



The Assam Tribune

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NEWS CAPSULE

Flood situation

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The flood situation in the State improved today with waters receding in one of the seven affected districts. Around 45,000 people were still affected in 170 villages where nearly 6,000 hectares of agricultural land are submerged, said a flood report. — PTI

AASU demand

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The All Assam Students Union (AASU) today demanded that the Aadhaar cards be distributed in the State on the basis of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), the draft of which is expected to be published on December 31. — Staff Reporter

Journalist shot

BENGALURU, Sept 5: Senior journalist Gauri Lankesh, an outspoken critic of Hindutva politics, was shot dead today by unidentified assailants at the entrance of her residence in Raj Rajeshwari Nagar here, police said. — PTI

Child rescue

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: Under 'Operation Muskhan,' 593 children were rescued in Assam this year till July and steps have been initiated to rehabilitate them, the Assembly was informed today. Of them 33 are from Udalguri district alone. — Staff Reporter

Asha workers

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The State government today said there was no question of giving monthly salaries to Asha workers in lieu of the incentivized pay they are getting now. There are 31,900 Asha workers in the State, who are recruited as voluntary workers. — Staff Reporter

Probe ordered

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today directed the vigilance and anti-corruption wing of the Assam Police to inquire into the reported incident of corruption by Chirang Revenue Commissioner Bindu Kumar Deka, an official release stated.

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

State Govt sets terms for withdrawal of AFSPA

R DUTTA CHOWDHURY
GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The Assam Government is likely to consider withdrawal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) provided the Centre agrees to deploy additional central paramilitary forces or allow the State to raise additional India Reserve Battalions to fill up the void to be created following the withdrawal of the Army from counter-insurgency operations.

Highly placed official sources

NEDA conclave in Delhi 5 NE CMs raise alarm over Bangladeshi influx



BJP president Amit Shah with chief ministers of five northeastern states and other dignitaries at the inauguration of NEDA conclave, in New Delhi on Tuesday. — UB Photos

KALYAN BAROOAH

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: The chief ministers of five northeastern states today raised an alarm over unabated illegal migration from Bangladesh calling for sealing of the India-Bangladesh border.

The second conclave of the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA), inaugurated by BJP national president Amit Shah here this morning, saw the chief ministers discuss at length the problem of illegal influx from neighbouring Bangladesh, besides a range of issues, including political stability, insurgency problem and overall development.

The chief ministers who attended the conclave were Sar-

bananda Sonowal, Pema Khandu (Arunachal Pradesh), N Biren Singh (Manipur), TR Zeliang (Nagaland) and Pawan Kumar Chamling (Sikkim).

Three Union ministers – Minister for DoNER Dr Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Minister of State for Railways Rajen Gohain also took part in the day-long conclave.

NDA partners like the AGP (represented by its president Atul Bora and State minister Keshab Mahanta), BPFF (represented by its chief Hagrama Mohialy and Rajya Sabha MP Biswajeet Darmany) and Mizo National Front (represented by Zoramthanga) and other regional parties also attended the conclave.

The takeaway from the con-

clave was that BJP leaders led by their national president sought to convey the message that the party was determined to wrest control of the three remaining states of the region – Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura by the fall of 2018. The BJP leaders pledged that they would make the Northeast a Congress-free region. "When we meet for the third conclave, all the eight states will be BJP-ruled," asserted NDA convenor Himanta Biswa Sarma.

Several of the allies though had a mixed feeling about the meet, most BJP leaders hailed the NEDA initiative. An alliance partner said that the NEDA initiative was a reflection of the now defunct North East Congress Coordination Committee.

On the other hand, another alliance partner was highly critical of the role of the DoNER Ministry. "What exactly is the role of the DoNER Ministry other than being a post office. We get to hear the same old slogans every time we meet," commented yet another alliance partner.

Later briefing newsmen, Himanta Biswa Sarma said that Assam Chief Minister and his counterparts raised the issue of illegal influx from Bangladesh and discussed ways to check it. They discussed options like sealing of the international border, he said, adding, the NEDA also discussed updating of the NRC and shared their concern over the issue.

(See page 4)

Rohingyas to be deported: Rijiju

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Rohingyas are illegal immigrants and stand to be deported, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju told reporters here.

The Minister of State for Home said that since they are not legal immigrants, "they stand to be deported".

"As per law, they stand to be deported because they are illegal immigrants. We are a nation with great democratic tradition. India has absorbed maximum number of refugees in the world so nobody should give India any lessons on how to deal with refugees," he added. — PTI

Oxford to review 'Assamese' definition in its dictionary

SANJOY RAY

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The Oxford University Press based in the United Kingdom has assured to review the entry of 'Assamese' in its Oxford Dictionary of English after it got the definition wrong, triggering an uproar in the social media.

The most widely read category of dictionary Oxford Dictionary of English, published by the Oxford University Press with ISBN 978-0-19-8571123, in its UK edition, has defined Assamese as a language related to Bengali and even claimed that it is spoken by around 23 million people, roughly half in Assam and half in Bangladesh.

Not just that, even the Oxford online app, which is one of the most popular online dictionaries, also has the same definition.

When contacted over email, Ella Percival, Communications Manager, Global Academic Division, Oxford University Press, UK, stated, "We strive to make

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Modi, Xi agree to put ties on right track

XIAMEN, Sept 5: Putting behind the Doklam standoff, India and China today agreed to move forward in their ties with Chinese President Xi Jinping telling Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he wants to put the relationship on the "right track".

Days after the prolonged standoff in the Doklam area of the Sikkim sector was defused, the two leaders held an hour-long meeting which Modi described as "fruitful".

During their meeting here, the two leaders agreed that the two countries should make more efforts, including strengthening cooperation between their security personnel, to ensure that such

incidents do not recur.

"Met President Xi Jinping. We held fruitful talks on bilateral relations between India and China," Modi tweeted after meeting Xi.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said the approach was "forward-looking" during the "constructive" meeting in which it was reaffirmed that maintaining peace and tranquility in the border areas was a pre-requisite for the development of India-China relations.

Asked if both the countries have left behind the Doklam episode, he said, "It was a forward-looking conversation... And

(See page 4)



Chinese President Xi Jinping greets Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Dialogue of Emerging Markets and Developing Countries, in Xiamen on Tuesday. — UNI

Treasury, Opp against diluting Assam Accord

STAFF REPORTER

even the Union government during the tripartite talk held in April this year had stated that the spirit of the Accord would not be diluted.

However, raising concern over the disappearance of foreigners identified by the court, Mahanta stated that the Government of India must take up the matter with Dhaka so that Bangladeshis identified by the court are accepted back by the neighbouring country.

"If the spirit of the Clause 6 has to be kept intact, the State governments should come forward to

(See page 4)

Modi arrives in Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, Sept 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today called on Myanmar President Htin Kyaw, soon after he arrived in the country on his first bilateral visit, and discussed steps to deepen the "historical relationship".

Modi reached Nay Pyi Taw on the final leg of his two-nation visit after attending the BRICS Summit in China.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar tweeted a few images of Kyaw welcoming Modi.

"Act East" and Neighbourhood First Policy, PM @narendramodi calls on President U Htin Kyaw discusses steps to deepen historical relationships," he said in a tweet.

The two leaders also inspected the guard of honour.

The Prime Minister's visit to Myanmar comes amid a spike in ethnic violence with Rohingya Muslims in the Rakhine state.

Modi will hold wide-ranging talks with Myanmar's State Counsellor and de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi tomorrow. — PTI

JOCOSERIOUS



Sir loves to be in news, so he stirs up controversies!

Opp MLAs sore over minister's absence

STAFF REPORTER

honour and dignity of the House". He said, "health and education are supposed to be priority areas. Today when we are discussing the subjects, the minister is absent. It violates the rules."

His colleague Ajanta Neog said that only minister Chantra Mohan Patowary was replying to queries of all the departments and asserted that he cannot speak on "policy matters" of departments which are not under him.

In defence, Patowary claimed that Himanta Biswa Sarma along with Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and

(See page 4)

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LOCAL FORECAST: Partly cloudy sky; general cool air. Few thunderstorms likely to occur in some areas. Maximum and minimum temperatures are most likely to be 34°C and 25°C respectively on Wednesday.

TEMPERATURE:
Max 35.2°C
Min 25.0°C

Bhupenda birth anniv celebration on Sept 8

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI: Sept 5: The 91st birth anniversary of legendary musician Dr Bhupen Hazarika will be celebrated by the AASU on September 8 on the bank of Dighalipukhuri.

Tributes will be paid to the maestro during the programme 'Uddipana', which will showcase performances by students of various colleges and universities.

Academic Dr Amariyoti Choudhury will also recite 'lilam sron', the sequel to his famous elegy on Dr Hazarika - *Eta Gaan Sesh Hol* - at 10 am that day.

TEACHER'S DAY CELEBRATED



Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary lighting a lamp to pay tribute to Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan on the occasion of Teacher's Day in Guwahati on Tuesday. — AT photo

used for society, then that is the biggest tragedy of life and not death."

He mentioned that teachers must put in all efforts to build a healthy relationship with the students for their mental and spiritual growth. "This is in accordance with our *guru-shishya* tradition of Indian philosophy." In this context he also mentioned about Manikanchan Sanoy of Srimanta Sankaradev and Sri Sri Madhvadev.

He also stressed the importance of skilled human resources to get success in the competitive world of modern era. He stated, "If the in-built talent one is born with dies without it being explored and

SECRETARY, Elementary Education, RC Jain, Commissioner and Secretary, Secondary Education, Aruna Royaria, Mission Director, Assam Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan, Dr M Angamuthu, Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup Metro, along with a host of other officials.

Elsewhere, Teacher's Day was celebrated at the Khamapara Adarsha Prathmik Vidyalaya with participation of teachers, guardians and local citizens.

Pranati Gogoi, Headmistress of the school, presided over the function, while Chitraranjan Saikia explained the purpose of the meeting and welcomed the guests.

Addressing the function as the chief guest, senior journalist DN Chakravarty said that Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the second President of India, was acclaimed by a large section of leaders all over the world as a noble teacher and a great philosopher. Referring to the ideals propounded by Dr Radhakrishnan, Chakravarty said that education is the process of creation and recreation of tradition and handing it over from one generation to the other. He attributed the loss of morals and student unrest to the loss of leadership by teachers and gross irresponsibility of the parents.

used for society, then that is the biggest tragedy of life and not death." He emphasised that teachers have a crucial role to play in this regard in bringing out the best in a child as they are the pillars of society. He distributed awards to 27 Elementary and Secondary teachers at the function.

Vice Chancellor of Cotton University Dr Bhupen Chandra Goswami recalled the life and work of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and called upon the teachers to imbibe his teachings to take the society forward.

The programme was attended by AK Tewari, Principal Secretary, Higher Education; Preetom Saikia, Commissioner and

Dr Angamuthu new CEO of GMDA
STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI: Sept 5: Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup Metro Dr M Angamuthu has been given additional responsibility as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA).

Earlier, Teacher's Day was handed over to the Zoo authorities in the presence of Conservator of Forest (North) P Sivakumar, DFO Devendar Saman and other forest officials.

The snake species is unique to eastern India.

"It is among the five most



poisonous snakes to be found in India," Zoo DFO Tejas Mariswamy said.

The serpents were rescued by "snakeman" Saurabha Barkataky yesterday from separate houses at Kolbari and Porbotiya of Tezpur.

"When the news of the rescue was flashed on TV channels, the Zoo authorities contacted the Forest department here and requested them to hand over the snakes to the Zoo. The Chief Wildlife Warden also issued directions in this regard," Barkataky said.

Both the snakes – a male-female duo – are over seven feet in length, he said.

Photography exhibition

GUWAHATI: Sept 5: Canid Clicks, a Facebook group, is going to hold its third photo exhibition at the State Art Gallery here from September 7 to 12. Educationist Dr Amriti Choudhury will inaugurate the exhibition at 4.30 pm on September 7. The exhibition will remain open for visitors from 2 pm to 7 pm during the six-day period.

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Vacancy Notice for Recruitment of Technical Personnel in North East Area (on Contract Basis)

RailTel Corporation of India Limited, a Mini-Railway (Category-I) Public Sector Undertaking under Ministry of Railways invites applications from Indian citizens for filling various technical posts for projects in North East Area (on contract basis). Detailed vacancy notice is available in 'Careers' section on RailTel's website 'www.railtelindia.com'. Last date of receipt of on-line applications in RailTel Corporation is 27.09.2017
By General Manager (P&A)

Narengi-Chandrapur road crying for repair

Through the columns of this esteemed daily, I would like to bring to the notice of the authorities concerned the pathetic condition of the Narengi-Chandrapur road.

Although most of the important roads in the city have been repaired, the road connecting the Pobitora wildlife sanctuary, the abode of the endangered one-horned rhino, has been lying neglected for years. It has neither been repaired nor constructed by the department concerned. Even 10 minutes of rainfall can inundate the road with knee-deep water. No proper drainage system is in place along this important road, too.

The road must be repaired/constructed as soon as possible to make

movement of traffic on this vital road smooth and hassle-free. An improved road connecting Pobitora will also attract tourists in large numbers.

— Ankita Das, Narengi

Cashless economy

I am really disappointed at the lackadaisical attitude of the State government in promoting cashless and digital payment in government offices like GMC, ASEB, ASTC, etc. Are all the slogans and announcements made by the Prime Minister mere propaganda? I hope the State government will implement digital and cashless payment in all the key sectors as soon as possible.

— Dr Abid Ahmed, Guwahati

Need for flyover

A flyover is needed at the Sarab

due to the traffic jams. I feel that a flyover will considerably help ease traffic congestion in the area.

— Dr PK Das, Rehbari

FCI godown

We would like to draw the attention of the authorities of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to the fact that the FCI godown at Bamunimaidan has become a breeding ground of insects. The residents living in apartments and houses located in the vicinity of the Parag Das Road opposite the FCI godown are the worst affected by insects coming from the godown in swarms. Small insects found in rice have made life difficult for the residents of the area. There is every pos-

sibility that the foodgrain stocks, including the rice stored in the godown, are rotting and this is the reason why insects are breeding there. In this residential locality, the insects fall in the food and make the same unpalatable because of the obnoxious smell they emit. The insects also get into御es of people and bite.

Why is the FCI allowing the precious foodgrains to go spoiled, when for every purpose of the godown is to provide fresh supply of rice to the weaker sections? Where has the huge amount of money released to the FCI for destruction of such pests gone?

— Residents of Parag Das Road, Bamunimaidan

কৰম পৰৱৰ উপলক্ষে অসমবাসীলৈ শুভেচ্ছা

তাদ মাসেৰ থম্ থমা থম্
বাজাও আজি থম্ থমা থম্
মাদল চাওতালী।

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অসমবাসীলৈ কৰম পৰৱৰ উপলক্ষে আন্তৰিক শুভেচ্ছা যাঁচিলো।

সর্বানন্দ মোগোৱাল
মুখ্য মন্ত্রী, অসম

MESSAGE FOR TODAY

It is better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret.

— JACKIE JOYNER-KERSEE

The Assam Tribune

A farcical exercise

The Assam Assembly was told on Monday that out of a total of 86,489 illegal migrants (as pronounced by Foreigners Tribunals since the signing of the Assam Accord in 1985), only 71 have been deported till date. During the same period, 29,663 foreigners have been 'pushed back', and 41,033 have been absconding. This amounts to a shocking admission of the failure of the government machinery on an issue intrinsically linked to the long-term well-being of the people of Assam. The expression 'pushed back' is actually a misnomer and serves little purpose of expelling the illegal migrants. In the absence of a bilateral extradition treaty between India and Bangladesh, the authorities in India take recourse to the convenient practice of pushing back the foreigners from Indian territory – but only for the pushed-back people to make a reappearance on Indian soil. The situation is unlikely to change as long as India does not take up the matter of extraditing the legally-detected foreigners to their country of origin with the Bangladeshi Government in due seriousness. The BJP's unprecedented showing at the last Assembly and Parliamentary polls in Assam has a lot to do with its vociferous anti-Bangladeshi rhetoric and its pledge to safeguard the interests of the indigenous people who are facing an identity crisis due to the large presence of Bangladeshi migrants in the State. Disturbingly, instead of honouring its poll pledge, the BJP Government has chosen to place this burning issue on the back-burner once it assumed power. The fact that it has never taken up the matter of deportation of Bangladeshi migrants with the Bangladeshi Government would testify to its lack of intent. Ironically, at the same time, the BJP Government has gone out of its way to accommodate the Hindu Bangladeshi migrants in Assam despite vehement opposition to the move by the indigenous populace.

The handling of the issue of cross-border infiltration from Bangladesh by successive governments makes it clear that neither the Centre nor the State Government has the goodwill to resolve it. With an India-friendly Government in Bangladesh, things should have been easier for India to press for an early resolution of the issue. The entire process of detection and deportation of illegal Bangladeshi migrants also continues to be clumsy, allowing enough time for the infiltrators to disappear during the unduly lengthy proceedings, or after the court's pronouncements. Even while there is an urgent need to expedite the police investigations and the legal proceedings with regard to detection and deportation of illegal foreigners, less important is to complete the fencing along the porous Indo-Bangla border. As revealed in the State Assembly, 61 km of the 263-km Assam-Bangladesh border still remains unfenced. Same has been the case with the riverine stretches that lack foolproof monitoring and vigilance. A matching security mechanism in the form of floating border outposts and round-the-clock vigil on speed boats besides installation of high-tech measures has long been absent along the riverine stretches.

Gracious host

Was China playing the gracious host in agreeing to put its thumbprint on the BRICS joint declaration at the end of the summit at Xiamen? Anti-terror groups in tenor; the declaration pointedly named – among other organizations such as the Taliban, ISIS, al-Qaeda and its affiliates including Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan – the Pakistan-based terror groups like the Haqqani network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and Hizb ut-Tahrir! This is the very first time China has let down its staunch ally Pakistan and joined in the growing chorus asking that country to clamp down on terrorist outfits on its soil. One may recall that the US too had come down heavily on Pakistan for becoming a haven for international terrorism. It may also be noted that India had attempted to have these outfits named at the declaration made by BRICS nations in the last summit at Goa, but had failed to persuade China into doing so. Thus the declaration then had been generic in nature and remained confined to condemnation of the al-Qaeda, ISIS and their affiliates. There must have been a great deal of diplomatic give and take behind the scenes in order to persuade China to take this huge step. That the country's bête noire, the ETIM, which has been fomenting terror in China's Uyghur region, is included might be a clue.

However, it would be easy to make too much of China's willingness to name Pakistan-based terror groups and expect that China would cease its opposition to India's efforts to have terrorists attacked to them prescribed by the UN. Pragmatic self-interest has always dictated the nation's policies and it has not shied away from double-speak when convenient for it to do so. Perhaps it had acquiesced to the consensus generated among the others, in particular the point of view of Russia, in order to present a facade of unanimity on the terror question. Thus, the actual realization of the assumption which can be made from the Xiamen declaration belongs to the future. Moreover, given China's current preoccupations, it would have been keener to further the BRICS economic agenda, and any discord on the terror issue might have jeopardized this. That, in the vacuum created after Donald Trump shifted economic gear, China is attempting to emerge as the leader of anti-protectionism is well known, which explains the explicit opposition to protectionism voiced by BRICS nations. These asserted the importance of an open and inclusive world economy which would enable all countries to share the benefit of globalization, and their commitment to a multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO. Such a broad agreement as well as the pacts on mutual economic and trade cooperation between the BRICS nations could well have been inducements for the change of stand by China.

Legalizing cannabis: problems and prospects

■ Dr Kawai Deep Kour

When Maneka Gandhi, Minister for Women and Child Development, lent her voice suggesting that therapeutic use of cannabis be made legal, she echoed the rumblings across many countries of the world for a holistic view of the value of cannabis. Scores of countries globally have moved towards decriminalizing cannabis, which remains the drug of choice globally. With the intensification and success of movements to ensure availability of cannabis for medical and scientific purposes across Europe and Americas, it is important to consider the prospects and challenges over this in India. As India opened up to a lively talk on the problem of drugs by its Prime Minister, it was certain that the events of the year, particularly the *Udaan Prabha* phenomenon, had intensified the demand for revisiting the drug problem nevertheless with a fresh pair of lens. Members of Parliament Dhananjay Gandhi suggested the legalization of opium and cannabis followed by opening up of the opinion registry as a plausible solution to the travails of abuse. While the nation argued and discussed the possibilities, one State became a trailblazer. Uttarakhand legalized the cultivation of cannabis for industrial purposes. The cultivation will be carried out only by farmers who hold licences for growing cannabis. They would also be required to sell the produce only to the Government which is also being seen as a move to boost the stagnant rural economy of the State.

The popularity of cannabis increased as its commercial and industrial uses were discovered. Although hemp and marijuana are both derived

from the same species *Cannabis sativa*, yet they are distinguished by difference in use, chemical composition and difference in methods of cultivation. Hemp is not psychoactive while marijuana is. Marijuana is employed for recreational purposes. Misconceptions related to hemp's association with marijuana have resulted in the denunciation of the potential of cannabis as being highly beneficial to both the economy and environment. Hemp is an agricultural commodity and is cultivated for its seed and fibre across countries like Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Egypt, Korea, Portugal, Thailand and Ukraine. In the United States, the states of Colorado, Vermont, California and North Dakota have passed laws legalizing the cultivation of hemp. China is the largest exporter of hemp paper and textiles. Hemp seed and fibre are employed in manufacturing a variety of health care products, construction materials, paper, textiles, hemp cordage, rags, oil, animal bedding, currency paper, cloth and artistic applications. Hemp is around 85% cellulose and can be used to manufacture durable, non-toxic and biodegradable plastic which is sought after by carmakers like Ford, BMW, Chrysler, Honda, Mercedes, etc., for the manufacture of door panels, dashboards, headrests, etc., besides being used by companies for the manufacture of musi-

cal instruments, furniture, etc. In India, the National Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS) Act, 1985 stipulates that "the Central Government shall follow a cautious, evidence-based approach towards cultivation of cannabis for horticultural and/or industrial purposes and shall take decisions based on the results of the research." The Bombay Hemp Company (BOHECO) of Mumbai and the Indian Industrial Hemp Association

pounds found in cannabis, it is the THC which has powerful intoxicating effects. THC was first isolated in 1964; particularly significant in the history of scientific understanding of the effects of cannabis, it was a revolutionary discovery by Dr Allyn Howlett and William Devane of the 'binding sites for THC in the brain'. Apart from behavioural changes, THC stimulates appetite and is valued for its analgesic and sedative effects. The National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) of the US has documented the short-term and the long-term effects of using cannabis.

It is also looking at the beneficial therapeutic effects of cannabis and is massively funding research studying the potential of cannabis to treat diseases like HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, inflammation, pain, seizures, substance abuse disorders and mental disorders with encouraging results. This can certainly be the bedrock of a move towards allowing cannabis research for medicinal uses and with good reason.

The medicinal properties of cannabis or for that matter other 'illicit' narcotic-yielding plants as poppy have been known since ages by humankind. They were hailed as 'God's own medicine' and 'God's green herb' employed for treating a variety of ailments much before the advent of modern medical science. In an interesting account of the medical usage of marijuana across different nations by Joseph W Jacob, there is the mention of a book written in India, named *Rajgiravallabha*, which enumerates the

therapeutic use of marijuana. It was known to be extensively used for the treatment of leprosy, hormonal imbalance and for restoring vitality. *Bhang*, prepared by grinding the leaves and buds which are mixed with spices and milk, is offered and consumed as a religious drink during traditional festivities. It is also used in various parts of India to cure ailments like dysentery, sunstroke, fever, wounds, and relieving toothache, neurological and digestive disorders. It was believed to aid the yogis and the sadhus in enduring long hours of meditation. Its association with the Hindu god Shiva further rendered it a divine and religious connotation.

The move by the State Government of Uttarakhand exhibits progressive thinking yet the concerns that the legal commercial production of hemp might facilitate clandestine cultivation of high THC-yielding cannabis prone to illicit diversion are real. Cannabis grows wild in many parts of the country including Himachal Pradesh which has a booming illicit trade. Nevertheless, this should not canopy its array of beneficial uses – therapeutic and industrial. While the hemp industry is witnessing resurgence, several medical organizations across the world are advocating and facilitating scientific research into its curative properties with promising outcomes. It would be prudent for India to review its policy and shed its prohibitionist stance on medical uses of cannabis. The regulations on cannabis should serve more as opportunity and less of inhibition to discuss and dialogue about the flaws of the current approach and push for viable, practical alternatives to curb abuse and promote sustainable healthcare and green economy.

The move by the State Government of Uttarakhand exhibits progressive thinking yet the concerns that the legal commercial production of hemp might facilitate clandestine cultivation of high THC-yielding cannabis prone to illicit diversion are real.

(IIIA) of New Delhi has been actively promoting the legitimate industrial use of cannabis. This is in tandem with the provisions of the NDPS Act. Section 14 of the NDPS Act provides that the Government of India can allow cultivation of cannabis plant exclusively for horticultural and industrial purposes. It specifically mentions that "the Central Government shall encourage research and trials of cultivars of cannabis with low THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) content".

THC is the primary chemical compound found in the dried resin glands of the female cannabis flower. Of around 85 chemical com-

The spiritual approach towards conflict resolution

■ Samir Baruah

The north-eastern region of India is much more than a mere political construct. It is a unique civilization in itself with its own rich historical and cultural foundation. Being ethnically, linguistically and culturally very distinct from the mainland India, the North-east is often misunderstood by and misrepresented to the larger world. Hence, its problems are also needed to be deliberated as such. Merely political posturing and positioning cannot result in lasting solutions. We need to look beyond and apply the teaching touch.

It's in this context that the upcoming visit of an apolitical leader with an impeccable track record of uniting hearts and bringing peace spells hopes for the region. World renowned humanitarian and the founder of the Art of Living, Sri Ravi Shankar, is embarking on a special visit to the region this week. During the visit, he is slated to interact with people from all sectors of society in his bid to seek a shared vision for addressing the issues facing the region in non-viol-

ent and democratic ways.

One of the highlights will be his keynote address at a conference of opinion-makers and thought-leaders of the region. Christened 'Strength in Diversity: North-east Indigenous People's Conference', the power-packed event is organized by many like-minded and prominent individuals and groups of the region. The event will bring leaders from all walks of life including leaders who have formerly taken up arms on a common platform to debate, discuss and bridge the gap among various stakeholders in the peace processes and reduce the trust deficits that exist.

What is making the North-east watchers excited about Ravi Shankar's address at the event is the presence of several former underground leaders led by the general secretary of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA). Anir Chetia as the conveners of the event. Other prominent speakers include former leader of the Tripura National Volunteers, Bijoy Kumar Hrangkawh and Dilip

What is making the North-east

spiritual leader is likely to be more successful than the rational tools of legal, economic or military interventions.

Ravi Shankar has been pushing for peace in the region very proactively and is acknowledged to have played a big hand in the recent homecoming of 68 militants in Manipur. Over the years, the Art of Living has been working in the region to heal the trauma of militancy, facilitate dialogue, reform those who are lodged in prisons, and channelize misguided youth towards constructive pursuits. His recent meetings with Thuingaleng Muivah of NSCN (IM) and RK Meeghan, chairperson of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) of Manipur, whom he met in a jail last year, have only added a touch of reality to the dream of lasting peace in the region.

One sincerely hopes that Ravi Shankar will be able to do an encore of Columbia in the North-east. To paraphrase the Oregon State University professor and conflict resolution expert Aaron Wolf, if the spiritual approach does not work, there is little hope that anything else will!

Letters to the EDITOR

Sir, — Apropos the news report, 'Railways to rename trains after literary classics' (AT, September 3), I would like to applied the Railway Ministry for their proposed plan to honour the Sahitya Akademi-winning works by naming miscellaneous trains after them. This way, the young learners will be able to connect with the literary classics of various languages in India. In fact, everyone will be interested to reopen those valuable books and peep through the inspiring pages that created a great literary legacy. It is a judicious decision of the Railway Ministry to bring back the charm of those historic works to the world of today which is racing towards online resources. This will help the new generation to be curious and learn about our literary heritage. There is a need to simplify, rectify, dignify and glorify our personal library and that of our State. The young generation must not forget the presence of books in life. Indeed, books are our best friends. Yours etc., JAYANTA CHANDRA, Guwahati

Naming trains after literary classics

Written screening test

Sir, — A notification was published in the APSC website regarding the revised dates of holding examinations/viva voce for the year 2017. Here it is seen that for the post of assistant Director of Town & Country Planning in the Urban Development Department, only viva voce exam is scheduled in October. As there are only nine posts in this recruitment, I would like to request the APSC to hold a screening written test as mentioned in the advertisement itself. Conducting only viva voce for any recruitment leaves scope for bias, nepotism, etc. Further, a candidate may not be judged well in the little time during an interview. These defects were seen in the recent recruitment processes where viva voce was the only selection criteria. Hence, a written screening test is desired by most of the serious and dedicated candidates. Yours etc., A CANDIDATE, Guwahati

New Sports Minister

Sir, — Through your esteemed daily, I would like to congratulate Athens Olympic silver medallist shooter Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore for his appointment as

the new Sports Minister of India. This move of Prime Minister Narendra Modi deserves applause because a sportsperson is made the Sports Minister. Now we can expect more medals in the coming Olympics. Being a sportsman himself, Rathore understands each and every problem of a sportsperson. He knows the ground realities and can take steps accordingly. I hope that he would use his first-hand experience to enrich Indian sports. Similarly, every important post of the BCCI should be given to former cricketers rather than giving it to politicians and businessmen. Now it is the foremost duty of Rathore to find the answer to the question that if our neighbour China wins so many medals in Olympic, why can't we? Yours etc., DIPJAY CHANDRA, Lankia.

DU pension

Sir, — Our attention has been drawn to the news published in your esteemed daily relating to pension payable to the retired employees of Dibrugarh University. It is admitted that the grant of pension was a long-standing demand of the employees of the university and consequent to the

above, the Assam Legislative Assembly amended the Dibrugarh University Act, 1965 to add a new Section (30A) which was made effective only from April 1, 2013. The statistics covered in the news item are unverified. The 422 employees as mentioned in the news item are mainly the employees who retired or expired on or before March 31, 2013 and are outside the ambit of the Act. The employees who retired or expired on or before that day have already obtained all the service benefits including the gratuity

provided by the fund. The amended Act is open credited for this the transition, which not only brought the Nobel Peace Prize for the Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, but also led to FARC turning in a political party last week. Such success stories and Ravi Shankar's pragmatic approach bring the hope that initiatives by a

In anticipation of receipt of fund from the Government of Assam, the University disbursed one-third of the pension payable to the retired employees monthly from its own source involving a total amount of Rs 6.20 crore. However, the university had to stop the payment of pension from November, 2015 as it did not receive the required fund from

the Government except Rs 2 crore for the financial year 2014-15. Dibrugarh University is primarily dependent upon the fund provided by the Government of Assam and has no other source of fund for paying the pension as requested by the retired employees.

Meanwhile, the Government of Assam has approved and sanctioned that the eligible teachers/ officer and employees of the University retired/expired before March 31, 2013 shall receive monthly gratuity as per the specified slabs and amounts. In case of the eligible employees who have retired on or after April 1, 2013 and have not availed CPF, the University has requested the Government of Assam to provide the required grant for payment of pension during the year 2017-18.

The University is expecting the release of monthly gratuity to the employees retired/expired on or before March 31, 2013 as soon as it receives the grant from the Government. Yours etc., REGISTRAR, Dibrugarh University.

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.

Major city streets to be repaired, refurbished

PRANJAL BHUYAN

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: Facing flak over the pathetic condition of most roads in the city which have not only resulted in massive traffic snarls on a daily basis but also caused many accidents in recent months, the Kamrup (Metro) district administration is now looking to undertake a major exercise to repair and refurbish the major streets of Guwahati.

Speaking to *The Assam Tribune* today, Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup (Metro) Dr M Angamuthu said the exercise would be carried out in two phases.

In the first phase, work has been taken up for immediate repair and resurfacing of major

roads by September 20 to ensure that it is completed before the Durga Puja which will take place in the last week of this month.

Next, once the dry season starts from October, the second phase will commence wherein work will be undertaken over the course of three months for major refurbishing of roads and by-lanes.

"We recently held a meeting where besides officials of departments concerned, the MLAs from Guwahati and the local MP were also present to discuss the matter. An elaborate plan was made based on that meeting. Stress is being given to inter-departmental coordination," said Dr Angamuthu.

He added, "Most roads in the

city are in very bad condition. We faced some hurdles because for some time there was shortage of construction materials as well as

some extent and the monsoon is also in its last phase."

Meanwhile, some senior officials told this newspaper on



due to the monsoon rains. Now the shortage of construction materials has been overcome to

condition of anonymity that the State government's lackadaisical attitude is responsible to a large

extent for the state of affairs.

"The party in power may have changed, but the work culture remains the same. Projects for construction of drains and repair of roads were sanctioned very late and had hardly started when the monsoon started. Besides, work on dredging of roads to lay water pipelines was continued even after onset of the rainy season," said an official.

Some repair and resurfacing work has been carried out on MRD Road, GS Road and at places like Noonmati and Narengi.

"However, there are stretches in places like VIP Road and at Kharhuli which have become almost impossible to use," said the official.



ASRC invites tenders for
Refurbishment of 2017 AAU 2344, I for
the work "Miscellaneous Repairs & Maintenance Civil works at Tezpur Airport
2017-2018". Total value of work Rs.
Rs. 25,00,000/- with period of completion
12 (Twelve) months. The scope of work
includes minor repair and maintenance of
construction works. The last date for online
sale and submission of bid is extended upto
17.09.2017. On 11.09.2017, further details
Information can be obtained at
<http://tenders.gov.in/e-procure/> or
www.asrc.org.in. Further clarifications
concerning the work may be obtained by
uploading only on CPPB website / portal.



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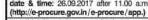
Job Name: Empowerment of Contractors for Implementation of various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities under Government Projects in Three Categories (SDM, CSR, CSR-ESD) Category C-II
75000, Category C-II
Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: [nrc1 csr@nrcl.nrl.in](mailto:nrcl csr@nrcl.nrl.in)
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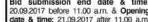
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Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: bsm@nrcl.nrl.in
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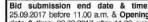
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NIT NO: OC22000091

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of Water Unit (DU) & Water Treatment Plant (WTP) for 12 months
Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: du@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514



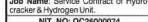
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NIT NO: OC19000073

Job Name: Service Contract of Hydro-cracker unit for 12 months
Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: hydro@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514



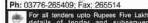
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Job Name: Service Contract for Upkeepment of MS Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
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Job Name: Supply, Installation of Air Conditioning & Ventilation System
Bid submission end date & time: 20.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 26.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: acv@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514



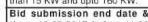
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NIT NO: OC19000070

Job Name: Service Contract for Upkeepment of DPU
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: dpu@nrcl.nrl.in
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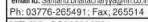
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NIT NO: OC19000069

Job Name: Service Contract for Upkeepment of CDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: cdunsu@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514



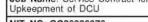
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NIT NO: OC19000068

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: cduvdunsu@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514



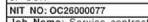
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Job Name: Service Contract for Upkeepment of MS Plant
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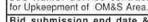
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Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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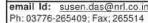
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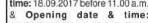
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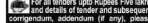
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Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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NOTICE INVITING E TENDER
NIT NO: OC19000061

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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NIT NO: OC19000060

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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NIT NO: OC19000057

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: cduvdunsu@nrcl.nrl.in
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Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
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Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
email Id: cduvdunsu@nrcl.nrl.in
Ph: 03776-265495, Fax: 265514

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NOTICE INVITING E TENDER
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Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
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REFINERY DIVISION
NOTICE INVITING E TENDER
NIT NO: OC19000053

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
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NOTICE INVITING E TENDER
NIT NO: OC19000051

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. (<http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/>)
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REFINERY DIVISION
NOTICE INVITING E TENDER
NIT NO: OC19000050

Job Name: Service contract for Upkeepment of CDU/VDU & NSU Plant
Bid submission end date & time: 13.09.2017 before 11.00 a.m. & Opening date & time: 19.09.2017 after 11.00 a.m. ([http://](http://e-procure.gov.in/e-procure/app/)



Villagers on a plantain raft moving towards highland in the flooded Ruptoli village at Paschim Dhemaji, on Monday. — UB Photos

Father leads police to son's murderers

CORRESPONDENT

KALIGAON, Sept 5: A father's pain-staking efforts finally led to the arrest of his son's murderers, nearly a year after the gruesome incident. The recent arrest of three school-going students in the year-old death of their colleague has created shock waves in Udalguri district.

Sidon Basumatari (14), son of Bapan Basumatari of Khorabari, a meritorious student of Diamond English School, Harsingarh in Udalguri district was found dead, hanging with a gamusa from the window of his school hostel on November 8, 2016. The school authority lodged an FIR at Harsingarh Police Station describing it as a case of suicide. The police also accordingly closed the case. But Bapan Basumatari, father of

Sidon was not convinced. He alleged that his son was killed by his own school mates.

"The theory of suicide being propagated by the school authority is fictional," he told people last year. He also filed a counter-FIR at the Harsingarh Police Station last year. He also engaged informers to collect information from a few suspected students of the same school. Finally, his attempts bore fruit when an informer recorded the confession of three students who had killed his son brutally on the night of November 8 at

the school hostel.

According to information, Sidon Basumatari was a brilliant and honest student in the school. He used to report the misdeeds of a few students to teachers. He also used to advise a few notorious students to study well and learn manners from him. This annoyed many. According to the confession, Allen Daimari took Dijit Daimari on September 1.

The other accused Nitu Sonowal two days prior to the incident. He arrived at the school secretly on November 7 night and along with other two students namely - Dijit Daimari and Nitu Sonowal -



Sidon Basumatari

brutally killed Sidon in his room. Later, they hung up the body so that it looked like a case of suicide.

The role of the principal of Diamond English School, Harsingarh has been suspicious from the beginning, alleged Bapan Basumatari. The principal was changing his version from time to time, may be to save the prestige of his school, he told the media. Finally, on the intervention of the ADGP, Assam and other high-ranking officials, Assam Police officially arrested Allen Daimari and Dijit Daimari on September 1.

The other accused Nitu Sonowal too was arrested on September 3 from Dibrugarh. All of them have been remanded to judicial custody at Udalguri. But they have been granted interim bail by court under juvenile justice laws.

OBITUARY

BN Sarma

A CORRESPONDENT

TIHU, Sept 5: Bhabendra Nath Sarma, an educationist and retired Head Master of Jalkhema Bhattacharjya High School died on Monday night at his Haribhangha residence following a cardiac arrest. He was 65.

Late Sarma was the president / secretary of the Paschim Nahari Parishika Parishad for several years and was closely associated with the various socio-cultural organisation of Haribhangha village like Haribhangha Seniors' Parish, Haribhangha Sahitya Sabha, Kolya Gosti Mandir Committee, Haribhangha Public Library, Haribhangha Kamakhya Ekashad Club, Haribhangha Gaon Unnayan Samiti and many others.

His sudden demise was widely mourned at Haribhangha and also at Jalkhema Bhattacharjya High School.

He leaves behind his wife, who is the Headmistress of Haribhangha Girls' High School, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives.

'Panchayats hold the key to all-round development'

ANN Service

keys for the all-round development of the country and the world was today afflicted with conflicts and confusions. The self-governed, self-sustained and self-reliant panchayats gifted with freedom to make their own plan, fund, functionaries, functions and fraternities with other NGOs can revive the rural economy and resuscitate the morose modern-day life, he added.

Santana Gohain, president ZP, called upon the PRI members to work with dedication to upgrade life in the rural regions.

Sports journalism: "Sports journalism in Assam has come a long way since the first sports news appeared in an Assamese daily way back in 1923," Subodhmallo Baruah, president, All India Sports Journalists' Association said here while speaking at a sports journalism workshop organised jointly by the Assam Sports Journalists' Association and Sivasagar District Journalists' Association and Sivasagar District Journalists' Association recently. It is no longer a passion merely but a profession that offers real adventure, fame and fortune, he added.

He also said that Sivaguri has contributed in a big way to the overall sporting arena in Assam in the form of the first sports pavilion of Asia, 'Ranggarh', 'Arjun' Bhogeswar Boruah, athlete Tabumonia and Phanamra Gogoi, reported the first sports reporter.

Arun Das, former Resident Editor, *Dainik Janambhumi*, said that sports journalism got its due only recently though sports journalism used to serve as a cradle for some of the greatest reporters in the world. Re-

turning to its challenges and re-

sponsibility, Das said that a sports journalist must do the follow-up work to arouse the con-

science of sports lovers.

Sashi Kanta Bora: a tribute



Sashi Kanta Bora, a resident of Hailakandi, Nagaon who passed away on August 27 last was born at Dhang Chariali on May 25, 1930. He passed his matriculation from Dhang KB High School and did his post-graduation from Gauhati University. He started his career as a teacher at Dhang KB High School and later on

joined Anandamani Deekshil Phukan (ADP) College at Nagaon as a lecturer of political science. He retired from this college in 1995.

During his stay at Dhang, he was a well-known figure in its cultural and social circles. While residing at Dhang, he was closely involved with the Dhang Public Library and Dhang Madhab Dev Nayak Mandir Samiti.

Today on his *advyashraddha*, we pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to his departed soul.

- Swagat Bora

Joymoti Kakati

with a lot of people. Then our father was transferred to Bihar and this was a life-turning moment for her.

In Bihar, though language was a big barrier for her, yet she learned it fast and within a span of two-three years, she made life-long friendship with people of different communities. Meeting new people and visiting many new places broadened her horizons and her approach to life. In 1988, we came to our own house at Hatiaghari Chariali in Guwahati. She ventured into business opening a new stationery shop at Railway Colony at Bamunimaidam. She was the first lady in that

market to venture into business. Travelling to her daughters' households and visiting new places became a passion to her. Inspite of being a school-dropout at a tender age, we were amazed to see how she mastered three languages - Assamese, bengali and Hindi. She was also an expert in Sankaradeva's *Blagavat Geeta* and hence was a regular invitee to many households in her neighbourhood for reading.

Today on her *advyashraddha*, we pray to the Almighty for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

- Kanika Talukdar, Babita Deka, Kabita Konwar

Over 150 hatchlings of Asian open bill stork perish in Jorhat, 82 rescued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, Sept 5: In a sad development for bird lovers, over 150 hatchlings of Asian open bill stork died after two branches of a separate tress where the birds are nesting in the heart of the city, cracked and subsequently fell down to the ground below on Sunday and Monday, thereby crushing the newborns in the process.

One of the trees which had a safety net stretched above the ground by a few bird lovers two weeks back with an aim to protect the hatchlings, got partially damaged as it was ruptured by the weight of the falling branch.

However, the positive side of the incident is that 82 hatchlings were subsequently rescued by Forest Department staff along with the assistance of some local bird lovers.

Divisional Forest Officer (Jorhat)

Sapan Saikia told *The Assam Tribune* that a big branch of a tree on the KBR Baruah Road here, where the colony of Asian open bill stork are nesting for breeding purpose, fell to the ground and resulted in a large number of hatchlings falling down to

the ground.

In both the cases,

the hatchlings were

collected by the Forest Depart-

ment staff, who were aided by a

few people of the locality and birds

lovers. Saikia said that the hatch-

lings that were alive were then

transported to the Centre for

Wildlife Rehabilitation and Con-

servation (CWRC) at Borjuri near Kaziranga National Park.

The DFO estimated that over

250 birds had built their nests in a few trees about two months back. After the hatchlings were born, the number of birds increased substantially and subsequently led to a drastic increase in weight of the branch-

es, which after being unable

to bear the weight no

longer cracked

and fell down to the ground below.

Firoz Hussain and Devajyoti

Bora, both avid bird

watchers of the region,

had pooled their

financial resources

along with support from

friends, had put up a safety net be-

low one tree measuring around

900 square metres at a height of

six feet above the ground so as

to have a cushioning effect on the

hatchlings if they fall down

from the tress.

They had taken the initiative af-

ter they came to know from peo-

ple of the area that several hatch-

lings had fallen to the ground from that particular tree almost every day and died.

The duo after approaching the

Traffic Branch of the local police

department had managed to get bar-

racades placed in the area to pre-

vent people and vehicles from pass-

ing through the netted area.

Incidentally, since the past few

days, Firoz and Devajyoti are out

of station due to some personal

work. Firoz told this Correspond-

ent from New Delhi that he was

'pained' to know about the incident.

"May be due to overcrowding in

those branches due to the birth of

hatchlings in large numbers, the

tragic incident took place."

As Devajyoti is out of Jorhat too, my associate Mustak Hussain along with his friends were assisting the Forest Department personnel since Sunday," Firoz said.

Mustak said he managed to get the torn portion of the net repaired on Monday with the help of friends, and put up the net again. Asian open bill stork is a large resident wading bird found in the north-eastern region. They generally build nests on tall trees during the breeding season.

Goalpara Municipal Board employees go on strike

CORRESPONDENT

GOALPARA, Sept 5: The permanent employees of the Goalpara Municipal Board (GMB) went on strike from Monday over non-payment of seven months salaries and other dues, bringing all the official works of the Board to a standstill.

The 25 permanent employees of the GMB say that their pending salaries and dues are paid from the amount of Rs 91.80 lakh received recently as the first and second quarterly instalment of devolution funds under the award of 5th Assam State Finance Commission for 2017-18.

Meanwhile, talking to this correspondent, the secretary of Goalpara Municipality Workers' Union (GMWU), Anowar Hussein said that the strike will continue till September 9 next and if there is no progress, then the union is planning to go on an indefinite strike. He, however questioned the Board's delay in taking a decision on payment of pending salaries and dues to all its employees from

devolution fund received by the Board recently despite the fact that several Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of other districts have paid salaries to its employees from the devolution funds received by the respective Boards.

The secretary of GMWU also said that around 120 employees including labourers and sweepers, besides the 25 permanent employees have exerted pressure on the Government at various times to fulfil their long-standing demands. He said that among other demands, the union has asked for provincialisation of all the municipality workers as per the Cabinet decision taken on September 4, 2013 by the previous Congress Government, issue of notification of the staffing pattern of the regular employees as well as the *sofai karmacharis* and Harijans, immediate payment of wages and other arrears by the GMB to all its retired employees.

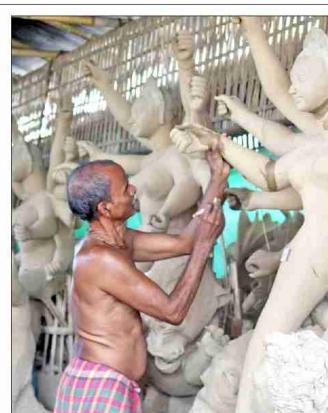
Conscious citizens from the town have rued the fact that despite the municipality authorities levying high taxes for maintenance of basic civic services within the town, the Board is facing resource constraints and is not able to perform its duties efficiently. The three successive strikes by the employees of the Board within a span of a month have amply proved the deteriorating financial health of the GMB and they demanded that corrective measures should be taken immediately in the interest of providing efficient services to the people of the town.

417-year-old Royal Durga Puja from Sept 19

GAURIPUR, Sept 5: The 417-year-old Royal Durga Puja of the erstwhile Zamindary Estate of Gauripur is scheduled to be held from September 19, the date on which Mahalaya falls this year.

Brisk preparations are on for the same at the temple located in the eastern part of the historic Maha-maya playground.

It is customary that the *astadhatu* idol of Goddess Mahamaya will be immersed at the intersection of the Gadधar and the Brahmaputra rivers and thereafter, the 'Ranachandi' and the 'Kaman' puja will be performed in front of the Royal palace at Matlabag area of Gauripur. — Correspondent



An artisan busy making clay idols of Mother Goddess Durga ahead of the annual Autumn Fest, at Bakhalaghat in Karbi Anglong, on Monday. — UB Photos

Teacher's Day celebrated across State

CORRESPONDENTS/
ANN Service

TEZPUR, Sept 5: "Teachers are the torchbearers of the society. They enlighten the society through the power of their knowledge and education and they deserve the highest honour. There is a difference in the role and action of a teacher and a common man living in the society." This was observed by noted writer and retired Prof Dr Ramesh Chandra Goswami.

Attending the 56th Teacher's Day organised by office of the Inspector of Schools, SDC, Tezpur in Association with the Sonitpur district administration at the District Library here today, Prof Dr Goswami, as the chief speaker said that a teacher's role and action are closely observed in the society because society's future and development is based on them. "Therefore, teachers will have to dedicated towards the society's development," he mentioned.

Altogether 54 teachers from various schools of the district were felicitated in the programme. Addressing the felicitated teachers, the guest of honour vice chairman of AMTRON, Rithibhan Sharma, urged them to play a key role in the development of the society. Noted writer Mrinali Chetia released the souvenir

Sambardhona while retired Prof Dr Satish Chandra Bhattacharya released a storybook titled, *Antardhara* written by Labanya Mahanta of Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi College. Meanwhile, Chayan Mazumdar who secured highest marks in the HSLC final examination 2017 from Tezpur Don Bosco High School was awarded with the 'Amli Maanta Memorial Award.'

Besides other dignitaries, the event held under the aegis of ADC, Parom Kumar Kakoti and conducted by noted teacher and journalist Biswajit Boro and Pankaj Baruah respectively was attended by Ashok Bora, retired principal of Tezpur College, Chairman of Tezpur Municipality Board Puspa Devi, Krishan Das Nath, Benudhar Kakoti, Bankim Sharma and noted social worker, Anjali Kalita.

TINSUKIA: The district level Teacher's Day was celebrated at the District Library auditorium here today. The meeting organised on the occasion was presided over by Dhandeb Mahanta, former chairman of Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA) and addressed by Dr Dyandana Borgohain, chairman, Assam Higher Secondary Council (AHSC) as the chief guest and Dr Sarbaswar Bhuyan, professor, Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh.

The speakers highlighted the significance of the day and appealed to the teachers to dedicate themselves towards the development of the society as the teachers are responsible for moulding the future generation. Besides many dignitaries and former teachers, the meeting was attended by teachers and students of various schools of the district.

MORIGAON: Along with the rest of the nation, the Teacher's Day was celebrated here with lots of enthusiasm. On the occasion, the main function under the auspices of Morigaon district administration was held at Morigaon Bihuti.

The programme started with the lighting of the lamp before the portrait of great thinker and philosopher Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Flower tributes were paid at the portrait of Radhakrishnan by the retired teachers and senior citizens of Morigaon. At

The open meeting held on the occasion was presided over by Hemen Das, Deputy Commissioner, Morigaon. Addressing the gathering, Kuladhar Saikia, ADGP, dwelt at length about the ideology pursued by Dr Radhakrishnan and appealed to the teachers' community to follow the path shown by him. The teachers can change the society, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, DC, Morigaon explained the social responsibilities of a teacher who is the friend, philosopher and guide of students. In the function, as many as 36 teachers were felicitated.

BAHATI CHARIALI: Under the aegis of Madhya Kamrup Umanayi Parishad (MKUP), the Teacher's Day was celebrated today at Pathumari College with a day-long colourful programme.

The programme began with the lighting of the lamp before the portrait of great thinker and philosopher Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Flower tributes were paid at the portrait of Radhakrishnan by the retired teachers and senior citizens of Morigaon. At

12:30 pm, Kishor Kumar Bhattacharya, secretary of MKUP delivered the welcome address and briefly described the significance of the Teacher's Day.

Thereafter, an open meet-

ing was held under the presi-

dence of Nityananda Kalita,

principal of the college where a number of teachers, educationists and social workers attended.

Participating in the meeting as the distinguished guest, Lakshmi Nath Tamuli, in his speech, described the immense contributions of the teachers in formation of the nation and development of the society. They have not been given due respect and importance by successive governments. He added that the present environment of education in the State is not healthy. It is often seen that a number of teachers' organisations come out to

the streets demanding their rights and this is not a good sign for the society, he said.

PRAMAN: The souvenir of the MKUP was also released and more than 50 retired teachers were felicitated on the occasion. In the cultural programme, noted artistes Dipen Baruah, JP Das and Sam Hazarika enthralled the audience with their performances.

SILCHAR: As many as 29 retired teachers of Cachar district were accorded rich felicitation on the occasion of the Teacher's Day today.

In a function organised by the Cachar district administration at the District Library auditorium, the teachers were felicitated in the presence of ADC Ranjeet Das, Inspector of Schools Anup Kumar Das, District Education Officer Dr Haren Kumar Hazarika, former principal of Guru Charan College Silchar Srimanta Dutta and others.



Students taking out a cultural rally on the occasion of the Teacher's Day organised by Tihu Barama Prathamik Sikkha Khanda, at Barama in Baksa district on Tuesday - UB Photos

Management-contractor nexus ruined paper mills: Patowary

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: Besides short supply of coal and scarcity of raw materials, an unholy nexus between contractors and some in the management led to the present plight of the two paper mills in the State, Industry Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said today.

Responding to a call atten-

tion motion by Congress MLA Kamalakhy Dey Purkayastha at the Assembly today, Patowary said there is a shortage of raw materials as well as coal which used to come from Meghalaya.

"These factors were not solely responsible for the plight of the paper mills. There was mismanagement... the activities of the contractors were also doubtful. This syn-

dicate destroyed the paper mills," the Minister said.

He also asserted that the mills were once profit-making and the sickness did not develop overnight. "Had remedial measures been taken immediately, when they had first shown signs of illness, things would not have come to such a pass," he said, hinting out at the previous Congress government.

Patowary added, "The government doesn't lack the will to revive the mills."

"To revive the mills, we will need Rs 1,800 crore, of which Rs 1,200 crore will be required to clear the debts. The proposal to revive the mills is now with the Cabinet Secretariat. Once it is cleared, things would start moving," Patowary added.

Interested agencies are requested to send their Expression of Interest in not more than 2 pages, which includes a brief profile and covering the areas mentioned above along with the declaration letter.

All documents should be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Expression of Interest - Refurbishment of Office" on the top of the envelope addressed to the Supply focal point.

Supporting documents will be verified at a later Request for Proposal [RFP stage].

Last Date: The sealed envelope should be dropped in the bid box kept in UNICEF office or sent via email to indigwahatibids@unicef.org by 14 September 2017 Thursday 14:30 hours.

Model colleges equally funded by Centre, State: Himanta

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The 12 model degree colleges being established in the educationally backward districts of the State have been equally funded by both the Union and the State governments. The State government would bear the complete expenditure related to the salary of the staff of these colleges.

In a written reply to a starred

question by Congress' Ajanta Neog in the State Assembly today, State Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated that as per the proposal in a meeting of the University Grants Commission in 2009, the model degree colleges were approved in November 2013 by the Rashtriya Uchchashiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) project approval board.

"Both the Union and the State governments are bearing

50:50 cost of the 12 colleges in the State," the minister replied.

A sum of Rs 9 crore has been fixed for each of the colleges with State and Centre paying Rs 4 crore each. The additional Rs 1 crore for the girls' hostel would be given by the Union government.

Moreover, an additional sum of Rs 20,45,15,530 for additional infrastructure in five such colleges would be given by the State government.

BISHOP CONDOLES DEATH OF STUDENT

DIBRUGARH, Sept 5: The Catholic Diocese of Dibrughar has expressed grief at the unnatural death of Namrata Sharma, a student of St Mary's School, Naharkatia.

In a press statement, Joseph Aind, the Bishop of Dibrughar conveyed condolences to the bereaved family members and hoped that God comforts them during this hour of grief. He also assured prayers for the release of the soul of the deceased child.

Bishop Aind, the head of the Catholic church in Upper Assam further called upon the district administration and the police to ensure a thorough investigation into the suicide case to unearth the truth. - Staff Correspondent

DU SCHOLARS AWARDED OVERSEAS POST DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, Sept 5: The Science and Engineering Research Board of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, has announced the award of its Overseas Post Doctoral Fellowship for the year 2016-2017.

The candidates were selected on the basis of their academic credentials, merit of the proposed research work and the credentials of the institutions abroad where they are proposing to carry out their post doctoral research.

This year 50 candidates have been awarded this highly competitive and prestigious fellowship. Dr Rumajoti Hazarika of the Centre for Atmospheric Studies and Dr Tridip Ranjan Chetia of the Department of Chemistry of Dibrughar University have been awarded the Overseas Post Doctoral Fellowship. They will be carrying out their research in the University of Edinburgh and the University of Newcastle, UK respectively.

Two students from the Mizoram Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati have also been awarded the Post Doctoral Fellowship this year, a release stated.

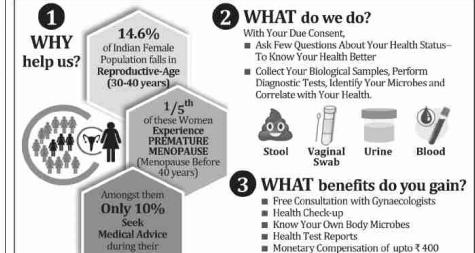
Dear Women, We Care ! If You Do Too, Join Us !

Help Discover How Microbes Present in Human Affects Women Health

CALL FOR WOMEN PARTICIPANTS FOR A STUDY ABOUT HUMAN MICROBIOME AND IMPROVEMENT OF WOMEN HEALTH

The Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST) (An Autonomous Institute of DST, Govt. of India), Guwahati, Assam in collaboration with Guwahati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), Guwahati, Assam and Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIM), Imphal, Manipur is conducting a study to understand the association between human microbiome and health status of reproductive-age (30-40 years) women of North East India and find ways to improve their health for a better quality of life.

To make this study successful, WE NEED YOUR PARTICIPATION !!



4 HOW can we help us ?

With Your Due Consent:

- Ask Few Questions About Your Health Status - To Know Your Health Better
- Collect Your Biological Samples, Perform Diagnostic Tests, Identify Your Microbes and Correlate with Your Health.

5 WHAT benefits do you gain?

■ Free Consultation with Gynaecologists

■ Health Checkup

■ Know Your Own Body Microbes

■ Health Test Reports

■ Monetary Compensation of upto ₹ 400

6 ELIGIBILITY of participation?

■ 30 to 40 years of age

■ Resident of North East India

■ Healthy, Not Pregnant, Experiencing Regular Menses OR Healthy, Experiencing Menopausal Signs & Symptoms

■ Willing to Answer Survey Questions About Your Health

■ (Optional): Have a Twin Sister

Join Hands With Us, for You Are the One We Need !

To participate, give us a call or send an e-mail to the following:

GMCB, Guwahati
Dr. Naharia Deka
Mob: +91-9664064047

JNIM, Imphal, Manipur
Dr. Wansingbam Romi
Mob: +91-9876345789

E-mail: roniwahengbam@gmail.com; roniwahengbam@iasst.gov.in

davp 36117/11/0025/1718

অসম বার্তাক মন্ত্ৰ বিদ্যালয়
ASSAM STATE OPEN SCHOOL
ASSAM HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION COUNCIL
BAMUNIMAIDAM: GUWAHATI-21

NOTIFICATION Dated : 05.09.2017

No EST/ASOS/0604P-1/4662. This is for information of all concerned that the last date for Application for Open Enrollment Course of the Assam State Open School under the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council is extended upto 20th September, 2017, with a motive to provide a scope to the learners who desires to upgrade their educational qualification and percentage of marks through open learning.

Here learners can take admission as per their choice and requirement keeping in view the future need selecting any one of the following options

i. **Admission in all subjects:** Here both the marks-sheets and Certificates will be issued to the successful learners after completion of the course.

ii. **Part Admission:** A learner may take admission in minimum 1 [one] subject and maximum of 4 [four] subjects. Here only marks will be issued.

Further, the Principal cum Co-ordinators are requested to continue the Admission procedure upto 20th September, 2017 and submit the Admission forms with the statements within 25th September, 2017 positively. Fees are to be deposited through RTGS.

Sd/- Secretary
Assam Higher Secondary Education Council
Bamunimaidam: Guwahati-21

unicef

House # 27, Basisthapur Bylane 3, beside
Regional Passport Office, Beltola,
Guwahati: 781028

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

UNICEF Office for Assam is looking for construction firm able to undertake refurbishment work in their Guwahati office.

Minimum Criteria:

□ The agencies should not be blacklisted by any government office (declaration on letter head to be furnished).

□ They should have their own infrastructure and should not be middle man, brokers or commission agents of other companies.

□ The agencies should have at least 5 years of experience in similar trade.

□ Preference to be given to government (PWD registered) contractors.

□ Must have done work for reputed private companies, PSUs, government etc.

□ Minimum annual turnover of the firm should be INR: 50 lakhs for the past 3 years.

□ Preference to be given to Guwahati based agency.

Interested agencies are requested to send their Expression of Interest in not more than 2 pages, which includes a brief profile and covering the areas mentioned above along with the declaration letter.

All documents should be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "Expression of Interest - Refurbishment of Office" on the top of the envelope addressed to the Supply focal point.

Supporting documents will be verified at a later Request for Proposal [RFP stage]

Last Date: The sealed envelope should be dropped in the bid box kept in UNICEF office or sent via email to indigwahatibids@unicef.org by 14 September 2017 Thursday 14:30 hours.



**WEATHER
NORTHEAST**
Forecast for North Eastern States: Moderate rain/rainfall with thunderstorms may occur at many places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Warning : Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur in Assam on September 7, 8 and 9 over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

Temperatures:

	Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	32.4	23.0
Guwahati	33.5	26.1
Silchar	34.0	24.5
Dhubri	32.6	27.3
Jorhat	34.0	22.4
Tinsukia	29.5	16.2
Imphal	31.1	21.4
Itanagar	33.8	23.0
Aizawl	28.8	12.7
Agartala	30.0	20.0
Kohima	24.8	18.4
Pasighat	28.8	24.0
Cherrapunji	22.4	17.4

Arunachal Health Minister Jomde Kena dies at 52



CORRESPONDENT

ITANAGAR, Sept 5: Arunachal Pradesh Health and Family Welfare Minister

Jomde Kena passed away at a Guwahati-based hospital following a prolonged illness.

The 52-year-old lawmaker from West Siang district was undergoing treatment at the hospital where he breathed his last around 9.05 pm last night. He leaves behind his wife and five children.

A three-time MLA from Lekakibali Assembly Constituency since 2004, Kena had held the post of Deputy Speaker of Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly during the Naban Tuki Government. He had previously served as a Parlia-

mentary Secretary under the Dorjee Khandu and Jarbum Gamlin Ministry.

The mortal remains was flown back to Naharlagun helipad today and then to his hometown, Gensi in West Siang, where his last rites will be performed tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the State Government has declared a three-day State mourning from today as a mark of respect to the departed soul. Moreover, the State Government has decided to accord State funeral to the departed soul and all offices, Government undertakings, educational insti-

tutions will remain closed tomorrow on the day of funeral.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has condoled the death of Jomde Kena. The Prime Minister, an official statement expressed his grief on the demise of Kena and extended condolences to his family and supporters.

Governor P B Acharya and Chief Minister Pema Khandu have condoled the death of the Minister. The Chief Minister in his message, said "It was a great loss for the State and his contributions will always be remembered."

Search at former bureaucrat's residence

IMPHAL, Sept 5: The residence of a former top bureaucrat of Manipur, whose name figured in the FIR lodged against a former Chief Minister and five others for alleged financial irregularities, has been searched, a senior police officer said today.

The search was carried out at the residence of the former Project Director of Manipur Development Society (MDS) Y Ningthem in Imphal West district yesterday following a search warrant issued by a Court, the police officer said.

The result of the search was not known, he said.

Ningthem's name had figured in the FIR lodged against former Manipur Chief Minister O Ibohi Singh and five former top bureaucrats of the State, for alleged financial irregularities in the MDS.

Meanwhile, Congress MLAs Lokon Singh at a programme yesterday, had termed the act of registering the FIR against the former Chief Minister and the former bureaucrats as "political vendetta". However, Health Minister L Jayantakumar Singh in the BJP-led coalition Government, denied the charge. — PTI

Teachers of Mizoram University taking out a rally in Aizawl on Tuesday in protest against non-fulfilment of their long-pending demands. — Newsma News

This is for general information of all concerned that some timber lots are lying in various depots under Sonitpur East Division, Biswanath Chariali of and intended to be sold by tender on 21.09.2017 and bids for individual lots shall be received upto 3:00 PM (IST). If the office does not function on the day for any reason beyond control, bids will be received on the next working day.

Interested bidders may obtain details of the sale notice from the office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Sonitpur East Division, Biswanath Chariali during office hours on any working day and collect the prescribed tender form on payment of Rs. 50/- (Rupees fifty) only for each copy.

Sd/- Divisional Forest Officer,
Sonitpur East Division
Biswanath Chariali

Janasanayog/C/229/17

TENDER NOTICE

No. SENRC/TBN/2017/18/05 Dated: 30/08/2017
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Superintending Engineer, PWD, Nagaon Road Circle, Nagaon on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bids for the work detailed in the table from Assam PWD registered contractors. Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

TABLE

SL No.	LAC	Name of work	Approximate value of work (in Lakh)
1.	2	Construction of road from NH-37 Belaja Chembrai Road (Ch.0.00M to 630.00M) Under A.P. (General Areas) for 2015-16	50.00

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD
Nagaon Road Circle, Nagaon

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TABLE

Sl. No.	LAC	Scope of work	Approximate value of work (in Lakh)
1	Jagroad	"Construction of road from mouth of Hattamukh Village to Banjor Sub-Center connected road" (Providing EW, CSE, WBM Gr. III & Interlocking concrete block pavement and HPC-JC) (Ch.693.00M to Ch.1361.00M) under TSP during 2017-18 under Morjoria Rural Road Division, Jagroad LAC (TSP)."	49.99

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD
Nagaon Road Circle, Nagaon

No. SENRC/TBN/2017/18/07 Dated: 30/08/2017
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

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TABLE

Sl. No.	LAC	Name of work	Approximate value of work (in Lakh)
1	1/84	"Construction of temporary pahal, stage, platform & view deck, necessary electrical works, repairing Nagaon Bank Brangani Sams Award Function at Sarong on 12-09-2017."	49.99

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD
Nagaon Road Circle, Nagaon

No. SENRC/TBN/2017/18/07 Dated: 30/08/2017
ARMY RECRUITMENT RALLY FOR LOWER ASSAM AT POLICE GROUND ASHAPURIA, BONGAIGAON FROM 24 OCT 2017 TO 31 OCT 2017

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Sd/- Pradeep Choubey
Director, Army
Recruiting Office, Narengi

Janasanayog/D/719/17

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Janasanayog/D/

CAPSULE**Facebook's IPL bids**

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept 5: In a move to stream the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket matches, Facebook placed a \$600 million bid to secure five years digital distribution rights for the IPL. However, Star India bagged the media rights for both TV and digital broadcast worth Rs 16,347.50 crore with a single consolidated bid worldwide during the auctions on Monday. —IANS

BSNL offers Rs 429 plan

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Government-owned telecom giant Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has launched a voice and data centric plan for Rs 429, which will provide unlimited voice and 1 GB data per day for 90 days for prepaid mobile services. The plan will give free calls (VoSTD) to any network on par with India basis (except Kerala Circle), a company statement said here on Tuesday. —IANS

Radio product for 5G

LONDON, Sept 5: Complementing its global 5G radio offering, telecommunications service provider Ericsson on Tuesday launched a new radio product AIR 3246. AIR 3246 is the company's first 5G Radio for frequency division duplex and supports 4G/LTE. The product will enable operators to bring 5G to subscribers using present mid-band spectrum and boost capacity in their LTE networks. —IANS

AI-powered news feed

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Global tech firm Opera Software on Tuesday rolled out a new version of its mobile browser app Opera Mini for iPhone users in India that has artificial intelligent (AI)-powered news feed. Apart from English, the news feed is available in Gujarati, Hindi and Tamil for the Indian user. The AI-powered news feed features a news feed on its start page which renders news four times faster than the previous version. —IANS

ICICI Lombard gets SEBI's nod for IPO

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company has got capital markets regulator SEBI's go-ahead for its estimated Rs 6,000 crore initial public offer, which could be the first by a general insurer in the country.

Two state-run general insurers — General Insurance Corp of India and New India Assurance Company — also two life insurance firms (SBI Life and HDFC Standard Life) have also lined up IPO plans and are awaiting SEBI's go-ahead for their respective draft papers.

Among these, SEBI is awaiting "clarification" from insurance regulator IRDAI with regard to IPOs by HDFC Standard Life, New India Assurance and General Insurance, as per the latest update available with Sebi on these IPOs. —PTI

Policy soon to promote agri exports, says Prabhu

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Outlining his priority, new Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu today said the ministry will work on promoting agri exports and will ensure global market for farmers.

Said that farmers have all the right to access global markets and get better prices and "for that we will put in place a good policy framework very soon".

Prabhu, who took charge as Commerce and Industry Minister yesterday, said that his ministry will work on developing global supply chain for the agriculture sector.

Addressing the 10th Agricultural Leadership Summit 2017 here, the minister said at the multi-lateral platforms also, there is a need to work on removing trade restrictions with an aim to boost the country's agri shipments.

"We have right to have access to global markets for our farm produce by removing all trade restrictive practices," he said adding all these measures would help increase farmers' income.

The Narendra Modi-led government aims to double farmers' income by 2022. Crop diversification, focus on allied sectors and food processing and tapping global markets are among the steps the government is taking to meet the target.

In 2016-17, export of agri products, such as cereals, processed fruit and vegetables, processed foods, and animal products, was around USD 16.27 billion, according to the data by ApEDA.

Prabhu said the ministry will work on developing global supply chains for the sector. "We have to develop global supply chains and we are going to actu-

ally work on that," he added.

The commerce ministry, Prabhu said, will make sure that "we will achieve this goal to ensure that India's agri sector will also be able to feed hundreds of others".

As a commerce minister, he said "my job is to ensure that we will develop this global supply chain and ensure farmer get better prices". Domestically, the ministry will work with its agri counterparts to develop agriculture parks in India.

"If there are clusters for industry, why should we not think about clusters for different kinds of agriculture," he said.

Further Prabhu informed that soon he would be meeting trade ministers in Manila, the Philippines, and Seoul, South Korea.

Talking about the World Trade Organisation (WTO), he said the ministerial conference

is in Argentina in December.

"Our agenda is going to be very aggressive. This is a development round ... We will like to make sure that Indian farmers get their due by getting better price from global markets. This is very important and this is going to be part of the strategy to increase farmers income in India," the minister said.

Talking about challenges in the agri sector, he said land and water is limited but the population is growing and "we have a challenge to keep feeding".

"New challenge is climate change. It will have a huge negative impact on agriculture ... How to keep feeding more people," he said, adding the changing food habits are also going to be a big challenge and to address these "we have to have technologies and you need to think differently". —PTI

GST return filing deadline extended

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: The government has extended the deadline for filing the GST sales return — GSTR-1 — which was to expire on Tuesday, for another five days till September 10, according to an official announcement.

"GIC (GST Implementation Committee) decided to extend date of GSTR-1, L, GSTR-2 and GSTR-3 for the month of July to 10th, 25th and 30th September 2017, respectively," the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) said in a tweet.

While GSTR-1 is the sales return and GSTR-2 is the purchase return, GSTR-3 is the match of GSTR-1 and GSTR-2. On Monday, many Goods and Services Tax (GST) assesses had complained of being unable to log on to the GSTN portal due to the massive rush to meet the deadline for filing GSTR-1. Later in the afternoon, there were reports of the GSTN portal having crashed owing to heavy load. —IANS

Demonetisation to have high short-term economic costs, Rajan cautioned govt

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: The demonetisation tool used by the Indian government to drive out black money could have long-term benefits but its short-term economic costs would outweigh them, ex-Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan feels.

"I was asked by the government in February 2016 for my views on demonetisation, which I gave orally. Although there might be long-term benefits, I felt the likely short-term economic costs would outweigh them, and felt there were potentially better alternatives to achieve the main goal," he said.

"I do what I wrote in his book 'The Economics of Good Government' published by Harper Business, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers India. The book is to be launched by Rajan in Chennai on Tuesday.

The Indian government undertook the demonetisation drive on November 8, 2016 by the book. —IANS



Tapan Sinha (L), COO, Zing Restaurants launching Rang De Basanti Urban Dhbara, in Guwahati on Tuesday. —UB Photos

New Vespa, Aprilia dealership opened

BUSINESS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: As part of its expansion drive on the back of an overwhelming response to its two-wheeler range, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd today opened a new dealership for its iconic Vespa and sporty Aprilia models in Guwahati.

Various products under the Vespa and Aprilia SR 150 range will be available at the showroom of the new dealership, GM Auto at Ganeshkhora.

The new 1300sq ft showroom,

that has been designed keeping in mind the lifestyle and premium experience that is reflective of the Italian heritage of the brands, promises to offer best customer service, quality experience to customers in Guwahati.

Speaking to this correspondent after the launch event, Ashish Yakhmi, Head of Two-wheeler Business, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd, said the company is on an expansion drive.

Not hold back in the segment,

as soon as we can determine the customer preference we will come up with such models. In the meantime, focus will be to increase fuel efficiency (in current models) and bring in new technologies," Bhargava said.

MSI Chairman R C Bhargava told shareholders in the company's 36th annual general meeting (AGM) here.

The auto major, which has

around 50 per cent of the market share in the Indian passenger vehicle segment, also expects its sales to grow in double digits over the next 3-5 years.

He added that the company will come with electric vehicles after determining customer preference. "Your company will

not hold back in the segment," he said.

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Facial recognition is not an innate ability, but a skill that forms through experience, a study in monkeys has found.

Working with macaques temporarily deprived of seeing faces while growing up, the researchers from the Harvard Medical School in the US have found that regions of

poral sulcus by 200 days of age.

The relative location of these brain regions, or patches, are similar across primate species. That knowledge, combined with the fact that infants seem to preferentially track faces early in development, led to the long-standing belief that facial recognition must be innate, said Margaret Livingstone from Harvard Medical School.

However, both humans and primates also develop areas in the brain that respond to visual stimuli they have not encountered for as long during evolution, including buildings and text. The latter observation puts a serious wrench in the theory that facial recognition is innate.

To better understand the basis for facial recognition, Livingstone, along with postdoctoral fellow Arcario and research assistant Schade, raised two groups of macaques. The first one, the control group, had a normal upbringing, spending time in early infancy with their mothers and then with other juvenile macaques, as well as with human handlers. The other group grew up raised by humans who bottle-fed them, played and cuddled them – all while the humans wore welding masks.

For the first year of their lives, the macaques never saw a face – human or otherwise. At the end of the trial, all macaques were put in social groups with fellow macaques and allowed to see both human and primate faces.

When both groups of macaques were 200 days old, the researchers used functional MRI to look at brain images measuring the presence of facial recognition patches and other specialised areas, such as those responsible for recognising hands, objects, scenes and bodies.

The macaques who had typical upbringing had consistent “recognition” areas in their brains for each of these categories. Those who had grown up never seeing faces had developed areas of the brain associated with all categories except faces. The findings suggest that sensory deprivation has a selective effect on the way the brain wires itself.

The brain seems to become very good at recognising things that an individual sees often, and poor at recognising things that it never or rarely sees.

(Source: PTI)

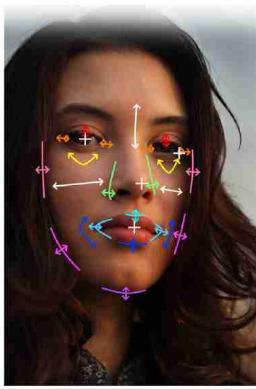
Tracking faces

Facial recognition not an innate ability, finds a study

the brain that are key to facial recognition form only through experience and are absent in primates who do not encounter faces while growing up.

The findings, published in the journal *Nature Neuroscience*, sheds light on a range of neuro-developmental conditions, including those in which people can not distinguish between different faces or autism, marked by aversion to looking at faces.

Macaques – a close evolutionary relative to humans, and a model system for studying human brain development – form clusters of neurons responsible for recognising faces in an area of the brain called the superior tem-



(Source: PTI)

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2017: This year you often juggle different interests. In fact, some of your friends could be surprised by your ability to juggle different interests with ease. You feel comfortable in multiple views, as you look past the obvious and see the same bottom-line issue in both perspectives. If you are single, you often could feel as if you are in perpetual arguments and controversies with whomever you are dating. Come fall 2017, you will learn how to take a dispassionate or point out similarities. Your ability to communicate clearly, if you are allergic, passes increase. You often work through problems by kissing and making up. Pisces adds many wild ideas to your already imaginative choices.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19) As a result, you might want to update your plans since you don't feel up to snuff. News coming from a distance could be sobering; however, it might not be as negative as you might think. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) You might have a premonition about a friend. Rather than overthink the issue, you might want to make a phone call and check in with that person. A partner suddenly could want to have a stronger sense of control. Think before you speak. Tonight: Where the action is.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) A partner could be touchy. You want to find out what is happening with this person. You could have difficulty getting him or her to open up. Have a strong conversation about your feelings and boundaries. Exercise caution with your words. Tonight: A bit of appearance.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) You might want to kick back and listen to your intuition. You could be heading in a new direction after some reflection. Adjust to a change of plan or a new attitude from someone. Routine could be broken. A small house adjustment could make all the difference. Tonight: Face yourself.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) You might want to mellow out some before responding to a situation. There are many ways. It could be a good idea to find a new way to win a partner over. The other party might get more controlling for a while, attempting to get a response. Eventually the behavior will pass. Tonight: Go along with a dear friend's or loved one's request.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) You might want to understand what is happening with others. Place yourself, knowing when to stop pressuring yourself to squeeze one more item or errand in. Your creativity bubbles up when dealing with a difficult scenario. A family member is restrictive or distant in some ways. Tonight: Take some time to say no.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) *** Deter if need be. Have you taken on too much work or a project that you need more help with? You could be for changing your routine, especially on the front foot. You don't need to do a major upheaval. You might take some time to convey an element of coldness. Tonight: Know when to call it a night.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You feel you might not know the whole story, which is quite sketchy. Consider to put your best foot forward. Use caution around a changeable money master. You easily could be on the wrong side of an issue or debate. Tonight: Head home early.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You feel you might not know the whole story, which is quite sketchy. Consider to put your best foot forward. Use caution around a changeable money master. You easily could be on the wrong side of an issue or debate. Tonight: Head home early.

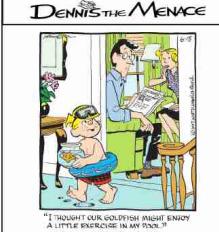
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You have come to a crossroads of moving forward before a situation becomes too hot of a topic. You have gone over an issue in your mind, only to come up with the same answer. You don't want to hear other opinions. You might be more negative than you realize. Tonight: Out and about.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You sense of direction might be off when dealing with a money master, but otherwise you could be on target. Don't allow a close associate or loved one to get the best of you. Understand what your choices are. Opt for the most positive path. Tonight: Be willing to take a risk if you are asked to do so.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) *** You might want to continue down a certain path. However, it might not be the right path for you. You could be confused. Take your time and discuss things with several friends who are likely to add different views. Don't allow yourself to feel flushed. Tonight: All smiles, feeling rejuvenated with friends.

*** For the day

Our whole economy is based on planned obsolescence.
— BROOKS STEVENS



By Lee Falk



BLONDIE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

Entertainment		Movies	
16:30	Khabbaaz	14:00	Grey's Anatomy
17:30	Yeh Rishita Kya Kohlata Hai	14:00	Top 20 Funniest
18:00	Yeh Rishita Kya Kohlata Hai	14:00	The Big Bang Theory
18:30	Mei Durga	14:00	
19:00	Kasam	14:00	
19:30	Fear Factor	14:00	
20:00	Shakti	14:00	
20:30	Naam Saanji Pyaji	14:00	
21:00	Naam Saanji Pyaji	14:00	
21:30	Yeh Rishita Kya Kohlata Hai	14:00	
22:00	Abhijit Chakravorty	14:00	
22:30	Tu Soosai Main Saanji Pyaji	14:00	
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BRICS leaders want to deepen political, security cooperation: Xi

XIAMEN, Sept 5: BRICS leaders believe that it is in the common interest of the member countries to deepen political and security cooperation with the world undergoing "profound and complex" changes, Chinese President Xi Jinping said today.

Leaders attending the ninth BRICS Summit here have reached extensive consensus on the international situation, global governance and cooperation among the five emerging economies, Xi Jinping

told the media at the end of the Summit.

The summit adopted the BRICS Leaders Xiamen Declaration which reaffirmed the BRICS spirit of openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, and mapped out a new blueprint for strengthening the BRICS partnership and deepening practical cooperation in various areas, Xi said.

"We, BRICS leaders believe that the world today is undergoing profound and complex changes. While the world economic outlook is im-

proving, all sorts of global challenges continue to emerge," he said.

As nations with major influence, BRICS countries must step up communication and coordination on important issues and work for more just and equitable order, he said.

"We, the BRICS leaders believe that it is in our common interest to deepen political and security cooperation and enhance mutual political trust," the Chinese President said. BRICS must play a constrictive role and uphold basic norms

governing international relations and international fairness and justice, he added.

"This is also what international community expects us to do. This year we had in-depth exchanges of views and reached important consensus on issues such as the international situation, global governance, international hot spots and national security and development," he said.

The meeting of the high representatives on security issues and

the first Foreign Ministers' meeting this year have injected fresh inputs for closer political ties, Xi said. The BRICS countries must work together to address global challenges and promote open inclusive and balanced economic globalization that is beneficial to all, speed up global economic governance reform and increase the representation and voice of emerging economies and create an enabling external environment for the development of all countries, he said.

Majority in UK have no religion: Survey

LONDON, Sept 5: Britain is becoming an increasingly faithless society, according to a new survey that found 53 percent of people now describing themselves as having no religion. This proportion is the highest ever, up from 48 percent in 2015 and 31 percent in 1983 when the British Social Attitudes survey was begun by the independent National Centre for Social Research.

The trend is evident across all age groups but is particularly marked among young people, with 71 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds surveyed in 2016 saying they had no religion, up from 62 per cent the previous year, said the survey out Monday.

The majority of older people still have some faith – only four in ten of those aged 65 to 74 describe themselves as having no religion, and only 27 percent of those aged 75 and over.

"This increase follows the long-term trend of more and more of us not being religious," said Roger Harding, head of Public Attitudes at the research centre. "The differences by age are stark and with so many younger people not having a religion it is hard to see this change abating any time soon. The falls in those belonging to the Church of England are the most notable, but these figures should cause all religious leaders to pause for thought."

Affiliation to the Church of England has declined markedly in recent years, with just 15 percent of Britons now considering themselves members – half the proportion of 2000. However, the proportion of Catholics has remained relatively stable, at around one in ten.

Six per cent of Britons said they follow a non-Christian faith, down from eight per cent in the previous year but up from two per cent in 1983. The survey did not go into more detail. – AFP

80 Indian fishermen released by Lankan Navy

COLOMBO, Sept 5: Sri Lanka has released 80 Indian fishermen who were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly fishing illegally in the island nation's territorial waters, according to a media report.

Four of them were rescued by the Sri Lankan Navy when they were drowning in northern seas on August 31, while the others have been arrested for trespassing into the Sri Lankan territorial waters and engaging in illegal fishing activities, *The Colombo Page* reported.

The 76 Indian fishermen were apprehended on separate occasions by the Sri Lankan Navy and Coast Guard for engaging in the illegal fishing method of bottom trawling in the Sri Lankan territorial waters.

The repatriated Indian fishermen were handed over to the Indian Coast Guard Ship, *Sarang*, at the International Maritime Boundary Line north of Kanyakumari, the report said.

Fishermen from both countries are arrested frequently by the maritime security agencies of both countries for illegal fishing and often stray into illegal waters due to absence of any proper technology to confirm the coastline border between Pakistan and India near Sui Creek in the Arabian Sea. – PTI

India, Egypt to strengthen ties

XIAMEN, Sept 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today met Egyptian President Fattah el-Sisi and held talks on ways to strengthen bilateral ties. Modi, who had come to this port city of China on September 3 to attend the 9th BRICS Summit, held two bilateral meetings on the last day of his China visit. After meeting Sisi, Modi held talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"Delighted to meet President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. We held talks on further strengthening our historical ties with Egypt," Modi tweeted after the meeting.

Earlier, during his address at the BRICS Emerging Markets and Developing Countries Dialogue, which was attended by Egypt, Mexico, Guinea, Thailand and Tajikistan on China's invitation as part of 'BRICS Plus' outreach exercise, Modi described these countries as "close and valued" partners of India. – PTI

40 European nations hit by egg contamination

COPENHAGEN, Sept 5: A European Union official said 40 countries have now been affected by a Europe-wide contaminated egg scandal, including 24 EU members and 16 non-members. Vytenis Andriukaitis, the official in charge of Health and Food Safety for the European Commission, said today in Estonia that only four countries in the 28-nation EU have not had eggs tainted by the pesticide. Fipronil, considered a health hazard if consumed in large quantities. The unaffected EU nations are Lithuania, Portugal, Cyprus and Croatia. – AFP



South Korean naval ships taking part in a military drill in the waters of the East Sea on Tuesday. – UNI

More than 123,000 Rohingya refugees have fled Myanmar: UNHCR

BANGKOK, Sept 5: The number of Rohingya refugees that have fled to Bangladesh to escape violence in Myanmar is higher than previously thought at 123,000, the UN refugee agency said today. That higher number, revised up from 87,000 estimated yesterday, was the result of aid workers conducting new, more accurate counts at both established and makeshift refugee camps, said UNHCR spokeswoman Vivian Tan. It did not mean all 36,000 new refugees counted had entered in the last 24 hours. Still, "the numbers are very worrying," Tan said. "They are going up very quickly."

Thousands are streaming daily across the swampy border, having walked for days through forests and rice paddies to reach safety in Bangla-

dens. Others were attempting to cross the river that separates the two countries, and at least several dozen have drowned in the attempt.

Older established refugee camps that have been housing the Rohingya Muslims since the 1990s have already reached capacity. Tens of thousands of new arrivals had nowhere to go, and were sheltering in makeshift camps, in

village alleys, on open roads or in fields.

The latest influx of the Rohingya began on August 25, when Rohingya insurgents attacked Myanmar police posts, prompting security forces to launch "clearance operations" in response. Both Myanmar security officials and Rohingya insurgents accuse each other of committing atrocities in the last week. – AP

North Korea begging for war: US envoy Haley

WASHINGTON, Sept 5: North Korea is "begging for war" with abusive use of missiles and nuclear threats, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley has said, pushing for the "strongest possible" sanctions against Pyongyang following its sixth and most powerful nuclear test.

On Sunday, North Korea said it detonated a hydrogen bomb designed for a long-range missile and called it a "perfect success," inviting worldwide condemnation and promises of tougher US sanctions.

Haley said North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un's action cannot be seen as defensive and he wants to be acknowledged as a nuclear power. "But being a nuclear power is not about using those terrible weapons to threaten others."

"Nuclear powers understand their responsibilities. Kim Jong-Un shows no such understanding," Haley told members of the UN Security Council during a meeting on North Korea. The Indian-origin US Ambassador to the UN said his abusive use of missiles, and his nuclear threats show that he is "begging for war."

"War is never something the US wants. We don't want it now. But our country's patience is not unlimited. We will defend our allies and our territory," she said.

The idea that some have suggested of a so-called freeze-for-freeze is insulting, she said.

"When a rogue regime has a nuclear weapon and an ICBM (Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile) pointed at you, you do not take steps to lower your guard. No one would do that. We certainly won't," she said, adding time has come to exhaust all diplomatic means to end this crisis.

"Only the strongest sanctions will enable us to resolve this problem through diplomacy. We have kicked the can down the road long enough. There is no more road left," she said.

Haley and her counterparts

from Japan, France, the UK and the South Korea requested the emergency meeting in response to North Korea's latest nuclear test. "To the members of the Security Council, I must say: enough is enough," she said.

British Ambassador to the UN Matthew Rycroft said North Korea has created a deeply dangerous and unstable situation. "The UK will work with our partners on this Council and beyond to tackle the challenge," he said. Dialogue he said, will always be the "end goal."

"But returning to dialogue without a serious sign of intent from Pyongyang would be a set-up to failure. North Korea must change course to allow a return to dialogue. Were they to do so, the opportunity exists to end this crisis. Until that moment, we must stay the course on sanctions, and continue, as the Secretary-General has called for, to present a united front," Rycroft said. – PTI

Human ancestors may have existed in Europe, Africa simultaneously

LONDON, Sept 5: Scientists have discovered human-like footprints in the Greek island, Crete, dating back to 5.7 million years, which suggests that our ancestors may have existed in Europe at the same time as they evolved in Africa.

Ever since the discovery of fossils of Australopithecus in South and East Africa during the middle years of the 20th century, the origin of the human lineage has been thought to lie in Africa.

More recent fossil discoveries in the same region, such as the 3.7-million-year-old Laetoli footprints from Tanzania which show human-like feet and upright locomotion, have cemented the idea that humans originated in Africa and remained isolated there for several million years before.

The discovery of the 5.7-million-year-old human-like footprints by researchers at the Uppsala University in Sweden overthrows this simple picture and suggests a complex reality.

Human feet have a very distinct shape, different from all other land animals. The combination of a long sole, five

short forward-pointing toes without claws, and a haltus ("big toe") that is larger than the other toes, is unique. The feet of our closest relatives, the great apes, look more like a human hand with a thumb-like halux that sticks out to the side.

The Laetoli footprints, thought to have been made by Australopithecus, are quite similar to those of modern humans except that the heel is narrower and the sole lacks a proper arch.

By contrast, the 4.4-million-year-old *Ardipithecus ramidus* from Ethiopia, the oldest hominin known from reasonably complete fossils, has an ape-like foot.

The researchers who described *Ardipithecus* argued that it is a direct ancestor of later hominins, implying that a human-

like foot had not yet evolved at that time. The newly found footprints have an unmistakably human-like form. This is especially true of the toes.

The big toe is similar to our own in shape, size and position; it is also associated with a distinct "ball" on the sole, which is never present in apes. The sole of the foot is proportionately shorter than in the Laetoli prints, but it has the same general form. The shape of the Trachilos prints indicates unambiguously that they belong to an early hominin, somewhat more primitive than the Laetoli trackmaker. They were made on a sandy seashore, or a small river delta, whereas the Laetoli tracks were made in volcanic ash.

"What makes this controversial is the age and location of the prints," said Per Ahlberg at Uppsala University in Sweden.

At approximately 5.7 million years, they are younger than the oldest known fossil hominin, *Australopithecus* from Kenya, but more than a million years older than *Ardipithecus ramidus* with its ape-like feet. – PTI

Sushma arrives in Russia on three-day visit

MOSCOW, Sept 5: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today arrived in the Russian port city of Vladivostok on a three-day visit to attend the third Eastern Economic Forum which will deliberate on pressing issues relating to global trade. She will also hold bilateral talks with her Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, during which various issues relating to trade, investment and defence cooperation are likely to figure.

Swaraj is visiting Russia at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District Yury Trutnev.

"The External Affairs Minister's visit reflects the importance attached by India to emerging opportunities in the Russian Far East, and to its strategic partnership with Russia," the external affairs ministry had said last week.



The Eastern Economic Forum is considered the biggest international communication platform for cooperation between business leaders and senior government representatives from Russia, the Pacific Region and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Delegates from at least 24 countries including the US, Japan, China, Australia, Canada, Britain and Germany are attending the gathering, as per Russian media reports.

Swaraj's trip to Russia follows the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the guest of honour at the St Petersburg International Economic Forum in June. Yesterday, Modi had talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in the Chinese city of Xiamen and discussed ways for boosting bilateral trade and investment. They also discussed the security situation in Afghanistan. – PTI



Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen announcing the appointment of Tainan city mayor William Lai (R) as Prime Minister during a news conference in Taipei on Tuesday. – UNI

Del Potro sets up Federer US Open showdown

NEW YORK, Sept 5: Juan Martin del Potro shrugged off sickness to save two match points and defeat Dominic Thiem in a five-set US Open epic on Monday to book a quarterfinal showdown with four-time champion Roger Federer.

Argentina's 24th seed Del Potro claimed a heroic 1-6, 6-2, 7-6 (71), 6-4 victory over the sixth-seeded Austrian in a rocking Grandstand court, describing it as night he would remember forever.

Del Potro famously defeated Federer in the 2009 final for his only career Grand Slam title before his career was almost torpedoed by a succession of wrist surgeries.

Federer, the third seed, eased into the last-eight with a 6-4, 6-2, 7-5 win over Philipp Kohlschreiber, taking his record over the German veteran to 12-0.

Elsewhere, top seed Rafael Nadal claimed his fifth win at the US Open and will meet Russian teenager Andrey Rublev.

In the women's event, world number one Karolina Pliskova set up a quarterfinal date against America's CoCo Vandeweghe.

Estonia's world number 418 Kaja Kanepi also reached the quarterfinals just the second qualifier to make the last eight.

But the day belonged to Del Potro, who celebrated his win, which came off a Thiem double fault, by stretching out his arms, head facing the night sky, as his legion of fans, many dressed in the light blue colours of Argentina's famous football and Pumas rugby teams, celebrated loudly.

"On my God," said Del Potro, who had been 2-5 down in the fourth set.



Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina celebrates after defeating Dominic Thiem of Austria in their fourth round match of the US Open.

"I was sick the last two days. I came here trying to play the best I can and then when I see this crowd cheering for me, I was trying to play better every

game. I will always remember this."

Federer has a 15-5 advantage over Del Potro but they have split their last six meetings.

The 36-year-old Swiss maestro didn't face a break point against Kohlschreiber with his biggest challenge having to take a medical time-out off court at

the end of the second set.

World number one and 2010 and 2013 champion Nadal, who could meet Federer for the first time in New York in the semifinals, crushed Ukraine's Alexander Dolgopolov 6-2, 6-4, 6-1.

The 31-year-old Spaniard goes on to face Russian 19-year-old Rublev, who stunned Belgian ninth seed David Goffin 7-5, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 to become the youngest quarterfinalist since Andy Roddick in 2001.

Rublev, ranked 53, has won 13 of his last 17 matches after breaking the top 100 for the first time in June.

"Rafa is a real champion. I will try to do my best – I have nothing to lose," said Rublev.

Meanwhile, the 32-year-old Kanepi, a former world number 15 whose career was almost ended by illness and a crippling injury, downed Russia's Daria Kasatkina 6-4, 6-4.

She will next face Madison Keys of the United States, who put out fourth seed Elina Svitolina 7-6 (7/2), 1-6, 6-4, ending the Ukrainian's hopes of taking the world number one spot.

It will be Kanepi's sixth quarterfinal at the majors and second in New York after also reaching the last eight in 2010.

Top seed Pliskova, the runner-up in 2016, needed just 46 minutes to sweep past American Jennifer Brady 6-1, 6-0 and make her third Slam quarterfinal of the year.

She will next face American 20th seed CoCo Vandeweghe, who made the last eight for the first time by beating Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic 6-4, 7-6 (7/2). - AFP

Bopanna's US Open ends with defeat in mixed doubles

NEW YORK, Sept 5: Rohan Bopanna's campaign at the last Grand Slam of the season ended with a defeat in the mixed doubles along with Canadian partner Gabriela Dabrowski while India's juniors also fizzled out in the singles in the US Open.

Seventh seeded Bopanna and Dabrowski, the French Open winners, lost 6-4, 3-6, 8-10 to third seeded team of Hao-Ching Chan and Michael Venus. - PTI

Football legends to enthrall fans in exhibition match

NAVI MUMBAI, Sept 5: On the occasion to mark 30 days to the Under-17 FIFA World Cup, world football legends are set to enthrall fans when they play an exhibition match against a mixed gender former Indian stars here tomorrow.

The FIFA legends, including World Cup winner Frenchman Marcel Desailly, Colombian great Carlos Valderrama, Spain's Fernando Morentes, Mexican Jorge Campos and Nigerian Emmanuel Amuneke, will roll back the years and turn out for a short match at the DY Patil Stadium.

It is learnt that the FIFA Legends vs Indian Legends match will be of 20 minutes duration with two halves of 10 minutes each.

The Indian side will have the likes of former Indian men's team captain Renedy Singh and legendary women footballer Bembem Devi. The current Indian women's team captain Balbir Devi will also be part of the mixed gender team.

Indian football legend Bhairung Bhutia was to be part of the team but he will not be able to take part in the exhibition match tomorrow due to a back problem. - PTI

India set for total domination on Sri Lanka tour

COLOMBO, Sept 5: India would aim to cap off their successful Sri Lanka tour with a win and clinch a one-off T20 International here tomorrow.

Any other result than India's resounding win looks highly unlikely tomorrow, considering the visitors' rampant run in the preceding Test and ODI series, where they whitewashed the hosts 3-0 and 3-0 respectively.

The game provides India an opportunity to fine-tune team combination ahead of the upcoming T20 home series against Australia and New Zealand. In total, India would play nine T20Is in Sri Lanka and all contests will be a three-match series. India are on an experimentation drive ahead of the 2019 50-over World Cup and one name they could have tried here is Rishabh Pant who was not named in the squad.

It is all the more surprising since the selectors had an opportunity to send him for this stand-alone game when Shikhar Dhawan returned home to attend to his ailing mother this past weekend, leaving Ajinkya Rahane to open the innings in the fifth ODI.

Hardik Pandya was rested for that fifth match on Sunday, and he too is expected to return to the playing eleven.

Pandya hadn't featured in India's last T20I against the West Indies, with Kohli

opting for five full-time bowlers back in July. His return to the playing eleven will add another body combination similar to the ODIs, with four full-time options to choose from.

Jasprit Bumrah is a shoe-in choice, whilst it remains to be seen if Shardul Thakur will get another go after proving impressive in the last match at Bhuvneshwar Kumar's expense.

Kohli does like to field leg-spinners in the shortest format, and he played both Chahal and Amit Mishra against England at both Nagpur and Bengaluru. He is expected to repeat this trick with Chahal and Natarajan this time around.

Even so, there were no sure hints coming forth as the Indian team enjoyed an additional off day of the game and did not practice.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka have made a few changes to their original T20 squad after suffering the 50-50 whitewash. Leg spinner Jeffrey Vandersay and seam-bowling allrounder Dasun Shanaka are prominent additions. - PTI

MATCH STARTS AT 7PM

It is turnarounds that keep crowds coming for more

We are already into the business end of the last Grand Slam of the year and the excitement has gradually mounted in the US Open Championships. The much-awaited Nadal-Federer clash of

Samira Mirza

is still on the cards but while the Spaniard clay-court genius has a young, talented Rublev from Russia as his quarterfinal opponent, Roger has to

overcome an even more dangerous foe in the form of Del Potro of Argentina.

Juan Martin del Potro scored

an epic win over Dominic Thiem of Austria and Federer seems ready to take on Roger. Federer now appears to be striking peak form after some struggle in the first couple of rounds. The Argentine was unfeared before the start of his match against Thiem and Federer's back has given him a few problems which was perhaps the reason why the Swede decided to have come into this Grand Slam a shade under-prepared.

How well they cope with their physical problems could well determine the outcome of their World Cup here.

The World No. 20 Indian, playing with white pieces in this round, was wary of his opponent's attacking prowess and started off with careful calculated moves. - PTI

Harikrishna wins 2nd game

TBILISI (Georgia), Sept 5: Indian Grand Master Penta Patala Harikrishna recovered quickly from the loss in the opening game against GM Yuri Gonzalez Vidal to win the second game and take the first round contest into the tie-breaker at the FIDE World Cup here.

The World No. 20 Indian, playing with white pieces in this round, was wary of his opponent's attacking prowess and started off with careful calculated moves. - PTI

Even the slow nature of the Arthur Ashe stadium this year seems tailor-made for Nadal's game and the high bounces that it provided for him on a perfect, clear Monday morning made it an one-sided

Svitolina with defeat staring in her face at 2-4 down in the decider. The Czech duo of Pliskova and the rapidly improving Petra Kvitova look likely to challenge the American girls in their bid for the coveted trophy.

With all the knowledge and experience that fans and experts acquire over the years, it is still

Saina eyes Superseries Final qualification



BENGALURU, Sept 5: London Olympics bronze medalist Saina Nehwal wants to qualify for the Dubai World Superseries Finals after resuming her partnership with long-time mentor and chief coach Pallela Gopichand.

Three years after parting ways, Saina yesterday announced her reunion with Gopichand and said she is looking forward to training at his academy beginning on Thursday.

"I feel we spoke things went very smoothly and there was no discussion of past. For now, we have buried our past differences. We are now only looking forward to the training," Saina, who won a bronze at World Championship, told PTI.

"I would like to start training first, the fire to win is there and I would definitely try my best. I'm keen to qualify for year-end Dubai Superseries Finals."

After splitting with Gopichand following a loss at the Copenhagen

gen World Championship in 2014, Saina had said that her off-court planning was not fructifying as she was losing to top players such as China's Li Xuerui.

Saina said she has started playing in Hyderabad from yesterday, but because she has some pain in her leg, she will start full training from September 7.

"I am playing in Hyderabad, but because I have some pain in my leg, I will start full training from September 7," said

Saina, who is suffering from a slight thigh strain.

Asked if she was feeling homesick while training in Bengaluru with Vimai Kumar, Saina said,

"It is not like that, but things will be much easier in Hyderabad for me," Saina credited coach Vimai

for being there when she needed him the most.

"Definitely, his hardware has paid off in the last three years that Vimai sir has worked on me," she said. - PTI

HI invites applications for Oltmans' replacement

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Hockey India (HI) today invited applications for the vacant post of national men's team's chief coach in its website.

According to the advertisement, the chief coach will be given a three-year term till December 31, 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games cycle, subject to

four months after removing Dutchman Roelant Oltmans unceremoniously from the helm of affairs.

Taking a cue from the BCCI, the HI advertised for the position for the first time in its

website.

According to the advertisement, the chief coach will be given a three-year term till December 31, 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games cycle, subject to

four months after removing Dutchman Roelant Oltmans unceremoniously from the helm of affairs.

The selected chief coach will report to HI High Performance Director David John and CEO

In addition, the chief coach will need to oversee the development and preparations of the national junior men's team during the term.

The chief coach will also be required to submit regular reports to the management on the status of the national teams and the core probables programme. - PTI

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Warner, Handscomb, Smith give Australia momentum in second Test

CHITTAGONG, Sept 5: An unbeaten century stand between David Warner and Peter Handscomb led Australia's strong reply against Bangladesh on day two of the second and final Test in Chittagong on Tuesday.

The visitors were 225-2 at stumps in their first innings,

trailing by 80 runs after Bangladesh were bowled out for 305.

Warner was hitting on 88 with Handscomb on 69 at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium.

Skipper Steve Smith hit a gritty 58 off 94 balls before being bowled by left-arm spinner Taijul Islam as the visitors

slipped to 98-2.

The left-handed Warner and Handscomb then put together 127 runs to thwart the Bangladeshi bowlers, which failed to take a wicket in the final session of play.

Handscomb, who recorded his fourth Test fifty in just his 10th

game, took regular drinks breaks as he battled exhaustion and dehydration in the final half-hour.

The swashbuckling Warner played a sedate innings, having hit just four boundaries during his 170-ball stay at the crease so far.

Warner rode his luck with two reprieves. He was dropped at short-leg on 52 and then Mushtaqur Rahim missed a stump when he was on 73, with Taijul and Mehedi Hasan being the unlucky bowlers.

Warner's opening partner Matt Renshaw departed early, dismissed by fast bowler Mushtaqur Rahman for four before the lunch break.

The left-hander tried to tickle a sliding delivery down the leg side but wicketkeeper Rahim took a stunning catch.

Warner was then involved in a 93-run second-wicket part-

nership with Smith as the pair steered the innings.

Smith, who registered his 21st Test half-century, was done in by an arm ball from Taijul that sneaked through the bat-pad gap to hit the middle stump.

Warner was then involved in a 93-run second-wicket part-

Australia 1st innings: M Renshaw c Rahim b Mustafizur 4; D Warner not out 88, S Smith b Taijul 58, P Handscomb not out 69. Extras: (b-1, lb-6). Total: (2 wkt), 305. 64 overs, 225. Fall of wickets: 1-90, 2-130, 3-140, 4-190, 5-203, 6-230, 7-253, 8-270. Mustafizur 10-0, 45-1, Shakib 15-0-52-0, Taijul 15-1, 50-1, Nasir 1-0-4-0, Monirul 2-0-6, Sabir 10-0-9-0. - AFP

Bangladesh 1st innings: 305

Shahil bags 13th position in Brazil meet

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: Shahil Dey who represented India in the U-10 category in World Cadet Chess Championship held at Brazil from August 22 got the 13th position in final ranking with 6 wins and 2 draws. He started the tournament against the 16th seeded player based on his international rating. Shahil got 7 points out of 11 rounds. Shahil lost his final round match on the final day and missed the 3rd position. Till the 8th round he was occupying the 3rd place with four other players from USA, Russia and Uzbekistan.

Shahil will next represent Assam in the National U-11 Chess Tournament to be held at Maharashtra from November 22 to 30.

Shotokan karate meet ends

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The first edition of the All Assam Shotokan Karate Championship, organised by the Shotokan Karate Do Pro-Shotokan of Assam, ended on Saturday last evening at the Bhogeswar Phulkeni Indoor Stadium here.

Talukder Majumdar, Advik Majumdar, Kasturi Narzary (Sub Junior) and Dhananjan Boro (Cadet) of Guwahati won two gold medals each in their age categories in both Kata and Kumite events.

Other gold medal winners are Sub Junior (Boys): Bhagav Ranjan Das, Abhay Mohan Pratyang Bhandawaj, Kondin Sama, Ayushman Pachani, Asoknath Deba, Deepanjan Gogoi, Nisha Paul, Disha Mehta, Mugdha Baruah, Jyoti Deka, Jonali Deka, Rima Baruah, Chirantha Baruah, Monita Ishita Keshay, Ankanta Konwar, (Cadet) Tithikarai Basithya, Dibyanshu Chakraborti, Ashish Talukdar, Arunabhat Lohia, Masuma Begum, Emon Gogoi, (Junior): Tridipan Deka, Hemangshu Sahari, Kaushik Kr Gogoi, Janaki Devi, Chiranjit Deka, (Senior) Akashdeep Das, Deepoyoti Das, Deepoyoti Deka, Dipankar Baruah, Nihaul Rahaman, Upaljyoti Dutta, Rengrajit P Klingiyan, Jyotishmitra Gogoi.

Badminton tourney

GUWAHATI, Sept 5: The Smasher's Club will organise a State level prize-money badminton tournament at the Kanakata Indoor Stadium in the RG Barua Sports Complex here on September 9 and 10.

India beat Macau 2-0 in Asian Qualifier

MACAU, Sept 5: Substitute striker Balwant Singh's opportunistic second half double strike helped India beat Macau 2-0 in a group league encounter of the Asian Cup qualifying round, thus ending their unbeaten run in international matches to 11.

The former Mohun Bagan goal poacher found the target in the 57th and 82nd minutes respectively as the 'Blue Tigers' won their third successive match in the qualifying tournament, maintaining their pole position in the group with nine points.

With nine points from three games, India are now firmly in contention to seal a berth for the 2019 edition of the tournament.

Ranked 96th in the FIFA list, India were overwhelming favourites against minnows Macau – currently ranked 183rd.

However, the home team managed to defend their citadel in the first half, which that ended goalless. It was Balwant, who replaced Eugenesen Lyngdoh post change of ends, broke the deadlock. – PTI



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