 24: India and the US have agreed to chalk out a joint strategy to combat the "full spectrum" of terror threats as the National Security Advisors of the two countries met here, a top White House official said.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval met his American counterpart Lt Gen HR McMaster yesterday.

They discussed a range of issues to "identify opportunities to set a course" for India

and the US, Michel Anton, Spokesman of the National Security Council, White House told PTI.

"They committed to work together as partners to combat the full spectrum of terrorist threats, affirming that both great democracies stand together in the fight against terrorism," Anton said.

McMaster noted that President Trump looks forward to hosting Prime Minister Modi in the United States later this year," Anton said.

Doval is also expected to meet US Defence secretary James Mattis today.

Last year, the US declared India a major defence partner. The US and India last year also signed a bilateral Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) that will give the militaries of the two countries access to each other's facilities for supplies and repairs.

LEMOA is said to be one of the four "foundational agreements" that the US enters into with its defence partners. — PTI

Mamata slams Centre for 'vendetta politics'

KOLKATA, March 24: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today said the Centre was indulging in "vendetta politics" to deter the state government from raising its voice against the latter's bad policies.

"Whenever we protest against the Centre's anti-peasant policies like demonetisation, it tries to cover down us with threat of arrest. This is nothing but vendetta politics," Banerjee said.

This vendetta politics also comes in the way of doing good work for the people, she said, asserting that the Centre will not be able to succeed in its design.

"The canards or misinfor-

mation campaign will not be able to prevent us from taking up developmental works," said Banerjee while inaugurating a batch of 400 girls at Behala in South Kolkata.

During the Centre to "disturb" her government or "arrest" her leaders, she thundered, "If you have the guts, arrest all of us. Nothing will deter us from raising our voice against misdeeds by the Centre including demonetisation."

Alleging that her party was being targeted for criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's demonetisation move, Banerjee said she can never be silenced by fear-mongering as the state and the entire nation had to pay the price for the Left Front regime.

"The major transport problems will be over with the completion of the Metro Railway projects in the state, which had initiated during my tenure as the railway minister," Banerjee said. — PTI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi hands over a Chaadar to be offered at Dargah Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Ajmer Sharif to Minister of State for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Minister at PMO etc, Jitendra Singh, in New Delhi on Friday. — UNI

Tale of a soldier who strayed into Pakistan

MUMBAI, March 24: The Indian soldier who was returned by Pakistan after four months in captivity said he was so fed up with torture by Pakistani officials that he often prayed for death while in their custody.

"I was assaulted. I told them: Kill me. I realised that this was the end of the road for me." Chandu Babul Chavan, who was handed over to India on January 21, said today in conversation with a Mumbai channel.

The 22-year-old had crossed into Pakistan on September 29, the day India hit terror launch pads across the line of control (LoC), 10 days after an attack by suspected Pakistani militants

on a camp in Uri that killed 19 soldiers. Chavan was posted on the LoC in the Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

Describing the scenario after he was caught by Pakistani soldiers after crossing the border, Chavan said, "They checked me, took out my clothes, put on black robes (on me) and took me away in a vehicle."

"I was put in a room which was always dark. I did not understand what thing was the bathroom and toilets were also in the same room," the soldier, who returned to his native Boryihir village in Dhule district, earlier this month, told the channel.

"When I used to hang my head and ask them to kill me, they gave me injection doses. They used to beat me. There came a time that I didn't have any more tears in my eyes," he said.

"I did not understand whether it was day or night. I remembered my family in those harrowing times. I used to pray to God to end my life," he said.

Describing the Pakistani torture, he said, "They used to give me sedatives through injection. They would drop in my eye when it would bleed."

"There was a time when I told my captors that I had crossed into Pakistan to avenge the Uri terror attacks," he said. — PTI

Bill for better mental healthcare, decriminalising suicide in LS

NEW DELHI, March 24: A crucial bill seeking to decriminalise suicide and provide the right to better healthcare for people suffering from mental illness today found all-round support in the Lok Sabha.

The Mental Healthcare Bill, which was passed by the Rajya Sabha with 134 official amendments in August last year, was moved for consideration and passage by Health Minister JP Nadda who said it was introduced in the Lower House after wide-ranging consultations with experts, academia and others.

It found support from the opposition though the debate on it remained inconclusive.

"The bill empowers the patients for mental healthcare. It

gives them the right so that he/she is not denied (treatment) or discriminated against. This focus is on community mental healthcare... It is a rights-based bill," Nadda said.

The measure provides that a person who attempts suicide shall be presumed to be suffering from mental illness at that time and will not be punished under the Indian Penal Code.

It also seeks to protect and promote the right of persons with mental illness during the delivery of healthcare in institutions and in the community.

A unique feature of the bill is that it allows adults to make an advance directive on how they wish to be treated in case they suffer from mental illness in

future. Such a person can also choose a nominative representative who would take care of him or her, the Minister said.

It clearly defines mental illness and mental healthcare, he said, adding that the earlier definition was vague.

There are also provisions under which a person cannot be sterilised just because he or she is a mental patient. "As per this law, we cannot separate a child for three years... Also, one cannot chain a mentally ill person," the Minister said.

"We tried to see that the patient is informed and no coercive methodology is adopted. Persons who do not adhere to it will be liable to penalty and imprisonment. This is a very progressive bill," he said.

The Bill focuses on community based treatment. Special provisions for women and health have also been provided for. Among the various objectives, it provides for ensuring healthcare, treatment and rehabilitation of persons with mental illness "in a manner that does not intrude on their rights and dignity."

India is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, an international human rights treaty of the United Nations. Around 6.7 per cent of India's population suffers from some kind of mental illness, while 1.2 per cent suffer from acute mental disease. — PTI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacting with BJP MPs from Gujarat, Goa, Rajasthan, Andaman Nicobar, Dadar Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu in New Delhi on Friday. — UNI

UP CM meets victim 'forced to drink' acid

LUCKNOW, March 24: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav today visited a gang-rape and acid-attack survivor at a hospital here who was allegedly forced to drink acid by two men on board a train near here yesterday.

Taking serious note of the incident, the Chief Minister directed the police to arrest the accused and announced Rs 1 lakh assistance for the 45-year-old woman, who is being treated at the city's King George's Medical University.

The CM summoned ADG (Railways) Gopal Gupta and directed him to ensure that the accused are arrested. The incident came to light when the woman got off the Allahabad-Lucknow

Ganga Gomti Express at Charbagh station here and gave a written complaint to the government railway police.

She wrote the complaint as she could not speak. As per the complaint, two persons forced her to drink acid around 10.30 AM yesterday, police said.

This was fourth attack on the woman. The two men had allegedly gang-raped and attacked her with acid over a property dispute in her home at Uncharah (Raebareli) in 2009, 100 kilometres from Lucknow. The woman works with Sheroes Hangout Cafe, an outlet run by acid attack survivors in Lucknow, and had gone home on March 10 as her daughter was taking class 10 examinations.

She was returning yesterday when the incident took place. In 2012, the woman was attacked with knife, in a serious attempt on her life, and in 2013 she was attacked with acid, police sources said.

Women Welfare Minister Rita Bahuguna Joshi also visited the victim and assured all help.

Meanwhile, Inspector General (Lucknow Zone) A Satish Ganesh ordered action against three "insensitive" women constables who were taking selfies in the hospital near the victim's bed.

The photographs of the three women constables, sitting next to the bed of the victim and taking selfies went viral on the social media. — PTI

CPM for on-court settlement of Ayodhya issue

Karnataka plea against Cauvery water to TN

BENGALURU, March 24: Karnataka today pleaded its inability in supplying Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu in line with the Supreme Court's directive saying the state itself is facing a shortage of drinking water.

"There is no water for drinking purposes. If we had water we could have released. We have 3-4 tmc ft shortage to provide drinking water to Bengaluru, Mysuru and surrounding villages. Therefore, there is no question of releasing water," Water Resources Minister MB Patil said.

Nine CPI(M) activists had sought release of water to Tamil Nadu since May last, he said.

With regard to West Bengal, Yechury said that a serious situation of communal polarisation was happening in that state.

CPI-M leader also took exception to Centre bringing the Finance Bill for consideration in the Rajya Sabha today after taking private members bill.

The matter went to court because the issue could not be settled out of court. The supreme court has to adjudicate title ownership of 2.77 acres of land.

"It is a matter of law and not a matter for political settlement," he said.

Attacking the UP Chief Minister Narendra Modi's constituency, on August 2 last, she was admitted to the hospital. — PTI



A Russian delegation led by Director of Russia's Federal Security Service Alexander Bortnikov calling on Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi on Friday. — UNI

Mubarak walks free after 6 years

Cairo, March 24: Egypt's ousted president Hosni Mubarak was today released from a military hospital for the first time in six years during which he faced a number of trials over charges of killing more than 200 protesters during the 2011 revolution that toppled him.

Mubarak, 88, left the Maadi Military Hospital where he had been detained for the past few years, heading to his home in Helipolis, his lawyer said. Farid El-Dieb told local media.

Earlier this month, the Appeals Court gave its final verdict and acquitted Mubarak of charges of taking part in killing protesters during the 2011 revolution that toppled him.

Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison in 2012

for taking part in killing over 200 protesters during the 18-day revolt which began on January 25, 2011, but a retrial was ordered on appeal. In 2013, the court cleared Mubarak and his seven aides, including his interior minister

Habib el-Adli, from the charge, but public prosecutors appealed the sentence.

Mubarak will face retrial in the "Ahram's gift" case as he and some of his aides are accused of accepting gifts from the state-owned Al-Ahram newspaper. Mubarak, who ruled Egypt since the 1952 abolition of the monarchy, became president in 1981 after Anwar Sadat's assassination.

He was initially arrested in April 2011, two months after leaving office and had been at the hospital since 2013, when he was transferred there on bail from Torah prison.

A judge at a trial in May 2015 decided that Mubarak could be released from detention.

However, the government of President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi was reportedly reluctant to free him, fearing public backlash that may accompany such a move.

Sisi served as Mubarak's military intelligence chief and led the military's overthrow of his democratically elected successor Mohammed Morsi in 2013.

Hundreds of people are believed to have been killed as security forces clashed with protesters in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez and other cities around Egypt during the 18-day uprising that forced Mubarak to resign. — PTI

Ultra hideout raided in Bangladesh

DHAKA, March 24: Explosions and gunshots rocked a city in northeastern Bangladesh today after police laid a siege to a five-storey building where suspected militants belonging to an Islamist group behind the country's worst terror attack were holed up.

A team of counter-terror officials from the capital Dhaka surrounded the building in Sylhet at 3am. "Sounds of intermittent explosions and gunshots rocked the area since morning as militants preferred not to give up," a journalist told PTI.

"We have come to know that female militants are also there," Syhet's police commissioner Golam Kibria said, adding that preparedness was underway to launch a full scale raid to "neutralise" the extremists.

Officials said 12 families were staying in the building. "We are proceeding with utmost caution so that the innocent residents are not hurt," a police officer told reporters. — PTI

Trump's truck driver moment

WASHINGTON, March 24: Trump at the wheel of a big rig? Yes, it happened — at the White House. US President Donald Trump was rallying votes for his health care reform bill yesterday but made a pit stop in the afternoon to meet with truck drivers and trucking executives.

During that meeting, he spent a few minutes happily exploring the cab of a tractor-trailer parked outside the White House.

More Nazi taunts if I'm called dictator: Erdogan

ISTANBUL, March 24: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said he will keep up his "Nazi" taunts targeting European leaders as long as they keep on calling him a "dictator".

"How does that work, you have the right to call Erdogan a 'dictator' but Erdogan doesn't have the right to call you 'fascist' and 'Nazi'?" he said during an interview yesterday with the CNN-Kanal D television channels.

Relations between Turkey and Europe have been severely strained since Turkish ministers were thwarted from campaigning on the continent for a 'yes' vote in next month's referendum on expanding Erdogan's powers.

Ankara has said such behaviour was reminiscent of Nazi Germany and also raised alarm over what it sees as rising racism and Islamophobia.

Germany on Monday branded as "unacceptable" Erdogan's charge that

Chancellor Angela Merkel was using "Nazi measures", but signalled it wanted to avoid escalating the feud.

Erdogan, who has also taken similar aim at the Netherlands, didn't sound conciliatory.

"They accuse me then they speak of Erdogan as a 'dictator,'" he continued, still referring to himself in the third person. "So I'll continue to address them in these terms," he added.

Erdogan again demanded the cancellation of his ministers' trips to European countries with a large Turkish diaspora ahead of the referendum.

On Wednesday he warned that Europe risks being unsafe on the world's streets, as the crisis between Ankara and the EU showed no signs

of abating.

The same day Germany's new President Frank-Walter Steinmeier again urged the Turkish leader to "stop these appalling comparisons with Nazism, do not break the ties with those who want a partnership with Turkey."

Erdogan said he was "good friends" with Steinmeier and "deplored" his comments.

He added that there could be a "period of review" of Turkey relations with the European Union, while stressing the importance of economic ties with the bloc, his country's biggest trading partner.

Turkey is officially an EU candidate nation but its accession process has been practically blocked for years.

He said that an EU-Turkey agreement on migrants, aimed at reducing the numbers reaching Europe from Africa and the Middle East, would be part of an "A to Z" review of government policy to begin after the April 16 referendum.

Turkey summoned the Russian separatists in Turkey and Syria, the Erdogan said he was "saddened" by links which Russia and the US have with Kurdish militias.

While he is a regular critic of Washington over its support for the Kurdish YPG militia operating in Syria, it was the first time he had expressed his unhappiness with Moscow's stance.

Turkey summoned the Russian chargé d'affaires on Wednesday and sent him another message Thursday to convey "deep unease" over two incidents in Kurdish militia-controlled Syria, Ankara said. — AFP

France's Le Pen says Putin embodies 'new vision' of world

MOSCOW,

March 24: France's far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen said Russian President Vladimir Putin represents a "new vision" of the world, following her meeting with the Kremlin strongman in Moscow today.

"He represents a sovereign nation," the leader of the National Front far-right party told reporters. "I think he also represents a new vision."

"A new world has emerged in the past years. This is Vladimir Putin's world, Donald Trump's world in the United States, Mr (Narendra) Modi's world in India," she said.

"I think I am probably the one who shares with all these three nations a vision of cooperation and not one of subservience - a hawkish vision that has too often been expressed by the European Union." — AFP



Gabbard asks US Justice Dept to probe hate crimes

WASHINGTON, March 24: Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu lawmaker in US Congress, has expressed concern over a series of hate crimes against Indian-Americans and asked the Justice Department to investigate all violent acts motivated by bigotry to promote a pluralistic society.

"I'm very concerned about this. It's always dangerous to our people and our community when you have these violent hate crimes that are motivated out of bigotry," Gabbard told PTI.

A three-term lawmaker from Hawaii, Gabbard was recently elected as the Democratic Co-Chair of Congressional Caucus on India and Indian Americans.

"This is something that I urge the Justice Department to investigate and to continue to inform and educate people, and to promote a society that is a pluralistic society that respects people no matter their religion, their race, ethnicity, of

social status in life or anything else that makes each of us unique," Gabbard said.

She was responding to questions on the series of hate crimes across the country. "This is something that not only affects Indian-Americans or Hindus, but really is something that should be important to every American," she said.

Gabbard is the first ever Hindu elected to the US House of Representatives.

Earlier in the day, several lawmakers, including four Indian-Americans elected to the House of Representatives joined hands to condemn the hate crimes and asked the community to stand strongly against such acts.

"As a nation, we must come together to stand up to these disturbing acts of hate violence — starting with the President," he said.

Recent attacks, including the

shootings of Srinivas Kuchibhotla, Alok Madasani and Deep Rai are examples of the very real consequences that anti-Muslim and xenophobic rhetoric have on communities of color, she said. — PTI

The 70-year-old Republican, dressed in a suit, enthusiastically honked the horn before pretending to drive the vehicle and making some funny faces — and the internet noticed, with #TrumpTruck getting some traction on Twitter.

"No one knows America like truckers know America. You see it every day. You see every hill, and you see every pot-hole in our roads that have to be rebuilt," he told his visitors during their meeting in the Cabinet Room.

But legislation wasn't far from his mind, as Trump said that a vote on the measure to repeal and replace predecessor Barack Obama's health care law would be "very close." "By the way, it's close not because Obamacare's good — it's close for politics.

They know it's no good. Everybody knows it's no good," he said.

He joked that he couldn't

spend too much time with the truckers. — AFP

Robots, AI may replace 30 pc of UK workers: report

LONDON, March 24: More than 10 million workers in the UK are at high risk of losing their jobs to robots and artificial intelligence (AI) systems over the next 15 years, according to a new report released today.

However, new AI-related technologies will also boost productivity and generate additional jobs elsewhere in the economy, the report found.

The study by accountancy firm PwC estimates that the UK has a lower proportion of existing jobs at potential high risk of automation than the US (38 per cent) and Germany (35 per cent), but more than Japan (21 per cent).

The analysis found that the likely impact of automation varies significantly across industry sectors.

The highest proportion of jobs facing potential high risks of automation among the larger sectors include transportation and storage (56 per cent), manufacturing (46 per cent) and wholesale and retail trade (44 per cent).

PwC said 2.25 million jobs were at high risk in wholesale and retail — the sector that employs most people in the UK — and 1.2 million were under threat in manufacturing, 1.1 million in administrative and

support services and 950,000 in transport and storage.

Overall, more than 10 million UK workers are at high risk of being replaced by robots within 15 years as the automation of routine tasks gathers pace in a new machine age, according to *The Guardian*.

Education and health care workers are estimated to face the low-

est risks of automation given the relatively high proportion of tasks that are hard to automate.

"A key driver of our industry-level estimates is the fact that manual and routine tasks are more susceptible to automation, while social skills are relatively less automatable," said John Hawksworth, chief economist at PwC.

"That said, no industry is entirely immune from future advances in robotics and AI," Hawksworth said.

"Automating more manual and repetitive tasks will eliminate some

existing jobs, but could also enable some workers to focus on higher value, more rewarding and creative work, removing the monotony from our day jobs," he said.

"By boosting productivity — a key UK weakness over the past decade — and generating wealth, advances in robotics and AI should also create additional jobs in less automatable parts of the economy as this extra wealth is spent or invested," he added.

The potential impact of job automation also varies according to the characteristics of individual workers.

On average, PwC estimates that a higher proportion of male jobs (35 per cent), particularly those of men with lower levels of education, are at higher potential risk of automation than female jobs (26 per cent).

This reflects the fact that relatively highly automatable sectors such as transportation and storage and manufacturing tend to have high proportions of men working in them.

In contrast, female workers are more concentrated in occupations requiring higher levels of social skills — and often higher average education levels — such as health and education. — PTI

US, Israel officials discuss peace, settlement

WASHINGTON, March 24: Senior Trump administration officials have held intensive consultations with an Israeli delegation to advance the prospects for a genuine and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine, the White House said.

A principal focus of the discussions was specific measures that could have a meaningful impact on the economic environment in the West Bank and Gaza, allowing the Palestinians to more fully realise their economic potential, it said.

While the American delegation was led by Jason Greenblatt, President Donald Trump's Special Representative for International Negotiations, the Israeli delegation was led by the Chief of Staff to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Yoav Horowitz.

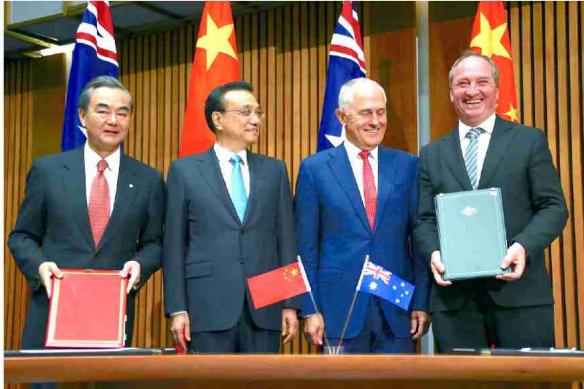
"The issues the two delegations discussed are exceptionally complicated, and the fact that both governments dedicated such senior delegations for nearly a full week of talks reflects the close cooperation between the two countries and the importance both assign to this vital task," the joint statement read.

The two delegations also discussed Israeli settlement construction following up on Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit to Washington and Greenblatt's recent visit to Israel.

The reiterated Trump's concerns regarding settlement activity in the context of moving towards a peace agreement. The Israeli delegation made clear that Israel's intent is to adopt a policy regarding settlement activity that takes those concerns into consideration. — PTI



Khalieff Conway, Counselor to the President, departs a meeting about the American Health Care Act on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on Thursday. — UNI



Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (2nd R) reacts with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi (L) as Barnaby Joyce, Australia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, laugh during an official signing ceremony at Parliament House in Canberra, Australia on Friday. — UNI

US, 13 other nations demand Venezuela hold elections soon

WASHINGTON, March 24: The United States and group of 13 nations across the Americas have called on Venezuela's government to hold elections and immediately free political prisoners, setting up a potential diplomatic showdown with President Nicolas Maduro's socialist administration.

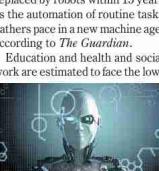
The statement comes as the head of the Organization of American States is pushing to expel Maduro's government from the Washington-based group for breaking the country's democratic order.

The 14 nations, including Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and Argentina, said they seek expulsion as a last resort and instead urged dialogue to resolve Venezuela's entrenched economic and political problems.

President Maduro should permit the democratically elected national assembly to perform its constitutional functions and should hold elections as soon as possible," Toner said.

Last week, the head of the OAS said he wanted regional governments to suspend Venezuela from the group unless general elections are held soon.

OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro made the request in a 75-page





Supporters of Iraqi Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr attend Friday prayers in Baghda's Sadr City March 24, 2017. - UNI

Police shoot at armed man in Washington, DC

WASHINGTON, March 24: Authorities say police in Washington, DC, shot and critically wounded an armed man who confronted them.

Acting Police Chief Peter Newsham said at a news conference Wednesday night that officers responding to a call about a shooting that evening confronted the man with a gun in an apartment building. He says there was a struggle and an officer fired shots.

The department said in a news release yesterday afternoon that the man, 32-year-old Michael Leach, is in critical condition at a local hospital. Police say he has been charged with assault at a police officer and other offenses.

Detectives say a gun was recovered at the scene, and the officers' body camera footage is being reviewed.

Police did not release the names of either the officer or wounded man. - AP

UK Parliament attacker was Muslim convert

LONDON, March 24: The man who launched a terror attack on UK Parliament has been identified by police as 52-year-old former convict Adrián Russell Ajaio who acquired the name Khalid Masood upon conversion to Islam.

Scotland Yard Acting Deputy Commissioner and Counter-Terrorist chief Mark Rowley yesterday revealed that the "fast-paced" counter-terrorism operation to establish Masood's "motivation, preparation and his associates" has been titled *Operation Classic*.

"The Counter Terrorism Command investigation - Operation Classic - continues, involving hundreds of officers from across the counter terrorism network... we named the dead terrorist as Khalid Masood," he said.

In July 2000, he slashed a man across the face after an argument that the court at the time was told was "racial overtones".

Hove Crown Court also heard during the trial that he had a number of aliases - we now know his birth name was Adrian Russell Ajaio," he said.

In his appeal to the public, he added: "We remain keen to

hear from anyone who knew Khalid Masood well; understands who his associates were; and can provide with information about places he has recently visited.

"There might well be people out there who did have concerns about Masood but weren't sure or didn't feel comfortable for whatever reason in passing information to us. The appeal came as a picture emerges of an English schoolboy, born to a white mother and black father, with a history of violent knife crime," he said.

Masood was born on Christmas Day in 1964 in Kent, south-east England, and was brought up by a single mother in the seaside town of Rye, East Sussex, before a religious conversion in later years.

After Masood was shot dead during the attack, Islamic State (ISIS) hailed him as one of its "soldiers" but the exact nature of his ISIS connection remains unclear. - PTI

years in prison. Some reports suggest that it is likely he was radicalised during his spell in jail.

The night before Masood went to ram his hired car at high speed into the side of the House of Commons railings before stabbing to death a police officer guarding the Parliament gates, he stayed at the Preston Park Hotel in Brighton.

"He was a friendly, normal guest. It has been very stressful to see what happened," said the owner of the hotel.

Masood was born on Christmas Day in 1964 in Kent, south-east England, and was brought up by a single mother in the seaside town of Rye, East Sussex, before a religious conversion in later years.

After Masood was shot dead during the attack, Islamic State (ISIS) hailed him as one of its "soldiers" but the exact nature of his ISIS connection remains unclear. - PTI

years in prison. Some reports suggest that it is likely he was radicalised during his spell in jail.

The night before Masood went to ram his hired car at high speed into the side of the House of Commons railings before stabbing to death a police officer guarding the Parliament gates, he stayed at the Preston Park Hotel in Brighton.

"He was a friendly, normal guest. It has been very stressful to see what happened," said the owner of the hotel.

Masood was born on Christmas Day in 1964 in Kent, south-east England, and was brought up by a single mother in the seaside town of Rye, East Sussex, before a religious conversion in later years.

After Masood was shot dead during the attack, Islamic State (ISIS) hailed him as one of its "soldiers" but the exact nature of his ISIS connection remains unclear. - PTI

350 in Myanmar hospital after free soup

YANGON, March 24: A free lunch for villagers in southern Myanmar turned sour after it landed more than a third of the rural community in hospital with food poisoning, local officials said today.

Hundreds of villagers from Eain Ta Lone, west of Yangon, fell ill after eating fish stew served at a Buddhist ceremony to celebrate the ordination of local novices.

The entire 1,000-person village was bundled over to the nearest hospital, where 367 were admitted for treatment, said charity worker Wai Lit Aung, who helped to transport the villagers.

Many were vomiting and some described aches and pains all over their body, he added.

"They felt like after eating boiled beans (type of fish) and cassia soup at the fisherman's house," he said.

The sick returned home later on Thursday and were recovering, Myaung Mya township chief administrator Aung Kyaw Zaya told AFP.

come under pressure to denounce all forms of religious discrimination.

In recent months, several mosques and synagogues have been vandalized in towns across Canada.

Nearly all of the deputies from Trudeau's Liberal party and the leftist New Democratic Party approved the measure, which is non-binding, while Conservative Party lawmakers voted against it.

It tasks a parliamentary committee to launch a study on how the government could address the issue, with recommendations due in mid-November. The study should look at how to "develop a whole

of-government approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia," the motion says.

The measure was put forth by Ifra Khalid, a deputy from the Toronto suburb of Mississauga, a city of 700,000 people with a major concentration of immigrants.

The motion has divided public opinion: a poll from the Angus Reid Institute published yesterday showed that 42 percent of respondents would have voted against the measure and just 29 percent would have approved it.

Other respondents did not give an opinion. - AFP

TNA hails UN resolution on alleged war crimes

COLOMBO, March 24: Sri Lanka's main Tamil party TNA today welcomed the UNHRC decision giving the government two more years to set up its accountability mechanism to probe the alleged war crimes committed during the civil war with the LTTE.

The Tamil National Alliance (TNA) said the resolution gives specific time frame to Sri Lanka and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on the successful implementation of the 2015 resolution.

At the same time, the TNA warned that, "the Tamil people have reached their limits of tolerance, and urge that their deprivation and suffering on these several issues be brought to an early end."

"In keeping with its commitments, we urge the government to sincerely address the issues of land release, the detention of Tamil political prisoners, grievances of the families of missing persons, and the enactment of constitutional reforms," it said in a statement.

Thirty-six more countries co-sponsored the UNHRC resolution which was adopted without a vote in Geneva yesterday. This was in addition to the original sponsors - the US, the UK, Montenegro and Macedonia. They recognised Sri Lanka had made good progress in its reconciliation attempts.

The TNA's most significant demand for Sri Lanka was criticised by the Tamil hardline diaspora groups which said that they have lost confidence in the Sri Lankan government.

The resolution, "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka" gives Sri Lanka two years to show more progress on the transitional justice process. - PTI

10 killed in Bangladesh road accident

DHAKA, March 24: At least 10 people, including four minor children, were killed today as a cement-laden truck overturned in central Bangladesh's Mymensingh district.

Nine people died on the spot, three being minor children, while another succumbed to his wounds as he was rushed to a nearby hospital along with four other injured people, police said.

"The passengers wanted to take a ride on the cement laden truck (to reach their destination) at a low fare while they were buried under the heavy cement sacks as it overturned," a police officer said. He said five of the dead appeared to be members of a single family.

The truck, with 15 passengers onboard, fell off track and overturned at Meherpurbari where the road had been dug for construction of a four-lane highway. The victims were then buried under the cement sacks. - PTI

ISIS claims Chechnya attack

MOSCOW, March 24: The ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack today on a Russian military base in Chechnya, according to the SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors jihadist communications.

Six attackers stormed "a military base of the Russian National Guard close to Naurskaya village in north-western Grozny in Chechnya," the ISIS statement said. "They clashed with those at the base with light weapons for several hours." The statement said all of the assailants died during the attack, which killed six Russian soldiers.

Russia's National Guard, established last year, is a new branch of troops aimed at defending borders and countering extremism. - AFP

অটল অমৃত অভিযান

অসম চৰকাৰৰ স্বাস্থ্য আৰু পৰিয়াল কল্যাণ বিভাগৰ এক অভিলাষী অভিযান



এই আঁচনি দ্বিতীয় সীমাবেংখাৰ তলৰ আৰু দ্বিতীয় সীমাবেংখাৰ ওপৰৰ পৰিয়াল ঘাৰৰ বাৰ্ধিক আয় ৫ লাখতকৈ কম, তেনে পৰিয়ালৰ সকলো সদস্যৰ বাবে উপলক্ষ ইয়াৰ অধীনত তলত উল্লিখিত ছহটা বোগ লগত জড়িত কেতোৱোৱা নিৰ্দিষ্ট চিকিৎসা পদ্ধতিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত

(Selected Procedure) ৰোগীৰ বাবে ২ লাখ টকা পৰ্যন্ত চিকিৎসা সাহায্য প্ৰদান কৰা হ'ব।

■ হৃদৰোগ (Cardio Vascular Disease)

■ নৱজাতকৰণৰ ৰোগ (Neo Natal Disease)

■ কৰ্কট ৰোগ (Cancer)

■ মায়াৰিক সমস্যা (Neurological Conditions)

■ বৃক্কৰ ৰোগ (Kidney Disease)

■ জুইয়ে পোৰা (Burn)

স্বাস্থ্য আৰু পৰিয়াল কল্যাণ বিভাগ, অসম চৰকাৰৰ কল্যাণকাৰী আঁচনি "অটল অমৃত অভিযান"ৰ ২০১৬-১৭ বৰ্ষৰ বাবে হিতাধিকাৰীসকলৰ নাম ঘোৱা ২৩ মাৰ্চ, ২০১৭ তাৰিখে বিজ্ঞাপনযোগে প্ৰকাশ কৰা হৈছে।

আজি ২৫ মাৰ্চ, ২০১৭ তাৰিখে দিনৰ ১:৩০ বজাৰ পৰা খানাপাৰা হিত পশু চিকিৎসা মহাবিদ্যালয় খেল পথাৰত ৩২০০ তকৈও অধিক হিতাধিকাৰীক আনুষ্ঠানিকভাৱে চেক বিতৰণ কৰা হ'ব।

এই অনুষ্ঠানত অসমৰ মাননীয় মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী শ্ৰী সৰ্বানন্দ সোণোৱাল ডাঙুৰীয়া মুখ্য অতিথি হিচাপে উপস্থিত থাকিব আৰু সন্মানীয় অতিথি হিচাপে উপস্থিত থাকিব অসমৰ স্বাস্থ্য আৰু পৰিয়াল কল্যাণ বিভাগৰ মাননীয় মন্ত্ৰী ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা ডাঙুৰীয়া।

এই বিজ্ঞাপনৰ ঘোগেৰে অটল অমৃত অভিযানৰ হিতাধিকাৰীসকলক অথবা পৰিয়ালৰ লোকক অনুদান গ্ৰহণ কৰা হ'ব।

অটল অমৃত অভিযান অসম চৰকাৰৰ এক অভিলাষী আঁচনি। এই আঁচনিৰ দ্বাৰা হিতাধিকাৰীসকলক উল্লেখ কৰা বোগসমূহৰ নগদবিহীন চিকিৎসা স্বৰূপ চৰকাৰী বাবে প্ৰযোজ্য ফটো পৰিচয় পত্ৰ লগত কৰা হৈছে। ভৱিষ্যতে ইয়াৰ সুবিধাসমূহ নগদবিহীনভাৱে লেমিনেটেড কাৰ্ডৰ জৰিয়তে ৰোগীয়ে চিকিৎসালয়ত গ্ৰহণ কৰিব পাৰিব।



ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় স্বাস্থ্য অভিযান, অসম

বিতং তথ্যৰ বাবে www.nrhmaassam.in ৱেবচাইট অনুসৰণ কৰিব পাৰে।



Virat Kohli takes aid from team physiotherapist Patrick Farhart as coach Anil Kumble looks on during a practice session at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala, on Thursday.

India under pressure as Kohli remains doubtful

DHARAMSALA, March 24: Indian captain Virat Kohli was rendered a highly doubtful starter for the fourth and final Test against Australia, a scenario that has put the hosts under immense pressure on the eve of the decider of the bitterly fought series.

With the high-voltage rubber locked at 1-1, things couldn't have got worse for India as their captain admitted that he is not hundred per cent fit going into the match, starting here tomorrow, with a threat of "aggravating the injury in the field" looming.

The pre-match statement was kind of a giveaway that Kohli's chances of playing are dim in a match where his presence as a leader is required the most. While Kohli the batsman had a nightmare of a series, the absence of a quality batsman like him can prove to be a game-changer unless his replacement Shreyas Iyer fires big time.

Kohli did bat at the nets today but admitted that a call can only be taken by physio Patrick Farhart in the evening. The India camp probably doesn't want to give away any psychological advantage to the opposition ahead of the decider. Perhaps that was also the reason that the skipper, even though doubtful, came for the mandatory pre-match media conference.

Asked how he felt at the nets, Kohli said: "It's something different from competition, that's one thing. Something that I experienced in Ranchi is that when

you have reactive movements, the main magnitude of your injury comes out."

"Those are the things that we have to keep in mind. The physio wants to give it a bit more time till I can test myself and probably we will take a call later tonight or tomorrow before the game. We will see if we can give it that much time more to make a call with the physiotherapist."

When he was asked a more direct question about the element of risk involved, Kohli said: "The physio can explain better. I don't know the magnitude of the risk. All I know is that if I go through fitness test, I will take the field."

The Indian captain's replacement, Iyer, arrived in the morning and joined the training late. Iyer had a net session that was closely monitored by coach Anil Kumble and Kohli, who also had a chat with the Mumbai youngster.

An aggressive batsman with all the strokes in his repertoire, Iyer's panchant for playing the cut and pull makes him a good choice for Dharamsala where there would be pace and bounce.

In the event of Kohli missing out, Ajinkya Rahane would lead the team. Iyer's 200+ in the warm-up game against Australia would give him confidence even though Mitchell Starc and Hazlewood did not play that game. – PTI

Match Starts 9:30 am

Teams:
India: Virat Kohli (captain), KL Rahul, Munali Vijay, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Karun Nair, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Abhinav Mukund, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Kuldeep Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Jayant Yadav, Mohammed Shami.

Australia: Steve Smith (captain), Matt Renshaw, David Warner, Steve O'Keefe, Mitch Marsh, Matthew Wade (wk), Nathan Lyon, Josh Hazlewood, Steve O'Keefe, Jackson Bird, Mitchell Swanson, Marcus Stoinis, Glenn Maxwell, Ashton Agar, Usman Khawaja, Pat Cummins.



Australian captain Steve Smith addresses a press conference on the eve of the 4th Test against India at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamsala, on Friday.

Ajinkya is more chilled out than Virat: Smith

DHARAMSALA, March 24: Australia's Steve Smith today felt Ajinkya Rahane will do a good job as skipper in the probable absence of Virat Kohli, terming the India vice-captain "more chilled out guy" than his opposite number.

Asked how much India would miss Kohli's leadership if he is forced to skip the series-deciding fourth Test, Smith showered accolades on his Rising Pune Supergiants teammate.

"No, I think they'll be fine. I think Ajinkya Rahane will probably step up to captain their side. I thought he did a pretty good job last week (in Ranchi) when he was out on the field in Virat's absence. So, I'm confident he'll be able to do a good job for them."

Playing alongside Rahane has given Smith an opportunity to know him and his assessment is that the Mumbaikar is less emotional.

"He (Rahane) is probably a bit more chilled out, out on the field. Probably, not quite as emotional. But, no, look, I think he's understanding the game really well.

"I've been fortunate enough to play a fair bit of cricket with or the year," – PTI

Ajinkya, and I think he reads the game and understands the game really well. So if Virat was to miss this Test match, then I'm sure the Indian side will still be in very good hands."

The visiting captain praised Shreyas Iyer, Kohli's possible replacement.

"He (Iyer) is pretty aggressive and he probably hit the first ball he faced for a six if I remember correctly. The knock was on a pretty good wicket, where there was not much of pace on the wicket in Mumbai and we didn't play any of our frontline pacers (Starc and Hazlewood).

"So he played really well there. It is just one game but he definitely looks like a good player for future."

Going into the match, Smith

said the favourites tag doesn't bother him one bit.

"I am not really bothered

if we are the favourites or underdogs to be honest with you. It is a game of cricket,

1-1 in the series and every-

thing to play for in this game.

As I said earlier, I am not

worried about the end result

or the match," – PTI

Hamilton 'in league of his own' after Aussie blitz

MELBOURNE, March 24:

Lewis Hamilton was hailed as "in a league of his own" on Friday as he burned off his rivals in the year's opening practice sessions at the Australian Grand Prix.

The triple world champion bossed the field and held a half-second gap over Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel and his new Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas in the afternoon session.

Britain's Hamilton followed up his field-leading fastest lap of 1 minute, 24.220 secs in the morning run with a blistering 1:23.620 in the late afternoon.

It was around one-tenth of a second off Vettel's circuit record of 1:23.529 posted for Red Bull in qualifying ahead of the 2011 race victory.

"Hamilton is in a league of his own at the moment," Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff said.

"His one-lap pace was really good and he took the ultra-softs for 17 laps and was sta-

ble. I'm happy."

Ferrari were expected to press Hamilton and the Mercedes team after superior times in pre-season testing, but on the evidence of the opening two sessions Hamilton is again the driver to beat in Sunday's season-opener.

"I'm super-happy to be back in the car, particularly after a first day like that. It was 99 percent perfect," Hamilton said.

"We've shown good form so far on both the long and short runs and we got every lap done that we wanted to. The tyres performed really well today too."

"I'll be pushing as hard as I can to win this race."

Hamilton's time was more than three seconds faster than his best lap in last year's corresponding free practice in Melbourne.

Finland's Bottas slotted smoothly into the Mercedes team environment with a best lap of 1:24.176. – AFP

Mattek-Sands stuns Svitolina in Miami Open

MIAMI, March 24: Bethanie Mattek-Sands picked up her first top-10 victory since 2015, upsetting ninth-seeded Elina Svitolina 7-5, 6-4 on Thursday to reach the Miami Open's third round. Mattek-Sands, who turned 32 on Thursday, is ranked only 158th in singles and needed a wild-card invitation to get into the hard-court tournament. She is ranked No. 1 in doubles. Against Svitolina, Mattek-Sands saved 12 of the 15 break points she faced.

The woman with whom Mattek-Sands won the doubles championships at the past two Grand Slams tournaments, Lucie Safarova, eliminated 23rd-seeded Maria Gavrilova 6-2, 6-2 on Thursday. Safarova, the 2015

French Open runner-up, is ranked 36th, so was just outside the seedings at the hard-court tournament. She broke Gavrilova five times while serving only once herself.

In a couple of other surprises, 18th-seeded CoCo Vandeweghe was knocked out by 105th-ranked qualifier Jana Cepelova 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, and Kirsten Flipkens beat No. 29 Anna Konjuh 7-6 (4), 6-7 (6), 6-2.

Another surprise appeared to be developing when play was halted on Thursday night because of rain: No. 6 Garbine Muguruza, the reigning French Open champion, was trailing 46th-ranked American Christina McHale 6-0, 3-2. They are scheduled to resume their second-round match on Friday.

Second-seeded Karolina Pliskova, a finalist at last year's US Open, had no trouble beating 86th-ranked Madison Brengle 6-1, 6-3 in about an hour to get to the third round.

Other seeded winners included No. 4 Dominika Cibulkova, No. 12 Agnieszka Radwanska, No. 12 Caroline Wozniacki, No. 17 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, No. 26 Mirjana Lucic-Baron, No. 27 Yuliya Putintseva and No. 30 Zhang Shuai.

In men's action, new things will get a little more challenging for Frances Tiafoe. Tiafoe, a 19-year-old from Maryland, set up a second-round meeting against top-seeded Stan Wawrinka next. Wawrinka lost to Federer in the final at Indian Wells, California, on Sunday. – Agencies

Brazil on brink, Messi revives Argentina

MONTEVIDEO, March 24: Brazil thrashed Uruguay to move to the brink of the World Cup final as Lionel Messi got Argentina's faltering qualification campaign back on track with the only goal to sink Chile.

A superb hat-trick from China-based midfielder Paulinho powered Brazil to a 4-1 drubbing of the Uruguayans in Montevideo to leave the five-time world champions all-but-certain of a place at next year's finals in Russia.

The Uruguayans now lead the 10-team round-robin competition by seven points after their latest win.

The top four teams in the standings qualify automatically and with only five rounds remaining, it would take a freakish set of results to deny Brazil.

Uruguay had taken the lead after only nine minutes when Brazil goalless Alisson brought down Paris Saint-Germain striker Edinson Cavani for a penalty.

Cavani got to his feet and drilled the spot-kick beyond the Brazilian goalkeeper. But Paulinho produced a thunderbolt 10

minutes later, uncorking a screamer into the top corner from 25 yards to level at 1-1.

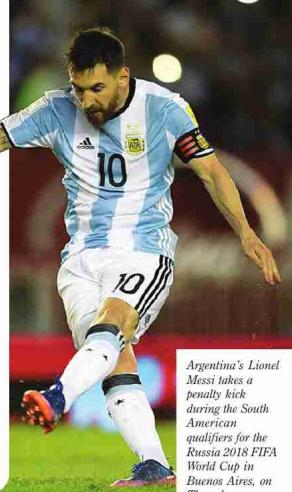
The midfielder then stabbed home Philippe Coutinho's shot in the 51st minute to make it 12-1.

Barcelona superstar Neymar added a third with a sublime chip in the 75th minute to effectively settle the contest. Paulinho completed his hat-trick in injury time, turning in a low cross with his chest to cap a fine display.

Uruguay, who were missing the suspended Luis Suarez, remain in second place in the standings.

In Buenos Aires, Argentina had entered their clash with Chile desperately needing to take all three points to revive their campaign. And captain Messi duly delivered when it mattered as Argentina avenged last year's Copa America Centenario final defeat to the Chileans with a 1-0 win.

Messi stroked home his penalty on 16 minutes after veteran Chile defender Jose Fuenzalida brought down Angel Di Maria with a clumsy challenge. – AFP



Argentina's Lionel Messi takes a penalty kick during the South American qualifiers for the Russia 2018 World Cup in Buenos Aires, on Thursday.

Manohar defers decision to step down as chairman

DUBAI, March 24: ICC chairman Shashank Manohar today deferred his recent decision to step down from the post until a successor is elected following the completion of the 2017 Annual Conference.

The decision comes following an ICC Board resolution to request him to remain in post was passed with overwhelming support earlier this week.

In a significant show of support for Manohar, the Board asked him to withdraw his resignation or at the very least defer it until the ongoing process relating to governance and financial restructuring are completed.

Commenting on the decision, Manohar said: "I respect the sentiments expressed by the directors and the confidence they have reposed in me. In the light of this, and although my decision to depart due to personal reasons has not changed, I am willing to continue as chairman till the responsibility as per the resolution is complete." – PTI

Competition will be intense at the Indian Open

It's always special to play in front of your home fans. The cheering and the chanting from the stands adds to the rush of the adrenaline and it's something which I enjoy. But for me it's different. How I wish I could play in my country all year through.

The Yonex Sunrise Indian Open has been one of my favourite tournaments and my association goes back a long way. I am eagerly waiting to be on the courts again and get back to my best. The competition will be intense at the Indian Open with very little between the contenders. I have always enjoyed such close encounters

– they are the ones which stay with us as memories.

For a player coming back from injury, it takes time. And the best part

wants to leave any stone unturned. For a badminton player, there's no shying away from hard work. There may be other sports, quite a few in fact, where despite not being in the best of shape you are able to churn out your best. But the demanding sport that badminton is, the script stays entirely different here.

In badminton, whatever your pedi-

gree may be, there's hardly any difference between an unfit World Champion and a college level player. The fitness, speed, the stamina, the strength is what makes the difference.

Past my surgery I understood that I just could not rush back to prime fitness. The aim at that time was to have a feel of the courts, move around, get back to top flight badminton and regain my confidence. With all of that done, it's time to set the next target.

The training sessions are so painful for a player. But that's what motivates me. Unless you are sincere, you won't ever reap that fruit. You need to grill and grill in your effort to hit the bulls eye. – TCM



one hundred ten percent



SU DO KU

1	9	8	5	6
2		9	8	
4	7			2 9
3	7	6	8	4
9		2		1
1	3	4	7	8
8	5	3	8	6
2	4	6	9	5

Solution of last problem

5	2	4	3	9	8	1	6	7
8	6	1	5	4	2	9	3	0
3	7	9	2	6	8	4	5	6
6	4	5	9	8	2	3	7	1
2	7	8	6	1	3	9	5	4
4	5	6	8	3	9	7	1	2
7	8	3	2	4	5	8	9	0
9	8	2	1	7	5	4	3	6

Manthan upsets Appollosoana in international chess

GUWAHATI, March 24: Local boy Manthan Kashyap Datta created sensation in the 3rd round of the Assam Down Town University International Open Rating Chess Tournament today holding second seeded Appollosoana Mangam Rajkumar of Manipur in a well fought contest that lasted over three hours.

On the other hand unseeded Dhrupad Kashyap of GTC Chess Foundation upset 5th seed CH Meghna of Kerala in a keenly contested match.

After completion of the first three rounds a group of 11 players are in the lead with three points each. They are followed by a group of four players with 2.5 points each.

Lokhra, Chandmari SC win matches

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 24: Lokhra Sports Club and Chandmari Sports Club emerged winners in the Uma Churan Bania Memorial T20 D/N Cricket Tournament yesterday.

In the first match of the day, Lokhra SC defeated Vintage XI by five wickets while Chandmari SC got the Manipuri Manya Club by an identical margin with lights off.

Brief scores: **Vintage XI 110** (Abhay 23, Jani Koch 3/17, Chandan Sharma 12, Sanjay Deka 2/25); **Lokhra SC 115/5** (Jani Koch 30, Sunil Rai 20, Anil Baruah 2/24).

Sumanta SC 120 (Anil Shrestha 27, Parikram Rakhowar 23, Sumanta Sarma 3/24, Kharul Khan 2/15, Tridip Deka 2/21); **Chandmari SC 135/5** (Amit Sircra 65, Sumanta Sarania 25, Raju Master 3/18).

Adventure camp in city begins

GUWAHATI, March 24: The three-day All Assam Adventure Camp, organised by the Assam Rock and Sports Climbing Association (ARSCA), began at the 4th AP Bn campus here today.

Altogether 40 boys and girls from different places of the State are taking part in the camp where basic training will be imparted in sports climbing, rock climbing, water sports, high rope activities among others under the watchful eyes of Experienced Tarun Saikia and other experienced trainees.

ARSCA vice president Bipul Pathak, senior mountaineers Kanak Deka, Ajit Kalita, along with a host of mountaineers were present in the opening ceremony.

Trekking expedition to Sandakphu

GUWAHATI, March 24: A 15-member team of *The Adventures*, a city-based organisation for the promotion of adventure activities, will conduct a high altitude trekking expedition to Sandakphu (11,981ft) and Phalut (11,811ft) in the Singaila Ridge of the Indo-Nepal border from March 26.

Out of 15 members, including two ladies, 12 are senior citizens while the youngest member is 13-years-old.

The team will be accompanied by Pran Patel Bhagawati and Pranab Kumar Dass as team leader and manager respectively. The team will return here on April 3 after conducting the expedition through Tumblong, Kalopokhari, Sandakphu, Phalut, Ramam and Rimbik, stated a release.

SC directs BCCI to release funds for Dharamsala Test

NEW DELHI, March 24: The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to release funds to the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) to host the fourth and the final Test between India and Australia in Dharamsala as per the schedule.

Earlier, the BCCI's Committee of Administrators (CoA) had sought the apex court's immediate interference to ensure both the Dharamsala Test and the upcoming tenth edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) are not disrupted by disgruntled state associations.

The CoA in its second status report, which was submitted in the court last week, had singled out the HPCA for intransigence. The three-member

Pressure on India: Waugh

MELBOURNE, March 24: Australian cricket legend Steve Waugh felt the pressure will be on pre-series favourites India going into the deciding fourth Test and urged the visitors to not tinker with the playing XI in Dharamsala.

"I think a lot of the pressure is on the Indian side. They've been expected to win this series and they now come into this Test match with the possibility of losing it," Waugh was quoted as saying by *Cricket.Com.Au*.

The high-voltage series is poised at 1-1.

The former captain added, "So for Australia it's about enjoying it, working together and not looking too far ahead."

Waugh backed the out-of-form David Warner to come good and called on the selectors to back the XI that held on for a fighting draw in the third Test in Ranchi, saying the potency of opening bowlers Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins should provide plenty of firepower to skipper Steve Smith. - PTI

Kohli should play if team management wants him: Gavaskar

NEW DELHI, March 24: Former captain Sunil Gavaskar today said that Virat Kohli should consider playing in the final Test against Australia starting tomorrow even if he is not fully fit if the team management feels his presence will boost the side in the series decider.

At the pre-match press conference in Dharamsala, Kohli said that he will play in the fourth and final Test only if he is 100 per cent fit.

But, Gavaskar said that the team management should decide whether Kohli's value as a player and captain makes him a must-have in the playing eleven even if he is short of full fitness.

"Virat personally would want to go in as 100 per cent fit because that is what he would have expected from any other player in the team. He would not want another player in the team to hide an injury and then later found out (about an injury) because it is a five-day Test," Gavaskar said.

"So for Australia it's about enjoying it, working together and not looking too far ahead."

Waugh backed the out-of-form David Warner to come good and called on the selectors to back the XI that held on for a fighting draw in the third Test in Ranchi, saying the potency of opening bowlers Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins should provide plenty of firepower to skipper Steve Smith. - PTI

Shami all set to replace Ishant

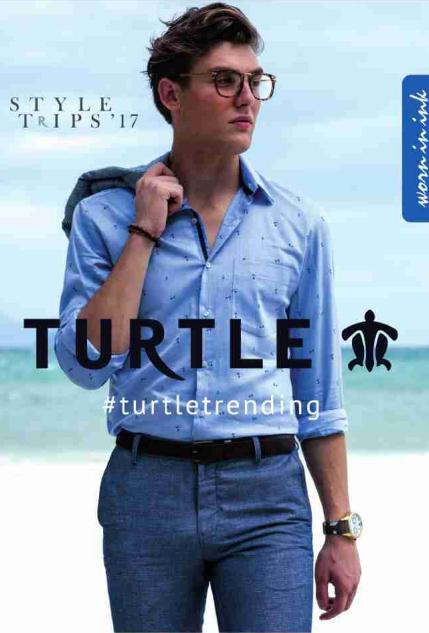
DHARAMSALA, March 24: Bengal speedster Mohammed Shami today has been officially included in the Indian Test team for the fourth cricket Test against Australia with indications that he may replace Ishant Sharma.

Ishant's lack of wickets has been a case of concern for the Indian team throughout the series and Shami's inclusion is considered a welcome move.

Shami recently bowled with a lot of fire for Bengal in the Vijay Hazare Trophy grabbing

4 for 26 in the final against Tamil Nadu.

The BCCI confirmed that Shami along with Shreyas Iyer are now officially part of the squad making them eligible for selection in the playing XI. - PTI



Exclusive Stores Guwahati Ambori Guwahati Club | Fancy Bazar Opp. Hotel Dynasty | G.S. Road Zoo Road Spanish Garden | Agartala Ml Plaza Month Bari Road | Dibrugarh Junction Mall | Jorhat K8 Road M.M. Plaza | Nagaon A.T. Road | Silchar Golaghat Mall | Tezpur Friends Plaza | Tinsukia Khaton Plaza GNB Road
Also @ [pantaloons](#) | [TRENDS](#) | [AYATTA](#) | [JABUNG](#) | [amazon.in](#)
[www.turtleonline.in](#) | Partnering | [contact@turtlelimited.com](#)

Follow us on

ZOIRO
Mens Inners • Casuals

Be her play # YNot

+91 99011 19000 customercare@zoiro.com www.zoiro.com
[@TheZoiro](#) | [/zoirolifestyle](#)

HAVELLS
FAN THAT ATTRACTS A FAN FOLLOWING.
Presenting the stunning Havells Octet Fan with 8 blades, silent operation and superior air delivery of 280 CMM.

OCTET



For Trade Enquiry: Assam: 9864296135, 8811094469, 9706617870. Silchar, Mizoram, Tripura: 8811061881. Manipur: 9864296135.
 Agartala: 8811061881. [www.havells.com](#) [buy online](#) [shop.havells.com](#) [havells](#) [havellsindia](#) [havells_India](#) [havells](#) [havells_Connect](#)