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NEWS CAPSULE

High Court fire

GUWAHATI, July 17: A fire broke out in the legal service records room of the old building of the Gauhati High Court here this evening, destroying nearly 80 per cent of the legal documents. The cause of the fire is suspected to be electrical short circuit. — Staff Reporter

Chopper scam

NEW DELHI, July 17: A woman director of two Dewangiri choppers was today arrested by the ED in connection with its probe in the Rs 3,600-crore money laundering case relating to supply of AugustaWestland VVIP choppers, a senior agency official said. — PTI

Terror funding

NEW DELHI, July 17: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has roped in tax officials to probe trans LeC trade and alleged receipt of money by separatists groups in the Kashmir valley, believed to be the main source of terror financing, officials said today. — PTI

Panel on MCI

NEW DELHI, July 17: The Supreme Court today directed the Centre to set up a panel to substance the court-appointed oversight committee, headed by former CJI RM Lodha, to look after the affairs of the Medical Council of India. — PTI

Jawan killed

JAMMU/SKINAGAR, July 17: An Army jawan and a minor girl were today killed while four persons injured in heavy shelling by militants sheltering by the Pakistan Army along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch, Rajouri and Barwanta districts. — PTI

Bill on DNA

NEW DELHI, July 17: A legislative process is in progress to bring in a bill under which authorities maintain records of unidentified and unclaimed bodies or missing persons, the government told the Supreme Court today. — PTI

3 drown in Kopili

DIPHU, July 17: Three school students drowned in Kopili river while taking bath in Tumpang of West Karbi Anglong district today. The three deceased are Bid Ronghang, Kaisari Kathar and Anglong Rongpi. Search operation is on in the area. — Correspondent

Couple tortured

DOOMDOOMA, July 17: Villagers of No. 2 Hatisia in Kordoiogra area under Baghjan PS of Tinsukia district tortured a couple — Molen Moran and Rupahui Moran — inhumanly last night for allegedly practising witchcraft. Police later rescued the couple. — Correspondent

The Assam Tribune on Internet
http://www.assamttribune.com &
http://paper.assamttribune.com

Presidential poll

Close to 99 pc votes cast

NEW DELHI, July 17: Close to 99 per cent voting was recorded today for electing India's 14th President, the returning officer for the poll announced. The counting of votes will take place on July 20.

The numbers are stacked in favour of the ruling coalition's nominee Ram Nath Kovind over the opposition's candidate Meira Kumar.

Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Gujarat, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Puducherry recorded 100 per cent voting.

In Parliament House, the voting percentage was 99 per cent, said Lok Sabha Secretary General Anoop Mishra, who is also the returning officer for the poll. He said while the sanctioned strength of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha is 776, 771 MPs were eligible to cast their votes. There are two vacancies in each of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, while one BJP MP Ched Paswan does not have voting rights, he added.

In Delhi, 717 MPs were to cast their ballot but only 714 exercised their franchise even before 2 pm.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi casting his vote in the presidential election, in New Delhi on Monday. — UNI

chise. The TMC's Tapas Pal, the BJP's Ram Chandra Hansdak and Ambumani Ramdas of the PMK did not cast their votes.

Fifty-four MPs had sought permission to cast their vote in state capitals. These included Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar, his UP counterpart Adityanath, his deputy Keshav Prasad Maurya and Union minister Uma Bharti.

BJP chief Amit Shah, who is an MLA from Gujarat, had also sought permission to cast his vote in Delhi. Trinamool Congress MPs cast their votes in Kolkata.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the first person to cast his vote, Mishra said. He also said that except for Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur and Tripura, data has been received from all other states which indicates that the voting was "close to 100 per cent".

Counting will begin at 11 am on July 20. First the ballot box of Parliament House will be opened, and then, the ballot boxes received from states will be counted on alphabetical basis.

The votes will be counted on four separate tables and there would be eight (See page 7)

Sonowal's directive to DCs on flood relief

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 17: All Deputy Commissioners (DCs) must ensure that every family affected by current wave of flood in the State is provided relief materials without delay. Those flood-hit people, who are not staying in the relief camps, must also be provided shelter," Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said today while directing the DCs of all the districts. He was reviewing the flood situation in the State through video conference at the Chief Minister's Conference Hall at the Janata Bhawan here, said an official press release.

The Chief Minister directed the DCs to take steps for repairing and rebuilding the houses that are damaged fully or partially by floods. He also issued direction to the DCs for repairing the embankments which are damaged by flood in coordination with the Water Resources Department, as soon as the water levels recede. The roads and bridges damaged by flood must also be repaired with the help of the PWD Department so that communication infrastructure can be restored at an early date, he said.

The Chief Minister also instructed that appropriate steps should be taken for preventing diseases from spreading and taking epidemic form in the flood-affected areas by holding medical camps and taking other such measures. Farmers in the flood-affected areas should also be provided quality seeds for cultivation in coordination with the District Agriculture Council. (See page 7)

Venkaiah Naidu
NDA's vice
Presidential
candidate



NEW DELHI, July 17: Union Minister M Venkaiah Naidu, a veteran BJP leader from Andhra Pradesh, will be NDA's vice presidential candidate, party president Amit Shah said today.

Naidu was chosen at the BJP Parliamentary board meeting here attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior party leaders.

The 68-year-old Naidu currently holds the portfolios of Information and Broadcasting and Housing and Urban Affairs.

The former BJP president is pitted against Gopal Krishna Gandhi, who was chosen by an alliance of 18 opposition parties, including the Congress.

The electoral college for the August 5 election consists of 790 MPs of the two chambers of Parliament.

Naidu will file his nomination tomorrow at 11 am, Shah said. Tomorrow is the last day for the filing of nominations. — PTI

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Voting passes off smoothly in State

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 17: Voting for the presidential polls passed off smoothly at the Assam Legislative Assembly today.

Principal Secretary of the Assam Legislative Assembly Mrigendra Kumar Deka said that voting started at 10 am.

All the 124 MLAs and three MPAs who had registered to vote here had exercised their franchise even before 2 pm.

"However, as per the rules, we kept the voting centre open till the stipulated time of 5 pm, after which the ballot box was sealed and put in the strong room. Tomorrow, the ballot box will be taken to New Delhi," Deka said.

He said there was only a single ballot box.

"The voting exercise was completed without any glitch or hassles," Deka said. (See page 7)

Extradition of ULFA(I) chairman may take time

R DUTTA CHOWDHURY

ty. But he was sympathetic to the cause of the ULFA and was known more as a human rights activist. In the past, there were instances of DC Hazarika remaining in touch with the chairman of the United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent), Dr Abhijit Asom Aloram.

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Gogoi advocates water treaty with China

SPL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, July 17: Advocating a water sharing treaty with China, former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has urged the Central government to put pressure on the neighbouring country to sign such an agreement.

"Such a treaty is essential because of the apprehension of China planning to divert the Brahmaputra river in its territory," Gogoi said while talking to this newspaper after emerging out of the Parliament House after casting his vote in the presidential election today.

Gogoi, who returned from abroad this morning, said that he has written letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Rajnath Singh



leaders of the ULFA and offering his guidance on political issues. But after a division in the ranks of the ULFA with a faction led by its chairman Arbindra Rajkhowa opting for talks with the Government of India, Dr Hazarika was made the chairman of the hard-line faction, which is now known as the ULFA(I). Sources revealed that during (See page 7)

LoC firings

India asserts right to retaliate

NEW DELHI, July 17: In a stern message conveyed by the top Army brass, India today told Pakistan that it deserves the right to retaliate appropriately against any incident of ceasefire violation along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a telephonic conversation, Lt Gen AK Bhatt, the director general of military operations (DGMO), also told his Pakistani counterpart that the Indian Army was sincere about maintaining peace on the LoC.

The DGMO made it explicitly clear that the Indian Army reserves the right to retaliate (See page 7)

Chinese Army conducts live-fire drills in Tibet

BEIJING, July 17: China's military today said it has conducted live-fire exercises in the remote mountainous Tibet region to test its strike capability on plateaus, amid the standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in the Doklam area in the Sikkim sector.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted the 11-hour-long live-fire exercises at an altitude of 5,000 meters on the plateau in Southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, aimed at improving the combat capability on such locations, the military said.

The exercise was conducted by a ground combat brigade of the PLA Tibet Regional Com-



mand, according to a statement by the Line of Actual Control (LAC) of the India-China border along several sections connecting the mountainous Tibetan region. — PTI

mand this month and involved scenarios such as rapid deployment, multi-unit joint strike and anti-aircraft defence, state-run China Daily quoted a PLA press release as saying.

The exercise effectively tested the brigade's joint strike capability on plateaus, according to the report.

The brigade that conducted the drills was from the PLA's Tibet Military Command and is one of China's two plateau mountain brigades.

The PLA Tibet command guards the Line of Actual Control (LAC) of the India-China border along several sections connecting the mountainous Tibetan region, the military said.

(See page 7)

GHADI

মহাশক্তিশালী ঘড়ী ডিট'বজেন্ট

A doctor in a white coat stands next to a large bag of GHADI detergent. The bag features the brand name 'GHADI' in large letters, followed by 'মহাশক্তিশালী' in Bengali script, and 'ডিট'বজেন্ট' below it. The background shows a modern hospital interior.

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State begins raising rhino protection force

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, July 17: The State forest department has begun the process of raising a Special Rhino Protection Force to be stationed exclusively in Kaziranga National Park where poaching of rhinos is continuing unabated.

The project is being funded by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and candidates from the five districts of Nagaon, Golaghat, Sonitpur, Biswanath and East Karbi Anglong are eligible to apply for recruitment in the force.

Men to be trained in jungle warfare



According to NTCA guidelines, the personnel for such special forces – more specifically the Special Tiger Protection Force – should be recruited from areas adjoining the tiger-bearing areas. Likewise, for the rhino protection force, men from near the rhino-bearing areas will be considered.

Initially, the forest department will raise one company

of men, which will comprise 90 personnel and 22 officers to be brought on deputation. The special force will be given jungle warfare training at a recognized institute like the

Vairengte in Mizoram. "We have already invited applications from interested candidates. We hope to complete the process of recruitment in six months time. After that the basic training would commence which will be followed by a special jungle warfare training," a senior forest official told The Assam Tribune.

The force will directly be under the command of the Kaziranga National Park Director.

The officers of the force would be brought on deputation from other agencies, including the State police, Assam Forest Protection Force, etc.

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Requirement in Multinational Company Health Sector 10+2 & Graduates selection on 22nd July #7896024621/7086047762. SV/PA/1424/1

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All testimonials (including P.R.C.) to be furnished along with the Application form and all information must be mentioned in the form of Bio-Data. A Bank Draft of Rs.100.00 (Rupees one thousand) only payable at U.B.I. Narayapur Branch in the writing of name & Secretary, Metabhati College needs to be furnished. Incomplete application will be rejected. The Application must reach the Principal, Metabhati College, Narayapur, P.O. Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Assam, Pin-784164 within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of the advertisement.

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CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT

IN MEMORIAM

Late Dr. Gurucharan Baruah
Died on: 27th July 2008

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I have lost my MarkeSheet of HS final year-2017, Roll #059, No. 0186, Jayanta Talukdar, Upnath, Kamrup.
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OBITUARY

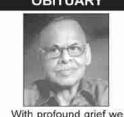
Late Renu Bora
DOB - 24.10.1958
DOD - 06.07.2017

In loving memory of our mother/mother-in-law/grandmother, a caring mother with indomitable spirit & willpower, may your soul rest in peace.

Rimpi, Keshab, Mridu, Manisha, Navya, Ron,

CD/Obituary/P/14311/1

OBITUARY



With profound grief we inform you this sad demise of our beloved Vasudeo Dhanawat (Agarwal) on 16.07.2017. His Adyak Sabha was held on 28.07.17 Condolences.

Meeting will be held from 18th to 23rd of July 2017 at our Residence from 4 pm to 6 pm

In reverence and grieve
Pushpa Devi Dhanawat
(Amardeep)

Dr. Dinesh Agarwal (Son)
Rajesh Agarwal (Son)

.. Residence ::

KRISHNADEEP APARTMENT

2nd Floor, Behind Daily Bazar

A.K. Azad Road, Rehabani, Gauhati

Ph: 9864061456, 94380-10994

CD/Obituary/...../1

PAYING GUEST

Authorised PG Nijwan Girls Hostel at Rupaiya Nagar, Kokrajhar, W/No. 3, Contact : 98549-54889.

PG/1700/7

Hostel/PG (Girls) nearer to G.S. Road stop, Ganeshguri and Rukmini Nagar, 7896048017, 7002092955.

PG/P/138334

Pallabi PG Zoo Tinali Uday Path, TV, Fridge, Inverter, Aquaguard homey environment, hygienic food, 9508917130.

PG/P/13760/1

PG for girls and working women, Sri. Mile, Dispur, Contact: 9864125639, 970756061.

PG/P/PA018/14

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Shifting? Shifting? Shifting? Local & Outside Household & Official Goods: 8584066099, 700230986.

P&M/P/AT204/10

INTERNATIONAL

Russia demands access to envoy compounds before talks

MOSCOW, July 17: The Kremlin today said Washington must unconditionally restore its access to diplomatic compounds in the United States ahead of high-level talks on the issue.

Russia is angry that Washington is still barring its diplomats from two compounds in the states of New York and Maryland after then-president Barack Obama in December ordered the ban

on access in response to suspected Russian meddling in the US election.

"We consider it absolutely unacceptable to place conditions on the return of diplomatic property, we consider that it must be returned without any conditions," Kremly spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

He spoke as Thomas Shannon, the US State Department's third-in-command, was

set to host Russia's deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov in Washington later Monday.

Diplomats quoted by Russian news agencies said the issue of the residential complexes would be on their agenda.

The talks between Shannon and Ryabkov were earlier scheduled for June but Russia cancelled them, citing new US sanctions linked to the conflict in Ukraine.

When President Vladimir Putin and US counterpart Donald Trump met for the first time at the G20 summit in Hamburg this month, the Kremlin's strongman raised the question "quite unambiguously," Peskov said.

He added that "we still hope our American colleagues will show political wisdom and political will."

Obama announced the US

was shutting down residential complexes in December at the same time as he expelled 35 Russian diplomats for spying.

He said the measures were in response to US intelligence reports of Russian hacking and an alleged influence campaign to sway the US presidential election in Trump's favour, describing the compounds as used by Moscow for "intelligence-related purposes."

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He said the measures were in response to US intelligence reports of Russian hacking and an alleged influence campaign to sway the US presidential election in Trump's favour, describing the compounds as used by Moscow for "intelligence-related purposes."

At the time Putin held off from retaliating, saying he would wait to see how Trump reacted after he came into the White House.

But hope that Trump will soon follow up on campaign pledges to boost relations have fizzled as any ties to Moscow have become toxic for the White House amid a maelstrom of US investigations into possible collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign. - AFP

Afghan forces take district from Taliban

KABUL, July 17: Afghan forces have retaken a key southern district from the Taliban while in a western province, insurgents today snatched three officers from their car, including a woman, and killed them, officials said.

The country's security forces drove the Taliban out of Naway district in southern Helmand province from where they had been threatening the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah, said Defence Ministry spokesman, Daulat Waziri.

The battle to recapture the district had been fierce, with more than 50 Taliban fighters killed and five security forces wounded, he said. Naway is located just 16 kilometres from Lashkar Gah, and had been a staging arena for militant attacks on the city.

Government troops also captured a large cache of ammunition and guns.

The Taliban did not immediately comment on reports of the district's fall. US and NATO troops are in Helmand to assist Afghan security forces when needed. - AP



UK PM seeks to quell cabinet in-fighting over Brexit

LONDON, July 17: British Prime Minister Theresa May will seek to reimpose order on her ministers after a series of damaging leaks pointing to cabinet splits on Brexit, her spokesman said.

The Conservative leader will use Tuesday's regular cabinet meeting to "remind" colleagues to keep their discussions private and urge them to focus on the job of government, he said.

Tranquilliser darts were used to sedate the stray animals at the prestigious University of Moratua but many died from the dose, activists said today.

This is cruel and brutal treatment of animals and we want action taken against those responsible," animal rights activist Wiboda Ambegoda told AFP.

She said university authorities removed paralysed animals from the campus and dumped them 20 kilometres (12 miles) away to die.

A spokesman for the university said a private company was contracted to cull the stray animals from the campus.

Snakes have strict flora and fauna laws, and cruelty to animals is punishable with up to five years in jail.

Six people were jailed in March last year after posting photos online showing them skinned a sea eagle alive. - AFP

Ahead of the resumption of

key Brexit negotiations in Brussels on Monday, the weekend newspapers were filled with stories about warring ministers, as well as leaks targeting Finance Minister Philip Hammond.

"Cabinet must be able to hold discussions on government policy in private and the prime minister will be reminding her colleagues of that at the cabinet meeting tomorrow," May's spokesman said.

"She will just be reminding them of their responsibilities," he said, adding that each minister's job is to focus "on delivering for the British public."

Hammond hit back Sunday, blaming the "noise" on rivals who disagreed with his position that Britain must be careful to prioritise the economy when it withdraws from the European Union.

But his words seemed only to fuel the fire, with Hammond calling minister accused him in Monday's Daily Telegraph of trying to "frustrate" Brexit.

"What's really going on is that the establishment, the Treasury, is trying to *** it up. They want to frustrate Brexit," the minister said.

"This is a critical moment. That's why we have to keep Theresa there. Otherwise the whole thing will fall apart."

The minister said Hammond viewed Brexit supporters as "a bunch of smarmy pirates" who have "taken the establishment prisoner". - AFP

Sharif's family rejects Panamagate probe report as 'farce'

ISLAMABAD, July 17: Em-battled Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif today rejected as "farce" a probe panel's damning report that recommended filing of a corruption case against him and his family as the Supreme Court resumed the hearing of the high-voltage Panamagate graft case.

A six-member Joint Investigation Team (JIT) set up by the Supreme Court to investigate charges of money laundering against 67-year-old Sharif and his family had submitted the report on July 10 to the court, which could cost him his job.

But the JIT report is turning into a major challenge to Sharif. Opposition parties accuse

was a farce and an eyewash and was undertaken with a predes-posed mind and malign and im-plicate the respondents in some wrongdoing or the other," according to the objec-tion filed by the Sharif family.

Khwaja Harris on behalf of Sharif and his family filed a re-sponse to the JIT report, re-jecting its findings and accus-ing it of bias and violation of the original mandate.

"The JIT report is not only against the law but also the constitution of the country and its finding are, therefore, of no legal value," he said.

But the JIT report is turn-ing into a major challenge to Sharif. Opposition parties ac-

use his family of using their political influence to amass wealth by unlawful means and are demanding his resignation.

So Sharif has refused to quit, calling the investigators' report a compilation of "false accusations and assumptions". His decision to stay in power was endorsed by the federal cabinet last week.

Sharif has all along denied any wrongdoing.

During today's hearing, his lawyer also objected to the documents obtained from the foreign countries, which he said was against laws of the country.

Harris asked the court to

provide the volume 10 of the

report which was kept confi-dential on JIT's request.

He also urged the court to

reject the JIT report.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on his behalf separately sub-mitted objections over the JIT report in the Supreme Court registrar's office. - PTI

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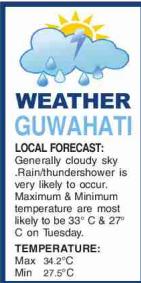
He also urged the court to

reject the JIT report.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on his behalf separately sub-mitted objections over the JIT report in the Supreme Court registrar's office. - PTI

report which was kept confi-dential on JIT's request.

He also urged the court to



Lawyers' body slams Govt over floods

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 17: The All Assam Lawyers' Association today alleged that the State government's claim on the completion of repair works on embankments is only confined to papers.

"The government has failed to declare floods in Assam as a national problem and provide adequate relief to the affected people. Due to the failure of the government, sufferings of the people have increased manifold," said Dipali Kumar Das, general secretary of the Association.

NI Choudhury, president of the Association, said the government should form panels comprising members of the administration and social organisations to monitor the distribution of relief materials.

The lawyers' body also demanded use of scientific measures to prevent any outbreak of diseases in the flood-affected areas.

"The government should also ensure that the farmers whose croplands have been inundated by floods do not face any financial crisis," the Association said, adding that the Brahmaputra should be tamed scientifically as it has been done in case of the rivers in other countries.



Firefighters trying to extinguish the fire that engulfed the old building of the Gauhati High Court, on Monday. - AT photo

Purohit asks PWD to repair roads in flood-affected dists

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 17: Expressing serious concern over the deteriorating road condition in the districts of Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Darrang, Governor Banwarilal Purohit, in a meeting with the Public Works Department officials at Raj Bhavan here on Sunday, asked the department to take immediate steps to repair the roads urgently.

It may be mentioned that Purohit travelled extensively in both the districts on July 14 and 15 and the condition of the roads and the resultant plight of commuters prompted him to convene the meeting and issue directions to the roadways authority.

Commissioner and Special Secretary, PWD (Building and High Ways) Parmananda Das informed that all the paper works and the tendering process have been completed and they shall start work soon after the rainy season is over maybe in the month of September this year. He also said that regular inspections are being carried out by the department.

The Governor assured the officials of full support and cooperation from the Centre. He said that if required, he would also talk to the Union Minister of Roads and Transport.

Secretary to the Governor GM Hazarika, Commissioner and Special Secretary PWD(Roads) Rajesh Kempay, Chief Engineer, PWD(NH) NK Bora, Additional Chief Secretary, PWD Tezpur zone Hiraymon Sen, and several other high officials of the department were present in the meeting.



Special Police Officers Welfare Society members protesting at Dighalipukhuri Park in Guwahati on Monday. - AT photo

Problems galore at greater Pandu

The residents of greater Pandu area are facing many problems, but the Jakubari police and the conscious citizens of the area are playing the role of mute spectators. Adabari falls under the Pandu area. There are five big wine shops located on the State highway and AT Road in this area. In the Leturam Market at Adabari Tiniyal, which is full of residential areas and flats, schools, colleges, banks, coaching institutes and a gymnasium, there is also a wine shop. In the Pandu Market area, one could easily get country liquor. These wine shops sell liquor to everyone, flouting the age limit norm set by the government.

citizens' voice

Citizens are requested to express their Guwahati-specific views within 100 words and mail the same to citizensvoice36@gmail.com

- Ashim Kumar Chakraborty,
Adabari Tiniyal, Guwahati

Headlight horror

Headlights are as essential part of a motor vehicle. However, when we misuse them, we could end up endangering ourselves as well as others.

It is observed that most of the drivers in the city drive with the headlights on the 'high beam' mode soon after the sunset. Most car drivers never use the 'dipper' at night and as a result of 'high beam blindness', accidents occur. Some car drivers even use foglights while driving. High beams help illuminate

a long section of the road when one is travelling at high speed. But, the streets of Guwahati are in no way conducive to high-speed driving. Then why use the high beam in the first place? I urge the high beam users to strictly enforce the rules.

- MD Adhikary,
Lokhra, Guwahati

Illegal parking

Although there are authorized autorickshaw stands in various locations of the city, it is often seen that some autorickshaws are illegally parked on the roadside, narrowing the width of the main roads as well as lanes and bylanes and thus putting other vehicles in great discomfort. Trucks and autovans are also seen parked for long hours on the roadsides, and the department concerned does not seem to make any serious attempt to remove these vehicles to facilitate smooth movement of traffic.

Construction materials like huge plastic pipes, heaps of sand and stone chips etc. are also dumped on the roads and bylanes, without thinking about the impact such acts would have on the movement of other road users.

- Bikrami Senapati,
Chandmari, Guwahati-3

District admin gears up for I-Day celebration

STAFF REPORTER

He also asked the officials to prepare the field by erecting the tent with some innovative design. The APDCI was asked to provide sufficient light.

The Guwahati Municipal Corporation will clear the surrounding drains of the field for anti-sabotage checking. The DC ordered the Inspector of Schools to select student contingents (above Class VIII) to participate in the parade. He also asked the police officials to introduce new troops for the Independence Day parade.

The Public Health Engineering Department and the Transport Department will provide water and buses for the participants of the day.

The DC emphasised cleanliness of the city in view of the forthcoming celebrations and entrusted the job to GMC. He also asked Information and Public Relations Department to make plans to attract peo-

ple for the Independence Day programme.

He ordered all the heads of the departments of the district to illuminate their respective office premises on August 14 and 15. The circle officers will make arrangements in their respective office premises to celebrate the Day in a befitting manner.

The DC said the entire programme of the Independence Day along with the parade and cultural programme will be completed within 45 minutes.

Apart from the main programme at the Khamapara field, the Governor and the Chief Minister will participate in small programmes at the War Memorial and the Sradhanjali Kanan, respectively.

ACP Mousumi Kalita and ADC PP Kathkata will be the nodal officer from police and overall in-charge of the programme respectively.

Bid to encourage independent research on social science

STAFF REPORTER

disciplines to engage in independent research on areas and issues of their interests.

The programme combined usual elements of research methodology with aspects of theoretical engagements and understanding.

The idea behind the programme was to promote inter-disciplinary thinking and understanding of the issues of concerns relating to the region.

The programme combined elements of three courses – orientation, refresher and research methodology. The programme was also accordingly structured in a modular form to bridge the common gaps challenging research capability of intending scholars.

The format of the programme included classes, lectures, interactions and special talks. The participants made presentations on the topics they intended to work on in their further research.

Apart from faculty members of the Institute, several scholars worked as resource persons in the programme.

The list included Sohanlal Dutta Gupta, former professor of the Calcutta University; BP Misra, former professor, North Bengal University; Salil Misra, professor, Ambedkar University; Indranil Dasgupta, professor, Indian Statistical Institute; Atul Sood, professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Arupa Patangia Kalita, a Sahitya Akademi Award-winning litterateur, a press release issued here stated.

Items sought for upcoming issue of Uromi

GUWAHATI, July 17: Preparations are on to publish the next edition of *Uromi* – a compilation of profiles of women living outside the State or the country. Editor of the journal El Ahmed said the women diaspora can send their profiles to the *Uromi* office at the Housing Colony, Chandmari. – Staff Reporter

Death mourned

GUWAHATI, July 17: The Cotton Collegiate Higher Secondary School Alumni Association has mourned the death of Sayanty Das, an alumnus of the school who died in a road mishap near the Saraghat Bridge on Saturday. The Coordination Committee of the Alumni Associations of the Guwahati Schools has also mourned Das' death.

A socially active person, Das was the assistant secretary of the Cotton Collegiate Higher Secondary School Alumni Association. – Staff Reporter

NATION TAX MARKET

Attention: Entities liable to be registered under GST

GST registration is to be obtained before 31.07.2017.

REGISTER NOW
Don't wait for the last date.

The timelines for applying for registration are as follows:-

Registered under any of the existing laws	Migrated	Liable for registration in GST regime	Provisional IDs issued need to be converted to GSTIN by submitting necessary documents in 3 months (i.e. by 22nd September 2017)
Not Migrated		Liable for registration in GST regime	Need to apply for registration within 30 days (i.e. by 22nd July, 2017)
Not registered under any of the existing laws	Liable for registration in GST regime	Became liable from 01.07.2017	Need to apply for registration within 30 days (i.e. by 30th July, 2017)
		Became liable after 01.07.2017	Need to apply for registration within 30 days from becoming liable for registration

Application for registration and all supporting information/ documents need to be filled online on the GSTN Common Portal.

WHY SHOULD YOU REGISTER?

- With GST registration, you can take Input Tax Credit (ITC) on inputs/input services. Your buyers can take ITC on your supplies.
- Non-registration, if liable for registration, will invite penalty.
- Register & grow your business.

YOU MAY ALSO ADDRESS YOUR QUERIES TO:-

Helpline No.: 0120-4888999; 1800-1200-232

Tweet at: @askGST_GoI and @askGSTech

E-mail: helpdesk@gst.gov.in;

cbecmitra.helpdesk@icegate.gov.in

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It is available on



You can also download it by scanning this QR Code

deep 15502/13/07/2017



Central Board of Excise and Customs & Commercial Taxes Departments of States/Union Territories
www.cbec.gov.in, www.cbec-gst.gov.in

MESSAGE FOR TODAY

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

The Assam Tribune

Constructive role

With the commencement of the monsoon session of Parliament, it is an opportune moment to remind the ruling NDA coalition and the Opposition that they have to play a constructive role. Each session of Parliament entails a huge amount of expenses which, naturally, comes out of the pockets of taxpayers. The people's representatives must prove themselves to be worth the expenditure incurred and ensure that during the session, rather than indulging in fruitless opposition merely for the sake of opposition, they dwell on the numerous problems currently besetting the nation. These indeed are many — that the NDA Government has not succeeded in translating into reality many of its promises has augmented this burden of problems. Given the reality that the Reserve Bank of India is yet to put into the public domain how much of the cash has returned to it after demonetization, there is ground to believe that the move was not an unmitigated success despite the hardships caused to the common people. At the same time, the economy, as well as the much touted 'Make in India' campaign, is yet to take off in a substantial manner, while data has shown that the promised goal of job creation has not been attained. One major issue that needs to be debated is the plight of the Indian farmer who is indubitably the prime driver of the nation's economy.

The situation in Kashmir is an exigent issue, as is the current border stand-off with China. This Government has deliberately taken a hard-line stance in Kashmir and veered away from India's traditional policy of remaining equidistant from Israel and the Arab world — how far such actions have benefited the nation requires to be debated. Some of the NDA's laudable endeavours, such as the Swach Bharat Abhiyan, have not secured desirable results and the Opposition needs to discuss how it can help in furthering the objective of such schemes. Sadly, some of the previous Parliament sessions have been unfruitful because of the chaos and disruption caused initially by the BJP when it was in Opposition, and then the Congress and its 'allies' when they were no longer sitting on the treasury benches. Such an unpalatable phase of post-independence India must not be allowed to be repeated. India's Parliament is the very heart of our democratic system; if it is rendered dysfunctional, the entire structure suffers. Our founding fathers had designed it to be a forum for informed debate and discussion, and that precisely is the mandate of the members upon whom the people have reposed their faith. On the very first day Parliament, along with the State Assemblies, would vote to elect India's new President. However, that done, the members must not assume that their job is over and that they can go back to their disruptive ways!

Trouble for ULFA(I)

The chairman of the United Liberation Front of Assam (Independent) Dr Mukul Hazarika alias Dr Abhizeet Asom and the commander-in-chief of the outfit, Pares Baruah, may find themselves in trouble as the National Investigating Agency (NIA) is likely to start extradition proceedings against them to bring them to the country to face trial for their involvement in waging war against the nation. The NIA has already filed a charge sheet against them in the special NIA court in Guwahati and the extradition proceedings are likely to start once the court issues non-bailable warrants against them. Both the leaders of the ULFA (I) have been declared as absconders in the charge sheet filed by the NIA in the court and now it remains to be seen how much time it takes to start the extradition proceedings. The charge sheet of the NIA also laid to rest the speculations about the real identity of the chairman of the outfit and it is now evident that the United Kingdom-based Assamese doctor Mukul Hazarika, who hails from Nagpur, is the chairman of the ULFA (I). The NIA reportedly obtained the details about the background of Dr Hazarika, who was made the chairman of the outfit after a division in its ranks, following which, the chairman of the ULFA, Arabintha Rajkhowa and several other senior leaders decided to start the process of talks with the Government of India for a political solution of the issues raised by them. On the other hand, the faction led by Pares Baruah decided to adopt a hard line on the issue of talks and formed the ULFA (I). The people of Assam came to know about the new chairman of the outfit only after a formal announcement in this regard was made. Though there were speculations that Dr Mukul Hazarika is the real name of Dr Abhizeet Asom, only the NIA charge sheet laid to rest all the speculations.

Under the present circumstances, the trouble for Dr Hazarika will definitely be more serious than Pares Baruah as he stays in London and reportedly works in a hospital. The Government of India has an extradition treaty with Britain and the security agencies are quite hopeful that it would not be very difficult to persuade the British Government to hand him over to India to face trial as he is allegedly involved in terrorist activities. But in case of Pares Baruah, it is a known fact that he spends most of his time either in Myanmar or in China and for years, the Government of India has been trying to get him without success. Of course it will be difficult for Baruah to go to Bangladesh, where he had once stayed as a court in that country awarded death sentence to him for an arms haul case. Despite issuing an Interpol red corner notice, the Government of India has not yet been able to nab him.

Speaking as a former teacher

The Beaten TRACK
DN Bezboruah

There has been a certain amount of resentment over the recent review meeting of headmasters of some selected schools convened by the Education Minister of Assam. This was a review meeting involving headmasters of those schools that had no students passing in the school final examination. Expressed in more trendy language, these schools had "zero pass percentage". I am quite convinced that if the Health Minister of Assam had occasion to summon doctors working in the different districts for poor performance, the people would have taken the matter in their stride, and there could have been no occasion for any kind of resentment. As I see it, much of the resentment over the Education Minister's meeting of headmasters of schools with very poor performance in the HSLC examination stems from two aspects of the encounter. One has the kind of respect that our society has always shown towards all teachers. The other is related to the Education Minister's manner of speaking to the headmasters. It is said that his words were deemed to be somewhat less polite than what is normally used in speaking to teachers. Our abiding respect for teachers is a part of our culture that seeks to equate the teacher with Brahmas, Vishnu and Maheswara. There is a certain sensitivity in our culture that forbids us from criticizing a teacher, no matter how ineffective or unimpressive she or he might be. And this is the kind of respect (and even reverence) that teachers of all levels — from the primary school teacher to the university professor — get in our society.

Is it unreasonable for any society to ask why such well-paid teachers are unable to ensure that a small number of their examinees are unable to clear their school leaving examinations? Are we about to go on pretending that teachers constitute a section of society who must not be questioned on their performance under any circumstances?

Having been a teacher myself for a fairly long spell (both in Assam and in Karnataka), I have often wondered whether the kind of respect and consideration that teachers receive in India is always well deserved or whether it is an accepted norm of behaviour that may not be violated for fear of any deviation being considered unworthy or downright condemnable. I have done my share of soul-searching as a teacher, and there have been occasions when I have felt rather miserably for a particular instance of teaching that has not been up to the mark. At such times, I have wondered why this unquestioning respect for teachers must be carried to such absurd limits. I am happy to find that today there are periodic evaluations of teachers not only by their superiors but also by their students. And since these evaluations remain secret, I am told that there have been quite a few instances of students being brutally honest about teachers who either do not take their responsibilities seriously or have proved themselves to be rather mediocre or pedestrian most of the time. Since the performance of people in virtually all professions is constantly evaluated and commented upon, the exclusion of teachers from such evaluation is something that I find rather unfair and discriminatory.

As a student from the school to the university level, I have had the good fortune to have some excellent teachers. However, there is no room for any dishonest generalization in this regard — no matter what my culture may tell me is proper. I have had the odd teacher for whom I

was unable to have any genuine regard for his professional competence. I have also had teachers who have rarely made any serious effort to teach well. I often felt that they had chosen the wrong vocation in life.

In recent years, there have been interesting developments in the realm of education centring around the competence of teachers. I am a matter of regret that one is unable to unequivocally claim that all teachers do a good job of teaching. Per-

wise, a teacher who has scant respect for the rule of law is unlikely to instil in his students any respect for law and order. A teacher who has no consideration for the rights of others is equally unlikely to be able to impress upon his students the importance of respect for the rights of others.

One of the reasons why some people who should have nothing to do with teaching are in their profession is that teaching is often seen as a vocation that it easier to pursue than many others because it does not call for rigorous studies in a particular discipline. One needs very demanding academic discipline for vocations like medicine, engineering, architecture and so on. The academic requirements for teaching are not quite so demanding or difficult for those who aspire to be teachers. This could be one of the reasons why a lot of young people with a real aptitude for teaching are getting into the profession. Quite naturally, there has to be qualifying examinations for prospective teachers. These are being conducted in Assam, but the number of prospective teachers who have qualified in the selection examinations is far lower than the number of additional teachers that the State requires at this point of time. Obviously, there can be no question of permitting those who have copied in these selection examinations to become teachers. This would be a gross disregard of the very basic qualities that teachers are expected to have. After all, what examples are they going to set for their students?

Along with the question of academic qualifications for teachers, teachers are being conducted in Assam, but the number of prospective teachers who have qualified in the selection examinations is far lower than the number of additional teachers that the State requires at this point of time. Obviously, there can be no question of permitting those who have copied in these selection examinations to become teachers. This would be a gross disregard of the very basic qualities that teachers are expected to have. After all, what examples are they going to set for their students?

not allow the Chinese road construction activity is this area.

Bhutan and China share four disputed areas, the other three being Sarchela, Ama Chu and Gamochen. Bhutan and China till now had 24 rounds of boundary negotiations. Bhutan does not have formal diplomatic relations with China. On the other hand, China has been making concerted effort to develop diplomatic, economic and cultural relations with Bhutan. China has been approaching Bhutan for a package deal on settling the border issue but Thimpu insists that India should be included as a third party for any negotiated settlement.

While the stand-off between both the armies continues, there is also a need to discuss the timing of the incident. The Chinese are known to activate pressure points like this to suit their interest. This time China seems to have conveyed their unhappiness over the growing India-US relations, India's relations with Vietnam, Japan, Australia, etc. India's non-participation in the Chinese initiative of 'One Belt One Road' programme as well as the Dalai Lama's recent visits to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh has strained the ties. Moreover, China is extremely wary regarding the ongoing naval exer-

cise named 'Malabar 2017' among India, Japan and the US.

As a retaliation to India's tough posture, China has stopped the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra from the Nathu La side but the other traditional route through Lipulekh has been allowed. The Indian Army has an organization in Bhutan headed by a Major General to provide training to the Bhutanese army. But India needs to provide much more economic and military assistance to Bhutan.

The war of words like the Chinese statement that "the Indian Army should learn from historical lesson", referring to the 1962 war or the Indian Army Chief General Bipin Rawat's statement that India is prepared for two-and-a-half front war could be best avoided.

There should not be any one-upmanship between the two countries to settle such sensitive issues. The issue needs to be resolved at the earliest at the highest level. India should talk to China as an upright and well-meaning neighbour with one-to-one equation. While the issue is being addressed, the local army commanders on both sides all along the border need to ensure that no further escalations take place at their sub-sectors.

Dredging the Brahmaputra: a reality check

Letters to the EDITOR

Sir, — A reality check is necessary before finalizing the much-publicized Brahmaputra dredging project which will involve expenditure of a few thousand crores of rupees and will also cause a lot of problems with regards to reallocation of the silt. The entire aquatic life will be disturbed and the users of the river will be affected during the operation. It may happen that ultimately people will be disillusioned if the project fails to deliver the desired result. My intention is only to draw attention to certain facts of river dredging and its sustainability from a common citizen's point of view. First of all, nowhere in the world dredging has been undertaken in a river as long as the Brahmaputra is which, having unique geomorphological and hydraulic nature, leaves behind 13 million tons of silt per day in the peak flood period. Dredging is generally done in short courses of rivers, particularly

in river port areas to facilitate navigation. Navigability of the Brahmaputra is a part of the Government of India's Look East Policy which aims at making access to the East Asian markets through the Bay of Bengal converting the Brahmaputra into a river.

The people of Assam have been given to understand that dredging of the Brahmaputra will reduce the flood level but in reality, several studies made elsewhere reported that dredging did not lower peak flood levels significantly while the other negative impacts will be much evident. These include increased risk of downstream flood. The dredged part silt up more quickly and returns to their pre-dredged state within a short time. Dredging will be an unsustainable activity if the entire stress of the river is not dredged recurrently. Moreover, dredging will destabilize the riverbanks more than the pre-dredging stage, causing vigorous erosion of riverbank, according to some hydrological studies. Moreover,

reallocation of silt will be a gigantic problem if it does not suit as a material for road construction. Dredging will bear some result if accompanied by some long-term floodplain management schemes. Yours etc., DR RN BHATTACHARJEE, Beltola, Guwahati.

Power sector revamp

Sir, — In reference to the news item 'Powergrid to revamp power infrastructure in NE' (July 17, 2017), it has been informed that as Assam lacks in technical expertise in the power sector, the funding for the power sector development is sanctioned to the Powergrid directly by the World Bank for the implementation of the North East Region Power System Improvement Plan (NERPSIP). To a large extent this disclosure is true, though the ADB, World Bank, GoI, etc., had sanctioned and disbursed to Assam more than \$200 million for the overall development of its power sector since 2003, Assam has still not been able to enhance its own power generation capacity beyond 250 MW against the peak

demand of 1,500 MW while in the distribution sector, the aggregate technical and commercial loss is still as high as 30%. Hope this new scheme will help Assam generate sufficient power in the coming days. Yours etc., MANIN HAZARIKA, Beltola, Guwahati.

Load-shedding

Sir, — Through these columns, I would like to draw the attention of the APSC that the optional subjects should not be made the deciding factor for clearing the CCE. Every year there have been complaints against the low marks given in the Sociology optional paper in the APSC Mains exam. Many candidates have not been able to meet the cut-off marks and as such were deprived of success. Marking should be uniform across the optional subjects. The APSC, especially the evaluation of the Sociology subject, should look into this matter. Yours etc., FEW CANDIDATES, Guwahati.

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

Students' summer camp at TU
ANN Service

KALIABOR, July 17: A students' summer educational camp organised by the subvisional administration of Kaliabor got under way at Tezpur Central University from July 16 in collaboration with the TU authorities. Many teachers from various secondary schools of Kaliabor are co-operating in the camp. Altogether 150 students of 30 educational institutions are participating in the camp. Keshab Mahanta, Water Resource & IT minister also participated in the camp.

Governor inspects flood-hit areas: Many people of Kaliabor revenue circle and Samaguri revenue circle under Kaliabor subdivision were affected by floods like other areas of Assam. In this connection, the Governor of Assam Banwarilal Purohit inspected Kaliabor recently. First he went to Kaliabor circuit house and then to Silghat where he offered prayers at Silghat Kamakhya Mandir. Then he inspected the erosion-affected areas at Silghat. Soon after he went to Salona directly and inspected the flood-affected areas and inquired about the condition of the flood-affected people at the Salona Baupuri HS School relief camp. Besides, he also visited Kalpani and Amalakhi HS School relief camps. Keshab Mahanta, Water Resource Minister, the DC of Nagaon, and a other senior officers accompanied the Governor during his inspection.

Students feted: Students of Sankardev Shishu Niketan of Kaliabor who excelled in the last HSLC examination were felicitated by the management committee of the school recently at the Niketan premises. Mrityunjay Attri got the Late Pabitra Bordoloi memorial prize for becoming the topper of the Niketan. Manikanchan Bhuyan and Mrityunjay Attri jointly received the 'highest mark in social science award' in the school in memory of Late Baba Das Barua this year. The meeting presided over by the adviser of the Niketan MC Prof Phani Borah was attended by the students, teachers, guardians etc.,

1.30 lakh hit by floods in Barpeta district

CORRESPONDENT

BARPETA, July 17: A total of 1.30 lakh population of 185 villages have been affected by the recent wave of floods in Barpeta district. This was informed by the Deputy Commissioner of Barpeta, Thaneswar Malakar.

Addressing a press meet in the conference room of his office, Malakar said that the overall flood situation has improved now but it

will take sometime to commence normal works in the severely-affected areas. Giving details of the affected areas, Malakar said that 13 in Barpeta Revenue Circle, 53 in Baghbar, 52 in Kalgachia, 28 in Sarthebari, 13 in Bajali, 25 in Chenga and 1 village in Barnagar Revenue Circle have been affected by the floods.

The floods have damaged 5439.5 hectares of crop area, the highest being in Baghbar with 1829 hectares followed by Chenga with 1772 hecta-

res and Sarthebari with 1254 hectares.

One minor child, identified as Dewan Nur Njamul Haque, son of Harishwar Ali and a resident of Baklikuri NC drowned in the flood. The Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs 4 lakh to the next of kin of the deceased. Besides, one Dhanya Sarkar, a resident of Kuriharpur lost his life in flood-related electrocution. The APDCL will pay his family Rs 4 lakh as compensation and it is being processed.

Floods have severely affected road communication in the district with as many as 26 rural roads being washed away by the current wave of flood water. Besides, two PWD roads have also been damaged and 14 approaches of bridges have been damaged by flood. Brahmaputra and its tributaries have breached their embankments in six places causing immense miseries to the neighbouring villages of those areas.

Three school buildings have been damaged and two dwelling houses have been fully damaged by the flood besides 13 houses being partially damaged.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that the district administration has left no stone unturned to help the flood victims and it has kept a strict vigil on the impending situation till now. The entire machinery in the district has been monitoring the post-flood situation.



AASU general secretary Lurin Jyoti Gogoi and other members interacting with the flood-affected people of Gandhali village of Jorhat district, on Sunday. — UB Photos

Tinsukia District Mineral Foundation Trust meet held

CORRESPONDENT

DOODOMOHA, July 17: The second meeting of Tinsukia District Mineral Foundation Trust (TDMFT) was held recently at the conference hall of the DC office, Tinsukia. The Deputy Commissioner of Tinsukia district, Omran Kumar Singh chaired the meeting which was attended by all the members of the trust including the Superintendent of Police, Tinsukia district Mugu Jayoti Mahanta and Tinsukia MLA Sanjay Kishan besides the representatives

of Oil India Limited, Coal India Limited and State Forest department.

At the beginning of the meeting, District Development Commissioner and the manager of the trust Rina Mech read out the proceedings of the first meeting of the trust held on May 8. She also informed the meeting that Coal India Limited had deposited its outstanding dues of Rs 12.2 crore in the trust and, at present, the total amount in the trust deposit is Rs 16.47 crore.

The Forest department of the district is ready to deposit its share of Rs 29

lakh in the trust, but it has not been deposited yet due to some legal problems, she added. She also informed the meeting that the processes of starting a website for the trust was on.

It can be mentioned here that the money deposited in the trust will be spent to compensate the people who are affected during extraction of mineral resources.

The meeting took a few important decisions regarding preparation of plans on how to compensate the affected people.

NFR GM inspects ongoing railway works in Dhubri dist

CORRESPONDENT

DHUBRI, July 17: Sale of limited tickets of the ongoing train services is the main reason for the delay in the allotment of new trains to Dhubri, said the General Manager of NFR Railway, Chhatay Ram on his visit to Dhubri.

The General Manager, after inspecting the ongoing railway works of the district visited the Dhubri station to meet an all-party delegation and members of Dhubri District Railway Development and Passengers' Association.

They demanded improved railway services and passenger amenities at Dhubri railway station and to accept and approve the long-standing demand of the people of the district to run the Rajyavari Express Train daily instead of three days a week. DEMU train via Dhubri station and introduction of direct trains from Dhubri to Kolkata and Delhi.

However, while interacting with the media the General Manager said that although Dhubri is one of the

oldest stations in the region, but projects based on this historic station couldn't be pushed because of the underperformances by the ongoing trains.

"The ticket sale from the Dhubri railway station is very low in all the trains. In such cases, it is difficult to enrol new trains or increase the capacity of the current trains," Ram said.

He, however, added that the ongoing works of the New Moiaguri-Jogighopa route is going on fast and the quality of work is satisfactory.

The General Manager also said, "We hope that the entire project will be finished by 2020 and the district will be benefited with quality railway service and there will be many important stations here."

Meanwhile, a representation comprising many senior citizens, educationists and journalists urged the GM to build the Gauripur station as a replica of Matanga Palace of Gauripur Raj and a garden with statues of renowned personalities of the area.

Programme on drug abuse organised

CORRESPONDENT

GOLAPARA, July 17: The Prohibition Council, Golapara (PCG) organised a programme on drug abuse here at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel library cum-auditorium on Saturday.

Explaining the objectives of the programme while addressing the open session, Seilen Das who is the zonal organiser of the PCG, highlighted the harmful effects of drugs and the numerous health hazards associated with substance abuse. He also said that there is a need to educate especially the school children on drugs and alcohol abuse so that information on potential damage that could occur to the mind and body of the student community to keep away from drugs and other toxicants and to make our society free from drugs.

Another speaker, Deputy Superintendent of Excise, Sidhartha Sankar Dutta focussed on how the consequences of drug addiction can affect one's mental and physical well-being, family and other relationships and other areas of functioning and the importance of

education in dealing with drugs, substance abusers and addicts, so that further damage can be prevented through counselling or detoxification.

Ira Nath, former headmistress of Central Girls' High School spoke objectively on drug abuse and its various ill effects and said that drug abuse is an obstacle to human development. "Though drug abuse is a complex phenomenon but the role of women is also very important as they can deliver preventive education to vulnerable young children and help eradicate the use of drugs and other such substances from the society," she said.

Others who spoke a few words on drug abuse were Dibakar Das, president, district Sahitya Sabha, litterateur Pinkaja Das, Jesmine Sultan and journalist Dilip Sarma.

The meeting was presided over by Nani Das, vice president of the District Prohibition Council. An art competition among school children was also organised on the occasion on the 'drug abuse' theme which was judged by artists Dilip Sarma, Satya Deswara and Sanjukta Chatterjee.

Aid to Morigaon Law College

CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, July 17: Homen Nath, retired judge and senior citizen of Morigaon town donated Rs 50,000 to Morigaon Law College for the infrastructure development of the college. He formally handed over the cheque of Rs 50,000 to the principal of Morigaon Law College in the governing body's meeting held on July 16.

The GB of Morigaon Law College extended its gratitude to Nath for his generous help to the only law college of Morigaon town. The meeting also discussed the schemes for all-round progress of the College.

Bimal Choudhury, principal, JB Law College, Guwahati; Dr L Borthakur, principal, Morigaon College; Dr Kriya Medhi, professor, Nagaon College; Jon Jonai Borah, former MLA, Morigaon; Nirajan Kumar Borah, senior advocate took part in the discussion, which was presided over by Homen Nath, president, GB, Morigaon Law College.

Earlier, Diganta Kumar Misra, principal, Morigaon Law College explained the purpose of the meeting and read out the progress report of Morigaon Law College.

Felicitation programme

GUWAHATI, July 17: The seventh inaugural function and felicitation programme of Manjula Dutta Memorial Kulyoti Trust was held on July 14 last at the Athiabon Bonnja High School premises, a press release stated.

Suva Ram Das, member of the trust, hoisted the trust flag. A tree plantation programme was also held, which was opened by Bharat Kalita, headmaster of Athiabon Bonnja ME School, where Dhiren Das, president of Friendship, a cultural and social welfare organisation, Borka and many others took part.

The opening meeting and felicitation programme of meritorious students of the locality, who passed with flying colours in the HSLC and HSSLC examinations held in 2016 was held at 11 am, which was presided over by the chairman of the trust, Dharendra Bhattacharya.

Anil Kumar Deka, acting headmaster of Athiabon Bonnja High School was the chief guest. Among other guests were Dr Bhaskaryoti Sarma of Anandoram Barooh Language, Art and Cultural Organisation, Assam, Garima Saikia Garg, fashion designer and Anindita Mukherjee, Branch Manager of SBI, Changsari branch.

Noted educationist Bhaskaryoti Sarma praised the trust for its steps on education and socio-cultural affairs.

Noted fashion designer Garima Saikia Garg, in her speech, said that she is very happy over the activities taken up by the trust, specially on tree plantation. She donated Rs 10,000 to the trust and promised help in the future too. Another guest Anindita Mukherjee also promised to help.

Earlier, Madan Dutta, contributor of the trust spoke of the aims and future activities of the trust. The welcome speech was given by the president of the reception committee Kushal Kalita.

Governor moved over negligence of building rules by municipal authority

CORRESPONDENT

MANGALDAI, July 17: Assam Notified Urban Areas (Other than Guwahati) Building Rules-2014, which has been made effective since March, 2014 in all urban areas under elected civic bodies in the State to regulate unauthorised construction of buildings keeping in view the possible high risk of loss of lives and public property due to any nature of disaster including earthquakes has been struggling for its very existence due to the alleged action of a section of elected civic bodies including the Mangaldai Municipal Board. This became evident from a petition submitted to the Governor of Assam Banwarilal Purohit during his recent visit to Mangaldai by journalist and NGO activist Mayukh Goswami.

According to the petition, the role of the Chairman of the Municipal Board and nine other elected ward commissioners is suspicious as the elected body has been trying to safeguard the interest of the owner of a

multi-storied building which had already been identified as an unauthorised construction by the Municipal authority itself and that too even after more than 40 days of the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Darrang directing them to take necessary action as per the law. It was pointed out that on a request of the petitioner, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Officer, Mangaldai Municipal Board to conduct an inquiry into the construction of a multi storied (G plus 4) commercial-residential complex in the name and style 'Radhika X-Ray and Imaging Centre' at ward no-1 of the town and jointly owned by a Senior Medical and Health Officer of the district, Health Department and her dependent son.

Accordingly, the Executive Officer carried out the necessary inquiry and found gross violation of the Assam Building Rules-2014 and vide his office letter no. MMRB/2017/5339 Dtd. 12th April, 2017 submitted the inquiry report to the Deputy Commissioner.

She was an ardent devotee of Satya Sai Baba. She dedicated herself to living each moment in His Divine service, wholeheartedly engaging in 'seva' activities. She was an enthusiastic member of the Women's Sai Committee where she cooked and distributed food in the orphanage, visited and personally supported all those around her through good and bad times. We will dearly miss our maternal grandmother who unflinchingly supported her through thick and thin. On her 95th birthday, we pray that God blesses her with a long life.

On her *ayashraddha* today, we pray that her soul rests in eternal peace.

— Shankar Baruah

PMKK opened at Mangaldai

MANGALDAI, July 17: In a bid to provide employment opportunities among the youths, a new Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra was inaugurated at Konwarpara by MP Ramen Deka at a function here on Saturday. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK), a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to skill the unskilled population of the country with the vision of making India, the 'Skill Capital of the World'.



A massive ditch caused by erosion on the road connecting Bardoibam to Subansiri has disrupted the communication system at Dhakuakhana in Lakhimpur district. — UB Photos

No. ASAC/S(NACP)/IV/proc/PS/2013/542/Pt/28	Dated: 17.05.2017
Notice Inviting EO/INQ	
Assam State Admn. Socy. invites EO/INQ and related application in single bid system along non-bidding mode. Bid amount of Rs. 825 (Rupees eight hundred and sixteen rupees) Stamp worth of Rs. 25 (Rupees eight and paise twenty five) for the below mentioned jobs/works. Relevant details may be obtained from official website www.assamsacs.org or from the office of the undersigned at any working day between 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM.	
SI No.	Particulars
1	EOI from approved cost surveyor/ Valuer
	Last Date 02/08/2017 up to 2:00 pm
2	Hiring of Vehicle for Assam SACS
	07/08/2017 up to 1:30 pm
	Sd/- Project Director Assam State Control Society Kharapara, Guwahati-22 Janasanayog#B80/17

NOTIFICATION

This is for information of all concerned that in concurrence with the protocol for Open Defecation Free (ODF) Declaration under Swachh Bharat Mission (U), the Guwahati Municipal Corporation has declared the areas under the jurisdiction of Guwahati Municipal Corporation as ODF. In line with the requirement of the protocol for declaration of ODF, the Guwahati Municipal Corporation, hereby, makes a preliminary declaration through this notification that area under Guwahati Municipal Corporation is Open Defecation Free City.

Public objections / feedbacks, if any, regarding the above resolution are invited and may be submitted to the Office of the undersigned within 15 (fifteen) days from the publication of this notification.

Sd/- Commissioner
Guwahati Municipal Corporation
Guwahati

CINEMA PROGRAMME

SILVER SCREEN Bijoy Nagar, GSN ICICI Bank (Digital Projection and Dolby Surround sound system) For booking online visit bookmyshow.com	URVASI CINEMA At 11.00 am & 2.00 & 5.00 pm BAHUARH - 2 (Hindi)
VANDANA (WITH DIGITAL PROJECTION)	
SHOOTING STAR HOME COMING (Hindi) At 2:00 pm	
DOORONIR NROLA POJA (Ass.) Sag Miri Baruah, Guria Govind etc	
GALLERIA CINEMA Tinsukia, Assam 14th June to 20th June 2017 Screens-1	
SPIDER-MAN HOMECOMING (3D-H) At 5:00 pm & 8:00 pm	
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES At 11.30 am & 8:45 pm	
For booking online visit bookmyshow.com	
GRANDE CINES 5th Floor, Paltan Bazaar Building, C.S. Road, Guwahati-781008 (2 Curved Screens, Dolby Surround Sound System, Luxurious Premium Seats, Refreshments, Snacks and Beauty and the Multiplex Ambience) At 11.00 am, 2.30, 5.15 & 7.30 pm	
JAGGA JASOON (Hindi) At 2:15 pm	
SPIDER-MAN HOMECOMING (3D-H) At 5:00 pm & 8:00 pm	
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES At 12:45 pm	
For booking online visit bookmyshow.com	
ABS MALL - GAR AL JORHAT (17th July to 29th July) 10:00 am	
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES At 12:45 pm	
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES At 3 (Hindi) U/A	
At 4:30 pm, 12.55, 4.56, 6.00 & 7.15 pm	
JAGGA JASOON (Hindi) U/A	
SPIDER-MAN HOMECOMING (H-3D) At 5:00 pm & 8:00 pm	
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES (Hindi) D	
Stg Andy Senka, Wajid, Harrelson etc Rs. 250/-, 150/-, 100/-, 70/-	
Online Booking www.bookmyshow.com/for any query please call at 0371-222722	
FUN CINEMA MANGALDAI 2nd Floor, Sunway Shopping Opp. Laxmi Road, Dibrugarh, Dibrugarh (Dolby Surround sound system with Silver Screen, Multiple Seats, Air Conditioner, Refreshments, Snacks etc) 14th June to 20th July 2017 10:00 am & 4:30 pm	
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Digital Pictures & Dolby Surround Central Air Conditioned Cinema With Multiple Ambience	
At 11.30 am & 2:30 pm	
MG R Stg Srikrishna, Sudhiga etc At 8:30 pm	
GUEST IN LONDON Stg Koraon, Karima Kalita etc Contact Mob: 91275-27844	
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WEATHER
NORTHEAST

Forecast for NE: Light to moderate rain/rain showers is very likely to occur at a few places in Meghalaya, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Warning: Heavy rain is very likely to occur at isolated places on July 19 '17 over Assam & Meghalaya and on July 18, 19 and 20 over Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Temperatures :

	Max ('C)	Min ('C)
Dibrugarh	33.4	21.2
Torpur	32.9	27.9
Silchar	36.9	26.6
Guwahati	33.4	28.6
Jorhat	32.7	25.7
N Lakhimpur	34.3	23.5
Shillong	35.8	16.2
Imphal	32.7	22.8
Itanagar	34.2	21.1
Aizawl	33.2	13.8
Agartala	36.3	27.7
Kohima	29.8	18.8
Painghat	33.2	20.1
Cherrapunjee	28.0	20.0

Rijiju to hold talks with tribal party on separate State

AGARTALA, July 17: Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday informed Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar that he will hold talks with a tribal party on Tuesday regarding the demand for a separate tribal State, an official said.

The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) has been blocking National Highway-8, the lifeline of Tripura, and the lone railway line since July 10, leading to shortages of essential commodities, fuel, food grain and other goods of basic necessities.

"On the directions of Union Home Minister (Rajnath Singh), Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju on Monday talked to Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and told him he would talk to IPFT leaders on Tuesday afternoon," the Home Department official said.

Rijiju is said to have conveyed to the Chief Minister that Rajnath Singh had authorised him to talk to IPFT leaders staying in Delhi.

Rajnath Singh had assured Sarkar on Sunday that he would look into the issue of ongoing road and rail blockade by the tribal party.

IPFT General Secretary Mevar Kumar Jamatia and the front's youth wing President Dhananjay Tripura have been camping in New Delhi since Thursday. The IPFT has been agitating since 2009 for a separate State to be carved out by upgrading the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAACD). — IANS

NORTH EAST

HC verdict on Nagaland Assembly floor test today

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, July 17: The Kohima bench of Gauhati High Court will deliver its verdict on Tuesday on the petition filed by Nagaland Chief Minister Dr Shurhozelie Liezetsu challenging the directive of Governor PB Acharya asking him to prove majority on the floor of the House on or before July 15, sources said.

The High Court bench on July 14 issued an order staying the directive of the Governor till July 17, the day of the Presidential election.

The Governor on July 10 directed the Chief Minister to obtain vote of confidence of the council of ministers headed

by the Chief Minister, he said.

"This being the inescapable position of law, since the council of ministers has not advised the Governor to summon the State Assembly, the question of summoning the Assembly or before July 15, does not arise," the Chief Minister stated.

The Governor, in a letter to Liezetsu on July 15, said that the Chief Minister's refusal to summon an emergent session of the 12th Nagaland Assembly did not seem justified. He pointed out that the Chief Minister in his reply did not refute the claim of the TRZ not failing to prove majority on the floor of the House of 59 in the State Assembly.

Citing the instance of Nahan, Kebang and Bamang Felsi versus Deputy Speaker of Arunachal Pradesh Assembly, Shurhozelie argued that the Supreme Court had clearly laid down that the Governor has no authority on his own to summon, prorogue or dissolve the Legislative Assembly. The Governor can only do so on the aid and advice of the council of ministers headed

by the Chief Minister, he said. "This being the inescapable position of law, since the council of ministers has not advised the Governor to summon the State Assembly, the question of summoning the Assembly or before July 15, does not arise," the Chief Minister stated.

The Governor, in a letter to Liezetsu on July 15, said that the Chief Minister's refusal to summon an emergent session of the 12th Nagaland Assembly did not seem justified. He pointed out that the Chief Minister in his reply did not refute the claim of the TRZ not failing to prove majority on the floor of the House of 59 in the State Assembly.

Meanwhile, DAN chairman Kuzhluo Nienu appealed to the NPP members comprising central office-bearers and mem-

bers of all frontal units of the party to study the best case scenario and worst case scenario at this time of situation. He appealed to the members to be diplomatic in their approach and not provoke the situation at any cost.

According to a party release, he made the appeal during an emergency meeting of the Central party leaders of NPP held in the central office in Kohima under the chairmanship of Apong Pongener, working president and advisor (political) to the Chief Minister today evening.

Opening that courage and honesty are the pre-requisite to become a great leader, Nienu said that one should have such quality to lead the people.

Bomb blast in Imphal



IMPHAL, July 17: Miscreants exploded a high intensity improvised explosive device (IED) in the busy commercial locality here today, police said.

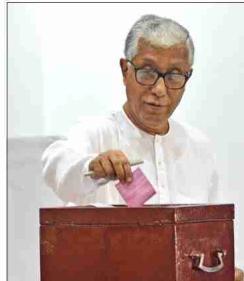
Security personnel have cordoned off the area. — PTI

The incident occurred at

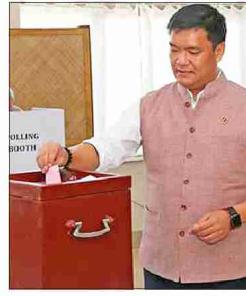
Lawmakers vote to elect country's 14th President

52 MLAs in Meghalaya cast votes

CORRESPONDENT



Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar casting his vote, in Agartala on Monday. — UB Photos



Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu casting his vote, in Shillong on Monday. — UB Photos

CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, July 17: Altogether 52 MLAs, out of the total 60, from different parties cast their votes at the Meghalaya Assembly complex here in the Presidential poll. The poll process began at 11 this morning.

Legislators from three parties — Congress, National People's Party and United Democratic Party — cast their votes. Four legislators from the Hill State People's Democratic Party (HPDP) abstained from the elections.

Apart from those who voluntarily abstained, four others did not vote due to personal reasons and these included PWD Minister MM Dango (Congress), Broding Nonsgie (UDP), Justine Dikhar and Julius Dorphang (Independent).

The UDP and the NPP have pledged their support for NDA's Presidential candidate Ram Nath Kovind. The Congress backed the UPA's candidate Meira Kumar.

Chief Minister Mukul Sangma led the Congress party in casting the votes. Later speaking to the media, Sangma said that the country was facing "unwarranted challenges" as the NDA government was pursuing the agenda of the Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh (RSS).

He added that under the present situation, various issues are threatening the existence and way of life of the small ethnic groups of the Northeast.

Nagaland CM Liezetsu embarrassed

KOHIMA, July 17: Nagaland Chief Minister Shurhozelie Liezetsu was left embarrassed today after being stopped at the entrance to the Assembly hall, where polling for the Presidential election was going on, by the security staff.

The Chief Minister, though not eligible to vote since he is not an elected member of the Assembly, intended to enter the hall to oversee the security arrangement and logistics, but security officers blocked his entry, creating some misunderstanding between his officers and the Assembly staff, Assembly sources said.

Interacting with the mediapersons, Liezetsu said, "As the head of government, I went round to see if proper security and logistics were arranged properly. He mentioned that as he was crossing the polling booth, a staff of the Assembly pulled him from behind."

The Chief Minister said that he had officially intimated to the Assembly Secretariat yesterday about his visit.

The CM also regretted that the Assembly Secretariat had appointed a dissident MLA as election agent without consulting the government. "Assembly is supposed to be above party politics," he said. — PTI

wheeler goods-laden truck was crossing it at around 6 am, sources said.

As a result, nearly 300 Imphal-bound goods trucks, which took the Barak bridge route after the massive landslide at Imphal-Dimapur sector blocking NH-2, stranded on the highway.

Though some of the goods trucks passed the area before the incident, most of the trucks carrying rice and petroleum products are reportedly stranded near Makru area

along the NH-37 while necessary bridge repairing works are in progress on war foot-ing. However, the passengers are crossing the damaged bridge on foot.

Meanwhile, clear skies since Saturday ensured water recession from several inundated areas on Monday. It was estimated that nearly 2 lakh people across the State are affected by the floods.

"Even if floodwater recedes from our homestead, we cannot go straight away without

clearing the debris and sanitising the areas," said housewife Angom Kamala (48), who is currently staying in a relief camp at Takyelap area in Imphal West District. "We are expecting necessary steps to be taken by the government," said Arupam Dilip (63) another flood-affected resident of Lambohongnangkhong area.

Manipur has been suffering from flash floods and landslides due to intense rainfall in the State after cyclone Mora hit the State in May-end this year

clearing the debris and sanitising the areas," said housewife Angom Kamala (48), who is currently staying in a relief camp at Takyelap area in Imphal West District. "We are expecting necessary steps to be taken by the government," said Arupam Dilip (63) another flood-affected resident of Lambohongnangkhong area.

He, moreover, added that the forensic lab has just four divisions, although there is a requirement for ten divisions. He urged the Government to take special care of the needs of this Department.

The Department has been in the focus of the public in view of the rising crimes against women and children and also other cases. The overlooked Department is getting a new look as it is in the process of shifting to its sprawling new office at Mawdandiang next month.

He, moreover, added that the forensic lab has just four divisions, although there is a requirement for ten divisions. He urged the Government to take special care of the needs of this Department.

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Manipur cut off as crucial Barak bridge gets damaged

CORRESPONDENT



CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, July 17: Manipur has been cut off from rest of the country after the Barak bridge along Imphal-Jiribam sector of National Highway-37, which is considered to be the second life line of north eastern border State after National Highway-2, was damaged on Monday.

The Barak bridge, located about 120 km west of Imphal in Manipur's Tamenglong district, got damaged when a 10-

conviction (that is desired)... So rapists are moving around," he said while asking the gathering of police personnel if "we are competent, capable".

Sangma said that since there was a delay in conviction it emboldens habitual criminals to commit such crimes again and also encourages potential criminals.

The Chief Minister said that the existence of the present laws was not acting as a deterrent to stop crimes against women and children. "We are not seeing the kind of

Department for additional manpower and equipments would be considered.

"We would make the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) the State one of the best in the country," he assured.

Meanwhile, the FSL Director, Rymmai said the Department needs more professionals and also additional modern equipments. "The FSL laboratory in Shillong needs more manpower and equipments," the director said.

Department for additional manpower and equipments would be considered.

"We would make the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) the State one of the best in the country," he assured.

Meanwhile, the FSL Director, Rymmai said the Department needs more professionals and also additional modern equipments. "The FSL laboratory in Shillong needs more manpower and equipments," the director said.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, July 17: Chief Minister Mukul Sangma today said that "rapists are moving around freely" as there are delays in conviction of such criminals in cases related to crime against women and children in the State.

Addressing an investiture ceremony of Meghalaya Police at the police headquarters here, Sangma didn't mince words and said, "People cannot tolerate crimes against

women and children."

Meghalaya has a high incidence of such crimes. In fact Mawhati MLA Julius Dorphang allegedly raped a minor and is lodged in jail. However, the conviction rate is notoriously poor due to shoddy investigations and the lengthy judicial procedures.

The Chief Minister said that the

existence of the present laws was not acting as a deterrent to stop crimes against women and children and also other cases. The overlooked Department is getting a new look as it is in the process of shifting to its sprawling new office at Mawdandiang next month.

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CAPSULE**ACC Q2 net up 32.5%**

NEW DELHI, July 17: Cement-maker ACC Ltd today reported a 32.5 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at Rs 326.23 crore for the April-June quarter, driven by increase in sales. The company, which follows the January-December fiscal year, had clocked a net profit of Rs 246.07 crore on the year-ago period. ACC Ltd said in a BSE filing. Its consolidated sales moved up 17.89 per cent to Rs 3,618.21 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 3,168.69 crore in the corresponding period last year ago. -PTI

SBI Life IPO

MUMBAI, July 17: SBI Life today said it has received interest in its IPO with capital market regulator SEBI to raise Rs 6,500-7,000 crore through an initial public offer (IPO). The public issue by the private life insurer involves its promoters offloading up to 12 core equity shares of the face value of Rs 10 each through offer of sale route. SBI Life said in a release. - PTI

Bio-methane bus

MUMBAI, July 17: Auto major Tata Motors today rolled out the country's first bio-methane-powered bus. The company said the bio-methane engines (5.7 SGI and 3.8 SGI) will be available on light and medium buses. The company displayed three models, including the lead model Tata LPO 1613 with 5.7 SGI BS-IV BDOB-II-compliant bus. -PTI

VW Finance CEO

NEW DELHI, July 17: Volkswagen Finance, the financial arm of the Volkswagen Group, today has appointed Patrik Riese as the Managing Director and CEO with effect from July 1. Volkswagen Finance Pvt Ltd caters to all the group brands in India operating under the name of Volkswagen Financial Services, Skoda Financial Services, Audi Financial Services, among others. -PTI

Jubilant FoodWorks

NEW DELHI, July 17: Jubilant FoodWorks today reported 25.53 per cent rise in June quarter net profit to Rs 23.84 crore helped by increase in same-store sales growth of Domino's Pizza. Same-store growth refers to the year-over-year growth in sales for restaurants in operation for 2 years or more. The company, which operates Domino's Pizza and Dunkin' Donuts chains in India, had posted a net profit of Rs 18.99 crore in the same period of previous fiscal. -PTI

Nokia feature phone

NEW DELHI, July 17: HMD Global, which holds the rights for Nokia brand, will launch a new version of Nokia 105 model priced at Rs 999 as it looks to tap the feature phone market in the coming days. The device will be priced at Rs 1,149 (excluding taxes and subsidies). Both devices will hit the stores on Wednesday. The company will also launch another feature phone, Nokia 130, in India in the coming weeks. -PTI

New industrial policy being formulated, says Nirmala

NEW DELHI, July 17: The process for formulation of a new industrial policy has been initiated and consultations are being held with stakeholders, Parliament was informed today.

Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today said consultations are on with industry bodies, academia, think-tanks, State governments and concerned ministries and departments of the Central Government.

"Inputs are also being collected through a survey," she said in a written reply to Lok Sabha.

Replies to a separate question on special economic zones, she said during April-June this

fiscal, exports from SEZs stood at worth Rs 1.38 lakh crore. The minister also said that in the case of lack of substantive progress in the project or on a request by the developer, the Board of Approval needs the letter of approval for the SEZ.

So far letters of approval of 109 SEZs have been cancelled.

In another reply, she said the government has received proposals to set up spice parks from States including Gujarat, Kerala, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Karnataka and Assam.

CII seeks new industrial policy: The Confederation of Indian Industry today sought a

new industrial policy considering the presence of e-commerce players, as the existing one was more than 20 years old, a top official said.

"We need a new industrial policy. At this time, we are working on an industrial policy which was crafted in the 1990s. There seems to be so much happening in the industry including presence of e-commerce (companies)...," Apollo Hospitals Executive Vice-Chairman Shobana Kamini, who took over as the new President of CII in May this year, told reporters.

On the implementation of the goods and services tax, she said, "this is a reform which has come for the industry to benefit." The Indian government had also approved the proposal to terminate those out of 83 existing BTIs that India had signed with other countries, whose initial validity period had expired, she said.

India had along with the notice of termination, communicated its intention to renegotiate a new treaty with the aforesaid countries, based on the new model BIT text.

"India has received responses from number of these countries including Switzerland, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Oman, Qatar, Belarus, Thailand, Zimbabwe, Armenia, Morocco who have come forward to renegotiate a new BIT," Sitharaman said. -PTI

4 new centres being set up: Govt

NEW DELHI, July 17: The Commerce Ministry today said it is setting up four new centres to develop expertise for handling contemporary and future international trade-related issues.

Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that approval has been given to the proposal to set up four additional centres.

-Centre for Trade and Investment Law; Centre for Regional Trade; Centre for Trade-Related Capacity Building; and Centre for Trade Promotion.

"These centres are being formed to widen the scope to handle better contemporary and future requirements like international trade law, regional studies, trade promotion and capacity building," she said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

The Centre for Trade and Investment Law would create

a dedicated pool of legal experts who can advise the government on trade and investment issues.

The Centre for Regional Trade would analyse economic developments in different regions and assessing their implications for India.

The government had also approved the proposal to terminate those out of 83 existing

BTIs that India had signed with other countries, whose initial validity period had expired.

The Centre for Trade-related Capacity Building would undertake training for government officials/stakeholders of India.

The objective of the CRIT is to influence international discourse on trade and investment issues in consonance with India's interest.

Replying to a separate question, she said India so far has terminated bilateral investment treaties (BIT) with 58 countries.

"While approving the new model BIT text in 2015, the

Handling of international trade-related issues

which has been renamed Centre for Research and International Trade (CRIT).

The Centre for Trade-related Capacity Building would undertake training for government officials/stakeholders of India.

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"While approving the new model BIT text in 2015, the

New call drop norms in a week: TRAI

NEW DELHI, July 17: Telecom regulator TRAI today said it is set to release in about a week the new mobile service quality norms covering call drops.

TRAI also plans to start in August the public discussion on the next round of spectrum auction which will focus on wireless frequencies for 5G services as well as the premium 700 megahertz band.

"We are almost ready with revised standards for quality of service (for mobile phones). It will be issued within a week," TRAI Chairman RS Sharma told PTI in an interview.

The regulator is also likely to come up with stringent parameters for radio-link time-of-technology (RLT) which was allegedly being used by telecom operators to reduce call drop incidence.

With the help of this technology, a call remains connected even if a consumer

moves to poor network coverage area for which he is billed.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) expects to float a consultation paper for the next round of spectrum auction.

"The draft paper is ready. We will hopefully finalise it within a fortnight. By the first week of August, the consultation paper should be out," Sharma said.

Telecom operators have requested the government to go slow on the next round of auction as the sector is in deep financial crisis and it will not be in a position to buy more spectrum for about next two years.

"The consultation will bring out issues like should we auction or should we not auction, reserve price, etc. These will be asked from stakeholders and then authority will take a view," Sharma said.

In the last auction, held in October

2016, the government managed to sell only 964.80 MHz of spectrum in various bands as against 2,354.55 MHz of radio waves on the block.

Even at the end of the five-day auction, nearly 60 per cent of the spectrum had remained unsold, including the premium 700 MHz band, which found no takers for being too expensive.

The 700 MHz band spectrum which was priced at around Rs 11,000 crore per MHz. The total value of radiowaves in this band was over Rs 4 lakh crore.

On 700 MHz, Sharma decided to make specific comments on pricing strategy.

"As far as this consultation is concerned, every issue is open issue. Now it is a fresh consultation paper. Therefore, we are open on all issues related to timing, pricing, band to auction. All these things will be considered," Sharma said. -PTI

Tata Motors launches new engines, gear box

MUMBAI, July 17: Ahead of its rollout, Tata Motors today introduced two new engines and a gear box for its all-new SUV Nexon that will be launched before Diwali.

The new power-trains – a 1.6-litre petrol from the Revotorq series and a 1.5-litre diesel engine from the Revotorq family – are performance-oriented and offer higher fuel efficiency and performance.

The Nexon is the short form of 'Next-On' and signifies next level of things. The Nexon made its debut at the

Auto Expo 2016, the company said in a release.

Designed at Tata Motors' in-house facility in Pune, the engines have been independently developed with inputs from re-

nowned global technology suppliers like AVL, Bosch, Mahale and Honeywell, the company said.

"We are not leaving any stones unturned while we prepare to launch the all-new Nexon."

"Both these engines have been designed and developed after extensive feedback from auto enthusiasts, expert driv-

ers, followed by extensive testing across India, on different terrains," he said.

"We are confident that this new family of engines will further help us build our brand and deliver a memorable experience on-road," Pareek said.

He also said that the new engines will be light on weight and low on friction, delivering high performance and fuel economy.

The new transmission – TAG600 – offers synchromesh with overdrive and comes with six forward gears and one reverse. -PTI

"We are strong demand from wedding photographers, who are looking for better cameras. Besides, there are many who are looking to upgrade as well," Canoo India President and CEO Kazudatsu Kobayashi said.

He added that while the demand for these high-end cameras is coming from metro and tier-I cities now, gradually it would pick up from the small cities as well.

The company has launched

a new range of cameras – EOS

Upcoming SUV Nexon

Unit at Tata Motors said. "We are not leaving any stones unturned while we prepare to launch the all-new Nexon."

"Both these engines have been designed and developed after extensive feedback from auto enthusiasts, expert driv-

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Further, they believe technology will be one of the top factors impacting growth of their organisations in the next three years. Yet 53 per cent respondents are struggling to keep pace with the rate of technological innovation in their sectors.

According to the KPMG CEO Outlook, based on the inputs of over 130 Indian CEOs in navigating an increas-



Secretary of Defence Production Ashok Kumar Gupta and Chairman and Managing Director of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) MV Goutama at an MoU signing ceremony, in New Delhi on Monday. -UNI

Employability skills test for graduates launched

NEW DELHI, July 17: India's largest employability skills test, which will test employability of fresh graduates and assign scores with prospective employers, has been launched across 29 States and seven Union Territories.

The test, by employability assessment company Wheebex, was launched to mark 'World Skills Day' in collaboration with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), UNDP, Association of Indian Universities (AIU), Pearson Education and HR technology outsourcing firm PeopleStrong.

Called the 'Wheebex Employability Test (WEST)', it

will be open to students who

are final year graduates, postgraduates or diploma holders

from engineering, polytech-

nic, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), and State-run colleges or management schools, the company said in a statement.

"In 2016, over 30,000 new employment opportunities were provided to young graduates from campuses as an outcome of the initiative. This partnership brings a new dimension and understanding to the way India and the world looks at hiring skilled talent," said Nirmal Singh, Founder and CEO of Wheebex.

"The report provides an insight into the future jobs and skills required by employers also the hiring trends of the market while understanding the needs of the job seeker and organisations," Singh added.

The findings will be part of India Skills Report 2018 which will be published during the Global Skills Summit in November. -IANS

Boosting India business Canon bets big on professional cameras

NEW DELHI, July 17: Imaging giant Canon today said it will strengthen its position in the country's professional camera market, driven by demand from emerging segments like wedding photography and enthusiasts looking to upgrade their equipment.

"India is one of the most important markets for Canon. We are seeing strong demand from wedding photographers, who are looking for better cameras. Besides, there are many who are looking to upgrade as well," Canoo India President and CEO Kazudatsu Kobayashi said.

He added that while the demand for these high-end cameras is coming from metro and tier-I cities now, gradually it would pick up from the small cities as well.

Currently, the company has 233 such outlets where consumers can experience the products before buying them.

"We want people to experience the products before they make a decision. We will have 260 such Canon Image Squares by the end of the year. These are present across cities, including tier-II and below," he said. -PTI

Govt proposes Rs 2,000-cr credit guarantee scheme for start-ups

NEW DELHI, July 17: The

Commerce and Industry Ministry today said it has proposed a Rs 2,000-crore credit guarantee scheme for start-ups to help them access funds.

For the scheme, a corpus contribution of "Rs 2,000 crore is proposed keeping in mind the challenges faced by start-ups in accessing funds."

The company is also looking at wooing customers through experimental marketing through its Canon Image Squares.

Currently, the company has

233 such outlets where consumers can experience the products before buying them.

"We are providing credit guarantee of up to Rs 500 lakh per case inclusive of term loan,

working capital or any other instrument of assistance extended by member lending institutions to finance eligible start-ups recognised by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP). -PTI

Indian CEOs optimistic about economic growth outlook: Report

ingly complex and highly dynamic business ecosystem, 88 per cent of CEOs believe in better growth prospects for India compared to that of the global economy, according to a KPMG report.

Besides, more than half of the respondents believe their organisation will be completely transformed in the next three years, the report said.

Further, they believe technology will be one of the top factors impacting growth of their organisations in the next three years. Yet 53 per cent respondents are struggling to keep pace with the rate of technological innovation in their sectors.

According to the KPMG CEO Outlook, based on the inputs of over 130 Indian CEOs in navigating an increas-

smarter in tracking the impact of related investments in cyber on the overall organisation," the report noted.

"In this year's findings, Indian CEOs have mentioned that in the face of new challenges and uncertainties, they are now feeling the urgency to disrupt and grow.

"Similar to last year, more than half the CEOs expect the organisation to be transformed into a significantly different entity over the next three years," said Arun Kumar, Chairman and CEO, KPMG in India.

Kumar said that Indian CEOs continue to focus on innovating with their products and services, adopting internal processes, adopting new technologies and building a resilient organisation and most CEOs see this

disruption as an opportunity rather than a threat.

"Majority of the CEOs are upbeat about the growth of the Indian economy. Optimism about India's growth is higher than that for the global economy. The CEOs are now willing to build partnerships, collaborate with others and merge or acquire to gain relevant competencies which is a welcome change," Kumar said.

With data fast becoming a catalyst to derive insight, driven value, predict future, and reorganise capabilities to achieve strategic goals, especially during uncertain times, 49 per cent CEOs invested significantly in data-analytics tools in the last one year. On the other hand, 46 per cent are planning a further step up in next three years. -PTI



A boost for the brain!

Playing word puzzles daily may keep your brain younger, says a study

Love to play word puzzles such as crosswords? It may improve brain function and keep your brain ten years younger, a study has found. The results indicated that the more regularly people engaged with word puzzles, the better they performed on cognitive tasks assessing attention, reasoning and memory – decline of which may lead to the development of dementia.

Further, such people also have brain function equivalent to ten years younger than their age on tests of grammatical reasoning and short-term memory accuracy.

"We found direct relationships between the frequency of word puzzle use and the speed and accuracy of performance on nine cognitive tasks assessing a range of aspects of function,

including attention, reasoning and memory," said Keith Wesnes, Professor at the University of Exeter in Britain.

"Performance was consistently better in those who reported engaging in puzzles and generally improved incrementally with the frequency of puzzle use," Wesnes added.

For the study, presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC), 2017 held in London, the team analysed data from more than 17,000 healthy people aged 50 and over, submitted in an online trial.

Along with keeping the mind active, exercising, avoiding smoking and eating a healthy balanced diet may also help reduce the risk of developing dementia, the researchers suggested. – IANS

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! For Tuesday, July 18, 2017:

This year you move forward in your life. If you resist growing with change, you could prevent yourself from experiencing a lot of great things. If you act single, you need to be with someone who will not judge you and who loves you for who you are. If you are married, you might want to meet this person as soon as fall. If you are attached, the two of you might decide to make a major change in your lives. Make sure both are on the same page, or else you could have a problem. TAURUS gives you good financial advice.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Negative; 2-So-so

(Astrology: March 21-April 19)

***** Your determination to express your feelings comes through. Remaining open will be imperative. Don't make a misunderstanding any bigger than it needs to be. Allow others to be indulged more than usual. Communication could be confusing. Tonight: Curb a possessive streak.

(Taurus (April 20-May 20)

***** You are the adaptable and the words to comfort someone else that your path is the right one. Do not neglect other responsibilities. You seem to have that magic touch that makes whatever you work out well. Others remain responsive. Tonight: Be yourself.

(Gemini (May 21-June 20)

***** See if that something going on in the background that might be coloring your thoughts and your vision. A romantic bond or a flirtation could be more appealing than your originally had thought. Consider making special time for your tonight. Deep in thought.

(Cancer (June 21-July 22)

***** Zero chance of a win! You might be surprised by the responsiveness you receive. You could get a comeback that seems a bit manipulative in nature. You will want to back off and take several moments to weigh the pros and cons of what you are hearing. Tonight: Go with the flow.

(Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

***** You are hearing. You might want to revise your thinking as more information comes in. You are likely to hear some positive news. Wait for others to process their thoughts before you make a decision. Tonight: Curb from the heels until the wee hours.

(Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

***** You are the one when you offer up a pedestal. Ultimately, this person helps you find creative and artistic energy. Brainstorm or simply enjoy some special time together. A money issue could be in question. Tonight: Follow through on an imaginative idea.

(Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

***** Your imagination proves to be a source of creativity for you. A loved one is the ability to be efficient and loyal, which you find to be a nice combination. Confusion surrounds a situation, but you still might see unanticipated great results. Tonight: Celebrate the moment.

(Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

***** You are the proposal situation could change as you enter the different dimensions of it emerge. To others, you seem more reasonable and dependable. Detach if you cannot find the correct answer. You might not like what you are hearing. Tonight: Make the moment work.

(Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

***** You are the drop. You might need to deal with a different set of problems than usual, and could feel frustrated. Know that you do not have the full picture. Focus on a friendship; this person often comes through for you. Tonight: You have a lot of ground to cover.

(Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

***** You are the one who likes to feel understood, which they seem to feel uncomfortable, you see a way around them. You might hit a period where you don't see eye to eye with someone else. Understand that this person could be having a difficult time grasping your ideas. Tonight: Express your essence.

(Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

***** You see a personal matter far differently from how many others do. You could feel as if you are dealing with someone who is a stick in the mud. Sometimes trying another approach works. Help others get to where you are coming from. Tonight: Enjoy being at home.

(Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

***** Communication could be muddled. When you clarify what is being said, the veil of confusion is lifted. You might be amazed by how different the connotation of a word can be from person to person. Demonstrate your ability to detach. Tonight: Return all messages first.

From the day

How horrible, fantastic it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing.

– NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

Kids

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15:00 Roi No. 21
16:00 We Bare Bears
17:00 Teletubbies
17:30 Team Trans Go
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18:30 Handi Henry
19:00 Kitekretu
21:30 Team Trans Go
22:30 Dragon Ball Z
23:30 Telephoong

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Thai junta grants king full control of palace wealth

BANGKOK, July 17: A new law giving Thailand's king direct control over royal assets worth billions of dollars went into force today, the latest move by an increasingly assertive monarch to consolidate his power.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn inherited one of the world's great fortunes when he ascended the throne in October following the death of his father Bhumibol Adulyadej who ruled for seven decades.

Thailand's monarchy is shielded from both criticism and scrutiny by a draconian lese majeste law and does not declare its wealth.

But analysts say the Chakris are one of the world's wealthiest royal dynasties,



with estimates varying between US\$ 30-60 billion.

Most of this wealth is controlled by the opaque Crown Property Bureau (CPB), a vast portfolio that includes massive property ownership and investments in major companies.

Yesterday the Royal Gazette published a new law governing the CPB that was passed by the junta's rubber-stamp legislature last week and went into effect on Monday.

The main change gives Vajiralongkorn power to appoint who he likes to head the committee.

It is the first time that law has been changed in 69 years.

On paper the monarchy has little constitutional power.

But under Bhumibol's long and charismatic reign it came to wield huge political and economic clout behind the scenes.

Academics often dub Thailand a "network monarchy" in which major aristocratic families, businesses and state bureaucracies, including the military, all benefit from royal patronage.

The country's first succession in 70 years stirred anxiety among powerbrokers about how the new monarch would manage those complex relationships.

Since Bhumibol's death, a series of legal changes have been made which analysts say strengthens Vajiralongkorn's power.

At the request of the new king's office the junta waded through constitutional amendments earlier this year.

Among these was a provision allowing the king to travel overseas without having to appoint a regent in his stead, and an end to the need for all royal decrees to be countersigned by a government official. – AFP

Trump back on offensive after brief respite in Paris

WASHINGTON, July 17: US President Donald Trump, fresh from a political holiday in Paris, went back on the offensive as a new poll showed his popularity dropping amid doubts about Russian election meddling and deepening frustrations over stalled health-care legislation.

"What took place at the meeting... Is not a violation of any law, statute or code," Sekulow told NBC. He repeated an earlier assertion that Trump is not the subject of any current investigation into alleged Russian efforts to tilt last year's election in the Republican's favour.

In a tweet early yesterday, Trump used some of his toughest language against a favoured target, the press, saying: "With all of its phony unnamed sources & highly slanted & even fraudulent reporting, #Fake News is DISTORTING DEMOCRACY in our country!"

Trump also sent one of his private lawyers, Jay Sekulow, onto five Sunday talk shows to argue that there was nothing illegal about son Donald

Trump Jr.'s meeting last year with a Russian attorney following a promise of damaging information on Democratic rival Hillary Clinton.

"That took place at the meeting... Is not a violation of any law, statute or code," Sekulow told NBC. He repeated an earlier assertion that Trump is not the subject of any current investigation into alleged Russian efforts to tilt last year's election in the Republican's favour.

The concerted pushback comes as a Washington Post-ABC News poll near the six-month point in Trump's administration showed him facing significantly declining approval ratings, down from 42 per cent in April to 36 per cent today.

Similarly, the president's disapproval rating has jumped five points to 58 per cent, according to the survey of 1,001 adults.

Trump responded to the survey in a tweet, saying: "The ABC/Washington Post Poll, even though almost 40 per cent is not bad at this time, was just about the most inaccurate poll around election time!" – AFP



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Around the WORLD

'Oh, bother': Chinese censors can't bear Winnie the Pooh

BEIJING, July 17: Has Winnie the Pooh done something to anger China's censors? Some mentions of the lovable but dimwitted bear with a weakness for "hunny" have been blocked on Chinese social networks.

Authorities did not explain the clampdown, but the censors' "big, very little brain" has been used in the past in a memo comparing him to portly Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Posts bearing the image and the Chinese characters for Winnie the Pooh were still permitted on the Twitter-like Weibo platform today.

But comments referencing "Little Bear Winnie" – Pooh's Chinese name – turned up error messages saying the user could not proceed because "this content is illegal."

Winnie the Pooh stickers have also been removed from WeChat's official "sticker gallery," but user-generated gifs of the bear are still available on the popular messaging app. – AFP

I want to see his light: Carlos Santana on Donald Trump

LOS ANGELES, July 17: Veteran musician Carlos Santana said he hopes to see a positive side of US President Donald Trump's personality.

The 69-year-old guitarist-songwriter said if people try to find a brighter side to the POTUS, it is here he might surprise them for good in future, reported Rolling Stone.

"I want to see his light. I already know about his darkness, his fear and his greed. And it's redundant to speak over and over about that, but the man might have some light because he is a child of God," he said.

"And if we concentrate on that, hopefully one day he might shock everybody. Starting in New York he can start fixing schools, invest all that money he has, or at least some of the gray money, to institutions right there in Manhattan," Santana said. – PTI



The figure of a judge is placed by anti-euthanasia protesters outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London, on Monday. – UNI

9/11 survivors at higher risk of heart, lung disease

NEW YORK, July 17: Survivors of the 9/11 terror attack on the World Trade Center who were exposed to the dust cloud or sustained physical injuries may be at an increased long-term risk of asthma, heart attack and other respiratory diseases, a study has found.

Researchers at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in the US examined the association between physical injury or acute exposure to the dust cloud on the morning of September 11, 2001, and chronic disease up to 11 years later.

They found that the

Taliban bomber attacks Pak force, 2 killed

PESHAWAR, July 17: A Taliban suicide bomber today hit a vehicle carrying paramilitary force members, killing two, including a major, and injuring ten others in northwest Pakistan.

The suicide attacker with explosive-laden motorcycle hit the Frontier Constabulary (FC) convoy at a traffic signal in Peshawar's Hayatabad area, police said.

Two Frontier Corps men, including a major, were killed in the attack, SSP Operation Sajad Khan said.

Ten others, including passersby, were injured in the blast near Bagh-e-Naran Khan in Hayatabad.

Two vehicles that were part of the convoy were completely damaged in the blast.

Security personnel cordoned off the area after the explosion as rescue services shifted the injured to Hayatabad Medical Complex.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has accepted responsibility for attack.

TTP spokesman Khurashan in a statement mailed to media said slain major Jamal Sherwan was on their hit list.

The terror group vowed to carry out more attacks on FC troops. – PTI



Cameroon army vessel capsizes at sea, dozens missing: security sources

YAOUNDE, July 17: A

Cameroon army vessel trans-

porting "dozens" of troops from the elite Rapid Intervention Brigade capsized off the country's southwestern coast, a security source said.

The boat "capsized yesterday between the city of Limbe and Bakassi. There

were dozens of troops on board, including a colonel,"

the source told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Rapid Intervention Brigade is in the front line of Cameroon's fight against Boko Haram jihadists in the far north.

"The army has begun

searches," the source said, while another source close to the Cameroonian army said at least one body had been re-

covered.

As well as the troops the boat was also transporting equipment for construction work at a military base on the Bakassi peninsula, where the Brigade has helped to bring security after a previous spate of hostage-takings.

Though Boko Haram originated in Nigeria, the Islamic State-affiliated group has carried out frequent attacks in Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

Cameroun's Far North region, which borders Nigeria, has seen a resurgence in attacks blamed on Boko Haram after months of relative calm.

Last week two bombers

blew themselves up in north-

eastern Cameroon killing 15

people in an attack blamed on Boko Haram. – AFP

9 dead, boy missing in flash flood in Arizona swim hole

TONTO NATIONAL FOREST, July 17: Nine people died and a 13-year-old boy was missing after their group of family and friends was swept away while cooling off in a creek that suddenly turned treacherous when a rainstorm upstream unleashed floodwaters in Arizona's Tonto National Forest.

Gila County Sheriff's Detective David Horner told The Associated Press that the group from the Phoenix and Flagstaff areas had met up for a daytrip along the popular Cold Springs swimming hole near Payson in central Arizona

and were playing in the water

Saturday afternoon when muddy flood waters came roaring down the canyon.

The group, ranging in age from 2 to 60, had set out chairs to lounge on a warm summer day when miles upstream an intense thunderstorm dumped heavy rainfall on the mountain.

Disia Alexander was hiking to the swimming area where Ellison Creek and East Verde River converge when the water suddenly surged. She was still about two miles away when she spotted a man holding a baby

and clinging to a tree.

His wife was nearby, also in a tree. Had they been swept downstream, they would have been sent over a 20-foot waterfall, Alexander said.

Alexander and others tried to reach them but couldn't. Rescuers arrived a short time later.

"We were kinda looking at the water; it was really brown," she said. "Literally 20 seconds later you just see like hundreds of gallons of water smacking down and debris and trees getting pulled in. It looked like a really big mudslide." – AP



"Our findings indicate

that intense exposure on a single day - the first day of the disaster - contributes substantially to the risk of developing chronic conditions," he added.

The study was published in the journal Injury Epidemiology. – PTI

people who were present in the vicinity of the World Trade Center on 11 September by medical providers is warranted for the foreseeable future," he added.

"Continued monitoring of

7.1 million Venezuelans vote in Opp referendum

CARACAS, July 17: Venezuelan opposition said more than 7.1 million people responded to its call to vote in a symbolic rejection of President Nicolas Maduro's plan to rewrite the constitution, a proposal that has raised tensions in a nation suffering through widespread shortages and months of anti-government protests.

A 61-year-old woman was killed and four people wounded by gunfire that erupted after government supporters on motorcycles swarmed an opposition polling site in a church in the traditionally pro-government Catia neighborhood of western Caracas.

Analysts said the vote for the opposition across Venezuela and the country's far-flung diaspora was an impressive show of support. However, it fell short of the opposition's 7.7 million-vote showing in 2015 legislative elections and the 7.5 million votes that brought Maduro to power in 2013.

Opposition leaders said that was because it was only able to set up 2,000 polling places in a largely symbolic exercise that the government labeled as illegitimate. Still, some supporters said they were disappointed.

"I thought it was going to be more," said Mariela Arana, a 56-year-old school counselor. "But these seven million people spoke and it was plenty."

David Smilde, a Tulane University expert on Venezuela, said Sunday's results would likely rally the international community even more strongly against the July 30 vote Maduro has called to elect members of the assembly that will retool Venezuela's 1999 constitution.

The opposition says that vote has been structured to pack the constitutional assembly with government supporters and allow Maduro to eliminate the few remaining checks on his power, creating a Cuba-style system dominated by his socialist party. – AP

Suicide bombing in Nigeria claims 8 lives

MAIDUGURI, July 17: Eight people were killed today when a female suicide bomber detonated her explosives at a mosque in northeast Nigeria, in the latest attack in the restive region.

The head of the Borno state emergency management agency, Ahmed Satomi, said the blast happened at about 5:30 am (0430 GMT) in the London Ciki area of Maiduguri, which has been at the epicentre of Boko Haram violence since 2009.

"She killed eight people and injured 15 others. The mosque was being guarded by civilian JTF (joint task force militia) during prayers," he told AFP.

"Unknown to them, the girl was being pursued from another part of town by residents who were suspicious of her movement at the time."

"When she approached the mosque, they demanded that she stop to be searched but she suddenly bolted into the mosque and set off her bombs."

Three other female suicide bombers were located in Maiduguri at about the same time, said Satomi. – AFP

UAE behind hacking of Qatari media

WASHINGTON, July 17: The Washington Post is reporting that the United Arab Emirates orchestrated the hacking of a Qatari government news site.

The Post says the UAE planted a false story that sparked the crisis between Qatar and several Arab countries.

"We quickly decided as 'false' by the Emirati Embassy in Washington."

The Post cites unnamed US intelligence officials as saying that senior members of the Emirati government discussed the hacking plan on May 23.

A day later, a story on the Qatari News Agency's website quoted a speech by Qatari's emir in which he allegedly praised Iran and Israel.

Afghan civilian deaths hit new high: UN

KABUL, July 17: Civilian deaths in Afghanistan hit a new high in the first half of 2017, with 1,662 killed and more than 3,500 injured, the United Nations said today.

The majority of the victims were killed by anti-government forces – including the Taliban and the Islamic State – with around one in five of deaths happening in the capital Kabul, according to the report which has been produced by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) bi-annually since 2009. – AFP

I never dreamed I'd be Wimbledon legend: Federer

LONDON, July 17: Roger Federer admitted that he never thought he'd be a record eight-time Wimbledon champion and would even have laughed if it was told he'd win two majors in 2017.

The Swiss star, who will turn 36 in three weeks' time, eased past the mark of seven All England Club titles he had shared with Pete Sampras since 2012 with a 6-3, 6-1, 6-4 win over injury-hit Marin Cilic in the final yesterday.

It was 16 years ago when Federer famously defeated Sampras at Wimbledon to announce himself as a star in the making.

However, it wasn't until 2003 that he captured his first All England Club title.

Now he has 19 majors, four clear of closest rival Rafael Nadal on the all-time list.

"I didn't think I was going to be this successful after beating Pete here," said Federer who also won a fifth Australian Open in January.

"I hoped to have a chance maybe one day to be in a Wimbledon final and have a chance to win the tournament."

"Winning eight is not something you can ever aim for. If you do, you must have so much talent and parents and the coaches that push you from the age of three on, who think you're like a project. I was not that kid."

Federer had been written off as a faded force when he was knocked out of Wimbledon in the semifinals by Milos Raonic last year.

He immediately shut down his season to rest a knee injury, a decision which meant that for the first time in his professional career he would go

through an entire campaign without adding to his trophy haul.

But his Australian Open triumph led to back-

to-back Masters at Indian Wells and Miami before he skipped the clay court season.

A ninth Halle grass court title followed and

on Sunday his record triumph in south-west London took his career trophy collection to a staggering 93.

Sunday's straight-sets cruise meant he was the first man since Bjorn Borg in 1976 to win the title without dropping a set.

He is also the oldest Wimbledon men's champion of the modern era.

"I'm incredibly surprised how well this year is going, how well I'm feeling, how I'm managing tougher situations, where my level of play is on a daily basis," added Federer.

"I am surprised that it's this good. I knew I could do great again maybe one day, but not at this level."

"So I guess you would have laughed, too, if I told you I was going to win two slams this year. People wouldn't believe me if I said that. I also didn't believe that I was going to win two this year."

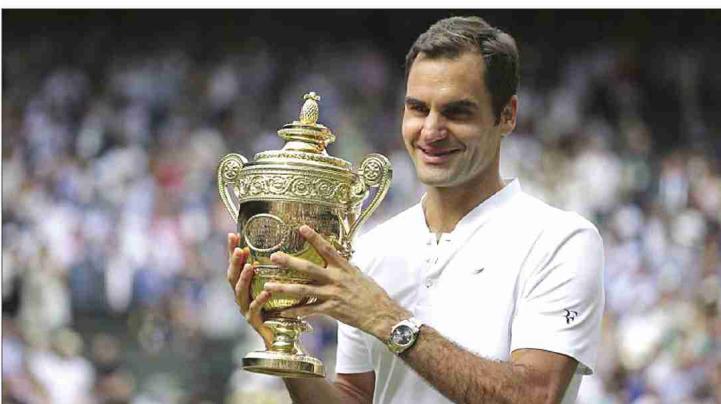
Federer also insisted he fully intends to defend his Wimbledon title in 2018 despite delivering what many fans fear sounded like a farewell speech to Centre Court.

"We never know what happens," said the Swiss star, who had told the crowd in his victory speech: "I hope to be back, I hope this wasn't my last match".

He later clarified his remarks, telling reporters: "Honestly, ever since I had the year I had last year, I think a year ahead of time, you know, with my schedule, fitness schedule, tournaments I would like to play."

"So I totally see myself playing here this time next year."

"There's never a guarantee, especially not at 35, 36. But the goal is definitely to be here again next year to try and defend." — AFP



Roger Federer eased past the mark of seven All England Club titles he had shared with Pete Sampras since 2012 with a 6-3, 6-1, 6-4 win over Marin Cilic in the final, on Sunday.

Career best rank in singles for Ramkumar

NEW DELHI, July 17: Ramkumar Ramanathan today improved his career-best rank to 168 in singles following a runner-up finish at Wimbleton in USA where he earned 48 points and resiliently jumped 16 places on the ladder.

The 22-year-old from Chennai is now India's best ranked player in the singles, followed by Yuki Bhambri (212), Prajnesh Gunneswara (214), N Sriram Balaji (293) and Sunil Nagal (306).

In the doubles chart, Rohan Bopanna dropped a place to 22 but Divij Sharan (51) and Purav Raja (62) gained six and five spots respectively. Veteran Leander Paes also jumped three places to be 59th in the chart but Jeetveer Nedunchezhyan (98) lost eight places.

Sania Mirza was unchanged at number seven in the doubles while in the singles, Ankita Raina continues to be the highest-ranked singles player at number 277 (loss of three places). — PTI

IPL media rights up for grabs

NEW DELHI, July 17: The BCCI will release the invitation to Tender (ITT) for the IPL media rights on July 21 while the last date for bid submission will be August 28.

The media rights on offer will be for a five-year period, like it was the case with the title and event rights that went to Vivo and IMP respectively for a handsome amount.

The IPL Governing Council at its meeting held on July 11, 2017 evaluated the IPL Media Rights ITT and confirmed that the existing BCCI tender process is the best approach, both in terms of absolute transparency and a free and fair price discovery, for the IPL Media Rights," stated BCCI acting secretary Amritab Choudhary. — PTI

Zimbabwe's ODI win over Lanka good for the game: Ashwin

MUMBAI, July 17: India's right-ovopper Ravichandran Ashwin welcomed the upset ODI series victory scored by minnows Zimbabwe against hosts Sri Lanka and said such shock results will help cricket stay healthy.

"With regard to Zimbabwe winning over Sri Lanka, that's how the game goes, anybody can lose, anybody can win. Tomorrow Afghanistan may beat someone, so that's the way the sports need to go. It is very healthy for the game," Ashwin said on the sidelines of a promotional event of small finance bank, Equitas Bank of which he is the brand ambassador.

Zimbabwe had defeated Sri Lanka 3-2 in the five match ODI series by winning the first, fourth and the fifth match.

Ashwin is part of the Indian squad led by Virat Kohli which will face Sri Lanka in a full-fledged tour comprising three Tests, five ODIs and a lone T20 in the island nation.



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The tour commences on July 21 with a two-day practice game at Moratuwa prior to the opening Test at Galle beginning July 26.

The 30-year-old cricketer was reluctant to comment on the appointment of new head coach Ravi Shastri who has re-

placed Anil Kumble.

"I think the new coach or the new support staff, it does not come under my jurisdiction, it is not something I will take a call on."

"I am not being diplomatic, it will be unfair for me to pass a comment on that," said Ashwin, who is 25 short of reaching the milestone of 300 Test wickets. — PTI

JOHANNESBURG, July 17: The Indian women's hockey team suffered a 0-3 loss to reigning opponents Argentina in their last group stage encounter at the Women's Hockey World League Semi-Final here.

For Rocio No. 3 Argentina, Rocío Sanchez (2nd minute), María Granatto (14th) and Noel Barrionuevo (25th) were the goal-scorers, while India failed to find the back of the net.

Argentina were quick to get off the blocks last night scoring as early as the second minute of the match. It was Rocío Sanchez who fetched Argentina an early 1-0 lead.

India's goalkeeper Savita was kept busy right from the start and unfortunately for her this goal came off Argentina's second shot on goal.

Though she made a diving effort to save the first attempt, an unmarked Sanchez was quick to pick up the re-

bound and convert.

Soon after India came close to scoring an equaliser when Vandana Kataria assisted by Namita Topro tipped the ball into the post but it was blocked away by the Argen-

time goalkeeper.

Savita made as many as four saves in the first 15 minutes and one of her best saves was padded away a fiercely struck shot by Julieta Janikunas.

Argentina also won their

first PC in the 6th minute but it was blocked away by first runner Namita. Maria Granatto scored Argentina's second goal in the 14th minute to go into the first hooter with a strong 2-0 lead. — PTI

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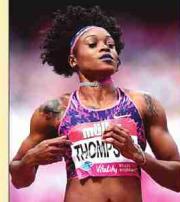
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India and Argentina players in action during the Women's Hockey World League Semi-Final match at Johannesburg.

Thompson in tune for worlds, concern for Brazil



after a month sidelined with a knee problem in Morocco, his lack of form will give him major cause for concern with London looming.

Reigning double Olympic sprint champion Thompson, in contrast was all smiles after annexing the 100m in a meeting record 10.47sec.

Thompson, who owns the season's leading time of 10.71m set in Kingston last month, crossed clear of Marie-José Lou of the Ivory Coast (10.90) in a rerun of the result in Paris on July 1.

Trinidad and Tobago's Michelle-Lee Ahye took third in 11.02.

"My races are going fine, I'm in the shape that I want to be and I'm looking forward to the London world championships," said Thompson.

Briton Chijindu Ujah timed 9.98sec to take the men's 100m from Ivorian Ben Youssef Meite in 10.01.

"I hope I can be something very special in London," ventured Ujah ahead of his clash with Jamaican sprint legend Usain Bolt next month.

Canada's Andre De Grasse, seen as the heir to Bolt when the Jamaican

went through in the last few months in preparation for Wimbledon."

Clic explained that his tears at 3-0 down in the second set were more a result of his disappointment at not being able to perform at his best rather than a legacy of the pain.

"It was just a feeling I knew I cannot give my best on the court, that I cannot give my best game, especially at this stage of my career, at such a big match," he said.

"It was very, very difficult to deal with the pain. It didn't hurt so much that it was putting me in tears. It was just that feeling that I wasn't able to give to the best."

"It was actually very difficult to focus on the match, as well as my mind was all the time blocked with the pain."

"Obviously it was very tough emotionally because I know how much I

"It was tough for me to focus on the tactics, on the things that I needed to do. I wasn't serving very good today because of that."

Clic had taken pain relief before the match in a bid to get him through, but he revealed he thought he would struggle once he felt more discomfort in the pre-match warm-up.

"We even tried to block the pain. But in that area it's very difficult because it's hard skin. It helped, but I still felt some pain," he said.

"Even when I was warming up for the match, I was trying to test myself in exercises with change of direction. Really I was too slow basically to react. I knew that it's going to be difficult, but I tried."

Clic is confident that the blister would get healed by

the time he starts his build-up for the US Open, which starts in late August.

"Having now three weeks of before US Series, tournaments in Montreal and Cincinnati, I believe until that time everything is going to be okay," he said.

Despite the agony of being denied a final chance to compete in the final, the 28-year-old took heart from his run to his maiden Wimbledon final and first at any Grand Slam since winning the US Open in 2014.

"Obviously it's a sad one, it's a devastating one, but I'm really proud of myself for everything I did these two weeks over here," he said.

"I played, I would say probably best tennis of my life. That's what I'm going to take home with me."

"This will give me much more confidence, much more strength for the rest of the year. I know that my level can even go higher."

"That's something which is definitely making me more happy." — AFP

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Injured Vijay out, Dhawan in for Lankा Test series

NEW DELHI, July 17: Open American Murali Vijay was today ruled out of the Test series against Sri Lanka due to a wrist injury and was subsequently replaced by Shikhar Dhawan in the 16-member women's 400m team.

South African Rushwell Samuels took the men's long jump, while another star of the Rio 2016 games, Shamael Miller-Uibo of the Bahamas, won the women's 400m.

Shivam Patel "This was actually a training run for me. The time (49.80sec) was good but it is not very important for me now, what counts are the world championships."

With India flopping, the pole vault went to Poland's Paweł Wojciechowski who cleared 5.85m to beat German Raphael Holzdeppe (5.70m).

The world championships in London run from August 4 to August 13. — AFP

fore advised that Vijay should continue his rehabilitation programme," added.

Dhawan, who is a regular in the Indian ODI side, has played 23 Tests and averages 38.52. He has four hundreds to his credit in an accumulated 1464 runs.

He last played a Test for India in 2016 against New Zealand in a home series.

After the Test series, India are scheduled to play five one-dayers starting August 20 before signing off with a lone Twenty20 on September 6.

Special shout-out: Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice captain), Rohit Sharma, R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Hardik Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mohammed Shami, Kuldeep Yadav, Abhinav Mukund. — PTI

Devastated Cilic reveals blister sparked Wimbledon tears



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3		7	9	2
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Solution of last problem

5	9	3	6	2	8	4	7	1
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