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NEWS CAPSULE

State floods

GUWAHATI, June 26: The flood situation in Assam worsened today as four new districts were hit by flood, taking the total number of flood-affected districts to eight. An Assam State Disaster Management Authority report said the deluge has affected over one lakh people in 126 villages in 11 revenue circles. – PTI

Fake abduction

SILCHAR, June 26: Police arrested four youths for fake abduction and demanding ransom. Based on the confession of one Amit Das, who was arrested on Sunday, police arrested Rahul Das and two others who executed the plan. Rahul's father got ransom calls for his son's release. – Correspondent

NBCB Bill

NEW DELHI, June 26: A parliamentary panel examining a Bill that seeks to accord constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes has reached a consensus, paving the way for its likely passage in Rajya Sabha in the monsoon session. – PTI

Skills India

NEW DELHI, June 26: The World Bank has cleared a USD 250-million loan for making Indian youth more employable, in a move that is seen as a gift to Skill India mission. Under the programme, adults in 15-59 years of age will get skill training. – PTI

(Details on Page 11)

Mansarovar

BEIJING, June 26: China today said it was in talks with India over the denial of entry to 47 Indian pilgrims who were scheduled to travel to Kailash Mansarovar in Tibet through the Nathu-la pass in Sikkim. The issue was being discussed by the two foreign ministers. – PTI

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

State all set to implement GST regime

R DUTTA CHOWDHURY

GUWAHATI, June 26: Assam is ready to go into the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime as majority of the dealers have already registered themselves under the new regime and the State Government has notified the GST rules. Moreover, the State will not suffer any financial loss due to implementation of the GST regime as any loss occurred during the initial stages of the new regime will be compensated by the Government of India.

Highly placed official sources told *The Assam Tribune* that from now on, there will be no new tax proposals in the State's budget apart from VAT on a few items as under the GST regime, there will be uniform tax structure all over the country. However, petro-

leum products and alcohol have been excluded from the purview of the GST and the States will have the power to impose VAT on it. If the States need to increase tax on any other item, they have to approach the GST Council for approval.

On the preparations of the State Government to move into the new regime, sources said that majority of the dealers have already registered themselves under the GST and training of the tax officials is complete. The process of training up the drawing and disbursing officers of all the departments is going on and the process is likely to be completed by the end of this month for smooth transition to the GST regime from July 1.

Sources said that there is possibility of minimal decrease in tax collection in the initial period of going into a new system

(See page 2)

Chinese troops transgress Sikkim sector

NEW DELHI, June 26: In another transgression, Chinese troops entered India in the Sikkim sector and posted with Indian army personnel guarding the Sino-Indian frontier, besides destroying two bunkers.

The face-off has been going on in Doka La general area in Sikkim for the past ten days and the Chinese troops have also stopped the batch of pilgrims that was proceeding for Kailash Mansarovar yatra, officials said today.

The Indian troops had to struggle hard to stop the Chinese personnel from advancing further into Indian territory. They formed a human wall

along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) to stop the PLA personnel, some of whom also videographed and click pictures of the incident.

The bunkers has been destroyed in Lalten area of the Doka La area.

A flag meeting was also held between senior army officers of both the sides on June 20, but the tension still continues.

It is not the first time that such a transgression has happened at the Doka La, a place at the Sikkim-Bhutan-Tibet trijunction.

The Chinese forces had in November 2008 destroyed some makeshift Indian army bunkers at the same place. – PTI

(See page 2)



Devouts offering namaz on the occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr, in Guwahati on Monday. – AT photo

Surgical strikes prove India can defend itself: Modi

WASHINGTON, June 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said India has succeeded in telling the world about the need to uproot the menace of terrorism and the surgical strikes conducted across the LoC prove that the country can defend itself.

"When India conducted surgical strikes the world experienced our power and realised that India practices restraint but can show power when needed," the Prime Minister said as he highlighted the achievements of his government in the last three years.

India conducted surgical strikes on ter-

ror pads across the LoC on September 29 last year after the Uri attack.

Modi said India has been a victim of terrorism, but "the world did not and cannot stop us. We have succeeded in telling the world the deleterious effects of terrorism on India."

In an apparent dig at China, Modi said that India believed in following the world order.

India, he said, does not believe in achieving its goals by not following the global rules. – PTI

Idd-ul-Fitr celebrated

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: Idd-ul-Fitr, the holy festival of the Muslims marking the end of the month-long fast of Ramzan, was celebrated across the State along with the rest of the country.

Ramzan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is observed as a fasting period by Muslims who abstain from food and water from sunrise to sunset.

Religious fervour and traditional gaiety ruled the roost as

(See page 2)

JOCOSERIOUS



Better go and enjoy the summer vacation in my village, rather than suffer here, my son!

Indrani among 200 booked for rioting in jail

MUMBAI, June 26: Nearly 200 Byculla Jail inmates, including Indrani Mukerjee, the prime accused in the Sheena Bora murder case, have been booked for rioting and other offences following the death of a woman convict.

Manju Govind Shette (45), a convict, died at the government-run JJ Hospital on Friday night after allegedly being beaten up by a woman prison official.

Subsequently, six jail staffers were placed under suspension and yesterday police registered a case under IPC section 302 (punishment for murder) against them.

Following Shette's death, over 200 women inmates of the jail were up in arms since Saturday morning.

Some inmates on Saturday clamped atop the roof of the jail while newspapers were

torched inside, a police official earlier said.

The inmates alleged that Shette was beaten up by a woman prison official. They wanted to present the issue before the media which is not permissible under prison rules, he said.

Indrani, who is lodged in the Byculla prison, is among the 200 inmates against whom a case was yesterday registered for rioting, unlawful assembly assault on public servant and other relevant sections under the Indian Penal Code, a police official said today.

The jail houses around 251 women prisoners. – PTI

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ASTC plans smart ticketing

Initiative to check revenue leakage

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, June 26: The Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) is looking at technological solutions to check revenue leakage and has invited bids from private players to install a smart ticketing system and put in place an e-ticketing mechanism.

As part of the smart ticketing system, the state-run transport service will issue smart cards to its regular customers, and categorize them depending on the membership fee.

"We are planning to install smart ticketing machines which will have GPS and other facil-

ties and will be connected to bank gateways. People will be able to use any kind of swipe cards to purchase the tickets. They can also use the cards to be issued by the corporation through which they will get some rebate," ASTC managing director Anand Prakash Tiwari told *The Assam Tribune*.

Under this new initiative, passengers will get both SMS and print tickets. The ASTC cards will also have pre-recharge options. For e-ticketing, the transport body is exploring the options of RFID (radio frequency identification) or analogue camera-based systems.

"The systems will be in-

stalled in the buses and will be connected to the ticketing system and a central server. They will be able to count the passengers which have been tagged. The count will be done on a unique identification number," Tiwari said.

When asked about the poor internet connectivity in the region, the MD said, "We will have clearly defined terms in the contract that the systems will have to have provisions to take inputs offline and update the server once it gets connected to the network."

Around ten to twelve companies have shown interest to

(See page 2)

No ADB funding to tackle city flash floods

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: How genuine is the State Government's claim that it has moved the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for assistance to solve the Guwahati flash flood problem? The information available with this newspaper suggests that there is no such move made by the State Government to secure a financial assistance from the ADB.

Since public memory is very short, it needs mention here that in July last year, the Guwahati Development Department

had informed the media that the State Government had taken action to solve the city's flash flood and had made 'communications with the ADB for funding.'

It was followed by another such assertion made by an Additional Chief Secretary. He claimed that the State Government had prepared a scheme for the purpose and moved the ADB with a request to fund it. The scheme, the Additional Chief Secretary claimed, included diversion of the flow of the Bahini river, etc.

However, knowledgeable circles here

(See page 2)



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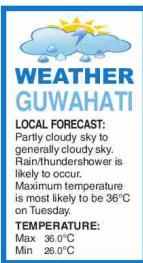
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Meet on 'Work-Life Balance' held

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: A discourse on 'Work-Life Balance' was held at Durbar Hall in Raj Bhawan on Saturday evening where speakers advocated 'ethics, honesty and disciplined life sans ego' for a balanced professional and personal life.

Speaking on the occasion, Sadhu Gnanavatsdas of BAPS Swami Narayan Sanstha Akshardham laid stress on the importance of a family and the need to give attention to each member. He also said that family, friends and faith in God and oneself form true happiness. Swami also asked the gathering to be honest at every level. He also laid emphasis on honest ethical hard work at professional and personal life to attain optimum potential.

The talk also dwelt on the importance of cultivating the habit of strict discipline. Swami Kothariji Maharaj, while sharing his wisdom with the gathering present on the occasion, hailed the importance of *satsang* and said that *satsang* dispels ignorance and leads a person to wisdom.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit welcomed the spiritual gurus and expressed his gratitude to them for coming all the way to Assam.

Highlighting the role of spiritualism in one's life, Governor Purohit said that there exists a crucial connection between culture and religion.

Former Governor of Meghalaya Ranjit Sekher Moosahary, former Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, Chief Secretary Vinod Kumar Pipersena, DGP Mukesh Saikia, Vice Chancellor of Gauhati University Prof Mridul Hazarika, Vice Chancellor of Cotton University Prof Dhruba J Saikia and a host of other dignitaries were present at the event.

Shillong girl new Miss North East

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: Mary Khyriem from Shillong, Meghalaya was crowned the 15th Sunisi Mega Miss North East-2017 at the Pragyo-ITA Centre for Performing Arts on Sunday evening.

Sreela Thounojam from Imphal and Smriti Sarmah from Guwahati became the first and second runners-up respectively, a press release said.

Deplorable state of Chatribari-AT Road

I just wonder why the road that leads to Chatribari from AT Road near Himatsinka Petrol Pump always remains in a deplorable state. And now, the rainy season has started and it has become very risky to use this road as half of it gets submerged after a brief shower. The authority concerned should take note of the poor condition of the road and improve its conditions without further delay.

— Saptarshi Chowdhury
Guwahati.

When nature calls
Khanapara is one of the most important points in Guwahati. Lakhs of people and thousands of vehicles use the Khanapara point to enter the city or vice versa on a daily basis. The area is also considered as one of the business hubs. But de-

Rush of devotees at Kamakhya as doors are thrown open

STAFF REPORTER

the union of mind and soul.

Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today extended his



Governor Banwarilal Purohit at Kamakhya on Monday. — AT

prayers at the temple for the welfare of the people and prayed to Goddess Kamakhya for

the doors of the holy shrine were thrown open this morning after four days. Governor Banwarilal Purohit paid a visit to the Kamakhya temple and paid obeisance to Goddess Kamakhya and sought her blessings for development of all sections of the people of Assam.

Lauding the efforts of the temple management committee, Governor Purohit said that civil and police administration, volunteers of different agencies also put in their best efforts in celebrating the Ambubachi Mela maintaining the highest order of harmony, tranquility and peaceful coexistence where the pilgrims from different regions of the country and abroad converged to practise and realise

gratitude to the pilgrims for coming to Shaktipeeth Kamakhya from all over the country and abroad, and making the Ambubachi Mela one of the greatest religious congregations of the country.

The Chief Minister offered

growth and prosperity of the State. He also extended his gratitude to the fraternity of Kamakhya Devalaya, the security forces, organisations, agencies, and all others directly or indirectly involved in making the Ambubachi Mela a success.

"We will be making proper

Impact of Ambubachi on city to be studied

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: The Kamrup (Metro) district administration will go for an impact study of this year's Ambubachi Mela to figure out its overall socio-economic impact and the future potential of the annual event for the city.

Book stresses empowerment of differently-abled

STAFF REPORTER

tions on Physical Disabilities: A March towards Emancipation and Empowerment" was released here today.

Stressing the need for inclusive education for overall development of such persons, the author made several recommendations that can make a difference in the lives of persons with physical disabilities. "If any intervention into the issue or for the legal framework to benefit the persons living with disabilities, the awareness must be created on a larger scale," This was observed by Geetanjali Debi, researcher and assistant professor of the University Law College, Gauhati University through her research work which was published as book.

Debi's book titled 'Reflect-

on the types of disability recognized by the law, there is an urgent need to make public buildings accessible to persons with disabilities. Along with the government sector, even the private sector is now encouraged to provide employment to the differently-abled people,' he mentioned.

Hinashith Changakotia, former DGP Assam and president of NGO Karunadhara, while speaking on the occasion, laid stress on the need to promote skill-development courses especially designed for the persons with disabilities to make them self-reliant.

Professor RC Barpatri Gohain, Head, Department of Law, Gauhati University, also spoke on the occasion.



Muslims offering namaz on the occasion of Idd-Ul-Fitr at Machkhowa Idgah in Guwahati on Monday. — UB Photos

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Pedestrians at risk

It is really unfortunate that despite our repeated pleas to install streetlights in the FCI-Noonmati stretch of MRD Road, neither the

for long. Especially during night, pedestrians struggle to walk on the footpath and those who need to cross the road have to dodge speedily moving vehicles whose headlights are on high beam. It may be mentioned that there is a famed temple in the area where devotees visit in large numbers.

Through your esteemed daily, I once again request the authorities concerned to solve the problem of street lights without further delay. Strangely, during Namami Brahmaputra Festival, the street lights in this area were switched on for a few days!

— Kamakhya Prasad Chaliha,
Guwahati

PRS centre

With the new hope of development in different sectors, there is a

GMC nor the ASEB has taken any steps in this regard.

It is also very strange that in spite of having light posts fitted with bulbs/tubes, these are not working

State BJP observes 'Black Day'

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: The State BJP today observed a 'Black Day' to mark the imposition of Emergency in the country in the 1970s.

All the 38 district committees of the party observed the day through various programmes.

The central programme was held at Sri Madhavdev International Auditorium of Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshepa, where State BJP president Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Union MSME Minister Kalraj Mishra, national secretary Ranen Deka, MP Bijoya Chakravarty, MLA Atul Bora and other senior members of the party participated.

The speakers at the programme recalled the times of Emergency and appealed to the gathering to help strengthen democracy in the country.

"The imposition of

Emergency is a blot on the

country's democracy. Democratic organisations were banned and their leaders jailed, scriping a black chapter in the

country's history. No patriotic person can forgive this conspiracy," State BJP general secretary Dilip Salkia said in a statement.

The speakers at the

programme recalled the

times of Emergency and

appealed to the gathering

to help strengthen

democracy in the country.

"We all are responsible for

this menace. Therefore, we all

need to wake up and fight

against it," he said. He spoke

about the OST Centres at

GMCH and Diphu Civil Hospi-

tal where IDUs are adminis-

tered drugs orally to minimise

the injecting habits that often

lead to HIV transmission.

Hold of Psychiatric Depart-

ment, GMCH, Dr HR Phukan

said, "In Assam, 40 to 50 per

cent of people are alcohol ad-

Alarming rise in drug abuse among Assam youths

STAFF REPORTER

dicts, 30 to 40 per cent are opium addicts, 2 to 3 per cent are heroin addicts and 10 to 20 per cent use inhaling drugs."

Speaking on the occasion, film personality Kopi Bora said, "There are various types of addictions and amongst them, the best addiction is the work addiction." He said even amongst the artiste fraternity, there is a belief that only by taking alcohol and other intoxicating substances one can become better artiste, which is not true.

"Guardians must keep an eye on their children and if any kind of abnormal behaviour is noticed, they should immediately blow the whistle," noted actress Chetna Das said.

Principal of GMCH Dr AK Adhikari expressed concern at the rising IDU cases.

"Many of the accident cas-

es that come to GMCH are re-

lated to drug abuse. There

were times when pan shop

owners refused to sell intox-

icating products to minors. But

now, they don't hesitate to sell

those products to minors,"

GMCH Superintendent Dr Ramen Talukdar said.

Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Mukul Gogoi said

there is an onslaught of drugs

in the region and stressed pro-

moting healthy living among

youths.

Call for action against illegal migrants' 'sympathisers'

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: Separatist advocate Upamanyu Hazarika has written to the Brahmaputra Committee, which was formed for protection of land rights for indigenous people in State, recommending action against the officials of the State revenue department and all other departments that allegedly migrants helping them to get settled in encroached land.

Hazarika, who headed the one-man commission appointed

by the Supreme Court in 2015,

also recommended a legislation

reserving land on 1951 basis

which according to him, would

act as a disincentive to existing

and potential encroachers and

would be a legal barrier to any

government official or a

politician to give permanent

rights over land encroachers.

"I am shocked at the State gov-

ernment has not yet placed be-

fore the Brahmaputra Com-

mittee the reports submitted by me to

the Supreme Court. Of the four

reports submitted to the SC,

the third report of October 4,

2015, dealt extensively with the

land policy necessary to safe-

guard indigenous people, in the

context of massive infiltration

from Bangladesh," Hazarika

told *The Assam Tribune*.

The report recommended that

the panchayats in the area

should be reconstituted and

the boundaries should be re-

drawn to reflect the actual

population density.

The report also recommended

that the boundaries should be

redrawn to reflect the actual

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MESSAGE FOR TODAY

A kind and compassionate act is often its own reward.

— WILLIAM JOHN BENNETT

**Strong Opposition**

One of the prime requisites for a vibrant democracy is a strong Opposition. Dearth of a proactive Opposition has sounded the death knell for numerous 'democracies' across the world. If, for instance, erstwhile USSR supremo Gorbatchev, through his policies of glasnost and perestroika, had sought to introduce a democratic system in his country, he failed because his successors such as Vladimir Putin would brook no opposition. Thus though Russia on paper remains a democracy, any opposition to the ruling regime is crushed, which renders elections a farce. Similarly, Turkey is supposed to be a democracy, but President Erdogan through careful manoeuvring has assumed the authoritarian mantle, throwing thousands of political opponents in jail and taking other punitive measures against anyone who did not agree with his views. Independent India had reached the threshold of autocracy for a heart-stopping moment when Indira Gandhi imposed the infamous Emergency, arrested Opposition leaders, censored the media and suppressed the independence of the Judiciary. However, by then the democratic ethos, nurtured carefully by the founding fathers, had taken strong roots in the nation, so much so that Indira, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, had finally to loosen the leashes and once again tread the path of democracy. If India today is acknowledged by the international community as a genuine democracy, it is because of the foundations upon which the system has been built.

A strong Opposition, both at the Centre and the States, has been the hallmark throughout the decades since India's independence. However, the spectacular rise of Narendra Modi in the last three years has tended to debilitate the Opposition so much so that enlightened opinion in the country is worried. Even as the BJP-led NDA continued to make a triumphant march at the hustings, leading opposing entities such as the Congress, which held the nation's reins for the longest period in India's post-independence history, currently appears to be leaderless, leaderless and policy-less. True, strong regional leaders from non-BJP parties have emerged, but these need a cohesive core around which to cluster so that the semblance of a strong Opposition can emerge. Noticeably, the deficiencies of the parties which constitute the Opposition have emboldened certain authoritarian elements to emerge from the woodwork, which exhibit exclusiveness and lack of tolerance not acceptable in a democracy. This is why the fact that 17 Opposition parties have set aside any mutual feelings of ill will and unitedly converged around Meira Kumar as their choice for the Presidential candidate is so significant. Though Bihār Nitish Kumar has opted for the NDA nominee Ram Nath Kovind, he has made it clear that this is merely a one-off action. One certainly hopes that this show of Opposition unity is carried beyond the Presidential elections, for never before has the nation needed a strong Opposition as at this moment.

Seal the border

Given that the Indo-Bangladesh border continues to remain porous along several stretches in Assam, one will need a large helping of salt to digest the Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh's assertion about the Centre's commitment to seal the border and check cross-border infiltration. Indeed, three years into power at the Centre, the BJP Government has exposed itself to be lacking the desired sincerity in putting a stop to illegal influx besides expediting the matter of sending back the infiltrators to Bangladesh once their illegal Indian citizenship is pronounced by the courts. Over the decades so much has been said about 'sealing' the Indo-Bangla border that it has become a cliché, with little visible work on the ground. Cross-border influx from Bangladesh is an issue that had a large bearing on the BJP's spectacular electoral showing in the last elections in Assam. Regrettably, a strange sort of complacency seems to have gripped the party after it assumed power. The fallout of illegal migration from Bangladesh in the socio-economic and political spheres of Assam are no longer a myth. This has to be acknowledged even while maintaining that not all immigrant Muslims are Bangladeshi, as many in the saffron brigade would have us believe. A sizeable segment of the immigrant population who migrated before the cut-off date of March 25, 1971 has assimilated with and became a part of the composite Assamese identity. But it is equally true that a large number of illegal migrants have been living in the State, enjoying all the benefits of Indian citizens and they need to be shown the door through the legal process and with a bilateral arrangement with Bangladesh to that effect.

To prove it means what it says, the Centre must declare a specific time frame within which to seal the border and render it foolproof for any infiltrator to cross over. One can recall that the BJP when it was at the Centre during 1999-2004, displayed a shocking lack of concern to improve things on the ground even as it never lowered its shrill rhetoric on infiltration. The only inference one would draw from its inertia is that the saffron brigade wants the situation to fuel polarization among the masses on communal lines – something that suits its religion-driven agenda. It would do well to remember that this time the people of Assam have given it a decisive mandate to address – among other things – the burning issue of cross-border infiltration. As the BJP is in power both at the Centre and in the State, it is in a better position to honour its poll pledge. As for the Assam-Bangladesh border, it remains porous at stretches even today, while the vigilance mechanism is below-par at many places, especially along the riverine areas. It is baffling why a foolproof security mechanism cannot be put in place along the entire length of the border, especially in view of the sinister and long-term implications that unabated cross-border infiltration is bringing with it.

Making Guwahati liveable

■ Swapnanil Barua

Guwahati was once a very green, liveable place of hills, *beels* and fields, all in their own places, complementing each other. Every hill range had big fields or *beels* ending at the base of them. The Navagraha, Navagiri, Krishnamati etc., hills had a big capacity to accommodate all the rainwater. Similarly the Sarana, Narakasur, Kaliapura, Kalapahar, Gotanagar and Kamakhya hills too had large water bodies at their base. The Gectanagar, Hengrabari, Satgao hills too had huge beels and fields in their base to hold monsoon deluges. The rains came down the hills, rolled down the slopes and came to rest in the fields and then unto the *beels*. The fields were dry in winter, but the beels were full of water, under an unending green cover of hyacinths. Without the beels and the fields, the run-off of monsoon rains would only find their way into the houses; and that is what has happened to Guwahati since the early 60s, aggravating in the 70s, till a point of no return and complete surrender in the last few years. The agricultural fields that lined the GS Road or the RG Baruah Road were unending stretches of green as the eye could behold, till they were reclaimed to house people from all over the State and the region, a process begun in the late 60s. The Brahmaputra river directly drained only the Uzbaran to Bharaluimukhi area in a narrow stretch about five hundred metres south of the river bank. From the Sukreswar hillock, the natural slope was to the south,

ending in the Saru and Barsola *beels*, south of the railway line, from Maligao to New Guwahati. Beyond that point, rainwater sped to the Silsakoo *beel*, from the Satgao and Hengrabari hills, after flowing through the rice fields at the base of the hills.

All those paddy fields and *beels* have been reclaimed in the last 40 years. So where does the rainwater finally rest in, but houses? Historically and geographically, Guwahati never had a running wastewater drain network, which would drain water directly into the Brahmaputra. Hills came in the way, creating level and slope issues and the excess water had to rest in paddy fields and *beels*, before finally making it to the Brahmaputra. This negates a pumping out solution to the excess water problem. Yet engineers and administrators have been harking on this pumping out solution to the flooding problem in Guwahati or cleaning the drains. That this will never work has been proven by the failed attempts of the last three decades, where only money and no floodwaters have flowed down the drain. This is more a hogwash than reasoned application of minds. Many have been fooled for quite a while, but a stage has been reached, where you can no longer fool all the people, all the while.

Guwahati, prior to the 60s was a small town, a kilometre in breadth, from the riverfront to the railway line on the south and a little be-

yond. The houses were small with large compounds. Commercially it was not very important, a small port of call on the journey upstream to the richer tea towns of Dibrugarh, Jorhat and Tezpur. It was no gateway to the North-east, but an educational town with the Cotton College, the university, the engineering and the medical colleges. Lakhimpur was the second richest district in the whole country. The other State-level institu-

tions were the media houses and the All India Radio station and the High Court. The game changers were the Saraiha bridge and the Gauhati Refinery, which raised the commercial importance of the town. The closing down of the river route in 1965 and the growth of road transport added to the more rapidity of growth of the town. Commerce grew and a few industries came up around the town. People from all over the State started coming and making it their home. Army and the pipelines also added to the development of the town began, starting in

Chandmari, Kaliapura, Narakasur and Choonasali Hills, those being the only *Khora* lands in the city. With 4,400 persons per sq km, Guwahati can bear more souls no longer, within its present boundaries. There is no more space to loosen the belt.

Guwahati to be liveable again has to die and rise from the ashes.

Chandmari, Kaliapura, Narakasur and Choonasali Hills, those being the only *Khora* lands in the city. With 4,400 persons per sq km, Guwahati can bear more souls no longer, within its present boundaries. There is no more space to loosen the belt. So no drinking water, free roads, drainage and sewerage, garbage disposal, open spaces, parks and promenades, municipal markets, recreation areas in the required minimum quantity will be ever available in Guwahati nor will any government in the near future have resources to take them available. Guwahati to be liveable again has to die and rise from the ashes.

How to expedite the death of if that sounds too harsh, the makeover of Guwahati, is the challenge before the city planners. The target has to be to reduce the population density to 150 persons per square kilometre. This can be achieved by a ban on construction beyond two stories with a maximum FAR, which will ensure every house has an open space all around. No high rises are to be permitted. The minimum plot size for new houses should be raised to two *kathas* or even more. Municipal taxes and land revenue have to be raised to prohibitive levels, to make it more attractive to live in the suburbs, than in the city. Municipal services of the best quality are to be made available on cost basis. Public transportation must be made more hassle-free thus using private transport. Developing of colonies with all facilities must be encouraged among developers, keeping in mind that it should be spacious housing.

The city must be converted from a living place to a working place. People will come and work and leave to live in satellite towns, with best of facilities. Excellent communications through metros, high speed trains, bus corridors must be set in place simultaneously. Education institutions must be available in those satellite towns. Working from home must be encouraged in public offices, which will call for excellent high-speed IT facilities. Private capital, including FDI, has to be roped in. What may seem a pipe dream today has to be a reality tomorrow. Pragjyotishpur had died once and its name has come alive again. If not made over now, Guwahati's days are numbered, as much as the other towns of Assam tomorrow.

ASTU and engineering education in Assam

■ Dr Manoranjan Kalita

During the years 2009 and 2010, the Government of Assam established two new universities, viz., Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Science (SSUHS) and Assam Science and Technology University (ASTU). As understood at that time, the prime philosophy behind establishing these two universities was to bring all the medical colleges and other institutions of health sciences under SSUHS as well as to bring the engineering colleges and other relevant technical institutions under ASTU. It was definitely a welcome move to have two universities with focused disciplines of study in the interest of producing highly proficient human resources in those two fields – one is health and the other is technology. Accordingly, it has been observed that all the medical colleges of Assam took affiliation under SSUHS. Along with these medical colleges, all other colleges such as nursing, pharmaceutical sciences and institutes catering to paramedical

courses also took the affiliation of SSUHS. Thus, with around 47 affiliated institutions now, including the Assam Medical College, Gauhati Medical College and the Silchar Medical College, SSUHS has already come up as a prestigious pioneer university, as expected. Since it has turned out to be the hub of all veterans, it will flourish in leaps and bounds within a short time without doubt. None of the colleges resisted or showed unwillingness to go under SSUHS; they took it as a new opportunity to excel.

On the contrary, it has been observed that none of the engineering colleges under the Government of Assam have been brought under the affiliation of ASTU for which the very purpose of establishing this university has been defeated. Only a few (five or six) private colleges are there under its affiliation. This is a university only for declaring results and awarding degrees to these few students of the few affiliated colleges. Now, it is high time

for the Government of Assam to look into this matter and bring all the Government engineering colleges under ASTU without further delay. It has been felt that the old universities are 'overburdened' with new activities and the semester system and, therefore, shifting of the engineering colleges from them to ASTU will give them much relief. This 'overburdened' phrase can be justified by the fact that the semester results are never declared within about one month, which is the essential requirement of continuous evaluation of the semester system. For example, as observed during the last many years, in case of the Assam Engineering College, every time the Gauhati University takes around six months, i.e., students get the results of the previous semester at the time of writing of the next semester. This has become a routine character in case of the results of AEC students under GU. This is an unhealthy practice which is probably non-existent world over except for the AEC. Only the students

and parents face the anxiety as it is not known whether they have passed or failed or the real status of performance for a unbelievably long time; others need not have to lose anything.

One is sure that if all the Government engineering colleges come under ASTU, there will be a revolutionary progress in technical education in the state. Currently, particularly in the AEC and JEC, we have a large pool of highly talented and efficient faculty members. Most of them have outstanding teaching and research experience. There are many with proven credibility at the national and global level. If this large pool of proficient faculty members can be engaged in the academics of ASTU, there is no doubt that within a very short period, ASTU will earn fame and name in the global scenario. Along with the undergraduate courses, it will pave the way for introducing postgraduate courses in multi-specialty and emerging inter-disciplinary areas. Such learning will create competency for extensive research in cutting edge domains of science and technology. Thus, ASTU will definitely be able to produce scientists, engineers and technocrats at the commendable service of our motherland and the world of tomorrow. The students of AEC, JEC and other institutions should not think that their standard will go down as the current universities are old and reputed, whereas ASTU is new. The names of AEC and JEC or others are sufficient to prove authenticity and credibility.

One does believe that a much-needed decision has been taken by the Government of Assam in merging the Cotton College and the Cotton College State University to make one Cotton University with effect from June 1, 2017. The State Education Minister rightly said that history is not for pulling the institution backward, but to push it forward towards a brilliant future. Similar bold steps from the Government are necessary for real uplifting of ASTU at the earliest.

Letters to the EDITOR

Sir, — Drugs affect the 'Reward Pathway' of the human brain by flooding it with the chemical messenger dopamine. The Reward Pathway controls the body's ability to feel pleasure (caring and spending time with the loved ones). Overtreatment of the pathway causes intensely pleasurable 'high' that leads people to take drugs again and again. If a person continues to use drugs, the brain adjusts to the excess dopamine by making less of it or reducing the ability of the cells in the reward circuit to respond to it. This reduces the 'high' that the person feels compared to the 'high' that he felt when he first took the drug. This is known as tolerance. It affects the person's learning, judgement, decision making, memory and behaviour. It becomes problematic for the teens because the development of the brain is affected. The parents or family members must give time to the children. They should try to share their problems like good friends. When the children start staying alone or are keeping busy with cell phones or internet, the parents must try to make them social; they should be exposed to family gatherings. Yours etc., JAYANTA KUMAR DAS, Guwahati.

Drug abuse and role of parents

False propaganda

Sir, — The local television channels, advertisements/promos of various godmen and babas, who claim to have infinite powers to solve any problem of any person and that too within hours, are telecast regularly. In this age it is quite unbelievable that a powerful medium like the electronic media is used to spread this false propaganda leading to doping of innocent people. Through your esteemed Gali, I would like to urge the authorities concerned to take necessary steps to stop this. Yours etc., DEBRAJ DAS, Christian Basti, Guwahati.

Highway menace

Sir, — I would like to bring to the notice of the general public about the cow and goat menace lurking large on the National Highway 37. In fact, this phenomenon is not only prevalent in Assam, but all over India. Cows and goats are released onto the streets by their owners and the whole highway becomes a grazing field. These animals sit or wander all day long on the roads, causing tremendous inconvenience to the vehicles plying on these roads and highways. Highway traffic is the bloodline of our country and we cannot let the cows and goats ruin the economy of our nation by needless delays. The owners who release their cattle like this should

be fined and this should be considered a serious offence. The VDP people could be made responsible for restricting the owners. This will not only ensure efficient transportation, but will also reduce preventable fatal accidents. Yours etc., RONJOY BORDOLOI, Bhetpara, Guwahati.

Kashmir scenario

Sir, — The brutal murder of young police officer Md Ayub Pandit on Thursday night in the heart of Srinagar has yet again brought to the fore the hard reality in the Kashmir valley, especially the sway the terrorists still have on the young misguided youths there. The heinous crime was committed on the night on which, according to Islamic beliefs, the first verses of the Quran were revealed to Prophet Mohammed. The peace-brokers working in the area at the moment appear to have been in a fix whether to suppress the mob violence in military fashion or to appease them. Appeasing the goons means giving them more time to indoctrinate and recruit more and more Kashmiri youths on radical lines, especially when the dreaded ISIS tentacles have reached all corners of India.

The need of the hour is super cops and a pragmatic intelligence back-up. Further appeasement is absolutely untenable at the

moment as none of the Kashmiri leaders speak the truth for the fear of a backlash. Yours etc., MANOJ BORTHAKUR, AT Road, Sivasagar.

Rock bee conservation

Sir, — This is an effort to bring the immediate attention of the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India regarding the threat to the rock bee species due to the destructive method of honey collection. This has become an easy way to earn livelihood without much effort for the opportunistic honey gatherers. As this is the sole source of income of the people concerned, within a day a number of combs are collected and destroyed. The problem associated with it is that killing a large number of bees, larvae and eggs due to squeezing of combs. The dangerous side of this activity is the loss of agricultural biodiversity and also the decrease in agricultural production. At present the dangerous impact of this is intangible and not much realized but the farmers will be the first to face huge loss due to this in future. This insect is often neglected in the biodiversity conservation efforts because of its small size while its importance is far greater than the other widely famous keystone species. Honey-bee is important to fight climate

change and increase food security. Therefore, there is an urgent need to prohibit the sale of honey in the roadside markets. Yours etc., JINU PATHAK, Nalbari.

Pensioners' dues

Sir, — The State pensioners (gazetted) have not yet received the revised pension (as revised with effect from January, 2016). The authority concerned should investigate the matter and give clarification on the delay. Further, the arrears due for 21 months to the State employees remain unpaid till date. The organizations of the State employees are also silent in this matter. The State Government should take immediate steps to redress the same. Yours etc., PRASANTA BARUAH, Maturanagar, Dispur.

VC appointment

Sir, — I fully agree with Prof Srinath Baruah regarding his viewpoints of selection of Vice-Chancellors (AT, June 25). It should be an eye-opener to many. It is sad that some of the selections referred to had loopholes. The Acts and statutes of the university concerned and the UGC regulations should never be diluted. Yours etc., Prof NN DASS, 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@assamtibune.com.

Silsako Beel: a wetland exploited to the hilt

VAISHALI KASHYAP

Way back in February 1971, Ramsar, a city in Iran, had hosted a significant event that was destined to have a lasting impact across the globe for all times to come. The event, organised under the auspices of UNESCO, and attended by representatives of as many as 169 countries of the world, discussed at length the past, present and future of wetlands and water bodies of the world, and it came to be known not just as convention on wetlands, but also as the Ramsar Convention.

The convention is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources, with all signatory nations pledging to implement the resolutions in the larger interest of environment in general and mankind in particular.

Wetlands have a significant value in the ecosystem and they play multiple essential roles – from recycling nutrients to purifying water, from assuaging floods to maintaining stream flow and recharging groundwater. It also supports wildlife and provides recreation and ecotourism facilities. Wetlands are helpful during dry spells as well as monsoons. During the dry season, the wetlands keep the water

tables stable and during the rainy months, they minimise floods and retain nutrients from run-off water.

While most of the area of the present city of Guwahati used to comprise numerous low-lying areas, marshlands and swamps for a long time, it was only after the establishment of the State's 'temporary' capital at Dispur that the entire face of Guwahati underwent rapid changes, thus exerting tremendous and unprecedented pressure on the these water bodies. The numerous hills in and around the haphazardly growing city have also come under an onslaught of anthropogenic activities which, in turn, have had a cascading effect on the wetlands.

While the clamour for protecting Guwahati's wetlands had begun in the early 1990s, it was only in 2008 that the Government of Assam came up with a legislation to protect the wetlands and water bodies of Guwahati. By this time, a sizeable portion of wetlands and water bodies has already been lost due to both change of status of land, allegedly at the behest of unscrupulous government officials and illegal occupation of such water bodies by encroachers. Schedule 3 of the Act gives details of the area and the boundaries covered by Silsako.

Silsako covers an area of 407 hectare. The localities near Silsako include Heng-

garbari, Satgaon, Birkuchi, Kalitakuchi, Bondagao and Marthgharia. Though there are a few signboards in Silsako

(et), All Assam Tennis Association, Assam Sahitya Sabha, etc.

Likewise, one plot of land on the Beel



warning against encroachment, quite a number of unauthorised structures exist within the Beel area.

It is pertinent to mention that the government had allotted land on Silsako Beel to various organisations much before the enactment of the Act. These include the OKD Institute of Social Change and Development, Institute of Hotel Management, Institute of Cooperative Management, Ginger Hotel (a Tata Group ho-

was also allotted to Bhupen Hazarika before it was notified under the Act. Similarly, IHM, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Institute of Cooperative Management, OKDISCD, tennis courts and Ginger Hotel – all on the south-central part of the Silsako Beel – were allotted land before the Act came into force. The Koch-Rajbongshi Development Council office set up by the State Government in 2004 is also located on

the Beel.

I have noticed that a huge quantity of sand and earth comes down the natural stream from Meghalaya to Silsako, a portion of which is collected by a number of people in the Juripar locality. While this portion of sand and earth thus collected is used by people to fill up their plots for construction of houses, a sizeable portion flows down to the Silsako Beel. The quantity of sand and earth coming down from Meghalaya was very less 15 years ago. Older residents of Juripar say that there was very little sediment in the stream 25-30 years ago. They attribute this increase in sand and earth to rampant earth-cutting in Meghalaya. The other stream flowing through the Army cantonment has also registered more sand and earth flowing with the passage of time.

Luckily for Silsako, the authorities have launched occasional eviction drives since 2015, and after removing the illegal structures, the GMDA has started removing the earth that the encroachers had dumped on the Beel. However, visits to the Beel from the two southern approaches show that hardly five to 10 per cent of the earth has been removed so far. The authorities have acquired an amphibian dredger, a barge-mounted excavator, an amphibian excavator and several other machinery that

Love affairs major cause of suicides in Assam

PRANJAL BHUYAN

GUWAHATI, June 26: Love affairs are the major reason for suicides in Assam, with family problems and property disputes also accounting for a substantial number of such cases.

In addition, people from poor economic background and also those having less education are more prone to taking their own lives.

As per data gathered from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 3,231 cases of suicide in Assam in 2015, the latest year for which data is available.

Among those who committed suicide in Assam in 2015, there were 2,364 males and 867 females.

Assam contributed to 2.4 per cent of all the suicides nationally in 2015. Across India, the total number of suicide cases during the year under review stood at 13,362.

However, the number of suicide cases in Assam fell year-on-year by 8.9 per cent in 2014 to 3,231 as compared to 3,546 cases in 2014.

Among the causes of suicide in Assam in 2015, 887 cases were on account of love affairs.

In addition, family problems accounted for 472 cases, property disputes for 439 cases and failure in examination for 414 cases.

Among other causes, marriage-related issues accounted for 126 cases, impotency and infertility for 62 cases, illness for 213, death of

near and dear ones for 61, fall in social reputation for 46, poverty for 295, unemployment for 132, suspected illicit relations for three

category and 30 had an annual income of Rs 10 lakh or above.

Most of the suicides in Assam during the year under review were carried out by hanging.

Of the total cases, 2,216 were by hanging, 10 were by consuming sleeping pills, 445 were by drowning, 70 by fire or self-immolation, seven by firearms, 165 by poison, 185 by jumping from building or moving trains, 66 were by coming under running vehicles or trains, 45 by touching electric wire and 22 were by other means.

Of all the cases of suicide, 460 were housewives, 527 were professional or salaried persons, 564 were students, 211 were unemployed persons, 1,074 were self-employed, 138 were persons engaged in the farming sector, 239 were daily wage earners, four were retired persons and 14 were 'others'.

As per social status, among those who committed suicide in Assam in 2015, 877 were unmarried, 2,249 were married, 29 were widows/widowers, 24 were divorcees, 23 were separated, nine were 'others', while the status of 20 others was not known.

Of the total suicide cases, 350 had no education, 641 had studied up to class V, 967 had studied up to class VIII, 703 were matriculates, 559 had studied up to higher secondary, eight were graduates and above, while the status of three was not known.

and professional or career problems for 19 cases.

In 38 cases of suicide the causes were not known, while 24 cases in the State in 2015 were on account of 'other causes'.

It is noteworthy that among those who committed suicide in the State, 2,754 had an annual income of less than Rs one lakh, while 446 were in the Rs 5-10 lakh category, one in the Rs 5-10 lakh



Social worker's death condoled

STAFF REPORTER

Samit Panjaki Mahila Bihu Samiti and a founder member of BPSS and PSCA. She had passed away on June 20.

Paying tributes to her memory, senior journalist DN Chakravarty said that in the personality of Burhagohain there was a sparkling reflection of the endearing and dignified persons of the Ahom royalty. He said that

the people of Panjabari would for long remember with gratitude the contributions of the noble lady.

Kaumudi Dutta, Dr Achyut Medhi, Tabul Hussain and Pratibha Bhuyan, while describing her as an ideal social worker, suggested that proper steps be taken for perpetuation of her memory.

Retired principals' get-together
STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: A get-together of retired principals, vice principals, teachers and employees of Cotton College Govt HS School, Panbazar will be held in the school hall at 11 am on July 1, a press release said.

Religious discourse
STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: Digambar Jain 108 Punyasagar Maharaj held a religious discourse at Shri Mahavir Dhamasthal, Fancy Bazar here on Sunday, stated a press release today.

The religious guru addressed a large gathering of devotees on the occasion. He was also felicitated by the Relabari Jain Samaj and Dispur Jain Samaj.

ditional DCs of 22 district headquarters, including resource person TM Sarmah, former APSC Secretary and Principal Controller of Exams and other officers and staff of the Commission were present.

APSC Secretary Prakash R Gharphalia gave the welcome address and briefed the gathering about the objectives of the meeting, which was followed by an introductory speech by Dr AR Roy.

The session was presided over by APSC chairman-in-charge Dr AR Roy. Retired IAS officers Dibruba Hazarika and Dipak Kr Sarma, APSC members, representatives of DGP, Chairman-cum-MD, APDCL, Chief Post Master General, Assam Circle, Commissioner & Secretary, Finance Department, Commissioner of Police, Guwahati, Ad-

ditional DCs of 22 district headquarters, including resource person TM Sarmah, former APSC Secretary and Principal Controller of Exams and other officers and staff of the Commission were present.

Former APSC Secretary TM Sarmah, through a power-point presentation, highlighted some of the critical areas like misconduct on the part of candidates, role of nodal officers (ADCs), duties and responsibilities of supervisors/invigilators of the venues, etc., with reference to the provisions of the CCE Rules, 1989. The ADCs present participated in the discussion to clear their doubts and assured the Commission of smooth conduct of the examination.

The Commission stressed the need of help and cooperation and active involvement of all present in the session and hoped that the examination would be conducted smoothly.

Gorkhas stage rally in support of movement in Darjeeling hills

JORABAT, June 26: The Gorkhas here brought out a rally on Sunday afternoon in support of the ongoing movement in Darjeeling hills for the creation of a separate Gorkhaland State.

A large number of Gorkha men, women and children along with people from other communities took part in the rally carrying pro-Gorkhaland placards and shouting slogans against the West Bengal government. The rally, which started from 8th Mile, culminated at Jorbat.

All Assam Gorkha Students' Union (AGSUS), Kamrup Metro unit president Tinku Poudel said the Gorkhas here condemn the inhumane behaviour of the West Bengal Government with the innocent people who were protesting peacefully, and reiterated his organisation's support towards the cause. – Correspondent



Playwright Prithviraj Rabha speaking at a meeting held in memory of Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha at Guwahati Press Club on Monday. – AT photo

Interactive session on CC(P) exam

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: A briefing and interactive session of nodal officers was held on Saturday at the Assam Administrative Staff College here in connection with the conduct of the ensuing Combined Competitive (P) Examination 2016 scheduled to be held on July 2.

The session was presided over by APSC chairman-in-charge Dr AR Roy. Retired IAS officers Dibruba Hazarika and Dipak Kr Sarma, APSC members, representatives of DGP, Chairman-cum-MD, APDCL, Chief Post Master General, Assam Circle, Commissioner & Secretary, Finance Department, Commissioner of Police, Guwahati, Ad-

ditional DCs of 22 district headquarters, including resource person TM Sarmah, former APSC Secretary and Principal Controller of Exams and other officers and staff of the Commission were present.

APSC Secretary Prakash R Gharphalia gave the welcome address and briefed the gathering about the objectives of the meeting, which was followed by an introductory speech by Dr AR Roy.

The Chairman stated that the basic function of the APSC is to select the right person for the right job through various selection processes. Amongst them, the Combined Competitive Examination, conducted for selection to ACS and Allied Services, is the

premier examination of the Commission which calls for greater efforts on the part of the district and police administration as well as some other departments and organisations.

This year, APSC is conducting the said examination in 112 examination venues under 22 districts headquarters, where 52,436 candidates are appearing.

The examination procedures right from the stage of advertisement is guided by different set rules/instructions for their hassle-free implementation. With a view to making all concerned conversant with the rules, regulations and other formalities attached with the said examination, the APSC Secretary gave a power-

Debut novel by Singapore-based Assamese launched
STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: *Revelations of an Imperfect Life*, a debut novel of Sankhya Samanta, an Assamese author based in Singapore, was launched in Singapore on Sunday.

The launch included a panel discussion on 'Getting back to the roots', that invoked many sentiments and memories in everyone present. Samanta Pujari, a former teacher and employee of Cotton College Govt HS School, Panbazar, will be in the school hall at 11 am on July 1, a press release said.

The book, asserting the need to close one's Assamese roots, has been published by Redleaf Publications. The book is based on the life of a young Assamese woman, Tamaya Saikia who meanders in life in search of her home and her identity.

"Staying away from Assam has made me realise the importance of our roots and culture. What we become in life is always a function of where we belong, our home to all those who are in search of a home they haven't found yet," Samanta said.

The book was launched by

Ailing elephant dies at Kaziranga
CORRESPONDENT

KAZIRANGA, June 26: The ailing elephant, Rajdhani, which was lifted yesterday with the help of an excavator by a team of veterinary doctors from CWRD, Kaziranga, died at around 10:30 last night, informed one of the veterinary doctors, who was giving treatment to the ailing elephant since the last few days. He added that the elephant died of suspected food poisoning, which might have led to severe toxicity inside his body.

It is worth mentioning here that the elephant could be lifted yesterday from the spot in Panbari village after more than 12 days with the help of an excavator. Since there was no visible symptom of any kind of disease, veterinary experts believed that the elephant would soon be able to walk without any support and become normal. But unfortunately, it died yesterday due to severe toxicity. A final report will be available after the post-mortem is completed, said one of the veterinary doctors.

Teacher murdered
CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, June 26: unidentified miscreants killed one Lachit Bauling, an assistant teacher of Baghjan-Dighatarrang High School with sharp weapons in front of his school under Baghjan PS of Doomdooma Circle at around 8 pm on Sunday evening.

OBITUARY

Sumitra Das
CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, June 26: Sumitra Das, a distinguished woman of Ward No. 6 of Morigaon town breathed her last on Sunday at a private hospital following a final illness. She was 69.

A lady of amiable disposition, her demise cast a pall of gloom in Morigaon town. She was associated with several women organisations of Morigaon town. She was the founder chairperson of Surabhi Mahila Sangha, Morigaon and launched various schemes of women empowerment in Morigaon town.

She leaves behind her husband, three sons, two daughters besides a host of relatives.

Madhavi Baruah: a tribute



It was a sad day for all of us when our dearest Madhavi *jethai* (Madhavi Baruah) lost her battle with life on June 17, leaving us shocked and grieved. The only consolation was that she had lived a long, fulfilling life and took things in her stride even during her last days while fighting a dreaded disease.

Simple, cheerful and committed – *jethai* embodied many a virtue and endeared herself to anyone who came into her contact. The eldest of our *jethais*, she was a motherly figure for all of us. Known for her平原ness and helpful nature, she had an incredibly comforting presence, and her smiling face and gentle demeanour had something infectious about it. From the time I remember

her till almost her last moments, she remained her ever-eblilient self. As children, we have fond memories of spending idyllic times at her residence situated at a serene locale on the bank of the Dikhow river at Nazira. The river held a lot of attraction for us, as we used to frolic in its shallow waters during the lean season.

A family person to the core, she excelled equally in the discharge of her social obligations. She was closely associated with various socio-cultural and literary bodies. Her amiable and cheerful persona naturally put her in the forefront of social gatherings.

Today, on her *adyashradha* day, I join many others in praying to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to this noble soul.

– Sivasish Thakur

Kamakhya P Sarmah



My friend Kamakhya P r a s a d S a r m a h passed away on June 15 last at the Apollo Hospital, Guwahati.

Born on March 31, 1944, Kamakhya Prasad Sarmah was a good student at the Cotton Collegiate School, Guwahati. Prior to his graduation in Science from Arya Vidyaapeeth College, Guwahati, he had to do odd jobs, like working along side his father in a printing press. After graduation, he got employed in the Reserve

Bank of India at Guwahati, from where he retired as an Assistant Treasurer.

A good and honest human being, he befriended me at the RBI and later we became neighbours. He was a good bridge and carrom player and an avid cricket lover. With his mild behaviour, he endeared himself to all. It has saddened me that he lost his fight against an ailment which was his companion for a long time. My heart goes all out to his bereaved family.

May your soul rest in eternal peace.

– Deben Deka

Review meeting

HAFLONG, June 26: A review meeting of all the development departments under the administrative control of NCHAC was held recently under the presidency of Principal Secretary Amarendra Barua, who reviewed the progress and instructed the officials to achieve the targets within time. – Correspondent

Himanta promises development package for Dima Hasao district

CORRESPONDENT

HAFLONG, June 26: State Finance Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma while assessing the all-round development of Dima Hasao said on Sunday that he has received many memoranda on the development of education, health sectors etc, and for this, he along with his officials would come to Haflong to finalise a development package for the district in the month of July.

A well-attended meeting was also held with JL Jidung in the chair at the hostel premises where the chief guest Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma appreciated the work of the representatives of the Akhil Bharatiya Vanabasi Kalyan Ashram in the making of human beings, since our nation would prosper only when our people are sensitive. He said perhaps, the Akhil Bharatiya Vanabasi

Kalyan Ashram is the only selfless organisation in our country which has as its only aim the development of human beings. He also appreciated the endeavour of the SBU authority terming it as a noble cause and hoped that in future also, it would come forward for such noble causes.

Somayajulu, the organising secretary, Akhil Bharatiya Vanabasi Kalyan Ashram, Mumbai in his speech detailed the activities of the Ashram in helping the downtrodden and the underprivileged section of the society.

Earlier, Sadananda Waibra, secretary, Kalyan Ashram District Committee accorded a warm welcome to all the guests who were felicitated with traditional *gamosas*.

Protest rally: In protest against

bandh culture, several organisations and the people in general of Harangajo organised a rally at Harangajo recently.

The rallyists, demanded a total stop to bandh culture in the district of Dima Hasao. They later submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner Dima Hasao, Haflong through the officer in charge, Harangajo Police Station.

It was stated in the memorandum that frequent bandhs calls for the demand of bifurcation of the district or Dima Hasao have become unbearable for the common people of this rural area of Harangajo. The majority of the people here are poor, and they face the worst consequences of bandhs called by some opportunists in their vested interests. "We

strongly oppose it, condemn it in the strongest terms and request you to take appropriate steps, because, if bandh culture is allowed to continue, the largest section of the people will suffer the worst consequences.

The rallyists, demanded a total stop to bandh culture in the district of Dima Hasao. They later submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner Dima Hasao, Haflong through the officer in charge, Harangajo Police Station.

"Again, the district of Dima Hasao is very small and hardly has a population of two lakh. How can a separate district be created with such a small population? It is highly objectionable and its demand is strongly condemnable. We strongly oppose it and will never allow it to happen, because, it will give rise to different problems which can never be solved.

"This proposed bifurcation will push the people to bloodshed and a civil war-like situation even, which we have witnessed in the recent past. So, it is undesirable and unacceptable."

Meet on promotion of medicinal plants

CORRESPONDENT

NALBARI, June 26: A farmer-scientist interaction programme on promoting medicinal plants cultivation as a tool of biodiversity conservation and livelihood enhancement was organised by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nalbari in NICRA village Bar Naddi on June 22. The programme started with a welcome note by Himadri Shekhar Datta, subject matter specialist of horticulture of the KVKK, who stressed on the need of biodiversity conservation of medicinal plants for their existence and future use.

He emphasized that conservation and cultivation of medicinal plants is an emerging option and also a significant source of income for the local community considering the fact that an unit of Patanjali Ayurved has been set up at Tezpur.

The assistant director of district Agriculture office, Nalbari, Dambari Patowary shared his experiences in the context of biodiversity conservation of medicinal plants and organic farming. He also imparted knowledge to the participants on preparation of some easy home-made biopesticides and biodynamic formulations.

Dr Manashi Chakraborty, subject matter specialist of soil science of the Kendra who was also present in the programme, spoke on nutrient management aspect of medicinal plants and urged the farmers to take up vermicomposting on a large scale.

Speaking in the interaction programme, Amitabh Sharma, Agriculture Executive of Tezpur-based Patanjali Ayurved Ltd showcased the vision and mission of his organisation and about the mode and formalities for the procurement of medicinal plants from the farmers. Manabendra Bharali, subject matter specialist of Agronomy of the KVKK highlighted some important points about contract farming of medicinal plants. The participants interacted well with the resource persons and shared their experiences, views and also cleared their enquiries from the experts.

Debendra Nath Sarma, a popular retired headmaster of the locality while offering his vote of thanks appreciated the initiative for organizing such a programme at Bar Naddi by the KVKK under National Innovation on Climate Resilience Agriculture (NICRA) and called upon his fellow participants to come forward for commercial cultivation of medicinal plants.

Kaliabor to have planetarium

ANN Service

KALIABOR, June 26: The Department of Science and Technology of the Government of Assam has selected a site to construct a planetarium and a science and technology garden here at the Millennium Garden, Kaliabor.

Concerned officials have already visited the Millennium Garden site recently and selected approximately six bighas of land here. Further, an agreement in this regard will be signed between the two parties – the Department of Science and Technology and the Millennium Garden Society in respect of some significant clauses through which in future the Millennium Garden will be well preserved or will not be endangered in any way.

The public as well as the senior citizens of Kaliabor have hailed the decision of construction of a planetarium at the Millennium Garden here through which the student community as well as tourists will be attracted and benefited highly.

Lack of doctors hits Dangari PHC

CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, June 26: Dangari Primary Health Centre (PHC) under Sadiya LAC of Doomdooma Revenue Circle has been suffering a lot due to the lack of adequate number of doctors. Due to paucity of doctors, the PHC remains closed on Sundays. The authority of the hospital has put up a notice in this regard in front of the PHC.

According to information available, the PHC had five doctors. But, the Health department has transferred two doctors from this PHC to some other hospital. Hence, the remaining three doctors have to attend hundreds of patients every day. After rendering services for 24 hours in the PHC every day on weekdays, the three doctors are unable to manage the same on a Sunday. Hence, the authority of the PHC has no other alternative but to close the PHC on Sundays.

On the other hand, the infrastructure of the hospital is also not very good. The generator of the hospital often remains out of order. Moreover, the X-ray machine of the PHC has become useless due to non-availability of a radiologist. To run the PHC, at least eight doctors are needed.

The PHC is managed by a committee headed by Sadia MLA Babin Chetia. The local people alleged that due to the negligence of the local MLA, the PHC has been suffering a lot. They also alleged that the Samborana Sonowal-led State Government has completely neglected the rural health sector of the State.

Cong leaders flay Centre, State Govt

CORRESPONDENT

DHEMUA, June 26: Fighting against the alleged failure of the BJP-led State Government in fulfilling its promises made during the political campaigns in the last Assembly election, the Dehomi District Congress Committee organised a *Pratirodh* rally on June 23 at Dhemaji.

A meeting was held in this connection at the Dhemaji Public Auditorium that day with Rishav Gogoi, president, Dhemaji District Congress Committee of the BJP. Highlighting the failures of the both the BJP-ruled Central and State governments, Ripun Bora said that they did not keep their word given to

the voters during the last two election campaigns. He added that the Central Government did not deport illegal migrants, nor did it implement developmental schemes for the farmers and the poor section of people as promised by during the election campaigns. Bora said the argument that the BJP is a political party for only the rich and the capitalists, and not for the poor. He also said that Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma was the most corrupt minister in the present BJP-governed State Government.

The meeting was also addressed by Debrabrat Saikia, former Congress Minister Bokuli, former Ministers Paban Singh Ghatowar and Pranati Phukan. Several party leaders including Monika Bora, ex-MLA, Gohpur constituency, Dejyaprasad Das, president, Lakhimpur District Congress Committee, APCC general secretary Aban Baruah, secretaries Babul Sonowal, Sailem Sonowal and Sushil Pegu and the vice-president of Dhemaji District Congress Committee, Anil Borgohain attended the meeting.

Harendranath Borthakur felicitated

ANN Service

CORRESPONDENT

SIVASAGAR, June 26: Sahitya Akademi Award recipient for children's literature, Harendranath Borthakur, was felicitated by 40 socio-cultural organisations in Sivasagar on Sunday in a function organised by a premier theatre group Natyapeethi the Hindu Dharma Nagmarg auditorium. Prasanta Sarma, introducing the children's playright said that Harendranath Borthakur has won a national award while he was so long overlooked by the so-called established literary luminaries in the State, Asom Prakashan Parishad and the Asom Sahitya Sabha. *Rajar Deul* written by Borthakur has been staged a record 37 times on different stages of the State in recent times, he added.

Monica Saikia, eminent social worker said that it is a moment of rejoicing for Natyapeethi which took a keen interest in staging Harendranath Borthakur's plays one after another. Writer Khagen Borthakur Sahitya said that Borthakur is intellectually ahead of his contemporaries in the field. Joga Gogoi, secretary, Sivasagar Zila Sahitya Sabha, in his speech highly appreciated Borthakur's dedication to children's literature. The meeting presided over by Dr Neelakshi Chalina Gohain was addressed among others by Sarat Hazarika, education secretary, AASU, Dr Nirupama Mahanta, Prof Suresh Saikia, Manoj Kumar Borthakur, Swarnajyoti Borborha, Surovi Borthakur and Jatin Gogoi. Noted singer Manoranjan Gogoi and Uday Dutta rendered two songs and enthralled the gathering while Dilip Das read out the felicitation plaque presented to Harendranath

Borthakur. Harendranath Borthakur in his speech thanked the people of Sivasagar for giving him love and inspiration and added that he writes for the common people and against the overbearing self that seeks to distinguish oneself as respectable or honourable in society.

DOOMDOOMA: The Sahitya Akademi announced its various awards recently. The Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya (Children's Literature) Award was bagged by eminent Assamese playwright and children litterateur Harendranath Borthakur for his lifetime contributions to the Assamese children literature.

The former president of the Sadou Asom Jana Sanskritik Parishad and the Tinsukia District Sahitya Sabha, Harendranath Borthakur has made a remarkable contribution to Assamese children's literature and drama. Presently he is holding the post of the president of the Tinsukia District Committee of the Assam Natya Samelan. In 2009, Borthakur received the Madhabilata Sahitya Ratna. Born in 1911 he received the Dharmeswar Kotoky Sishu Sahitya Ratna. A few of his major literary works are: *Bigyan Aniba Juar, Amat Mat, Rajar Deul, Sonali Din Junali Rati* etc.

Born on March 1, 1943 at Mohikhali Krishnabihari Tea Estate in Sivasagar district, Harendranath Borthakur retired as a teacher of Semiram Higher Secondary School, Tinsukia. A resident of Gandhi Nagar of Makum, Borthakur is associated with various literary and socio-cultural organisations of Makum and Tinsukia.

Talking to this correspondent, Borthakur said that this award was a recognition not only to him but also

for Assamese children literature. He also said that through this award, Assamese children literature which has the capability to compete with the children literature of any other language had received a national recognition. In place of him if any other Assamese children writer had got this award, he would have been equally happy, Borthakur added.

Various individuals and organisations of the State and of Tinsukia district in particular have congratulated Harendranath Borthakur for winning this award. He was accorded a warm public felicitation by various individuals and organisations at Jugal Kishor Keshan Bhawan of Makum on Friday. The Assam Sahitya Sabha has also congratulated him. A delegation of the Sabha visited his house and greeted him. AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi also congratulated the veteran writer.

Idd-ul-Fitr celebrated with religious fervour

GUWAHATI, June 26: Along with the rest of the country, Idd-ul-Fitr was celebrated all over the State today with religious fervour.

Reports filed by our correspondents are still pouring in.

In **Kokrajhar**: BTC chief Hagrama Moholyar took part in the special prayers organised on the occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr at the Zakir Hussain LP School premises here.

BTC Executive Members Dowsnar Goyer, Rajib Kumar Brahma, BTC MCLA Abdul Ali Mondal, former BTC EM's Derhasat Basumatary and Mono Kumar Brahma, among others, also attended the special prayers.

Talking to mediapersons later, Hagrama Moholyar said

that he prayed for the peace, progress and prosperity of this region. He also conveyed his greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr.

In Rangia: Faithfuls representing every strata of Muslim society celebrated Idd-ul-Fitr with religious fervour and joy.

In the morning, **Namaz** was offered by the people at the Idgah Maidan near the Highway Chowk. Hundreds of religious-minded people in their traditional best assembled to offer their *Dui Karat Namaz*. The community prayer was attended by Imam Mahabul Hoque from Dhang in Nagon.

The Imam stated the significance of the festival and appealed to all sections of the people to maintain peace, harmony and fraternity in society so as to usher in world peace. Faithfuls coming from Terakuchi, Sahon, Islampur, Jayantipur, Dimu, Solmari, Kanha, Rangya NT Road, Tarami, Tulsibari, besides jawans from the CRPF, SSB and Army were present on the occasion. Later, each one greeted the other.

In Nagaon: Special Idd prayers was held at the Town Idgah which was led by Muhsina Hifur Rahaman. All the people present prayed for world peace and prosperity of mankind.

Earlier, Nurul Islam Qasimi highlighted the ideals of Islam and significance of fasting and ap-

pealed to all sections of the people to maintain peace, harmony and fraternity in society so as to usher in world peace.

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Later, each one greeted the other.

In Dibrugarh: After observing the mandatory month-long *Roz*, people from the Muslim community celebrated Idd-ul-Fitr here today.

Faithfuls from all over the district converged at the Idgahs and Masjids for taking part in the community prayers. Seeking peace and prosperity, the people wished Idd Mubarak to each other and celebrated the festival with mouth-watering delicacies.



Faithfuls offering Namaz on the occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr at Ditta Suradi Makhoria Idgah in Nalbari, on Monday. — UB Photos

Fasting Rupiyoti Kurmi hospitalised



STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, June 26: Congress MLA from Mariani Rupiyoti Kurmi, who began an indefinite hunger strike from Saturday over the Assam-Nagaland border problem, was hospitalised on Sunday evening.

He was shifted to the Jorhat Medical College and Hospital late last night.

His close aide said quoting doctors that Kurmi was suffering from blood pressure-related problems and fluctuating heart beat. But the legislator refused to take food unless his demands were met. Kurmi is, however, being administered saline at the hospital site.

Former Minister Rakibul Hussain and other party leaders, besides senior officials of the Jorhat district administration visited Kurmi at the hospital today.

Among other demands, Kurmi wants the Central Government to make public the Framework Agreement

signed between the NSCN(M) and the Government of India.

"One hand, the Narendra Modi Government talks about transparency and on the other he has kept the Agreement under wraps," Kurmi told *The Assam Tribune* over telephone from the hunger strike site at Thiana Mariani last evening.

He also questioned how the State Forest Department undertook a scheme to erect pillars along the border areas even though the inter-State border dispute case in pending before the Supreme Court and there is a status quo in place.

He said even after he dismantled a couple of pillars erected

by the State Forest Department near the border along the northern boundary of Desso Reserve Forest at Naginjan area, the Department has sent him a letter seeking cooperation to implement the Central-sponsoured scheme.

Kurmi said that such a move would encourage further encroachment from Nagaland.

In the meantime, the

12-hour Lakhimpur & Dhemaji dist bandh today in protest against Doley's killing

ANNA Service

JONAI, June 26: In the backdrop of Congress leader Hiranya Doley's murder on Saturday night by unidentified miscreants, the Asoai Pradesh Youth Congress had proposed a 12-hour Dhemaji and Lakhimpur district bandh on Tuesday in protest against the cold-blooded killing at Jonai, besides Lakhimpur businessman Gujjar Khan, who too was shot dead by unidentified miscreants on June 21 last.

In the meantime, the leader of the Opposition in the State

Legislative Assembly, Debata Saikia accompanied by Assam Pardesh Youth Congress president Hiranya Bhuyan, Dhemaji DCC president Rishav Gogoi, APCC general secretary Abani Baruah and other Congress leaders rushed to Dekaipara today and met the family members of Hiranya Doley.

Saikia, who subsequently addressed a press meet at Hotel Padma Palace at Silpatbari town, sharply condemned the killing of Hiranya Doley and urged the State Government to institute a high-level probe to unearth

the facts behind the killing. Claiming that Doley was a popular social activist, Saikia said that the dastardly killing of such a person by miscreants would never be tolerated by the people.

Saikia presumed that the deceased's son, Santosh Doley, who is an active youth Congress member, was instrumental in blowing the lid of many irregularities in the Government departments through RTI, following which he often received threatening calls from various quarters, as disclosed by Doley's family members,

which may perhaps be the cause behind the barbaric killing of his father in order to demoralise him.

However, Saikia did not utter the name of any instant group suspected to be involved with the incident, rather he urged the Sarbananda

Meantime, Dhemaji district police picked up three persons, including Ranjana Pait Doley of Jonai, Roki Kumangbam and Bipul Doley of Dekaipara for interrogation. Police, however, refrained from disclosing anything further.

In Silapathar: Close on the heels of the dastardly killings, the Indian Youth Congress and Lakhimpur Lok Sabha Committee in association with Jonai Youth Congress Committee too have called a 12-hour Lakhimpur-Dhemaji district bandh on June 27, adds our Correspondent.

3 car-lifters held

MORIGAON, June 26: Acting on a tip-off, Morigaon Police arrested a gang of Interstate car lifters from Kalikatri area.

Morigaon SP Swapnil Deka said the gang of five car-lifters had taken away a Maruti Ertiga vehicle along with the driver Joinal Alobina a week back and the latter was subsequently murdered near Diphlu in Karbi Anglong three days back, while the car is yet to be traced.

The arrested are Hasmat Ali, Abdul Kalam and Fatema Begum, while two of their accomplices are absconding. The arrested were produced in the CJM court today and subsequently remanded to three days' police custody. — Correspondent

Govt emphasis on cultivation of potato, strawberry, vegetables

PRANJAL BHUYAN

which is more than the yield estimated in 'Package of Practices' of Assam Agriculture University which is 16,000 KG per hectare," said an official.

He said that the average productivity of potato in the State is 6,685 kg per hectare.

Sources said that with new varieties and more thrust on the crop, in 2016-17, the estimated area under cultivation has gone up to 1,05,875 hectares with a total production of over 10.58 lakh MT. Average productivity is also estimated to have gone up to 9,995 kg per hectare.

Sources said the Department of Horticulture and Food Processing has also implemented RKVY (Horticulture) scheme for 2,520 hectares for vegetables and 79.5 hectares for strawberry respectively.

"Strawberry, which is a high-value crop, is being introduced in the State for cultivation with guidance from departmental officials. It has been found to be adopted by the farmers. One plant is found to yield around 300 gm of fruit with a market value of Rs 120 to Rs 400 per kg. Several farmers in different localities of the State have lately taken up commercial cultivation of strawberry," said Mowsam Hazarika, Assistant Director of Agriculture (Horticulture, Crop Insurance & FMC).

"Hence, it may be estimated that approximately 13,000 MT of potato will be additionally harvested this year only because of changing variety in 1,021 hectares. The new varieties are becoming popular among the farmers because of their higher yield," said the official.

Officials told this newspaper that under RKVY (Horticulture), potato cultivation was taken up during this crop year in 2015-16.

This year, two new varieties of potato were given to the farmers — *Kufri Pokkraj* and *Kufri Khayali*.

The yield of these two varieties was found to be much more than the traditionally used varieties.

In formal crop cutting experiments conducted in Morigaon district, the yield was estimated at 23,700 kg per hectare.

"In 2015-16 crop year, potato was grown in 1,04,521 hectares in the State with a total production of 7,833 lakh MT and an average yield of 7,498 kg per hectare. In 2015-16, the area under potato fell to 1,03,812 hectares and production was 6,94 lakh MT with an average yield of 6,685 kg per hectare.

Bid to double farmers' income by 2022

ya Krishi Vikyana (Horticulture) as it seeks to achieve the target of doubling farmers' income by 2022.

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**WEATHER
NORTHEAST**

Forecast for NE: Moderate rain/thundershower is very likely to occur at many places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura.

Warning: Heavy rain is very likely to occur at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh on June 30 and heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh on June 27, 28, 29 & 30.

Temperatures:

	Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	27.7	24.8
Tezpur	32.5	26.1
Silchar	34.4	23.9
Dhubri	33.9	27.1
Jorhat	32.7	24.7
N Lakhimpur	29.8	23.5
Shillong	28.4	16.4
Imphal	31.9	21.7
Itanagar	28.8	24.5
Aizawl	30.1	14.3
Agartala	33.8	27.7
Kochi	23.8	16.6
Pasighat	27.3	25.0
Cherrapunji	24.2	17.8

**Guv lauds
Pasighat citizens
for inclusion in
Smart Cities list**

ITANAGAR, June 26: Arunachal Pradesh Governor PB Acharya has congratulated the denizens of Pasighat on the selection of the district headquarter of East Siang district, under Centre's Smart Cities Mission.

Union Minister for Urban Development M Venkaiah Naidu had made the announcement of the new list of 30 Smart Cities, including Pasighat, in New Delhi on Friday.

The Governor said that Pasighat, the centennial town of the State and one of the foremost educational hubs of the east, while NEFA, deserved to be included in the list of Smart Cities.

He expressed confidence that the next town of the State will now lay new benchmark for excellence in standard of life, health care and education facilities and basic infrastructure. — Correspondent

**Cong flays NPF
for supporting
BJP presidential
candidate**

DIAMAPUR, June 26: Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) has accused the Naga People's Front (NPF) of giving a "final burial" to its regional identity to become a full-fledged proxy party for BJP-RSS by supporting the BJP-RSS candidate" for the presidential election.

The NPCC also criticised the NPF-BJP alliance as "without any principles but based solely on petty benefits," adding that "despite BJP calling NPF 200 per cent corrupt and NPF calling BJP anti-Christian party, they continue to sail together in a rotten boat."

The NPF has conferred the charges saying, "The NPCC and its president have no moral right to grumble or question the decision of NPF to maintain its alliance with the NDA or with any other party at the Centre."

NPF president K Therie has absolutely no right whatsoever to question the NPF-led DAN Government to support or not anybody's candidature in the presidential election. The NPF doesn't need the approval of NPCC to support someone's Presidential candidature," the NPF said in a statement. — Newma News

**BRO restores
road to Tawang**

ITANAGAR, June 26: Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has opened the strategically important Bhalukpong-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) road for vehicular traffic which remained blocked since June 19.

The BCT road was disrupted on June 19 due to a massive landslide triggered by torrential rains at an area, 9 kms from Bhalukpong, a Defence communique said here. — PTI

Idd-ul-Fitr celebrated in NE



Muslims offering prayers on the occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr at Sonamura, 57 km from Agartala, on Monday. — UB Photos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, June 26: Muslims in Meghalaya today celebrated Idd-ul-Fitr by offering prayers at mosques to mark the end of holy month of Ramadan.

In the Madina Masjid here, known as the glass mosque, close to 10,000 Muslims offered their prayers. Namaz-e-Idd was also offered in different mosques spread across the State.

The festival marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan in which Muslim faithfuls undergo fasting from dawn to dusk. The observation of Ramdan or Ramazan marks the anniversary of the Quran being revealed to Prophet Mohammed.

It is also an occasion where people meet each other's families and friends and lavish feasts are served. Muslims also give out Eidis or gifts to chil-

dren during the occasion. An other important aspect of Idd celebrations is giving Zakat or charity to the poor and needy.

Meghalaya Governor Banmali Lal Purohit in his greetings said that he hopes that the end of Ramadan will "reinforce our belief in human values like compassion, sacrifice, brotherhood and harmony."

Chief Minister Mukul Sangma in his message said: "May this festival enable us to reaffirm our commitment to spread the spirit of love, compassion and empathy to further strengthen the elements of understanding, tolerance and solidarity which will go a long way in building a more inclusive society for the prosperity of all."

Imphal Correspondent adds: Idd-ul-Fitr was celebrated across Manipur on Monday. The biggest festival of the

year marks the culmination of a month-long fast during the holy month of Ramzan.

Governor Dr Najma Huptula and Chief Minister N Biren Singh in their messages have conveyed warm greetings to the people of the State on the occasion. In his greeting, the CM said the festival highlights the spirit of joy and sharing and reflects the composite culture of the State.

PTI adds: The Muslim community in Nagaland today celebrated Idd-ul-Fitr with religious fervour across the State. Muslims offered namaz at Idgahs, specially in Kohima and Dimapur while also exchanging Eid greetings.

Nagaland Governor PB Acharya conveyed warm greeting to the people of the State and expressed hope that "this sacred occasion will usher in good-

will and harmony and further strengthen the values of composite society."

The Muslim community in Mizoram today celebrated Idd-ul-Fitr. Thousands of Muslims offered namaz at the Assam Rifles ground here and prayed for peace and communal harmony in the State.

Arunachal Pradesh Governor PB Acharya and Chief Minister Pema Khamto today greeted the people of the State on the auspicious occasion of Idd-ul-Fitr.

The Governor said that the festival of Idd-ul-Fitr marks the culmination of the Holy Month of "Ramzan", the month of prayers, blessings and forgiveness. In a message here this evening, Khandu greeted the people of Muslim community and said he joins them in the celebration of the three-day festival of feast and festivity.

International Day against Drug Abuse observed

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, June 26: The International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed in Manipur on Monday. This year the theme was "Listen First - Listening to Children and Youth is the First Step to Help Them Grow Healthy and Safe."

The State level observance was held under the aegis of State Social Welfare Department, Federation of Indian NGO's for Drug Abuse Prevention and Coalition

Against Drugs & Alcohol Health & Family Welfare Minister Jayanta Kumar Singh, Social Welfare and Cooperation Minister Nembcha Kipgen and Education Minister Th Radhesingh Singh attended the function.

Most of the speakers in the meeting expressed the need to work hand in hand in making the State a Substance Abuse Free State and to develop a healthy community.

Health Minister Jayanta Kumar Singh informed that various departments under the govern-

ment are working to completely wipe out drug abuse and illicit trafficking and also to educate the society of the harmful effects of drugs.

Social Welfare and Cooperation Minister Nembcha Kipgen urged the families, institutions, civil society, and various organisations to cooperate and contribute their bit to get rid of such inauthenticants.

In Churachandpur town, a marathon race was held as part of the observation, in which about 500 runners participated.

Health Minister Jayanta Kumar Singh informed that various departments under the govern-

ment are working to completely wipe out drug abuse and illicit trafficking and also to educate the society of the harmful effects of drugs.

"We have called Bagra, an Arunachal govt employee, from Mawkhuan area when villagers reported about a stranger in their village," police said.

He was conscious when the police found him but was unaware of the events that had transpired and does not know why he had gone to Mawkhuan about 10 km away, said said.

Bagra had taken a rented accommodation near the North Eastern India Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences at Mawphat as his wife was under treatment at the hospital and was gone missing since June 20 last.

On Tuesday Bagra told his wife he was going to the shop but never returned home since then. Acting on a missing complaint, a search operation was launched and words were passed to nearby village elders about the missing man from Arunachal Pradesh.

After his rescue, Bagra was handed over to his family after completing all formalities, the police said. — PTI

Pineapple fest begins in Manipur

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, June 26: The 10th State level pineapple festival cum sellers & buyers meet and youth festival began at Thambul Market Complex, Poriopat, Lamkhai, in Imphal East district on Sunday.

The festival jointly organised by Development Organisation Andro Kendra and State Horticulture department was sponsored by North Eastern Council. The festival will conclude on June 29.

Media programme: Editors Guild Manipur organised a media sensitisation programme on the state of higways in Manipur here on Sunday.

According to Chakrabarty, Manipur has only six teachers education institutes. "The intake capacity of the six institutions is only 1,130 for a two-year teacher's course," he said, adding, "Hence to fill up the vacancies of 15,436 teachers posts with qualified teachers will take a few decades."

Under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, before recruitment of teachers in government schools, Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) is mandatory. To appear for the TET, the candidate has to have 50 per cent marks in certain subjects and a Bachelor degree or Diploma in Elementary Education or Diploma in Education.

The Education Minister said that

Tripraya requires 52,315 teachers to run 5,000 government schools. The State currently has around 47,000

teachers – of whom 10,323 face the axe due to the Supreme Court order. "Other States in India, the pass percentage of candidates in TET is very minimal in Tripura too. This makes the situation worse," Chakrabarty added.

The apex court on March 29 upheld the Tripura High Court order to terminate the jobs of 10,323 teachers, but allowed them to continue in service until December 31. The court asked the government to frame a new Employment Policy, to initiate a fresh recruitment process and complete it by December 31.

The Tripura High Court's division bench headed by then Chief Justice Deepak Kumar Gupta (now elevated to the Supreme Court) on May 7, 2014, terminated the jobs of the teachers citing "incorrect selection procedure".

However, on May 17, the State Government announced the creation of 13,000 non-teaching posts in two departments – ostensibly to "accommodate" the teachers facing ouster.

Ahead of next year's Assembly elections in February, the opposition and ruling Left parties are hurling accusations at each other over the issue.

CPI-M State secretary Bijan Dhar

said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led Central Government and the party leadership have been playing a "double role" on the crucial education issue.

"The BJP Government at the Centre gave a relaxation in teachers' recruitment norms to Assam and West Bengal, but rejected Tripura's proposal. The BJP leadership also asked the Union HRD Minister not to give any relaxation to Tripura – thus depriving the State's youths," Dhar said.

On April 11, when three Tripura MP's met Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar to discuss the relaxation to Tripura, the minister assured that there is no question of relaxation regarding eligibility of 10,323 teachers.

Tripura Lok Sabha member Jitendra Chaudhury, who had led the three-member MP's team, said: "Relaxation of Tripura's demand for relaxation will create a huge vacuum in the State's school education system and cause immense inconvenience for the school students." — IANS

Teachers' crisis becoming political hot potato in Tripura

CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, June 26: Tripura's Left Front Government is facing an unprecedented shortage of teachers to run its 5,000 schools from the next academic year beginning in January.

The Supreme Court order of March 29 upholding a State High Court order terminating the jobs of 10,323 government teachers has added to the vacuum. The State also faces a dearth of eligible candidates to fill up 15,436 posts of the Assembly elections.

According to Chakrabarty, Tripura

has absolutely no right whatsoever to question the NPF-led DAN Government to support or not anybody's candidature in the presidential election. The NPF doesn't need the approval of NPCC to support someone's Presidential candidature," the NPF said in a statement. — Newma News

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road to Tawang**

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CAPSULE**GSTN videos**

NEW DELHI, June 26: To help the people register themselves to the new goods and services tax (GST) portal smoothly, GST Network (GSTN) has released three videos just after the opening of the portal. The three state-of-the-art video cards have today. Registration with the GSTN is necessary for doing business in the GST regime as businesses will have to upload monthly supply data as well as file return forms on this portal. –IANS

Dot rules

NEW DELHI, June 26: The Department of Telecom is working on rules to make tampering of IMEI number—a unique 15-digit serial number of mobile devices—a punishable offence with up to three years of imprisonment. The move will help curb issues pertaining to fake IMEI numbers and also ease tracking of lost mobile phones. –PTI

RIL plan

NEW DELHI, June 26: Reliance Industries Ltd plans to raise Rs 25,000 crore through privately placed debentures as the energy-to-retail conglomerate continues its expansion by high-profile borrowings as well as build a war chest for its aggressive expansion strategy in the telecom space. In a stock exchange notice, RIL said the company's annual general meeting will be held on July 21 to consider the fund raising. –PTI

Flipkart tips-ups

NEW DELHI, June 26: E-commerce marketplace Flipkart today announced that it has collaborated with HP, Intel and AMD to offer a range of desktop and laptop PCs. Flipkart has also partnered with ICICI Bank and Citibank to provide hassle-free financing options to consumers. –IANS

ICICI Prudential

MUMBAI, June 26: ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund today launched a value fund, which is a 3.5-year close-ended equity fund. The series 15 NFO, which will remain open from June 27 to July 11, will invest in infrastructure, banks focused on corporates, technology, and pharma, among others. –PTI

Fiat Mail

MUMBAI, June 26: Fiat Mail is helping car and bike dealers come online by digitising their catalogues, and is also boosting online discovery through QR codes. This has helped over a thousand dealerships across the country to reach a wider set of customers. Dealers are also using the QR code as a medium to drive sales without the need of managing a large inventory. Payal said in a statement here. –PTI

GM dealers' dharna

NEW DELHI, June 26: Dealers of General Motors, which has decided to stop selling vehicles made by the US brand, will demonstrate at Jantar Mantar tomorrow to protest against the American automaker. A majority of General Motors' 96 dealers, which operate around 140 showrooms across India, are unhappy with the company's offer of just around 12 percent of total investments they have made as compensation. –PTI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a roundtable meeting with the US business leaders, in Washington DC, USA on Sunday. – PIB

Govt to push wage code, factories Bills for passage

NEW DELHI, June 26: The Labour

Ministry will push the Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and Code on Wages Bill for passage in the forthcoming monsoon session of Parliament starting next month.

The Code on Wages Bill will enable the Central Government to fix universal minimum wage applicable on all establishments and workers across the country.

The Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2016 will increase the working overtime hours up to 100 per quarter and allow workers to work more and earn more.

The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha in the monsoon session last year. Now, it will be pushed for the passage

in Rajya Sabha next month.

"The Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and Code on Wages Bill are the two legislations which would be pushed by the Labour Ministry in the monsoon session beginning next month," an official source said.

The source said, "Apart from these two Bills, the Labour ministry is also working on Code on Industrial Relations. But, it is under scrutiny of a ministerial panel on labour issues headed by Arun Jaitley."

The Code on Wages Bill has already been approved by the ministerial panel, and will soon be placed for the Union Cabinet nod.

The code will ensure universal min-

imum wage for all industries and workers. It will also cover those workers who are getting monthly pay higher than Rs 18,000.

At present, laws on wages do not cover workers getting monthly wage of more than Rs 18,000.

The Code on Wages Bill seeks to empower the Centre to set a minimum wage across sectors, and States will have to maintain that. However, States will be able to provide a higher minimum wage in their jurisdiction than the one fixed by the Central Government.

Besides, the minimum wage will be applicable on all classes of workers. At present, it is applicable for scheduled

industries or establishments under the law.

The proposed Code on Wages will subsume the Minimum Wages Act of 1948, the Payment of Wages Act of 1936, the Payment of Bonus Act of 1965 and the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976.

The Labour Ministry is in the process of condensing 44 labour laws into four codes – wages, industrial relations, social security and safety, health and working conditions.

The Factories (Amendment) Bill seeks to double the overtime working hours to 100 in a quarter for factory workers with an objective of boosting job creation in manufacturing sector and improve ease of doing business. – PTI

FSSAI issues draft rule for organic food products

NEW DELHI, June 26: Food regulator FSSAI has come out with a draft regulation for organic food products, seeking to ensure that these food items are actually organic.

Organic food will have to comply with the provisions under the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) administered by the government or the Participatory Guarantee System for India (PGS-India) run by the Agriculture Ministry or any other standards notified by the food authority.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has sought public comments of the draft regulations, which have been prepared in view of rising demand for organic food products, being considered healthy in the country.

"Organic food products are either those grown under a system of agriculture without the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides or made from organically produced raw materials. Currently, a number of food products are being marketed as organic," the FSSAI said.

However, the regulator said that consumers do not have any way to check the authenticity of organic food products due to lack of a regulatory framework.

"The draft regulation on organic food is aimed at over-

coming this problem and ensuring that what is sold as organic food is really organic," FSSAI said.

The draft regulation mandates that labeling of organic food should convey full and accurate information on the organic status of the product. –PTI

Based on the feedback received from trade and industry, the government has decided to postpone provisions relating to TDS (Section 51) and TCS (Section 52) of the CGST/State GST Act 2017, while as exempted from registration small businesses selling on e-commerce platform.

E-commerce companies will not be required to collect 1 per cent TCS (tax collection at source) while making payment to suppliers under the goods and services tax (GST) which will be rolled out from July 1.

As per the Central GST (CGST) Act, the notified entities are required to collect TDS (tax deducted at source) at 1 per cent on payments to suppliers of goods or services in excess of Rs 2.5 lakh. This provision has been kept in abeyance.

Small businesses, with turnover less than Rs 20 lakh, will also not be required to register themselves under the GST for selling goods or services through e-commerce portal.

In other words, persons

supplying goods or services

through electronic commerce

operator liable to collect tax at source would not be required to obtain registration immediately.

"This step has been taken

to provide more time for persons liable to deduct tax at source/e-commerce companies and their suppliers to prepare for the historic tax reform," the statement added.

The GST Network portal has started accepting registration of TDS, TCS deducted and e-commerce operators only yesterday. Given the huge rush, it is unlikely that all registrations would be done before the July 1 rollout date.

The biggest tax reform since Independence, GST will subsume host of levies, including excise, service tax, VAT and other local levies. It will create a uniform market for seamless transfer of goods and services. GST is expected to widen the tax base, check tax evasion and add about 1.2 per cent to GDP. –PTI



Prasenjit Kr Gosh, DTO, Kamrup and actor Chetana Das unveil the Jeep Compass SUV during the pre-booking inauguration programme at Mahesh Motors, in Guwahati on Monday. – UB Photos

Record low credit growth sees cos borrowing Rs 1 trn less

MUMBAI, June 26: The record low bank credit growth of 5.1 per cent in FY17 was led by the top 1,000 listed corporates which saw their net loan outstanding decline by a whopping Rs 1 trillion in the reporting year, said a report.

One-third of this massive contraction was led by just 10 companies, which cumulatively availed of Rs 33,710 crore less in the year over the previous year, according to the report.

According to SBI chief economic adviser Soumya Kanti Ghosh, who penned the report, this could either

be perceived as lower debt utilisation levels or prepayment through internal accruals or through asset sale. Other reasons could be QIP or private equity participation.

The RBI data showed that bank credit inch ed up by a tad 5.1 per cent in the year ending March 2017, which was the lowest since 1951 when it had grown by a paltry 1.8 per cent which could be attributed rise in bond issuance and cheaper non-bank fund sources coupled with overall credit aversion in the economy as well as non-investment by the private sector in capacity expansion.

However, taken as a whole, as per cent annual results of about 3,000 listed entities for FY17, there was an 8 per cent increase on a CAGR basis in loan funds outstanding over FY15.

The outstanding loan funds as of FY15 stood at Rs 22.8 trillion, which increased to Rs 26.5 trillion in FY17. This was Rs 24.2 trillion in FY16. However, many top-notch corporates reported contraction in loan funds outstanding in FY17 over FY16. "About 1,000 entities in aggregate (excluding banks & finance companies) reported decline in loan funds to the extent of Rs 1 trillion crore," said

Ghosh. Debt contraction can either be through repayments, equity conversion or restructuring, he says, adding, "top ten entities saw a decline of about Rs 33,000 crore."

Some of the best-known companies that have lowered loan funds include GAIL India (-48 per cent), Piramal Enterprises (-37 per cent), National Ferries (-37 per cent), L&T (-24 per cent), Hindalco (-20 per cent) and Jet Airways (-22 per cent). Cumulatively, these companies alone borrowed Rs 20,000 crore less, said the report.

From a sectoral point of view, this came in amidst a double-digit annual

growth in EBIDTA by most of the top 10 sectors depicting an all-round growth in top-line, midline and bottom-line.

About 1,000 entities (excluding banks & finance) saw a steep Rs 1,00,710-crore decline in loan funds, while the top ten entities' loan funds declined by Rs 33,571 crore which is 33 per cent of the aggregate reduction in loan funds for all.

Hinging at a continuation of the same deleveraging trend in the times to come, the report points to the Tata Group identifying non-core businesses for divestment. – PTI

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Reskilling Indian youth

World Bank clears \$250-mn loan

NEW DELHI, June 26: The World Bank has cleared a \$250-million loan for making Indian youth more employable through reskilling, in a move that is seen to aid the Skill India Mission.

The multi-lateral lender is keen to support the Indian government in its efforts to equip the young workforce better with employable skills. It said the support will help the youth contribute to India's economic growth and prosperity.

The \$250-million Skill India Mission Operation (SIMO), approved by the World Bank board of executive directors, will increase the market relevance of short-term skill development programmes (3-12 months or up to 600 hours) at the national and State level," the Bank said in a release.

Under the programme, adults in 15-39 years of age, underemployed or unemployed, will get the skill training.

It will also include the 12-crore youngsters in the age group of 15-29 years who are entering the labour market every year.

The programme has a mandate to provide placement and

entrepreneurship opportunities to women and increase their exposure to skill training.

The Washington-headquartered World Bank's SIMO is a six-year programme in support of the Indian government's National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2017-23).

SIMO will be implemented through the National Skill Development Mission and will specifically target labour market entrants.

According to an official skill gap analysis, India will require an additional 109 million skilled workers in 24 key sectors by 2022.

"This programme will support the government's vision of investing in the human capital of India's youth, enable greater off-farm employment and increase women's participation in the labour market," World Bank Country Director to India Junaid Ahmad said.

India continues to be on its path of structural reforms and a higher-skilled labour force can potentially serve as a catalyst in transforming it into a competitive middle income country, Ahmad said. – PTI

Traders want 'ombudsman' for GST grievance redressal

NEW DELHI, June 26: Traders' body CAIT today demanded setting up of an 'impartial authority' like an ombudsman or Lokpal, before whom businessmen can voice their grievances related to the goods and services tax (GST) and seek redressal.

"We have also requested the government to suspend implementation of e-way Bill and HSN Code for six months," Khandelwal said, highlighting that the government needs to sit with traders to iron out initial difficulties in compliance.

The traders' body asked the government to clarify which products will come under the ambit of unbranded goods, saying that a lot of confusion has emerged over it among traders.

Khandelwal said small businesses will face difficulties in complying with the GST due to it being a technology-driven taxation system, as 60 per cent of traders have yet to adopt computerisation in their existing business format.

Terming the GST as a learning process for traders as well as the government, Khandelwal demanded that the government declare the first nine months post GST implementation up to March 31 as an interim period, in which there

should not be any penal action against traders for 'procedural lapses leading to non-compliance'.

CAIT also sought the first two years post the GST rollout from July 1 to be declared as a transition period.

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The white paper assumes significance as large number of traders across the country still remain unaware about the basic fundamentals of GST and the compliance obligations, it said. – PTI

Mattress segment

Godrej Interio aims to be among top 3 players

NEW DELHI, June 26: Godrej Interio is aiming to be among top three players in the mattress market in next 3-4 years, as the company is expecting a faster growth in the branded mattress category.

The company, is also expanding its retail presence across the country, and has plans to double it to 4,000 point of sales in 3-4 years, where its range of mattresses will be available.

"We are growing at about 20 per cent CAGR and we are confident to maintain that growth rate for next four to five years," he added. – PTI

Lupin founder Desh Bandhu Gupta passes away

NEW DELHI, June 26: Founder and Chairman of pharma major Lupin, Desh Bandhu Gupta, passed away this morning in Mumbai. Gupta (79), founded Lupin in 1968 and created a global pharmaceutical major with a presence in over 100 countries.

"We are deeply saddened with the demise of our father early this morning," Lupin CEO Vinita Gupta and MD Niles Gupta said in a joint statement.

A company spokesperson said Gupta's death was sudden and untimely and he had been an active and integral part of Lupin until his last working day in the capacity of founder and chairman. Gupta, an MSc in Chemistry, helped Lupin become a pioneer in the Indian pharmaceutical landscape. The company grew from being a domestic Indian pharmaceutical firm to become a global pharmaceutical major. It is now the 4th largest generics pharmaceutical player by market capitalisation in the world. – PTI

'BJP to hold survey for distributing tickets'

BENGALURU, June 26: Karnataka BJP chief BS Yeddyurappa today said a survey would be conducted by an external agency for ticket distribution for the 2018 Assembly polls and added that the party was preparing for early elections.

As he predicted early Assembly polls by December, the former Chief Minister also claimed that several sitting legislators from rival parties are willing to join the BJP.

The elections are due early next year.

"We are planning things... A survey needs to be conducted to find out who the best available candidate is," Yeddyurappa said in response to a question about the process for selection of candidates.

He said, "Our workers are a

Vistarik Yojna (Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Vistarik Yojna). Once they come back we will get the feedback; then we may conduct a survey so that it will benefit the party."

Yeddyurappa said the survey

would be conducted by an external agency and it may start in about two months.

"The survey will be held throughout the state to get a correct picture and find out our probable candidate," he added.

In May, there were reports that a "secret survey" was being conducted through a private agency at the behest of BJP chief Amit Shah in the 224 Assembly constituencies in the state, based on which the saffron party's election plan, including selection of candidates, was likely to be finalised.

Following this, Chief Minister Siddaramiah had also announced that the Congress would carry out a survey about the performance of its government and legislators to formalise its strategy in the run up to the Assembly election.

Yeddyurappa also claimed that several sitting legislators from the rival party were keen on switching over to the BJP six months before the Assembly election.

"Many are approaching us, the only problem they have is if they join the party now the development in their constituency would stop and elections are approaching, and by-polls will have to be held."

"They want to join when six months are left for Assembly elections to avoid any by-polls," he said

in response to a question.

He said there are also MLAs

from ruling Congress who wanted to join the BJP but declined to specify any numbers.

"Many have expressed interest. We are looking to encourage them wherever we don't have a good candidate. We don't want to promise everyone and bring them in," he added.

Yeddyurappa also claimed that the sudden spurt of activities in the rural party were keen on switching over to the BJP six months before the Assembly election.

"Looking at the activities of Congress new-in-charge of the state - MLAs being directed to focus on respective constituencies, we have

increased pressure on officials to look into developmental activities - the sudden spurt indicates to me that early elections may be called by December. We are preparing for it," he said.

Questioned about the reasons for the Congress possibly calling for early polls, Yeddyurappa said there was fear among them that the drought situation may worsen.

Also, he claimed, the party felt that by holding elections along with Gujarat they would benefit, thinking that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Shah's focus would be on winning their home state.

Claiming that the crop loan waiver of Rs 8,165 crore was announced by the Congress government in

increase as party's state unit chief.

The former Chief Minister, who expressed his intentions to contest from Shikarpur Assembly constituency, has been projected as the BJP's chief ministerial face by the party high command.

He also said the BJP, if voted to power, would shift certain government departments to Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in Belagavi in northern part of Karnataka to reduce the disparity between the north and the south.

"That will be our first preference", he said.

Currently Yeddyurappa is on a state-wide tour as part of BJP's 'Jana Samparka Abhiyan' where he has been addressing a series of public meetings and visiting Dalit colonies and houses. -PTI

Karnataka Assembly polls |



BJP national president Amit Shah paying floral tributes to Mahakavi Subramanya Bharathi, in Puducherry on Monday. - UNI

'Black Idd' observed over Haryana lynching

GURUGRAM, June 26: A majority of Meos (Muslims) in Haryana's Mewat region on Monday observed a "Black Idd" by tying black bands on their arms to protest against the lynching of a young man four days ago.

The Muslim community in Mewat and adjoining region decided to express its anguish in the wake of the June 22 lynching of 19-year-old Junaid on a moving train by a group of people.

Mewat residents Kasim Khan said that people could not have celebrated Idd with the usual sense of joy considering how Junaid and Pehlvi Khan were killed.

"So we decided to mark our protest by wearing black bands around our arms," he said.

Junaid was stabbed to death on June 22 on a Mathura-bound train which he had boarded with his two brothers after shopping at Delhi's Sadar Bazar. At Delhi's Sadar Bazar, many said they were also upset over the manner biryani samples were being collected if known if it was beef or not.

A group of miscreants hurled communal slur at the brothers and attacked them.

One of those arrested over Junaid's killing, being remanded to police custody by a court in Faridabad on Saturday, told reporters that he was drunk at the time of the incident and attacked the teenager after being allegedly instigated by fellow passengers.

Khan also wondered why only one arrest had been made so far although four days had passed since Junaid was killed. -IANS

Kasturirangan heads panel on NEP

NEW DELHI, June 26: The HRD ministry has appointed a new nine-member panel, headed by space scientist Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan to work on a National Education Policy (NEP), sources said.

The Prakash Javadekar-led HRD ministry has chosen experts and educationists from wide-ranging backgrounds to be part of the panel that is expected to recast India's education policy.

Besides Kasturirangan, who headed India's space agency ISRO, the panel includes former IAS officer KJ Alphonse Kamathnathan. He had played a key role in helping Keralites' Kottayam and Ernakulam districts achieve 100 percent literacy, sources said.

Ram Shanker Kureel, vice chancellor of the Baba Saheb Ambedkar University of Social Sciences, Mhow, Madhya Pradesh, who has wide experience in the field of agriculture sciences and management has also been appointed.

Dr MK Sheshadri, former member secretary of the Karnataka State Innovation Council, Dr TV Kattimani, an expert on language communication, Dr Mazhar Asif, professor of Persian at Guwahati University, and former Director of Education, Uttar Pradesh, thus sources said. PTI

Meira Kumar to file nomination tomorrow

NEW DELHI, June 26: The Opposition's Presidential candidate Meira Kumar will file her nomination papers on Wednesday, the last date of filing nominations.

Congress sources said Meira Kumar will be accompanied by Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and senior leaders including Ghulam Ali Azad and Mallikarjun Kharge when she files her papers.

Leaders of other parties supporting her, including

NCP's Sharad Pawar, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, CPI-M's Sitaram Yechury and Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Lalu Prasad are also expected to be present during the filing of nomination.

Meira Kumar, a former Lok Sabha Speaker, will face the NDA's Presidential candidate Ram Nath Kovind who has already filed his nomination papers.

The National Democratic Alliance has a clear edge in the election and Kovind is widely expected to sail through.

GJM delegation hands over resignation from GTA to Guy

KOLKATA, June 26: A three-member delegation of the Gorkhaland Terai Administration (GTM) met Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi here on Monday to formally submit their resignation letters from the Gorkhaland Terai Administration (GTA), the developmental board in the northern West Bengal hills.

"MLA from Darjeeling Amar Singh Rai, ex-GTA chairman Roshan Lama and Deputy chairman Aravind Lama are in Kolkata today to hand over their resignation letters to the

Governor of West Bengal," Binay Tamang, GTM's assistant general secretary said.

Tamang said the delegation, led by Amar Singh Rai, also handed over the resignation letters of 43 GJM leaders, including party chief Bimal Gurung who resigned en masse from the board on June 23.

"The other GTA member Satish Pokhrel, who is in judicial custody, had handed over the resignation letter to Roshan Lama," he added.

The GJM, spearheading the

movement for a separate state of Gorkhaland in the Darjeeling hills, announced it would resign from the GTA over its differences with the Mamata Banerjee government.

The GJM chief, who had been in hiding since a police raid at his residence in Darjeeling's Patlebas locality on June 15, had resurfaced on Friday and vowed to burn the GTA Regulation Act documents before the public on June 27 as a symbolic protest against the board. -IANS

Women booked for heckling Goa minister, insulting Tri-colour

PANAJI, June 26: An FIR was filed against two women in South Goa on Monday for insulting the National Flag, abusing Goa Health Minister Vishwanath Rane and assaulting his bodyguard during an official visit to a local hospital on Sunday.

The FIR was lodged at Margao police station in South Goa district. Rane has alleged that the two women, who publicly heckled him - an incident which was caught on video - had been planted by the Congress party.

South Goa Superintendent of Police, Chandan Choudhury has confirmed the registration of the FIR. "We are probing the matter. An FIR has been filed by the minister's PSO (Personal Security Officer)," Choudhury told reporters.

The FIR filed by Sharad Chodpokar, the PSO of Rane, has been registered under sections 352 (assault), 353 (preventing government servant from discharge of duty) and 504 (breach of peace), read along with relevant sections of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act 1971.

Rane said that the two women had been heckled during his visit to a government hospital in South Goa on Sunday and apart from hurling abuses at him, they also grabbed at the Tri-colour affixed on his official car.

"Looks like they were planted by the Congress there to harass me. The Congress is a frustrated party at the moment... They also hit my PSO," said Rane, who in March had quit the Congress party to join the Cabinet in the BJP-led coalition government led by Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar. - IANS



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu performing puja after releasing water for canals from Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada on Monday. - UNI

Karnan petitions Governor for bail or parole

KOLKATA, June 26: Former Calcutta High Court judge CS Karnan, jailed on an order of the Supreme Court, has moved a petition before the Governor of West Bengal seeking bail or parole.

Karnan, 62, who was lodged at the Presidency Correctional Home here on June 21 following his arrest in Tamil Nadu a day earlier is at present undergoing treatment at a state-run SSKM Hospital.

He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for contempt of court by a bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice of India JS Khehar, on May 9. Questioning the constitutionality of the order of imprison-

ment of Karnan by the apex court, the petition said, "It is requested that the applicant may please be enlarged on bail/parole till the said lacuna are remedied and constitutional supremacy restored."

Making the appeal through his lawyers, Karnan said, "The applicant is ready and willing to abide by any terms and conditions that may be imposed for granting bail/parole to him."

He appealed to Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi that he should "exercise the jurisdiction invested in you excellency and enlarge the prisoner Sri Justice CS Karnan on bail/parole in the interest of justice and equity".

"The appeal has been sent by speed post to the Governor," Karnan's counsel Mathew J Nedumpara said today.

"Copies of the representation have also been sent to the West Bengal Chief Minister, the Home Minister and the Law Minister of the state," Nedumpara said.

Karnan, who was ready to approach the Supreme Court for the last several months, has the dubious distinction of being the first sitting high court judge to be awarded a jail term by the apex court. - PTI

nor," Karnan's counsel Mathew J Nedumpara said today.

"Copies of the representation have also been sent to the West Bengal Chief Minister, the Home Minister and the Law Minister of the state," Nedumpara said.

Karnan, who launched his fifth book "The Secret's in the Spice Mix: Fifty Unique Homemade Spice Mixes With Recipes" earlier this month, has her academy in Lucknow.

"Not today... Now if you see, a lot of women can be seen as professional chefs. But, yes, earlier was a different case," she told IANS in an interview here when asked about the lack of female chefs in the hotel management industry, particularly in India.

"This is true with every other profession. Earlier girls were not allowed to step out for a long time," she said.

One has to understand what the hotel life is like, she said. "When the entire world is asleep, the kitchen work starts at 7 in the morning,

clothes at 2 in the night. Difficult timings, long hours... tough job. At that time, parents would not allow their girls. But now women are doing night shifts, air hostesses are doing night shifts... Now the horizon of our society has broadened. We have started accepting our girls in different roles, and this is one of them."

She is also happy to see how mothers are enrolling their sons for cooking classes. "I have a lot of students where mothers are enrolling their sons to my academy where they say, 'Please teach him something because he is going outside the country to study, will live on his own, so he needs to be independent enough,'" Bhadouria said.

"Teaching comes naturally to her. A school teacher for 16 years, Bhadouria left her job to chase her dreams.

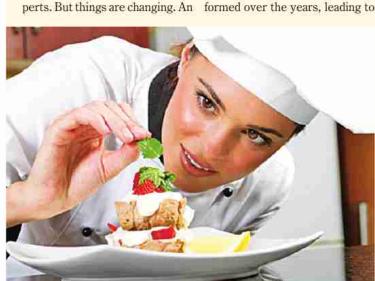
She says she enjoys sharing her skills through her books. "I love to research, read a lot. Each one of them (books) has been a point of excite-

ment in my life. Whenever I have approached a publisher they have always appreciated the concepts that I have shared with them. The support has always been there. I guess my hard work has been noticed," she said.

Bhadouria's latest book celebrates the very "essence" of Indian cooking.

"My book doesn't just talk about these Indian spice mixes but we also have certain international spice mixes that I have covered. For example, the Thai curry mixes, Zaatar - a Middle Eastern masala or the Moroccan seasoning."

"All the spice mixes are very sensual to the local flavours of that particular place. So we have gathered all those... It's an alchemy of spices that I would like to call it. That is what the book is all about," Bhadouria said. - IANS





Cutting out the clutter

A study suggests finding a way to 'preserve memories' may help you declutter your home

Is your cupboard full of stuff you no longer use but can't bear to part with? Taking their photo may help you dispose of such items, a new research suggests. The study showed that people were more willing to give away unneeded goods that still had sentimental value if they were encouraged to take a photo of those items first, or find another way to preserve the memories.

"What people really don't want to give up is the memories associated with the item," said Rebecca Reczek, Associate Professor at the Ohio State University.

"We found that people are more willing to give up these possessions if we offer them a way to keep the memory and the identity associated with that memory," Reczek added.

For the study, published online in the *Journal of Marketing*, the team conducted a field study involving 797 students at the Penn State, where they conducted two different advertising campaigns for a donation drive.

The researchers found 613 items were donated in the halls that hosted the "memory preservation" campaign, versus only 533 in the control campaign.

Reczek says the results show it may be relatively easy to break the habit of clinging on to some of our possessions with sentimental value.

However, "it is not a natural behaviour. It is something we have to train ourselves to do," she added.

In other related experiments, the researchers found that it wasn't just the memories associated with these possessions that were keeping people from donating – it was the identities linked to those memories.

"These memories connected to possessions are a carrier for identity. It is this reluctance to give up a piece of our identity that is driving our reluctance to donate," Reczek said.

The bottom line is that everyone benefits by using this memory preservation strategy to declutter a home, the researchers said. – IANS

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Tuesday, June 27, 2017:

This year communication becomes more and more interesting as you become more open to new possibilities. Your creativity and happiness lie in your ability to say the right words at the right time. If you are single, you meet people everyday and you will be able to meet your bank to the dry cleaners. Honor the process of getting to know someone before committing. If you are attached, the two of you develop a new mutual hobby. Your ability to prosper as a couple is emphasized, as long as you keep your spending under control. VIDEO: Scrabble makes a great account for you. The Stars Show the kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Adventurous; 2-Sensitive; 1-Discourteous.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

**** Your tendency to go to excess comes forward. You might want to use some self-discipline. Know that your unpredictability works for you, but it could cause some people to distance themselves from you. A lone one or partner needs positive. Tonight: Listen to your instincts.

TUESDAY (June 27, 2017)

**** You could be bogged down by a personal matter. Remain sensitive, but deal with this issue ASAP. Many of your associates will want to spend more time with you, whether it is over lunch or working on a project. You will make a fast time with ease. Tonight: Nap, then decide.

WEDNESDAY (June 28, 2017)

**** Your efforts come back in multiples. Others respond to your inquiries more easily than in the recent past. A potential loved one cannot help but show his or her caring. The unexpected occurs around a long-term goal. A friend could surprise you. Tonight: Make it an early evening.

THURSDAY (June 29, 2017)

**** You are struggling with an issue that could affect your self-confidence. Do whatever is necessary to feel better. You might want to cocoon for the day. Ask yourself whether this escape will be positive for you in the long run. Tonight: Hang out with a pal at a favorite spot.

FRIDAY (July 28, 2017)

**** You approach serious situations with clarity and creativity. This combination allows you to resolve seemingly unsolvable issues, as long as you are OK getting off the beaten path. Soring through all your responses will be your biggest issue. Tonight: Catch some zzz's.

SATURDAY (July 29, 2017)

**** Listen to situations openly, even if you have a strong knee-jerk reaction. It takes much more strength to respond to a matter without bias or judgment. You will enhance the likelihood of finding a positive, mutually acceptable idea. Tonight: Relax. Sort through the positives.

SUNDAY (July 30, 2017)

**** Use the daylight hours to the max. Maintain a steady pace, and you will be a sunrise winner. Make plans with a friend who is also a business associate, and do some networking together in the near future. Tonight: A lone one is a way that you would least expect.

MONDAY (July 31, 2017)

**** Stay on top of what is happening. Remain responsive to others, and be willing to go across the line to patch in where help might be needed. Investigate possibilities with a eye to the positive compliance of the majority. Tonight: Work mops into fun, for your delight.

TUESDAY (Aug. 1, 2017)

**** You're feeling confused, step back and look at the big picture. You might have trouble identifying with someone else's feelings. You could be fearful of absorbing any more negativity than you presently feel swirling around you. Tonight: Others express their appreciation.

WEDNESDAY (Aug. 2, 2017)

**** You are likely to explore your options more carefully than you have in quite a long time. Understand an innate resistance to allowing anyone to make a decision about which direction you and others should head in. Tonight: Treat your mind to a game of Scrabble or some music.

THURSDAY (Aug. 3, 2017)

**** You do. A strategic partner or associate could be somewhat challenging right now. Do not lose sight of the big picture. Avoid what appears to be an argument or disagreement. Tonight: Find out a friend's bottom line.

FRIDAY (Aug. 4, 2017)

**** You might be surprised by how much you are capable of doing. Do not get overly serious when dealing with someone else who is on edge. Try to present a positive yet respectful view. Tonight: Sort through your offers.

***** Thought for the day

One day I wrote her name upon the strand, but came the waves and washed it away. Again I wrote it with a second hand, but came the tide, and made my pains my prey.

— EDMUND SPENSER

Kids

CN

12:00 Ben 10 Devastare
12:30 Ben 10 Devastare
14:00 Ben 10
14:30 Ben 10 Devastare
16:00 We Bare Bears
17:00 We Bare Bears
17:30 Teen Titans Go
18:00 Land of Stories: The Return of Neverland
18:30 David Henry
18:30 Krishna: Karna Vadhi
20:00 Krishna: Karna Vadhi
21:00 Teen Titans Go
21:30 Dragon Ball Z
22:00 Dragon Ball Z
23:00 Dragon Ball Z

POGO

12:00 Talking Castle
12:30 Mr. Bear
13:00 The Tom And Jerry Show
13:30 Chota Bheem
14:00 Chota Bheem
14:30 Chota Bheem
15:00 Chota Bheem
15:30 Chota Bheem
17:00 Chota Bheem
18:30 Hole In The Wall
20:00 Chota Bheem
21:00 The Tom And Jerry Show
21:30 Talking Castle
22:00 Chota Bheem
23:00 Chota Bheem
23:30 Telephones

StarPlus

12:00 Naamkaran
12:30 Kyu Queen Hai Aamda Ka?
13:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
13:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
14:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
14:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
15:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
15:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
16:30 Ye Mohabbat
17:00 Ishqbaaz
18:30 Dill Bevoi Orend
19:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
19:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
20:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
21:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
22:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki
23:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

colors

12:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
13:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
14:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
15:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
16:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
17:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
18:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
19:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
20:30 Jait Ki Jogi
21:00 Bayhardt
21:30 Bhagirath
22:00 Crime Patrol - Satark
23:00 Crime Patrol - Satark

12:00 Ek Tha Raja Es Th Rani

12:30 Ek Tha Raja Es Th Rani

13:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

13:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

14:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

14:30 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

15:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

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16:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

17:00 Shakti - Astha Ke Ehsaas Ki

18:00 Savitri Devi College...

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Afghan air corridor shows India's stubbornness: Global Times

BEIJING, June 26: The dedicated air corridor between India and Afghanistan bypassing Pakistan is an attempt by New Delhi to counterbalance China's ambitious economic corridor via PoK and shows its "stubborn geopolitical thinking", a leading Chinese daily commented today.

India and Afghanistan last week inaugurated a dedicated air freight corridor to give boost to bilateral trade and give the landlocked central Asian country greater access to Indian markets.

India has been closely working with Kabul to create alternate and reliable access routes. It is also working with Afghanistan and Iran for development of the Chabahar Port. A trilateral transport and transit agreement based on sea access through Chabahar was signed between the three countries in May 2016.

The article in the state-run



Global Times said that the already launched and the proposed routes between India, Afghanistan and Iran "begs a question: Will India bypass Pakistan to develop trade with Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries?"

"All such connectivity efforts have not only signalled India's desire to more actively participate in regional economic development, but have also

highlighted the country's stubborn geopolitical thinking," the article said, referring to India's opposition to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project.

China's USD 50 billion investment in Pakistan is part of its ambition to reach the Eurasia markets through the Arabian Sea, and the CPEC links its resource-rich Xinjiang province to the southern port of Gwadar in Pakistan's Balochistan province

through a maze of road and rail networks.

India opposes the CPEC project, which in turn is part of the larger Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), as it runs through Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

The article said India has

"always been pushing back against the Belt and Road Initiative, so its intention to create its own connectivity network appears to be a strategy to counterbalance" the CPEC - especially to bypass Pakistan.

It argued that Pakistan

blocked India from transporting goods through its territory only because of their tense ties.

"It is undeniable that geopolitical issues are complicated in this region, but it would still be better for India to develop economic and trade relations with Pakistan," it said. - PTI

Nine dead, 28 missing in Colombia tourist boat mishap

GUATAPE (Colombia), June 26: At least nine people were dead and 28 missing after a boat carrying tourists sank in a reservoir in northwestern Colombia, a regional official said today.

Authorities did not yet say

what caused the four-deck Almirante to go down in the El Peñol reservoir in the tourist town of Guatape yesterday, where Colombian and foreign tourists take leisure cruises.

"At the moment we officially have nine people who have been found dead" and "approximately 28 people reported missing," said Margarita Moncada, head of the disaster prevention department of the Antioquia regional government. She said the boat was carrying 170 people, most of whom were rescued by other boats or escaped by themselves. Guatape

"It sank extremely quickly. It all happened in a few minutes," said a fire service captain involved in the rescue effort, Luis Bernardo Morales.

One helicopter from the air force and two from the army went to help in rescue operations, the military said.

The reservoir is 68 kilometers from the city of Medellin and one of Antioquia department's main tourist draws. One woman who survived said that the two lower decks were "too crowded" and there were "lots of children" on board.

"We started to feel like the boat was going to capsize," said the woman, who appeared on television but was not identified. The Antioquia regional government said on Twitter that 24 people caught in the wreck were being treated in hospital.

Video circulating on social media showed the ship going down and dozens of other vessels approaching it to try to rescue people. - AFP



French President Emmanuel Macron meets with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko at the Elysee Palace in Paris, on Monday. - UNI

Govt websites in US hacked with pro-ISIS rant

COLUMBUS (US), June 26:

Government websites, many of them in Ohio,

were hacked with a message that purports to be supportive of the ISIS terrorist group.

A message posted on the website of Republican Ohio

Gov John Kasich said, "You

will be held accountable

Trump, you and all your peo-

ple for every drop of blood

flowing in Muslim countries."

The message, left by "Team System Dz," also ended, "I

love the Islamic State."

The same message also in-

flicted government websites

in the town of Brookhaven,

New York, as well as the

website for Howard County,

Maryland. In the past, the

group also claimed responsi-

bility for similar hacks in the past

in Richland County, Wisconsin,

and in places such as Aberdeen,

Scotland, and Sweden.

Several other government

websites were hacked in Ohio,

including that of first lady

Karen Kasich, Medicaid, the

Ohio Department of Rehabili-

tation and Correction and the

Casino Control Commission.

Tom Hoyt, chief commu-

nications officer for Ohio's

Department of Administra-

tive Services, was among

Ohio officials who confirmed

the hack.

"All affected servers have

been taken offline and we are

investigating how these hackers

were able to deface these

websites," he said. "We also

are working with law enforce-

ment to better understand

what happened."

He said the hacking in Ohio

happened at about 11 am

EDT. He hoped the websites

would be up and running

someday today. The

websites in Brookhaven and

Howard County also re-

mained down yesterday.

The hack is part of ongoing

cyberterrorism that has im-

pacted governments and cor-

porations across the globe.

Some see these types of

hacks – sometimes called "de-

facement" – as simply a hu-

mane, though in some in-

stances, they have been disrup-

tive to work and govern-

ment life.

But others see cause for

alarm. "Wake up freedom-lov-

ing Americans. Radical Islam

infiltrating the heartland," Josh

Mandel, the Ohio treasurer

and a Republican candidate for

US Senate, said in a tweet yes-

terday. – AP



Liu Xiaobo

lawyer said today, worrying supporters who pleaded for his unconditional release.

Liu, who has about three years of his 11-year sentence to serve, was diagnosed on May 23 and was released days later; his lawyer Mo Shaoping told AFP.

The 61-year-old democracy campaigner was being treated at a hospital in the northeastern city of Shenyang. "He has no special plans. He is just receiving medical treatment for his illness," Mo said.

The writer was sentenced in 2009 for "subversion" after spearheading a bold petition for democratic reforms. He was awarded the Nobel prize a year later and was repre-

>Be GST Ready >
GST Coming from 1st July, 2017

GST gives big relief to small traders/manufacturers/restaurants

Manufacturer/Service Provider/Trader whose annual turnover is below Rs. 20 Lakh* need not pay any GST and need not register.

Those with annual turnover upto Rs. 75 Lakh* can opt for composition scheme in which case the tax rates will be as follows:-

GST Rate of Composition

Traders - 1%	Manufacturers - 2%	Restaurants - 5%
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- In service sector, Composition Scheme is available only for one sector – restaurants.
- The composition scheme is not available for manufacturers of tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes, pan-masala & ice-cream and other edible ice, whether or not containing cocoa.
- The dealers who opt for composition scheme have to file only one quarterly return with details of total turnover. Invoice with details are not necessary, bill of supply will suffice.
- Small taxpayers are not required to give HSN code in their returns.
- However, in this option, no input tax credit can be taken or passed on.
- With online registration, return, payment, refund & other processes, delays and discretions would be reduced.
- Reduced compliance burden.
- Special dispensation for job-work to help job workers in the GST regime.

* This limit is Rs 10 Lakh for Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

This limit is Rs. 50 Lakh for Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh.

For more details on Composition Scheme, please see www.cbec.gov.in



Tweet us at @askGST_GoI for any GST related query



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

Image ID: 1309591778

India thrash West Indies by 105 runs



Ajinkya Rahane plays one through the off side during the 2nd ODI against West Indies at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain, on Sunday.

De Villiers to decide future in August

CARDIFF, June 26: AB de Villiers left South Africa's tour of England saying he would decide his cricket future in August.

One of the outstanding batsmen of his generation, the 33-year-old headed home after captaining the Proteas in a 19-run defeat against England in Cardiff on Sunday that saw them beaten 2-1 in a three-match Twenty20 series.

They previously lost an One-Day International series to England by the same scoreline and then suffered a hugely disappointing first-round exit at the Champions Trophy.

But a Test series against England is the centrepiece of a four-month tour.

However, it has long been planned that de Villiers would miss the four-Test campaign to take a break from the strain of being one of the world's leading players in all three international formats, as well as a man in demand at lucrative Twenty20 franchise events around the world.

Bangladesh are due to tour South Africa in September and de Villiers said he expected to know by then what his international workload would entail.

"I am going to meet with CSA (Cricket South Africa) in August, and that will decide my (international) future," de Villiers told reporters after making a typically dashing 35 off 19 balls. - AFP

Rahane allows us to play an extra bowler, says Kohli

PORTE SPAIN, June 26: India skipper Virat Kohli praised centurion Ajinkya Rahane, saying his presence brings a balance to the side and allows him to play an extra bowler, which will come handy during the 2019 World Cup.

Rahane blasted a 104-ball 103 – studded with two sixes and 10 boundaries – to power India to 310-2 against the West Indies in the rain-truncated second one-dayer here.

"Jinx (Rahane) has been a part of the ODI set-up for a while and we all felt he had a great potential at the top of the order. He is always there as the third opening batsman," Kohli told reporters after India notched up a 105-run win.

"In this series, he has batted really well in both the games. He paced his innings well today.

He is such an established Test batsman. He wants to make it count in the shorter format."

"I think he has started taking less pressure on himself and has begun enjoying his game more. He can only go up from here and improve in this format," he added.

Kohli said the role which Rahane plays lends balance to the middle order. He might allow you to play an extra bowler in a big tournament like the 2019 World Cup.

There are very few people who can perform two roles for the team. He can open and he can play in the middle-order. So, I see him providing balance to our side, in terms of allowing us to take an extra bowling option when he is there," he explained. - PTI

Kvitova eyeing Wimbledon after comeback title

BIRMINGHAM, June 26: Petra Kvitova said today that coming back from a set down to win her first title since suffering a career-threatening injury has given her added confidence ahead of Wimbledon, which starts on July 3.

The Czech beat Australian Ashleigh Barty 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 in the final of the grass-court event in Birmingham.

It was just the two-time Wimbledon champion's second tournament since recovering from severe injuries to her left playing hand suffered while fighting of a knife-wielding burglar at her home in December.

"I think it was nice to lose the first set, and that I had to fight for the second and for the third," said Kvitova.

"I think that will give me some extra confidence that I am still able to fight. So I think that's important."

The 27-year-old will head into the third Grand Slam tournament of the season as one of the favourites for the title, with reigning champion Serena Williams taking time out from the sport to give birth to her first child, and last year's runner-up Angelique Kerber having a difficult season. - AFP

'Panel' to be formed to implement SC order

MUMBAI, June 26: In a move expected to further delay the implementation of Lodha panel reforms, the BCCI today decided to form a committee for analysing how "best and quickly" the principal Supreme Court order can be executed.

The two hour and 45 minute long Special General Meeting, attended by controversial former BCCI president N Srinivasan, did not take any decisive call as requested by the Committee of Administrators during a meeting with state units yesterday.

"A five-six member committee will be formed tomorrow to see how best and quickly the principal order of the Supreme Court can be implemented," ac-

tended deadline of a fortnight to submit its report and it will start working in the next two days.

The principal issues are 'One State One Vote', age cap of 70 years, cooling off period after every three years and reinstatement of a five-member selection panel instead of the current three. On some of the other issues like bilateral engagement with Pakistan, Chaudhary reiterated the BCCI's stance that it can only play the arch-rivals if permitted by the government.

"We met with the PCB on the basis of a letter signed by the BCCI back in 2014. It was necessary. Our position is still the same. The tour can take place only after government permission," Chaudhary stated. - PTI

ing secretary Amitabh Chaudhary told mediapersons after the meeting. Chaudhary said that the committee will have a

deadline of a fortnight to submit its report and it will start working in the next two days.

Ferrari star Vettel was handed a 10-second stop-go penalty during the race for "dangerous driving" after deliberately crashing into title rival Lewis Hamilton in a wild and chaotic Azerbaijan Grand Prix won by Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo on Sunday.

Hamilton's Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas snatched the second place from 18-year-old Williams driver Lance Stroll in the final straight, as Vettel finished fourth ahead of Hamilton to extend his championship lead to 14 points.

Despite Ricciardo's win, the race will be remembered for the angry confrontation between former world champions Vettel

and Hamilton.

Ferrari star Vettel was handed a 10-second stop-go penalty during the race for "dangerous driving" after deliberately crashing into title rival Lewis Hamilton in a wild and chaotic Azerbaijan Grand Prix won by Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo on Sunday.

Vettel reacted incredulously when he learned of the 10-second penalty on lap 32, while Hamilton, whose hopes of victory were later ended when he had to pit for a loose head rest, complained over his radio that the sanction was insufficient.

"I don't really care about (what happened)," Hamilton responded. "It's done and dusted and we move on."

"I think it's just not driver conduct. It's dangerous driving and to get a 10-second penalty for that..."

"Nothing happened, did it?" Vettel said to Sky Sports. "He brake-checked me as well, so what do you expect? I'm sure he didn't do it on purpose but for sure it was not the right move."

"I got damage, he risked dam-

age," added the German. "After the incident, we were side by side, I raised my hand and showed him that I wasn't happy with that."

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Ricciardo wins chaotic Azerbaijan GP

BAKU, June 26: Sebastian Vettel was penalised for dangerous driving after deliberately crashing into title rival Lewis Hamilton in a wild and chaotic Azerbaijan Grand Prix won by Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo on Sunday.

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"I got damage, he risked dam-

Super series tennis from July 17

GUWAHATI, June 26: The OIL-AITA Super Series Tennis Tournament, a major all India ranking junior tennis championship will be held here next month.

The first tournament for Boys' and Girls' U-12 and 14 years will be held from July 17 to 21 and the second tournament for Boys' and Girls' U-14 and 16 years will be held from July 24 to 28. Both the tournaments will be sponsored by Oil India Limited and will be organised by the All Assam Tennis Association (AATA) at its own complex in Chacla here.

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has appointed Somnath Manna of West Bengal as the chief referee for both the tournaments. This was stated in a press release issued by AATA secretary Ankush Dutta.

School chess tourney

GUWAHATI, June 26: The two-day Akshayam Inter School Children Chess Championship came to an end at the Assam Chess Club's Christian Basti centre here today.

Altogether 65 players from different schools of the city participated in the event organised by the Assam Chess Club, the chess promotion unit of city based NGO Akshayam.

The tournament was conducted by senior national arbiter Biswajit Bharadwaj and he was assisted by Mrinal Deka and Nandan Buragoin, stated a release.

The final results: (Novice to Club I category) 1st-Amit Ghoshurya, 2nd-Sanket Saikia, 3rd-Suryavirak Chakma, 3rd-Sayan Ohncharia. (Club II to Club III) 1st-Jadeep Karmakar, 2nd-Riya Ray, 3rd-Sayan Ohncharia. (Club IV to Club V) 1st-Gaurika Kaushal, 2nd-Satyam Jain, 3rd-Brijnesh Kalita. (Club VI to Club VII) 1st-Dhyan Oleyman, 2nd-Abhijan Arunabhat, 3rd-Prithivikar Das, 4th-Santosh Barua. (Club VIII to Club IX) 1st-Monil Bordoloi, 2nd-Ekanth Bagaria, Guanta Konwar, Nahini Kowari. (Best girl player) 1st-Sumita Devi, 2nd-Mairali Shrestha. (Most Promising Player) Jinson Hong. (Youngest player) Hrushadeep Deka (4 years).

Maharnav clinches chess title

GUWAHATI, June 26: Maharnav Deka clinched the Young Masters Chess Classic title organised by the Guwahati Chess Academy at its RG Baruah Road premises here. Maharnav defeated Biswajit Deka in the sixth and final round to finish with a score of 5.5 points.

Arunabh Gohain also scored 5.5 from the same number of rounds but was declared second on the basis of tie-break score. In the sixth round Arunabh beat Abinav Dubey with black pieces, Arkapravo Rajkonwar scored 4 points and got third position. Dhrithiman Bez and Aarohan Bharadwaj also scored 4 points each but was declared fourth and fifth respectively on the basis of their tie-break score. In the sixth round Arkapravo Rajkonwar beat Pran Govinda Parasrao Kashyap while Dhrithiman beat Mayank Chakraborty and Aarohan beat Aslesha Talukdar. Abinav Dubey and Sajal Saroij Lahkar got sixth and seventh position respectively by scoring 3.5 points each. In the sixth round Sajal drew against Medha Baruah. Mayank Chakraborty, Biswajit Das and Aslesha Talukdar scored 3 points each and got eighth, ninth and tenth position respectively according to their tie-break score.

Altogether 22 players, including 16 rated players participated in the tournament. The tournament was held in Swiss League system of 6 rounds in classical time control. Pramod Kumar Nath conducted the tournament as chief arbiter.

New chess academy in city

GUWAHATI, June 26: To promote the game of chess amongst the students, the Rajbari Athletic Club, Manipuri Basti here will start a chess academy, named RAC Chess Academy, in its premises from August 6.

Besides imparting training to the students, the academy will also provide evening practice facilities to the senior players. Interested students may collect the admission form from the Club office after 5pm. The faculty will be headed by Th Bipin Singh as chief coach, stated a release.

State shooting meet concludes

GUWAHATI, June 26: The Assam Rifle and Shooting Association (ARSA) organised the 13th All Assam State Shooting Championship at the 4th APB Complex in Kaliapara here. The championship concluded last evening.

Nisha Baishya of ARSA clinched the Champion of Champions title in the 10m Air Rifle for women while Arman Ali, also of ARSA hit gold for overall performance in Para Category, including the 10m and 25m Air Pistol Para Men events.

In the closing function, Sports Minister Naba Kumar Doley and DG Assam Police Mukesh Sahai were present as guests.

Other results: (50m Standard Pistol, Men) 1st-Priyanka Sharma, 2nd-Subrata Hazarika, 3rd-Pranab Baruah. (25m Standard Pistol, Women) 1st-Ramneha Thapa, 2nd-Sanjib Gogoi, 3rd-Dhrubajyoti Bora. (25m Centre Fire, Men) 1st-Ritupriya Khanikar, 2nd-Nayammon Gohain, 3rd-Dhrubajyoti Bora. (Sports Pistol), Women) 1st-Bishnu Baruah, 2nd-Somnath Bhattacharya, 3rd-Vimal Agarwal. (10m Air Rifle, Women) 1st-Nirupama Chakraborty, 2nd-Srikiran Choudhury, 3rd-Durrah H Nongbi. (10m Air Rifle, Jr. Men) 1st-Somnath Thapa, 2nd-Hemanta Baruah, 3rd-Palash Ranjan Baruah. (10m Air Rifle, Men) 1st-Mayan Chakraborty, 2nd-Santosh Samanta, 3rd-Ramneha Thapa. (Air Rifle Open, Men) 1st-Pritam Kumar Sarma, (10m Air Pistol Youth, Women) 1st-Naadia Choudhury, 2nd-Naimi Dhrisrasia, (10m Air Pistol Youth, Men) 1-Mayank Chakraborty, 2nd-Dip Baruah, 3rd-Sangla Harsur, 3rd-Etlu Bhuyan. (10m Air Pistol, Men) 1st-Rakesh Neog, 2nd-Dhrubajyoti Bora, 3rd-Prashutriya Bhagawati. (10m Air Pistol, Open, Men) 1st-Priyanka Joy Sharma, 2nd-Yubraj Ojha, (10m Air Pistol, Open, Women) 1st-Bisheya Singha, 2nd-Gital Baruah.

SU DO KU

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

Solution of last problem

Originating from Japan, 'su do ku' is a mind game and a puzzle that requires the player to use paper, pen and logic. Fill the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3x3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9 without repeating any.

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

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N Korea doubt over South's Olympic invite'

SEOUL, June 26: A top North Korean sports official voiced doubts over a proposal by South Korean President Moon Jae-In to form a unified Olympic team, citing political tensions and a lack of time, a report said.

The comment by Chang Ung, the North's delegate to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) came after Moon suggested that two Koreas pool their athletes to form a joint team for the 2018 Winter Games, which the South is hosting. The South and the nuclear-armed North are separated by one of the world's most heavily-armed borders and remain technically at war after the Korean War ended with armistice in 1953 instead of a peace treaty, and Pyongyang boycotted the 1988 Olympics in Seoul.

Organisers of Pyeongchang 2018 have urged it to take part to make them a "peace Olympics". - AFP

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