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## NEWS CAPSULE

### Sukhoi black box

TEZPUR, May 28: The black box of the Sukhoi-30 MKI that went missing with two pilots on board has been recovered from a dense forest in Arunachal Pradesh, two days after wreckage of the fighter jet was sighted. — PTI

### Army Chief visit

NEW DELHI, May 28: Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat today left for Myanmar on a four-day visit during which he will hold talks with top military leaders there to further ramp up defence and security ties between the two countries. — PTI

### CBSE results

GUWAHATI, May 28: The Guwahati Region commissionerate, including Silchar has a pass percentage of 64.3 in the CBSE Class XII examination results declared today. The pass percentage among girls is 67.1, while that among boys is 61.7. — Staff Report

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Former UGC chairman Prof Ved Prakash addressing the first convocation of Cotton College State University, in Guwahati on Sunday. — UB Photos (Report on Page 7)

## Army facing dirty war in Kashmir: Gen Rawat

NEW DELHI, May 28: The Indian Army is facing a "dirty war" in Jammu and Kashmir which has to be fought through "innovative" ways, Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat has said, stoutly defending the use of a Kashmiri as a "human shield" by a young officer.

In an exclusive interaction with PTI, Rawat said the main objective of awarding Major Leetul Gogoi, when a Court of Inquiry was finalising its probe into the incident, was to boost the morale of young officers of the force who are operating in a very difficult environment in the militancy-infested state. "This is a proxy war and

the media on the issue.

The Army Chief's Commendation medal to Gogoi, who had tied a man to an army jeep and used him as a human shield from stone throwers last month was criticised by human rights activists, Kashmiri groups and by a few retired army generals. A video of the incident had triggered a row with many condemning it.

Gogoi was awarded for his sustained efforts in counter-insurgency operations.

"People are throwing stones at us, people are throwing petrol bombs at us. If my men ask me what we do, should I

(See page 7)

### Chief hails Major Gogoi innovation on 'human shield'

where innovation comes in. You fight a dirty war with innovations," Rawat said, in what were the General's most comprehensive comments yet to

### ISRO getting ready to launch monster rocket

NEW DELHI, May 28: An indigenous rocket as heavy as 200 full-grown Asian elephants could well be the one taking "Indians into space from Indian soil" as the country inches closer to joining the big boy's space club.

Stand tall on the rocket port at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh is the country's latest rocket called the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark III (GSLV Mk-III), the heaviest rocket ever made by India that is capable of carrying the heaviest satellites till now.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) enters into a bold new world muscling its way to make its mark in the world's heavyweight multi-billion dollar launch market. "We are pushing ourselves to the limits to ensure that this new fully-reliant Indian rocket succeeds in its maiden launch," ISRO chairman AS Kiran Kumar said.

It is the maiden experimental launch of GSLV-Mk III earlier named Launch Vehicle Mark-3, but if all goes on well in a decade or after a slew of at least half a dozen successful launches, this rocket could be India's vehicle of choice to launch "Indians into space, from Indian soil using Indian rockets".

This heavy lift rocket is capable of placing up to 8 tons of payload in a low Earth orbit, enough to carry India's crew module. ISRO has already prepared plans of hosting a 2-3 member human crew into Indian rockets".

(See page 7)

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## Low conviction rate in State matter of concern: DGP

### R DUTTA CHOWDHURY

GUWAHATI, May 28: With militancy on the wane, the low conviction rate in the cases being investigated, prevention of crime, use of social media by insurgents and other antisocial elements, etc., have become major challenges before the Assam Police. Meanwhile, the State Gov-

ernment has tried to address the problem of shortage of manpower in the force and the recruitment process at all levels has

Talking to *The Assam Tribune*, the Director General of Assam Police, Mukesh Sahay admitted that the low rate of conviction in the cases investigated by the Assam Police is a major cause of concern and "we

have taken it up as a major challenge for the days to come." He admitted that the conviction rate at present is less than 10 per cent, which is much lower than the national average and it has become an area of concern. He said that shortage of manpower is one of the reasons for the present scenario, but there are other issues which need to be addressed to improve the scenario.

The DGP pointed out that in investigating agencies like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the investigating officers have discussions with the legal experts in every step of the investigation and the charge-sheets are also cleared by legal officers before they are submitted in the court. Efforts are on to arrange for such a mechanism in the district level so that (See page 7)

### TV, AC, fridge to cost more

## Daily use items to be cheaper under GST

NEW DELHI, May 28: Aerated drinks and consumer durables like TV, AC, washing machines and refrigerators will cost more, while smartphones, small cars and daily use items will turn cheaper when the GST is implemented from July.

An analysis of the tax rates

decided by the all-powerful GST Council for over 1,200 goods and 500 services revealed that daily use items like soap and toothpaste will cost less while fresh fruits, vegetables, pulses, bread and fresh milk will continue to be exempt from any tax.

Economy-class air travel will

be slightly cheaper and so will be hiring a taxi as tax on such travel has been brought down to 5 per cent in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime from the current service tax of 6 per cent.

Foodgrains may also become cheaper as they have been put

(See page 7)

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### SCHOOL TOPPERS IN CBSE CLASS XII BOARD EXAM



ALICE SAHA 95.2% (ARTS)  
 SNEHA SHARMA 92.0% (SC.)  
 SHRABANTI NARZARY 92.0% (ARTS)  
 AMARYTA SARKAR 90.4% (SC.)



HABUNG ASHWIN 89.0% (SC.)  
 LARRY C KHARBANG 85.0% (SC.)  
 ANJALI MEGHOBANI 87.0% (SC.)  
 RAMITA DEY 86.4% (ARTS)  
 DISHA DAS 85.0% (SC.)



PRIYASH BASUMATRY 84.0% (SC.)  
 BAJUHN LYNGDHO 83.2% (ARTS)  
 RIMA KAR 83.0% (COMM)  
 MANAS B BARUAH 82.0% (SC.)  
 DOLLSMITA BORAH 82.0% (ARTS)



LEENA BASUMATRY 82.0% (ARTS)  
 BINAY TENG 82.0% (SC.)  
 DEEP HURUNG J 82.0% (ARTS)  
 BADAHUN LYNGDHO 81.2% (ARTS)  
 ADOLUO CH MARAK 81.0% (SC.)



BARNALI PAUL 80.0% (SC.)  
 CHAMOUNI CHAIKHP 80.0% (SC.)  
 VARU C SHANGUANG 80.0% (ARTS)  
 VISHAL SAHU 80% (COMM)

### SUBJECT TOPPERS

Name of the Subject Toppers	Subjects	Marks
Alice Saha, Baishali Lyngdoh, Chitra Barman, Sneha Sharma, Habung Atin, Aninda Datta	English	97
Alice Saha	Political Sc.	98
Shrabanti Narzary	Sociology	92
Alice Saha	History	97
Alice Saha	Economics	66
Naba Kalita	Mathematics	72
Ansanta Sarkar	Chemistry	95
Sneha Shama	Physics	91
Larry Cooper Kharbangar	Biology	93
Alice Saha	Geography	98
Ramita Dey	Psychology	85
Sneha Shama	Physical Edu.	100
Rima Kar	Accountancy	64
Rima Kar	Entrepreneurship	89
Rima Kar	Business Studies	89
Priyash Basumatry, Zarina Yesmin	Informatics Pract.	92

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## Girls outshine boys in CBSE Class XII results

NEW DELHI, May 28: Girls outshone boys in the CBSE Class 12 results declared on Sunday, bagging the top two spots and recording a better pass percentage compared with boys.

Raksha Gopal from Delhi's neighbourhood Noida in Uttar Pradesh topped the Class 12 Central Board of Secondary Education exams, followed by Bhoomi Sawant Devi from Chandigarh.

Raksha from Amity International School in Noida secured 99.6 per cent marks, and Bhoomi from DAV School in Chandigarh scored 99.4 per cent marks, the CBSE said.

Aditya Jain and Mannat Luthra, both from Bhaban Vidyalaya in Chandigarh, came joint third with 99.2 per cent marks. According to CBSE, a total of 87.5 per cent girls passed the exams compared with 86 per cent boys.

A total of 10,76,761 students registered for the Class 12 examinations but only 10,20,762 appeared at 3,504 centres across the country between March 9 and April 29.

The pass percentage this year recorded a marginal drop to 82 per cent from 83.05 per cent last year. Only 8,37,229 students managed to pass this year, the board said. The CBSE announced the results of all its 10 regions simultaneously – including the highest, 2,58,321

students from Delhi region, followed by Panjab in Haryana with 1,84,557 and Ajmer in Rajasthan with 1,31,449 candidates.

The board said 10,091 students scored more than 95 per cent marks, and 63,247 more than 90 per cent this year. A total of 2,497 candidates with various disabilities also sat for the exams this year, of which 2,123 students passed.

Jay K Raj from St Thomas Central School in Thiruvananthapuram topped the list in the different category with 490 marks out of a maximum of 500 marks. The board said 125 differently able candidates scored above 90 per cent, with 21 scoring above 95 per cent marks. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar conducted all proceedings for the results after the results were declared.

"Congratulations to all my young friends who have successfully passed the CBSE Class XII exams and best wishes for future endeavours," Modi said in a tweet. Beside congratulating the students, Javadekar also talked to reporters over phone. "I want to congratulate all the students who scored well... success gives you strength and confidence. Also congrats to students of all boards," Javadekar said. – IANS

"I was expecting a 'good' result but was surprised to find that she was just two marks short of a perfect 100."

"I was expecting about 95 per cent, but 99.6 per cent was unimaginable," she said. Raksha, who stood first among almost 11 lakh students across India, scored per cent marks in three subjects – English core, political science and economics – and 99.6 per cent in two subjects – psychology and history.

She is keen to study political science in the University of Delhi. The top three colleges that she has in mind are Lady Shri Ram, Miranda House and Jesus and Mary – PTI

## NATIONAL PM to embark on 4-nation tour today

NEW DELHI, May 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said his four-nation tour of Germany, Spain, Russia and France beginning tomorrow is aimed at boosting India's economic engagement with these nations and inviting more investment.

In the first leg of his six-day trip, he will visit Germany, where he will hold talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel under the framework of India-Germany Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC).

He will also call on German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Modi said he and Merkel will "chart out a future roadmap of cooperation with focus on trade and investment, security and counter-terrorism, innovation and science and tech-

nology, skill development, urban infrastructure, railways and civil aviation, clean energy, development cooperation, health and alternative medicine."

Describing Germany as a valuable partner, the prime minister said, "German competencies fit well with my vision for India's transformation."

In Berlin, Modi and Merkel will also interact with top business leaders from both the countries to further strengthen the trade and investment ties.

"I am confident that this visit will open a new chapter in our bilateral cooperation with Germany and further deepen our Strategic Partnership," he said in a Facebook post.

On Tuesday, Modi will travel to Spain for an official visit, the first by an Indian prime minis-

ter in almost three decades. He will call on King Felipe VI and hold talks with President Mariano Rajoy. "We will discuss ways to enhance bilateral engagement, especially in the economic sphere, and cooperation on international issues of common concern, particularly in combating terrorism," he said.

The prime minister said there is significant potential for deepening bilateral trade and investment ties. "We seek active participation of Spanish industry in various Indian projects including infrastructure, smart cities, digital economy, renewable energy, defence and tourism," he added.

He will also meet top CEOs of the Spanish industry and encourage them to partner in the 'Make in India' initiative. – PTI

## Waste management drive in 4,000 cities soon

NEW DELHI, May 28: A massive waste management campaign will be launched in 400 cities across the country on June 5, the World Environment Day. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced today.

Under the campaign, waste bins of blue and green colours would be distributed in these cities along with an awareness drive. "There is a firm belief that we will develop a culture and the new steps that we take towards achieving cleanliness will continue. Only then will we achieve the dream of Gandhiji, achieve the kind of cleanliness that he had dreamt of," Modi said in his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'.

He explained what kind of waste should be put in green colour bins and what in blue colour bins. The Prime Minister, who has been driving the 'Swachh Bharat' campaign for over two years, said that even if a single individual decides, a huge public campaign can be built.

In this context, he referred to one such cleanliness drive on the Versova beach in Mumbai. "You must have heard that the Versova beach in Mumbai, which was infamous for its filth, has now transformed into a clean and beautiful," he said. People toiled for about 80-90 weeks, extracting thousands of tonnes of waste and today Versova beach is clean and beautiful," he said.

Modi said this mission was started by one Afroz Shah in October 2015 and gradually people joined it. "For this outstanding work, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) awarded 'Champion of the Earth' Award to Sh. Afroz Shah, and thus he has become the first Indian to achieve this distinction," the prime minister said. – PTI

He will also meet top CEOs of the Spanish industry and encourage them to partner in the 'Make in India' initiative. – PTI

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## CONGRATULATIONS AISSE 2017 Results

### Performance of the School

Stream	90-100%	80-89%	70-79%	60-69%	50-59%	40-49%
Science	16.0	40.4	29.8	11.7	1.1	1.1
Commerce	23.2	43.5	24.6	7.2	1.4	-
Humanities	23.2	37.5	26.8	12.5	-	-
Total	20.1	40.6	27.4	10.5	0.9	0.5

### Pass Percent : 100%

### Average

**School:** 81.3

**Science:** 80.3

**Commerce:** 82.8

**Humanities:** 81.3

### TOP 3 RANKERS

SCIENCE	CHEMISTRY	BIOLOGY
Himanta Devi (95.8) Rank-I	Sunita Pathak (95.3) Rank-II	Shreyas Ahmed (95.3) Rank-III
Paromita Barman (95.4) Rank-I	Abhishek Gogoi (93.2) Rank-II	Sankha Jain (93.2) Rank-III
Shubham Sharma (93.4) Rank-II	Malini Devi (93.2) Rank-III	Malini Devi (93.2) Rank-III
Hemanta Jain (95.8) Rank-I	Manisha Pareek (95.6) Rank-II	Rida Faruque (94.8) Rank-III

### SUBJECT WISE HIGHEST MARKS

SUBJECTS	MARKS	NO. OF STUDENTS
English Elective-CBSE	96	01
Mathematics	96	03
Physics	95	06
Chemistry	99	01
Biology	99	02
Informatics Practices	98	05
Physical Education	100	01
Buisness Studies	99	01
Accountancy	95	13
Entrepreneurship	98	01
History	97	01
Political Science	97	02
Economics	100	04
Geography	98	01
Psychology	100	01
Sociology	100	01

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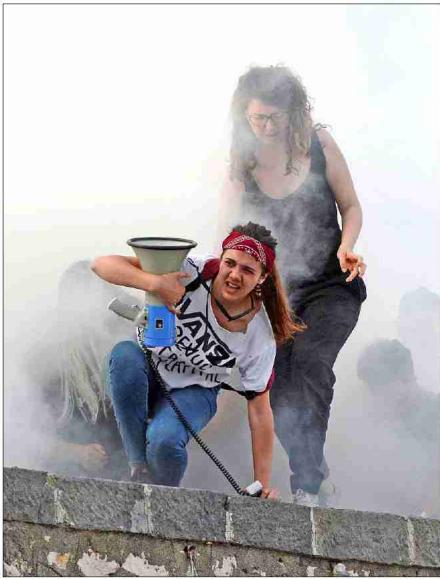
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## INTERNATIONAL

MONDAY, MAY 29, 2017



Demonstrators run away from tear gas during a demonstration against the G7 summit in Giardini Naxos, Sicily, Italy on Saturday. - UNI

## Death toll in Philippines clashes climbs to 95

MANILA, May 28: Government troops have found eight bodies of civilians who were allegedly executed by militants in Marawi city in southern Philippines, bringing the death toll in the six-day clashes between army and militants to 95, a military spokesman said on Sunday.

Brig Gen Restituto Padilla said the eight bodies, including women and a child, were found on Sunday night and Sunday morning in Marawi city, which has been under siege by Maute militants since Tuesday, Xinhua reported.

"The bodies (found) consist of four males, three females and a child," Padilla said, adding that the discovery of the eight bodies "validates" reports that militants have indeed killed civilians.

"We are still waiting other reports of atrocities by militants," Padilla said. To date, he said, 19 civilians have been confirmed to have been executed by militants.

Padilla said so far, 61 militants have been killed in the firefight and that 11 soldiers and four policemen have also been killed.

Padilla said in a statement that the troops will continue "precision" air strikes and artillery fire at specific targets in the city where Maute militants are hiding.

Padilla said the ongoing military air strikes and military actions focus on freezing and still undetermined number of civilians trapped in the city's interiors.

"Precision airstrikes and artillery fire will likewise continue to specific targets to hasten the clearing," Padilla said.

The Philippines media reported on Sunday that heavy fighting, explosions and airstrikes continued as troops sealed the city of Marawi.

Hundreds of Marawi city residents have fled as the military operations to flush out the militants intensified.

"Our forces are working overtime to hasten the restoration of the rule of law and Marawi's return to normalcy," Padilla said.

President Rodrigo Duterte, who declared martial law on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines on Tuesday night, vowed to crack down on local militants who have alleged links with ISIS and seek to carve out a caliphate out of Mindanao.

Until the police and armed forces say the Philippines is safe, this martial law will continue," he told soldiers in Iligan City on Saturday.

The violence that broke out on Tuesday afternoon on the southern island left 95 people dead, the military said. The military has earlier said that some of the dead militants are foreigners from neighboring countries.

Mindanao is home to a number of Muslim insurgent groups seeking more autonomy. The insurgents have been fighting the government for decades. - IANS

## Two dead in Nepal aircraft crash

KATHMANDU, May 28: The death toll in the Nepalese cargo aircraft crash in the Mount Everest region has risen to two after the co-



pilot of the plane succumbed to his injuries, officials said today.

A senior pilot and the co-pilot were killed when the aircraft 9N-AKY crashed while landing. - PTI

ing in foggy weather at Tenzing-Hillary Airport, also known as Lukla Airport, the gateway to the Mount Everest region yesterday.

The plane, carrying three crew members on board including a woman, belonged to the domestic airline Goma Air.

The senior captain of the Czech-manufactured LET-410 cargo flight Paras Kumar Rai, 48, died on the spot.

Critically injured co-pilot Srijan Manandhar was rushed to a hospital in Lukla but he succumbed to injuries nearly eight hours after the accident, The Himalayan Times reported.

The bodies have been sent for postmortem in Kathmandu.

Flight attendant Pragya Mahajan, who was injured in the incident, is said to be out of danger. - IANS

## French hostage kidnapped in Congo released

PARIS, May 28: A French hostage kidnapped in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been released, the French Presidency said on Sunday.

French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed the release and congratulated all the parties concerned that worked for the release, especially the authorities of the DRC, for their mobilisation and the effectiveness of their actions, Xinhua news agency cited an Elysee statement as saying.

An employee of the Canadian mining company Banro, the French national was taken hostage on March 1 by a local armed group along with four other people, including one Tanzanian and three Congolese. - IANS

Stroke patients who learned to use their minds to open and close a device fitted over their paralysed hands gained some control over their hands, according to a new study from Washington University in the US.

By mentally controlling the device with the help of a brain-computer interface, participants trained the uninjured parts of their brains to take over functions previously performed by injured areas of the brain, the researchers said. "We have shown that a brain-computer interface using the uninjured hemisphere can achieve meaningful recovery in chronic stroke patients," said Professor Eric Leuthardt, co-senior author of the study published in the journal Stroke.

Stroke is the leading cause of acquired disability among adults.

In the first weeks after a stroke, people rapidly recover some abilities, but their progress typically plateaus after about three months.

"We chose to evaluate the device in patients who had their

## Death count from Lanka floods rises to 146

COLOMBO, May 28: The death toll from Sri Lanka's worst floods since 2003 today rose to 146, as security forces and rescuers stepped up search and rescue operations after weather condition improved and floodwaters receded.

Around 4,42,299 people belonging to 1,14,124 families were affected in 15 districts due to the flood situation, the Disaster Management Centre said today.

According to the Centre, 146 people were killed and 112 remained missing while 1,01,638 people belonging to 24,603 families were shifted to 319 safe locations.

"Although the heavy rainy condition has reduced tempo-

rily, showery conditions are likely to enhance again over south-western part of the island from 29th May 2017," the Meteorological Department said.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in coordination

with the Ministry of Disaster Management, appealed to the United Nations, International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) and neighboring countries to provide assistance to affected people, especially in the areas of search

and rescue operations.

India was the first country to respond yesterday to the grave situation and it dispatched three Navy ships with emergency supplies to help Sri Lanka in the rescue and relief operations.

INS Kirch yesterday diverted to Colombo to render immediate assistance in flood relief operations.

Other Indian ship – INS Sharda reached Colombo today with relief materials. A third ship – INS *Jahashwa* has also left for Sri Lanka. The flooding is the worst since May 2003 when 250 people were killed and 10,000 homes destroyed after a similarly powerful Southwest monsoon, officials had said. - PTI

expected to continue over the sea areas. These winds can be strengthened during the showers, it said.

The fishing community in the country have been alerted about the condition.

Sri Lanka's tri-forces per-

sonnel including more than 1,000 Army troops were engaged in the rescue and relief operations.

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## Manchester bomber photos released as runners defy terror threat

MANCHESTER, May 28: Britain police have released CCTV footage of Manchester bomber Salman Abedi on the night of the attack as thousands defied the terror threat to take part in the Great Manchester Run today.

Safety was tight as 40,000 runners pounded Manchester's streets in the annual half marathon (21.1 km) a day after Prime Minister Theresa May lowered the terror threat level, which was hiked following Monday's carnage.

Investigators gave details of Abedi's last hours as they released photographs from security cameras showing the black-clad suicide bomber wearing jeans and trainers, a black bodywarmer and baseball cap, the straps of his backpack visible on his shoulders.

The 22-year-old, of Libyan origin, was born in the northwestern English city.

The police statement said one of the last places he went to was a "city centre flat and from there he left to make his way to the Manchester Arena" where the attack took place.

"The flat is highly relevant as a location which we believe may be the final assembly place for the device."

"It is surprising because these people are just under you nose and you don't know it," said Harpreet Loda, a Manchester resident walking past the building.

In their latest operations, police detained two men, aged 20 and 22, in a raid in north Manchester early on Saturday.

Along with the 11 suspects in UK custody, police in Libya have detained Abedi's father and brother.

A third of those killed in Monday's bombing were children and another 116 people were injured.

The attack, which has been claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group, targeted young fans at the end of a concert by US teen pop idol Ariana Grande.

British counter-terror chief Mark Rowley said Friday that police had captured "a large part of the network" linked to the bombing.

Explaining the decision to re-

duce the terror threat level from critical – its highest level – to severe, May said troops would also be withdrawn from the streets, another measure adopted after the bombing.

"We should be clear

about what this means:

A threat level of severe

means an attack is highly likely,

the country should re-

main vigil-

ant," she said. – AFP

Salman Abedi

## Bodies of 3 Indians retrieved from Mount Everest

KATHMANDU, May 28: Bodies of three Indian climbers, two of whom had died last year on Mount Everest, were retrieved today from a high altitude camp on the world's tallest peak and airlifted to the Nepalese capital.

Paresh Chandra Nath, 58, and Gautam Gosh, 50, were missing from April 7 last year.

Ravi Kumar, 27, died last week when he fell into a crevice after conquering Mt Everest. His body was also recovered from the same camp.

Their bodies have been sent to Kathmandu by helicopter for the post-mortem.

The bodies were taken to Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu for postmortem, said an official of Seven Summit Treks that carried out the rescue works.

Later, the bodies were handed over to the Indian Embassy officials in Kathmandu.

du, the official told PTI.

Nath and Gosh, who had reached in camp-4 on March 15 last year, were found buried under snow. They were associated with Trekking Camp Nepal

Private Limited, Kathmandu for the Mt Everest expedition.

They died last year but their remains could not be moved due to bad weather, according to tourism department officials.

The bodies were found above 8,000

metres - an altitude that marks the beginning of the "death zone".

The West Bengal government has sent three officials to manage the recovery operation.

Kumar, who died last week, was associated with Summit Trek Private Limited, Kathmandu.

On Wednesday, bodies of four climbers, including two foreigners and a woman, were found at a high altitude camp on Mt Everest, taking the total number of fatalities on the world's tallest peak to 10 this season.

Last year, five climbers lost their lives on Mt Everest. A total of 640 people reached the summit.

Climbers ascend Mt Everest from two sides - the north face from China and the South face from Nepal.

Nepal had cleared 371 mountaineers to climb Mt Everest during the current season ending this month. – PTI



People pose for selfie as they break their fast at the main shopping and pedestrian street of Istiklal on the first day of the holy fasting month of Ramadan in central Istanbul, Turkey on Saturday. - UNI

## Mind-controlled device may help paralytics

WASHINGTON, May 28: Scientists have developed a new mind-controlled device that helps paralysed patients regain movement in their hands.

Stroke patients who learned to use their minds to open and close a device fitted over their paralysed hands gained some control over their hands, according to a new study from Washington University in the US.

By mentally controlling the device with the help of a brain-computer interface, participants trained the uninjured parts of their brains to take over functions previously performed by injured areas of the brain, the researchers said.

"We have shown that a brain-computer interface using the uninjured hemisphere can achieve meaningful recovery in chronic stroke patients," said Professor Eric Leuthardt, co-senior author of the study published in the journal Stroke.

Stroke is the leading cause of acquired disability among adults.

In the first weeks after a stroke, people rapidly recover some abilities, but their progress typically plateaus after about three months.

"We chose to evaluate the device in patients who had their

stroke six months or more in the past because not a lot of gains are happening by that point," said Dr Hussey, from The Rehabilitation Institute of St Louis in the US.

The Ipsilateral device comprises a cap that contains electrodes to detect electrical signals in the brain, a computer that amplifies the signals, and a movable brace that fits over the paralysed hand.

The device detects the wearer's intention to open or close the paralysed hand, and moves the hand in a pincer-like grip, with the second and third fingers bending to meet the thumb.

Participants underwent a standard motor skills evaluation at the start of the study and every two weeks throughout.

The test measured their ability to grasp, grip and pinch with their hands, and to make large motions with their arms.

Among other things, participants were asked to pick up a block and place it atop a tower, fit a tube around a smaller tube, and move their hands to their mouths. Higher scores indicated better function.

After 12 weeks of using the device, the patients' scores increased an average of 6.2 points on a 57-point scale. – PTI

# Table White Paper on nation's economy: Cong to NDA

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 28: Accusing the Narendra Modi-led Government of increasingly adopting an authoritarian style as well as distorting the federal structure of the Constitution and hoodwinking the citizens by making false claims, the Opposition Congress today demanded that the NDA regime should bring out a White Paper on the state of the Indian economy and on employment generation during the past three years.

Addressing the media here, senior Congress leader and Deputy Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Anand Sharma said that the NDA regime has broken all the promises made by Modi during the run-up to the 2014 general elections.

Sharma said that the NDA Government has spent Rs 1,500 crore on advertisements to mark three years of completion of the NDA regime at a time when the country's economy is in doldrums, internal security has been threatened and our foreign policy is in a shambles.

"This is not a time to celebrate. Rather, this is the time

(for the NDA) to answer questions and apologise to the people of the country for their failure to implement the promises made during the poll campaign," Sharma said, adding that during his May 26 visit to Assam, Prime Minister Modi again tried to "hoodwink" the people.

He said that the NDA had promised to create two crore jobs annually, but less than 10 lakh new jobs were created during the last three years across the country.

He said that the Congress has demanded a White Paper seeking details of employment generation by the NDA Government.

Sharma also accused the Centre of fudging data and called upon the Government to release growth figures using both the old and new methodologies so that the reality comes out.

He said that despite fall in global crude prices, the consumer has not benefited.



Former Union Minister and Deputy Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Anand Sharma addressing a press conference in Guwahati on Sunday – UB Photos

"Therefore, we demand that the Central Government release a White Paper on the state of Indian economy," reiterated Sharma.

The Congress leader accused the NDA regime of spending public money to promote personality cult and said such practices are dangerous

for a democracy.

"The NDA regime has displayed its totalitarian tendencies blatantly. Anybody questioning the Government or the

ruling party is dubbed as an anti-national," Sharma said.

He said that the Modi Government is trying to falsify history and discredit all the

previous Prime Ministers of India, including Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

"There is a deliberate campaign to create fear in the society and divide the people," said Sharma, who is also a former Union Minister.

He termed India's Pakistan policy as "diplomatic disaster" and added that the current situation in Jammu and Kashmir is much worse when compared to 1947.

"Diplomacy is not merely photo-op... But for Modi, every occasion is a photo-op," Sharma said, adding that 538 jawans have lost their lives during the past three years, including more than 200 in Kashmir.

Sharma said that previous UPA regime had succeeded in bringing peace to Jammu and Kashmir.

"The NDA Government lacks policy and direction. It must take the country into confidence and sit down with the Opposition to formulate a proper policy," he said.

Sharma termed demoneti-

sation as hogwash. "How much black money was unearthed? How much fake notes were unearthed? The Government should table the figures," he said.

Regarding the beef controversy, Sharma said that a country like India has a diversity of food habits and people themselves should be left free to decide what to eat and what not to eat.

"Besides, India is a federal country and the States also have their rights," he said, adding that the NDA regime is seeking to erode the federal structure.

He said that while on the one hand BJP and Sangh Parivar leaders speak about protection of cows, India's bovine meat export has dropped substantially during the last three years.

Asked if Modi is seeking to become a dictator, Sharma said, "Modi has all the hallmarks of becoming one."

Sharma also refuted suggestions about a leadership vacuum in the Congress party.

## State Govt's tough stand on graft lauded

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 28: The Purvottar Marwari Sammelan, while congratulating Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on completion of one year of the State Government, said that the official machinery's tough stand on corruption was encouraging and winning public goodwill.

"Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has led from the front in this fight against corruption, as is evident from the cleansing of the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC).

We extend our whole-hearted support to this uncompromising stand against corruption and this should be continued and extended to every level," Sammelan spokesperson Bikas Gupta said in a statement.

The statement further urged the Chief Minister to get the perennial problem of flood and erosion in the State recognised as a national problem so that it can be addressed efficiently. "Another urgent need is to create employment avenues for addressing the burgeoning unemployment problem, which is having disturbing socio-economic implications," it added.

It also congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on completing three years in office.

## SBI pensioners' meet held

## Internship for young talents at Jyoti Chitrabon

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 28: In a bid to develop and expand the largest Government-run digital archive of the North East under Jyoti Chitrabon, Celebstan, a cultural start-up founded under IIM Ahmedabad's

Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) has floated one of its kind internship programme for the young talents of Assam. Celebstan, which is also working towards development of the Jyoti Chitrabon Digital Archive, is the brainchild of a young and talented team of two co-founders Amrita Sonowal and Axi Hazarika hailing from Guwahati.

"North East India's largest Government-run film studio Jyoti Chitrabon's new branch titled Jyoti Chitrabon Digital Archive would be a unique gift for the culture lovers of the State. It will digitise and preserve all the available collections, including cassettes and vinyl. It is an opportunity for the students and recent graduates interested in the field to get associated with the voluntary internship project and learn from experts in the field," said

Amrita Sonowal.

With the offer of dual certificate and several exciting perks, Jyoti Chitrabon and Celebstan are looking for young talented students who would like to contribute towards development of the digital archive.

According to the secretary of Jyoti Chitrabon (Film Studio) Society, Monita Borghain, "the internship programme is a unique initiative taken by Celebstan through which interested students of Assam can join us in the development of North East India's largest Government-run digital archive. In the process, the interns will also get the opportunity to learn a lot from the top minds of IIM Ahmedabad."

The start-up idea of Celebstan was selected in the IIMAveck Programme of the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) at IIM Ahmedabad. Every year the IIMAveck programme selects top innovative start-up ideas from students and young entrepreneurs across India, whom they consider to have potential to be among the top 500 companies in the country.

## INSTILLING NEW LIFE IN FIELDS & FARMS

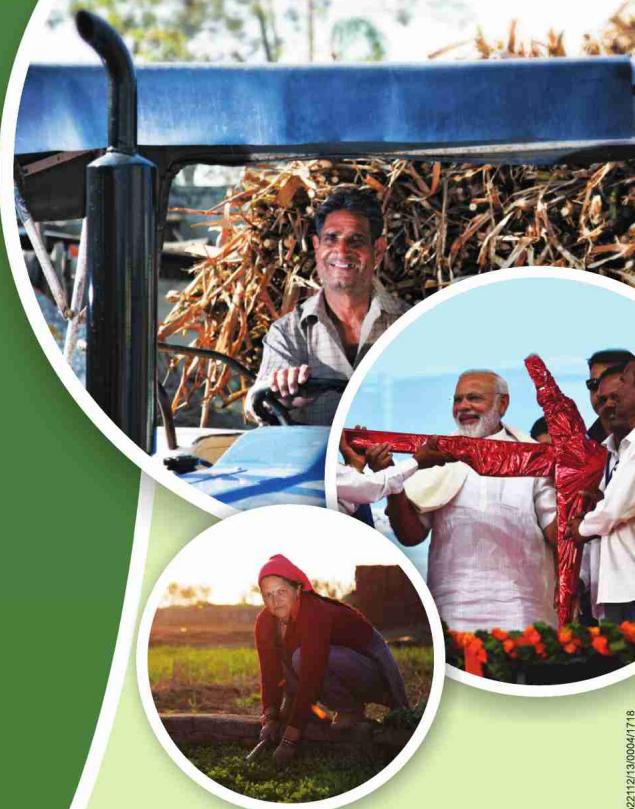
### PROSPEROUS FARMERS FOR A PROSPEROUS NATION

- Bumper harvests for farmers this year
- Full insurance cover at low premium for farmers' crops
- Suitable irrigation arrangement for every farmer under Krishi Sinchayee Yojna
- Hike in Minimum Support Price (MSP) to benefit the farmers

### SECURING FROM SEEDS TO MARKETS

- Soil Health Card facilitating soil testing, reduction in fertilizer usage and bumper harvests
- Farmers getting Neem-coated Urea in adequate quantities
- Farmers getting better price for their crop through e-NAM
- Transactions of produce worth Rs. 15,000 crore done on e-NAM platform till date
- 101 new Cold Storages being approved

**Saath Hai, Vishvaas Hai  
...Ho Raha Vikas Hai**



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



## MESSAGE FOR TODAY

You really can change the world if you care enough.

- MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

**The Assam Tribune**

## Plight of Darrangiri

It's a poor reflection on our successive governments that we have failed to put to good use our inherent advantages in key sectors. Horticulture is one such area that has fallen way short of realizing its potential due to the apathy of the government authorities. In the Darrangiri banana market of Goalpara, we have the biggest market of its kind in the whole of Asia. Hundreds of truckloads of the fruit find their way to far-off markets of not just neighbouring States but countries like Bhutan and Nepal as well on a regular basis every week. But the amenities at such an important market place are virtually non-existent. Well over half-a-century old, the Darrangiri market lacks even an ATM in its vicinity at a time when pompous rhetoric of a digital India continue to fly thick and fast from all quarters, especially the Government. There is no proper accommodation and other amenities required for such huge congregations of traders from different places. Of course, a lot of promises had been made by the Government that include setting up of a market complex, a fruit packaging centre, a research facility on banana, etc., but none have materialized. It is worth asking what purpose the Agriculture Department, the Horticulture Department and the Agricultural Marketing Board are serving, as they remain oblivious to tapping the vast potential of Asia's biggest banana market. Having a railway station at the nearby town would also have done a world of good to the transportation needs. Facilities for food processing and related industries are another dire need overlooked by the authorities.

Horticulture and food processing are one key area replete with possibilities for Assam and other north-eastern States. But despite the prospects, lack of interventions by the Government has prevented a horticulture boom in the region. Assam is endowed with the ideally diverse soil and climatic conditions for growing a variety of fruits, vegetables, flowers, and ornamental, medicinal and aromatic plants besides spices, mushroom and plantation crops. As the plight of Darrangiri market exposes, horticulture, by and large, continues to be done in the traditional manner, with little thought given to its commercial prospects, including food processing and export. All that can change if our growers are provided access to the emerging trends and innovative expertise necessary for attaining excellence in the field. Of late, a lot of emphasis has been placed on expanding organic farming, and organic cultivation of horticulture can go a long way in boosting the sector in a big way. This will also be essential for exporting organic horticultural products, including processed food, that have a huge demand in the international market. The Act East Policy, too, needs to be oriented towards facilitating a sustained growth of sectors such as agriculture and horticulture with an eye on capturing the lucrative markets abroad.

## Troubled Maharajah

There had been a time when Air India and its indigentous version, Indian Airlines literally ruled the skies, inspiring the 'Maharajah on a magic carpet' icon. However, for quite some time the monarch has been in dire danger of being dethrown by Johnnie-come-lately usurpers, with Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley hinting that the Centre is mulling an exit from Air India operations. If this does occur, the airlines would have none else to blame but its own management and employees. For quite a few decades after independence, Air India and Indian Airlines enjoyed a monopoly over air travel in this nation. Being a public sector entity, once employees were hired by them, they could never be 'fired', no matter how inefficient or disinterested in their jobs they proved to be. This, as well as lack of competition, bred a work culture not conducive towards running these airlines as professional, profit-yielding, commercial entities. One recalls the proliferation of complaints against both the airlines - with Air India the primary grievance had been that its employees did not bestow the desirable courtesy to 'native' passengers as they did to foreigners; with Indian Airlines that its employees were either indifferent or even rude towards their customers. Moreover, since these were public sector airlines, government officials often made exorbitant use of them such as upgrading of economy tickets to first class, thereby eating into their resources.

It needs to be noted that, like many other public sector enterprises in India, these aviation giants too were running at a loss due to bad management even before the advent of private airlines. When the latter began to appear one by one in the Indian sky, they spell further trouble for the ailing airlines. Yet governments after governments continued to prop them up, dropping the Indian Airlines tag, changing the management, pumping in money to purchase a fleet of new aircraft. However, the work culture of the Maharajah's servants did not change; pilots continued to defy the management; unlike the young and dynamic cabin crews of private airlines, those of Air India continued to be jaded and overweight! Little wonder that, with the advent of private airlines, losses mounted and currently it has a debt of a whooping Rs 50,000 crore, which is twice that of the value of its assets like aircraft. With its market share standing at just 14% to the 86% share enjoyed by private airlines, the possibility that it can ever recoup its losses is slim indeed. Thus perhaps it would not be unwise to abandon the sinking ship, or a pilotless, rudderless airplane, and prevent further inroads into the national exchequer. However, any exit contemplated must be done in a sensible way so that private players can make fruitful use of the vast global network the Maharajah has at its disposal.

# Kashmir situation: an analysis

## ■ Brig Ranjit Borthakur (Retd)

**P**robably, this is one of the worst phases that the troubled Kashmir valley is going through. The brutal killing of a young dynamic newly-commissioned army lieutenant on May 9 last has sent shockwaves across the country. By committing similar heinous crimes which are on the rise, the terrorists have clearly signalled that if anyone wants to survive in the valley, they have to follow their diktat. What is more important is that the terrorists supported by their Pakistan masters have been able to convert large sections of Kashmiri youth.

In spite of the security forces having the capability and resolve to effectively handle terrorist activities, stone-pelters working in tandem with Pakistan-sponsored terrorists have given a totally new dimension to the ongoing proxy war and have made the tasks of our security forces extremely difficult.

Any brutal action like mutilation of our soldiers or the killing of Lieutenant Fayaz and other such dastardly acts go through a similar series of reaction process in our country which is known even to a school kid. The cycle starts with condemnations, political one-upmanship, hyped TV debates, government's resolve to eliminate terrorism, etc.

The country is fed up with such 'replay of rhetoric' without achieving substantial results on the ground. The fact that Pakistan is the epicentre of all terrorist activities is well known and well documented,

Therefore, India must get rid of the idea that peace with Pakistan is possible unless and until Pakistan decides to mend its ways. India has tried for decades for a peaceful resolution of all disputes with Pakistan but without success. Our efforts to put pressure on Pakistan through the UN have not helped either. Similarly China, fully aware that Uighur Muslim terrorists have support bases in Pakistan, has kept silent because of strategic reasons. Our effort to isolate Pakistan in the world forum has also not been very successful.

Since Pakistan, particularly the Pakistan army, is the nerve centre of most of the terrorists' activities in Jammu and Kashmir, we need to seriously analyse our shortcomings which have contributed towards the worsening of the situation. (The voting percentage in the recent parliamentary election for the Srinagar constituency was only 7% compared to 65% for the Lok Sabha election in 2014).

One of the most important things to be noted is that slowly and silently but very methodically, the Wahabi form of Islam has spread in the valley. This form of Islam preaches extreme intolerance and hatred. This has led to the Kashmiri movement slowly and gradually gravitating towards religious lines from the earlier concept of

'Azaadi'. There is a concerted effort to replace Kashmiriyat with 'Islamiyat'. The recent video clipping of JKHM terrorist leader Zakir Musa (who replaced Burhan Wani as Hizbul commander) is a pointer in that direction where he strongly propounded an Islamic state – an idea propagated by the ISIS too. Thus, in due course, the political parties are likely to lose relevance in the valley. The very successful disinformation campaigns through

evidences are given of Pakistan's involvement.

The formation of government between the BJP and the regional People's Democratic Party (PDP) which was a marriage of convenience has also deterred the Central Government from taking harsh actions in the valley. In any case the BJP is seen as an ultranationalist and Hindu fundamentalist party. The issues like 'Gau Rakshak', etc., have also been negatively portrayed in the valley.

India needs to formulate holistic short- and long-term policies to effectively deal with the civil designs of Pakistan and Pakistani-supported extremists and fundamentalists elements. While formulating such policies, the basic presumption should be that Pakistan (Pakistan Army) will always want to bleed India and keep Kashmir boiling. It is not that they

have any love for the Kashmiris but Pakistan survives on the Kashmir issue. If the Kashmir problem is resolved, the Pakistani army's hold on its internal and external affairs will significantly reduce. The Pakistan army which has such disdain for its own political masters cannot be expected to treat India with respect.

It is tragic that in the last three decades, the security forces were able to restore peace and order many times but politicians have failed to take advantage of such situations. No doubt, numerically, there are not more than 400-odd militants but the number of the

overground supporters, especially the youth, has increased. In their war on social media, the terrorists are far ahead of us. The regional political parties for their own convenience and compulsions have either decided to remain silent or have become critics of the Central Government's policies. The human right group have always played a negative role in the valley.

The security forces must be given free hand to restore law and order. The killer of Lieutenant Fayaz and others must be hanged. The leaders who encourage stone-throwers must be identified and treated as terrorists. The intelligence network which seems to be very weak at this juncture must be augmented. The inflow of funds from the ISI to militants/Hurriyat, etc., must be stopped. It appears that demonetization has failed to achieve the desired results of choking the flow of funds to the terrorists.

Along with strong actions on terrorism, proper governance to ensure education, employment generation and eradication on corruption must be carried out on the fast track. The Kashmiris, who all along have been surviving on the government largesse, must be made aware that such aids are not unconditional. The infrastructure development, in the form of connectivity, economic projects must be completed on a priority basis. The electronic and print media that draw a lot of TRP by negative reporting must be suited deal with as per the laws of the land. The common people must be given all support to live with dignity.

## Trump's Saudi address: repeating rhetoric

### ■ Sazzad Hussain

**E**sactly eight years after President Barack Obama's address to the Muslim world from the Cairo University podium, his successor Donald J Trump made a similar move from the Arab kingdom that houses the two holiest sites of Islam. The call was made after the eight-year reign of faulty interventions by President George W Bush in the Muslim world stretched from the rivers of Babylon to the Hindu Kush, which earned a very bad name for America. This time Trump's address is aimed to reiterate America's same faulty policy of cornering Iran and of maintaining the sectarian divide in this region while combating terror. India too, a worst sufferer of terror, must choose a path while partnering and engaging different nations of the Middle-East following the stand expressed by President Trump.

Let us also not forget that Obama's 2009 Cairo address did not confirm the seven-decade-old bilateral relations between America and Saudi Arabia. It was on February 14, 1945 that Franklin D Roosevelt met King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia on board USS *Quincy* en route to home from Yalta on April 11, 1945. Since then both the countries were in a grip of friendship and collaboration from formation of the ARAMCO to Afghan Jihad at different fronts like Kashmir, Chechnya, the Balkans, the Philippines, Africa and now in the Euphrates valley. Osama bin Laden, a Saudi billionaire fighting America's war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, masterminded the 9/11 terror attacks with more than half dozen fellow Saudis. The kingdom's textbooks also teaches its children to hate non-Muslims as infidels including Shiites and its official mufti calls for Jihad abroad while asking for complete allegiance to the king at home. This official stand encourages the oil-rich Saudis to fund terror activities outside its borders and also to participate as Jihads.

It's a sheer irony that the person

who had so much anti-Muslim rhetoric during his presidential campaign and who has imposed travel ban from seven Muslim countries to America after his election as its President, set his feet in Saudi Arabia, the bastion of militant Wahabi Islam and birthplace of Osama bin Laden, to be the first country of his maiden overseas tour. In fact Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen – the five of the seven countries barring Iran and Syria, whose nationals are banned by Trump to enter America, attended the Arab-Muslim Summit in Riyadh where he delivered this address as the keynote speaker. Nevertheless of these ambiguities, Trump's speech was more of a US-Saudi traditional bonhomie than a clear-cut and unequivocal stand against terrorism (read Islamist terrorism and radicalism).

President Trump's anti-terror address in Riyadh is more about confirming the seven-decade-old close bilateral relations between America and Saudi Arabia. It was on February 14, 1945 that Franklin D Roosevelt met King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia on board USS *Quincy* en route to home from Yalta on April 11, 1945. Since then both the countries were in a grip of friendship and collaboration from formation of the ARAMCO to Afghan Jihad at different fronts like Kashmir, Chechnya, the Balkans, the Philippines, Africa and now in the Euphrates valley. Osama bin Laden, a Saudi billionaire fighting America's war against the Soviets in Afghanistan, masterminded the 9/11 terror attacks with more than half dozen fellow Saudis. The kingdom's textbooks also teaches its children to hate non-Muslims as infidels including Shiites and its official mufti calls for Jihad abroad while asking for complete allegiance to the king at home. This official stand encourages the oil-rich Saudis to fund terror activities outside its borders and also to participate as Jihads.

Further, Saudi Arabia has been

playing a central role in spreading a sectarian divide across the Arab Muslim world since the Lebanese civil war (1976-93). It considers Shiite Iran as its rival and hence is backing radical Sunni groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. The Arab Spring in Shiite majority Bahrain was crushed by Saudi military in 2011 to protect its Sunni king. The ISIS is the latest instance where anti-Shiite violence is attributed to Saudi help. Strategically the Gulf Cooperation Council (Kuwait, the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arab) – which is the regional partner of NATO hosting the US Army's Central Command and the US Navy's 7th Fleet, is funding Sunni extremists operating in Syria and Iraq like al-Nusra. They all want the defeat of Iran and its regional allies like the Assad regime in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza.

In his address, President Trump is nothing more than of these traditional geopolitical positions of Washington in the Middle-east. Besides terming the \$110-billion arms deal as a "landmark agreement" between the two countries, he equates ISIS and al-Qaeda with Hezbollah and Hamas and blames Iran for fueling instability in the region and castigating President Bashar al-Assad of Syria, the only remaining secular regime in the entire Arab world. Ironically, the three recent terror attacks in America – Boston, San Bernardino and Orlando – mentioned by Trump

in his speech were perpetrated by Dagestan, Pakistan and Afghan nationals – all linked to Sunni terror groups opposed to Iran. Endorsing Saudi Arabia's Vision for 2030, a plan with economic growth and development with strict Wahabi designs, President Trump did not mention a single word on democracy which is still absent in all GCC countries including Saudi Arabia. Fattah al-Sisi, the military general who had toppled the first democratically-elected President of Egypt Mohammed Morsi, was among the dignitaries attending Trump's address.

Though countries with modest Muslim population like Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Ivory Coast, Mozambique, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Togo, etc., were present at the summit, India was invited to despite its huge Muslim population. However, it had a mention in President Trump's speech as a victim of terror. India can take a consolation only in the fact that Trump made no mention of Pakistan in his address and its Prime Minister was not allowed to speak at the summit. India's growing cooperation with GCC has tilted its relation with Iran. If New Delhi forsakes Tehran as its traditional ally vis-à-vis Middle-east, tackling the growing threat of ISIS and a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan will be difficult. Thus President Trump's address in Saudi Arabia has nothing to offer much to India as also to the world.

### Letters to the EDITOR

## Rewarding the good contractors

ment and we hope that it should be strictly implemented. At the same time, we feel that on the contrary, the contractors who perform poorly with inferior quality works should be punished. The local people and organizations should monitor the works of the contractors and support them for doing quality work. Yours etc., BIBHUTI KUMAR SARMA, Dulajha, MCA degree

Sir – The APSC has invited applications from Indian citizens for the post of Assistant Engineer (IT) under the PHE Department. It has mentioned the requisite qualifications to be BE/BTech in Computer Science and Engineering or Engineering degree in IT in regular course as well as from IGNOU in distance education mode. My concern is that whether an MCA degree holder will get an opportunity to apply for the State Government exams. An MCA degree is often seen neglected in our State, which is in fact equivalent to BE/BTech. Both the courses have been given equivalent weightage in other competitive examinations. Even all

the nationalized banks are recruiting MCA holders for IT posts along with other BE/BTech graduates. In a situation of acute unemployment, many MCA graduates are seen working in contractual posts in various government-run software development and programming projects. So the State Government including the APSC should look into the requisite educational criteria and include the MCA degree as one of them for respective recruitments. Yours etc., AN ASPIRANT, Bettar, Silvassa

### Job security

Sir – With this letter, I want to draw the attention of the Higher Education Ministry towards the contractual college teachers' job security as the ministry has decided to provide the single-stream provincial colleges with one more sanctioned stream. Although this is a very good step, the contractual teachers currently working in such colleges will be removed and new candidates will be absorbed through fresh interviews. My question to the ministry concerned is that where these

teachers will be absorbed after serving the non-provincialized colleges for 5 to 10 years or more with a very meagre salary; they are now not fit to appear in an interview board in terms of age, percentage of marks and other required criteria. These teachers got appointed through paper interviews advertised for recruitment by the governing bodies of the colleges concerned. Yours etc., R DEKA, Guwahati

### Bhajo train station

Sir – The Bhajo railway station, situated near Sonari town, the headquarters of the newly-formed Charaideo district, is important for several reasons. Major trains like the Kamrup Express, Brahmaputra Mail, two InterCity Expresses and the local passenger trains stop at this station. Apart from a large number of passengers of the locality, the people from the border States of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh are also availing this station for their day-to-day travel. But due to the apathy of the Railway Department, this station has been lacking basic infrastructure facilities since long.

As there is no foot bridge to cross over to the platform No. 2, passengers of all categories – women, children, old and aging persons – have to face a perilous situation at the time of crossing of two trains from both directions. This platform is also not properly built. As the platform is below the usual level, passengers face difficulties in boarding or alighting from a train. Moreover, there is no shed over the platform for which passengers have to suffer a lot.

Other basic amenities like drinking water are also unavailable. Waiting rooms for both male and female passengers are not adequate and up to the mark. About the approach road leading to the station, less said the better.

Will the Railway Minister of State from Assam, Rajen Gohain, look into the matter urgently for solving such long-standing grievances? Yours etc., ALOK SHYAM GOHAIN, Sonari.

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





Domoda unit of the All Assam Students' Union staging a dharna in protest against non-fulfilment of their long-pending demands in Hajo on Saturday. -UB Photos

## Digital traffic signal installed

CORRESPONDENT

BISWANATH CHARIALI, May 28: A digital traffic signal system was installed in Biswanath Chariali town under the aegis of Samian Tech Industry. The system was inaugurated by Biswanath MLA Pramod Borthakur. It is said to be the second such venture throughout the State after Lakhimpur town.

Inaugurating the system, MLA Borthakur expressed the hope that this system would be able to do away with the increasing traffic problem in the town. Biswanath Deputy Commissioner Asitaksh Chakravarty, Superintendent of Police Diganta Kumar Choudhury, Biswanath Municipality Chairman Ruli Sharma, and Samir Tea Industry proprietor Naren Sharma also spoke on the occasion.

## ULFA cadre held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIRRUGARH, May 28: One ULFA (I) cadre identified as Ajoy Gogoi was apprehended from Dimnay near Chabua town for his alleged involvement in the Dikom pipeline fire incident that took place on May 22 last.

Police also recovered one Chinese grenade from his possession. The ULFA cadre confessed before the police that he along with his colleague Bobby Dabotia alias Palash Axon had tried to blast the oil pipeline. Per Ajoy Gogoi's statement, at least four kgs TNT explosives and two detonators were used by them.

## Ex-ULFA forum formed

CORRESPONDENT

BISWANATH CHARIALI, May 28: The Sonitpur (undivided) District Committee of Ex-ULFA cadres formed a committee recently at a meeting held in Bipanpatna Naya Mandir, here. The meeting was presided over by Haren Borah which a 41-member committee was formed with Deepak Deka as president and Dadul Deka as general secretary.

Ex-ULFA leaders Anup Chetia, Kalpajoti Neog, Pranji Saikia etc., were also present on the occasion. The leaders called upon the ex-cadres to work unitedly.

## OBITUARY Rasendra Nath Dev Sarmah

GUWAHATI, May 28: Rasendra Nath Dev Sarmah, a retired Divisional Forest Officer and a resident of Jyotinagar area, passed away on May 26 at a city hospital. He was 77.

Born in 1939, at Bhawanipur village in Barpeta district, Sarmah was actively associated with various socio-cultural organisations in and around Jyotinagar area.

He leaves behind his wife, two sons, a daughter and a host of relatives.

## Nazrul Islam remembered in Hailakandi

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, May 28:

The Sudarshan Music Academy organised a series of programmes to mark the 118th birth anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam at Graham MV School. The programme began with garlanding on the portrait of Kazi Nazrul Islam.

The students of the academy led by Dipanskar Paul performed the inaugural song Anjali loho mor sangeete.

The Nazrulgeet was also performed by Sunanda Bhattacharjee, Rupali Bhattacharjee, Naba Kumar Choudhury,

Maitrayan Choudhury and Dipanskar Paul. They were assisted by Amitabha Bhattacharjee and Pritam Dey. Nazrul's poem was recited by Rita Chanda.

The vice-president of the academy, Satyabrata Purkayastha while addressing the function explained on the life and contributions of Kazi Nazrul Islam.

He lamented that despite his contribution to the literature, the poet could not get due recognition during his life.

Meanwhile, various programmes were also organised in this connection by the

Hailakandi district committee of Barak Upatyaka Banga Sahitya O Samkruti Samiti and Rabindra Bhawan here.

Speaking on the occasion all the speakers highlighted the works of Nazrul and said that he was always vocal for the derived.

They elaborately discussed the relevance of Nazrul in present day society. They urged the young writers to follow the path shown by Nazrul Islam. A cultural programme was also organised. The programme was jointly anchored by Purabi Mishra Debnath and Surajit Deb.



State Forest Minister Pramila Rani Brahma during her visit to Borjuri under Parkun forest range in Nagaon on Saturday. -UB Photos

## Court rejects PIL by Karbi bodies

CORRESPONDENT

DIPUH, May 28: The interlocutory application filed by the leaders of 26 organisations in the Gaubati High Court before Justice Ujjal Bhuyan seeking stay of elections to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, has been rejected by the court recently.

In the ruling passed by Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Parun Kumar Phukan pertaining to the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) case seeking declaration of the Assam Autonomous Districts (Constitution of District Councils)

Rules, 1951, as illegal and null and void and also sought a direction for framing new rules in place of the aforementioned rules.

The petitioners also sought for constituting an independent electoral authority for conducting elections to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. They also prayed before the court to restrain from filing of nomination papers by non-Scheduled Tribes persons for elections to the 26 constituencies of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council and also to disqualify non-tribal voters, who were not permanent residents of the erstwhile Mikir Hills District as on

the qualifying date of March 1, 1950 from the electoral rolls of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council.

"We find that in the related PIL, the court by order dated 10.02.2017, had granted time to the respondents to obtain instructions and to file affidavit. In view of the aforesaid order of this court dated 10.02.2017, we do not feel that any new case has been made out to stay the ensuing elections. At this stage, we also put a query to counsel for the petitioners that since 1951 till date, how many elections to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) have been held, to which he submitted that 14 elections have been held on date."

None of the elections were stayed or annulled by the court on the grounds in the present interlocutory application.

"In such circumstances; we are of the view that no case for grant of interim order is made out in this interlocutory application. Issues raised in the PIL would be decided by the Court in due course. Interlocutory Application is dismissed," Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Parun Kumar Phukan mentioned in the order.

## Bongaigaon Refinery launches new scheme for poor students

CORRESPONDENT

BONGAIGAON, May 28:

With a view to bring encouragement to the underprivileged students to pursue their technical education in Industrial Training Institutes and Polytechnic institutions, Bongaigaon Refinery under its CSR initiatives launched IndianOil Gyanodaya scheme in a ceremonial function held here which was attended by GC Sikder, CGM, A Kalita, CGM, D Gogoi, CGM/Tech and other senior officials of BGR and the representatives

from IOOA, BGR unit and BGREU.

During the function, Mrinalini Das, Principal, Bongaigaon Polytechnic and Raju Gopal, Principal, Industrial Training Institutes, Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar handed over the consent documents to GC Sikder, CGM for implementation of the IndianOil Gyanodaya scheme in their institutes from the academic session 2017-18.

Speaking on the occasion, Mrinalini Das, Principal of Bongaigaon Polytechnic lauded the initiatives of IndianOil Bongaigaon Refinery for providing scholarship to the meritorious students who are economically underprivileged and need the financial support for pursuing technical education. "We are confident that this scheme will surely help the poor students in the area," she claimed.

Speaking on the occasion, GC Sikder, CGM highlighted various CSR initiatives of the Bongaigaon Refinery for socio-economic development of the vicinity and said that IndianOil Gyanodaya scheme is particularly to support the economically-backward students by providing monthly stipend to pursue the technical courses in the ITIs and polytechnics with a view to promote the 'Skill India Mission' launched by the Government of India.

He also urged the Principals of Bongaigaon Polytechnic and ITI, Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar to give adequate publicity of the scheme not only in the institute but also in the society so that more and more students can reap the benefit from the scheme.

## Plea to revitalise HPC

CORRESPONDENT

JAGIROAD, May 28: The Nagaon Paper Mill Suraksha Manch, which is a public body constituted to work for the restoration of the Jagiroad-based Hindustan Paper Corporation, has expressed its anguish at the lack of initiative on the part of the Union Government to restore normal functioning of the mill.

Top officials of the Nagaon Paper Mill Suraksha Manch while addressing a press conference alleged that Union Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Arant G Geete during his maiden visit to the Jagiroad mill in March last had assured that the Centre would take every possible step to improve the condition of the mill. However, no step has been initiated so far.



They also said, "The BJP-led Government at the Centre has proclaimed the 'Act East Policy' for all-round development in the North-east. It is also planning to increase productivity through its vision of 'Make in India'. But, the plight of the two integrated mills of the HPC has turned worse."

Further, they claimed that the two mills were providing desired results, and, therefore the Centre should accord priority to revive the mills as early as possible.

They expressed serious anguish at the present plight of the mill employees, who are reeling under financial condition and an uncertain future due to prolonged pending of their salaries.

In a press release issued at the news conference, the Suraksha Manch demanded immediate release of financial grants towards revitalisation of the mills, steps for their modernisation, waiving of sales tax on the finished products, including raw material of the projects.

## Body recovered

CORRESPONDENT

RAHA, May 28: The body of the 30-year-old fisherman Jadav Bordoloi was fished out today from river Kolong. The man met with a watery grave after drowning in the water body.

The deceased, an inhabitant of Mohgorh

village, Phulaguri, Raha had gone to Kolong river for fishing along with his wife on Saturday afternoon.

## Faculty development programme

CORRESPONDENT

DERGAON, May 28: Golaghat Commerce College is organizing a week-long faculty development programme on application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching at the college premises from June 6.

The programme will serve the need for the faculties of schools, colleges, universities, staff college, industrial institutes in the use of ICT in teaching. The programme will be attended by several experts from Tezpur University, IIT Guwahati and Jorhat Engineering College. For smooth conduct of the programme, an organising committee has been constituted with Dr Jatinanda Nath Saikia as chief patron, Dr Parma Nanda Sharma as the president and Manash Pratim Sharma as coordinator. The organisers have urged all faculties to take part in the programme.

## Local body demands railway link to Saikhowa

CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, May 28: With the inauguration of long-awaited Khasi Hazara bridge 'Dr Bhupen Hazarika Setu' connecting Sadiya with Dhola for the first time before the Central Government. On the other hand, Makum-Saikhowa (Sadiya) Rail Path Suraksha Samiti (MSRPSS), a local organisation set up for pressing for the demand for gauge conversion work of Makum-Dangari branch line of NE Frontier Railway adopted a resolution for construction of the fifth bridge over the Brahmaputra.

"Although the Sadiya bridge will open up new vistas for the people of the easternmost corner of the country, yet the dream remains unfulfilled due to non-completion of the railway line up to Chakphakowa," the organisation alleged.

It also demanded extending the existing Makum-Dangari branch line up to Saikhowa in the greater interest of the people of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Side-by-side the construction of the railway bridge, railway network expansion work can also be undertaken in the similar manner as it was done between Guwahati and Amingaon with the river Brahmaputra, the organisation said.

However, the MSRPSS has hailed the Centre's decision on naming the newly opened country's longest river bridge over the river Lohit connecting Sadiya with Dhola after Sudhakar Dr Bhupen Hazarika.

## Workshop on cooperative movement

CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 28: A brainstorming session on employment generation and master trainers workshop on strengthening cooperative movement in Assam for livelihood generation will be held on May 30 at Kasturba Ashram, Ulbari here, a press release stated.

The programme is being organised under the aegis of Gandhi Smriti Darshan Samiti, New Delhi in collaboration with Ananya Axom Foundation, North East Citizens Initiative for Peace and Development, Manabata and North East India Young Women Peace Volunteers. Resource persons from Department of Cooperation, National Cooperative Development Corporation, Institute of Cooperative Management, Assam Rajiv Gandhi University of Cooperative Management, Department of Fisheries, etc., will take part in the workshop. Interested persons have been asked to contact Kasturba Ashram, Sarania at 10 am.



Students browsing books at a stall at the ongoing book fair in Dibrugarh. -UB Photos

## Six State jails functioning without superintending officers

SANJOY RAY

GUWAHATI, May 28: Despite witnessing recurring incidents of jail breaks and other untoward incidents, security in prisons continue to be of low priority for those at the helm of affairs.

Information available with this reporter suggests that as many as six jails in the State are functioning sans their superintending officer, which is the top post in the jail campus.

These prisons include those located at Abhayapuri, Kokrajhar, Mangaldoi, Diphu, Sadiya and Karinganj. While the

posts in the Abhayapuri and Kokrajhar jails still vacant in 2015, the others except for Karinganj (vacated this year), are lying vacant since last year.

The situation, according to many, is alarming especially when the rise in criminal activities leading to overcrowding of most of the prisons is taken into account.

A recent report on jail security revealed that lax security arrangements have resulted in 68 prisoners escaping between 2012 and 2015, of whom only 12 could be re-arrested.

Of the 68 prisoners, 41 of

them fled from the jails with the help of people from outside by scaling the boundary walls or breaking the iron gate.

Another 27 prisoners escaped from police custody in the existing security set-up of the jail.

Sources informed that although the Prisons Department had initiated steps to fill up a few posts recently, nothing has come up till yet.

"The proposal to install close circuit cameras at the Guwahati Jail is a welcome step although it would be interesting to see how much time the authorities take to make it a reality," sources pointed out.

## Two persons tortured

CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, May 28: Two persons of a remote village in Morigaon district were tortured on suspicion of being witches on Saturday. According to the police in Blurbandha village, one Moni Bordoloi (30) herself as a soothsayer said that two persons namely Dhru Bordoloi (70) and his sister-in-law Anjali Bordoloi (64) were witches and they were planning to kill many villagers. The two were tortured yesterday and were threatened by the superstitious villagers with dire consequences.

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**CAPSULE****Maruti target**

NEW DELHI, May 28: Country's largest car-maker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) is targeting to sell 3 lakh units of vehicles equipped with different automatic transmission technologies by 2020. The company currently sells around 94,000 units per annum of vehicles with AGS (automated gear shift), AT (automatic transmission) and CVT (continuously variable transmission). It is counting on the more affordable AGS technology to drive sales growth of cars with automatic transmission. — PTI

**Thomas Cook**

NEW DELHI, May 28: Travel services provider Thomas Cook India is aiming at up to 16 per cent growth for its holidays business during the current financial year. The company also expects online sales to increase contribution to the holidays business going forward from around 21 per cent at present. "We are looking at a growth of 14 to 16 per cent in our holidays business going forward during this fiscal year," Thomas Cook (India) CMD Madhavan Menon told PTI.

**Mahindra e-vehicles**

NAGPUR, May 28: Banking on the shared mobility space after launch of India's maiden electric vehicle project in Nagpur, automobile giant Mahindra & Mahindra is eyeing a capacity of 5,000 e-vehicles a month by 2019 which will be expanded further. On May 26, Nagpur earned the distinction of becoming the country's first city with a fleet of 200 electric vehicles, including taxis, buses, e-rickshaws and autos. — PTI

**Raymond capex**

MUMBAI, May 28: Textile and apparel major Raymond will invest Rs 350 crore in capacity and research and development, the company said today. "Of the Rs 350 crore, Rs 200 crore will be allocated to manufacturing expansion... while Rs 150 crore will go towards retail expansion," Sanjay Behl, CEO, Raymond, told PTI here.

**Midmark centre**

GUWAHATI, May 28: Midmark (India), a leader in patient positioning equipment, has launched its first state-of-the-art Experience Centre in North-East India in Silchar. The company with its authorised distributor Arti Enterprises, the centre will offer the latest patient positioning technologies of global standards in the areas of OPD, ICU, ward care, oncology, dialysis, digital diagnostics, and homecare. Midmark technologies blend features such as patient comfort and ease of mobility etc., a press release said here.

**phasis on visa issue**

NEW DELHI, May 28: IT company Mphasis doesn't see any impact on its ongoing visa row on its business as it plans to invest and expand more in Europe. "I think our footprint on visa front is far smaller and manageable compared to some of the larger players. We continued very diligently to make sure plans are in place to avoid any disruption. It hasn't been any. In case there is any knee-jerk or short term event, we are protected from that," Mphasis Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director Nitin Rakesh told PTI in an interview.

**UClean plans**

NEW DELHI, May 28: Tech-enabled laundry start-up UClean is looking at raising fresh funds to the tune of \$5 million (about Rs 32 crore) this year to fuel its aggressive growth plans. "We do have plans to raise funds this year which will be primarily be utilised for technology, training and marketing. We are looking at raising around \$5 million in this current year," UClean founder and CEO Arunabh Sinha told PTI.

# RBI, SEBI step up NSE probe, top officials under scanner

NEW DELHI, May 28: Regulators RBI and SEBI have stepped up probe into alleged lapses in high-frequency trading offered through NSE's 'co-location' facility, while the role of some top officials including board member and ex-CEO Ravi Narain is also being looked into.

The Finance Ministry is also keeping a "close watch" on the entire case and wants capital markets watchdog SEBI to fast-track the investigations as it involves the country's largest stock exchange in terms of turnover and may have a bearing on the overall market sentiments, sources said.

"The show-case notices have been issued by SEBI to the exchange and several top executives including Narain as

also some former top management personnel, and these would be soon followed by 'summons' for their personal hearings," a top official said.

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## Lapses in high-frequency trading offered through exchange's 'co-location' facility

the government as well as from the exchange itself said that pressure is building from within the board of the exchange, from some of its shareholders and a few other stakeholders for the exit of some top as well as mid-level executives.

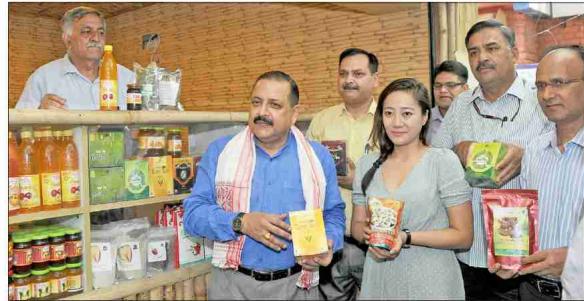
While sources close to the top management of the exchange

sent across a strong message. "It has become very important to tell the world that the exchange is serious about keeping its image clean and acting against any lapses, rather than sweeping things under the carpet," he said, pointing out that the delay in "closing the matter" has begun to re-

sult in several resignations at top-to-middle levels.

When contacted, an NSE spokesman declined to give any official comment on specific queries and said: "As the matter is under discussion between NSE and the regulator, you will appreciate that we will not be able to comment on your queries."

"The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has also received 'references' from agencies like CBI as well as from some MPs regarding the case, in which the regulator began a probe in early 2015, months after it was brought to light by 'whistle-blower' complaints but no conclusive action has been taken as yet," a top official said. — PTI



Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (IC), Prime Minister's Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Dr Jitendra Singh visiting the recently launched North East Organic Showroom-cum-Restaurant at Dilli Haat, in New Delhi on Sunday. — PIB

## Govt misses opportunity to spur growth: CMA

NEW DELHI, May 28: The government has missed out on an opportunity to spur growth in the struggling cement and housing segment by putting the commodity at the highest tax slab of 28 per cent under GST, according to industry body CMA.

The Cement Manufacturers Association (CMA) also lamented that tax incidence on cement in India, which is the highest in Asia-Pacific, has affected the health of the industry that is witnessing only 70 per cent of capacity utilisation due to low demand.

"Presently, 'housing for all' is a big-ticket item for the government and by reducing price-

plus cost of logistics, this is also an industry which is very intensive with low margins. GST was an opportunity to provide relief to the industry but has been missed," CMA president Shailendra Chouksey told PTI.

At present, tax incidence on cement in India is around 60 per cent, he said, adding, "This is the highest in the Asia-Pacific region, which has an average of 11.4 per cent. Even Sri Lanka, where rates are the second highest, is only 20 per cent."

Commenting on the health of the industry, Chouksey, who is a whole-time director of JK Lakshmi Cement, said: "Before 2011, the cement industry had a double-digit growth

and since 2012, it declined to single digit."

In 2016-17, there was one per cent decline, he said, adding, "The CAGR growth of last five years was about 4 per cent, while it was 8 per cent before the period."

While the industry has a total capacity of 435 million tonnes (MT) per annum, Chouksey said only 280 MT was utilised for meeting domestic demand and 5 MT for exports.

Chouksey, however, expressed hope that the industry could see growth considering the government's focus on infrastructure development and housing development. — PTI

## High GST on cement, housing segment

While the industry is ailing, a lower tax rate on cement would have reduced prices, which in turn could have benefited the housing segment – the biggest consumer – he added.

"On a 50 kg bag of cement costing Rs 300, Rs 180 is tax

plus of cement a signal would have gone that it cares for the people," Chouksey said.

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of 11.4 per cent. Even Sri Lanka, where rates are the second highest, is only 20 per cent."

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## Finmin initiates hunt for new SBI chief

NEW DELHI, May 28: The Finance Ministry has initiated the process for finding a new chief of the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) as Arundhati Bhattacharya's extended term comes to an end on October 6.

Department of Financial Services has communicated to Banks Board Bureau the emerging vacancies at the top level of PSU banks which will have to be filled during the course of the year, a senior Finance Ministry official said.

This includes chairman and one managing director of the SBI, which alone has a market share of more than 20 per cent.

We continued very diligently to make sure plans are in place to avoid any disruption. It hasn't been any. In case there is any knee-jerk or short term event, we are protected from that," Mphasis Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director Nitin Rakesh told PTI in an interview.

**UClean plans**

NEW DELHI, May 28: Tech-enabled laundry start-up UClean is looking at raising fresh funds to the tune of \$5 million (about Rs 32 crore) this year to fuel its aggressive growth plans. "We do have plans to raise funds this year which will be primarily be utilised for technology, training and marketing. We are looking at raising around \$5 million in this current year," UClean founder and CEO Arunabh Sinha told PTI.

It is perhaps the only one of its kind in

the system of integration would at least take a year.

The government had in February approved the merger of these five associate banks with SBI. Later in March, the Cabinet approved the merger of BMB as well.

SBI first merged State Bank of Saumurash with itself in 2008. Two years later, State Bank of Indore was merged with it.

For the fourth quarter ended March 2017, the bank reported more than double its net profit of Rs 5.36 per cent to Rs 10,484 crore as against Rs 9,951 crore in the previous fiscal. With stock prices inching up, SBI has lined up a share sale through which it intends to raise Rs 15,000 crore during the current fiscal.

It is in the process of appointing six merchant bankers for managing its proposed share sale. The Central Government holds 62.22 per cent stake in the bank as of March 2017. — PTI

Blatcharya and the focus on pre-owned exotic cars.

Ahuja, who focuses on pre-owned cars that cost between Rs 50 lakh and Rs 1.5 crore and manages to sell at least one car a day, owns a showroom in Gurugram and a car studio in Sultanpur, New Delhi.

"I would like to focus more on cars in the bracket of Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1.5 crore rather than the Rs 1.5 crore to Rs 3 crore segment (the super-luxury segment). The volume of business in the first bracket is more than that in the Rs 1.5 crore-plus segment," Ahuja told IANS in an interaction in his Gurugram showroom.

"I would like to do at least 75 per cent of my business in the Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1.5 crore segment," he added.

Big Boy Toyz gets orders for its exotic cars through its online portal, bigboytoyz.com. Ahuja says 30 per cent of his business – of buying and

## Tax slabs for different items under GST worry traders: CAIT

NEW DELHI, May 28:

Classification of different items under various tax slabs of GST has created an environment of anxiety and concern among the trading community across the country, Confederation of All India Traders said today.

Various verticals of trade are demanding lower tax on items being dealt by them since they have been categorised under a higher tax slab in comparison to the slab of current VAT regime, CAIT said.

As per an analysis, 1,211

goods and 36 services have been so far classified under GST out of which nearly 50 per cent goods have been placed under 18 per cent rate; 14 per cent under 5 per cent rate; 17 per cent under 12 per cent rate and 24 per cent under 28 per cent rate, CAIT said in a statement.

In view of growing discontent about the proposed GST rates, CAIT has urged the government to revisit the rate schedule.

"The wider impact of the classification of items under different tax slabs needs to be gauged very cautiously since

under GST, not only the taxes paid on goods but even the taxes paid on services will be eligible for input tax credit," CAIT said. Besides, taxes paid on inter-state purchases of goods or availing of services will also be eligible for input tax credit, it added.

"Hitherto, both these advantages were not available under VAT tax regime. Therefore, impact on the prices of commodities will have to be drawn after calculating advantages of input tax credit," CAIT said. — PTI

## IOC overtakes ONGC as India's most profitable PSU

NEW DELHI, May 28: Indian Oil Corp (IOC) has overtaken Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) to become India's most profitable state-owned company.

IOC, which has for decades been India's biggest company by turnover, posted a 70 per cent jump in net profit to Rs 19,106.40 crore in the financial year ended March 31, 2017.

This was more than the Rs 17,900-crore net profit ONGC posted in the 2016-17 financial year, making IOC the most profitable PSU, according to earnings statements of the companies.

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries retained the crown of being India's most profitable company for the third year in a row, posting a net profit of Rs

29,010 crore in financial year 2016-17.

Tata Consultancy Services, India's largest software services exporter, with a net profit of Rs 26,357 crore was the second most profitable company in the country.

ONGC was for long India's most profitable company but lost the crown to private sector Reliance and TCS a couple of years back.

White IOC Chairman B Ashok attributed the profit growth to higher refining margins, inventory gains and operational efficiencies, — PTI

## BSNL plans satellite phone service for all in 2 yrs

NEW DELHI, May 28: State-run BSNL is planning to extend satellite phone services for all citizens in two years that can work at any corner of the country and remain immune to breakdown of mobile services during natural calamities.

"We have applied to International Maritime Organisation. It will take some time to complete the process. In 18-24 months, we will be in a position to open satellite phone service for citizens in a phased manner," BSNL CMD Anupam Srivastava told PTI.

Satellite phones will be able to work in any part of the country, even inside flights and ships, as they depend on signals directly from satellites located about 35,700 kms above the earth.

Traditional mobile networks cover around 25-30 km around towers and can transmit signals to phones placed equal to or below the height of the tower.

BSNL has started satellite phone service using INMARSAT service which will be initially offered to government agencies and later extended to citizens in a phased manner.

The service will cover areas where no networks are present and will be provided by INMARSAT which has 14 satellites.

Agencies handling disasters, state police, railways, Border Security Force and other government agencies will be given the phones in the first phase. — PTI

## Indian tax laws 2nd most complex in Asia-Pacific: Survey

NEW DELHI, May 28: Indian tax laws are perceived to be the second most complex in the Asia-Pacific region, becoming even less predictable over the last three years, a Deloitte survey said.

India ranks only after China in having most complex jurisdiction for taxation and most complicated requirements of tax, the Asia-Pacific Complexity Survey conducted by Deloitte said.

Japan, Australia, Indonesia and South Korea trail India in the complexity index. "In these two jurisdictions (China and India), well over half of the respondents believe complexity in the regime has increased in the last 3 years," it said.

By 'complexity', it meant the perceived level of difficulty in interpreting the tax laws and rules in the relevant jurisdictions. "An overwhelming majority of over 90 per cent respondents said that they would like to see tax reform in India along with China and Indonesia. Specifically for India, the survey respondents suggest that they look forward to reform taking place in timeliness and quality of audits and adoption of BEPS recommendations," Deloitte said.

With regard to consistency in tax policies, a majority of the respondents felt that India has become less consistent over the last three years.

Consistency refers to the

AS per the latest auction sale (No 11) held at Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) on May 23-24, the total tea offerings were 91,124 packages, out of which 66 per cent were sold. Market witnessed fair demand on all teas while improved liquor tea sold well. Other teas sold easier according to quality.

Major packeteers actively participated in the auction. Northern Indian buyers operated on liquorising sorts. The auction average price for this week stood at Rs 140.79, up by Rs 1.92 from last year.

**Top Garden Sold prices**

BOP	Price	BOPSM	Price	QF/RF	Price
HILKHARI	336	HILKHARI	298	MAHALUXMI	270
MALJIPUR	679	SOTAI	270	LOKDHARA	265
SOTAI	261	MALJIPUR	271	CHILDIRAY	251
DOOMURULLING	241	HOCKHMOL	262	MAHOLUP	249
MAHALUXMI	241	MAHALUXMI	256	SOTAI	248

Secretary, Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers Association (GTABA)

## Massive security across Kashmir Valley as Hizbul militant Bhat buried

SRINAGAR, May 28: Authorities on Sunday clamped curfew and imposed restrictions on the Kashmir Valley to maintain law and order and prevent violence, as top Hizbul Mujahideen commander Sabzar Ahmad Bhat was buried in his ancestral village in Tral of South Kashmir with hundreds attending the midnight funeral.

Though authorities said curfew would be imposed only in seven police station areas of Nowhatta, Rainawari, Khanyar, MR Gunj, Safa Kadal, Kralkhud and Maisuma in Srinagar on Sunday, the city was virtually sealed in the morning to prevent vehicular movement.

Heavy deployment of security forces was made in the old city areas of Srinagar to prevent violence. One person was killed and 40 others were injured in violent clashes between the stone-pelters and security forces on Saturday.

Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman Yasin Malik was arrested on Sunday and shifted to central jail Srinagar. On Saturday, Malik had visited Bhat's residence in Ruttama in Tral and expressed his condolences over the death to his mother.

Bhat was buried past midnight in his ancestral graveyard in Ruttama village, as hundreds converged - arriving from different areas - over the death to his mother.

On Saturday, one protester was killed when protesters tried to breach the cordon of security forces in Sainam village where the Hizbul commander Sabzar Ahmed Bhat and his accomplices were trapped.

In clashes at other place, 40 people in-

cluding 28 protesters and 12 security men were injured.

Of the injured protesters, eight are being treated for bullet injuries while seven have suffered pellet injuries and are admitted to different hospitals in Srinagar.

Restrictions under Section 144 CrPCs were imposed in Ganderbal, Badgam, Bandipora and Kupwara in north Kashmir while in south Kashmir, the districts of Anantnag, Kulgam, Puhama and Shopian saw unprecedented security arrangements in place to ensure minimum attendance at Bhat's funeral prayers.

People in hundreds had arrived on Saturday from different places of south Kashmir to attend the burial of Bhat and Faizan, his associate, who were killed in a gunfight with the security forces in Sainam village. On Sunday morning, call facility incoming and outgoing, were suspended on all mobile phones whether paid and prepaid. Only postpaid BSNL mobile phones are working at the moment. - IANS



Security personnel patrolling on deserted Nulla Mar road in Srinagar on Sunday. - IANS

## 800 Kashmiri youths appear for Army exam amid unrest

SRINAGAR, May 28: Defying the separatists' bandh call, nearly 800 Kashmiri youths today appeared in the Army's common entrance exam in the Valley, which has been hit by fresh protests following the killing of Hizbul militant Sabzar Bhat.

Curfew-like restrictions were imposed in many parts of the Valley to maintain law and order in the wake of violence sparked by Bhat's killing and the two-day shutdown called by separatist conglomerate the Hurriyat Conference.

An Army official said 799 candidates appeared today in the common entrance exam for selection of junior commissioned officers and other ranks held at Pattan and Srinagar.

"It is a clear rejection of regressive bandh calls for choosing a brighter future," the official said.

He said 16 of the 815 candidates, who had passed the physical and medical tests held earlier, did not turn up for the written exam.

Several parts of the Kash-

mir Valley were on the boil after security forces inflicted heavy damage on militants, killing eight of them, including Bhat, who had succeeded Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani following his killing last July.

Violence erupted yesterday at more than 50 places in the Valley including in Srinagar and Tral as stone-pelting youths were out on streets attacking security forces.

Wani's killing had sparked a long spell of unrest in the Valley last year. - PTI



Work in progress for Ratha Yatra of Lord Jagannath, at Puri Temple Road in Odisha on Sunday. - IANS

## Jharkhand tribal school dropouts train for foreign jobs

BUNDI, May 28: In a country where millions of degree-holders struggle for employment, Dayanidhi Pradhan, 23, a Class 8 dropout in Jharkhand, dreams of an overseas job.

And achieving that aspiration is a real possibility - thanks to a multi-trade skill development institute that has placed hundreds of tribal youths in foreign countries.

Pradhan and over 100 others are currently enrolled for short-term skill training in various trades like electric fitting, plumbing, AC ductman and pipe fitting at the Kalyan Gurukul, housed in a sprawling green campus in this town, some 40 km from Ranchi.

"Gurukul in Bundu has a history of placing almost all of its students abroad," Pradhan told IANS, remembering how his peers - Boodhu Munda, Gopal Munda and Shahmawaz Bhai, who were also skilled at the institute - are now working in the Gulf. Most of the tribal youth working in the Gulf had not even visited Ranchi, the state capital, he said. Kalyan Gurukul is run by PanIT Alumini Reach for India Foundation (PARFI), sponsored by the

state government and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) of the government of India.

The institute began operations in October 2013 with a batch of 19 with the aim of training tribal youth as well as those from other economically-backward sections of society who had dropped out of schools.

The government has opened 10 similar training centres across the state.

All these institutes - that are much like ITIs - are called "Gurukul", replicating not only the name but also a strict regime of discipline and time management of ancient Indian schools.

Teachers and students live on the campus which also has a huge vegetable garden maintained by trainees. Every morning starts with yoga, meditation, prayers and a healthy breakfast before classes begin.

The Bundu centre is headed by ex-serviceman Pramod Kumar Pandey, who said "patriotic values" coupled with life skills, including financial and credit literacy, are part of the training programme.

"Students enrolled in Gurukul have to pay a basic fee

of Rs 18,000 provided through a loan financing scheme with NABARD. Repayment starts once the student gets a placement," Pandey said.

Many of Gurukul students now work in Dubai, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar, he said. "We hire skills of the students according to the contemporary needs of the market. Since inception, we have placed around 276 students in Dubai, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka. The latest batch of around 104 students have also been selected by recruiters and are waiting to go to various Gulf countries."

Gangadar Munda's brother Boodhu Munda - a Gurukul alumnus - works in Dubai. The tribesman from Hesu said the "entire village", in Hesu hills, was proud of his brother who went abroad "and secured a good future despite belonging to a poor family and being a school dropout".

"Boodhu went to Dubai around seven months ago. He sends us money every month. Our financial status is getting better now and we are able to educate other children in the family," Gangadar said. - IANS.

## Kapil Mishra unlikely to face expulsion

NEW DELHI, May 28: Notwithstanding his persistent attacks on AAP leadership, sacked Delhi minister Kapil Mishra is unlikely to face expulsion from the party.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) sources said expulsion of the rebel MLA will give him a chance to join another party or form a separate group in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, which the party wants to avoid though it has a brute majority in the House.

Mishra, once a close confidant of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, had levelled corruption charges against him and other AAP leaders, which created ripples in the city politics and dent ed the image of the party. - PTI

## 'No action from govt on Zika virus'

AHMEDABAD, May 28: Senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel today alleged lack of action from government side after three positive cases of Zika virus were detected in Ahmedabad.

The Rajya Sabha MP from Gujarat tweeted that he is "Worried about Zika cases emerging in Gujarat. Matter of concern that there was no action from government side until WHO made the report public."

While the state government was aware of three positive cases in January and February, the matter came in public domain only after the report was published by the WHO on its website yesterday. The WHO confirmed three cases of Zika virus, including a pregnant woman, from Ahmedabad, the first in the country.

All the cases are from Bapunagar area of the city. "The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare - Government of India reported three laboratory-confirmed cases of Zika virus, including a pregnant woman, from Ahmedabad," the global health body said. - PTI

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## India's 1st under-river metro tunnel to be completed next week

NEW DELHI, May 28: The tunnelling work under the East-West Metro project, the first such under-river project in the country, to provide metro connectivity between Howrah and Kolkata is slated to be completed next week.

The under-river tunnel is a crucial link for the Railway's 16.6-km long East-West Metro project in Kolkata.

The 520-metre twin tunnel, one east-bound and the other west-bound, is built 30 metres below the riverbed.

Commuters between Howrah and Mahakaran metro stations will be under the river for only about a minute when the metro train will pass through the tunnel at a speed of 80 km per hour.

### Public cattle slaughter

Cong, CPI-M youth wings slammed

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, May 28: Slamming the cattle slaughter in public by leaders of Congress and the CPI-M to protest the new rules on cattle sale, BJP's Kerala president Kummamneni Rajasekheran on Sunday expressed his "deep concern" and asked if they had turned into "butchers".

"This is with deep concern that these acts conducted by these political parties are being seen as they are venting their anger against the BJP," Rajasekheran said.

People should be really concerned because these people are indulging in politics with the minds of 'butchers' and this is a dangerous trend,"

Rajasekheran said.

"It was shocking to see these people walking around with the head of the cattle as blood was dripping. Will anyone with any common sense indulge in this sort of activity? These acts predictably bring a gloomy future for Kerala," he added. - IANS

There will be walkways in the tunnels for evacuation of passengers in case of emergency, the official said, adding it was a challenging task to dig tunnel under the river.

For the Railways, besides the tunnel under the Hooghly river, drilling work is going on for the seven-km-long under-sea route of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad rail corridor to ascertain soil condition for India's first bullet train path.

Passengers will get the thrill of travelling under the sea at a maximum speed of 350 km per hour, another first in the country, near Thane in the upcoming high-speed train project connecting the two metropolis. - PTI

## 11 die due to lightning, rain-related incidents

NEW DELHI, May 28: At least 11 people died in lightning and rain-related incidents in Bihar today, even as hot weather conditions continued in many parts of the country and heat-related toll in Bihar climbed to 12.

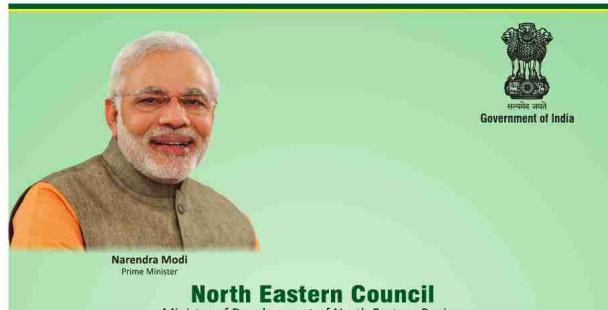
However, in a good news, the onset of the southwest monsoon is likely to advance due to a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal. The Met department said that rains will be likely to start in Kerala by May 30-31, marking the onset of monsoon in the country.

In parts of national capital, the mercury was below the 40-degree mark with some areas in the city witnessing rainfall. The Safdarjung observatory registered a high of 36.3 degrees Celsius while areas under Palam, Lodhi Road, Ridge and Ayanagar observatories recorded maximum temperatures of 39.7 degrees Celsius, 35 degrees Celsius, 35.8 degrees Celsius and 37.9 degrees Celsius respectively.

Rainfall recorded in the city during the last 24 hours till 8.30 am was 11.9 mm. In Bihar, at least 11 people, including eight women, were killed in separate lightning and rain-related incidents.

Five persons, including four women, were killed when lightning struck them in East Champaran district. In West Champaran district, six persons were killed in various incidents of wall collapse during a storm in that area.

Meanwhile, sunstroke toll climbed to 12 in Odisha even as rains triggered by the depression over the Bay of Bengal and a nor'west in some areas brought respite from scorching heat. Two more deaths were reported in Samalpur and Barghara district since yesterday. With this, four heat-related deaths have been reported from Sambalpur, while three deaths each took place in Angul and Barghara districts and one each in Balangir and Bhadrak. - PTI



Dr. Jitendra Singh  
Chairman, North Eastern Council  
Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region (Independent Charge), Minister of State for Prime Minister Office, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Government of India

Members  
Padmanabha Balakrishna Acharya - Governor, Arunachal Pradesh & Nagaland  
Banwarilal Purohit - Governor, Assam & Meghalaya  
Dr. Najma Heptulla - Governor, Manipur  
Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma, PVSM, USM, AVSM, VSM (Retd.) - Governor, Mizoram  
Shrinivasa Dadasaheb Patil - Governor, Sikkim  
Tathagata Roy - Governor, Tripura  
C.K. Das IAS (Retd.) - Member

Pema Khandu - Chief Minister, Arunachal Pradesh  
Barananda Sonowal - Chief Minister, Assam  
Nongthombam Biren Singh - Chief Minister, Manipur  
Dr. Mukul Sangma - Chief Minister, Meghalaya  
Lal Thanhawla - Chief Minister, Mizoram  
Dr. Shurhozelie Liezetsu - Chief Minister, Nagaland  
Pawan Chamling - Chief Minister, Sikkim  
Manik Sarkar - Chief Minister, Tripura

NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL  
Government of India, Nongrim Hills, Shillong, Meghalaya  
Website: www.necouncil.gov.in

ASSAM | ARUNACHAL PRADESH | MANIPUR | MEGHALAYA | MIZORAM | NAGALAND | SIKKIM | TRIPURA



## Intelligence identifies 23,000 jihadis in Britain

LONDON, May 28: The British intelligence has identified 23,000 jihadis extremists living in the country as potential terrorist attackers, the media reported on Sunday.

The scale of the challenge facing police and security services was disclosed by sources in Whitehall after criticism that multiple opportunities to stop the May 22 suicide bombing on the Manchester Arena had been missed, Xinhua news agency reported.

The bombing at the closing set of pop singer Ariana Grande's concert left 22 persons dead and 59 others injured.

About 3,000 of the 23,000 jihadis are judged to pose a threat, the report said.

Those 3,000 are under investigation or active monitoring in 500 operations conducted by police and intelligence services.

The rest have featured in previous inquiries and are categorised as posing a "residual risk".

The two terrorists who carried out attacks in Britain this year – Manchester bomber Salman Abedi and Westminster attacker Khalid Masood, who killed five people two months ago – were former subjects of interest and no longer under any surveillance, the report said.

Prime Minister Theresa May acknowledged the terror threat in Britain from "critical" to "severe" on Saturday morning, but said troops will remain deployed on the streets until Monday.

Britain's top police officer for counter-terrorism said 11 men were held with more arrests expected.

London Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley said significant arrests meant a large part of the terror network around suicide bomber Abedi had been wound up.

"The high pace and rapid progress of this investigation is continuing. There were three more arrests overnight and we now have 11 men in custody. There are now 17 searches either concluded or continuing at various addresses largely in the northwest of the country and we are getting a greater understanding of the preparation of the bomb," he said. – IANS

## Around the WORLD

### Writing a letter to terrorists!

LONDON, May 28: A new book published in the UK recommends school children as young as seven to "write a letter to a terrorist" to help understand their motives.

The book, *Talking About Terrorism*, published weeks before the Manchester Arena attack, describes the indiscriminate mass murder of innocent members of the public as a "type of war".

It tells primary age children that terrorists kill people because they believe they are not treated "fairly and not shown respect", *Daily Express* reported.

In an activity recommended for pupils aged seven to 11, teachers are urged to "invite children to write a letter to a terrorist. If they could ask a terrorist six questions, what would they be?"

The book, published by Brilliant Publications and containing a foreword by Peter Wanless, the chief executive of the NSPCC, aims to prevent child abuse. In a foreword, Wanless said: "It is potentially dangerous." – PTI



70th Cannes Film Festival - screening of the film based on a true story (Drapes une histoire vraie) out of competition - Red Carpet Arrivals - Cannes, Friday, Saturday, Director Roman Polanski and cast members Eva Green, Emmanuelle Seigner pose. - UNI

### World's youngest club DJ

TOKYO, May 28: A 6-year-old boy has set a new Guinness record for being the world's youngest club DJ after he played an hour-long set at a restaurant in Japan.

Itsuki Morita, who has just started attending elementary school in Japan, played a number of tracks using professional DJ decks in front of a big crowd of both adults and other kids.

The 6-year-old Morita was first taught to mix by a friend of his mother.

He likes to play a mixture of disco and rock music, however Swedish musician Avicii is his favourite DJ.

"I saw people DJing and thought it looks fun," Morita said, on being asked why he wanted to become a DJ.

"I was really happy that I could DJ."

Everyone says it's great," he said. – PTI

*Itsuki Morita*

# China slams G7 for 'interfering' in disputes

BEIJING, May 28: China today strongly denounced the just-concluded G7 summit, accusing it of interfering in the East China Sea and South China Sea disputes.

The G7 summit held in Taormina, Italy, ended with a joint communiqué yesterday, saying the members are committed to "maintaining a rules-based order in the maritime domain based on the principles of international law".

The statement expressed con-

cerns about the situation in the East China Sea and South China Sea.

China's position on the East China Sea and South China Sea issues is clear and consistent, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Kang said in a statement.

China has been committed to properly handling disputes, cementing cooperation and safeguarding peace and stability of the East China Sea and South China Sea through talks and consultations directly with related parties, he said. China

Chinese warships in South China Sea



claims almost all of the South China Sea. Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei have counter-claims.

China last year rejected an international tribunal judgement quashing its claims over the area.

Lu urged the G7 and countries outside to understand the situation, stick to the pledge to take no position on relevant disputes, fully respect the efforts made by the countries in the region to handle disputes and stop making irresponsible remarks.

China has also been opposing US dispatching naval ships and aircraft to assert freedom of navigation.

The G7 consists of the United States, France, Canada, Germany, the UK, Italy and Japan. – PTI



North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un watches the test of a new-type anti-aircraft guided weapon system organised by the Academy of National Defence Science in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), on Sunday. – UNI

## Philippines' Duterte vows to ignore SC on martial law

JOLO, May 28: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has said he will ignore Supreme Court and congress as he enforces martial law across the southern third of the country, despite the Constitution giving them oversight.

Duterte on Tuesday imposed martial law in the Mindanao region, home to 20 million people, following deadly clashes in a mostly Muslim-populated city involving militants he said were trying to establish a caliphate for the Islamic State group.

"Until the police and the armed forces say that the Philippines is safe, this martial law will continue. I will not listen to others. The Supreme Court, congress, they are not here," Duterte told soldiers on Saturday.

"Are they the ones dying and losing blood, bleeding, hemorrhaging because there is hurt, no, no reinforcement? It's not them."

The 1987 constitution imposes limits on martial law to prevent a repeat of the abuses carried out under the regime of dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who was deposed by a famous "People Power" revolution the previous year.

The Constitution requires congress to approve a President's declaration of martial law and limits military rule for 60 days. If a president wants to extend it, he or she must again get congressional endorsement.

The Supreme Court can also rule on martial law's legality.

"The Supreme Court will say they will examine into the factual basis. Why I don't know. They are not soldiers. They do not know what is happening on the ground," Duterte said Saturday on Jolo, a southern island that is under martial law.

A day after declaring martial law, Duterte described the nine years of military rule under Marcos as "very good", and said his would be similar. Duterte also told soldiers on Friday they would be allowed to conduct searches and arrests without warrants.

"During martial law, your commanders, you can arrest any person, search any house. There is no more warrant needed," Duterte told troops on Friday.

Duterte's comments contradicted a government statement released on Saturday to explain martial law. – AFP

## China denies 'unsafe' intercept of US plane

BEIJING, May 28: Accusing the Pentagon of distorting facts, China today denied its charge that an encounter between Chinese fighter jets and an American surveillance plane over the South China Sea was "unsafe and unprofessional".

Chinese J-10 fighter planes intercepted a US Navy P-3 Orion operating in international airspace over the South China Sea, the Pentagon had claimed.

The US termed the move as "unsafe and unprofessional" and said that it would convey its concerns to the Chinese government.

However, Chinese defence ministry in a statement said the US account of the incident "was not in accordance with the facts".

"On May 25, a US patrol plane carried out reconnaissance activities in the airspace southeast of Hong Kong, China," it said in a statement on its website. – PTI

## Petition in Pak SC seeks immediate execution of Jadhav

ISLAMABAD, May 28: A petition has been filed in Pakistan's Supreme Court seeking immediate execution of Indian prisoner on death row Kulbhushan Jadhav if he failed to get his capital punishment overturned.

Muzaffar Ali, a lawyer by profession, filed the petition yesterday through Advocate Farooq Naek – a leader of opposition Pakistan People's Party and former Senate chairman.

The petition asked the apex court to order the federal government to ensure an early decision under the domestic laws on any pending appeal by 46-year-old Jadhav.

The petitioner requested the Supreme Court to order the immediate execution of the Indian spy if he failed to get his capital punishment overturned, Dawn reported today.

Pakistan claims its security forces had arrested Jadhav from the restive Balochistan province on March 3 last year after he reportedly entered from Iran.

A Pakistan military court had awarded the death sentence to Jadhav for espionage and subversive activities.

However, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), through an interim ruling, stayed Jadhav's execution till the time the case pending with it reached its logical end.

The petitioner also requested the court to declare that Jadhav's trial had been conducted in accordance with the law, that due process had been observed and that he had had consular access as was demanded by India.

The federal government, through the secretaries of interior and law, and the court of appeal constituted under the Pakistan Army Act (PPA) 1952, General Headquarters Rawalpindi, were named the respondents in the case.

The petition mentioned that Jadhav's mother had moved an appeal on April 26 under Sections 131 and 133(b) of the PPA.

According to Section 131, any person who considers himself aggrieved by the sentence of a court martial may submit a petition to the federal government or the chief of the army staff. – PTI



US First Lady Melania Trump introduces her husband President Donald Trump as he rallies with service members at Sigonella Air Force Base at Naval Air Station Sigonella at the end of Trump's participation in the G7 summit in Sicily, Italy on Saturday. – UNI

## B'desh reinstalls Greek statue in front of SC annexe

DHAKA, May 28: Bangladesh today reinstated the statue of a Greek Goddess clad in a saree, taken down from the front of the Supreme Court after religious hardliners deemed it "un-Islamic", to a different location within the premises.

The sculpture of Themis – the goddess of justice – had been in place for less than six months when it was removed on Friday after Islamist groups claimed it hurt the religious sentiments of Muslims.

Sculptor Mirjal Haque, who engraved the statue, supervised the reinstatement process. The reinstatement began yesterday and was completed today with the help of around 30 workers.

Hifazat-e-Islam, Olama League and several other Islamist organisations have been

demanding the removal of the statue.

Radical Islamist group Hefazat-e-Islam had targeted the statue since its erection in December, saying it did not reflect the Islamic culture of the Muslims in Bangladesh, the *Dhaka Tribune* reported.

Just a day after being removed from the front of the Supreme Court, the statue of Lady Justice was reinstated today before the annexe building of the apex court, Haque said. "I wasn't given any clarification but was only ordered to relocate it," he said.

The statue was erected in December 2016, holding a sword and the scales of justice in her hands.

The statue, which is not of the Greek goddess but a Bengali woman, has ruffled feathers in the Muslim-majority nation, who disapprove of the statue and approved its removal. – PTI

with hardliners staging massive protests in recent months.

According to the hardliners, the statue, a variation on the Greek goddess Themis, goes against Islam, the report had said.

Policemen had used tear gas and water canons as protest mounted after authorities removed the statue from the Supreme Court premises. Scores of slogan chanting protesters rallied near the apex court complex where police hurled tear gas canisters and coloured water from water canons to disperse them the report said.

In April, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who leads the secular Awami League party, apparently backed the Islamists by expressing her dislike for the statue and approved its removal. – PTI

The short sleepers with metabolic syndrome were also 1.99 times more likely to die from any cause compared to those without metabolic syndrome.

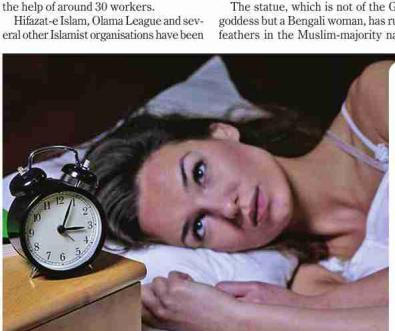
"If you have several heart disease risk factors, taking care of your sleep and consulting with a clinician if you have insufficient sleep is important if you want to lower your risk of death from heart disease or stroke," said lead author Julio Fernandez-Mendoza, Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

For the study, published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, the team selected 1,344 adults (average age 49 years, 42 per cent male)

who agreed to spend one night in a sleep laboratory.

The results showed that 39.2 per cent of the participants had at least three of the risk factors – body mass index (BMI) higher than 30 and elevated total cholesterol, blood pressure, fasting blood sugar and triglyceride levels.

During an average follow-up of 16.6 years, 22 per cent of the participants died. "Future clinical trials are needed to determine whether lengthening sleep, in combination with lowering blood pressure and glucose, improves the prognosis of people with the metabolic syndrome," Fernandez-Mendoza said. – IANS



## Sleeping less than 6 hours may double death risk

NEW YORK, May 28: Failing to sleep less than six hours may nearly double the risk of death in people with metabolic syndrome – a combination of diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity, researchers have warned.

A study found that people with metabolic syndrome who slept for more than six hours were about 1.49 times more likely to die of heart disease or stroke.

Conversely, those who slept less than six hours were about 2.1 times more likely to die of heart disease or stroke.

For those who got more sleep, the risk of death was more modest, the researchers said.

# Messi magic inspires Barca to retain Copa del Rey

MADRID, May 28: A Lionel Messi master-class salvaged some silverware to end Barcelona's season and gave coach Luis Enrique a victorious send-off as the Catalans retained the Copa del Rey with a 3-1 win over Alaves.

Messi opened the scoring then helped tee up Neymar and Paco Alcacer to lead Barca to a record 29th Cup triumph after Theo Hernandez's brilliant free-kick had briefly brought Alaves level.

Victory means Enrique bows out after three seasons in charge with nine trophies to his name, including the Cup in every year of his reign.

However, once again it was Messi who inspired Barca to bounce back from the disappointment of losing their La Liga title to Real Madrid last weekend with a stunning individual display.

Barca were without the suspended Luis Suarez and Sergi Roberto and Enrique was forced into another reshuffle just 11 minutes in as Javier Mascherano was forced off with a head injury.

Yet, whilst Barca's depth has been much criticised this season, Andre Gomes deputised ably at right-back after replacing Mascherano and Alcacer took his chance on a rare start on the big stage in Suarez's absence.

In stark contrast to Barca's glorious run of six finals in seven years, Alaves were appearing in Spanish football's showpiece for the first time.

The Basques were roared on by the more enthusiastic support at a far from full Vicente Cal-



Barcelona celebrate after winning the Copa del Rey final against Alaves at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, on Saturday. With the Cup triumph, Luis Enrique ended his three-year stint as Barcelona manager with another silverware.

deron in its last competitive fixture before Atletico Madrid move home next season.

And Alaves were left wondering what might have been had they gone ahead when Ibai

Gomes's effort came back off the post, ricocheted off the back of the Barca custodian Jasper Cillessen but somehow squirmed along the goal line and not into the net on 27 minutes.

Three minutes later Messi kicked off a thrilling four-goal spell in the final 15 minutes of the half as he exchanged passes with Neymar before curling his 54th goal of the season.

## Arsenal beat Chelsea to win record 13th FA Cup

LONDON, May 28: Arsenal became the most successful club in the 154-year FA Cup history after lifting the trophy for a record 13th time with a victory over recently crowned



Arsenal celebrate with the FA Cup trophy after defeating Chelsea in the final at the Wembley Stadium in London, on Saturday.

English Premier League champions Chelsea 2-1 here on Saturday.

The Gunners dominated the first half at Wembley, pulling ahead with a controversial goal from Alexis Sanchez in the fourth minute, reports Xinhua news agency.

The Chilean striker opened the scoring after a solo run. Arsenal's Aaron Ramsey was ruled offside but

Antony Taylor overruled his assistant's decision and allowed Sanchez's goal. Chelsea stepped up attack in the second half but their effort suffered a heavy blow in the 68th minute, when Victor Moses was sent off for getting his second yellow card for diving.

Diego Costa revived Chelsea in the 76th minute when Arsenal goalkeeper David Ospina failed to keep out a deflected shot.

Ramsey sealed the victory for Arsenal. Wenger's men three minutes later, heading home from substitute Olivier Giroud's cross.

It was Wenger's seventh FA Cup victory since he joined the north London club in 1996.

"We had an outstanding performance from the first minute onwards. This team has suffered. They have united and responded. They showed strength and unity and played spectacular football today. I'm proud to have won seven of these cups. I'm proud having done this – winning the championship without losing and winning seven FA Cups," Wenger said after the match. – IANS

## Government ready to mediate in Cricket Australia pay row

SYDNEY, May 28: Sports Minister Greg Hunt said today the federal government was prepared to provide mediation between Cricket Australia and players over the pay-dispute stalemate.

CA chairman David Povey has turned down the Australian Cricketers' Association's request for independent mediation and there are fears the stand-off could potentially lead to a players' boycott of the showpiece Ashes series later in the year.

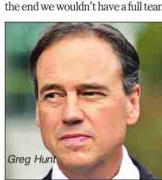
Hunt said the government was hesitant about being too interventionist in contract disputes in professional sport.

But he said there was scope to act as a mediator if the dispute looked likely to threaten the home Ashes series.

"If it got to a last-minute situation, I suspect that we would offer to provide good officers brokered between the parties, but there's six months between now

and the Ashes," Hunt told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

"It would be unthinkable that in the end we wouldn't have a full team."



"I do not see either the players or the administration returning to the late 1970s where we had a second-rate team."

"The players love playing for Australia, Cricket Australia knows this is not just fundamental to sport, it is part of our national identity. I'm very confident they will reach an agreement."

Hunt added that while Canberra would offer to mediate if there was a "fundamental threat". "All the advice I have is that with six months to travel, the Ashes will be proceeding with a full Australian team."

"And on Boxing Day (Melbourne fourth Test) you'll have Steve Smith, David Warner and the rest of the team out there."

The ACA has described CA's rejection of the players call for mediation as lacking in common sense.

"The CA strategy is to refuse to deal with the ACA and go directly to individual players to try and break the model," a spokesman said on Saturday.

"This is despite the players repeated insistence for CA to respect their request and mediate with the ACA."

"To refuse mediation at a time when it's the only sensible way forward shows a clear lack of common sense." – AFP

## Sarita, Pinki return to amateur fold after brief pro stint

NEW DELHI, May 28: Less than six months after taking the professional plunge, former world champion L Sarita Devi and Commonwealth Games bronze-medalist Pinki Jangra will return to amateur boxing after apologising to the national federation.

The two boxers, who had signed up with the Indian Boxing Council (IBC), will be rejoining the national camp after submitting letters of apology to the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) for abruptly leaving the amateur circuit no too long back.

"Pinki will be joining the camp from tomorrow, while Sarita will also be joining soon after taking care of personal issues. Both of them have apologised. While Sarita had kept us in the loop when she turned professional, Pinki had left the camp without taking permission," a top BFI official PTI.

The 31-year-old Sarita, who hasn't competed since winning her debut professional bout on January 29, is currently in Mumbai attending to her mother, who is unwell, and will be joining the national camp after a few days.

"Sarita is currently preoccupied with her mother's health. She will be joining the camp soon. She had requested permission from the BFI because this year, the Asian Championship is lined up in November (in Vietnam). The BFI has accepted her request," a source close to Sarita stated.

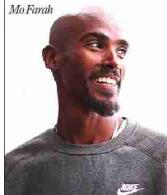
"She spoke to the BFI President Ajay Singh and he was quite supportive," the source added.

IBC president Brig (Retd) PK Marudhara Raja also confirmed the development.

"Both of them have apologised for not keeping the federation informed. Right now they didn't have any fights lined up so it was best for them to go back to the national camp," he said.

"This year and the next year has a lot lined up. They want to compete in the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games. So they duly submitted the letter of apology and a request letter to rejoin the camp," he added. – PTI

## Tokyo 'too far' for Farah



Mo Farah

Asked if he expected to run in Tokyo, Farah told AFP: "I don't think I will be."

"It's too far. I miss my family. My kids are growing up fast. I'm away six months of the year training and it makes me sad not to see them growing up."

Nevertheless Farah said he is determined to take a serious crack at the marathon after the Worlds.

"I feel like I haven't achieved what I could achieve on the road so I want to continue on," Farah said.

"In terms of track racing, I didn't get where I am today overnight."

"You've all seen me struggle – finish sixth, seventh, world champs, not making an Olympic final. I think road running will be a similar thing. It's going to be hard."

In the short term, Farah's focus remains his two specialist events, the 5,000m and 10,000m.

He is yet to decide if he will attempt to run both events in London, but said Saturday's win in Eugene in a world-leading 13min 00.70sec – had increased the likelihood of another double bid. – AFP

## Aubameyang seals Dortmund's German Cup title



Borussia Dortmund's Gabonese forward Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang celebrates after scoring a penalty during the German Cup final against Eintracht Frankfurt at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin, on Saturday.

Borussia Dortmund's Gabonese forward Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang celebrates after being released by Marco Reus.

However, they could not press home their advantage and on the half-hour Frankfurt, appearing in their first cup final for 11 years, equalised through Ante Rebic.

Niko Kovac's side ended the opening period the stronger of the two sides, and they were unfortunate to go into the break in front of Rebic then turned provider for Haris Seferovic, but the Switzerland international's shot struck a post.

Christian Pulisic won the decisive penalty after he was fouled by Lukas Hradecky, allowing Aubameyang to score his 40th goal in 46 matches this season. – Agencies

## South Korea upset China to win Sudirman Cup

GOLD COAST (Australia), May 28: South Korea today won badminton's Sudirman Cup for the first time in 14 years with an emotional 3-2 victory over 10-time champions China at Australia's Gold Coast.

The South Koreans claimed their fourth cup in the world mixed teams competition with a charged 21-17, 21-13 win by Choi Sol-Gyu and Chae Yoo-Jung in the mixed doubles match.

The victory – their first in the biennial tournament since Eindhoven in 2003 – ended China's 14-year grip on the Sudirman Cup.

South Korea, who also won the Sudirman Cup in 1991 and 1993, fought back from 2-1 down in the final to claim victory.

Upon winning match point the entire South Korean team descended on Choi and Chae and swamped them in celebration, with Chae eventually climbing off the floor in tears.

It was an outstanding performance by Choi and Chae, ranked 14th in the world, against the second-ranked Chinese combination of Lu Kai and Wang Yaqiong.

Rio Olympic champions Fu Haifeng and Zhang Nan gave China a confident start, rolling through the opening men's doubles match 21-14, 21-15 in 42 minutes.

World bronze medalist Sung Ji-Hyun levelled the final when she mastered He Bingjiao in the women's singles 21-12, 21-16 in 49 minutes.

Chen Long, the reigning Olympic champion, two-time World champion and All England champion, was too strong for Jeon Hyeo-Jin and took 47 minutes to wrap up a 21-10, 21-10 victory to give China a 2-1 lead.

But third world-ranked pair

## Venus set for French Open 20th anniversary

PARIS, May 28: Serena Williams may be missing from this year's French Open, but elder sister Venus is still going strong and marks her Roland Garros 20th anniversary today.

Three weeks shy of her 37th birthday, the American star, who made her debut in the French capital in 1997

with the exception of 2011 and despite her senior citizen status, she is still a contender at the Slams as her run to the Australian Open final in January proved.

Her staggering longevity is illustrated by the fact that her potential second round opponent is compatriot Amanda Anisimova who, at just 15, is the youngest main draw competitor since 2006.

When Venus was losing the 2002 Roland Garros final to Serena, Anisimova was just nine months old.

"I'm here as I still have a lot to give. That just wraps it up," said Venus who has never got beyond the quarterfinals in Paris since her runners-up spot 15 years ago.

Anisimova, the Florida-based daughter of Russian parents, made the tournament courtesy of winning the US wild card play-off.

She faces Japan's world number 94 Kurumi Nara on Sunday.

"This will be my first main draw match at a major. I'm very excited and I can't wait to play already," she said.

Elsewhere on what's expected to be a sweltering opening day in Paris, world number one Angelique Kerber

Venus

starts against experienced Russian player Ekaterina Makarova.

Kerber was defeated in the first round by unseeded Kiki Bertens 12 months ago and is yet to get past the quarterfinals.

The German left-hander has endured a miserable clay-

court season, losing early in Stuttgart and crashing out in her Rome opener, while retiring from her last-16 clash in Madrid with a lower back injury.

"Everybody knows clay is not my favourite surface, but I try my best," said Kerber. "Last year was not the best for me."

Makarova, also left-handed, is a former top tenner who has made at least the quarterfinals of all the majors, except the French Open.

Action on Philippe Chatrier centre court starts with two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova making her comeback after six months away from the sport spent recovering from potentially career-ending injuries sustained in fighting off a knife-wielding burglar in December.

Kvitova, a semifinalist in 2012 and seeded 15th this year, faces America's Julia Boserup, the world number 86 who is making her French Open debut.

The standout match in the men's singles sees Austrian seed Dominic Thiem, a semifinalist in 2016, take on unpredictable Bernard Tomic of Australia.

Thiem is regarded as a potential champion should wild card holder Andy Murray, defending champion Novak Djokovic or nine-time champion Rafael Nadal slip up. – AFP

# Stokes stars as England take South Africa series



England's Ben Stokes flicks one into the leg side during the 2nd ODI against South Africa at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, on Saturday.

## Golf championship concludes

SHILLONG, May 28: In 101 Arca Golf Championship concluded at the Shillong Golf Club on Saturday, stated a release.

Shillong Golf Club annexed the title while various golf clubs of Shillong including Vajra Golf Club, Laitkor Golf Club along with Rihno Golf Club participated in a team event, in addition to the participation of members of Shillong Golf Club in the open category. The initiative was taken by Lieutenant General DS Ahuja, General Officer Commanding, 101 Area.

Shillong Golf Club won the overall team event in addition to the various prizes given in a number of categories.

## Inter District Basketball from June 21

GUWAHATI, May 28: The 2nd Youth (U-16) Inter District Basketball Championship (Boys and Girls) will be held at the RG Baruah Sports Complex basketball courts from June 21 to 23.

Players born on or after January 1, 2001 are eligible to participate in the champion-

ship. All the affiliated districts of the Basketball Association of Assam have been asked to send their entries before June 15.

Players will be selected from the championships to represent the State in the 34th Youth National Basketball Championship which is to be held at Hyderabad from July 1 to 8.

## South Point in final of inter school tourney

GUWAHATI, May 28: South Point School rode on Ryan Parag's unbeaten

a total of 170 runs before being bundled out in 33.5 overs. Mani Bhushan Thakur scored with 40 runs while Yash Sharma picked four wickets. In reply, South Point batsmen put up 171 runs for the loss of five wickets in 28.1 overs. Ryan Parag scored an unbeaten 106 which also earned him the man of the match award.

**Brief scores:** Fairyland High School 170 in 33.5 overs (Mani Bhushan Thakur 40, Rubel Cheri 36, Pranita Hemantha, Yash Sharma 72, Dibyanshu Deka 21, Hemanta Sarangi 20); South Point School 171 in 28.1 overs (Ryan Parag 106 n.o., Sayan Dey 17, Bishal Pratim Samanta 16, Mani Bhushan Thakur 12, Dipjyoti Karki 1.5, Dibyanshu Deka 11, Biplab Poria 14); Today's match: (2nd semifinal) Assam Jyoti Bidyalaya vs Mother Merry School, Goalpara. — Sports Reporter

## Jaspal appointed physio of U-19 East Zone team

GUWAHATI, May 28: Assam Cricket Association's Jaspal Singh has been appointed as the physio of the U-19 East Zone team which will participate in the Inter Zonal Two Day Tournament which is underway at Chennai. Five teams from each zonal camp selected by the zonal selectors are participating in the tournament. — Sports Reporter

Dhan Sena Sinha trophy at the Latsasi Play-ground here today.

Electing to bat, Fairyland boys posted

SOUTHAMPTON, May 28: Ben Stokes struck a superb century before pacemen Josh Ball and Mark Wood helped England seal a dramatic and series-clinching two-run win over South Africa in the second one-day international.

Victory put England 2-0 up with one to play ahead of Monday's finale at Lord's.

Stokes made South Africa pay dearly for dropping him off both first and second ball after the all-rounder had been passed fit to play following a knee injury.

Yet in a match where the Protees dropped six chances in all, they were still on course for a morale-boosting win ahead of the start of next week's Champions Trophy ODI tournament in England.

South Africa, the world's top-ranked ODI side, needed 20 of the last two overs chasing a target of 331 yesterday.

That became 10 off 10 balls when David Miller (7 not out) struck Jake Ball for a six and a four off successive deliveries.

But South Africa — often accused of 'choke'ing in pressure situations — saw Miller and Chris Morris (36 not out) fail to score the runs they required as Ball and fast bowler Wood held their nerve.

Wood defended a target of seven off six

balls in the last over.

Two singles were followed by a dot ball, a single and another dot ball.

Suddenly, South Africa needed four off the last ball and Morris could not oblige. Earlier, Stokes made 101 and Jos Buttler a dashing 65 not out in England's 330 for six after South Africa captain AB de Villiers sent them into bat in overcast, bowler-friendly, conditions.

Stokes, who briefly left the field with a

### SCORECARD

England: J Roy B Smith 8, A Ali 8, A Kock 8, P Trego 24, J Root 100 not out (Preston) 39; E Morgan & C Morris 65; J Bairstow 45; B Stokes c Miller b Maharaj 101; J Buttler not out 65; M Ali c & b Kock b Rebodiac 45; 33 Extras: (B-13, W-8) 15. Total: (6 wickets in hand) 330 for 6. South Africa: 2-70, 3-80, 4-175, 5-252, 6-339. Bowling: Rabada 10-0-50-2; Morris 10-0-66-0; Pretorius 10-0-41-1; Maharaj 10-0-72-1; Phehlukwayo 7-74.

South Africa: O de Kock c Buttler b Ali 98; H Amla c Morgan b Stokes 24; F du Plessis c Buttler b Ali 10; D Miller c Buttler b Ali 52; C Botha c Buttler b Ali 52; D Morris not out 71. Extras: (LB-5, W-9) 14. Total: (5 wickets in hand) 281 for 6. Bowling: Rabada 10-0-48-0; Ball 10-0-81-0; Stokes 3-12; Phehlukwayo 10-0-43-1; Rashid 6-0-41-0; Ali 8-0-59-1; Root 3-0-18-0.

knee injury in England's 72-run win in the series opener at Headingley on Wednesday showed no discomfort with the bat, although only bowled three overs.

His 79-ball innings, just his second century in 55 matches at this level, featured four fours and three sixes.

Stokes, the Indian Premier League's record 10-million-dollar-man, shared stands of 65 with skipper Eoin Morgan, himself dropped twice, and Morris.

South Africa's sloppy fielding saw ODI debutant left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj, who bowled much better than figures of one for 72 in 10 overs suggested, have three catches dropped off his bowling alone.

England were faltering at 80 three

when Stokes came into bat.

The innings then took a decisive turn when Stokes was missed twice in his first two balls, with Maharaj again the unfortunate bowler.

Deceived Stokes with a well-flighted delivery that took the left-hander's outside edge only for the ball to go past the hands at slip for four.

Next ball produced another edge, with wicket-keeper Quinton de Kock failing to hold a more difficult chance. — AFP

## New Pakistan skipper faces CT acid test

KARACHI, May 28: New captain Sarfraz Ahmed will face his stiffest test yet when he leads unanchored Pakistan in the Champion's Trophy — starting with a highly-charged clash against India.

After qualifying by the skin of their teeth, Pakistan will need to overcome serious hitting deficiencies to be competitive following their struggles in the one-day format in recent years.

Pakistan's tournament in England starts with the tough set of games against arch-rivals India, the defending champions in Birmingham on June 4.

They are looking to halt a slump that began with a first-round exit from the 2015 World Cup, prompting all-round Shahid Afridi and skipper Mis-

baul-ul-Haq to exit the one-day scene.

Test specialist Azhar Ali then led Pakistan to an embarrassing 3-0 whitewash in Bangladesh and 4-1 reverses to both England and Australia before Sarfraz was handed the reins.

The wicketkeeper-batsman is credited for injecting new energy after winning three of his first four games, two against the West Indies and one against lowly Zimbabwe.

But former captain Ramiz Raja believes the team lacks the skill-set needed to regularly beat top sides in modern limited-overs cricket, which tilts heavily towards batting.

"They say a captain is as good as his team and this side lacks power-hitting skills," Raja told AFP.

— Star

PAKISTAN'S CHAMPION'S TROPHY TEAM

1. Sarfraz Ahmed (Capt)

2. Asad Shafiq

3. Mohammad Rizwan

4. Fawad Ahmed

5. Mohammad Rizwan

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