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RICE initiative

**Pattnaik for
Moscow sand
art meet**

BHUBANESWAR, April 9: Noted sand artist from Odisha Sudarsan Pattnaik has been selected to represent India in the 10th Moscow Sand Art Championship 2017.

With a theme "The World Around us", the championship is scheduled to be held from April 22 to 28 at Kolomenskoye, Moscow. Pattnaik said,

Top sand sculptors from different parts of the world are slated to take part in this championship, he said. In the 9th edition of the championship last year, Pattnaik had won gold medal for his sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi on World peace.

Recently he created World's Tallest Sand Castle at Puri which was placed in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Pattnaik has participated in more than 50 international sand sculpture championships across the world and won many awards. — PTI

SURI (WB), April 9: Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju today accused the Mamata Banerjee government in West Bengal of running a 'dictatorship', alleging that it was misusing state power to 'torture' political opponents.

The minister told reporters that the police in the state was acting under the pressure of politicians as evident by the 'fake cases' launched against his party leaders for carrying arms.

In this state, the government is running a dictatorship," Rijiju said.

The state administration has filed fake cases against party leaders. They didn't carry unlicensed guns. Trishuli and swords are traditional and symbolic weapons. It is the religious right of the people. This is an instance of

misuse of power by the Trinamool Congress government," he said.

Rijiju, who was asked by reporters about cases lodged against the BJP leaders for carrying arms during Ram Navami procession, described the development as 'very unfortunate'.

Speaking at a party meet here in Birbhum district, Rijiju said that the police was being 'misused' by the TMC government to 'torture' common people and political opponents".

An FIR was lodged against West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh and other BJP leaders for taking out a rally with swords on the occasion of Ram Navami last Wednesday.

Rijiju also accused the TMC government of not being 'sincere' in implementing the central government's

welfare policies at a time when the chief minister accused the Centre of curtailing funds for central schemes.

"I have come here to see how the central government's welfare policies are being implemented. What I found is that the state government is not at all sincere to run the welfare schemes," he said.

Meanwhile, the Birbhum district police has refused to give permission to the BJP to hold a rally on April 11 on the occasion of "Bir Hanuman Jayanti".

The district administration rejected the petition filed by the BJP's district unit on March 31. Today the organisers of the rally handed over a memorandum in this regard to the minister. — PTI

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Political Science Day observed

GUWAHATI, April 9: The Department of Political Science of Cotton College and University observed Political Science Day on April 5, an e-mail stated. The event was marked by seminars and paper presentation. Students of the host institution along with many other invited colleges took part. The Head of the Department, Shantanu Chakravarty spoke on discipline, which was followed by two sessions of paper presentation.

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For further detail about the programme, admission related information and important dates, please visit www.gnlu.ac.in (contact respective programme coordinators). **Registrar**



Children performing at the cultural function, on Saturday evening. – AT photo

GUWAHATI, April 9: A cultural programme organised in

sync with the 60th annual conference of the Assam Tribune Employees' Union at the Assam Tribune complex here at Chandramati was held under the stewardship of Hiranya Kumar Barman.

The ceremonial lamp on the occasion was lit by the Executive Editor of *The Assam Tribune*, Prasanta Jyoti Baruah.

The new executive com-

mittee comprises of Siba Prasad Deka as president, Manoranjan Sarkar as vice-president, Dugdha Ram Kalita as general secretary, Debasish Sinha and Tankeswar Kakati as assistant secretaries, Pranjal Hazarika as organising secretary, and Utpal Karmakar as treasurer. On the other hand, Hiranya Kumar Barman, Shyam Kumar Sinha, Gautam Kakati, Chandu Kalita, Tulika Pathak and Rameen Phukan were elected as executive members respectively.

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Plea to ensure decent life for womenfolk

STAFF REPORTER

full protection against the ugly designs of the criminals of society;

Dr Bankanta Sarma, Dr Rohini Kumar Baruah, Dr Konika Barkakati, Jognabira Dutta and Bijuli Barma, while participating in the discussion, said that while the police machinery should be more responsive and stringent in its efforts of protection in order to secure for the women of Assam a decent, honourable and safe life in the State.

Manju Dutta Barua, while explaining the purpose of the society, stressed the need for a concerted endeavour to secure for women, especially girl students and young ladies, protection from miscreants and misguided youths.

DNCC Secretary, in his presidential address, said that India down the centuries been setting up a noble ideal of treating women as mothers and giving them

protection against the rising problem of heinous crimes against women.

The Railways and other transport authorities should also devise more pragmatic and effective measures in order to reduce the incidence of incidents of abduction and enforced servitude in various modes of mass public transit systems, as such cases have assumed alarming proportions in recent times.

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PERFORMING ARTS

MESSAGE FOR TODAY

Let him that would move the world first move himself.

— SOCRATES

The Assam Tribune**Deflated expectations**

As expected, during her four-day official visit to India, Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina signed a slew of agreements and memorandum of understanding with India on matters such as purchase of military equipment, joint military exercises, extension of financial assistance, supply of diesel and electricity etc. Like Nepal, a pragmatic aspect of Bangladesh's policy has been to take full advantage of the rivalry between China and India in exerting influence on Asian nations, with the latter's concerns being more evident as far as her neighbours go. Last year, Dhaka had rolled out the red carpet for China's President Xi Jinping who used the occasion to announce financial assistance to the tune of \$23 billion. China, currently the biggest supplier of military weapons to Bangladesh, equipped that nation's navy with two submarines just a month after Jinping's visit. Little wonder that India has gone out of her way during this visit to be generous towards the august guest and her entourage. Even less wonder is that the Centre has tried its level best to persuade the West Bengal Chief Minister to give ground on the matter of sharing the waters of the Teesta river with Bangladesh. But Mamata Banerjee is made of sterner stuff; she has steadfastly refused to buckle to Narendra Modi's pressures and overtures and is reportedly bargaining hard to get the best possible deal for her State.

Mamata Banerjee's stance, and her commitment to the well-being of West Bengal, should be an object lesson to the North-east's political leaders. Given the depth of concern amongst the people regarding the issue of illegal migrants from Bangladesh, there had been high expectation that it would feature in the discussions between the two Prime Ministers. Throwing cold water on such an expectation, discussion on the stemming of continued illegal infiltration from Bangladesh into the North-east, let alone of detection and deportation, did not feature prominently during the talks. On the contrary, India's Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar admitted that there was more discussion on 'legal' rather than 'illegal' migration, forwarding the preposterous argument that "it is in our interest to make legal movement more accountable and effective so that there is less illegal movement". As though to drive home his point, he "clarified" that "our focus is on legal movement" and that "it is now much easier to get visa" for a Bangladeshi national to "visit" India. The shift away from "illegal" to "legal" once again iterates the reality that Narendra Modi's pledge during the Lok Sabha elections to tackle the foreign nationals problem was merely campaign rhetoric and the Assam Accord just a piece of paper! The very fact that none of the Chief Ministers of the North-east were invited for the talks with Sheikh Hasina is clear indication where the priorities of the Indian Government lie.

Mental health

An alarming trend in mental health-related disorders has been discernible for years now, affecting a vast segment of populations across the world. In India too, the phenomenon has been conspicuous, encompassing in its vicious fold people from diverse age groups. Things have come to such a pass that even children are known to suffer from acute depression. This was certainly not the case a few decades back. The factors behind the spurt in different forms of mental illness are not hard to fathom. Perhaps the single-most important aspect behind the disturbing trend is change in lifestyles. The rapid spread of globalization and urbanization and the consequent frenetic pace that has gripped people in their quest for never-ending materialistic success has a lot to do with our behavioural changes. This has led to more stress, tension and depression in a manner not witnessed before in history. The more people are achieving happiness with acquisition of material wealth, the more they are distancing themselves from happiness. This, together with our stress in family life, relationships, work place, etc., forms an interconnected chain that is increasingly shackling us.

The issue of mental health and its role in the overall well-being of a person has now been universally recognized. This is evident from WHO's declaration of this year's World Health Day theme as 'Depression: Let's Talk'. In the country also, we are having plans and programmes for effective redressal of mental health-related issues, the latest being an ambitious countrywide survey for having a nationally representative assessment of the extent and severity of the problem. For the curative interventions to follow, there is an urgent need for identifying the prevalent patterns, outcome, treatment gap and associated disabilities of mental illness. At the same time, we also need to have an assessment of the mechanism available for mental health care across the country. In Assam, the study which was conducted by LG-BRIMH, Tezpur, showed that as many as 12 lakh people above the age of 18 years are currently having intervention for various mental health issues. While males and lower income were linked to higher occurrence of a mental disorder, anxiety and stress-related disorders were more common in women. Another disturbing revelation concerns the high incidence (27.35%) of substance use disorder in the population above 18 years. While the scenario calls for a matching response mechanism, matters have not been helped by the slow progress of the district mental health programmes in terms of reach and coverage. The State Government should treat the matter seriously and ensure that the programme deliver quality services. It is also time the Government came up with a comprehensive state mental health policy, formulating explicit action plans, enhancing mechanisms for integration, dedicated financing, devising mechanisms for accelerated human resources, improving medicine supply and logistics, and monitoring frameworks to provide the widest possible coverage to affected citizens.

Political decision and social health

■ Dr Kamala Kanta Saharia

Political decision is an outcome of destined political mission and the subsequently rising vision. We the Indians are neither habituated to work in mission mode nor do we have the broad vision for the country. Politically the country has matured in electioneering; e.g., in the last few elections, big rallies, madness of posterizing and most importantly guns were missing. But, the country remained far short from the values of brotherhood, understanding, amity, cohesion, peace and harmony. In fact, such values are gradually eroding. They propagate an atmosphere of priceless patriotism and strong nationalism, where one saves his/her own agenda at the altar of national interests. Such individuals are rare among majority of the political parties today. Instead, for some political parties in India, the interest of the individual (family) is the first priority, followed by the core group (lobby) in the second, his or her local interests (associates, followers, relatives and helpers) in the third and then only the party in the fourth position of priorities. The nation does not feature anywhere in political vision. So, it is easier to imagine how the majority of the political decisions could be.

The results of the Uttar Pradesh election followed by the first few days of the ministers in the office gave three subsequent shocks to the nation. The first shock was that nobody expected the BJP to win

so many seats (325). All predictions were proved wrong. But after the very first phase of the election, it was clear that the party was all set to experience a major victory. Still, there were many political pundits who argued that the BJP in spite of all efforts, were not to cross the double digits. They were in fact expecting the Bihar model of alliance to click for the SP and Congress fully ignoring that the later virtually did not have its presence in UP. The reality is that, even in the Muslim-dominated areas where the BJP floated Hindu candidates, the voting percentage was higher and many Muslims voted for the BJP. This is the ground report from one of the continuously winning MLAs in Uttar Pradesh Dal Vir Singh who won the election from Barauli, Aligarh on a BJP ticket.

He was a Lok Dal man never wanting to change his party. But his ardent followers in the constituency forced him to change over to the BJP much before the election winds started blowing in the State. He is a Muslim majority area and from that parliamentary constituency out of seven, six BJP candidates won the Assembly election 2017, simply on the merit of their services to the society.

The second shock was the selection of the Chief Minister. Majority of the people in the country as well

as in the State did not realize it. But, Yogi Adityanath was floated, especially after the loss incurred from the statement made by Varun Gandhi before the fourth round of voting. The firebrand yogi becoming a Chief Minister of a State like UP is a major jolt to the political opponents. For many politically alert common men, Adityanath's transformation carries some antecedents. He is probably the only yogi

in flames with crimes and corruption, conflict and cruelty and rape and violence. So, making Yogi Adityanath the CM of UP might end up in the best resolution for all.

The third shock for the people of the State in particular was the decisions the new CM took on the very first few days in office. There were many important actions on outstanding issues to root out favouritism, nepotism and corruption.

Some of them are essentially aimed at the social health of the State, which did not happen in some other States including Assam so far. They include (i) the anti-Romeo squad, (ii) stay on UP PSC results, (iii) closure of illegal slaughter houses, (iv) blanket ban on cow smuggling, (v) 25 acre of land for Ram Mandir, (vi) putting government representatives in different boards, (vii) ban on chewing pan in government offices, (viii) cleanliness drive, (ix) punishment to erring police officers and (x) clearing up of all pending files at the earliest. Some of these decisions might lead to unhappiness among some sections of the society. For example, there are around 18,000-25,000 manual workers in the slaughter houses, who are almost illiterate and know only the art of butchering cows/buffaloes and other meat animals. The price of beef in UP before the ban was only Rs 80 to 100 per kilogram. Against the slaughter of each

in the entire world who carries a firearm for his personal safety – indicating what kind of law and order prevailed in UP before and during the election. His carrying firearm goes back to a 2007 'political grudge' when he was accused of murder and clash. Against the vendetta, the fact was that he is an elected MP from Gorakhpur for five consecutive terms and since the time of his becoming an MP; there is not a single case of communal or social conflict, even when the entire UP was

entrepreneurs to raise money from informal sources. Because of this lack of business literacy, women do not adhere to the appropriate reporting standards which further leads to a higher rejection rate from formal financial institutions. The high rejection rate has a multiplier effect and it often instills a lack of self-confidence which can have a negative impact on any entrepreneurs' willingness to scale. A rejection often prevents women entrepreneurs from approaching formal financial institutions for a subsequent attempt. Second, most of the formal financial institutions still prefer to lend against collateral. Cultural, traditional, and legal restrictions often prevent women from having ownership of land or assets. This considerably restricts their ability to raise finance.

Over the last few years, the Government of India has introduced several schemes and programmes to enhance lending to enterprises and startups. For example, the Credit Guarantee Trust Fund for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) was set up by the Government of India and the SIDBI to allow financial institutions to lend to small businesses without the need for a collateral. The scheme was designed to compensate the lender (50% to 85% of the credit availed) in case the borrower is unable to return the collateral-free loan. Similarly, the Startup India programme was set up to provide a wide array of support to Indian startups such as

incubation services and collateral free loans. Although the initiatives have been successful to a certain level in bolstering entrepreneurship in the country, their impact on women entrepreneurs is yet to be seen. This is because most of the newer schemes such as CGTMSE, Startup India, and MUDRA loans still operate through banks which continually consider women borrowers as high risk. Secondly, the largest component of women entrepreneurship focuses on the service industry, and banks usually prefer lending to brick and mortar businesses. Thirdly, since 90% of the woman-owned businesses are in the informal sector, banks cannot lend to them. These businesses are not registered, a preliminary eligibility criterion which banks want borrowers to fulfill. While other schemes such as the Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme and the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh Scheme have successfully provided access to micro-credit exclusively to women entrepreneurs, the ticket size is inadequate for enterprises that want to scale. In addition, micro-credit normally has a high interest rate associated with it, often discouraging women from borrowing.

Consequently, there is a need to introduce support systems which are refined and tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs. One of the key solutions that should be explored by the stakeholders in this space is to subsidize interest rates for a targeted section of women entrepre-

Improving access to finance for women entrepreneurs

■ Shreejit Borthakur

Over the last decade, there has been a change in the status quo with a rapid growth of women entrepreneurship in India. The number of women entrepreneurs has more than doubled since then, and now there are more than eight million women-owned enterprises in India. Besides contributing to India's growing GDP, women entrepreneurs cumulatively provide employment to more than 13 million people and these numbers are only likely to increase with time. Many drivers have come together to allow for this change including targeted entrepreneurship development programmes for women, improvement in women literacy rates, and attainment of higher education. It is however, important to note that women-owned entrepreneurs face a unique set of challenges which restrict them from scaling up. Subsistence entrepreneurship is still the trend and while women-owned enterprises employ more than 13 million people, less than 17% of these businesses have a hired worker. As per the International Finance Cooperation (IFC), while women entrepreneurship has grown in India, around 90% of these businesses are in the informal sector, where the business objective is subsistence.

Subsistence entrepreneurship is not always a choice but is a result of the challenges which entrepreneurs face. Inadequate access to debt finance

is a key roadblock to the growth of women entrepreneurship in India. The issue of inadequate availability of finance for women entrepreneurs in India is multidimensional. There are both supply side issues (issues from the side of the financial institution) and demand side issues (issues from the side of women entrepreneurs).

Most formal financial institutions have a high-risk perception with respect to lending to women entrepreneurs. In India, the rejection rate when a women entrepreneur approaches a financial institution for a loan is 2.5 times the rejection rate for male entrepreneurs. Consequently, informal sources of finance such as from friends, family, and money lenders contribute to more than 92% of the finance supplied to women entrepreneurs. These sources are however inadequate when the entrepreneur might want to scale her business. Moreover, women entrepreneurs often perceive an average bank environment to be not conducive to women customers. The lack of adequate women relationship managers has often highlighted as a key reason as to why women entrepreneurs avoid bank visits.

It is equally critical to address the various demand side factors which prevent women entrepreneurs from approaching banks. First, the lack of awareness regarding financial products makes it easier for women en-

trepreneurs to raise money from informal sources. Because of this lack of business literacy, women do not adhere to the appropriate reporting standards which further leads to a higher rejection rate from formal financial institutions. The high rejection rate has a multiplier effect and it often instills a lack of self-confidence which can have a negative impact on any entrepreneurs' willingness to scale. A rejection often prevents women entrepreneurs from approaching formal financial institutions for a subsequent attempt. Second, most of the formal financial institutions still prefer to lend against collateral. Cultural, traditional, and legal restrictions often prevent women from having ownership of land or assets. This considerably restricts their ability to raise finance.

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Assamese movies yearn for support

While the Bollywood movies are powered by huge budgets and super-smart media relations, the Assamese movie producers are forever struggling to complete their films on shoestring budgets and do not stand a chance, despite amazing narratives and outstanding performances of some films. The proliferation of general entertainment channels in vernacular may play an important role in helping the cause of regional cinema as the reach of television is many times the reach of cinema in any language. Hence, if the Assamese films are properly packaged and marketed with the support of the government and the electronic media, there is every chance that they will offer the producers, critics and audiences food for thought. Yours etc., KAMALIT DEKA, Houston, Texas, USA.

Child labour

Sir – It is indeed unfortunate that we find children being forced to work in order to earn their livelihood. Children are found working in agricultural sector, in building construction, in factories, etc. They often risk their lives just to keep their body and soul together. So tragic is their condition that even in the childhood, they become victim to physical and mental wreck. Their frail body suffers from many ailments. The government should realize the gravity of the situation and ban child labour; making it an offence under laws. Yours etc., ANUP DAS, Behora Bazar, Cachar.

Apex Court's ruling

Sir – Sujit De's letter 'Surnames and Apex Court's ruling' (AT, April 3) is extremely well-intended. He deserves congratulation for his stand against casteism which is indeed the greatest evil plaguing the country. Unless we get rid of the medieval dark caste system, no amount of success in attaining Mars orbit will make our nation an 'elite' one. However, I differ with him as far as the issue of surname is concerned. He concludes that the age-old caste system is responsible for it. Let me cite the case of a family which

bears the surname 'Malkhandi'. The children of the family also had to face unfathomable taunts and abuses during their schooldays reviving their surname. The punch line is they are Brahmins residing in the 'highest' echelon of the laggard caste system! So it can be easily concluded that mocking certain persons by exploiting their surnames bear no relationship with the caste system. Brahmins to Dalits will be made objects of jokes if they have to bear uncommon surnames. Yours etc., KAJAL CHATTERJEE, Peerless Nagar, Kollata.

Namami a damp squib

Sir – If imitation is the sincere form of flattery, then the Assam Government has done a fantastic job by organizing Namami Brahmaputra which is a replica of Namami Gange which was initiated by Narendra Modi. However, if the entire jamboree was to promote culture, trade and tourism, then it was a damp squib. The entire event seemed to have an imprint which was distinctly not

of North-eastern culture. Traditionally we have never seen an 'andatti' being performed on the Brahmaputra. This has its reasons because in Hinduism, Brahma is not worshipped. In fact, in India, there is only one temple dedicated to Brahma which is in Pushkar. Hence, the entire concept was incorrect from the point of view of culture. As far as trade is concerned, the proposals hold a lot of prospect. However, the idea of dredging the Brahmaputra needs deliberation and inputs from experts before its implementation. Lastly, if Namami Brahmaputra is also to showcase tourism prospects of the State, then where was our brand ambassador, Priyanka Chopra? Apparently the 'desi girl' was paid crores of rupees to be the brand ambassador of Assam which effectively means she should have been a part of such an extravaganza. Yours etc., ANIRBAN LAHIRI, Panbari, 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@assamtribune.com.

Memorandum to Lok Sabha members from State Call to support passage of Motor Vehicle Amendment Bill in Parliament

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 9: Consumers' Legal Protection Forum, Assam and Voluntary Organisation for the Interest of Consumer Education (Consumer Voice), New Delhi have appealed to all the 14 Lok Sabha members from Assam to support passage of the Motor Vehicle Amendment Bill in Parliament.

The two organisations submitted a memorandum individually to the Lok Sabha members from Assam.

In the memorandum, advocate Ajay Hazarika, secretary of the Consumers' Legal Protec-

tion Forum, Assam said that "the Motor Vehicle Amendment Bill is due for urgent discussions and passage in the Parliament. This is one of the most important Acts which requires urgent push to save millions of lives on Indian roads. Approximately 1,400 crashes and 400 deaths take place every day on Indian roads, which translates into 57 accidents and losses of 17 lives on an average every day. The Central Motor Vehicle Amendment Act is crucial Bill that will be affecting lives of all our citizens either as motorists or pedestrians."

According to a report released by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, India recorded 5,01,423 road crashes, 1,46,133 road traffic deaths and 4,93,474 injuries in 2015. Approximately 1,374 crashes and 400 deaths take place every day on Indian roads.

As per the National Crime Records Bureau, there were 7,633 traffic accident cases in Assam in 2015. A total of 3,083 persons died and another 7,068 persons were injured in these traffic accidents. Assam's share in the total accidental deaths nationwide in 2015 was one cent.

A copy of the memorandum was also submitted to Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari.

MPs can play a pivotal role in saving the lives of approxi-



A stall at the Bor Asom Rongali Mela at the Sivnath Sarma Bhawan in Guwahati, on Sunday. - UB Photos

Discussion on depression held

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 9: World Health Day with its theme 'Depression: Let's talk' was observed at NEDFI House here on Friday. Over 170 delegates attended the event.

Dr Bornali Das, psychiatric social worker from the Department of Psychiatry, Guwahati Medical College & Hospital (GMCH), and secretary of the Society for Mental Health in LAMIC (SoMHL) started the proceedings.

Organising chairperson Prof Hemendra Ram Phookon, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychiatry, welcomed the delegates.

Prof Atindra Kumar Adhikari, Principal-cum-Chief Superintendent, president of SoMHL,

GMCH, delivered the keynote address. It was followed by the World Health Day theme presentation by Dr Debashish Roy, Regional Team Leader (East) World Health Organisation – India (NFSNP). Next was a skit on depression by Aawaz Foundation from the Tista Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Guwahati.

Former Head of the Department of Psychology, GMCH, Prof Dipesh Bhagabati delivered a talk on 'Depression: Relevance and Way Forward in Assam and North East Region of India', followed by the narration of his suffering from depression by Biswajeet Das.

Dr Mythili Hazarika, Clinical Psychologist, Department of Psychiatry, GMCH, and president of SoMHL, started the proceedings.

Prof Phookon moderated a panel discussion participated in by Manisha Hazarika, Dr Srikrishna Dua, PJ Barua, Dr Debjit Nath and Neelotpal Deka, representing personalities from music, academics, literature, media, police, and law.

On the occasion, a day-long programme has been chalked out with *puga archana* and *abhisekh* of Lord Hanuman followed by *maha-aarti*, special *prasad* distribution in the form of a 101-kg 'pedha', cultural programmes, a cultural procession, etc., a press release said.

Noted singer Anuradha Paudwal and her son Devi Paudwal will present bhajans on the occasion.

Book released

GUWAHATI, April 9: A book titled *Eri Oha Sonali Dinbar*, written by Dipika Khandu was released this afternoon at her Rajbari Road residence here.

A few among those present on the occasion shared their views, while Khandu herself spoke about her writing on topics close to her heart.

Nistha Khandu, writer's granddaughter enthralled the gathering by presenting a song.

Pratibha Bhuyan, newly-elected president of the Samiti, thanked the members for all the help and cooperation to the Samiti in its various activities. - Staff Reporter

Don Bosco varsity team wins Smart Indian Hackathon

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 9: Two teams from Assam Don Bosco University (ADB) were in the final eight of the latest AICTE-organised 'Smart India Hackathon 2017' and one of them was declared winner of the contest, along with three other teams.

This ADBU team, named MATRIX, the only team from North East India, was among the winning teams of the contest and was adjudged fourth, stated a press release here on Saturday. The contest had recently ended.

The ADBU team consisted of six students and was men-

tored by Dr Bobby Sarma and Gypsy Nandi of the CSE department under the leadership of team member Abhijit Matak. Their project was 'Explaining the Future Projects of North East India'. Their project code has been delivered to and accepted by DoNER.

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En masse boycott over lack of pension benefits ends at DU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Sarbananda Sonowal, Chief Minister of Assam and Himanta Biswa Sarma, Health Minister inaugurating the plaque announcing the 'Bhumi pojan' and construction of the Lakhimpur Medical College at Saboti on Saturday. - UB Photos

Bhumi poojan of NL Medical College performed

CORRESPONDENT

NORTH LAKHIMPUR, April 9: *Bhumi pojan* and start of construction work on the much-awaited Medical College here took place on Saturday with the declaration by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal that henceforth the erstwhile backward north bank areas along the Brahmaputra would witness a paradigm shift on the development front.

The *bhumi poojan* began with a religious ceremony which was attended by the Chief Minister, State Health Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, PWD Minister Parimal Sarkar Baidya, Health Commis-

sioner Sameer Sinha and four MLAs from Lakhimpur, namely Utpal Dutta, Naba Doley, Mamun Imdadul Haq Chaudhury and Devananda Hazarika, besides Lakhimpur MP Pradhan Baruah.

A largely attended public meeting was organised in the campus of North Lakhimpur Civil Hospital to mark the occasion. Addressing the public, Chief Minister Sonowal said that history would remember this day for the beginning of a medical college in North Lakhimpur. He said that the north bank areas of the Brahmaputra in Assam, known for its perennial backwardness and least developed status,

would henceforth witness a paradigm shift in development.

Speaking on the occasion, State Health Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma shed light on the welfare schemes initiated by the Government for overall development in the healthcare sector. Cheques in the form of compensation for land acquisitions were also distributed in the meeting which was attended by Lakhimpur Deputy Commissioner Barun Bhuyan.

Akhanda Bhagawat Pooja: Earlier on Friday, the Chief Minister attended the silver jubilee celebration of *Akhanda Bhagawat Pooja* at Leteku Pukhuri Thaan, the birthplace of Vaishnavite saint

Srimanta Madhavadeva near Belpurha. He also formally inaugurated a coconut plantation supported by the Coconut Development Board and Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare in the presence of Satradhikar Janardan Deo Goswami of Uttar Kamalabari Satra.

The Chief Minister also attended an external evaluator programme related to *Gunotsav* at a local high school on Friday morning, besides visiting the Panindra Vidyalaya along with its ex-students and Lakhimpur MLA Utpal Dutta. He subsequently interacted with the teachers and students of the school.

Bihu wokshop concludes

JAGIROAD, April 9: Sanskriti Gosthi, Jagiroad organised a nine-day Bihu workshop at the Jagiroad Sports Association ground which concluded on April 7. A total of 60 participants, mostly students from greater Jagiroad area took part in it. Ranumon Gogoi and Priyanka Gogoi, both from Lakhimpur imparted training on different techniques of Bihu dances in the workshop. — Correspondent

OBITUARY

PC Goswami

GUWAHATI, April 9: Prabhat Chandra Goswami, a resident of Kalipur, here passed away on April 7 following a cardiac arrest. He was 89.

Late Goswami served banking sector in different capacities and retired as a treasurer from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Guwahati.

He was also actively associated with various social activities in Kamakhya and Kalipur areas. Goswami's demise was widely mourned in Kalipur.

He leaves behind his wife, three sons and three daughters. — Hahi Ram Nath

CORRESPONDENT

MANGALDAI, April 9: Hahi Ram Nath, a renowned academician, retired principal of Mangaldoi Town Girls' Higher Secondary School, a lawyer and a prominent activist of the Assam Movement passed away on Friday at his Santipur residence here. He was 85.

He was one of the architects of creating an environment for women education in Darrang district and was instrumental in the establishment of Mangaldoi Girls' College. He was also associated with several socio-cultural and literary organisations including Mangaldoi Moira Parijat, Darrang Zila Yogi Sammelan, Mangaldoi Sahitya Sanskriti Alochona Chakra, Darrang Scout and Guide among others. His demise was widely mourned in the greater Mangaldoi area.

1,891 schools covered under Gunotsav in Dibrugarh dist

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 9: *Gunotsav*, the initiative launched by the State Government for quality assessment in elementary education evoked good response in Dibrugarh along with rest of the State. The *Gunotsav* ended on April 7, a press release stated.

The idea behind the initiative was to evaluate schools and students by assessing their performance and design strategies to bring about quality improvement in levels of learning as well as in the school environment.

Of the 1,891 schools in the district, 1,448 provincial lower primary schools, 269 upper primary schools, 52 composite schools and 122 tea garden-managed lower primary schools were externally evaluated by 645 external evaluators from the district as well as from the neighbouring districts like Tinsukia, Sivasagar, and Charaideo.

Ravi Kapoor, Additional Chief Secretary, Industry & Commerce & Social Welfare visited Dibrugarh Bengali High School, Graham Bazar Boys' MES and Graham Bazar Girls' HS and interacted with the pupils, parents and the teachers and offered valuable suggestions for improvement of the learning process, besides taking recourse to childwise monitoring with effective classroom transaction.

Rajiv Kumar Borah, Additional Chief Secretary, WPT & BC and PWD visited Amotyoti Jyoti LP School, Chappori Ward LP School and Jentinatum MI School and performed external evaluation on reading, writing and numeracy skill of the pupils.

While expressing his observations on the competency level of English, he revealed that the students should be encouraged to enjoy the language through regular reading and writing practices in their age-appropriate classes so as to develop their ability to communicate effectively.

Mahbubor Rahman: a tribute



Born on September 1, 1923 at Nagaon in Sivasagar district, Mahbubor Rahman has passed his matriculation examination in 1938 obtaining 1st division from Calcutta University. After passing the intermediate examination in Arts from Sivasagar in 1940, he obtained his BA degree with distinction from the prestigious Cotton College in 1943.

Thereafter, he joined the Co-operative Societies of Government of Assam in 1945. Initially he was posted in Dibruri district as Inspector of Co-operative Societies and in that capacity he served the department in different places of Lower Assam and Barak Valley and, thereby, earned the reputation of an honest, sincere and dedicated officer of the Government.

He was promoted to the post of Asstt. Registrar of Co-operative Societies in 1960. Within a very short span of

time, by dint of his hard labour, sincerity and honesty, he became very popular as the key person of the co-operative movement of the State.

He also served the STAT-FED, a State Government Undertaking, as its Financial Adviser in 1972. He was promoted to the post of Deputy Registrar of Co-operative Societies in 1973. In recognition of his outstanding contributions in the field of co-operative movement of the State, he was chosen by the Government of India as one of the representatives of Assam to go for a specialised training in co-operative management in Birmingham, UK in 1972. In 1973 he was appointed by the Government of Assam as the Principal of the Co-operative Training Institute, Joysagar in Sivasagar district. He leaves behind his wife, one son, three daughters, ten grand children and a host of relatives and admirers.

Today on the day of *challisha*, we are determined to strictly follow his teachings in the remaining days of our life and pray to almighty Allah for eternal peace of his departed soul.

— Dr Matiur Rahman

A very kind hearted and courageous person, he loved to write dramas, one-act plays and had interest in debating, musical gardening. He was a silent friend of Islam and a true believer of God who used to teach us always the core principles of the religion of humanity and the wisdoms of secularism. He was very active until the time he fell sick in the year 2008 and had to be admitted for a major surgery in the hospital. His daughter Dr Gulenara Begum, a well-known debator of yester years and a reputed gynaecologist of Dhekaijuli predeceased him 12 years back. He leaves behind his wife, one son, three daughters, ten grand children and a host of relatives and admirers.

Today on the day of *challisha*, we are determined to strictly follow his teachings in the remaining days of our life and pray to almighty Allah for eternal peace of his departed soul.

— Dr Matiur Rahman

Gandheswari Baruah



Gandheswari Baruah, my revered elder mother (*bar ma*) left us bereaved for her heavenly abode on March 29 after falling ill for a few months. She was 87. People gathered at her residence at Azara to mourn the death till late in the evening.

Bar ma was a pious lady and her generosity could touch every compatriot. She was the fulcrum of peace and harmony in our greater family since the demise of my *bar deuta* in

1983. This kind and affectionate matriarch successfully upheld the dignity of our family in Azara and the neighbouring societies. She was admired by all in the locality for her socio-religious activities.

Loved by all, *bar ma* leaves us and her four well established sons and daughters-in-law alongwith six grand children. On the occasion of her *adysashradha* today, we all the members of greater family remember her and pray to the Almighty for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

— Niren Baruah

Debojani Thakuria



Our grandmother (*mai a*) Debojani Thakuria was loved and admired by all who came in contact with her – top officials, colleagues and subordinates during her tenure as an officer in the NF Railway, Morigaon, the neighbours and all relatives – for her compassionate nature and

the qualities of head and heart.

Liked by all, especially for her unassuming mild and soft manners in every walk of life, she was always an epitome of decency in whatever she did.

Small wonder that her life of 75 years was filled with modesty throughout.

Today on her *adysashradha*, we all pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to her departed soul.

— Suman, Kitti

1515 schools examined in Morigaon dist

CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, April 9: Along with the rest of the State, the *Gunotsav* programme in all the LP Schools was held in Morigaon district with a three-day programme from April 5 to 7.

The Assam Sarva Siksha Abhyayan Mission conducted the programme to create environment for quality-based primary education. In the programme, altogether 1515 nodal officers, 155 liaison officers and 505 externals were detailed to evaluate the quality of those schools. Altogether 1515 LP schools were examined in the process.

IAS officers like Rakesh Kumar, Commissioner, Excise, Anjan Chakravarti, Assam Administrative Staff College, Monimala Phukan of Assam Secretariate, DC, Nagaon, Shamsher Singh Das and several other ACS officers took part in the interaction programme with

students of those schools. The external teams examined the students' attendance, Mid day meal, school infrastructure, community involvement and student evaluation during the programme. According to official sources, 94 per cent students attendance was recorded during the evaluation period of the 1515 LP schools of Morigaon district.

Our Jagiroad Correspondent adds: Lower Assam Commissioner Ahmed Hussain on April 6 and 7 visited the 168 No. Nellie Lower Primary School and Nellie Government Middle English School respectively on the occasion of the *Gunotsav*. While visiting the schools, he assessed the quality of education including the problems of the schools specially faced by the students. A group of teachers from Jagiroad College individually visited their respective schools to assess the schools on various lines.

DIBRUGARH, April 9: The four-day boycott resorted to by the Dibrugarh University Teachers' Association, Dibrugarh University Officers' Association and Dibrugarh University Employees' Association over non-implementation of pension for the retired teachers, officers and employees, ended on Friday with a warning to the concerned authorities that the employees of the varsity would be forced to undertake extreme democratic protests in the future in the event of failure on the part of the authorities to listen to their just pleas.

The Dibrugarh University, which was recently accorded with 'A' grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was practically paralysed during the four-day boycott. Classes and official works were severely affected during the agitational programme.

It must be recalled that the Assam Legislative Assembly having amended the Dibrugarh University Act, 1965 in March 2013, paved the way for the grant of pension to the eligible retired teachers, employees and the family pensioners, responding positively to the demand of the retired teachers and employees.

The Government of Assam notified the amendment vide Notification No. vide LGL 133/2013 dated 30th May 2013. The Authority of the University, immediately after the said amendment of the Dibrugarh University Act, introduced the GPF scheme, withdrawing the CPF which was in force prior to the said amendment.

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Being deprived from both the benefits, i.e., pension as well as Contributory Provident Fund, the serving and retired teachers and employees of the University have been passing days in utmost uncertainty. Professor Salkia said.

The leaders of the coordination committee said that the executive council of the University in its meeting held on October 24, 2016 assured the delegation of teachers, officers and employees' associations that they would solve the problem within ten days after discussing the matter with the Education Minister. Though they met the Minister, there was no effective outcome till date, they said.

Meanwhile, the Dibrugarh University Post Graduate Students' Union (DUPGSU) and the AASU unit of Dibrugarh University have extended full support to the agitational programme.

The agitating leaders of the three organisations are record to have stated that they have resorted to such an agitational programme at the cost of the students for fulfilling their long-standing legitimate and genuine demand, as the life of the retired teachers and employees is quite pathetic due to lack of pension benefit.

They urged the Dibrugarh University authority and the Government of Assam to take necessary action for grant of pension to the eligible retired teachers and employees of the University so that the members are not compelled to further intensify their agitational programme for fulfilling their just demands. It may also be mentioned here that about 140 contracted teachers engaged by the varsity in different departments and centres of higher education have been demanding equal pay for equal work. The contractual teachers have alleged that they do not even get half of what their regularised colleagues receive as salaries for similar nature and same hours of work.

Centre keen on infrastructure development of region: Sinha

CORRESPONDENT

low on Saturday.

Railway and Communications

KAZIRANGA, April 9: The Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is very much concerned about the all-round development of the north-eastern region, for which it has specifically instructed his Council of Ministers to ensure that infrastructure development in terms of telecommunication, surface transport and railway services in new areas, including rail link to Arunachal Pradesh, a pit and sick line system would be placed in service for the nation at Silghat railway station at the cost of Rs 25 crore. In a pit and sick line, the train is parked in which the railway engineers and technical experts try to determine if there is any defect or mechanical failure in the particular train and repair it soon so that the train can continue its onward journey.

With regard to speedy telephonic connectivity, Sinha said that optical fibre system will be made available for the entire length of the NE region. This was observed by Union Minister of State (Independent charge) for Railways, Manoj Sinha while addressing mediapersons at Bagori Forest Inspection Bungabari-Lumding-Silchar, Lumding-Silchar-Badarpur has been completed. The worker Rangia-Murkongsele, Balipara-Bhalukpong and North Lakhimpur Murkongsele works are also being finished.

Sinha said till now Rs 369 crore had been spent for the construction Boghe bridge over the river Brahmaputra, adding that very shortly a pit and sick line system would be placed in service for the nation at Silghat railway station at the cost of Rs 25 crore. In a pit and sick line, the train is parked in which the railway engineers and technical experts try to determine if there is any defect or mechanical failure in the particular train and repair it soon so that the train can continue its onward journey.

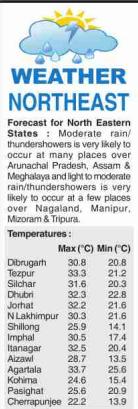
The demo train will leave Silghat at 5.15 am and reach Guwahati at 9.15 am. It was also announced that a new bridge would be constructed over the river Brahmaputra to connect with Tezpur town from Silghat. There will be railway connectivity between Chalna to Kumta, sources said.

Assault condemned

DIBRUGARH, April 9: The All Assam Sonowal Kachari Students' Union, district units of the Deori Students' Union and Hindu Yuva Chhatro Parishad have condemned the assault on Elementary Education Officer Ranjit Deori of Khowbung Block by Moran MLA Chakradhar Gogoi on the night of April 5.

The BJP MLA of Moran had reportedly slapped Ranjit Deori after levelling false allegation that the officer was drunk during the ongoing *Gunotsav* programme. The organisations while criticising the MLA for allegedly tormenting and harassing the tribal officer, said that such an assault on tribal community members will not be tolerated.

They called upon the Chief Minister and the Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly to award exemplary punishment to the errant MLA. — Staff Correspondent



Heroin seized, one arrested

AIZAWL, April 9: Narcotics department's Anti Narcotics Squad seized 60 grams of heroin here today and arrested one person in this connection, department sources said.

The sources said that Malsawmual (35) of Aizawl was arrested for allegedly possessing the contraband worth around Rs 2 lakh in the local market.

The accused was booked under sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and produced before Special Judge (NDPS Act) who remanded him to judicial custody.

Mizoram, with its strategic location, has been one of the main routes for heroin trafficking via Myanmar with which it shares 404-km international border - PTI

Palm Sunday celebrated

AIZAWL, April 9: Palm Sunday, locally known as 'Tumkai Ni', was celebrated across Mizoram today amidst prayer and worship services in churches and children taking out processions and singing hymns.

Sunday school students carrying palm leaves took out processions this morning to commemorate the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem city on the last Sunday before his crucifixion.

Prayer services were held in the churches of different Christian denominations.

The day is called Palm Sunday because the people of Jerusalem threw palm leaves on the floor as a greeting when Jesus Christ arrived in Jerusalem. - PTI

Garlic fest held

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 9: The 5th edition of district level Garlic festival cum sale was held at Taliu village in Manipur's Ukhral district on Saturday. The village SHG group produced more than 10,000 kg of garlic this year.

More than 4000 kg of garlic worth over Rs 1 lakh and other items were sold in the day-long festival.

Workers arrested: Police have arrested three workers of the banned People's Liberation Army/Revolutionary People's Front on Saturday. One 9 mm Steyr Pistol made in Austria along with 7 live rounds were recovered from them, police source said.



Manipur Govt to observe People's Day every month

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 9: In a move to provide easy access to the elected representatives and top bureaucrats, Bharatiya Janata Party-led coalition government in Manipur is planning to announce 15th of every month as 'Meeyamti Numit' (People's Day).

Announcing this at a reception by the women vendors of Nupi Keithel, women's market here on Sunday, Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh said a formal official order would be issued soon in this regard.

Stating that his government is fully committed to work in the interest of the people of Manipur, he said the public

would be allowed to meet the CM, Ministers, Commissioners, Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners and SPs to lodge their complaints and air their grievances on the 15th of every month.

He said that ending the UNC-sponsored economic blockade, resolving Chacharadpur issue and revamping Imphal-Jiribam sector of NH-37 were the three tasks he had set for himself after he was sworn in as the CM.

Stating that the first round of talks with JAC Churachandpur has come to an end on a positive note, he expressed hope that the impasse would be resolved within a few days. He said he would personally inspect the repair works on the Imphal-Jiribam Highway.

Meghalaya police advisory to land owners

SHILLONG, April 9: Meghalaya police on Saturday issued an advisory to land owners not to fall prey to criminals claiming to be representatives of telecom companies for setting up mobile towers.

"It has come to the notice of the police that some unscrupulous persons are calling public randomly over mobile phone claiming to be functionaries/employees of Reliance Communication or other service providers for setting up mobile towers," SP Chivik Syiem said in a statement.

He said these criminals first asked the persons whether they had any land available for

setting up of mobile tower and documents for verification, including PAN card.

Several people have fallen prey to such criminals and payments of Rs 20,000 to Rs 1 lakh were demanded as security deposits for the contract, the SP said.

The callers, using Kolkata-based SIM cards, would stop only when they realize that the victims cannot pay anymore, he said.

"All steps are being taken by the police to nab the culprits and book them as per law," he said adding that the advisory was issued to ensure that the public were not cheated. - PTI

'Dead man' gets 10 yrs RI for rape

CORRESPONDENT

AIZAWL, April 9: A middle-aged man in northern Mizoram's Lawngtlai district, who had faked his own death, has been convicted for raping a physically and mentally challenged girl in 2014.

The court of Lunglel additional district & sessions judge Helen Dawglangi sentenced Muin Rai to ten years and six months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 70,000. If he cannot pay the fine, his punishment will be extended by another six months.

The fine, if paid, will go as compensation to the rape victim as per section 357 Cr PC, the court summed up the person who put his signature on the death

Police busts fake HSRP racket

DIMAPUR, April 9: The Anti Vehicle Theft Squad (AVTS) of Dimapur Police have claimed to have busted a racket dealing in fake High Security Registration Plate (HSRP) of vehicles and arrested two persons.

The racket was unearthed recently while investigating cases of fake registration number plate found in some vehicles leading to the arrest of two persons, Dimapur Police said.

The two arrested persons have been identified as Neishakholie Sanjhu, resident of 4th Mile, Dimapur and Sanjay Thapa, resident of Kuda village, Dimapur, the police said. - PTI

certificate, and found that the signature was forged. The officer, whose forged signature was on the death certificate, immediately filed an FIR.

Rai's wife was then arrested and jailed for giving wrong information to the court. She later confessed that her husband was not dead and she forged the death certificate.

The court thus issued warrant of arrest for Rai. After a few months of massive manhunt, the police found Rai alive in Kolaisib district in northern Mizoram and arrested him.

The court, after hearing from seven witnesses, found Rai guilty of the crime beyond reasonable doubt.

The rape victim's father had filed an FIR with Lawngtlai police station alleging that Rai raped his daughter when she was alone at home on November 27, 2014. After investigation, the accused was arrested and was charged under section 376 (2) (i) IPC. His case was sent to a higher court in Lunglel.

After he was in jail for some time, Rai was released on bail. He then failed to appear in court and became untraceable.

Later, his wife approached the court claiming that her husband had died, and she produced his death certificate.

Suspecting a foul play, the court summoned the person who put his signature on the death

certificate, and found that the signature was forged. The officer, whose forged signature was on the death certificate, immediately filed an FIR.

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Every hill district headquarters would now have a women's market each, he said, adding the Centre had already sanctioned funds for the said project.

Taking serious note of leakage of question papers of Physics subject in Class XII examinations conducted by Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur (CHSE), he said an independent body would probe, he said. The Government will not spare those who are involved in the mess, he added.

The function was attended by Works, RD& PR, Commerce and Industries, Power and IPR Minister Th Biswajit and MAHD, Forest and Environment and Horticulture and Soil Conservation Minister Th Shyamkumar.

Nagaland Govt enhances maternity leave

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, April 9: Government of Nagaland has enhanced the existing ceiling of 90 days of maternity leave under Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972 to 180 days for female State Government employees.

The Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms in an office memorandum stated that the State Government is following the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972 as amended from time to time.

The memo also stated that the maternity leave may be combined with leave of any other kind; and it shall not be debited against the leave account.

Further, it said, a woman employee in whose case the period of 90 days of maternity leave has not expired on the said date shall also be entitled to the maternity leave of 180 days.

Maternity leave not exceeding 45 days may also be granted to a female government servant irrespective of the

number of surviving children during the entire service of that female government employee in case of miscarriage including abortion on production of medical certificate.

The memo also stated that the maternity leave may be combined with leave of any other kind; and it shall not be debited against the leave account.

Further, it said, a woman employee in whose case the period of 90 days of maternity leave has not expired on the said date shall also be entitled to the maternity leave of 180 days.



Meghalaya health centres in shambles

NEWMAL NEWS

beyond shortfall of specialist doctors, nurses and staff.

The CAG recommended the State Government to establish new primary health centres (PHCs) and sub-health centres (SHCs) as per norms and provision of essential medical and paramedical staff in the health facilities.

In its report the CAG said the shortage of medical specialists was a "serious impediment" in the proper delivery of healthcare services in the State and also pointed out that the State Government had failed to set up district hospitals in the newly created districts apart from over 40 per cent shortfall of sub-centres in the State.

The CAG report attributed the shortfall of 328 sub-centres in the State to the shortage of district health centres and

sub-health centres. It also held it as one of the factors responsible for shortfall in achievement of targets such as institutional deliveries, antenatal care, etc. The CAG report further reveals the sorry state of affairs in the existing district hospitals as there were shortages of 56 per cent specialist doctors and nearly 20 per cent in case of staff nurses. Going by the Indian Public Health Standard (IPHS) norms, the CAG said that there was shortfall of 51 specialist doctors, 17 general doctors, 57 staff nurses and 955 paramedical staff in all.

The non-utilisation of operation theatres at Nongstang district hospital in West Khasi Hills district and Nongpho district hospital in Ri-Bhoi district also came under criticism of the CAG which also pointed out that some CHCs do not even have the basic infrastructure facilities such as blood bank, water supply and others.

The "irrational" deployment of doctors in PHCs was also noted by the CAG which found out that while some PHCs had two doctors, some did not have even a single doctor. "As a result, the average of deliveries during 2015-16 in four PHCs with two doctors each was 102 while two PHCs without a doctor was only 33," the report stated.

The non-utilisation of operation theatres at Nongstang district hospital in West Khasi Hills district and Nongpho district hospital in Ri-Bhoi district also came under criticism of the CAG which also pointed out that some CHCs do not even have the basic infrastructure facilities such as blood bank, water supply and others.

NE women entrepreneur awards presented

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 9: Manipuri entrepreneur Keisham Babita Devi along with seven other women entrepreneurs have been awarded "Vasundhara NE Woman Entrepreneur of the Year" for the year 2014-15 in a function held in Guwahati on Saturday.

North Eastern Council Secretary Ram Muivali attended the award ceremony organised by Sreemanta Sankar Mission of Guwahati. The focus of the year 2014-15 has been selected as the focus of State of the event.

The Vasundhara—NE Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award is annually conferred on eight nominated women entrepreneurs from each State of NE on the basis of their achievements.

The brightest among them is chosen for the regional award which carries a cash award of Rs 25,000 along with a winner's trophy, an eri shawl and a plaque.

The awardees are Radha Devi Gurung of Sikkim, Tabu Yall Nabam of Arunachal Pradesh, Kevisedenuo Margaret Zinyu of Nagaland, Sunitha Babita Devi of Manipur, Zoramchhani Ralte of Tripura, Jannexaline Mary Pyngone of Meghalaya and Nabajit Bora of Assam.

After observing the problems faced by artisans of Manipur, Babita Devi turned the problem into a prospect, by taking up a challenge and started doing value addition in Kausa reed products through her unit M/S Natural Textile and Collection since 2005. The move ensured regular work for the artisans because business by making products from raw materials that are abundantly found locally.

APYC chief's house gutted CORRESPONDENT

ITANAGAR, April 9: In a major fire, the building of Arunachal Pradesh Youth Congress (APYC) president Jikje Tako located at Chimpui here was reduced to ashes last night, rendering the occupants homeless.

Police said the inferno that broke out last midnight was suspected to be caused by electric short circuit. There was, however, no loss of life as all the family members were away at the time of the fire, informed the APYC president.

He said that all the household properties including food items were completely gutted. A fire tender was rushed to the spot following a fire call but it was too late for the firemen as the house was already consumed by the devastating fire, said Fire Officer Koj Taro.

Mizoram fire mishap kills 3

NEWMAL NEWS

AIZAWL, April 9: At least three persons including two children were burnt to death when their house caught fire on Friday night, a delayed report said today.

The incident occurred at the Taha hamlet in Mizoram's south Lunglei district on Friday evening.

Police said the house was gutted by fire which was reportedly caused by electric short circuit.

The head of the family Taha (50), his son Bawnita (10) and one-year-old daughter Merry were charred to death.

Taha's wife and another neighbour were rescued by neighbours. One son was out of home at the time of the fire incident, police said.

The blaze completely gutted the house, police added.

Baby drowned

CORRESPONDENT

TURA, April 9: A baby was found drowned by residents in the Ganol river near Mukdanga village under Garoahda. The body was recovered last evening after local saw it floating in the river.

"The child's body has been sent for post mortem. We are awaiting the report to determine if the child was still-born, abandoned or drowned after birth," said police.

Rains likely to continue in NE

STAFF REPORTER

sam and its neighbourhood. This is extending up to 2.1 km above the mean sea level.

According to sources in the Borjhar-based Regional Meteorology Centre (RMC) here on Friday, between March 1 and April 7, Assam and Meghalaya's Meteorological Sub-division received 225.7 mm of rainfall against the normal of 109.6 mm for the period. Arunachal Pradesh Meteorological Sub-division recorded 312.1 mm of rainfall during this period, against the normal of 254.1 mm and Nagaland-Mizoram-Tripura (NMMT) Meteorological Sub-division received 222.9 mm of rainfall, against the normal of 104.5 mm for the period, said the RMC sources.

Assam and Meghalaya Sub-division is likely to receive scattered rainfall with 26 per cent to 50 per cent area being drenched by rains. The Sub-division is likely to receive fairly widespread rainfall with 51 per cent to 75 per cent area being drenched by rains.

Arunachal Pradesh Sub-division is likely to receive fairly widespread rainfall. It is likely to receive widespread rainfall on April 10 with its 75 per cent or more areas being drenched by rains.

Arunachal Pradesh Sub-division is likely to receive "adequate priority" to the health sector resulting in shortage of over 300 health centres in villages,

besides shortfall of specialist doctors, nurses and staff.

The CAG recommended the State Government to establish new primary health centres (PHCs) and sub-health centres (SHCs) as per norms and provision of essential medical and paramedical staff in the health facilities.

In its report the CAG said the shortage of medical specialists was a "serious impediment" in the proper delivery of healthcare services in the State and also pointed out that the State Government had failed to set up district hospitals in the newly created districts apart from over 40 per cent, 48 per cent and 23 per cent in the posts of specialist doctors, general doctors and staff nurses respectively. It, however, noted that there was

Under the impact of the latter trough, a cyclonic circulation is lying over central Assam.

CAPSULE**JLR new products**

NEW DELHI, April 9: Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover plans to launch 10 new products in India this year as it looks to accelerate sales growth. The company will also consider assembling more models in India as part of its strategy to enhance operational efficiency. –PTI

Mother Dairy

NEW DELHI, April 9: Mother Dairy's turnover grew by 9 per cent in the last fiscal to about Rs 7,850 crore helped by better sales in value-added dairy products and edible oils businesses. Mother Dairy, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Dairy Development Board (NDB), had posted a turnover of Rs 7,186 crore in 2015-16. –PTI

Samsung R&D

NEW DELHI, April 9: Samsung Electronics India filed the maximum number of patent applications in the IT sector in 2015-16, followed by home-grown TCS and Wipro. According to the annual report of Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs, Trademarks and Geographical Indications, the other top applicants include premier Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs) and HCL Technologies. –PTI

Woodland

NEW DELHI, April 9: Footwear and apparel firm Woodland plans to add up to 120 exclusive outlets across India by the end of 2018 as it also gears up to enter Japan and South Korea. Currently, the company has 600 exclusive outlets apart from presence in 5,000 multi-brand stores in India. –PTI

BookaTruck

NEW DELHI, April 9: Truck booking start-up BookaTruck looks to raise about Rs 25 crore in the third quarter of this fiscal to expand its presence across the country. BookaTruck launched the app-based service for booking of heavy commercial vehicles in February this year. –PTI

Natio target

NEW DELHI, April 9: Australian skincare and make-up brand Natio has raised Rs 20 crore by the end of this fiscal in India while continuing to focus on e-commerce channels to drive its sales. "Online is our main sales channel and we will continue to focus on it. This year, however, we are also looking at increasing our geographic expansion," Baloo Vouz Managing Director Divya Thukral told PTI.

CaratLane

MUMBAI, April 9: Jewellery portal CaratLane is planning to add 30 more retail stores and also eyeing to double its business turnover in the current fiscal. "We expect growth to be well ahead of the industry average this year. We are looking at doubling our business in the current financial year. Our growth will be driven by increasing our online transactions as well as by opening more retail stores," CaratLane CEO and Co-founder Mithun Sacheti told PTI here.

IndiGo flights

NEW DELHI, April 9: Budget passenger carrier IndiGo on Saturday said that it flew 900 flights on April 7, 2017, setting the record for the highest number of flights ever by an Indian airline in the history of Indian civil aviation sector. "We at IndiGo are thrilled on having flown 900 daily flights for the first time on Friday..." said Aditya Ghosh, President and Whole-Time Director, IndiGo. –PTI

IOC/I plan

NEW DELHI, April 9: Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) on Saturday said it will be investing Rs 5,400 crore on its various infrastructure projects in Kerala which will contribute significantly to the State's economy and its people. Elaborating on the roadmap, IOCL Kerala head PS Manohar said they are constructing an LPG import terminal with six lakh MT capacity per year in Pathiyapeen SEZ of Cochin Port Trust. –IANS



State Secretary-Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, Fomichev Oleg Vladislavovich and the Secretary, Dept of Science and Technology, Prof Ashutosh Sharma, at the India-Russia Round-Table on S&T Research Cooperation, jointly organised by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation & Science & Technology wing, Embassy of India in Moscow, at Bangalore on Friday. –UNI

President urges people to help make India cashless society

NEW DELHI, April 9: President Pranab Mukherjee today urged the people to support the government's mission to make India a cashless society.

"I urge all citizens to extend their unstinted support to the mission of a less cash India. All efforts of the government will achieve their end only if people were to adopt them proactively," the President said.

Mukherjee was speaking on the occasion of the 100th mega draw of lots for Lucky Grahak Yojana and Digi Dhan Yojana at Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

"India has a long way to go to be- come a cashless society. Presently, we remain primarily a cash-based economy with about 95 per cent of the personal consumption and 86 per cent of all transactions being in cash," President Mukherjee said.

Appreciating the government initiatives, he said: "It is necessary to re- duce cash in circulation and impart greater urgency to promoting secure digital payment methods to ensure greater transparency."

Calling the Aadhaar card a water- shed event in the development story

of India, President Mukherjee said: "Aadhaar enabled payment system has made digital payments possible for even those section of the population who may not have mobile phones."

"Launch of BHIM has demystified the digital payments and brought it within the grasp of every citizen," he said while discussing the new modes of digital payments which are being developed for making payments easier.

He complimented the government for the initiatives, for promoting the culture of digital payment in the country.

The government launched the

Lucky Grahak Yojana for consumers and Digi Dhan Yojana for merchants on December 25, 2016, in order to promote and encourage digital transactions. These schemes are being implemented by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

The Lucky Grahak Yojana rewards Rs 1,000 daily to 15,000 customers undertaking digital transactions. Weekly prizes up to Rs 1 lakh for consumers and Rs 50,000 for merchants are given. As on March 30, 2017, 13.5 lakh consumers and 79,519 merchants have received prizes under these schemes. –IANS

Appoint data security officers by April 30: IRDAI to insurers

NEW DELHI, April 9: Insurance firms will have to mandatorily appoint a chief information security officer by April 30 whose main job would be ensuring data protection.

This is part of sector regulator Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) cyber security guidelines that will be implemented in series, the first phase of which begins on April 30 and complete a full circle by end-March 2018.

"By March 31, all insurance companies will have to appoint a Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) who will be responsible for articulating and enforcing the policies to protect their information assets and formation of Information Security Committee (ISC)," IRDAI said in circular.

Data security is important and needs proper guard against theft and misuse as insurers and related entities share significant amount of personal and confidential policy holder information, at times even sensitive health-related ones, with third parties. –PTI

Most billing complaints for Airtel, Vodafone, Idea: TRAI

NEW DELHI, April 9: Users of Airtel, Vodafone and Idea mobile services filed maximum billing complaints in October-December of 2016, as per the latest report of TRAI.

The complaints in the case of Bharti Airtel mostly came from 2G pre-paid subscribers in Tamil Nadu (including Chennai), Kolkata, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir; where the bench-mark violation ranged between 0.11 per cent and 0.12 per cent.

Complaints against Idea in the North-east telecom circle pertained to 0.11 per cent of disputed bills.

As for other quality parameters, the complaint level should not be more than 0.1 per cent per 100 bills issued in one quarter.

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5-year old Varad Bhushan Malhotra was awarded four National-level records at an event organised for World Records India for the Youngest to recognise most car models in a minute, to record fastest reverse ABCD, to identify all states of India on the map in least time, and the youngest to arrange all states of India to form map of the country in least time at Nartanya Vidyalayam in Nagpur on Sunday. – UNI

Guru for observing Mahavir Jayanti as 'Ahimsa Diwas'

MUMBAI, April 9: Maharashtra Governor C Vidyasagar Rao today said teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir can save the world from devastation and suggested his birth anniversary be observed as 'Ahimsa Diwas' at the global level. The Governor was speaking at a programme to mark the 2616th Jann Kalyanak' of Bhagwan Mahavir (Mahavir Jayanti) here.

The concept of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) as propounded by Lord Mahavir had wider connotations, Rao said. He asserted that Ahimsa does not mean refraining from killing of any living being alone. 'Ahimsa' in totality means 'Ahimsa' in words, 'Ahimsa' in thought and 'Ahimsa' in action, he said.

Referring to the news of chemical weapons attack on civilians, including children in Syria, the Governor said, "Bhagwan Mahavir's message of 'Anekanta' (multiplicity of viewpoints) and Ahimsa could alone save the world from devastation and put it on the path of peace, progress and development." – PTI

Anti-Narcotic official's gunman, 2 others held

CHANDIGARH, April 9: Three persons including a gunman posted with an incharge of the Anti-Narcotic Cell of Punjab Police and a constable were arrested from Ludhiana for alleged heroin trafficking and extortion.

Gurwinder Singh, the gunman posted with the Anti-Narcotic Cell, official, and police constable Ranjit Singh, posted at police lines in Ludhiana, have been arrested, ADPC (Crime) of Ludhiana Police Balkar Singh said.

Five grams of heroin was also seized from them following which both officials were suspended, he said.

Another person identified as Gurcharan Singh was also arrested, Singh said, adding two other accused named Lakhwir Singh and Gurcharan Singh are absconding and a hunt is on for them.

Dalwinder, Lakhwir and Gurcharan Singh were already facing charges of extortion, drug trafficking, theft among others and were named in cases at several police stations, they said. – PTI



Monkey mate: The eight-year-old girl who was found living with monkeys in the Kataraynigad Wildlife Sanctuary was admitted to a Lucknow hospital on Saturday. – UNI

Indian, Chinese navies rescue merchant ship in Gulf of Aden

NEW DELHI, April 9: Navies of India and China today rescued a merchant ship in the Gulf of Aden after it was hijacked by Somalis pirates, in a well-coordinated operation which came in the midst of strain in ties between the two countries over a range of issues.

After getting a distress call about the attack by pirates on the cargo vessel OS 35 last night with 19 Filipino crew members, the Indian Navy despatched its two frontline warships, INS Mumbai and INS Tarkash,

while the Chinese Navy also moved in its missile frigate Yulin. The two Indian ships were in the region as part of a maritime deployment.

The merchant ship was travelling from Keeling in Malaysia to port city of Aden in Yemen and following the attack, the crew had locked themselves in the 'citadel', a safe room inside the vessel, according to the Indian Navy.

While the Indian Navy de-

ployed a helicopter that provided air cover, the Chinese side sent in a team of 18 personnel to sanitise the 178-metre-long merchant ship registered in Pacific island of Tuvalu.

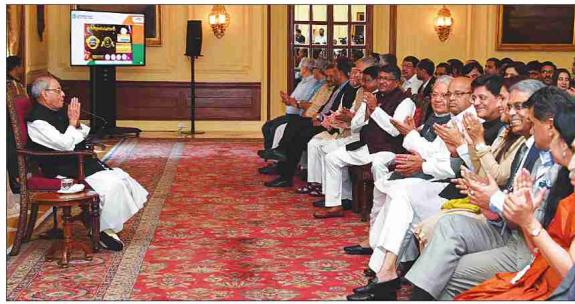
At the end of the operation, the Chinese Navy thanked Indian navy for their role in successful operation. The Indian Navy also returned compliment to their Chinese counterparts.

"In a show of international maritime cooperation against piracy, a boarding party from the nearby Chinese Navy ship went

on board the merchant ship, while the Indian Naval helicop-

ter provided air cover for the operation. It has been established that all 19 Filipino crew members are safe," Navy spokesperson Capt DR Shrivastava said.

The well-coordinated operation by navies of India and China comes amid strain in ties between the two Asian giants over a range of issues including the Dalai Lama's visit to Taiwan, China's opposition to India's NSG membership and Beijing blocking India's effort to declare JeM chief Masood Azhar as global terrorist by the UN. – PTI



Mega Draw of Lucky Grahak Yajana And Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana, startup by President Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. – UNI

Lalu trashes charge of amassing ill-gotten property

PATNA, April 9: RJD president Lalu Prasad today termed the BJP allegations of transfer of benami properties to his family as 'baseless and absurd', claiming that all the transactions were carried out in accordance with the law.

"All the allegations levelled against my family (wife and two sons) are baseless and absurd. All the transactions have been done in accordance with the relevant provisions of the laws concerned," Prasad said.

BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi had on April 7 demanded that Chief Minister Nitish

built in Patna belonged to the company owned by his family.

To a query on the ownership of the land on which the mall is coming up, Prasad said, "The land belongs to the company in which three persons namely Rabri Devi, Tejashwi Prasad Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav are the shareholders. Half of the share in the mall being built will be of the builder, while the remaining half will be that of the company," Prasad said.

Modi had alleged that Prasad during his tenure as Railways Minister had sold off two hotels in Puri and Ranchi controlled by the Railways to a hospitality chain owned by one Harsh

Kumar sack Lalu Prasad's two ministers for allegedly getting benami properties worth Rs 750 crore transferred in their names. Asserting that all the transactions with regard to transfer of shares have been done as per the laws, Prasad said the charges were a conspiracy to tarnish the image of his family.

Modi had alleged that Prasad during his tenure as Railways Minister had sold off two hotels in Puri and Ranchi controlled by the Railways to a hospitality chain owned by one Harsh

Kochar in February 2005. "Kochar in turn got two acres of land registered in the name of Delight Marketing Company Private Limited, in which Lalu Prasad's wife Rabri Devi and his two sons Tej Pratap Yadav and Tejashwi Yadav were made directors," he had alleged.

Replying to the allegations, RJD supreme claimed Kochar was allotted the lease of two hotels through competitive bidding and the highest bidder was given the lease of the two hotels.

Reacting to Prasad's comment, Modi claimed that his allegations have been proved 'correct' as Prasad had himself 'admitted' that he is the owner of the said land of two acres with an estimated cost Rs 500 crore.

"I am happy that Lalu Prasad has admitted all the charges levelled by me. He has not denied any kind of allegations such as Delight company, LARA or his son's shares in the company rather he tried to convince the people that it has been done in a legal and fair manner," Modi said. – PTI

Son decapitates mother to propitiate Kali

PURULIA (WB), April 9: A youth allegedly decapitated his mother to propitiate Goddess Kali at Barabazar in Purulia district. Superintendent of Police, Joy Biswas, said that the accused Narayan Mahato (35) allegedly sliced off the head of his mother Phuli Mahato (55) with a 'chhargo' (sharp-edged blade, used to sacrifice animal during worship) on Friday evening when she was cleaning the compound of the Kali temple at Bamagram under Barabazar police station area.

Narayan, the youngest son of the woman, then went to the residence of his elder brother with the blood-smeared weapon and claimed that their mother had beheaded herself before the idol, the SP said. His elder brother then rushed to the house with the accused and saw the severed head of their mother lying in a pool of blood with the torso some distance away. He informed the matter to the police.

Narayan was then taken into the custody of police late Friday night and following interrogation, he confessed having beheaded his mother to propitiate the goddess, the SP said.

The accused told the interrogators that goddess Kali had asked him in dream to kill his mother for the well-being of the family, the officer said.

The accused was remanded to 14 days' judicial custody by the district court yesterday.

"We are exploring all angles and possible motives," Biswas said. Neighbours said the accused was a 'tantric' who performed occult rituals and had installed the Kali temple at his home. The deceased woman had three sons. – PTI



A metro transport corporation bus and a car lie helpless as a portion of the road caves in at the Metro Rail Project at aertial Anna Salai, in Chennai on Sunday. – UNI

Delhi's Lodhi Garden completes 81 memorable years

NEW DELHI, April 9: Described as the 'best urban oasis in Asia', city's iconic Lodhi Garden, home to historic tombs and some of the most exotic plants and bird species, today turned 81.

The horticultural delight, nestled in the heart of Delhi, bordering the posh Lodhi Estate and upscale Khan Market, was opened on April 9, 1936 as 'The Lady Willingdon Park' named after the then Vicereine of India. Covering an area of 90 acres, this garden was laid out after shifting what was then the village of Khairpur, on the outskirts of New Delhi.

"The garden happens to contain an unusually rich variety of architectural styles, ranging from Sayyid and Lodi to Mughal. The present landscaping was done by American architect Joseph Allen Stein (in 1968), and modified by a group of of

Japanese landscape designers," according to INTACH.

Incidentally, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), a Delhi-based non-profit body, which works for preservation of unprotected heritage in the country, is located in the vicinity of the garden.

Iconic post-colonial buildings in Lodhi Estate area – India International Centre (IIC), India Habitat Centre (IHC), Ford Foundation, designed by Stein, sit handsomely with the old garden.

With its beautiful flora and fauna, the garden is a favourite of many for morning and evening walks as well as for picnickers and tourists.

Besides, scattered monuments, a

variety of plants and trees can be found here, such as neem, jambun, royal bottle palm, bamboo, eucalyptus and numerous birds, including parakeets, mynahs, kingfishers, bab-

blers, and hornbills.

Mohammed Shah's (the last Sayyid dynasty ruler) tomb was one of the earliest ones to be built in the Lodi Garden (renamed post-independence) in 1444.

The octagonal tomb situated near the periphery of the garden on the

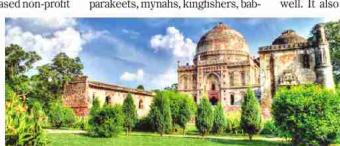
Lodhi Road side, is one of the most photographed monuments of the garden, and has been featured in various films and advertising campaigns as well. It also contains the tombs of Sikandar Lodi, besides Sheesh Gumbad, Bara Gumbad and a mosque. The monuments are embellished with intricate stonework and calligraphy.

"The garden also has a stone bridge over a stream, which was a nullah at the time the village was there. Hence, it is also called as the 'Khairpur ka Pu'. "It is indeed an oasis in the time of growing urbanisation and people must celebrate it," says city-based

activist Vikramjit Singh Rooprai, who conducts regular heritage walks. The old wrought-iron entrance gate of the garden that opens on the Rajesh Pilot Marg (old name South End Road) has stone-built pillars, on each side, which says, "The Lady Willingdon Park" and "9th April, 1936".

"But, people hardly pay attention to it. One reason is that the main gate is now on the other end of the road, but yes, we do tend to forget history. And, that is why awareness and heritage walks are important."

"We remember birthday of our political leaders and cricket icons and film stars and show our love now on social media too. It should not be hard to remember birthday of our city landmarks, not for the sake of remembering, but really to celebrate our history and heritage," Rooprai said. – PTI



Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Delhi.

Bhagwat demands law against cow slaughter

NEW DELHI, April 9: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat today advocated a nation-wide law against cow slaughter, calling it a 'vice' that must be removed, and condemned violence by cow protection groups as it 'defames' the cause. He also pitched for stepping-up of cow protection efforts by bringing more people in the drive while 'completely obeying the law and the Constitution'.

His remarks at an event to observe the birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir came against the backdrop of the lynching of a Muslim man by cow vigilantes in Alwar in BJP-ruled Rajasthan that sparked protests from opposition parties and put the saffron party on the defensive.

"Nothing should be done while protecting cows that hurts the belief of some people. Nothing should be done that is violent. It only defames the efforts of cow protectors... The work of cow conservation should be carried out while completely obeying the law and the Constitution," Bhagwat said. He said many states where RSS functionaries, a reference to BJP leaders with RSS background, have been in power have enacted such a law and expressed confidence that other governments will follow suit by dealing with local 'complexities'. Our wish is that there should be a law against cow slaughter across India," he said.

In several northeastern states, including some where BJP is in power, cow slaughter is not banned while beef is consumed widely in states like Kerala and West Bengal where the party is working to emerge as a strong political force. The RSS chief suggested that enactment of such a law everywhere will take time due to the complexities of politics. If there is a law, it will be for promoting non-violence not violence, he said, noting, "There cannot be a law that says you do violence. It is impossible. I am confident that wherever RSS workers are in power, they will deal with local complexities and work in that direction," he said. Cow protection should be promoted in such a way that it wins over more and more people to the cause and brings praise for those doing it, Bhagwat said.

Non-violent efforts will only help change the law accordingly, he said. Whether there is a law or not is the society's behaviour changes, cow slaughter will stop, he said. – PTI



NDA meet to decide future strategy today

NEW DELHI, April 9: A key meeting of the ruling NDA's top leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, heads of BJP allies and its chief Amit Shah, will be held tomorrow to take stock of the political situation and decide on future strategy.

This will be the second such after the BJP was voted to power in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) President N Chandrababu Naidu, PDP chief Mehmood Mufti are among the top BJP allies' leaders who may attend the meeting, BJP sources said.

Besides, a number of Union ministers will be present at the meeting, they said.

Sources said representatives of all the allies of the BJP across the country will participate in the meeting during the evening, followed by dinner. – PTI

Pilot turns up drunk for flight, grounded

NEW DELHI, April 9: An Air India pilot has been grounded for three months after he tested positive in the mandatory pre-flight alcohol test, minutes before operating a flight to Abu Dhabi from here. The pilot was rostered to fly the Air India Express IX 115 Delhi to Abu Dhabi flight, which was scheduled for departure from Indira Gandhi International Airport at 850pm yesterday.

"The pilot who was deputation with AI Express tested positive in the pre-flight breath analyser (BA) test. Since this was the first time he has failed his test he has been grounded for three months," an Air India source said.

Rule 24 of the Aircraft Rules prohibits crew members from partaking any alcoholic drink, 12 hours prior to the commencement of a flight, and it is mandatory for him or her to undergo an alcohol test both before and after operating a flight.

An crew member who tests positive in the pre-flight medical check or refuses to take a breathalyser test is required to be taken off flying duty and his or her licence is suspended for three months.

In case of a repeat offence the licence of the crew member is suspended for 3 years. However despite strict provisions, DGCA sources said pilots failing the breathalyser test is a common occurrence. – PTI



Not just kid's stuff!

New-age children's movies are breaking stereotypes, writes

Azera Parveen

Rahman

The "once-upon-a-time" and "happily-ever-after" fairytales that children and young adults have been heavily fed on while growing up have often reinstated patriarchal notions and gender stereotypes: the princess is almost always "sterner, fair, and delicate" and forever awaits her prince charming. A trickle of new animated films are attempting to change this narrative in today's political-ly correct and gender-neutral times.

Walt Disney Animation Studio's *Moana*, which hit the screens in 2016, is one such story. Moana is a feisty young girl who, despite her father's best efforts, embarks on a daring mission to save her people on their island. She meets the once-powerful demigod Maui, who, after casting doubts on her ability to be on such a risky adventure, finally guides her in her quest.

Moana is unlike the other Disney princesses. She does not wait for someone else, much less a "prince charming," to rescue her when she is faced with monsters in the ocean. She does all the slaying and the voyaging by herself.

Frozen, yet another Walt Disney production, was again female-centric and was a blockbuster hit when it was released in 2013. A story of two sisters, this tale hands over the rescue operation to the young Anna, who is determined to bring back her elder sister, Elsa, from her self-imposed exile after she set off on an unending winter because of mishandling her magical powers.

What takes the cake, though, is the answer to the quintessential question: What is the act of true love that will save the dying princess? No, not a "true love's kiss." The story leads the young audience — and the rest like us — to push the boundary of "true love" beyond what may exist between a man and a woman in a romantic relationship.

But what difference does that make, do you ask? It's just fiction! "Any movie that's relatable impacts children," says author Vani Mahesh, who

has recently written an Indian mythology-based comic book for the famous Amar Chitra Katha publisher. "When a girl watches another girl being fearless, it naturally evokes the same emotion in her. Autobiographical movies, like *Dangal*, probably have an even higher impact because kids can see their icons in action."

Clinical psychologist Debasmita Phukan agreed, saying that gender stereotypes begin to be acquired by the age of five. "By the time a child reaches adolescence, what society considers 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate' with respect to a certain gender is well understood," she said.

In a fast-evolving society where children have ready information at the click of a button, 32-year-old Anushree Vaidya carefully chooses the TV and movie content her three-year-old daughter is exposed to. "I don't want my daughter to be caged within stereotypes — that a girl must be fair and demure. I want her to grow up as a strong individual, and since at this age it's usually carrots that they idolise, I choose my movie content accordingly," the young mom said.

It's pertinent to point here that it's not just young girls who get influenced by gender-stereotyping through stories — it's through movies or books. Boys are equally impacted.

"When a patriarchal society leads a child to believe that girls are helpless and demure, and boys are 'manly' only if they are bulky and get into fights, stories like *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White* only reinforce these stereotypes, like encouraging patriarchy," Debasmita added.

"And patriarchy is dehumanizing and discriminating to men too," said feminist activist, poet and author, Kamla Blasius. "Boys are discouraged from crying from an early age — tears are seen as a sign of weakness — and are made to believe that they are protectors of women, as a result of which their emotional intelligence can be left deeply wanting," — IANS

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! For Monday, April 10, 2017:

TAURUS (March 21-April 19) Positive moments surround a vivid discussion, which encourages you to embrace a change in the status quo. You realize that you can't wait any longer, but eventually you will need to bend. Be aware that mixed messages mark the next few days. Tonight: Try not to be provocative.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

**** Positive moments surround a vivid discussion, which encourages you to embrace a change in the status quo. You realize that you can't wait any longer, but eventually you will need to bend. Be aware that mixed messages mark the next few days. Tonight: Try not to be provocative.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

**** You walk in the mire for serious matters, and it will be obvious to those around you. Allow more lightness and humor into your life. Help others to understand that it's up to them to decide how they behave and whom choices to make. Tonight: Let the sun shine in.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

**** Pressure builds around the horizon. So many offers come forward that you could be overwhelmed by your choices. Know what you want, and don't hesitate to ask for just that. You might be overwhelmed by someone else's stubbornness. Tonight: Hang in there!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

**** You have the right words to drive a very hard bargain. Your actions follow your thinking. You are unlikely to take anyone's attitude, especially if it is not supportive. You have a strong sense of knowing whether you are on the right path. Tonight: Know when to call it a night.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

**** You might be overly optimistic about a personal matter. Use caution if this attitude is affecting your finances. Be aware of your limits. Question your ability to fulfill a child's or friend's request. Tonight: Make no promises unless you are 100 percent confident.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

**** You walk a fine line between reality and a distorted vision. A roommate or family member won't hesitate to tell you what he or she thinks. You initially could have a negative reaction. Look at the big picture. Tonight: Try to make a long-term desire a possibility.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

**** You know when enough is enough, but others might not be able to hear your warning. Act on what you know to be true, despite others' reactions. Display your innate intelligence and intuition. This combination of traits works well for you. Tonight: Follow a hunch.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

**** You are full of up-and-downs. Follow through on a long-term desire. Friends are likely to support you in a meeting where you present a unique idea. Recognize others for supporting you, and let them know how much you appreciate it. Tonight: So what if it is Monday night?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

**** You might want to rethink a decision and head in a more appropriate direction. Recognize how many choices you have. Assess whether you need to choose the path that is the most realistic. Listen with care when others third-guess your decision. Tonight: In the limelight.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

**** Look at the big picture. Consider what is going to happen next. What are you going to push for? You play a major role in today's events. When you detach, you'll see many different routes to your desired destination. Don't hold on to your ways. Tonight: Follow the music.

PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

**** Deal with a partner directly, regardless of whether you want to. Remain secure in your judgment of what is going on. A friend might be displaying some excessive or outlandish behavior. Stay on course, and feel secure about your decision. Tonight: Where the action is.

Thought for the day

Men have become the tools of their tools.

- THOREAU

Kids

CN

13:00 Ben No. 21	12:00 Hasiyanne	21:00 Spainiel
14:00 Hasiyanne	12:30 Kyu Quitor Hai Amala Ka?	22:00 Time After Time
14:30 Ishevyan	13:00 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	23:00 Two and a Half Men: Uncut
15:30 Rani Omeri	13:30 Udanai	
15:30 Yeh Rista Kya Kohla Hai	14:30 Di Tak	
16:30 Yeh Mohabbat	15:00 Kasam	
17:00 Suhani Si Ea Ladki	15:30 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	
18:00 Mein Angre Mein	16:00 Devaneh	
18:30 Men Dunga	16:30 Kali	
19:30 Pardes Mein Har Mera D	17:00 Kasam	
20:00 Pardes Mein Har Mera D	17:30 Di Et Tak	
20:30 Chota Bheem	20:00 Kali	
21:30 Supermoms	20:30 Kali	
22:00 Chota Bheem	21:30 Kasam	
22:00 Dil Boley Obeni	21:30 Kali	
23:00 Dragon Ball Z	21:30 Kali	
23:30 Chota Koi	21:30 Kali	

colors

StarPlus

12:00 Hasiyanne	12:00 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	16:00 Jamai Raji
12:30 Kyu Quitor Hai Amala Ka?	13:00 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	16:30 Kumkum Bhagya
13:00 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	13:30 Udanai	17:00 Wifh Apara Sa
13:30 Udanai	14:00 Di Tak	17:30 Zindagi Ki Mahekk
14:00 Di Tak	15:00 Kasam	18:00 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
14:30 Ishevyan	15:30 Shakti-Astrha Ke Chetas M	18:30 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
15:00 Kasam	16:00 Devaneh	19:00 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
15:30 Yeh Rista Kya Kohla Hai	16:30 Kali	19:30 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
16:00 Devaneh	17:00 Kasam	20:00 Kali
16:30 Kali	17:30 Di Tak	20:30 Zindagi Ki Mahekk
17:00 Wifh Apara Sa	20:00 Kali	21:00 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
17:30 Zindagi Ki Mahekk	20:30 Kali	21:30 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
18:00 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai	21:00 Kali	22:00 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai
18:30 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai	21:30 Kali	22:30 Kuch Kuchh Hota Hai

Entertainment

21:00 Spainiel

22:00 Time After Time

23:00 Two and a Half Men: Uncut

Zcafe

21:00 Star Plus

22:00 Colors

23:00 Colors

24:00 Colors

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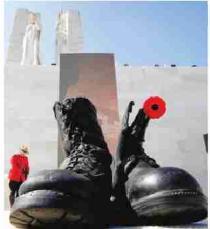
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Around the WORLD



Military boots symbolising dead soldiers are seen as a Canadian police mounted officer stands guard before the ceremony to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge, at Canadian National Memorial in Vimy, France on Sunday. – UNI

Dogs can adopt human perspective

LONDON, April 9: Ever wondered how your pet dog knows exactly where food is hidden? Our canine companions can adopt human perspective to correctly interpret cues and find treats that they cannot see themselves, a new study has found.

By adopting the position of a human and then using gaze signals to understand what the human could understand consequently, researchers said.

The Theory of Mind describes the ability in humans to understand mental states in other humans such as emotions, intentions, knowledge, beliefs and desires, said researchers from Messerli Research Institute in Austria.

This ability develops in humans within the first four or five years of life while it is usually denied in animals, researchers said. Researchers conducted the Gaze-Reading paradigm – a standard test in research into the attribution of knowledge to others. – PTI

Fitness device saves US woman's life

WASHINGTON, April 9: In an unusual incident, a fitness tracker ended up saving the life of a 73-year-old woman with large blood clots in her lungs – by indicating a spike in heart rate which allowed her to call for help in time.

Patricia Launder from the US bought a wearable fitness tracker hoping to improve her health and lose weight.

"I wasn't feeling well for a few weeks, and thought I might be battling a bad cold or walking pneumonia that I just couldn't kick," said Launder.

Her fitness monitor tests came back negative for pneumonia or any other health issues. She started to experience shortness of breath and fatigue, while walking even very short distances in her own home. – PTI



Actress Michelle Rodriguez attends 'The Fate Of The Furious' New York premiere at Radio City Music Hall in New York, on Saturday. – UNI

'UK news presenters on ISIS hit list'

LONDON, April 9: A number of prominent British television journalists from the BBC and Sky News are reportedly on an ISIS hit-list.

A website of the dreaded terrorist group is encouraging "lone-wolf" attacks on newsreaders alongside the location of their offices, the *Daily Star* reported.

The newspaper said it has contacted police to alert them about the website and counter-terrorism officers are now looking into the case. "The Islamic State website posts instructed followers to target BBC and Sky newsreaders and posted the location of their offices," the daily said.

"Terror bosses went on to instruct fanatics to attack popular tourist attractions. They include Downing Street, Big Ben and, chillingly, Westminster, the scene of last month's terror attack," it adds. Further posts reportedly provided a list of names of British MPs, police stations, government buildings, Army bases, shopping centres and airports.

The "terrifying lists" were posted on an "off-shoot" of a well-known terror website, the newspaper claims. The website had pictures of alleged victims of a coalition bombing in Mosul, Iraq, with the message: "By Allah! We will not forget! Even after some time we will never forget!" – PTI

INTERNATIONAL

US vows to keep up pressure on Syria



Russia responsible 'by proxy' for Syrian chemical attack

LONDON, April 9: British Defence Secretary Michael Fallon today accused Russia of being responsible "by proxy" for the death of 87 civilians killed last week in a suspected chemical weapons attack.

"Assad's principal backer is Russia. By proxy, Russia is responsible for every death last week," Fallon wrote in an opinion column published in *The Sunday Times*.

"If Russia wants to be absolved of responsibility for future attacks, Vladimir Putin needs to enforce commitments, to dismantle Assad's chemical weapons arsenal for good, and to get fully engaged with the UN peacekeeping process," he added.

"Someone who uses barrel bombs and chemicals to kill his own people simply cannot be the future leader of Syria," he wrote.

Assad's future role is a key sticking point - the rebels and their international backers demand that he must step down.

But Assad refuses to budge. His key ally in Moscow has backed him to the hilt against the rebels.

Both sides are willing all parties to get back to the table and get a deal done," the British defence minister said.

"That deal must lead to a representative government in which Assad will play no part."

He also once again offered Britain's support to the United States for its decision on Friday to fire 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles at the airfield located near Homs in central Syria.

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Neymar sees red as Barca let Real Madrid off hook

MADRID, April 9: Neymar was sent-off as Barcelona lost further ground on Real Madrid at the top of La Liga in a shock 2-0 defeat to Malaga.

Real are now three points clear and have a game in hand despite Antoine Griezmann's classy finish five minutes from time snatching a 1-1 draw for Atletico Madrid earlier at the Santiago Bernabeu.

However, Real can now afford to lose to Barca at home in two weeks' time and still have a first title in five years in their own hands.

Neymar picked up the first red card of his Barcelona career for two bookable offences as the Catalans were left to rue letting Sandro Ramirez join Malaga for free last summer.

Sandro exposed some awful defending from Jeremy Mathieu to sprint clear on goal and slot past Marc-Andre ter Stegen at his near post.

Malaga also had the better

chances of the second-half filled with controversy as Juanpi shot straight at Ter Stegen when clean through.

Neymar had been shown his first booking for delaying a Malaga free-kick whilst tying his shoelaces and stupidly charged into Diego Llorente 25 minutes from time to see red.

The hosts then had a goal wrongly ruled out for offside when substitute Adalberto Penaranda finished off a flowing counter-attack.

However, Barca were also infuriated with referee Gil Manzano when he somehow awarded a free-kick on the edge of the box when Sergi Roberto had been brought down clearly inside the area.

Malaga finally picked off the 10 men in the final minute when Pablo Fornals unselfishly squared for Jonny to smash home from close range.

Barca's defeat meant Real's

disappointment earlier in the day



Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann (left) celebrates with Angel Correa after scoring the equaliser during their La Liga match against Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu in Madrid, on Saturday.

was short lived.

Pepe's towering header early in the second half looked to have Real heading five points clear at the top in the Madrid derby.

However, Griezmann rounded Kaylor Navas to slot home at the next few minutes from time.

After a slow start, Real took control of the game as the first half wore on and only two scanning stops prevented Zidane's men from taking a half-time lead.

Firstly, Jan Oblak tipped over Karim Benzema's effort after a neat one-two with Ronaldo had freed the Frenchman inside the box.

Moments later Cristiano Ronaldo couldn't believe his eyes when his fierce goal-bound effort was turned to safety by Stefan Savic's incredible headed clearance from under his own crossbar.

Real started the second half with intent as Ronaldo headed just wide before Oblak had to rush before his goal to block Benzema's volley from point-

blank range.

The European champions finally made the breakthrough seven minutes into the second period when Pepe rose highest in a crowded penalty area from Toni Kroos's free-kick to power a header into the far corner.

However, Atletico responded to falling behind and should have been level on the hour mark when Yannick Carrasco played in Fernando Torres clear on goal.

The former Spanish international failed to finish, though, as he fired straight at the onrushing Navas.

Navas has faced a barrage of criticism this season, but he made another smart stop to deny Griezmann levelling with an outrageous overhead kick attempt.

The French international wasn't to be denied from an excellent through ball from Angel Correa with five minutes remaining, however, as he coolly fired past the advancing Navas at the near post for his 23rd goal of the season. - AFP

BCCI 'SGM' adjourned, Srinivasan attends meeting

NEW DELHI, April 9: The BCCI today adjourned its "Special General Meeting", which was attended by former president N Srinivasan, after the Committee of Administrators (COA) sought Supreme Court directives on some issues.

The decision to adjourn the meeting was taken after it was learnt that COA had sought Supreme Court directions on who all are eligible to be BCCI's representative in ICC meetings. The SC hearing is on Monday and the Board has again called a meeting on Wednesday.

"The meeting was adjourned as SC is hearing the matter tomorrow. Since legal implications are involved, Amitabh Chaudhary, the joint Secretary announced adjournment," former Saurashtra CA head Nirajan Shah told reporters.

The meeting was attended by most of the veteran members rendered ineligible by SC order based on Lodha reforms.

The likes of Srinivasan, Nirajan Shah, TC Matthew, Ranbir Biswas and G Gangi Raju — all above 70 years of age — attended the meeting in clear violation of norms.

From Himachal it was Arun Thakur, former president Anurag Thakur's younger brother, in attendance. Railways and Services also had their representatives in the meeting.

The only notable absentee was Delhi and District Cricket Association as per Justice Vikramjit Sen's direction.

Acting president CK Khan, na chaired the meeting and also signed the minutes of meeting.

When a State unit member was asked whether anyone objected to Srinivasan attending the meeting, he told PTI: "No one had any objection. The only problem was legitimacy of the meeting with SC hearing on Monday." - PTI

Chelsea inch closer to title with win at Bournemouth

BOURNEMOUTH, April 9: Chelsea delivered the perfect response to Tottenham Hotspur by winning 3-1 at Bournemouth on Saturday to restore their seven-point lead at the top of the Premier League table.

Antonio Conte's men went ahead after 17 minutes when



Chelsea's Marcos Alonso celebrates after scoring their third goal during the English Premier League match against Bournemouth at the Vitality Stadium, on Saturday.

Tottenham had trimmed Chelsea's advantage to four points by crushing Watford 4-0 earlier in the day, but Chelsea's victory left them seven points clear with seven games of the season remaining.

Joshua King halved the deficit just before half-time, but Marcos Alonso made it 3-1 with a perfectly flighted free kick after 88 minutes.

However, they were almost a goal down in the first minute.

Bournemouth midfielder Ryan Fraser curled a cross into the six-yard area and David Luiz, perhaps blinded by the low sun, sliced his attempt at a volleyed clearance back towards his own net.

It looked a certain goal until keeper Fraser had to dive to his left arm to divert the ball for a corner-kick.

But Chelsea recovered their composure quickly and took the lead, just after Jack Wilshere — on loan to Bournemouth from Arsenal — had created a chance for Fraser that he put wide.

Luis began the move with a pass of to Victor Moses on the right. His low ball inside found Costa, who turned and shot left-footed.

His wide effort was going well until it grazed the head of right-back Smith, who was attempting to block, and dropped gently inside the post with goal-keeper Artur Boruc hopelessly wrong-footed. - AFP

We have not achieved anything yet, says Constantine

NEEDWELL, April 9: National team coach Stephen Constantine believes Indian football has "not achieved anything yet" but the quantum leap in FIFA rankings has intensified the team's quest to qualify for Asian Cup 2019 and break into the top 100.

In the latest world rankings issued by FIFA, the country was placed 101, a significant achievement in the context of Indian football.

The Briton, though, is not reading too much into the recent growth story.

"We need to stay focused and make sure we understand we have not achieved anything yet. I would rather be 101 in the FIFA rankings and qualify for the Asian Cup UAE 2019 than be 95 and not be there," Constantine told PTI.

The 54-year-old, in his second stint with the Indian team, optimistically added, "If we do our job and work hard we will,

I am sure, achieve both of those goals," he said.

In March 2015, India's position had slipped to 173 out of 209 countries, its worst ever ranking, and they improved to 135 the following year.

He complemented his words for their performance last year, which has seen them win 11 of 13 matches, and made special mention of the support staff's contributions.

"I think one of the major points which is often overlooked is the competence of the backroom staff and the use of the GPS system," said Constantine.

Constantine warned his players to keep their feet firmly on the ground.

"It's been a difficult road. We had last qualified for the World Cup qualifiers long back and we were struggling on all fronts. Of course you can't change things overnight but we will continue to try and improve and get better."



Stephen Constantine

"To get out there and believe in myself again as much as I've been doing, be patient and don't freak out even if I do something wrong," Garcia said.

Rose, the 2013 US Open winner, birdied five of the last seven holes to shoot 67 in ideal conditions to join the 37-year-old Spaniard, this week's only player with three sub-par rounds, on six-under 210 through 54 holes at Au-

GUSTAUGA (US), April 9: Sergio Garcia, wireless in 73 previous majors, shook off a Masters legacy of third-round setbacks to match Rio Olympic champion Justin Rose for the lead entering the final round.

Garcia has gone a combined 38-over par to average 75 in 13 prior Masters third rounds. But this time he fired a two-under par 70 to match the best of those rounds from 2002 to join England's Rose in Sunday's final pairing with a great chance at a long-sought dream.

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"I liked my confidence on the greens. They were rolling per-

fectly," Rose said. "I just stayed with it and everything began to click into gear on the back nine."

"You've got to be aggressive at times, but this is a course where you've got to pick your moments. That game plan worked well for me today and I'm sure it will again tomorrow."

Garcia could end his major drought on Sunday on what would have been the 90th birthday of his idol, the late Spanish legend Seve Ballesteros.

"Hopefully he will help me a little bit," Garcia said. "His help is always welcome. Hopefully he helps a little bit tomorrow from up there and tomorrow we'll have something good to celebrate."

Asked what advice he thought he might get from Ballesteros, who died of brain cancer in 2011 at age 54, Garcia replied, "Believe in yourself, try to enjoy as much as possible, try to have fun and do your best." - AFP

Garcia National.

"I liked my confidence on the greens. They were rolling per-

Sergio Garcia of Spain plays his second shot on the 17th hole during the third round of the 2017 Masters Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, on Saturday.

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The young Dutch driver was even threatening Hamilton for the lead at one point, but fell back and eventually got passed by Vettel midway through the race.

The first half of the race brought plenty of daring passes as Vettel, Verstappen, Ricciardo and Raikkonen battled for second place behind Hamilton.

Vettel's pass of Verstappen on lap 28

was one of the most breathtaking of the day as the Ferrari driver surged past when Verstappen locked up mo-

mentarily. - AP

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

Solution of last problem

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9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1
7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Repeating any.

Hamilton coasts to fifth title at Chinese Grand Prix

SHANGHAI, April 9: Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton steered clear of a chaotic start to the Chinese Grand Prix and coasted to victory today, claiming his fifth title in Shanghai.

Hamilton started from pole position and led from beginning to end to capture the 54th race title of his career and his first of the new Formula One season.

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel recovered from a mishap-filled start to finish second in second place, 6.2 seconds behind the Mercedes driver.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen improved from 16th position on the starting grid to finish third, fighting off a spirited challenge from teammate Daniel Ricciardo on the final lap.

Ricciardo ended up in fourth position, followed by Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen in fifth and Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas in sixth.

A drama-filled start on a wet track from rain earlier in the day set the stage for Hamilton's victory and Mercedes' recovery after Vettel surprisingly cap-



Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Great Britain sprays champagne to celebrate his comfortable Chinese Grand Prix victory at the Shanghai International Circuit, on Sunday.

Hamilton emerged from the fray with a hold on the lead, but Vettel and Bottas slipped back several places and had to fight the rest of the race to catch up.

During the safety-car slowdowns to remove both cars from the track, the top drivers pitted to change tires, reshuffling the starting order.

A short time later, on the fourth lap,

Antonio Giovinazzi hit a wet patch and slammed into the wall, severely damaging his Sauber car and bringing the race to a halt again.

During the safety-car slowdowns to remove both cars from the track, the top drivers pitted to change tires, reshuffling the starting order.

"I'm trying to keep the car on the track and look after the tyres at the same time, it was definitely really tough," Hamilton said.

Verstappen, meanwhile, drove his Red Bull masterfully through traffic to move up from near the back of the starting grid to second place by lap 11.

The young Dutch driver was even threatening Hamilton for the lead at one point, but fell back and eventually got passed by Vettel midway through the race.



CAMARO JEANS T-SHIRTS

CAMARO JEANS T-SHIRTS

2 WOMEN PLUS
Notice how?

3 FICTION
Life on a deathbed - II

4 THIRD EYE
Rolling through time

The Assam Tribune

Sunday

Coffee at Saigon

BHASWATI K. GOSWAMI gives voice to the many charms of Vietnam.

We had to literally walk through racing two-wheelers, holding onto each other for dear lives as they zoomed past. In a city of ten million, there are seven million bikes. We thought Indian traffic was bad!

It was nearly the Vietnamese New Year, when we reached Ho Chi Minh, the commercial hub of Vietnam, formerly Saigon, named after the river which flows alongside. It was warm, the airport was packed. Everywhere we were greeted with the traditional *Chuk Mung Nam Moi* to usher in this Fire Rooster Year.

Ho Chi, which reminded me of Kolkata, with the same pulse and vibrancy, has French colonial landmarks, elegant boulevards and War history museums. The houses were narrow, much like the Dutch canal homes, to avoid being hit by highland taxes. We walked around town, negotiating traffic like bravehearts. The streets were lined with vendors and artists, beautiful pieces to be picked up for a bargain. The art of calligraphy finds good expression in Vietnamese scrolls made of bamboo, with matted silk paper. Gifted hands make exquisite cans and rattan furniture, wood carvings and masks. The women were beautiful silk *Oudais*. Everywhere Kumquat and peach blossom trees, considered auspicious, were being carried in bikes to adorn homes for the upcoming new year or *Tet* holidays. With a weak currency Dong, even to pay basic bills was in thousands. It made better sense to pay in dollars.

We found the right coffee shop to enjoy Vietnamese coffee, the dark roast coffee, blended with sweet condensed milk, another French legacy. We posed by the Notre Dame Cathedral awestruck, even the stones used for this was apparently brought from Paris. Standing magnificently at the heart of the city, the Central Post Office and Saigon



Opera House are still functional beautiful colonial era buildings. We met interesting people who have made Vietnam their home. The young American Logan who had come to teach English but decided to stay back and open a BBQ joint. Frenchman Anthony Jones helps his Vietnamese fiancée Hanh Polly run her family restaurant, Bunn Oi. We spent one evening at the Pasteur Street Brewing Company, trying out wonderful real ale (craft beers). We sipped Vietnamese coffee and relished *pho*, a Vietnamese noodle soup consisting of broth, rice noodles, herbs and meat.

Hand, up north, the capital, a two-and-a-half hour flight from Ho Chi, much cooler, is where traditional Vietnamese culture blends with the French. It is here that they have tried to keep Ho Chi Minh alive at his Mausoleum. Kathy, our young guide tells us that the

Vietnamese would like to believe that he is just sleeping peacefully. We joined the long line, his body lay in the central hall of the mausoleum as if in deep slumber. We spotted some locals getting emotional inside. We also saw the ceremonial changing of guards outside the mausoleum. Close by, the One Pillar Pagoda, with Goddess Tara inside rising from one pillar in the centre of an elegantly square-shaped lotus pond, was a unique piece of traditional architecture.

Impressive stone stele records of imperial examinations of the Le and Mac dynasties were preserved in the Temple of Literature. The Water Puppet Show, a traditional art has existed for about 1,000 years, showcasing the daily life of Vietnamese farmers – with cymbals, gongs, flutes, and other traditional instruments creating beautiful music. We took a cycle trip (a bicycle pulled

cart) around the Old Quarter or the French Quarter, the city's main tourist destination, packed with charming colonial architecture, pagodas, boutique shops and art galleries. The preserved shop-houses that lie along the narrow roads were built over a century ago. The cycles, where we sat in front of the drivers, confidently manoeuvred their way through all of this, constantly pressing the little bells to ward off passersby as we soaked in the fascinating sights and sounds, praying that none of the bigger busses fail to see our frail ones.

A highlight of the trip was the overnight stay on a cruise vessel *Flamingo* at the picturesque Ha Long Bay, a four-hour drive from Hanoi. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is known for its emerald waters and towering limestone islands topped by rainforests. Junk boat tours and sea kayak expeditions take visitors past islands named for their shapes, including Stone Dog and Teapot islets. *Flamingo*, with a great crew led by an energetic, witty Johnny had about 25 guests on board, mostly Europeans who were as musical as they were concerned about the leaves with our better boats turned turnip and plucked them into the icy water. Thankfully they came out alive and just about kicking! On-board, cooking, Tai Chi lessons and endless conversations, with the cool breeze brushing past, helped the guests bond.

We were well taken care of by Kathy and the gentle driver Mr. Dung, who drove us back and forth in his old but reliable Ford Transit. It was an emotional moment at the Hanoi Airport as we bid farewell. Kathy, as old as our children, carried a traditional Vietnamese breakfast and walked with us all the way to the security gate, making sure we didn't have problems communicating. We parted, promising to meet again, sometime, somewhere. Hoping I told you they also smile a lot here? *Tam Biet*, Vietnam!

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Music of the maestros



Dr. Manash P. Goswami

Paul Leroy Robeson, whose *'Ol' Man River* emerged as his signature tune, was one among the versatile Black American Civil Rights activists of the 20th century. Born on April 9, 1898, in Princeton, New Jersey, he was a man of exceptional talent – a theatre artist, actor, singer, footballer and activist.

Nearly three decades later, Bhupen Hazarika, the golden voice of Assam, was born in 1926 in Sadiya, the Northeast frontier of British Raj. Like Robeson in the USA, the multifaceted talent of Hazarika, from singer to poet, actor to director, journalist to author and lyricist to music composer, could win the hearts of millions of people of the Indian sub-continent from the early decades of the 20th century.

It was destiny that Hazarika met Paul Robeson in Columbia University, USA, in the 1950s. Bhupen Hazarika, who himself was an ardent supporter of freedom and equality, became Robeson's good friend in a short span of time.

The Indian Peoples Theatre Association (IPTA) played an important role in the growth of the socialist ideology in young Bhupen Hazarika in his formative years. His fine song *Agnijugor fittingo moi*, written at the age of 13, depicted his revolutionary mind talking about establishing a new Assam of equality. Under the guidance and support of Jyotiprasad Agarwala and Bishnu Prasad Rabha, young Hazarika wrote, composed and sang several revolutionary songs for the awareness of freedom, justice and equality among common people.

Paul Robeson was the youngest of five children, a son of a father of a runaway slave. He knew both hard-

ship and determination to rise above it from his childhood. He rose to prominence at a time when the segregation of Black and White people spread hatred across the United States of America. The incidents of Black people being lynched by racist mobs was very common during that period. The social deprivation of basic rights, often encountered with racist comments and the struggle to earn livelihood made him pen down songs that advocated anti-imperialism, affiliation to communism and criticism of the United States Government.

Robeson's extensive travel introduced him to the university of human suffering and oppression. He vehemently fought for an anti-lynching law, promoted African self-rule, appealed for helping the victims of the Spanish Civil War, supported India's Independence and championed equality for all human beings.

With his God-gifted rich bass voice, he sang highly engrossing lyrics of independence, freedom, equality and universal brotherhood. The rising influence of the activism of Robeson among the Black and poor people irked the establishment, which later blacklisted him during the McCarthy era.

When as a student of Columbia University, USA, Bhupen Hazarika met Paul Robeson, the belief of

masses in the true sense of the term, who reflected the changing times with socially, economically and politically relevant songs. His musical contribution to awaken the Assamese people to *Bhasha Andolan* is highly appreciable.

Paul Robeson and Bhupen Hazarika may have been born in different places, different times and with different ethnicity, but their influences still exist among different generations of people. They are remembered as great singers, actors and activists who fought for social justice and ethnic amity by blending entertainment with responsibility.

Bhupen Hazarika and Paul Robeson may have been born in different places, different times and with different ethnicity, but their influences still exist among different generations of people. They are remembered as great singers, actors and activists who fought for social justice and ethnic amity by blending entertainment with responsibility.

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Shaping Spring

In this evocative piece,
ASHA KUTHARI CHAUDHURI
encapsulates the spirit of Spring.

Who is best suited, really, to write a song of Spring, an ode to the *rang* – the colours that come with that eternally eulogised season of Rongali Bihu? The young. So what can someone who is now looking towards the mellower climes of autumn have to say about a time that can genuinely only be felt, lived and celebrated by those in the prime of youth?

The conundrum that Yeats articulated in *Sailing to Byzantium* comes to mind: his lamentation for that aged man who is "but a paltry thing / A tattered coat upon a stick" who gazes at the young "caught in that sensual music", forever enamoured of life, "*In one another's arms, birds in the trees*..."; and "all neglect / Monuments of unaging intellect". Even so, it is Spring again, as the year rolls by and another Bihu begins to create that buzz all around you. And with it comes nostalgia that is so characteristic of folks who have lived out a large part of their lives. And memory.

Of the time when I was a little girl of about seven, and would wait endlessly for the *huchori* groups that would come dressed in full Bihu regalia, would play and sing, and dance with us and then move on, and another group would come, the cycle repeating itself throughout the day. And then the preparation to visit the big *Bhutols*, all goggle-eyed about the lights, the sounds and the crowds.

Of the time when things changed; when the *huchori* groups came, but were distinctly less resplendent; and then they stopped coming altogether. Life and times had changed. We were now in an urban jungle, growing haphazardly, with scant regard to what was becoming extinct. Yes, there was the excitement of Bihu still, but a very different one – this was a much more commodified event. But the Bihu *Pronyms* were still exchanged, and we still visited the elders and extended family and friends, only the *ganochas* were no longer woven at our villages, they were mass produced and "imported" from elsewhere. But Bhupenda still sang and the air was still honeyed by songs that sank into your subconscious.

Of the times when we lived in the shadow of threats, ransom notes and identities that clashed, rather than meld, like they used to, in another time, in another memory. We had stopped going to community events. The *Bhutols* were warned not to besmirch the purity of the Bihu song with Hindi film songs. The celebrations of Bihu, of course, continued with all fanfare.

The city grew. The streets remained narrow. The traffic burgeoned. Everybody had cars. Or bikes. And the *Bhutols* became techno-savvy. Yes, in our time, we live-stream performances and Assamese communities from the world can come together and celebrate the advent of Spring. There are multiple television channels that showcase the latest songster



whose work has gone viral on YouTube. We are spoiled for choice. There are malls all around, and we are all shopaholics – Bihu is just another excuse to rush to the nearest one. And while the *mehkela chador* is now showcased at innumerable Fashion Week events across the globe, the tradition of weaving at home is almost extinct. And so while a few wear organically produced breathtakingly beautiful garments, the erstwhile fine-lined 'common' folks simply cannot afford a new set.

But ah, the mind veers towards a political bend that is really not our focus here. I was trying to fathom if it was at all possible, in the middle of one's life, having collected all these memories through the years, to find a truly resonant song of the Spring. A season where it is truly, tangibly, possible to taste those lost joys – not the kind that may only be relived through nostalgia.

Strangely, I find, the answer is yes. When a research scholar comes to you with a gift, you look at her sternly in the eye and say that you cannot allow her to buy gifts for you. She looks squarely back at you and says, "But Ma'am, I didn't buy this. *Nijel bonaisi*." Defeated, you relent. You cannot disappoint her. You unwrap the gift, and you gasp – it is a lovely handwoven eri shawl. "Did you this for me?" "Yes, *Baitlew*, my Ma helped a bit, but I learnt how, because you keep reminding us that little things like these are disappearing."

When one is surrounded by the young in their prime (and teaching at the university, I blessedly am) one is infected by their *joi de vivre*; the spring in their step is contagious, and their smiles invite reciprocation. So yes, the paradox that Yeats struggled with remains. But when the young surround you, it is still possible to sing a song of Spring, a Spring that you helped to shape.

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WOMEN PLUS

Notice how?

Agamonee Barbarah runs a toothcomb through everyday gender insensitivity.

FOR WOMEN, because that is assumed to be their office.

Notice how there is hardly any advertisement where the man is using the brand of edible oil in the kitchen or nappies for the child?

Notice how it is assumed that husbands can comment on the professional choices of a wife, while the wives are often asked to steer clear of commenting on the husband's office talk?



Notice how relatives, friends and even absolute strangers to her wife, offer unsolicited advice to her about how she should take care of her husband and yet, refrain from the doing the same with the husband?

Notice how a wife is expected to keep herself fit and sexy to keep her husband interested in her and a husband is not?

Notice how a woman's promiscuity is deemed to be a greater crime than a man's womanising?

FOR MEN, because that is what 'being a man' somehow implies

Notice how they made a hullabaloo about Arjun Kapoor's character wanting to be 'a wife' in *RJ & Ka* and that it is actually *habbat* and not *jihu-zoor*?

Notice how being a 'manly' is deemed to be a sissy job for a man? Notice how men are expected to 'be a man' to say Yes or

No about something? Notice how the silence at a wife's rebuke makes a man 'henpecked', while that in a husband's rebuke makes a wife 'a wife'?

FOR BOTH, because apparently neither can switch sides. Notice how men are psycholog-



ically trained to be the bread earner of the family and berated if they are not, while the woman is considered fit for marriage if not a job?

Notice how the responsibility of old age parental care is

Notice how men are psychologically trained to be the bread earner of the family and berated if they are not, while the woman is considered fit for marriage if not a job?

invariably perched on a man, while a woman doing the same is either blamed for being a husband-abusing feminazi or overtly appreciated for going out of her way?

Notice how a career in some kind of arts pursued by a man is deemed as hopeless and unyield-

RELATIONSHIP

Mark Manson

There's no class in high school on how not to be a lousy boyfriend or girlfriend. And, when it comes down to actually handling the nitty-gritty of relationships, we're given no pointers.

Yes, it's trial-and-error from the word-go. And if you're like most people, it's been mostly error.

But, part of the problem is that many unhealthy relationship habits are baked into our culture. Our partners are often seen as assets, rather than someone to share mutual emotional support.

Fortunately, there has been a lot of psychological research into healthy and happy relationships in the past few decades, and there are some general principles that keep popping up consistently, that most people are unaware of or don't follow.

Below are some of the most common tendencies in relationships that many couples think are healthy and normal, but are actually toxic and destroying everything you hold dear. Get the tissues ready.

• The relationship scorecard

What it is: The 'keeping score'

phenomenon is when someone you're

dating continues to blame you for past

mistakes you made in the relationship. If both people in the relationship do this, it develops into what I call "the relationship scorecard", where it becomes a battle to see who has screwed up the most over the months or years and, therefore, who owes the other one more.

What it's toxic: The relationship

ising wrong in the present. What you should do instead: Deal with issues individually, unless they are legitimately connected. If someone habitually cheats, then that's obviously a recurring problem.

• Dropping "hints"

What it is: Instead of stating a desire or thought overtly, your partner

is communicating openly and clearly with one another.

What you should do instead: State what your needs and desires openly. And make it clear that the other person is not necessarily responsible or obligated to them but that you'd love to have their support. If they love you, they'll almost always be able to give it.

• Holding the relationship hostage

What it is: When one person has a simple criticism or complaint and blackmails the other person by threatening the commitment of the relationship, as a whole.

What it's toxic: It's emotional blackmail and it creates tonnes of unnecessary drama. Every minor hiccup in the flow of the relationship results in a perceived commitment crisis.

What you should do instead: It's fine to get upset at your partner or to not like something about them. That's called being a normal human being. But, understand that committing to a person and always liking a person are not the same thing. One can be committed to someone and not like everything about them. On the contrary, two partners who are capable of communicating feedback and criticism towards one another, without judgment or blackmail, will strengthen their commitment to one another in the long-run.



Toxic bonds

Scorecard develops over time because one or both people in a relationship use past wrongdoings, in order to try and justify current righteousness. Not only are you deflecting the current issue itself, but you're also ginning up guilt and bitterness from the past to manipulate your partner into feel-

tries to nudge you in the right direction of figuring it out yourself. Instead of saying what's actually upsetting you, you find small and petty ways to piss your partner off, so you'll then feel justified in complaining to them.

Why it's toxic: Because it shows that you two are not comfortable

communicating openly and clearly with one another.

What you should do instead: State what your needs and desires openly. And make it clear that the other person is not necessarily responsible or obligated to them but that you'd love to have their support. If they love you, they'll almost always be able to give it.

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Black rice sweet (Kola bora saul'or pitha)

Ingredients:

- Black glutinous rice (*kola bora saul*) 1 cup
- Coconut, freshly grated 1 cup
- Sugar 2 tbsp
- Salt
- A pinch
- Boiling water or milk ½ cup
- Vegetable oil for frying
- Sugar 1 cup
- Water ½ cup
- Baking powder ½ tsp

Method:
Wash and soak the glutinous rice in cold water for half an hour.

Drain the rice completely and leave it in a colander or spread over a clean cloth to dry.

When the rice no longer feels wet, grind the rice to a fine powder.

Place the ground sticky rice flour, grated coconut, sugar and a pinch of salt in a large bowl.

Add boiling water or milk, a tablespoon at

a time and knead it into a stiff pliable dough. Take care not to add too much liquid to the dough.

Pinch off small pieces of dough and shape them into small ovals or cut them into thick squares.

Heat vegetable oil in a wok or deep pan. Fry the dough pieces on medium flame, until golden brown in colour. Remove with a slotted spoon onto a paper towel and let it cool slightly.

Meanwhile, in a pan, boil one cup sugar and half cup water until a syrup forms.

Stir in the baking powder (it will foam) and immediately add the fried dough pieces and stir to coat them evenly in the sugar syrup.

Lower the heat and, stir continuously until sugar crystallises completely.

Remove the sugar-coated dough pieces from the pan and allow them to dry out completely.

Serve fresh with tea.



Sharmin Pasha is a food writer currently based in Dubai, UAE, where she teaches privately-organised cooking lessons on different techniques of cooking. She also hosts an informative page featuring Assamese recipes on Facebook, which was created to showcase the culinary treasures of Assam to the world and to preserve ethnic recipes for generations to come.

Flattened rice with jaggery (Bora dhonor meetha sira)

Ingredients:

- Flattened sticky rice (*Bora dhonor sira*) 1 cup
- Jaggery, grated ½ cup, plus extra to serve
- Warm water ½ cup
- Ghee or butter 3 tbsp
- Cashew nuts, chopped 10
- Raisins 15
- Green cardamom(s) 1-2
- Bay leaf 1
- Fresh cream to serve

Method:

Rinse the flattened rice in cold water and soak until soft, but not mushy. Drain the excess water and keep aside.

Place the jaggery in the warm water and stir until dissolved completely.

Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring continuously. Strain through a sieve and keep aside.

Heat ghee in a non-stick pan, add in the cardamom(s) and bay leaf, and sauté until fragrant.

Stir in the nuts and the raisins and fry, until the nuts are lightly browned and the raisins plump up. Take them out and keep aside.

Now add the drained flattened rice to the hot ghee and mix well.

Pour in the jaggery syrup. Reduce heat and cook for four to five minutes until the flattened rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed. Mix in the fried nuts and raisins and remove from heat.

Serve hot with fresh cream and grated jaggery.

STYLE FILE

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It's raining blossoms

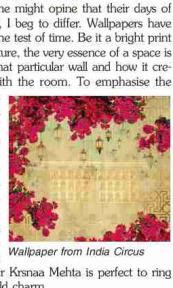
*Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trails its wreath;
And 'tis my faith that every flower,
Enjoys the air it breathes.*

— William Wordsworth

It is raining. Yes. And Spring is here! So while you are stuck indoors, get inspired by the season of fresh beginnings and merriment and drench your home with bright floral prints and pretty pastels. Online shopping is the rage today and with just a click of a button, you can transform your home into a cheerful abode in minutes.

So, let us get some "flower power" on and create magic with these amazing products which can be sourced online:

■ Wallpaper and wall art:



that are versatile and can be mixed around with different types of art for your gallery walls. My pick to celebrate this glorious season is this adorable print from Chumbak, which will brighten up any corner in minutes.

■ Tableware:



Versailles Collection from The Wishing Chair

of tableware from a fairly new brand have been catching my eye. The gorgeous Tea set, aptly named the Versailles Collection from The Wishing Chair perfectly echoes a regal afternoon tea party of scones and cake in an English home. The pretty floral motifs are an absolute joy and for the ones who like a little sophistication, this is the perfect collection to welcome Spring. While the English prints may enthrall you,



Sera Collection from Good Earth

The mystical beauty of the colourful Indian collection from Good Earth presents a special aura. The bright jewelled tones with glittering accents will leave you breathless. This spectacular dinnerware named the Sera Collection from Good Earth will definitely infuse your dinner table with colour and oomph.

■ Furniture and cushions:

Everyone has a favourite couch or a corner to curl up with their favourite book or a hot cuppa on a rainy evening. I am currently loving the burst of fresh, bold colours and the cheerful floral prints of the sofas and poufs from Chumbak and their spunkly cushion covers. The special teal sofa called the Flower Burst from Chumbak will surely



brighten up any corner without any effort.

The Charbagh Collection of bedlinen from Good Earth is another favourite where the subtle nuances of Indian floral motifs with minimal aesthetics are explored with great finesse.



Charbagh Collection from Good Earth

Life on a deathbed - II

FICTION

Munni Bora

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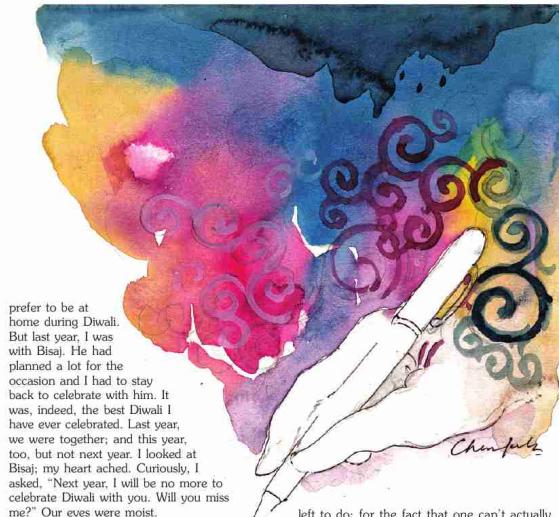
All I could think at that moment was, "Dada, the things which are so important to you, has got no value for me. You could have understood only by stepping into my shoes! At this point of my life, nothing can be more valuable than time, because that is the only thing that I don't have."

Bisaj calls me every day. Just like he did on the day I got my report; but something was different that day. As soon as I received his call, he asked, "Is everything fine with you, Naina?" I was stunned, but more than that I was happy that he had sensed it. "I am dying, sweetheart. I wish I could have spent more time with you. I wish we could have re-lived all those beautiful moments once more, or that I could beautify all those odd moments when we fought! I wish I could have woken up in your arms every morning." Unfortunately, I could not say any of that and ended up saying that I was fine and just that I wanted to meet him in the evening.

Finally, on April 30, two days before my birthday, all my family members got together. It felt like a complete family. No one knew anything; perhaps, all they could imagine was that I would announce my marriage. First day went in full enjoyment. Everyone was busy. The whole house was filled with laughter and giggles. It was heartwarming to see my parents playing with their grandchildren. I could not gather the courage to give them the heartbreaking news that day.

But the next day, after having a good lunch, I showed the report to my brothers. I remember their faces very well. The joyous environment at home suddenly came to a halt. It was pretty difficult to calm down my mother. She was constantly crying and complaining to God for His cruelty, while the rest of the family got busy, analysing where I would get the best treatment. I wanted to tell them that it would just be a waste of money; better to invest in some good time together.

Tomorrow is Diwali. I am trying to recall every beautiful memory I have of Diwali. I enjoy Diwali a lot, since it's my favourite festival. I



prefer to be at home during Diwali. But last year, I was with Bisaj. He had planned a lot for the occasion and I had to stay back to celebrate with him. It was, indeed, the best Diwali I have ever celebrated. Last year, we were together, and this year, too, but not next year. I looked at Bisaj; my heart ached. Curiously, I asked, "Next year I will be no more to celebrate Diwali with you. Will you miss me?" Our eyes were moist.

"No," he further added, "because you will be with me next year and on every Diwali." I smiled at his impractical words. I asked him to hug me and he did. "Can you get me a piece of paper and pen?" I whispered into his ear.

Basu, I know how desperate and helpless you became when you came to know that I was dying and you could not do anything about it, not even see me once, because I was far away from you on this hospital bed, in Mumbai. Wondering how I know? Megha told me everything. She felt sad seeing your miserable situation and that's why she told you where I was, breaking the promise she had made to me. I know, you regret for being ignorant about me. Please don't be sorry any more. Because I can't thank you enough for all the happiness that you have given me in the last few days of my life, and I mean it, sweetheart.

Take care, Naina.

HEALTHWISE

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Challenges of autism

Luit is a four-year-old, cute and cheerful boy. He is loved by the entire neighbourhood, which he likes very much, but on talking to him, he does not respond. He lives in his own world; hardly makes any eye-contact, though he looks at pictures, watches T.V., and loves to play with cellphones. To add to the worry, he does not play with children of his age, though he can walk, run and jump when he is happy; he often plays alone.

A neighbourhood physician advised his parents to visit a speech Language Pathologist (SLP). On doing so, the SLP interviewed the parents and observed Luit's play. He was provisionally diagnosed with 'Autism', which is characterised by challenges in communication, repetitive behaviours and social skills.

Autism is on the rise nowadays; current occurrence of autism is in the ratio of 1:50. The challenges of autism vary widely and could range from mild to a profound degree.

Luit had a moderate degree of autism, a low-functioning one. The SLP counselled his parents to enjoy bringing up their special child, rather than expecting him to be like other children. His speech-language, academic or other skills would be delayed. However, with adequate intervention, his skills could be improved. His parents were suggested to look out for his area of interest and skill.

Almost all children with autism have sensory-integration disorder, though the extent and type could vary. Poor eye-hand coordination could also exist. Luit has both, so he has to go through sensory-integration therapy, occupational therapy and communication therapy, also termed as speech-language therapy.

Apparently, the intervention needs to be regular and for a long duration (may be years). Parents were advised to be attentive, patient and tolerant for a child with autism. He could have uncontrollable tantrums, and outburst, at times, which is when the ABC (antecedent-behaviour-consequences) needs to be figured out and behaviour-management needs to be done accordingly.

We all know that slow and steady wins the race, yet, it is difficult to maintain sanity while keeping a slow pace in this fast-moving and competitive world. Nowadays, every other expert is trying to occupy himself/herself in autism management, though scientific evidence is yet to be reached and output is not known.

Here, it may be mentioned that Brain Function Training is one such trend, which is done by a brain analyst with no medical background. This is preceded by Brain Function Assessment. This is done by a digital EEG and cutting-edge software, approved by the FDA. It is known to improve adaptability, concentration and functioning in a normal person.

SIBO (Small Intestinal Bacteria Overgrowth), also a recent trend based on scientific evidence that an imbalance of intestinal bacteria is responsible for triggering autism, is practised in the West, but is not known in our country.

Till now, effective intervention for autism is the long way of therapy and is applied in many successful centres, improving the lives of children with autism, provided they were identified and taken for intervention before five years of age. It needs to be known that a child with autism would definitely improve in many ways, though he may not be able to talk after intervention.

Apdysia, motor planning disorder co-exists in these children with autism. In such cases, communication would be in visual mode, either through pictures or words, depending on the child's level of understanding.

AAC (alternative and augmentative communication) is not to substitute verbal communication, but to facilitate verbal communication. Hence, one need not worry that using AAC would be an obstacle in speech-language development.

So, even though autism is considered a disability, a child with autism teaches us to see the world differently. Let's see the world through their eyes, since reality is merely an illusion!



MONEY SMART

Dipankar Jakharia

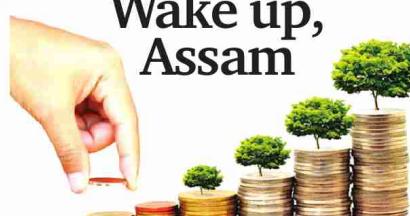
money.smart@assamtribune.com

I knew it was bad. In fact, I was shying away from looking at it for a long, long time. But with the Sensex almost reaching the 30,000 mark and the mutual fund industry also reaching 18 lakhs crore, I said to myself, it is about time. So I called the numbers and forced myself to go through it last night and I stood perplexed. It is like the greatest party happening in the neighbourhood and you have no clue about it. And the worst thing is – you have no one to blame but yourself.

My dear friends, India is growing faster than China and it is estimated that by 2030, it is going to be the third richest country by value of its GDP, right after the USA and China. What does it mean to you? Will it improve your life? Will the life of our children be better than ours? You bet, it certainly will. But my question is – why wait as a spectator? Why not participate in it?

The easiest way to participate in

Wake up, Assam



is through participating in our capital market. If India is growing at eight per cent, then the capital market will grow at a higher rate than that. That means, if you invest in the capital market, your investments will also grow at a higher rate than the GDP of our beloved country. But the question is, how do you invest your money in the capital market? The easiest and safest way is through mutual funds. I have been advocating mutual funds to retail investors since quite sometime. This is the fifth running year of Money Smart and I thought

of its State GDP. Maharashtra's is at 48 per cent to its State GDP, Delhi's is at 39 per cent. To give you another perspective, Assam's per capita investment in mutual fund is Rs. 1,930. Whereas, Maharashtra's per capita is Rs. 72,290 and Delhi's per capita investment in mutual fund is Rs. 106,110.

It is about time you ignore all the crooks and cronies who try to steal your money by promising to double your investment and take you for a ride by means of a chit-fund or ponzi scheme. It is time you join the real party that is happening right under your nose. For my part, I have decided to devote this space in Money Smart to tell you what mutual fund is all about. From the next time – till I am reasonably satisfied, I will devote this space to clarify every detail of mutual fund to you. I advise to you, from the next column onwards, cut the piece and paste it in a diary or a notebook. I would also appeal to all stakeholders, to write to me if I miss a point or two in my presentation or if they have a different point of view. We have missed the first few buses, but not the show.

MY SPACE

Prof. Dr. Madhumita P. Das

drmpdas@gmail.com

Being a doctor myself, I shall put down this confession first that this is an analysis from the angle of a dedicated doctor of the society who has put down her life for the sake of healing every sick person to the extent that's humanly possible.

People, of late, have been focusing on this relationship in many unpalatable ways, which causes discord in this trust, and down the line raises a volley of accusations about the treating doctor, which not only affects the patient but the doctor as well.

We, as doctors, also have our opinion to voice about this issue as we believe that the first and the foremost cornerstone of this relationship is "TRUST". If you do not trust your treating doctor, however dedicated, sincere or

updated he/she is, the patient or the family can never ever be happy. This is because healing is a science where medicines and surgery have a major role to play and, of course, it's also an art where mutual trust between the healer and the sufferer and the patient's immediate family can modulate the psychosocial part of the healing process.

I shall now openly put down a few confessions from a doctor's angle, who is as much a human being as the patient, but with the knowledge of handling diseases within certain limitations laid down by prerequisites like – condition of the patient on arrival, the infrastructural facilities available, the attitude of the attendants and most importantly, the faith of the patient and the doctor that finally determines the fate of a patient.

It's very important to remember

that not all diseases are curable nor sustainable, otherwise no doctors would have ever died in this world. Sitting in a busy Out Patient Department, whenever a patient walks in, a series of revelations flash across our mind even before we start a verbal exchange of information.

● This patient looks critical/stable.

- The attendants look cooperative and grounded/ demanding and super-connected.

But the fact is, whatever be the condition of the patient, the treating doctor would ready to make a fair trial of the situation, often with the informed consent from the family members around, specially if the condition of the patient on arrival looks critical, and proceed with the best possible intention of giving relief. But as I

have already mentioned, the outcome of any disease is never 100 per cent assurable. Unseen factors like luck, fate and destiny also have a role to play but, yes, however serious or critical a patient is on admission, if the attendants are realistic and ready to cope with the situation, there can be no scope of an unfavourable outcome. Often, in lesser equipped centres, the need to refer a patient to a higher centre becomes mandatory, but here also we always take into account the financial and other practical limitations that the party in the picture may have. But in spite of all this care and humanitarian considerations from the perspective of the treating doctor, there are a group of people who can never ever be trusted to react with sanity. They follow no rhyme or reason and believe that the doctor has come

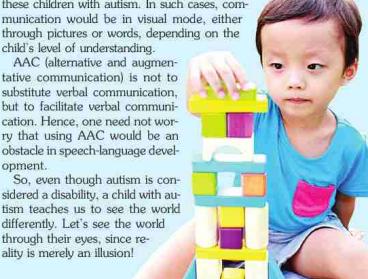
here on duty to cure anyone or everyone knowing fully well that this particular patient is on the verge of death. More so, the situation gets heated when the illness under consideration is a chronic condition deliberately denied or neglected by the person himself or the family members. Of late, we have come across many quacks very generously highlighted by the media to cure illnesses without so-called "side effects", which create a cocktail of mismanagement, toxicities and psychosocial controversies.

But finally, it's my personal opinion that if today the society at large does not bother about this blazing flame it's going to ultimately move to a time when medical professionals will gradually disappear and then I fear we will have no saviours to help us in need.

Doctor, patient – where's the lacunae?

“

But in spite of all this care from the perspective of the treating doctor, there are a group of people who can never ever be trusted to react with sanity.



Rolling through time

Know what? Heraclitus had a point there. He said no man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and has not the same man. I just wished he had included the term women too. For me, it is not so much about stepping into the Brahmaputra as about the images, colours and memories its vast waters awaken in me. It began when I was about five. My quirky dad decided to present me with two double whammies on my unsuspecting self, that long ago sunny afternoon. He hoisted me onto his lap for the first rickshaw ride of my life. What was this winged contraption whistling by, driven by a man with the desperation of one after whom the devil himself was hotfooting? I shrieked, shut my eyes, grabbed my father's shirt pocket and felt the cold rush of the wind all around me. After some moments I cautiously opened one eye and was again dumbfounded. For on the left, with just a sandbank beyond the road, was a vast sea of water rippling in the afternoon light. It winked, it glinted, it beckoned, seduced, and ultimately, ignored the viewer.

ing back after the thin channels of winter, surging our own song, boundless and free. Always on these roads to college, there would be a corpulent man seated on a sheet on the pavement, his back to the river. A parrot frettet about in a cage, and cards were laid out on the sheet. Your future was decided by the parrot selecting a certain card. And the customers were poor men who carried sacks of grains to the godowns and women in sited bubs and gaudy saris who swept the pavements with long brooms. And yet the river behind them, as do the Rhine and Mississippi, the Tigris, Euphrates and the Hwang Ho, remind us by their flowing and hurling, of people loved and fought, dreamed and created even

more babies to crawl around butt naked on those sands. And the breeze catching your hair, till you catch yourself thinking you are almost beautiful and nothing seems impossible any longer, those hills beyond the river seem closer now that you have seen more of the world. In the impenetrability of youth many of us yearned to be like the river – without boundaries, always rolling forward, growing wide and deep with experience, swell-

THIRD EYE

Indrani Raimedhi
indrani.raimedhi@gmail.com



For on the left, with just a sandbank beyond the road, was a vast sea of water rippling in the afternoon light. It winked, it glinted, it beckoned, seduced, and ultimately, ignored the viewer.

It will take longer than you might usually think to sort out your money, business, house, apartment, possessions or charity. As a typical Aries person, you may want to get moving, but in actual fact, the next few days are useful, as you need time to think.

FORECAST

APRIL 10 – 16, 2017

ARIES



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TAURUS



Devote as much time as you like to yourself, as this is not narcissism. It's common sense. When you have a lot of activity in Taurus, your own sign, you need to step back from your mirror image.

GEMINI



This week will involve matters which are hidden below the surface, under the radar, or issues which make you invisible, as you will be behind the scenes. This is really about operating at a distance, not making any credit, getting any recognition.

CANCER



The time has come to read hearts and minds, within the group. One friend, in particular, may be your biggest concern. This is going to take time. You do need to make some kind of trade-off where the controls are concerned.

LEO



All the focus in your chart right now is on your status, your success, your position – and also your ambition. This is going to be a huge deal when everything changes, quite radically, and you either reshape what you are doing now, or make the most dramatic move into quite a different territory.

VIRGO



Virgo, the areas of life affected now include travel, foreign people and places, regional differences, publishing, education, academia and belief systems of all kinds, from quantum mechanics to astrology.

LIBRA



The process with the money, house, possessions, business interests, apartment or charity might normally take two to three weeks to sort out, but this is not a normal time of the year. Even though the actual compromise may be over by the end of April, what has been under discussion will take you right up until the end of May, to put to rest.

SCORPIO



The person on the other end of the see-saw is central to everything between now and May 21, when the rocking finally stops. He or she may be part of your love life (past, present, potential). Partners on this cycle can also be purely professional.

SAGITTARIUS



Sagittarius, this week, there is a traffic jam, in one area of your life. Which area? Work and coursework. Unpaid work and university life. You might call it, the daily grind, or daily round. This part of your horoscope also describes your body, and the impact that your physical state or condition has on your life.

CAPRICORN



You will have major decisions to make, one year from now, that are 'seeded' in the events that begin this week. Capricorn, you do have a lot of thinking and talking ahead about your line of succession. Just remember that it may take longer than usual.

AQUARIUS



You will move or renovate from May 2018, which you might already know. If you don't know about this, perhaps it's time to start playing with impossibilities, as well as possibilities! Certainly, this week has its part to play. In fact, family and hometown appear to be in the very centre of things.

PISCES

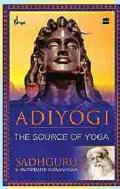


Pisces, you will spend the next few weeks (until May 20) trying to figure out your next big idea, course or concept. This is a natural medium for your 'voice', no matter if you work with words or images. You also need to be aware of the delays.

PAGE TURNER

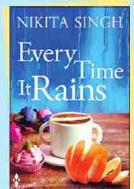
The following are books to look out for this month when you need reading material for those quiet weekends.

Adiyogi: The Source of Yoga



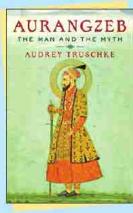
Shiva is that which is not, a primordial emptiness. He is also the first ever *Yogi*, *Adiyogi*, who perceived the emptiness. *Adiyogi* is both a symbol and myth, outlaw and ascetic. In this book, science and philosophy mingle seamlessly. Sadguruji's wisdom is compelling.

Every Time It Rains



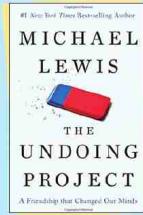
Rescued in a storm, Laila is forced to look back on her life and priorities. An enthusiastic entrepreneur, she also feels some of life's questions still remain unanswered. This is the story of a woman who once faced heartbreak, but found the strength to love again.

Aurangzeb: The Man and the Myth



Aurangzeb Alangir (1658-1707) was the sixth Mughal emperor and continues to be a controversial figure till date. This maligned ruler took the term 'religious zealot' to a new high. Many of the negativities were spread by colonial historians and now a different picture is emerging. Audrey Truschke rewrites the life of this misunderstood emperor.

The Undoing Project



There are geniuses who work alone and those who form partnerships. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky met in the 1960s warton Israel. Both were gifted psychology professors. Their friendship became a grand project of science, but got tragically unravelled. Their ideas have shaped our world and Michael Lewis does a fine job of portraying them.

5 THINGS/ Communication matters

"It is the duty of the government to reach out"

MARUF ALOM underscores the role of communication in today's world.

1 Social capital is the need of the hour

To develop and maintain relationships with field specialists is the mainstay of modern professional environment. I recall that when the Publications Division brought out a book *The Legend of Indian Silver Screen* to celebrate the legacy of Dadasaheb Phalke award winners, I was given the responsibility of coordinating with eminent film critics and authors from across the country.

2 Communication is a wide field

The field of Mass Media has a lot of avenues and scope. However, the knowledge about the field is very limited, and often confusing. The scope of Mass Communication opens a plethora of opportunities in both government and private sectors. Public relations, advertising, television, films, publishing, journalism, editing, direction, etc., are the traditional fields, while in recent times, digital communication has emerged as a new field, which has brought a paradigm shift in the relationship between media and society.



3 Indian Information Service not much talked about

The Indian Information Service (IIS) is an all India cadre-based central Civil Service with posts across the country in different media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. The service acts as a communication link between the government and the citizenry through media units like the Publications Division, Doordarshan (DD), All India Radio (AIR), Press Information Bureau (PIB), Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), etc.

4 Effective communication is a must

Outstanding communication skills are an essential attribute in the field of Mass Communication. Especially for an IIS officer, it is important to maintain proper communication channels with different stakeholders in the government, as well as on the grass-root level.

5 Community participation is key

India is the world's largest democracy. It is the duty of the government to reach out to its citizenry through various communication channels to inform, educate and engage about the various rights-based schemes that the government has initiated. Citizens' community becomes a key element herein.

(As told to Indrani Raimedhi)

FILM INTERVIEW

Rani returns

From the life she knew to concentrate on the life she made – Adira. As she returns to the set to shoot her next film *Hichki*, she talks about what drove her back to work (her hubby), what drives her to act (the love of her fans), and what she dreads (not giving her best to her work). Read on for excerpts...

■ Excited about being back on a film set?

I still don't know if I am ready to get back to work. I have said yes to working again. But, I don't feel the same way about work now like I used to. I had given Adira. Right now, though work is something which gives me happiness, the joy that Adira gives me is just too special.

■ So, what brings you back?

I have a lot of people who love me and my work. I think it's my responsibility to keep doing films, so that they get to see a part of me that I am known and loved for. I think working is very important for every woman. It's a special feeling for a woman when she is independent. There are a lot of mothers who dedicate their lives to their children, and that's absolutely great and I respect their chosen path, too.



■ Are you doing any preparations for Hichki?

Yes, from the last one month, I have started to prepare for the film. You know, I always used to wonder about the film I'd start with, after having Adira. I get emotional when I get to hear from my PR team that my fans keep asking about my next film. I want to honour that by doing a film which is worth their while and they can be proud of.

■ Why did you choose Hichki?

I really liked the script and said,

'Okay, we can go ahead with it. Then it hit me, I have to leave my daughter and go to work.'

My husband feels that if he hadn't have pushed me, I wouldn't have come back. I would be very happy being with Adira whole day long. And that's true.

■ Will you come back to work full-time?

No. It is about doing a film every year. I don't want to do four films a year. I don't want to take away anything from my motherhood, and from my time with Adira.

■ Do you think Aditya's involvement with Adira will increase now?

I think it will be the same. Adi is too involved in his work. He probably leaves last from the office. I am trying to change that now because he has to understand he has a child waiting for him at home. Now, every day, I manage his time, so that he comes back at a time when Adira has not yet slept. In the morning, he has his time with Adira.

■ Is he a better husband or better father?

Adi is a better husband than a father, definitely. Till now at least, and I hope that he remains a better husband. Men become good fathers by default, but it is very important for men to be good husbands. So, I'd want him to remain a better husband all his life.

- India Blooms News Service



Centre mulls 24-hr national health helpline

NEW DELHI, April 7: Akshay Kumar was named the best actor for his portrayal of a patriotic naval officer in *Rustom* at the 64th National Film Awards, where Marathi movie *Kasaav* led the regional film dominance bagging the best feature film honour.

The awards, which were spread out in Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and Marathi languages, saw Bollywood movies like *Pink*, *Neerja* and *Dangal* score in key categories. *Rustum*, a court room drama directed by Tinnu Desai, is loosely based on the 1959 Nanavati case.

"Government proposes to start 'Doctor on Call' (DoC) 24x7 national health helpline to address the medical queries of the people, the Lok Sabha was informed today.

Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel said in a written reply that the facility called 'Doctor on Call' - will reduce the need to pay personal visit to healthcare centres and thus decrease the load on government hospitals.

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Minister of State for Health Anupriya Patel said in a written reply that the facility called 'Doctor on Call' - will reduce the need to pay personal visit to healthcare centres and thus decrease the load on government hospitals.

The facility will also help in speedier consultations, increase government-to-citizen interaction and vice versa, and build trust in government services and deliverables, she said. - PTI

Akshay best actor, Kasaav best film at Nat'l Awards

NEW DELHI, April 7: Akshay Kumar was named the best actor for his portrayal of a patriotic naval officer in *Rustom* at the 64th National Film Awards, where Marathi movie *Kasaav* led the regional film dominance bagging the best feature film honour.

Neerja, directed by Ram Madhvani, was named the best Hindi film. It is based on the 1986 hijacking incident during which flight attendant Neerja Bhoot was killed by terrorists while saving passengers.

Amitabh Bachchan-starrer *Pink*, a female-centric court room drama, won the award for best film on social issues.

Kashmiri actress Zaira Wasim was chosen as the best supporting actress for her role in the Aamir Khan-starrer *Dangal*, while Nagesh Kukunoor's *Dhanak* was named the best children's film.

Akshay said in a video message to his fans. The actor said Sonam Kapoor, who received a special mention for her role in *Neerja*, was shooting with him and it was a double celebration for them on the sets of *Padman*.

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The 11-member jury, headed by Akshay's frequent collaborator, filmmaker Priyadarshan, named Surabhi CM as the best actress for her role in Malayalam film



Muscat as part of a programme, said. *Kasaav*, this year's best feature film winner by Sunil Suktankar and Sumitra Bhave, revolves around the issue of depression and environment conservation.

The film's team is hopeful that the win will give the movie a much-deserved boost ahead of its release.

"*Kasaav* got the best film award which is a great thing but another point of happiness is that the film deals with the theme of depression. The award definitely gives a boost to Marathi cinema. It is a proud moment for us," co-director Sunil Suktankar told PTI.

Besides *Kasaav*, Rajesh Mapuskar won the best director award for his film *Ventilator*. The movie, produced by actress Priyanka Chopra and her mother Madhu, won three awards. *Ventilator* also won the best editing and

the best final mixed track award.

I am very happy that *Ventilator* won three National Awards. It was my first Marathi film and we won so many awards. This is really special... The award definitely gives a boost to Marathi cinema. It's a proud moment," Mapuskar told PTI.

The best adapted screenplay went to

Dashakriya, which was also chosen as the best Marathi film, while its star Manoj Joshi was named the best supporting actor.

Malayalam film *Maheeshinte Prathikaram* won the best original screenplay award and the best dialogues went to Telugu movie *Pelli Chuppu*.

Special Jury award went to Mohanlal for his notable work in films like *Padmuram*, *Janatha Garage* and *Manthrivillikal Thalirkkunbol*. The National Film Awards will be handed out to the winners by President Pranab Mukherjee in a ceremony on May 3. -PTI

'2019 LS polls: EC needs 1600K paper trail machines'

NEW DELHI, April 7: The Election Commission would require deployment in all polling stations in the Lok Sabha polls.

"The proposal of the Election Commission is under consideration of the government," he said in response to a written reply to a question.

Since June, 2014, the Commission has given at least 11 reminders to the government seeking funds for VVPAT machines. Last

year, Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi drawing his attention to the need for the machines.

Recently, he has again written to Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad seeking funds for the same.

The voters see voter-verifiable paper audit trail slip for seven seconds, which would be an acknowledgement receipt for the party they voted for in the election.

VVPAT is a machine which dispenses a slip with the symbol of the party for which a person has voted for. The slip drops in a box but the voter cannot take it home.

Recently, when AAP, Congress and BSP had questioned reliability of the VVPAT, the poll panel had come out with a detailed release

defending the machine.

The release had also mentioned about the VVPAT system, saying it has cost Rs 3,174 crore for buying VVPATs for every polling station in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

EICL and BEL, two PSUs which manufacture VVPATs and EVMs, need 30 months to manufacture the required number of VVPAT units from the day funds are released.

The Supreme Court has supported the EC endeavour to use VVPATs in a phased manner to usher in more transparency in voting. -PTI

PRESS NOTICE /IFB

No. CE/DEV/B4/2022/16-17/10

The Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Builder Representative & NCW), Assam, Chandmari, Hailakandi, invites tenders for supply of 1600 km of 1000 mm plain/Printing Presses registered with Printing & Stationery Department of the State Govt for implementation for printing job which may be required during the financial year 2017-18. Such tenders may be submitted along with the bid documents.

Details can be obtained from [e-auction.gov.in](http://www.e-auction.gov.in) from 11.04.2017 as well as in the office of the Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Builder Representative & NCW), Assam, Chandmari, Hailakandi, Lakhimpur, Assam.

Last date of receipt of offer is 05.04.2017.

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India rejects Ontario motion on Sikh riots

NEW DELHI, April 7: The Legislative assembly of Ontario has passed a motion extending the official recognition to the 1984 riots in India, which has strongly rejected the proposal.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Gopal Baglay said India's views have been conveyed to the government and political leadership in Canada," he said.

He was replying to a question regarding passage of a private members' motion in the legislative assembly of Ontario.

The motion by Harinder

Malhi, a Liberal member of provincial parliament, read

"That, in the opinion of this House... Should reaffirm our commitment to the values we cherish - justice, human rights and fairness and - condemn all forms of communal violence, hatred, intolerance and prejudice, racism and intolerance in India, including the 1984 Genocide perpetrated against the Sikhs throughout India, and call on all sides to embrace truth, justice and reconciliation." -PTI

"We have noted the passage of a Private Members' Motion in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario on April 6. We reject this misguided Motion which is based on a limited understanding of India, its constitution, society, ethics, rule of law and the judicial process."

"Our views have been con-

veyed to the government and political leadership in Canada," he said.

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"Unruly' TMC MP Dola Sen delays AI flight cabin crew that rules do not permit wheel-chair-bound passengers to sit on emergency exit seats, said Air India.

The airline said the MP didn't mention that she was being accompanied by a wheelchair-bound passenger at the time of booking tickets.

The MP had booked front row seats on [makemytrip.com](http://www.makemytrip.com) and had paid extra for those seats, said Air India.

But she could only be booked on emergency exit seats, which also have similar leg room.

When Sen boarded the plane with her wheelchair-bound mother, she was told by the cabin crew that rules do not permit wheel-chair-bound passengers to sit on emergency exit seats, said Air India.

The airline said the MP didn't mention that she was being accompanied by a wheelchair-bound passenger at the time of booking tickets.

Following this the TMC MP "shouted and screamed" at the cabin crew, the airline claimed.

This forced the pilot to come out of the cockpit, who offered business class seats to the MP's mother but Sen declined.

Sen could not be immediately reached for comments. -PTI

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Ramkumar gives India lead, beats Temur in opening singles

BENGALURU, April 7: Ramkumar Ramanathan overcame a spirited challenge from Temur Ismailov to hand India a 1-0 lead against Uzbekistan in the Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tie here today.

Ranked 267, Ramkumar eked out a 6-2, 5-7, 6-2, 7-5 win over the Uzbek, who is ranked 406, in the opening singles rubber of the second round tie.

Prajnesh Gunnesswaran, ranked 287, makes his India debut against Sanjar Fayziev (376).

To his credit, Ismailov made life difficult for the Indian despite suffering cramps in his right hamstring.

Ramkumar dominated the proceedings before a bout of double faults handed Ismailov a small opening, which the Uzbek grabbed with both hands to make a match of it.

The Indian sealed the opening set in a jiffy and was leading



Ramkumar Ramanathan of India plays a shot against Temur Ismailov of Uzbekistan during the first day of Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tie in Bengaluru, on Friday.

Ramkumar stay alive and fight.

The Uzbek played freely while Ramkumar put himself

under pressure to finish the job quickly. The nerves got to Ramkumar and, in utter desperation, he squandered four

momentum but suffered

cramps in his right leg in the third set, making the job of the Indian easy. Ramkumar ran away with the third set as Ismailov's restricted movements gave him easy points.

Ismailov, though, recovered remarkably after a medical timeout and was battle ready for the fourth set. Ramkumar was always catching up with the Uzbek, holding his serves without fuss, and soon it was 5-5.

Two unforced errors by Ismailov gave Ramkumar three break chances. He converted the third when Ismailov buried a return to the net.

Ramkumar's unforced errors continued as twice he sent down double faults on match points. He though sealed the match with a forehand volley winner.

The winner of the tie will qualify for the World Group play-offs, to be played in September. -PTI

Delhi is no one's free lunch

Delhi arguably has the best bowling line-up this season. Pat Cummins and Mohammad Shami, to go with Zulqarnain Khan, Chris Morris and Amit Mishra, and no less than Rabekhan in the wrap, must batmen sober. It is also a side which boasts a few of India's best young talents. Karun Nair, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant and Aditya Tare are kind of dry gunpowder which can fire cannon far and wide. With Rahul Dravid in the backroom, Delhi is no one's free lunch.

This surge of young promise can make up for the absence of JP Duminy and Quinton de Kock.



Call for Free Demo: 1800 100 1000

Bangalore, cut by half by this misfortune, could thus be in front of hungry wolves. Chris Gayle and Shane Watson, the two spearheads in attendance, must defy their age and recent form. Both are out of their national teams. They go around the leagues of the world but the light

isn't burning too bright. Gayle was a let down in a recent league and Watson is trying to push the clock back. Young Kedar Jadhav holds the line-up between these two poles.

Bangalore is in need of early momentum. It didn't come

against Hyderabad in the IPL opener but it must against the teams from the North. An early surge could well turn into a gallop by the time Kohli and De Villiers return. During the high-octane clash, Dhoni had asked for a DRS referral when it was not for the taking. -PTI

MSD reprimanded for IPL breach

NEW DELHI, April 7: Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been reprimanded for breaching the IPL code of conduct during the match between his team Rising Pune Supergiants and Mumbai Indians in Pune.

Exactly why he was given a reprimand by match referee Manu Nayyar has not been specified by the IPL.

"MS Dhoni admitted the Level 1 offence (Article 2.1.1) for conduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game," read an official IPL statement.

"For Level 1 breaches of the IPL Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," it added.

During the high-octane clash,

Dhoni had asked for a DRS referral when it was not for the taking. -PTI

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Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Flagging off of 75730 / 75729 DEMU TRAIN SERVICE BETWEEN SILGHAT TOWN STATION AND GUWAHATI

by **RAJEN GOHAIN**
Minister of State for Railways

Inauguration of FILTERED DRINKING WATER SYSTEM AT SILGHAT TOWN STATION

by **MANOJ SINHA**
Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Communications & Minister of State for Railways

In august presence of Keshab Mahanta
Minister for Water Resources,
etc., Govt. of Assam

All are cordially invited

**Date : 08th April, 2017 | Time : 09:00 hrs.
Venue : Silghat Town Station**

Following this flag off, three pairs of conventional trains will be replaced by DEMU

NEW DEMU SERVICE			CONVENTIONAL TRAINS TO BE REPLACED				
TrNo	From	To	w.e.f.	TrNo	From	To	Cancellation w.e.f.
75723	New Borgaigaon	Guwahati	9th April'17	55805	New Borgaigaon	Guwahati	9th April'17
75724	Guwahati	New Borgaigaon	9th April'17	55806	Guwahati	New Borgaigaon	9th April'17
75725	Gauhati	Gauhati	9th April'17	55810	Gauhati	Gauhati	9th April'17
75726	Hailakandi	Gauhati	9th April'17	55815	Hailakandi	Gauhati	9th April'17
75729	Gauhati	Silghat Town	9th April'17	55807	Gauhati	Silghat Town	9th April'17
75730	Silghat	Gauhati	Inauguration 9th April'17 Replaces 55805 from 9th April'17	55808	Silghat Town	Guwahati	10th April'17

Composition of DEMU: Driving Power Coaching - 2 (Two), Driving Trailer Coach / Trailer Coach - 8 (Eight) = 19 Coaches.

The programme will be streamed live in Ministry of Railways' facebook page - RailMinIndia

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Health education sector in Assam now boasts of a new addition

After the inauguration of the construction work of Dhubri & Nagaon Medical Colleges in February 2017 now, a great news for the people of Northern Assam

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Chief Guest

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Assam

Guest of honour

Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma
Hon'ble Minister of Health & Family Welfare
Government of Assam

Shri Parimal Shuklabaidya
Hon'ble Minister of
Public Works Department
Government of Assam

Shri Pradan Baruah
Hon'ble MP
Lakhimpur Parliamentary
Constituency

Shri Naba Kumar Doley
Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent charge) of Panchayat & Rural Development, Government of Assam

Shri Utpal Dutta
Hon'ble MLA
Lakhimpur Legislative Assembly Constituency

Bhumi Puja & launch of construction work on 8th April, 2017



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- Important initiative of the Government to provide tertiary care medical facilities across the state in a time bound manner
- Approved cost: Rs.189.00 crores
- Proposed bed strength: 500 nos.
- Total land area: 100 bighas
- Proposed total intake of students: 100 students per annum

Resonance|NFM|2017



সর্বসেবা জনক
Department of Health &
Family Welfare
Government of Assam

Injury-hit RCB and Delhi look to outshine each other

BENGALURU, April 7: Injury-hit Royal Challengers Bangalore would look to put behind the opening defeat and aim for their first win of the season when they lock horns with yet another injury-struck outfit, Delhi Daredevils in an IPL match here tomorrow.

A depleted Bangalore is struggling without captain Virat Kohli, ruled out because of a shoulder injury, and AB de Villiers, who also missed the first tie due to a back problem.

De Villiers is once again a doubtful starter for tomorrow's match and his absence Shane Watson would continue to lead the side as an interim captain.

Bangalore have also lost star batsman KL Rahul for the entire tournament owing to an injury and talented Sarfaraz Khan will most likely be unavailable for the

season after hurting himself on the field during a practice match.

The absence of big names from the team has had an effect as RCB went down to defending champions Sunrisers Hyderabad by 35 runs in the inaugural match.

TEAMS

RCB: Chris Gayle, Mandeep Singh, Shane Watson (captain), Kedar Jadhav (wk), Travis Head, Sachin Stuart Binny, Tymal Mills, Sreesanth Aravind, Anil Mihir, Ishant Chahar, Yuzvendra Chahar, Pawan Negi, Harsh Patel, Adnan Ali, Iqbal Abdulla, Samson Kurian, Avish Karan, Tabraiz Shamsi, Jayant Yadav, Amit Mehta, Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Karun Nair, Rishabh Pant, CV Murali, Khaleel Ahmed, Prayush Singh, Munuguri Ashwin, Aditya Tari, Shashank Singh, Ankit Bawana, Navdeep Singh, Corey Anderson, Angelo Mathews, Pat Cummins, Kagiso Rabada, Chris Morris, Carlos Brathwaite, Sam Billings

On a better of a patch at Hyderabad, veteran Yuvraj Singh smashed 62 off 27 balls to steer the Sunrisers to 207 for four and in reply, RCB were bundled out for 172 in 19.4 overs. This was the first time in 23 matches that

RCB had lost a top-order partnership for the opening wicket in the previous match and they would be expected to repeat the performance against Delhi as well.

Kedar Jadhav, a rising Indian star, would also be keen to rise to the occasion, while another talented youngster, Bhavin Baby would hope to make an impression too before his big names come back in the fold.

In the bowling department, they would depend on Tymal Mills, an expensive buy at the IPL 2017 auction, and Yuzvendra Chahar. Both of them had picked just one wicket each in the last game.

With Aniket Choudhary and Sreenath Aravind averaging over 10, Watson might opt for Kiwi pace Adam Milne and Samuel Badree. - PTI

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SU DO KU

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Solution of last problem

Originating from Japan, Su do ku is a mind game and a puzzle that can be solved with proper reasoning and logic. Fill the grid with digits 1 to 9, so that each row, every column and every 3 x 3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9 without repeating any.	<table border="1"><tr><td>8</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>7</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>7</td><td>9</td><td>3</td><td>8</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>8</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>6</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>2</td><td>7</td><td>4</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>7</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>7</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>9</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>9</td><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>8</td><td>7</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>1</td><td>3</td><td>7</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>8</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>9</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	8	3	5	4	6	1	9	7	2	4	2	6	5	7	9	3	8	1	9	8	7	2	3	5	4	6	0	1	9	6	3	5	2	7	4	8	3	6	4	8	9	7	5	1	2	5	7	2	6	9	4	1	3	8	2	5	3	9	4	6	8	7	1	6	8	9	1	3	7	4	2	5	7	4	1	2	8	5	6	9	3
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Kyrgios, Thompson put Australia on top in Davis Cup quarters

BRISBANE, April 7: Nick Kyrgios and Jordan Thompson have Australia placed on the cusp of making the Davis Cup semifinals after establishing a 2-0 lead over United States at Pat Rafter Arena in Brisbane.

Kyrgios, enjoying arguably the best run of form of his career so far, showed impressive patience to nullify the big serve of John Isner and win their singles rubber 7-5, 7-6 (7-5), 6-4 in a tense battle.

A win in Saturday's doubles rubber could set up a semifinal date with Italy or Belgium September for Australia, with John Peers and Sam Groth due to take on Sam Querrey and Steve Johnson.

Kyrgios looked confident and untroubled throughout his encounter with Isner.

"The crowd was unbelievable. Let's hopefully close it out tomorrow."

He clawed back from 5-2 down in



Australia's Nick Kyrgios returns a shot to John Isner of the United States during their Davis Cup quarterfinal match at the Pat Rafter Arena in Brisbane, on Friday.

the deciding tiebreaker to finally end Isner's resistance after nearly two-and-a-half hours.

"He's one of the best servers in the world, a proven player."

"Let's hopefully close it out tomorrow."

It was a mature display from Kyrgios.

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as he picked up a wicket before coming up with a 21-run cameo ahead of Kings XI.

They would be hoping their team's decision of making Glenn Maxwell the captain, ahead of established names like Eoin Morgan, pays off.

It remains to be seen what combination Kings XI goes ahead

to out-serve Isner, slamming down 20 aces to 15, many of them coming at key moments.

World number 23 Isner made a sizeable start and raced to a 3-0 lead in the first set.

But Kyrgios recovered to win it 7-5 and then held his nerve in the second-set tiebreaker.

Thompson's victory continues the 22-year-old's undefeated run for Australia in Davis Cup after he won both his singles rubbers on debut against Czech Republic at Kooyong in February in straight sets. - Agencies



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Amigo 4.0 is a customized Gionee UI that takes your phone experience to a whole new level with amazing shortcuts and features.



Dragon boat racing

GUWAHATI, April 7: The 8th National Dragon Boat Racing Championship concluded on the river Mahabali Brahmaputra at Machhowsa, here came to an end yesterday.

The championship was organised by the Assam Traditional Sports and Dragon Boat Association. A total 350 participants and officials from 29 units took part in the meet.

Final results: (500 m, men) gold-Jammu & Kashmir, silver-Assam, bronze-Telengana. (500 m, women) gold-Jammu & Kashmir, silver-Manipur, bronze-Gujrat. (500 m, mixed) gold-Jammu & Kashmir, silver-Kerala, bronze-Assam. (200 m, men) gold-Tamil Nadu, silver-Jammu & Kashmir, bronze-SWTID, Kerala. (200 m, women) gold-Jammu & Kashmir, silver-Assam, bronze-Manipur. (200 m, mixed) gold-Kerala, silver-Jammu & Kashmir, bronze-Assam.

Overall champions-Jammu & Kashmir, second best-Assam.

ID women hockey gets off

CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, April 7: The 6th Sadiya Saha Memorial Senior Inter District Women Hockey Tournament started here at the Khoride Boruah Stadium today.

Altogether 15 district teams are taking part in the championship which was inaugurated by Santanu Bharali, Law Adviser to the Chief Minister in presence of DC, Morigaon Hemanta Das, local MLA Rama Kanta Deori and a host of sportspersons.

Today's results: Morigaon beat Kalibari 9-0, Bongaigaon beat Maroni 7-0 goals, Karbi Anglong beat Makum 2-1, Naharkata beat Tezpur 7-0, Silchar beat Golaghat 5-0, Sibsagar heat Hojai 5-0.

Boxing body's meet today

GUWAHATI, April 7: The Assam Amateur Boxing Association (AABA) will hold its Executive Council meeting at the AABA head office in the RG Baruah Sports Complex here tomorrow from 11.30 onwards.

AABA secretary Hemanta Kr Kalita asks all the EC and Commission Members to attend the meeting.

GSA school TT

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 7: The Guwahati Sports Association (GSA) organised an inter school table tennis tournament yesterday at the ABITA Centenary Indoor Stadium here.

Altogether 12 schools took part in the meet which has been named after Rayesh Nawad.

The results: (Jr boys) champion-South Point School, runners-up-Don Bosco, Panbari. (Jr girls) champion-Maharsi Vidya Mandir, runners up Maria Public School. (Sr boys) champion-Army Public School, Narengi, runner up Gurukul Grammer SS School.

Cricket tourney in city

GUWAHATI, April 7: A day/night cricket tournament will be organised by the Jyagnath Advertising and Media at the Judges' Field here from April 17 to 24.

The champion and runners up teams will be awarded Rs 50,000 and Rs 25,000 respectively.

Teams intending to take part in the meet may contact the organisers at their Batehi Complex, GS Road, Ulubari office here for detail informations, state a release.

NFR CA boys beat City CCC

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 7: In the thrilling last group league match of the 62nd All India Inter Railway Cricket Tournament at the Assam Cricket Association's Barsapara stadium here today, host NF Railway edge past East Coast Railway (ECOR) by three wickets with one ball to spare.

Opting to bat first ECOR were all out for 161 in 31.5 overs. Girija Raut top scored with 55 off 63 balls while Tushar Saha (5/28) was the most successful bowler for the host team.

NF Railway took 33.5 overs in the 34-over match to cross opponents' total. Sarupam Purkayasha remained unbeaten on 49.

Three teams-NF Rly, Metro Rly and East Coast Rly have qualified for the knock out stage from this group. The knock out matches will be played at Kharagpur from April 10.

Brief scores: NFR CA 113 (Argyil Chakraborty 21, Aniket Medhi 4/14, Arinob Bora 2/28, City CCC 75 (Ziyad Zaman 3/14, Debanush Ghosh 2/13, Jacky Ali 2/14).

Brief scores: ECOR 161 (Girija Raut 55, Ankit Yadav 31, Abhishek Yadav 28, Tushar Saha 5/28, Sarupam Purkayasha 2/17, Sib Sankar Roy 2/34). **NF Railway 165/7** (Sarupam Purkayasha, n/o 49, Abhishek Gogoi n/o 20, Kumar Saikia 23, Kirti Yadav 23, Parvez 22, Suryakant Pradhan 23).

The undersigned request your kind presence at the

60th Annual Conference of

ASSAM TRIBUNE EMPLOYEES' UNION

to be held at the Assam Tribune premises

on 8th April, 2017 at 3 pm.

Dr. Amarjyoti Choudhury

Former Pro-Vice Chancellor, Tezpur University will be the Chief Guest

and

Sri Khanindra Chandra Das

Veteran Trade Union Leader and Prominent Social Activist

will be the Appointed Speaker

Atulya Madhab Goswami

Chairman Reception Committee

60th Annual Conference, ATEU

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