

NEWS CAPSULE

Varsity scam

GUWAHATI, July 30: The vigilance & anti-corruption bureau has sought documents pertaining to a specific period from the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University. Several irregularities were reported in the open university during that period. – Staff Reporter

Heroin haul

AHMEDABAD, July 30: In one of the largest single haul of narcotics till date, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seized 1,500 kg of heroin, valued at around Rs 3,500 crore, from a merchant vessel off the Gujarat coast, a defence spokesperson said today. – PTI

J-K encounter

SRINAGAR, July 30: Two militants were killed in an encounter with security forces today in Pulwama district of Kashmir. Police said that forces had launched a cordon and search operation in Tabab area of the district last night. – PTI

NIA raids

JAMMU, July 30: The NIA today conducted raids at two places belonging to a close side of hardline separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani in Jammu in connection with its probe in the terror funding case in the Kashmir valley, officials said. – PTI

Adoption law

NEW DELHI, July 30: The Ministry of Women and Child Development is likely to seek repeating of the six-decade-old Hindu Maintenance and Adoption Act (HAMA), 1956 after concerns over its misuse for child trafficking, a senior official has said. – PTI

Eviction matters

NEW DELHI, July 30: Eviction matters should be given priority by courts at all stages of litigation, especially in cases where the landlord has sought eviction for his bona fide needs, the Supreme Court has said. – PTI

Gujarat MLAs

BENGALURU, July 30: The Congress today paraded its 44 Gujarat MLAs lodged in a resort here before media to scotch reports of disunity in their ranks, and accused the BJP of trying to poach them to cross-vote in the Rajya Sabha polls. – PTI

The Assam Tribune on Internet
<http://www.assamtribune.com> &
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Centre to boost digital expansion in State

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 30: The Centre will introduce a slew of measures in the State within the next few months with a view to giving a boost to digital expansion in Assam.

Union Minister for Information Technology and Law & Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad announced this in the presence of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, valued at around Rs 3,500 crore, from a merchant vessel off the Gujarat coast, a defence spokesperson said today. – PTI

Stating that the Northeast is a priority region in the digital vision of the Prime Minis-



Data hub, BPO call centres, 'e-hospital' project among slew of measures

ter, Prasad said the Union Ministry of Electronics & IT will set up a comprehensive mega electronic systems design and manufacturing cluster as one stop destination for IT and manufacturing industries investing in Assam.

This cluster would be set up

in Guwahati in a campus spanning around 200 acres for which land would be provided by the State government. Prasad requested the State government to submit a structured proposal to the Centre in this regard.

Prasad also announced a plan for starting 'e-hospital'

project in six major hospitals of Assam with a view to introducing digital inclusion in health care. Along with Guwahati, the e-hospital project will cover one major hospital each in Dibrugarh, Silchar, Barpeta, Tezpur and Jorhat, which will facilitate online registration of patients with doctors.

He said the IT Ministry will also lend its support in making the State Data Centre functional within next four months. "A 10,000-sq ft building has already been constructed for the centre and with infrastructural support from the Union Ministry it would be made operational," he said.

(See page 4)



DESERTED FARMLAND: Silt has covered agricultural land at Antola Milanpur in Lakhimpur district after the recent wave of floods, as seen on Sunday. – UB Photos

GST has transformed economy: Modi

NEW DELHI, July 30: Almost a month after the GST rollout, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said it has transformed the economy and marks an example of cooperative federalism as states have been partners in all the decisions related to the new indirect tax regime.

Describing GST rollout as such a "huge measure in a vast country involving scores of states was historic and can be a case study for universities around the world."

The Prime Minister said the priority of the government, while ushering in the GST (Goods and Services Tax), has been that there should not be burden on the plate of the poor man.

In his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', Modi also spoke about various other issues like the food situation in various parts of the country and mentioned about the freedom movement in view of the upcoming Independence Day.

Referring to the GST which was rolled out on July 1, the Prime Minister said, "one nation, one rule – how big a dream has been fulfilled."

Underlining that GST is more than just a tax reform, he said it ushers in a new culture.

"It has been about a month since the GST was implemented and I feel satisfied and happy when someone writes to me to say how the prices of

goods supplied by the poor have reduced," Modi said. "GST has transformed the economy," he added.

Describing GST rollout as an example of cooperative federalism, the Prime Minister said all states are partner in it and have a responsibility as well. "All decisions were taken by the Centre and the states through consensus," he said.

Modi said is an example of success of the collective effort of India and marks a "historic achievement". He said it was not only a tax reform but "is a measure that lends strength to the new culture of honesty. In a way it is campaign for cultural improvement."

The Prime Minister said the magnitude of the exercise is an example in itself and will surely be studied by the world.

Modi said the people from the Northeast, far off mountains and those living in the jungles have written letters, saying that initially there were fears but as they started understanding the GST, it became easier and business became easier. – PTI

29 Indian cities highly vulnerable to earthquakes

NEW DELHI, July 30: Twenty-nine Indian cities and towns, including Delhi and capitals of nine states, fall under 'severe' to 'very severe' seismic zones, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS).

A majority of these places are in the Himalayas, one of the most seismically active regions in the world. Delhi, Patna, Srinagar, Kohima, Puducherry, Guwahati, Gangtok, Shillong, Dehradoon, Imphal and Chandigarh fall under seismic zones IV and V. These cities have a combined population of over three crore.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has classified different regions in the country into zones II to V, taking into consideration earthquake records, tectonic activities and damage caused, NCS director Vineet Gautham said.

The NCS, which records earthquakes and carries out studies pertaining to micro-zonation of cities, comes under the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Seismic microzonation is the process of subdividing a region into smaller areas having different potential for hazardous earthquake effects.

Zone II is considered the least seismically active, while Zone V is the most active. Zone IV and V fall under "severe" to "very severe" categories respectively. – PTI

GUWAHATI, July 30: The Government of India must maintain its firm stand over the Doka-La face-off as control over the Doka-La plateau will give the Chinese a huge psychological advantage. However, the Indian Army is not what it was in 1962 and Indian forces are now much better prepared to deal with any eventuality including taking on a two-front war and a stand-off at the Doka-La face-off and such a stand must be maintained in the interest of the country. If

the Chinese manage to gain full control over the Doka-La plateau, the neighbouring country would be able to move in their long range artillery in that area to gain major advantage over India. If China gains full control over the Doka-La plateau, the Siliguri corridor connecting the North East region with the rest of India will come under the firing range of the long range artillery of China, which will pose a major security threat to India. "China does not need to physically cut off

eral Bipin Rawat recently. Highly placed sources told *The Assam Tribune* that so far India has been maintaining a tough stand on the Doka-La face-off and such a stand must be maintained in the interest of the country. If

(See page 4)

Doka-La standoff

India must maintain firm stand: Experts

R DUTTA CHOWDHURY

Chinese control of Doka-La plateau will put NE at risk

eral Bipin Rawat recently. Highly placed sources told *The Assam Tribune* that so far India has been maintaining a tough stand on the Doka-La face-off and such a stand must be maintained in the interest of the country. If

(See page 4)

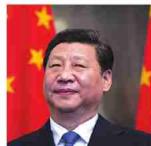
PAC seeks missing Bofors files

NEW DELHI, July 30: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has asked the Defence Ministry to trace and share with it all missing files related to the Bofors scandal, according to its two members.

The six-member subcommittee on defence, headed by BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahata, is looking into the long-pending non-compliance of certain aspects of the CAG report on the Bofors guns deal.

The PAC strongly objected to the ministry's suggestion that certain paragraphs of the CAG report may be dropped as some files related to it are missing, according to the minutes of the panel's meeting. According to the minutes of the meeting, top defence ministry officials agreed that the ministry will share all the required details with the PAC. – PTI

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Chinese army has ability to defeat all enemies: Xi

BEIJING, July 30: Chinese President Xi Jinping today said the People's Liberation Army is capable of vanquishing "all invading enemies" and praised its combat readiness as he reviewed a massive military parade to mark the 90th founding anniversary of the world's largest armed force.

Dressed in camouflage, Xi inspected 12,000 troops from an open-top military jeep at the parade held in Zurbine – Asia's largest military training centre in the middle of a desert in Inner Mongolia.

In his address to the soldiers, Xi said the PLA should strictly follow the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of China and "march to wherever the Party points to."

"I firmly believe that our gallant military has both confidence and ability to defeat all invading enemies," said Xi, who heads the Central Military Commission, which holds the overall command of the PLA – the world's largest army.

While there was no reference in his speech to over a

(See page 4)

India-Russia deal on Mi-17 choppers soon



ZHUKOVSKY (Russia), July 30: Russia and India are holding negotiations for the supply of 48 Russian Mi-17 military transport helicopters, with Moscow hoping to seal the deal by the end of this year.

Mikhailov said Russia and India are holding talks at a meeting to sign a contract for 48 (Mi-17V-5) helicopters and the technical-commercial negotiations are set to commence in August.

"We hope that we will reach an agreement before the end of this year," he told a select group

troop and arms transport, fire support, convey escort, patrol, and search-and-rescue (SAR) missions. He said India knows their specifications well.

Mikhailov said Russia and India are holding talks at a meeting to sign a contract for 48 (Mi-17V-5) helicopters and the technical-commercial negotiations are set to commence in August.

"We hope that we will reach an agreement before the end of this year," he told a select group

of journalists here on the sidelines of Russia's premier air show MAKS 2017.

Last year, Russia had handed over to India the final batch of three Mi-17V-5 military transport helicopters under a previously signed contract with Rosoboronexport, a company of the Rosoboros State Corporation, that entailed a total of 151 units of the Mi-17V-5 helicopter, produced by the Kazan Helicopter Plant. – PTI

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A pond with irrigation facility at Dalowjan Tea Estate

Tea garden moderating its micro climate with innovative method

RITAJI BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, July 30: Backed by IIT Guwahati, a tea garden in Upper Assam has been able to successfully moderate its micro-climate through a rain water management application that has led to better flushes as well as increased labour efficiency.

Creation ponds with irrigation facility at Dalowjan Tea Estate, around 10 km from Golaghat town, have shown

multiple benefits, including better crop yield due to micro-climatic changes.

He said the model would help address the adverse effect of climate change.

Ponds (of around 60 metre by 30 metre each) were created at feasible locations within the tea garden. Channels were dug through which the rain water was drained to the ponds.

levels near the pond were around two degrees lower than areas located near the garden road.

"We have created nine ponds so far and we plan to create three more to cover more areas of the garden. We have started to get the results. The sections of tea bushes near the ponds have better health and produced better flushes," Dalowjan manager SK Saikia said.

Measurements taken between July-December last year showed that the mercury

(See page 4)

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The charred remains of the youth were found from a forest area near the Dalai Lama temple at Meleodganj in Upper Dhamashala here, the police said.

Tibetans living in the region believe that they could be another case of self-immolation in protest against the Chinese rule in Tibet, they added.

The charred remains of the youth were first noticed by a Tibetan passerby, who immediately told a friend about it and the latter informed the office of the Tibetan Youth Congress and Dawa Rinchen, the Dhamashala Tibetan Settlement Officer.

The police were alerted by Rinchen subsequently. - PTI

Charred remains of Tibetan youth found

DHAMASHALA, July 30:

The charred remains of an unidentified Tibetan youth were

today found from a forest area

near the Dalai Lama temple at

Meleodganj in Upper Dhamashala

here, the police said.

Tibetans living in the region

believe that they could be

another case of self-immolation

in protest against the Chinese

rule in Tibet, they added.

The charred remains of the

youth were first noticed by

a Tibetan passerby, who imme-

diately told a friend about it

and the latter informed the of-

fice of the Tibetan Youth Con-

gress and Dawa Rinchen,

the Dhamashala Tibetan Sett-

lement Officer.

The police were alerted by

Rinchen subsequently. - PTI

Taslima Nasreen sent back from Aurangabad

AURANGABAD (Maharashtra), July 30: Controversial Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen was sent back from the airport here to Mumbai after protests by a group of people against her visit to the city, police said today.

Nasreen landed at the Chhatrapati Airport last evening by a flight from Mumbai.

Police stopped the author from stepping out of the airport, where a crowd had gathered shouting slogans like "Taslim Go Back".

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone-II) Rahul Shriramane said Nasreen was sent back to Mumbai by the next flight to avoid any "law and order problem" in this city in central Maharashtra.

The author was advised to abandon her visit to the city and she agreed to go back, the police officer said.

Protesters had also gathered outside a hotel where Nasreen was to stay during her three-day visit.

Police said that the writer was planning to visit the world heritage sites of Ajanta and Ellora, besides other tourist spots in Aurangabad.

The protest at the airport was led by Intiyaz Jaleel, the AIMIM legislator from the Aurangabad central constituency.

Jaleel said her writings have "hurt" the religious sentiments of Muslims across the world.

"We will not allow her to step on the soil of our city," he said.

Last month, the Union Home Ministry has extended her visa for one year, with effect from July 23, 2017. - PTI

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BOOKING IN PROGRESS 2/3

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Somali military officers evacuate an injured man from the scene of an explosion on Maka al Mukaram road in Mogadishu, Somalia, on Sunday. — UNI

Over 150 extremists stripped of UK passports: report

LONDON, July 30: Over 150 Islamist extremists have been stripped of their UK passports over fears that they would return from the Islamic State controlled territory in the Middle East to launch attacks in Britain.

According to *The Sunday Times*, more than 40 suspects have had their right to a British passport revoked this year alone, with around 30 targeted since March in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks in London and Manchester.

The newspaper claims the UK government has used so-called "deprivation orders" against 35 people to remove their citizenship rights in 2016 and another 15 in the first three months of 2017. It quotes security sources as saying that another 30 have been stripped of passports since March.

Those who have had their citizenship removed include so-called "jihadi brides" who



travelled to Syria to marry terrorists and live under the "caliphate" as well as gunmen.

They are all dual nationals, including people born in Britain to parents of other nationalities. Under UK law, the government cannot take away the citizenship of individuals if it would leave them stateless.

According to official figures from last year, 72 people were subject to a deprivation order between 2011 and 2015.

"We have planned and prepared for the risk posed by British returnees as Daesh [Islamic State] is defeated in Iraq and Syria and we are using a range of tools to disrupt and diminish that threat," said UK security minister Ben Wallace.

Britain's security chiefs believe at least 850 fighters have travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight with the ISIS and about half have returned and around 130 have been killed. — PTI

Kenyan police end siege at home of deputy president

NAIROBI, July 30: Elite Kenyan security forces today killed a man at the home of Deputy President William Ruto, ending a 20-hour siege that began with an attack in which a policeman was injured, police said.

Ruto and his family were not at the vast property in the northeast of the country during Saturday's attack, which came less than two weeks before the country votes in high-stakes elections.

Kenya's police chief Joseph Boimet said Sunday morning that the assailant had just been shot and killed and "the situation is under control".

Further details and the motive for the attack remained unclear.

Boimet said one assailant armed with a machete attacked and badly injured a police officer who was part of Ruto's security team, seized his gun and then entered the compound.

Police reinforcements arrived and the attacker fled into a building under construction near the entrance gate.

But several security sources told AFP on Saturday that the assault was staged by several people using guns.

"There are armed people who staged the attack and shot the GSU officer and stolen his gun," one security official said, referring to the elite police General Security Unit deployed to guard Ruto's house.

Ruto had left the house shortly before the attack to attend rallies alongside President Uhuru Kenyatta, his running mate who faces a tight re-election contest on August 8 against longtime opposition leader Raila Odinga. — AFP



NASA unveils stunning images of massive Antarctic iceberg

WASHINGTON, July 30: NASA has released stunning dark images which show the movement of the trillion-tonne iceberg – one of the largest ever recorded – that recently broke off from Antarctica.

As Antarctica remains shrouded in darkness during the Southern Hemisphere winter, NASA's Thermal Infrared Sensor (TRIS) on Landsat 8 satellite captured a new snap of the 5,800 square kilometre iceberg that split off from the Antarctic Peninsula's Larsen C ice shelf on July 10-12.

The satellite imagery is a composite of Landsat 8 as it passed on July 14 and July 21 and shows that the main berg, A-68, has already moved several smaller pieces.

The A-68 iceberg is being carried by currents northward out of its embayment on the Larsen C ice shelf.

The latest imagery also details a group of three small, yet not released icebergs at the north end of the embayment.

The calving of the iceberg left the Larsen C Ice Shelf reduced in area by more than 12 per cent, and the landscape of the Antarctic Peninsula changed forever. — PTI



Venezuelans take part in a 'The World Rejects Constituent Assembly' rally in Hong Kong, China, on Sunday. — UNI

Four arrested in B'desh after rape of teenager

DHAKA, July 30: A leader of Bangladesh's ruling party has been arrested along with three others for allegedly raping a teenager whose head was shaved as punishment by the accused's wife and sister, an incident that shocked the conservative Muslim nation.

Tufan Sarkar, 28, the convenor of Bogra district Sramik League – the labour wing of the ruling Awami League – raped the girl on July 17 and several times after that, promising her admission to a good college. *BD News* quoted Bogra Sadar Police Station in-charge Emdad Hossain said.

The others abetted the crime, Hossain said, adding Tufan admitted to raping the girl in initial interrogation.

When Tufan's wife Asha and elder sister Marzia Hasan

Runki came to know about the incident, they along with some miscreants picked the girl and her mother from their house. "They beat up the girl and her mother and later released them after shaving their heads," Hossain said, referring to the case files.

Asha, Runki and the other miscreants are charged with abduction and assault of the girl and her mother.

Bogra district Sramik League has suspended Tufan over rape allegation.

"This is a heinous act and we are ashamed," said Rafiqul Islam, president of Bogra district Sramik League.

A three-member probe body led by Additional Deputy Magistrate Abdul Samad Pradhan has been formed to investigate the incident. — PTI

Centre ...

(Contd from page 1)

Prasad said with a view to providing new job opportunities for the youth of the State, three BPO call centres would be set up – one each in Nagaon, Jorhat and Majuli. "Along with five functional BPO call centres in Guwahati which have a seat capacity of 710, a provision of 1,800 seats has been fixed for Assam," he added.

Prasad said that Assam and the Northeast have vast potential in the BPO sector and requested Sonowal to hold a conference of IT professionals for a collective move in this regard.

Prasad said the Centre would cover all the uncovered *gaon panchayats* by expanding the network of common service centres (CSCs) in a bid to strengthen the movement of digital delivery of government services. "Presently, 2,735 CSCs are operational in Assam, covering 200 digital services. Another 1,000 new CSCs will come up in the next six months in the State," he said.

Advocating a mega vision for the inclusion of the Northeast in the digital movement of the country, Prasad said that the IT Ministry is in the process of launching "North-East Digital Vision 2022" and a road-map for this will be prepared by his ministry in consultation with the state governments and other stakeholders.

He also stressed on expediting implementation of digital literacy programme under the National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) in the State. Prasad advised the State government to look out for new franchisees for implementing the mission.

Trump threat: end health payments unless there is an overhaul

WASHINGTON, July 30: President Donald Trump has threatened once more to end required payments to insurance companies unless lawmakers repeal and replace the Obama-era health care law.

In apparent frustration over Friday's failure by the Senate Republican majority to pass a bill repealing parts of the Affordable Care Act, Trump tweeted yesterday: "If a new HealthCare Bill is not approved quickly, BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies and BAILOUTS for Members of Congress will end very soon!"

No Democrats voted for the GOP bill. Repeal-and-replace has been a guiding star for Republicans ever since President Barack Obama enacted the law in 2010.

That goal, which Trump turned into a top campaign promise, remains out of reach even with Republicans controlling both the White House and Congress. The issue has dominated the opening months of Trump's presidency.

But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky, said after the bill failed early Friday that he would move to other legislative business by the upcoming week.

Trump also tweeted: "Unless the Republican Senators are total quitters, Repeal & Replace is not dead! Demand another vote before voting on any other bill!"

The subsidies, totalling about USD 7 billion a year, help reduce deductibles and for consumers with modest incomes.

The Obama administration used its rule-making authority to set direct payments to insurers to help offset these costs. Trump inherited the payment structure, but he also has the power to end them.

The payments are the subject of a lawsuit brought by House Republicans over whether the Affordable Care Act specifically included a congressional appropriation for the money, as required under the Constitution. Trump has only guaranteed the payments through July, which ends Monday.

Trump previously said the law that he and others call "Obamacare" would collapse immediately whenever those payments stop. He has indicated a desire to halt the subsidies but so far has allowed them to continue on a month-to-month basis.

Without the payments, analysts have said, more insurers might drop out of the system, limiting options for consumers and clearing the way for the insurers who stay to charge more for coverage. — AP

The Senate Democratic leader, Chuck Schumer of New York, cautioned such a step, saying it would make health care more expensive.

"If the president refuses to make the cost sharing reduction payments,



India must maintain ...

(Contd from page 1)
the North East from the rest of India. But the mere fact that the narrow corridor is under the firing range of the long range artillery of China will give a major psychological advantage to the neighbouring country," the sources pointed out.

The sources added that China has already been playing a psychological war over the recent stand-off and is using its government-controlled media to good effect. If China manages to gain control over the Dokla-La plateau, it will be able to use the state-controlled media to create a fear psychosis in the minds of the people, particularly in the North East region, the sources pointed out, adding that lately, instead of making official statements, China has been using the state-controlled media cleverly and there is need for India to negate such efforts.

Clarifying General Rawat's statement that the Indian armed forces are ready to face a two-and-a-half front war in case of any eventuality, the sources said that the forces are now much better prepared to defend the territories of the country. Divulging what the General meant by "two-and-a-half front war," the sources pointed out that in case of any trouble along the international border with China, there is every possibility that Pakistan would try to take advantage of the situation by creating trouble in the western sector. The other half front is that the possibility of the militant groups of the North East and the Naval groups trying to step up their activities, which can be termed as a half front of war. But India is fully prepared for two-and-a-half front of war, the sources added.

Sources further said that the people of the North East should not be apprehensive as 1962 would never be repeated. During the 1962 war, the Army was not at all prepared and the 4 Corps came up only during the war and it was not prepared for a battle. Now, in addition to the 4 Corps, India also has the 3 Corps based in Dimapur, 33 Corps in North Bengal and a strike Corps under the Eastern Command, while the capabilities of the Air Force have also increased manifold. "India is not warmongering but our forces are fully capable of defending our territory," the sources added.

Tea garden moderating ...

(Contd from page 1)
The garden has a plantation area of around 114 hectares. Saikia said the shade created by the ponds has also led to increased efficiency among the garden workers.

The IT-G has also suggested a more sophisticated rainwater management application which envisages creation of a recharge pond and a deep tube well within the ponds, which will help maintain the groundwater level. It will also have irrigation facilities. The garden

Chinese army

(Contd from page 1)
authorities will implement the application at a later stage. Field experiment under the IIT-G's BP Chaulia Chair PK Sarma said the project has helped tackle the waterlogging problem in the garden to a large extent.

"Flooding, waterlogging and drought are some major challenges faced by gardens which have been affecting production in many areas," he said. The project at Dalowanji is into its third year of application and more tea gardens are in touch with IT-G to replicate the model.

Chinese army

said in a statement.
Clad in a camouflage military suit, the 64-year-old Xi said the Chinese military has the confidence and ability to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests.

"Our military has the confidence and ability to write a new chapter in building of a strong

military and make new contributions towards realisation of the China dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and safeguarding world peace," Xi said in his about 10-minute address – an event carried live on state television and radio. — PTI



Exhibition on pre-Ahom cultural assimilation

GUWAHATI, July 30: The Assam State Museum, under the State Directorate of Museums, in collaboration with the India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bangalore, is organising an exhibition on the theme 'Mysterious Mothers of the Museum' in the Museum premises from August 1 to 10. Shubhabrata Purkayasha, Museum and Archival Research Fellow, IFA, will be the curator.

The exhibition will select four objects from the museum and attempt to re-contextualise them by providing an alternative identification. The objects were an integral part of an early 'Matrika' series, and their worship and creation were influenced by the larger wave of Hinduism coming in from the northern India, stated a press release issued by the Director of Museums, Assam.

In the sixth century onwards, the Sankritising elements from the Brahmanic north interacted with the indigenous cultures of ancient Kamrup, leading to a unique historical narrative and a distinct socio-cultural understanding. This is reflected in the economic and political history of the State as well as in its rich artistic legacy.

The exhibition would be accompanied by a workshop for school students on August 5 and an expert talk on the history of the pre-Ahom Assam on August 10.

Sony dance contest auditions

GUWAHATI, July 30: Sony Entertainment Television will shortly start the second season of its popular format Super Dancer. The jury for Super Dancer Chapter 2 will include Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty, ace choreographer Geeta Kapoor and celebrated filmmaker Aarav Basu. In Guwahati, the auditions will be held on August 1 from 8 am at the GMCH auditorium.



Dancers perform during the play *Satapdir Natok* written by Abinash Sarma, at Rabindra Bhawan in Guwahati on Saturday evening. - UB Photos

Youths associating with RSS activities, claims leader

PRANJAL BHUYAN

Asom pranta prasār pramukh of RSS, told *The Assam Tribune*.

RSS's Uttar Assam branch encompasses the entire Brahmaputra Valley, along with Meghalaya and Nagaland.

"It is only a year since the BJP came to power in Assam. Before that, Congress was at the helm at Dispur for 15 consecutive years. If RSS was really involved in giving arms training, why didn't the Congress regime of that time take action?" Das pointed out.

Regarding the Sangh's organisational plans for Assam, he said that the aim is to have at least 1,200 shakhas across Assam by July 2018.

"From 40 shakhas during the Assam Agitation, we have now 913 shakhas in Assam. This shows clearly that people here have accepted us. Our target is to increase the number of shakhas to 1,200 by July next year," Das said.

On an average, there are 15 cadres in each shakha. In Assam, the penetration of RSS shakhas has been more in the rural areas as compared to the urban areas.

RSS has also expanded its presence on the social media platform.

"We have an option of 'Join RSS' on our website where interested persons can fill up a form and establish contact with us. On an average, around 50 youngsters, including women, contact us by medium of our website in Assam every month. Many of them are highly qualified, including professionals working in the IT sector," Das said.

He said that RSS's main effort is on nation building and imbuing cultural and social values among the masses, especially youths of India.

Das said the Sangh has taken up flood relief work at various places affected by the ongoing floods.

"We have also drawn up a plan for post-flood works to be undertaken at various places, including provision of sanitation facilities, providing safe drinking water and prevention of diseases or epidemics which come after the floodwater recedes," Das said.

Jackfruit festival from tomorrow

CORRESPONDENT

JALUKBARI, July 30: Seeing the potential of business ventures on jackfruit value-added products in the NE region, the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship, Guwahati, and the Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship, Shillong, are jointly organising a three-day North East Jackfruit Festival at IIE here from August 1 to 3.

The primary aim of the jackfruit festival is to make the prospective farmers and entrepreneurs aware of entrepreneurial opportunities provided by the jackfruit, which is found in abundance in the North East.



The festival will include workshops, seminars, lectures and presentations by experts from the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru, and demonstrations by leading entrepreneurs from Keralia and Bengaluru.

The festival will showcase various value-added products that can be prepared from jackfruits. The festival will also include an exhibition-cum-sale of raw jackfruits and processed value-added products, competitions like display of the biggest jackfruits, lifting the biggest jackfruit and the fastest

Tale of American 'royals' at Assam State Zoo

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, July 30: An American 'couple' had arrived here in 1974. For the last 43 years, they have made Assam their home and the second generation of the family is now proving to be the centre of attraction.

Meet 'Raja' the hippopotamus, who was brought to the Assam State Zoo from the South with Birds and Animals Inc in Blackstone, US, back in 1974, when he was just one year old. He was accompanied by his would-be spouse 'Rani', who was of the same age. They had a co-traveller in Mohan, an African rhino, who died of old age recently at the State Zoo.

Rani had passed away in 2014, leaving behind Raja and their toddlers 'Anu' and 'Rumi'.

'Raja' is probably the oldest mammal in the Zoo at present and he is very special. We have six hippos in the Zoo at the moment – Raja and his five children, "Zoo Ranger Mukul Tamuly said, adding that the animals are the prime attractions for the visitors. Raja had fathered 10 babies, two of them died, while three were exchanged with other zoos.

Hippopotamus is an amphibious species, which spends the day in water and emerges at night to feed. The hippopotamus uses the water only as a retreat and it does not eat aquatic vegetation to any extent.

There are clear regional differences in population size and distribution. Eastern African countries (including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia) form the conservation

stronghold for this species and are where the largest numbers of Common Hippos are found. Although common hippos are found in many West African nations, the overall population sizes tend to be much smaller, either because of less available habitat or the higher density of human populations. Populations appear to be decreasing in many countries. The largest populations are found in East Africa.

While the lifespan of hippopotamus is between 45 to 50 years, despite having crossed 44, Raja has not shown any major signs of ageing.

"His physiological signs are normal. Teeth are intact. He is feeding normally, although he has slowed down than before," Dr Panchami Sharma of the Zoo hospital said.

Animal keeper Padma Boro has been looking after Raja and his family since 2002.

"Normally hippos are known to be ferocious... but Raja and his children are very quiet. The Zoo authorities wanted to shift me but I insisted that I would remain with them," Boro, who is emotionally attached to the animals, said.

"Raja is very disciplined... I have had absolutely no problems with either him or Rani who died a few years ago. You call him, he will come... you ask him to go, he will obey. I had fed Raja and Rani like kids," Boro added. Boro religiously cleans the cells of the hippo every day.

There are three enclosures for the six hippos, and it needs around three days to clean each enclosure and fill it with water.

There are 1,123 inmates in the State Zoo at present.

Neighbours clash over a dead duck

GUWAHATI, July 30: A resident of Sunasi 30, a resident of Sunasi has lodged a police complaint against her neighbour for allegedly killing her egg-laying duck and also demanded a death penalty for the man.

In her complaint, Reena Rabha alleged that Kusumbar Baruah and her son Khati Baruah killed her duck after the bird laid an egg on the floor of their house on Thursday. The carcass of the duck was recovered from Baruah's compound, she said.

Both families had a brawl over the issue. Later, on Friday Rabha lodged an FIR at the Noonmati police station.

A case (No.475/17) has been registered by police under Sections 229 (Mischievous killing or maiming cattle) / 294 (obscene, lewd, annoy- ing) / 304 (causing grievous hurt) and 34 of IPC.

Northeast ACB Dandi Mezunder told *The Assam Tribune* the woman and son – were called to the police station and examined.

The dead bird has been sent to the government veterinary college for post-mortem to ascertain the exact cause of death, she said.

"Once the postmortem results are out, we will be able to further the investigation," the ACB said. – Staff Reporter

Water tankers seized

GUWAHATI, July 30: Bharalukhia police last night caught 10 persons with seven drinking water tankers. The accused were allegedly involved in illegal border and anti-national treated water to people.

They were caught at the boring site at Pachali of Karimpurara. Seven of the arrested are drivers, while the other three were involved in illegal boring. – Staff Reporter

1 dies in mishap

GUWAHATI, July 30: A 40-year-old person, Prahlad Gogoi, died and his wife and eight-year-old son were injured when the motorcycle in which they were travelling was hit by a truck at Matgoria today. Hunt is on to track the truck which fled the scene immediately, police said. The injured mother-son duo were admitted to a hospital. – Staff Reporter

1 critical

GUWAHATI, July 30: A 21-year-old youth, Chandan Khatua, was seriously injured after he came into contact with a 440V live wire while trying to retrieve a cricket ball with a bamboo. The incident took place at the Sefali Apartment of Narayan Nagar of Bharalu-mukh. – Staff Reporter

Call to detect migrants with '51 as cut-off year

GUWAHATI, July 30: The Patriotic People's Front Assam (PPFA) has reiterated its call to detect all immigrants from the then East Pakistan and later Bangladesh with the cut-off year 1951 and urged the government in New Delhi to think about offering work permits (without voting rights) to them in case their deportation becomes impossible because of serious humanitarian and international crisis.

In a statement, the PPFA also appealed to the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government at Dispur to support 1951 as the cut-off year for detection of foreigners in the Supreme Court of India, as the case is presently in its jurisdiction.

Considering the spirit of the Assam Movement (1979 to 1985) to deport all foreigners with 1951 as the base year, for over 850 martyrs – Khargawar Tahukdar being the first – sacrificed their lives, the PPFA found reasons to support the same.

The forum pointed out that the immigrants who entered India after 1951 till December 16, 1971, should be treated as East Pakistani nation-

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MESSAGE FOR TODAY

Happiness is essentially a state of going somewhere, wholeheartedly, one-directionally, without regret or reservation.

- WILLIAM H SHELDON

The Assam Tribune

Saving the tiger

Even though the tiger has ceased to 'burn bright' in most of the forests of India, the big cat continues to find a secure home across its habitats in Assam, brightening hopes for its long-term conservation in one of its last strongholds. Latest tigers count reveals healthy tiger populations in national parks like Kaziranga, Manas, Orang and Nameri while several wildlife sanctuaries, too, have yielded the presence of tigers. Significantly, some reserved forest areas, particularly those linking different protected areas, have also recorded tiger presence, making for a strong case for enhancing security in these areas. While Assam's tiger population is indeed heartening – particularly when viewed against the plummeting tiger numbers across many protected areas in the country – areas of serious concern do remain. If left unaddressed, these could well spell doom for long-term tiger conservation. Assam may have added considerably to its tiger count but Arunachal Pradesh which used to be an ideal tiger habitat has not been doing well on this account.

Apart from poaching which has seen some abatement due to strong security measures in tiger habitats, the biggest concern *vis-a-vis* tiger conservation stems from rampant habitat loss. This loss of forests is causing tigers to concentrate in smaller areas – a situation fraught with the ominous portent of loss of genetic exchange between different populations, and a spurt in human-tiger conflict. Tigers sit at the apex of the food chain and require good forests with undisturbed breeding areas. Loss and degradation of forests has not just caused an alarming depletion in tiger habitat but has also disrupted the much-needed contiguity among different forests, rendering those as small islands. Till a couple of decades back, many of the forests in Assam used to have contiguous belts, facilitating unhindered movement of wildlife. While there still exists a few contiguous belts like the Manas-Royal Manas-Buxa, Nameri-Pakke and Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong, these are under increasing anthropogenic and industrial pressures and warrant urgent measures for maintaining the contiguity. Creation of new tiger reserves apart, providing connectivity among different forests by way of restoration of lost habitat assumes tremendous significance here. With the global community now committing itself staunchly to conserving the tiger, funds are no longer a constraint to save this beautiful animal. For saving the tiger, poaching has to be curbed with a zero-tolerance approach. Equally imperative is to preserve tiger habitats because the long-term goals of tiger conservation cannot be met without securing its habitat. This, in turn, will entail induction of trained manpower and adequate infrastructure, and intelligence. Tiger-bearing forests have already undergone serious fragmentation and degradation, and it is impossible to sustain viable tiger populations in small, fragmented habitats. It is only through a multi-pronged strategy involving a sustained crackdown on the thriving poaching network and preservation and restoration of tiger habitat that we can hope to rescue the tiger.

Gujarat politics

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) seems to have made it a prestige issue to ensure that senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel is defeated in the Rayya Sabha polls from Gujarat, to be held on August 8. Patel, the political secretary of Congress president Sonia Gandhi, has been fielded by the grand old party for one of the three upcoming Rayya Sabha vacancies from the State. Patel is considered to be the third most powerful person within the Congress hierarchy, just after Sonia Gandhi and party vice-president Rahul Gandhi. Patel is contesting the Rayya Sabha polls for the fifth consecutive time from Gujarat and he has been an MP in the Upper House of Parliament since 1993. The BJP looks to have formulated a strategy to ensure that Patel fails to make it to the Rayya Sabha this time, or at least to ensure that, even if he wins, it is not a cakewalk. Senior Congress leader Shanteshwar Vaghela recently resigned from the party. In addition, six other Congress MLAs, most of them Vaghela loyalists, have also resigned from the party in the last three-four days and submitted their resignations from the Legislative Assembly. That does not augur well for the party in Gujarat, where the BJP has firmly been in the saddle for past two decades. In the 182-member Gujarat Assembly, the strength of the Congress has gone down to 51 from 57, following the resignations. One of the MLAs who resigned, Balwant Singh Rapoo, joined the BJP and was fielded as the third candidate by the ruling party for the Rayya Sabha polls from the State. The BJP has also fielded party boss Amit Shah and Union Minister Smriti Irani. Both are sure to win. Patel's win would also have been a foregone conclusion if the latest developments had not taken place.

Congress has accused the BJP of using money and muscle power to coax its legislators to resign. On the other hand, the saffron party has tried to wash its hands off the entire affairs by claiming that the developments are the results of conflicts within the Congress. Patel can still win if he musters the support of 47 MLAs. But there are reports that some more Congress MLAs may resign in the coming days or resort to cross-voting in the Rayya Sabha polls. Congress has already airlifted around 40 of its MLAs to Karnataka to ensure that there are no more poaching from its camp. Meanwhile, the Election Commission (EC) has sought a report from the Gujarat Government over the Congress party's allegations that BJP is engineering defections from its ranks. This came after Congress petitioned the EC demanding a "free and fair" election to the Rayya Sabha. Congress MPs in Parliament also disrupted proceedings over the issue. Events in Gujarat will be worth watching in the coming days.

The game of connectivity

■ Abhishek Chowdhury

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) can be called the crown jewel of the Chinese state policy since its economic reforms in 1978. The significance of a massive transport corridor connecting China through a range of land-based and maritime corridors can hardly be overstated. The potential of this ambitious project is manifold. It provides a new paradigm of cooperative foreign policy where, in effect, almost all countries having a contiguous landmass can be linked. North America can also be brought under its fold by connecting the BRI with the East-West Siberian Corridor. And then it would just be a matter of bypassing the Bering Strait, which is about 82 km in length, connecting the eastern-most point of Russia with the western-most point of Alaska. The BRI has become one of the most debated and discussed policies in recent times. The recently conducted Belt and Road Forum had the most impressive turnout of highest government delegations from almost all the major countries which give an idea about the clout of the project and its perception in the minds of foreign policy makers. Against the much-quoted response of the Chinese authorities that the BRI is an economic endeavour, the question we must ask and explore at depth is whether this is really an economic endeavour?

The BRI has a massive investment corpus of 900 billion dollars.

In any way we look at it, this is a very significant amount. In many countries like Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, etc., all beneficiaries of parts of this investment – it can truly spur up the economic activity. Trade and manufacturing in these countries, on completion of the BRI, can develop at a break-neck speed. But the real question to be explored is who is going to lead this rapid trend in manufacturing and trade. A recent leak by the *Dawn* on CPEC talks about a proposed Chinese partnership with Pakistan on a variety of sectors – like power generation, textile, steel, manufacturing, logistics chain, etc. This leak gives an impression that China will be firmly in control of a significant portion of critical components of Pakistan's economy like food security, power generation and infrastructure by 2030. If this is an indication to the type of deals China will be looking to make with other smaller countries like Nepal or Sri Lanka, then we only imagine the expected penetration of Chinese state policies in these smaller countries. Such agreements and Chinese commitments may put the subject countries in a delicate bind. Can an independent foreign policy be truly followed by these countries when China is controlling a significant portion of their critical infrastructure? We can only con-

jecture as to the effectiveness of the safeguards that the countries along the BRI have in mind to counter this implicit Chinese influence. But once the BRI is completed or even the portions of it (like CPEC) are, how long will it take for this implicit influence to turn over very assertive, given the scale of envisaged investments?

This gives a strong impression that we are looking at the proactive age of neo-colonialism in the

Geographically, China has a better potential for hegemonic domination in vast swathes of the continental landmass. The BRI may well be its first step towards projecting and consolidating its power.

21st century in the veil of BRI. In this age, we are looking at policies to race towards the control of critical state infrastructures like food security, power, logistics, etc. In the present times, when economic concerns and development is at the forefront of national policy, an influence in state economy will have much more effectiveness than an influence in any state's political set-up. Connectivity is a very good concept but it cannot come at a price where the member states lose their independent ability to conduct their own foreign, trade and industrial policies.

We had a unipolar world since the end of the Cold War. But a sudden protectionist policy followed by the US administration in recent times coupled with an assertive China makes one wonder whether we are looking at the resurgence of a bipolar world. This also brings to light that geographically, China has a better potential for hegemonic domination in vast swathes of the continental landmass. The BRI may well be its first step towards projecting and consolidating its power. The presence of Chinese security forces in Pakistan, the String of Pearl theory and China's massive defence and military modernization plan makes one wonder as to the end game of BRI. It would be a fallacy to state that the advantages of BRI only extend to economic front and not on geopolitics. This is simply not possible when China would have significant maritime and land-based resources deployed to safeguard its investment.

The scope for power projection increases manifold because in the immediate sphere of influence of China, we find countries with low military budgets, lower level of force modernization and a much less aggressive foreign policy posture. Assertive posturing by China on economic and security fronts may rapidly expand its sphere of influence manifold compelling the world to sit up and take notice.

Connectivity is a pillar of globali-

zation. It is a logical next step that the world should take to find solutions to very important problems of our generation viz., terrorism, climate change and environment, economic inequality, expanding population, etc. Credit must be given to the Chinese authorities on conceiving the brilliant BRI and giving it the foremost publicity and seriousness it deserves. An ideal One Belt One Road can refocus the world into meaningful dialogue and bring many political dissidents to the mainstream.

But the member countries must very carefully consider the political costs of globalization and the impact that OBOR might have on their ability to conduct independent foreign policy. The countries must also be aware of the possibility of a debt trap. Foreign policy in South and Central Asia should not become subservient to the Chinese economic and geopolitical policies.

India, being the only major counterweight in the region, finds itself at a unique crossroads. The onus of action is on India to deploy a slew of diplomatic strategies and smart partnership to convince China and other countries to BRI's potential cost and ramifications. The BRI to be successful must have complete transparency and co-ownership. India has most to gain or lose in this project depending on what shape it takes in future. BRI can ensure extended geopolitical stability on the one hand and a form of neo-colonialism on the other. It will, finally, come down to India to engage constructively with China and be vocal about its concerns.

Appraising trajectory of migration in India

■ Reimeingam Marchang

The 2011 Population Census of India on migration data (provisional) shows that about 0.45 billion of India's 1.21 billion populations were migrants. In India, migration continues to be dominated by rural migration which is about 68%. About 23% of migrants were from urban areas and the rest 9% were from unclassified (as rural or urban) areas. Rural-dominated migration phenomenon, apparently a seasonal one, attributes to seasonal employment in agriculture as well as seasonal non-farm activities mostly in construction or industry during the lean agricultural season in the vicinity. Studies have shown that the seasonal migration is an important form of labour mobility with an increasing shift of labour force from agriculture to non-agriculture sector. Rural to urban migration is essentially driven by non-economic agricultural work and income, landlessness, educational issues among others in rural areas. Interestingly large sections (54% in 2001 and 64% in 2011) of people have increasingly migrated for long duration of more than 10 years that corroborates with life time migrants, while the rest have migrated for shorter duration of less than 10 years.

Migration was assumed to be predominantly a male movement, while females were considered to be either residual in the process of migration or dependent followers. However, empirical evidence shows a predominance of female migration manifested by high sex ratio of migrants, unlike for population, with 2369 in 2001 which roughly declined to 2218 in 2011.

The stream-wise distribution of migrants highlighted that about half of the migrants were rural-to-rural migrants, about 5% of migrants were urban-to-rural migrants, 18% were rural-to-urban migrants and the rest 18% were urban-to-urban migrants. Various studies have concluded that the urban migration trajectory, especially urban-to-urban, are essentially mostly confined among individuals who are not family members. Among the Indian migrants, the tendency to migrate towards urban areas was visibly high. In 2011, 48% of the urban population were migrants which have increased by 12 percentage points from the previous census. Even in the rural areas, data reveals a slight increase in the rate from 28% in 2001 to 33% in 2011. The rate of migration has increased for both genders and areas that are attributed by improvement in transportation connectivity and accessibility systems. The mobility of females is increasingly and considerably greater than their male counterparts, largely due to social reasons like marriage across intra- and inter-district or State, as the rate of migration was substantially higher for females when compared to males especially in rural areas. For example, in rural areas, 14% of the males

were migrants, against 53% of females in 2011. Among the Indian States and Union Territories (UTs), Goa recorded the highest rate of migration with 77% that is attributed to the tourism sector. Coincidentally, Goa has the highest per capita income and occupied the first rank in terms of literacy rate among the Indian States and UTs. Chandigarh has the second highest migration rate with 67% followed by Daman and Diu (64%), Andhra and Nicobar Islands (59%) and so on. J&K has the lowest migration rate with 23% followed by Manipur with 26%. These two States have socio-political issues and are among the bottom 10 in terms of per capita income. J&K and Manipur are ranked at 30th and 16th positions respectively in terms of literacy rate in India. Despite Delhi being the National Capital Territory, the rate of migration was 46% and is ranked at 10th position in India.

The 2011 census data reveals that people migrated mostly for marriage purpose. However, segregated data for males and females tells a different story. Majority of the females migrated for marriage and a substantial share of females also migrated along with their household or family. This is in conformity with some findings of previous studies that the Indian females migrated predominantly for marriage and associated rea-

sions, i.e., accompanying their migrant husband. In case of males, employment appears to be the primary reason for migration. Migration for business and for education remains very low especially for females.

Migration for work or employment, business, education, moving after birth and moving with household has increased portraying a decline of employment and poorer educational system at the origin of migration, and an increase of family migration due to the transfer of jobs of primary family income earner or in search of livelihood means of entire family. Both males and females have increasingly migrated for pursuit of education. Strikingly, the share of migrants who have moved after birth, in particular, and with their household has considerably increased. It is attributed by an increase in children migration occurring due to child delivery at origin of migration or at their parents' home. It is also due to chain migration where parents migrated initially, for example for employment, while the family members migrated later. The extent of migration for marriage remains almost unchanged. It rose, unusually, for males, unlike for females, perhaps due to inter-community and inter-place marriage with development of social networking and matrimonial advertisement in media.

Checking Chinese imperialism

ALG for copyists. India must act; otherwise, China may arm-twist on the border on Baruah, Yours etc., KAMAL BARUAH, Guwahati.

Fake job notice

Sir, – This is from your editorial 'Great opportunity' (AT, July 27). The great Himalayan range detaches India from the Tibet plateau. In 1959, Tibet rose up in revolt against the Chinese occupation. The Dalai Lama's escape from Lhasa to Tawang marks the starting of the Tibetan struggle for independence, and that led to the Chinese misadventure in 1962. Afterwards China remained busy in capacity building in Tibet, POK and Myanmar. The recent face-off at Doklam is becoming an enduring sore point between the two countries. All of a sudden the NE region is in the limelight with the realization of its strategic significance.

China has opened an airport at Nyinchi, very near to east Arunachal Pradesh. Also, the rail route from Lhasa is under construction. They reach the Gwadar port of the Arabian Sea through POK. To thwart the Chinese imperialism, it is time for India to take some concrete steps. India has to develop an airport in Arunachal apart from the existing

inspector (July 29, 2016), Director, Accounts & Treasuries, Assam for junior assistant (February 7, 2017), Director, Directorate of Archaeology, Assam for junior assistant (February 24, 2017), ASTC, Palitana, Guwahati for APO, UDA, LDC, etc., April 12, 2017 and Director, Cultural Affairs, Assam for junior assistant (HQ). The respective board and departments should inform the people of the State whether the above-mentioned job notifications were also fake. In case of genuine notifications, the reasons for the delay by the authorities concerned may also be declared.

It is the responsibility of the State Government to create a clear and impartial image among the young job-seekers of the state by allowing three months time from the date of job notification to complete the recruitment process. Yours etc., A CONCERNED CITIZEN, Guwahati.

Power sector

Sir, – Apropos Partha Pratim Gautam's letter (July 28) in reference to his news item 'Power grid to revamp power sector in NE', my letter on the same issue (July 18) basically emphasized the issues regarding

the failure on the part of the APGCL in enhancing the generation capacity in Assam and the failure of the APDCL to scale down the aggregate commercial and technical loss of their system to the targeted 15% (presently it is 30%). The APGCL has been functioning better in comparison to the other departments, though it is still a long way for the APGCL to reach the performance level of several of their counterparts in other States of India. Yours etc., MANIN HAZARIKA, Belota, Guwahati.

Assam floods

Sir, – This is in reference to the news item 'Centre not to declare flood as national problem' (AT, July 28). It is now confirmed that the Government of India is not interested to declare the flood problem as a national calamity. If a problem is not treated as a national problem, then, each State in India will have to handle that problem on its own. Every year, the Assam floods take a huge toll on the life and property of the people of the State. For years, Assam has been demanding that the annual floods should be declared a national problem. It is because of the fact that for

financial limitations, Assam alone cannot take up measures to control floods and mitigate the sufferings of the people. Unless the Centre treats Assam floods as a national problem and take up suitable measures to control the same, the sufferings of the people will never end. Yours etc., MAHESWAR DEKA, Rangiya, Outsider in CCE.

Sir, – Through your esteemed daily, I would like to bring to the notice of the APSC authority that it has been noted that several candidates from outside Assam have appeared in the recently-concluded APSC CCE. They may be few in numbers but their presence might leave some local candidates deprived from making it into the next level, especially in clearing the Preliminary exam. I urge the APSC authority to keep a strict vigil on these outsiders, as failing to pursue it would render the whole reformation of the APSC futile. Yours etc., HIMANGSHU K DEKA, Guwahati.

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

In Fond Remembrance of



Hemendra Prasad Barooah

who passed away on 31st July, 2013

Beloved father of Radha, and
grandfather of Robin, Kim and Shey

All those who loved him : friends, relatives and
members of the B&A Group of Companies

Per capita power consumption in State abysmally low

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 30: Assam, the most populous and second biggest State in the North-east, has a per capita power consumption of only 256 units per person in FY'2017 as compared to the national average of 900 units.

This, and many other relevant facets of the power scenario of the North-east were deliberated upon at the North East Energy Conclave organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) that concluded here on Friday. The summit made a strong pitch for ensuring power availability by harnessing the potential of renewable energy in the region.

It also stressed the need for streamlining the distribution and transmission system and implementing the 'Hydrocarbon Vision of the North East.'

In her welcome remarks Suparna Chatterjee, Deputy Director and Head of Energy Initiatives of ICC, emphasised on the ICC's role and focus on the Indian power and energy sector and added that ICC had

been working actively on key issues impacting the sector through various initiatives and recommendations and successfully creating various interactive platforms between the Government and industry addressing important and relevant concerns.

The north-eastern States have a huge potential in terms of rich petroleum, hydro-power and solar but the States are facing the problem of shortage of electricity in generation and distribution which leads to unsatisfactory supply in some regions which in turn is affecting the region's economic growth.

Ishant Borupandit, Regional Director, ICC North-east, in his speech highlighted the current power and energy scenario of the nation and the North-east with statistical data.

Nitin Zamre, MD, ICF International, the knowledge partner for the event, provided a forum a snapshot of the power sector, resource assessment and the way forward. He also spoke of the need for private sector investment. While highlighting the chal-

lenges including the electrification levels and per capita energy consumption of the region, he said that Assam had a per capita consumption of only 236 units per person in FY'17 as compared to the national average of 900.

Zamre also mentioned peak and energy shortages coming down below five per cent in the last ten years which he said was a significant change.

Puru Gupta, MD, Assam Power Distribution Company Limited, in his address, said that while per capita dependence was increasing, that did not mean per capita consumption was also increasing. He highlighted APPCL's achievement of selling 2 lakh LED's as part of an MoU between the State and EESL.

According to him, a right mix of policy, execution and regulatory methods would bring about sustainable ways of consumption. The dependence on the sustainable forms of energy has to increase keeping in mind the environmental factors as well, he added.

Kalyani Baruah, MD, Assam Power Generation Corporation



Farmers busy plucking paddy seedling in Demow on Sunday. - UB Photos

Remedial classes for under-performing students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, July 30: In a project titled "Milijuli Sikhu Aaha", involving the local community in teaching students who are found lagging behind in their regular studies, some 173 students from Class-VI to VIII are being imparted remedial classes at Nagjanir near Dullajan.

"Milijuli Sikhu Aaha" is a programme initiated by the Dibrugarh district administration in association with Sarba Siksha Abhiyan to fill up the learning gaps of poor performing students from Nagjanir Bozaloni ME School. Although Nagjanir Bozaloni ME School was graded 'C' in Gunotsav, 173 out of 221 students from Class-VI to VIII were graded as 'C' and 'D'.

It was evident from evaluation of the Gunotsav results that there were certain gaps with respect to teaching and training, infrastructure and learning, and on this basis a remedial plan "Milijuli Sikhu Aaha" was chalked out for students with 'C' and 'D' grade of the school.

In this programme have been divided into eight groups based on their habitation under one group leader for each group. Group leaders are also students from the same school who have scored 'A' and 'B' grade in the recently-concluded Gunotsav.

In this programme, 12 community volunteers inclusive of both parents and college students have come forward from the same institution for qualitative improvement of learning levels of the learners.

Deputy Commissioner Laya Maduri was present during two remedial classes at Nagjanir on Friday last, one of which was conducted in the home of a Class-VI student of the school named Baby Handique.

The students covered under

this programme have been divided into eight groups based on their habitation under one group leader for each group. Group leaders are also students from the same school who have scored 'A' and 'B' grade in the recently-concluded Gunotsav.

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The Deputy Commissioner said that this year a decision was taken to conduct remedial classes for students who were graded 'C' and 'D' in Gunotsav, which was started with students from Class-VI to VIII of Nagjanir Bozaloni ME School. Although Nagjanir Bozaloni ME School was graded 'C' and 'D' grade. The idea is also to experiment on how interactive and diverse teaching methodology would help in better learning and understanding and soon it will be extended to other schools of the district too," the Deputy Commissioner said.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by ADC Ankur Bhanai, Assistant Commissioner Ayush Garg and DPO, TT, SSA, Dibrugarh, Manima Bhattacharjee, the release added.

Former Minister Santosh Mohan Dev critical CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR, July 30: The health condition of former Union Minister and Congress heavyweight Santosh Mohan Dev is critical.

In an open session, former Rajya Sabha Member Rukhwar Guwa Brahma had talked on different forms of terrorism and their impact on the common people. Educationist Surat Narzary, former ABSU leader and present BCPM member Rungwra Narzary also spoke on the occasion.

According to doctors at the Valley Hospital and Research Centre, the former Minister is battling with multi-organ failure and has been kept under ICU observation.

Meanwhile, there has been a constant rush of Congress party workers and supporters at the hospital to visit and seek updates on the health status of the former Minister.

Pramod Boro hoisted the flag and along with the family members paid floral tributes at the tomb of late Swmble Basumatary.

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She leaves behind her husband, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives.

Late Dutta served the party in different capacities. Besides, she was also an executive member of Karinganji District Shefali Dutta passed away at her Badarpur Tea Colony residence on Friday. She was 63.

Since 1996 ABSU has been observing this day as Anti-Terrorism Day to remember the death of its

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In an open session, former Rajya Sabha Member Rukhwar Guwa Brahma had talked on different forms of terrorism and their impact on the common people. Educationist Surat Narzary, former ABSU leader and present BCPM member Rungwra Narzary also spoke on the occasion.

She leaves behind her husband, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives.

Late Dutta served the party in different capacities. Besides, she was also an executive member of Karinganji District Shefali Dutta passed away at her Badarpur Tea Colony residence on Friday. She was 63.

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**WEATHER
NORTHEAST**

For North Eastern
States – Moderate rain
Thunderstorms are very likely to
occur at many places over
Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram &
Tripura and light to moderate
rainfall is very likely to
occur at a few places over
Arunachal Pradesh, Assam &
Meghalaya.

Warning: Heavy rainfall is very
likely to occur at isolated places
over Assam, Meghalaya,
Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram
and Tripura on July 31, August
1, 2, 3.

Temperatures :

	Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	34.5	27.0
Tezpur	33.1	26.2
Silchar	35.5	24.4
Dhubri	33.2	26.4
Jorhat	33.1	26.0
N Lakhimpur	37.5	24.0
Shillong	23.7	15.5
Imphal	31.4	22.5
Itanagar	34.7	24.0
Aizawl	30.1	11.6
Aizawl	33.8	26.8
Kohima	25.4	19.8
Pasighat	33.8	26.0
Cherrapunji	23.9	17.8

Boy drowns in swimming pool**CORRESPONDENT**

TURA, July 30: A family holiday turned tragic after a 15-year-old boy from Maligaon in Guwahati drowned at the resort he was staying in with his family. The incident occurred at 12 pm today at the popular Tura House Resort here.

The boy, identified as Ishan Swarzyari, was accompanied by four members of his family.

According to police sources, Ishan and his elder brother went inside the pool, despite the fact that both the brothers didn't know how to swim. The elder brother somehow managed to come out of the pool, but Ishan drowned, police sources said.

Ishan was immediately rushed to the Tura Civil Hospital where he was declared brought dead. A post mortem was later performed.

"We have launched an investigation into the matter. As per the preliminary report, life jackets and a rescuer were present at the scene. Both brothers did not know swimming as per the initial reports," said WGH SP Dr MGR Kumar.

'66 acres of land to be acquired for Indo-Bangla rail project'

AGARTALA, July 30: Sixty six acres of land will be acquired in Tripura for an Indo-Bangla rail project. Land acquisition for the 15 km long Agartala-Akhaura rail project to link Indian Railways with Bangladesh Railways, has started officials said today.

"We have served notices to 257 families to acquire 66 acres of land for the rail project and the land would be handed over to the Railways by August end", West Tripura District Magistrate and Collector Milind Ramteke told reporters.

He said the Central Government has already released Rs 97.63 crore to acquire the land. The process of laying the 15 km long railway tracks to connect Agartala with Akhaura in Bangladesh will be completed

in two and half years time after laying of tracks begins.

Out of the 15 km track, 5 km would be on the Indian side and the rest would be on the Bangladesh side.

Ramteke said the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is the nodal agency for implementa-

tion of the project on the Indian side.

The Bangladesh Government has also started acquiring around 70 acres of land for the project, the NFR officials said.

Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu and his Bangladeshi counterpart Majbul Haque had jointly laid the foundation stone here on July 31 last year.

A flyover of 3.7 km would be constructed on the Indian side to save cultivable lands and the entire project cost would be borne by the Government.

The Agartala-Akhaura rail way route would connect Indian Railways with Bangladesh Railways, which would improve connectivity and boost trade between the two countries. - PTI

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Gorkhas of Nagaland, Meghalaya join Global Gorkhaland Unity March**BUREAU**

DIMAPUR/SHILLONG, July 30: Extending moral support and solidarity to the suffering Gorkhas in Darjeeling, thousands of Gorkhas across Nagaland today joined the Global Gorkhaland Unity March in Kohima demanding creation of separate Gorkhaland in India.

The rally was organised by the Nagaland Gorkha Association (NGA) in collaboration with sister organisations in four districts of Kohima, Mokokchung, Kiphire and Wokha.

After the rally, the NGA submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Narendra Modi through Nagaland Governor PB Acharya, explaining

its position on the issue.

Pointing out that the Indian Gorkhas have been permanently settled in various parts of the country', the NGA, in the memorandum, said Darjeeling district and adjoining Dooars under Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal is home to about 35 lakh Gorkhas.

Recalling history, the NGA alleged that these Gorkha people have been ruled, administered and exploited by numerous rulers, administrators, agencies as well as dictators, but no authority was given to the Gorkha people there on the principle of democratic welfare State, till date.

According to the NGA, this act of the West Bengal Govern-

ment was found to be inconsistent, as language, customs and ethnicity of the Gorkhas are completely different from that of the majority Bengali people.

Therefore, the Gorkhas from Nagaland urged the Prime Minister to give the Gorkhas justice by granting a full-fledged State of Gorkhaland under the Constitution of India.

In Kohima, around 10,000 young and old Gorkhas from Kohima, Tseminyu, Zubza, Lamai, Medziphema and surrounding areas converged at GPKP Ground in Chandel under the aegis of Gorkha Public Panchayat Kohima (GPPK).

Holding placards and banners supporting the demand for Gorkhaland, they rallied

through the main streets and submitted the memorandum, a copy of which was also handed over to Governors, Chief Ministers and Members of Parliament from Nagaland, Sikkim and Assam.

On the other hand in Shillong today, thousands of men and children took out a massive rally here today for a separate Gorkhaland demand.

The march was organised by a number of NGOs affiliated to the Gorkha society here.

Most of the protesters carried placards and banners, demanding a separate Gorkhaland as they marched through the main streets of the State capital. The participants called upon the Central Government to im-

mediately carve out a separate Gorkhaland by invoking Article 3 of the Indian Constitution. The participants in the march protested the brutal killings of innocent people in Darjeeling by the West Bengal Police.

"It is a genuine demand of the Gorkha people. These people have been demanding a separate State for over 100 years. If Telengana could be formed, why not Gorkhaland," Sanbir Shilla, former Deputy Speaker and NCP legislator who took part in the march, said.

Before the start of the march, former education minister Manas Chaudhury also spoke before the gathering and extended his support to the Gorkha community for the cause.

Sharing similar opinions, fisherwomen Khipironi Ongbi Kiranbal, N Thasana, Maisam Pramo and Eche Ekashini, besides fishermen N Nando, Kumar and Oinam Nabachandra also expressed their desire to have their smart cards and work for a better livelihood.

They demanded proper rest house cum jetty at suitable sites, market places, transport support, etc. and formulation of the national policy on fisheries (inland).

On the other hand, Premjit, secretary, Upokpi Khunou Club, highlighted the issues of siltation

and pollution in the lake.

Environmentalists Dr RK Ranjan and Salam Rajesh spoke on certain issues related to the fishing communities, besides sharing inputs from the national consultation on the matter.

PRDA secretary L Suraj Singh gave the introductory remark, while ALLAFUM secretary Onam Rajen presented the key note address.

Indigenous Perspectives' director Ram Wangkheirakpam was the moderator of the consultation which was attended by nearly 100 fishermen and fisherwomen.

Manipur fishing community stresses sustainable livelihood**CORRESPONDENT**

IMPHAL, July 30: The fishing community, mostly those living in and around the Loktak, the largest freshwater lake in the North East, has expressed their desire to have their own identity in order to claim their fishing rights for a sustainable livelihood.

"So far we have no platform to raise our concerns or demands. We need our identity so that we can demand our rights for the welfare of our community," said Kh Kiran Devi, a fisherwoman, adding, "in fact, we the fisher-

women need space in markets and other necessary facilities."

Kiran, a fisherwoman from Langolabi, a floating colony in Loktak, shared her opinion during a day-long State Level Consultation on National Policy on Fisheries (Inland) held here on Friday.

The consultation was organised by the All Loktak Lake Area Fishermen's Union, Manipur (ALLAFUM) and the People's Resources Development Association (PRDA), a Bishnupur-based NGO, at the Tribal Research Institute hall here.

Sharing similar opinions, fisherwomen Khipironi Ongbi Kiranbal, N Thasana, Maisam Pramo and Eche Ekashini, besides fishermen N Nando, Kumar and Oinam Nabachandra also expressed their desire to have their smart cards and work for a better livelihood.

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No plan to shift to Jan-Dec fiscal year from 2018, says Gangwar

NEW DELHI, July 30: Though discussions on shifting the financial year to January–December instead of April–March are still on within the government, the change will not happen next year, according to Minister of State for Finance Santosh Kumar Gangwar.

In order to start the next financial year from January 2018, the government needs to present the Union Budget some time in November, which does not seem to be possible as the process is time-consuming and has to be kicked off well ahead, the minister said.

"These are points of discussion in the government. For now, consider March as the end of this fiscal year," Gangwar told IANS in an interview.

After Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the current Parliament session said the government is considering changing the

financial year to January–December, speculations have been rife about the switch-over in 2018.

However, there was no official confirmation either way on this and the government continued its stance of "discussions are on".

Experts were of the opinion that the mammoth change was not likely to happen so soon after implementation of the goods and services tax (GST) from July 1, as the shift involves a lot of operational issues, including cutting short the year to three quarters, changes in government's balance sheet, new assessment year for income taxpayers and bringing forward of the Union Budget.

The Narendra Modi Government had already advanced the Union Budget by a month to February 1 from 2017 in order to complete all the legislative processes

and approvals for annual spending before the start of the financial year from April 1.

The April–March financial year was adopted in India in 1867 to align it with that of the British government. Prior to that, the Indian financial year used to begin from May 1 and end on April 30.

Meanwhile, with the GST Council meeting scheduled for August 5, Gangwar said the various issues that have cropped up since the rollout of the new indirect tax regime would be discussed.

The minister said that the tax rates on textiles, hybrid cars and gold could also be discussed.

"We have decided that on August 5 whatever changes are necessary will be brought about. The problems being faced by people... Council will discuss on those lines and whether any change is needed," he said. – IANS



Actress Tabu and Saurav Bhattacharya, President (Sales & Marketing) of Nakshatra during the launch of Nizam brand jewellery collection, in Mumbai on Saturday night. – UNI

CAPSULE

Bike taxis

NEW DELHI, July 30: The government is planning to facilitate the rollout of bike taxis on a bigger scale and is preparing to introduce an app that will also include the new and economical way of commuting, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said. Road Transport and Highways Minister is confident that bike taxis will notations not only for warding through severe traffic congestions in the metropolises, but can provide affordable transportation to people in far-flung rural areas. – PTI

Central Bank of India
NEW DELHI, July 30: State-run Central Bank of India on Friday reported a net loss of Rs 576.76 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2017. The bank had reported a net loss of Rs 599.81 crore in the corresponding quarter a year ago. – PTI

NTPC Q1 PAT up

NEW DELHI, July 30: State-run NTPC on Friday posted a 12 per cent rise in standalone profit after tax at Rs 2,618 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2017 on the back of higher revenue. The company's standalone profit after tax from continuing operations in the year-ago period was Rs 2,338.6 crore. NTPC said in a filing to BSE. – PTI

Pirelli India vision

NEW DELHI, July 30: Italian tyre major Pirelli plans to scale up its presence in India as it expects demand for high-performance tyres to grow in the country with road connectivity getting better and more people moving to bigger cars. In order to increase visibility, the company plans to expand its exclusive tyre centres in the country. – PTI

HSL target

MUMBAI, July 30: Sanitaryware manufacturer HSL is eying an over-two-fold growth to Rs 6,000-crore company in the next five years, its top executive said. The official has said: "With the projects that we already have in the pipeline plus we are putting up two new plants... with those plants getting commissioned, I think we should be closer to Rs 5,500 to 6,000 crore in revenue in five years' time." HSL Vice-Chairman and MD Sandip told PTI here.

Canon foray

NEW DELHI, July 30: Japanese imaging technologies leader Canon is expanding its product portfolio and has plans to enter into segments including medical equipment, security and surveillance cameras, expecting the country to be one of its growth drivers in Asia in coming years. – PTI

Akai business plans

KOLKATA, July 30: Japanese consumer electronics brand Akai, relaunched last year after a gap of about three years, is aiming at a Rs 2,000-crore topline by 2020 on the back of the strong brand recall among consumers. "The brand still commands strong recall and customer satisfaction... We are confident of doing well and targeting a turnover of Rs 2,000 crore by 2020," Akai India Director Anurag Sharma told PTI.

CBEC studying reasons for subdued demand

NEW DELHI, July 30: With just about one lakh of 70 lakh businesses opting for GST Composition Scheme, tax authorities are reviewing why the scheme allowed such entities to pay a fixed 1.5 per cent tax, has not clicked.

A senior government official said the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) is trying to ascertain the reasons for businesses not opting for the Composition Scheme that was especially designed to ease compliance burden of small traders.

It plans to step up media outreach programme to popularise the scheme. The composition scheme is an alternative

method of levy of tax designed for small taxpayers whose turnover is up to Rs 75 lakh (Rs 50 lakh in the cases of eight northeastern States and the hilly State of Himachal Pradesh). The objective behind it is to bring simplicity and reduce the compli-

ance cost for small taxpayers.

The scheme is optional wherein manufacturers, other than those of ice-cream, pani-sabzi and tomato products, have to pay a 2 per cent tax on their annual turnover. The tax rate is 5 per cent for restaurant services and one per cent for traders. "Out of the assessed base of 70 lakh, one lakh is a very small

number. One reason could be that the composition scheme cannot be availed by businesses engaged in inter-State trade. We are looking at it," the official told PTI.

GST Network had in first week of July asked over 70 lakh

excise, service tax and VAT assessees who

have migrated to the new in-

stitutional tax regime to log in to their account and opt for Composition Scheme latest by July 21.

The government later extended the deadline till August 16.

"We will increase our outreach programme to tell businesses about the benefits of composition scheme," the official said. – PTI

Sahara to challenge IRDAI order

NEW DELHI, July 30: The embattled Sahara group today said it will approach the court of law against the IRDAI order directing transfer of its life insurance business to ICICI Prudential and alleged that the insurance regulator has "wrongly concluded" that the promoter was no more "fit and proper" and a sum of Rs 78 crore was siphoned off.

In a statement following the IRDAI (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India) order dated July 28, the group said Sahara Life business is being "wrongfully" given to ICICI Prudential Life Insurance.

"Sahara Life is doing business since 2004 and since last 7 years (has been) running continuously in profit and has been in absolute and strict compli-

ance of all regulatory norms and directions issued by IRDAI," the group said.

It further said Sahara Life's asset is more than its liability and there is not a single complaint of non-payment by any

to the charges of IRDAI.

The group said the main allegation talks about the promoter shareholder Subrata Roy Sahara's status of being incarcerated, which was a judicial custody, and therefore the promoter company of the life insurance venture is no more "fit and proper".

This was also the reason of action against Sahara Mutual Fund by another regulator SEBI. The group had challenged this SEBI order before the Securities Appellate Tribunal which last week upheld the regulator's order but granted a stay of six weeks to allow the company file an appeal before the Supreme Court, which is already hearing a long-running case involving the group. – PTI

Transfer of life insurance business to ICICI Prudential

policy holder:

"However, it is unfortunate that IRDAI has handed over Sahara Life business to another insurance company ICICI Prudential," the group alleged.

Giving a point-wise rebuttal

of the IRDAI order,

the group said the main allegation talks about the promoter shareholder Subrata Roy Sahara's status of being incarcerated, which was a judicial custody, and therefore the promoter company of the life insurance venture is no more "fit and proper".

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Op Agarwala, chartered accountant and senior tax consultant of Guwahati, delivering his lecture during a workshop on GST organised by North Assam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in Tinsukia on Saturday. – UB Photos

RBI needs to cut interest rate by 25 bps: Assocham

August 2," an Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) statement said here.

"After a long duration of consistency in the repo rate, Assocham believes that the RBI could reduce the policy rate," chamber Secretary General DS Rawat said in his letter to the RBI Governor.

"Retail inflation in India during June dropped to a record low of 1.54 per cent, while industrial production data showed that the growth in factory production fell to 1.7 per cent in May, from 8 per cent in the same month a year ago.

"The wholesale price index (WPI) also eased to 0.9 per cent from 2.17 per cent. The case for rate-cut is additionally strengthened by easing of food inflation to (minus)-2.12 per cent from 0.31 per cent. Good monsoon forecasts for the current financial year have additionally created a stance for further reduction in the food inflation," Assocham said.

At its second bi-monthly monetary policy review of the fiscal on June 7, the RBI maintained status quo on its repo, or short-term rate for lending to commercial banks, at 6.25 per cent.

In doing so, the policy statement said, six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was guided by the risks of inflation. It was the fourth policy review in succession that the MPC had reviewed the statement that the MPC had kept the repo rate unchanged.

Since the MPC started setting rates in October last year, this was the first time it did not take a unanimous decision, with five members voting in favour of holding the rate and one opposing.

Three of the six members of the MPC are government nominees, while the others are from the RBL. – IANS

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Three of the six members of the MPC are government nominees, while the others are from the RBL. – IANS

Scrutiny of cases

I-T dept mulls setting up of centralised cell

NEW DELHI, July 30: The I-T department is considering setting up of a centralised cell for scrutiny of income tax cases as part of efforts to reduce personalised interface between the taxmen and taxpayers with a view to curb corrupt practices.

The proposed cell will be on the lines of the Central Processing Centre (CPC) that the department currently has in Bengaluru for processing income tax returns. A senior Revenue department official said the department wants to reduce interface between taxpayers and the department officers and is planning to set up a CPC.

E-mails sent out from the CPC would not bear the name of the assessing officer, he said.

"It is in discussion stage. This will be a part of the department's drive to go faceless and reduce interface," the official, who did not wish to be quoted, told PTI.

Currently, tax scrutiny notices carry the name and digital signature of the tax official.

The I-T department usually picks less than 1 per cent of the total ITRs filed for scrutiny.

Once a case is picked up for scrutiny under Section 143(2) of I-T Act, a taxpayer has to submit additional documents to the department as sought by the assessing officer so that further investigation can be carried out if any income is escaped as assessment.

The CPC, which is the centralised database centre of the I-T department, receives income tax returns (ITRs), both e-filed and sent through post, and processes them. – PTI

Setting up of world-class bus terminals

Govt proposes Rs 1,000-cr funds for States

MUMBAI, July 30: The Union Road Transport Minister is ready to offer viability gap funding to the tune of Rs 1,000 crore to its State counterparts to set up large world-class bus terminals in as many as 2,000 cities and towns.

"We have a Rs 1,000-crore funding plan to assist States in setting up of world-class bus terminals. What I have in mind is around 2,000 such terminals over the next few years in the BOT model or private-public partnership where there will be need for viability gap funding as well," he said.

"Why can't we have all types of operators, be it the state-run bus services or private or stage/contract carriages, under the same roof? Why should segregate them when they serve the same purpose," Gadkari wondered.

and said such integration of the system can increase its efficiency and usefulness to people.

The first busters have come up in Nagpur and Vadodara, he added.

Strenuously warning the advocates of diesel-fuelled transport vehicles, the minister also said he will extend full support to green transport solutions.

"The buses running on diesel are not good for our future. I will soon start tightening (the screw on) the diesel engine makers," he told the diesel industry and exhorted bus operators to opt for greener buses run on ethanol, bio-diesel or batteries which can massively bring down the operational cost of operators by at least 25 per cent. – PTI

Turning around domestic business need of the hour: Tata Motors Chairman

NEW DELHI, July 30: Tata Motors Chairman N Chandrasekaran has said turning around domestic business of the company is "the need of the hour" as it suffered from delays in new product launches, lack of adequate response to competition and an unsustainable cost structure.

Addressing shareholders while presenting the company's Annual Report 2016-17, he said Tata Motors' standalone net revenues increased by 3.7 per cent to Rs 44,777 crore for the 12 months ended March 31, 2017 but standalone loss before tax for the year fell to Rs 2,421 crore, compared with Rs 67 crore in the prior year.

In the domestic business segment, business turnaround is the need of the hour and management is working with renewed focus and energy to improve our market share, reduce our cost base, streamline the supply chain and ensure launch of products on time to delight our customers," he said.

The company's market share in commercial vehicles (CV) segment has fallen to 44.4 per cent from a high of 59.4 per cent in FY2011-12, while market share for passenger vehicles (PV) declined to 5.2 per cent from 13.1 per cent in the same period, he added.

"Overall, delays in new product launches as well as lack of adequate responsiveness to the competitive environment and an unsustainable cost structure have contributed to this performance," Chandrasekaran said.

Expressing similar views, Tata Motors Managing Director Guenter Butschek said: "Our immediate priority now is on execution – to address the top concerns of supply constraints, to advance the launch time of some of our new products." He further said: "In full alignment with the board, we have finalised a business turnaround plan through which we take upon ourselves to deliver a robust bottomline improvement in FY17/18." – PTI



As per the latest auction notice (No 30) held at Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) on July 25-26, the total tea offerings were 1,15,549 packages, out of which 82 per cent were sold. Good liquor tea was firm while balanced teas were irregular according to quality. TGBL lent fair support along with HUL. Internal buyers also participated along with western Indian buyers. The auction average price for this week stood at Rs 148.62, up by Rs 1.84 from last year.

Top garden price

BOP	Price	BOP/SMBP	Price	OF/PF	Price
HALIMPUR	406	BANANALIE	281	SOTAF	261
CHARAIGHOR	300	LOPHOCHA	279	SOKLATINGA	258
MADHUPUR	281	MADHUPUR	267	LOPHOCHA	253
SOOKLATINGA	289	LOPHOCHA	264	MADHUPUR	241
MACKYPORE	286	HANDIQUE	283	HALIMPUR	236

Secretary, Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers Association (GTABA)

With Quit India spirit, expel communalism, casteism by 2022, Modi urges countrymen

NEW DELHI, July 30: Ahead of the 70th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today invoked the 'Quit India Movement' and exhorted the countrymen to use the same spirit to expel problems of communalism, casteism, corruption, terrorism, poverty and dirt from the country by 2022.

He asked the people to take a pledge to contribute in some way or the other to create a "New India".

In his monthly radio programme "Mann Ki Baat", Modi referred to the Quit India Movement launched on August 9, 1942 by Mahatma Gandhi and the subsequent developments which resulted in the Britishers leaving India and the country getting freedom on August 15, 1947.

"Just like five years between 1942 and 1947 became the decisive period, I can see another five-year period from 2017 to 2022 to



make a resolve to end the problems of our nation," he said.

He identified these problems as communalism, casteism, corruption, terrorism, poverty and dirt and asked people to work for their removal in the same spirit of "Quit India".

"It is 70 years since we got Independence. Governments came and went, systems emerged and developed. Everyone contributed in own way to end the problems,

raise employment, remove poverty and make the country progress. Successes were achieved, but the expectations were also raised," the Prime Minister said.

He said this Independence Day should be celebrated as one of resolve to end the problems in next five years.

"If 125 crore people, remembering August 9, 1942, make a pledge on August 15 to contribute

something as an individual, as a citizen, as a family person, as a person from a city or a village, as a member of a Government department, there will be scores of pledges," Modi said.

He exhorted the citizens to use all kinds of fora to undertake this task, including through the online mode.

The Prime Minister also sought ideas from the public which could be incorporated in his Independence Day speech that he will deliver from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort.

Interestingly, he said, he has heard about "complaints" that his previous Independence Day addresses were long and that he will try to keep it short this time.

"I will try to finish it in 40-45-50 minutes. I have tried to make a rule for myself. I don't know whether I will be able to do it or not," he added. — PTI

RJD to move court against new Bihar Govt

NEW DELHI, July 30: The RJD today said it will move court "within a week" against the Bihar Governor's invitation to JDU-NDA coalition to form Government in the State, and hit out at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for "robbery of the mandate".

"We will knock at the court's door, and go to the people's court (*Janta Ki Adalat*) as well to tell the masses about the kind of politics being played by the two parties — JDU and BJP," RJD spokesperson Manoj Jha said. The senior RJD leader also challenged Kumar to address a meeting in an area dominated by people from Dalit, Mahadalit and other backward

castes, saying "He (Kumar) will face the wrath of the people."

"Every mandate has a character and in Bihar it was the Dalits, the minorities and some progressive sections of the upper castes (which had voted for the previous Government). Now, with JDU breaking the Grand Alliance, the character of that mandate has been dropped," he said.

"People of Bihar, including the youth, are feeling cheated about this robbery of the mandate they had given for an inclusive Bihar," Jha said, adding on the sidelines of an event here.

The Governor's decision to invite Kumar to form the Govern-

ment with the BJP he said, was a "blatant violation" of the Supreme Court judgement in the Bommai case.

"According to the SR Bommai case judgement, it is mandatory to call the single-largest party or electoral bloc first to explore the formation of a Government," he said, adding, "we will move court soon, within a week's time".

He said the party will go to *Janta Ki Adalat* (people's court) and tell them about the "conspiracy hatched by the BJP".

If one looks at the political journey of Nitish Kumar, it is worse than a Machiavellian character. He spoke of "Sangh-mukti" (RSS-free)

India and now he made it a "Sangh-yukti" (Sangh-related) Bihar.

Attacking Kumar, he said, his political journey also tells us about morality in politics.

"We were wrong in believing every word spoken by Nitish, which was just rhetoric. For the last one year, he was playing according to the script of Nagpur, the RSS headquarters," he said.

"But history has a different view than contemporary TV anchors. History looks in a nuanced manner. And, in the eyes of history, Kumar shall appear as a methodically destroyed, deceived, deceived the mandate which was won for building an inclusive Bihar," Jha said. — PTI



Gorkha community members at a protest for a separate Gorkhaland State, at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Sunday. — UNI

GJM seeks Centre's intervention

DARJEELING, July 30: GJM supporters today took out rallies at Chowkhaza area of the hills carrying black flags in protest against the police action against pro-Gorkhaland supporters.

Shouting slogans against the State Government, the protesters demanded the Centre's intervention in the matter.

Pro-Gorkhaland supporters had yesterday clashed with the police during which, the GJM had claimed, one of its supporters suffered a bullet injury. The charge was, however, denied by a Kurseong-based school who had termed it as "completely baseless".

Several protesters and police personnel were injured in the clashes that took place in Sukna area of the hills yesterday.

The situation in Darjeeling remained tense to day though no incident of violence was reported since last night.

The police and security forces patrolled the streets of the hills and kept a tight vigil at all entry and exit routes.

Normal life remained crippled on the 46th day of the ongoing indefinite strike to press for a separate Gorkhaland State. Barring medicine shops, business establishments, restaurants, hotels, schools and colleges remained closed.

The GJM and other hills parties today has planned to organise "Global Gorkhaland Unity March" in Darjeeling, other parts of the country and abroad

to express solidarity with the movement for a separate state.

"This is a global march that we have planned not only in various States of India, but also abroad where our Gorkha brothers are either settled or working," a GJM leader said.

In the meantime, the GJM-led indefinite shutdown has taken a toll on students, prompting a prominent boarding schools to shift classes 10 and 12 to Siliguri to clear the syllabus backlog, while a Kurseong-based school may follow suit. Classes were suspended in the hill schools in view of the indefinite strike going on since June 15.

"We have asked all the students of classes 10 and 12 to report at Siliguri on August 1. We will be holding classes at Matigara, near Siliguri," a spokesman of Darjeeling North Point School said.

It is being done to complete the syllabus for board examinations to be held early next year, he said.

Kurseong-based Himali Boarding School will take a decision on starting classes 10 and 12 at Siliguri after a meeting of the Gorkhaland Movement Co-ordination Committee in New Delhi on August 1.

"Everything is closed, shops, banks, schools etc ... Because of this, we may have to move to Siliguri with the students taking their board exams. Big hassle, but we have no choice," Robinda Subba, the director of Himali Boarding School, posted on his official Facebook page yesterday. — PTI

With new Prez in office, heritage experts draw up wish list

NEW DELHI, July 30: As President Ram Nath Kovind settles down in the grand sandstone complex that is now his home, conservationists hope that the present occupant of Rashtrapati Bhavan, like his predecessors, will usher in change that renews the old.

From restoration of the Bhavan's main building to allowing greater accessibility through open house sessions, heritage experts have a wish list drawn up for Kovind.

The nearly 90-year-old Raj-era landmark in the heart of New Delhi was given a makeover in select areas by earlier presidents, they

pointed out.

While Pranab Mukherjee focused on enhancing its architectural grandeur during his term, APJ Abdul Kalam added a herb garden in the complex to add to the horticultural splendour of the President's Estate spread over 330 acres.

Conservationist Swapna Liddle expressed the hope that the new President would consider restoring the main building proposed by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH).

"INTACH has worked on the restoration of the President's Es-

tate through various projects, some completed, some still under way. And now we have proposed the restoration of the main building of the Bhavan," Liddle, INTACH's Delhi Convener, said.

At the last function of outgoing president Mukherjee at the Bhavan, Liddle, a voluminous 'Conservation Management Plan' prepared by the INTACH was presented to him, she said.

"He in turn handed it over to the then President-elect," Liddle told this news agency.

Mukherjee, 81, has bequeathed to Kovind, 71, a legacy of cultural

sahab

would further widen the let of accessibility and let the common man get closer to the grand building and its historic treasures, especially through open house sessions," Rooprai said.

The centrepiece of the Raisina Hill capital complex, designed by British architect Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens as the Viceroy's House, became the residence of the Head of the State of the Republic of India in 1950.

The outer structure of the Bhavan is composed of red and beige sandstones, while the inside was constructed with brick, lime mor-

tar and other material.

Parts of the complex, spread over 330 acres of land and endowed with 340 rooms, gardens and crafted fountains, were given a makeover during Mukherjee's five-year tenure.

Decrepit stables were converted into a museum, colonial-era clock towers refurbished and a building of the President's Bodyguard (PBG) was restored.

INTACH collaborated on many restoration projects, including a 1925-built clock tower inaugurated in July 2015.

The tower, built by Lutyens,

now houses the reception zone of a museum complex, cafeteria and souvenir shop.

The museum, spread over 10,000 sqm, is a hi-tech story-telling centre revolving around tales of British Viceroys who occupied the Bhavan till 1947, the transfer of power and the life and work of presidents since 1950, among other themes.

The 13th president also opened a restored building of the PBG earlier this month. An elite household cavalry regiment of the Indian Army, the PBG has been active since 1773. — PTI

**অসম চৰকাৰৰ সাংস্কৃতিক সঁওতালকালয়ৰ উদ্যোগত আৰু
শেণগিতপুৰ জিলা প্ৰশাসনৰ সহযোগত
২০১৭ বৰ্ষ**

নটসূৰ্য ফণী শৰ্মা বঁটা প্ৰদান অনুষ্ঠান

স্থান : নেহেক ময়দান (চাৰ্ট ফিল্ড), তেজপুৰ

৩১ জুলাই, ২০১৭, দিনৰ ১১:৩০ বজায়

অসমৰ মাননীয় মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰী শ্ৰীযুত সৰ্বানন্দ সোগোৱালদেৱে

২০১৭ বৰ্ষৰ নটসূৰ্য ফণী শৰ্মা বঁটা

বিশিষ্ট অভিনেতা শ্ৰীযুত প্ৰসন্ন কুমাৰ গোৱামী আৰু

বিশিষ্ট আলোকশিল্পী শ্ৰীযুত হীৰামন গোৱামীক প্ৰদান কৰিব।

॥ সমানীয় অতি�ি ॥

শ্ৰীযুত নব কুমাৰ দলে, মাননীয় মন্ত্ৰী, সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমা বিভাগ

শ্ৰীযুত পল্লৰলোচন দাস, মাননীয় মন্ত্ৰী, শক্তি আৰু চাহ জনজাতি কল্যাণ বিভাগ

॥ বিশিষ্ট অতি�ি ॥

শ্ৰীযুত বাম প্ৰসন্ন শৰ্মা, মাননীয় সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিক্ৰমা বিভাগ

শ্ৰীযুত বৃন্দাবন গোৱামী, মাননীয় বিধায়ক, তেজপুৰ বিধানসভা সমষ্টি



শ্ৰীযুত সৰ্বানন্দ সোগোৱাল
মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰী, অসম

এই অনুষ্ঠানত উপস্থিত থাকিবলৈ শিল্পীপ্ৰাণ বাহুজন বিনৰ্ভাৰতে অনুৰোধ জনোৱা হ'ল।



'Saying' it with a smile

Researchers have identified three distinct, reliably recognised expressions of smile – reward, affiliation and dominance – and the facial muscle combinations that make them.

Each smile hinges on an anatomical feature known as the zygomaticus major, straps of facial muscle below the cheekbones that pull up the corners of the mouth, the researchers said.

"There are so many ways people use to describe different smiles, but we see them as describing subtypes of a reward situation or an affiliative situation or a situation of negotiation hierarchy and having disdain for someone else," said Paula Niedenthal, Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

According to researchers, reward smile is "probably the most intuitive".

This is "the kind of smile you would use with a baby, so he will smile back or do things you like," Niedenthal said.

It is a like a symmetrical hoist of zygomaticus muscles plus a dash of eyebrow lift and some sharp lip pulling.

On the other hand, affiliative smiles – used to communicate tolerance, acknowledgment or a bond and show that you are not a threat – comes with a similar symmetrical upturn to the mouth, but spread wider and thinner with pressed lips

and no exposed teeth.

The third smile in the category is dominance and is used to signify status and manage social hierarchies.

This smile dispenses with the symmetry, pairing a bit of lopsided sneer with the raised brows and lifted cheeks typically associated with expressing enjoyment, the researchers said.

In the study, published in the journal *Psychological Science*, participants looked at thousands of computer-generated expressions with random combinations of facial muscles activated. But each smile included some action from the zygomaticus – or "the smile muscle".

"When distinguishing among smiles, both scientists and laypeople tend focused to focus on true and false smiles. The belief is that if you smile when you're not happy, the smile is false," Niedenthal said.

"But people smile in many different circumstances and during many emotional states. So asserting that only smiles that result from states of happiness are 'true' smiles limits our understanding of this important facial expression," Niedenthal added.

The findings may enable people with affiliative and dominance smiles to shift the outcome of games and negotiations as well as help surgeons who repair and reconstruct facial bones and muscles, the researchers noted. – IANS

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Monday, July 31, 2017:

His year you often conflict between what you want emotionally and how vulnerable you want to be. With this type of conflict, you often send mixed messages. If you are single, many potential suitors could back off because they don't know how to react to your desire to be loved. You are likely to feel a sense of significance when you are around others and your self-defined personality. If you are attached, you and your sweetie will enjoy your downtime together more than you have in many months. SCORPIO understands you also too!

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★★ You might feel stucked out by everything that is happening around you. You are on a personal level. Either handle the issues before your workday starts or use more self-discipline in order to perform on the level you normally do in the outside world. Tonight: You decide.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Don't underestimate the importance of effective communication. Listen carefully, and be willing to imagine what the other party might be feeling. The more you are able to identify with others, the better the results will be. Tonight: Share important news with a loved one.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ You have a lot going on with you that you might choose to share. However, some of what you are holding back could pop up unexpectedly. Be prepared! How you deal with a money issue depends on your willingness to accept some big changes. Tonight: Join friends for dinner.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ A Cancer always say that you are overly emotional, but they do not understand you. They are willing to let go and embrace your feelings, whereas many people are not. This quality is your strength, not your weakness; use it well. Tonight: Your magnetism speaks for itself.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ It's time to pull away from a touchy or difficult situation. Be honest with yourself about why you seem to be holding back. Reach out to a loved one for feedback. Recognize how this matter affects you, and deal with it before it deals with you. Tonight: Make it easy.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Meetings and events surround you, as long as you remain calm and cool. Throw yourself into various situations. Be responsive to others' efforts to communicate. A goal becomes possible if you stay centered and focused. Tonight: Speak your mind with a clear friend.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★★ A Libra either wants to be a part of a situation involving an authority figure or make you feel uneasy. Try as you might, you can't seem to avoid this, which promises a change at least one area of your life. Refuse to be cornered by someone else. Tonight: Could be up late.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ You might be stuck out to someone at a distance and/or someone who knows and understands a lot more about a certain topic than you do. You are looking for alternatives, so be willing to discuss your options openly. Tonight: Do whatever puts a smile on your face.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ Use your instincts when dealing with a personal matter that is weighing you down. Speak to someone who cares a lot about you; you will appreciate this person's feedback. You still will have a lot to think about. Tonight: Get some extra R and R.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You the moment you get down to the basics of a certain situation. A friend or partner could take its toll on you. The other party might be generally demanding, and could ask a lot from you. Discuss your feelings and speak your mind. Tonight: Say "yes" to an invitation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

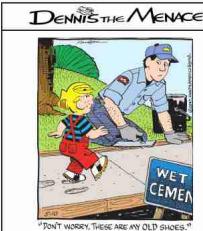
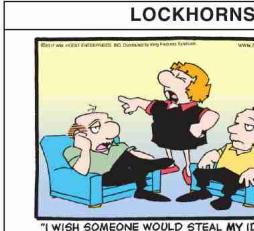
★★★★ You have great performance and ability to deal with a difficult person or situation. Be willing to acknowledge someone else's efforts, as it will add to the depth of your bond. You might decide that it's time to indulge in a special treat for you. Tonight: Relax at home.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Tap into your heart to get past a situation that you have found to be quite problematic. You'll discover that you are able to find a solution once you detach. A friend helps you understand his or her perspective. A loved one expresses his or her caring. Tonight: Out late.

Out where the handclaps a little stronger,
Out where the smile dwells a little longer.
That's where the West begins.

—ARTHUR CHAPMAN



THE PHANTOM

R

By Lee Falk



BLONDIE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



Kids

CN

13:00 Roll No. 21
14:00 Roll No. 21
15:00 Roll No. 21
16:00 We Bare Bears
17:00 Disney Jr.
17:30 Teen Titans Go
18:00 Larva
18:30 Handi Henry
19:00 Roll No. 21
21:00 Teen Titans Go

21:30 Handi Henry
22:00 Telephoning

22:30 Handi Henry

23:00 Handi Henry

23:30 Handi Henry

23:45 Handi Henry

23:50 Handi Henry

23:55 Handi Henry

23:58 Handi Henry

23:59 Handi Henry

Around the WORLD

Stallone sends special b'day wishes to Arnold

LOS ANGELES, July 30: Sylvester Stallone wished his friend and co-star, Arnold

Schwarzenegger, an advanced "happy birthday" on social media. The *Rocky* star shared

some throwback photos with the "big man." Schwarzenegger, who turns 70 today, Stallone posted side-by-side images of a young Schwarzenegger in work-out gear and him in his Rambo costume.

He wrote, "Pre... HAPPY BIRTHDAY ARNOLD!!! As long as you live and beyond, you're always going to be the "BIG MAN" Who set the bar so high that it will never be surpassed, an action hero legend!" The two were last seen on screen together in 2014 film *The Expendables 3*. - PTI

Fire hits Spain music festival

MADRID, July 30: More than 22,000 people were evacuated when the stage at an electronic music festival near Barcena Iona erupted in flames, sending revellers running. Firefighters rushed to the Tomorrowland festival in Santa Coloma de Gramenet in northeastern Spain, and eventually managed to extinguish the blaze, which caused no injuries, they said in a statement.

A total of 22,143 people had to be evacuated from the festival, they added.

Footage of the incident shows the side of the stage consumed by giant flames, a shower of sparks raining down as people ran away and black smoke billowing up.

It is not clear what caused the blaze, but organisers said on their Facebook page it was due to a technical malfunction.

"Thanks to the professional intervention of the authorities all 22,000 visitors were evacuated safely and without reports of injuries," they said. - AFP



Belorussian paratroopers perform during the celebration of the Day of the Paratrooper, which is celebrated in Belarus on August 2, in Minsk, Belarus on Saturday. - UNI

Dog finds help for 2 Utah girls

BEAVER (US), July 30: Two girls are recovering from a lightning strike after their dog brought help to the mountainside scene in Utah.

Authorities say the girls, ages 8 and 16, were crossing a meadow to explore during a family camping trip when the lightning hit. - PTI

The Beaver County Sheriff's Office says the dog ran back to the campsite and alerted family members. They followed the dog back to the unconscious girls.

The Deseret News reports that a Utah Department of Public Health official happened to be in the area for a biological study flew the girls to a hospital.

The 8-year-old suffered critical injuries, and the 16-year-old suffered serious injuries. They were later flown to hospitals in Salt Lake City, about 321 kilometres north of Beaver. Authorities did not name the dog's breed. - AP

Poor sleep may lead to weight gain: study

LONDON, July 30: Lack of sleep may lead to increased weight gain in children, according to a study which found that people who sleep less than nine hours a night are more likely to be overweight.

Researchers from University of Leeds in the UK studied 1,615 adults who reported how long they slept and kept records of food intake.

Participants had blood samples taken and their weight, waist circumference and blood pressure recorded. - PTI

Putin shows off Russia's naval might with major parade



SAINT PETERSBURG, July 30: President Vladimir Putin today oversaw a pomp-filled display of Russia's naval might as the Kremlin paraded its sea power from the Baltic Sea to the shores of Syria.

Some 50 warships and submarines were on show along the Neva River and in the Gulf of Finland off the country's second city of Saint Petersburg after Putin ordered the navy to hold its first ever parade on such a grand scale.

"Today much is being done to develop and modernise the navy," Putin told servicemen after surveying the military hardware from his presidential cutter.

"The navy is not only dealing with its traditional tasks but also

responding with merit to new challenges, making a significant contribution to the fight against terrorism and piracy."

The showcase event to mark Russia's annual Navy Day is the latest to be beefed up by Putin, with the Kremlin strongman also bolstering the traditional WWII victory parade in Moscow as he looks to fete the country's military muscles.

Russia has ramped up its military manoeuvres as ties with the US have slumped over Moscow's meddling in Ukraine, unnerving NATO and its members in Eastern Europe.

Smaller naval parades were also taking place from Russia's European exclave Kaliningrad on the Baltic Sea to the annexed Black Sea

peninsula of Crimea and Vladivostok in the far-east.

For the first time Moscow also showed off its naval hardware at its Syrian base of Tartus in the eastern Mediterranean, where Russian ships have played a prominent role backing up a bombing campaign in support of leader Bashar al-Assad.

Russian news wire Interfax reported that six vessels – including the latest generation *Krasnodar* diesel submarine – were taking part in the parade.

Moscow and Damascus in Janu-

ary signed a 49-year deal for Rus-

sia to expand and modernise the facility at Tartus, further cementing the Kremlin's influence in the region after its game-changing military intervention. - AFP

US bombers fly over Korean peninsula after missile test



WASHINGTON, July 30: US strategic bombers flew over the Korean Peninsula in a pointed show of force in response to Pyongyang's latest intercontinental ballistic missile, American officials said today.

US B-1B bombers along with fighter jets from the South Korean and Japanese air forces participated in the 10-hour bilateral mission, practicing intercept and formation drills.

The maneuver followed Pyongyang's second ICBM test this month late Friday, with Kim Jong-Un saying the move demonstrated the country's ability to strike any target in the United States.

"With Korea remains the most urgent threat to regional stability," said General Terrence O'Shaughnessy, Pacific Air Forces commander, in a statement.

"If called upon, we are ready to respond with rapid, lethal and overwhelming force at a point and place of our choosing."

In a standard response to the test, Beijing urged restraint by all sides, after the US and South Korea conducted a live-fire exercise using surface-to-surface missiles and formation drills.

Weapons experts said the altitude and flight time of Friday's missile suggested it was significantly more powerful than the earlier July 4 test, with a theoretical range of around 10,000 kilometers meaning it might be able to reach east coast US cities like New York, depending on payload size. South Korea said its test prompted it to step up deployment of a US missile defense system, despite consistent protests from China that the program would destabilize the region. - AFP

16 passengers burnt alive as van hits gas pipeline in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, July 30: Sixteen people, including women and children, were killed today when a van caught fire after hitting a gas pipeline in Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said.

The passenger van was travelling from Rawalpindi to Peshawar when it collided with a truck coming from the opposite direction at Abbottabad chowk and then hit a gas pipeline in the area. *The Express Tribune* reported, quoting officials.

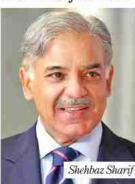
The fire engulfed the vehicle and all the 16 passengers, the report said. The bodies of the victims have been severely burnt and therefore, identification through DNA testing may not be possible, officials said.

Police personnel as well as rescue officials arrived at the scene of the incident soon after the blaze was reported and gained control over the fire shortly after.

The bodies were then removed from the van and transferred to District Headquarters Hospital Hassan Abdal.

Expressing grief over loss of lives, Punjab Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed concerned authorities to submit a report on the incident. Pakistan has an appalling record of fatal traffic accidents due to poor roads, badly maintained vehicles and reckless driving. - PTI

'Shehbaz may nominate son to succeed him as Pak Punjab CM'



LAHORE, July 30: Punjab Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who is set to succeed his brother Nawaz Sharif as the Pakistan prime minister, may nominate his son Hamza Shahbaz as the new head of the second largest province of the country, according to a media report.

According to sources at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), however, the final say on decision on who gets to helm Punjab rests with ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who is looking to consolidate the party's control in Punjab province.

The PML-N cannot afford to lose its grip on Punjab at this time, especially since the next general elections are barely a year away, a senior PML-N leader was quoted as saying.

"Shehbaz wants his son, who is already acting as the deputy chief minister, to succeed him for the remaining term in Punjab. However, [it is up to] Nawaz Sharif to decide whether Hamza will be the right choice for the post or not," said a senior PML-N legislator from Punjab.

The PML-N leader added that Shehbaz would continue to oversee matters in Punjab indirectly, while his elder brother Nawaz Sharif would govern the Centre from his Raigund residence. - PTI

Iran rules out halt to missile tests as tension with US rises

TEHRAN, July 30: A defiant Iran vowed today to press ahead with its missile programme and condemned new US sanctions, as tensions rise after the West hardened its tone against the Islamic republic.

In the latest incident, Tehran and Washington accused each other's naval forces of provocative manoeuvres in the Gulf that culminated in a US helicopter firing warning flares.

The US Navy said it had reacted to unresponsive vessels belonging to the Revolutionary Guards closing in on American ships at high speed, a charge denied by Iran which described the American move as unprovoked.

"At 4 pm (1130 GMT) on Friday, the supercarrier USS Nimitz and its accompanying warship, while being monitored by the Guards' frigates, flew a helicopter near the Resalat oil and gas platform and approached the force's ships," the Iranian paramilitary force said.

"The Americans in a provocative and unprofessional move, sent a warning message to the frigates and fired flares," it said. The Guards "ignored the unconventional move of the US ships and continued their mission".

The US Navy said its ships were on a routine patrol when an American helicopter "observed several Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps naval vessels approaching US naval forces at a high rate of speed".

"US naval forces attempted to establish communications, with no response from the Iranian vessels. Shortly thereafter, at a safe distance, the US helicopter deployed flares, after which the Iranian vessels halted their approach," it said.

The latest incident came after a US Navy ship fired warning shots at a Guards boat in similar circumstances on Tuesday, with each side blaming the other.

There have been a string of close encounters between US ships and Iranian vessels in the Gulf in recent months.

On the political front, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi said Tehran condemned new US sanctions against its missile programme, which US President Donald Trump is set to sign into law, and vowed to press on.

"We will continue with full power our missile programme," he said. "We consider the act by the US as hostile, reprehensible and unacceptable, and it's ultimately an effort to weaken the nuclear deal."

Ghasemi was referring to the 2015 agreement between Iran and US-led world powers that lifted some sanctions on Tehran in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

"The military and missile fields... Are our domestic policies and others have no right to intervene or comment on them," Ghasemi said. - AFP



Scientists to find if wine in corked bottles taste better

LONDON, July 30: Oxford scientists are set to resolve a long-standing dispute over whether wine tastes better when stored in bottles with corks or screw caps.

In a unique wine tasting event in London last week, researchers studied the brains of volunteers while they took a sip of different wines.

Taste, like other senses, is subjective and may vary from person to person. Researchers from Oxford University in the UK decided to attach sensors on the heads of tasters while they sip. The sensors monitor brain pleasure responses and translate them into numbers that can be used for comparison purposes.

The researchers will also be looking at other factors that might be related to how we register the taste of wine, such as whether hearing the cork pop induces greater enjoyment or if smelling the wine before drinking has any impact. *Phys.Org* reported.

Corks allow the wine to "breathe" - fresh air enters the bottle while air inside gets out.

However screw caps protect the wine from a fungus that is responsible for ruining about 20 per cent of bottled wine. - PTI

Babies can identify socially-dominant people: study

WASHINGTON, July 30: Toddlers as young as 17 months can perceive who is dominant and aware that such people receive more rewards, say scientists who found the social hierarchy is naturally ingrained in infants.

"This tells us that babies are sorting through things at a higher level than we thought," said Jessica Sommerville, professor at University of

Washington (UW) in the US. "They're attending to and taking into consideration fairly sophisticated

concepts," Sommerville said.

"If, early on, you see that someone who is more dominant gets more stuff, and as adults, we see that and say that's how the world is, it might be because these links are present early in development," she said.

The study evaluated reactions of 80 toddlers who watched three short videos of puppets in simple social situations.

Researchers measured the length of time children focused on the outcome of each video in an effort to determine what they noticed.

Measuring a baby's "looking time" is

a common metric used in studies of cognition and comprehension in infants, researchers said.

"Really young babies can't talk to us, so we have to use other measures such as how long they attend to events, to gauge their understanding of these events," said Elizabeth Enright, a graduate student at UW.

"Babies will look longer at things they find unexpected," said Enright.

For the study, each toddler watched an introductory video at least six times. This brief clip aimed to establish the "dominant" puppet in the scene - the

one who appeared to win a minor competition with a second puppet over a special chair. Then each child watched a second set of videos so that researchers could compare how the toddler reacted to various outcomes.

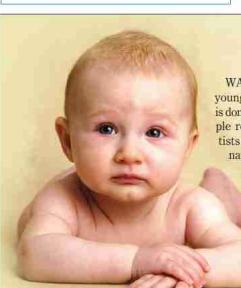
The researchers employed puppets, rather than people, for the videos because the puppets look essentially the same, offer no facial or other emotional reaction, and don't draw an infant's attention the way that differences among humans might, said Sommerville.

The researchers set up three narrative scenarios using the puppets. In one

scenario, a clip showed the dominant puppet receiving more Legos, while another clip showed both puppets receiving the same amount.

In the other scenario, a clip again showed the puppets receiving the same number of Legos, while a different clip showed the submissive puppet receiving more.

The study found that toddlers looked an average of 7 seconds longer at the videos in which the weaker puppet received more Legos, or when the two puppets received the same number, versus when the dominant puppet received more Legos. - PTI



Pique lifts Barcelona as El Clasico lives up to hype

MIAMI, July 30: Gerard Pique delivered Barcelona's match winner over Real Madrid as El Clasico Miami lived up to the hype.

The Spanish international steered in a Neymar free-kick in the 50th minute to seal a 3-2 win for the Catalan giants in front of 66,014 at the Hard Rock Stadium.

Lionel Messi, who put in a superb 64-minute performance, opened the scoring after just three minutes and when Ivan Rakitic doubled the lead soon after, the writing appeared to be on the wall for a sluggish Real Madrid side.

Yet Zinedine Zidane's side quickly woke from their slumber and by the end of the first half, goals from Mateo Kovacic and Marco Asensio had pulled them level. What followed was enterprising, often breathless friendly fare before Pique struck that decisive goal.

This was nothing more than a pre-season match and obviously wasn't going to affect the overall record between these two old rivals, which stands at 93 wins for Real, 91 for Barcelona – who had won their most recent meeting with Messi's last-gasp winner – his 500th for the club.

Madrid had the last laugh in May, winning La Liga and the Champions League, but actually arrived in Miami off the back of two exhibition defeats – a penalty shoot-out defeat to Manchester United before Manchester City also did a number on them in Los Angeles, running out 4-1 winners.

Barca, meanwhile, had beaten United and Juventus in International Champions Cup friendly competition, but the ongoing uncertainty surrounding Neymar – and Paris Saint-Germain's reported readiness to make a 218 million-euro move for him – has cast a serious cloud over their two-week stay in North America.

The Brazilian started for Ernesto Valverde's



Gerard Pique of
Barcelona scores
during the second
half of the International
Champions Cup
match against Real
Madrid at the
Hard Rock
Stadium in
Miami Gardens,
on Saturday.

outstretched hand of Jasper Cillessen.

Suddenly, the game was on Benzema, who'd barely had a sniff, dragged just wide on 19 minutes with Cillessen beaten.

Navas remained the busier keeper, however,

and was on hand to repel Messi once again on 31 minutes. It was a key save because in the 36th Asensio levelled for Madrid.

Los Blancos were counter-attacking dangerously and it was left to Modric who squared for the Spaniard who took full advantage of Jordi Alba missing the ball to rifle past a horribly exposed Cillessen.

Although they came back from the early goals, Zidane was downbeat about his team's performance. But he said there was plenty of time to get things right before Madrid take on Manchester United in the UEFA Super Cup on August 8.

"Today was a game of two faces for us, one bad, one better," he said. "Ultimately we are preparing for the eighth – we will be ready."

Both teams retained their star men after the restart and it was Neymar whose pinpoint free-kick was steered home by Pique in the 50th.

"We made a good start, generated some good opportunities," Valverde said. "Overall, we did well trying to dominate the match."

"I expect the best from Messi and all the players but he is extraordinary and we are aiming to win all the titles this season."

While the clash of the Spanish rivals was supposedly a friendly, Rakitic was lucky to escape a red card just after the hour mark when he appeared to push referee Jair Marrufo.

Neymar departed on 72 minutes in what could have been his final performance in Barcelona colours. "I don't want to speculate about Neymar. I see him in the same place I have seen him recently, on the pitch with us," Valverde said. – AFP

India amass 24 medals at Jordan Open TT

AMMAN (Jordan), July 30: India bagged a rich haul of 24 medals, including seven gold, at the Jordan Junior and Cadet Open here.

India bagged seven gold medals, seven silver and 10 bronze to complete a sweep of sorts, making the trip to Amman successful.

But for Hsu p-Hsuan, who stopped the Indian surge, Paray Jain would have added one more to the gold tally but had to be satisfied with the silver after going down to the Taipei boy 4-11, 6-11, 6-11 in the cadet singles final.

Even the team title was denied to India in the cadet section when Payas, Yashwanth Malik and Chinmay Somaiya found the going tough against Hsu Po-Hsuan, Lin Yen-Cun and Peng Chih who claimed the team gold, leaving India the second-best finishers.

However, the Indian girls, following the footsteps of the boys' team, ensured team title besides the hopes boys and hopes girls (cadet) adding to the golden kit-ton on the concluding day.

Payas overcame Ian A. Muhammad/Anam Samadhi with the boys' singles title with a 11-5, 11-9, 12-10 triumph while Ananya Manjunath grabbed the singles crown when she scored a 11-7, 6-11, 11-5, 12-10 victory over Taipei's Cheng Pu-Syuan in a needle final.

Following their impressive junior boys' crown, Jeet Chandra, Manush Shah and Parth Virmanti, the A' team India beat their counterparts in 'B' 3-1 to finish 1-2 in that order.

Team B consisted of Sneha Suravajula, Anukram Jain, Shivaji Roy and Mudit Dani. – PTI

Ronaldinho tells Neymar to go where he is happy



Sudha ready for Worlds, but AFI coach rules out participation

NEW DELHI, July 30: The controversy surrounding the selection of Indian team for the World Championships took a dramatic turn yesterday with Sudha Singh finding her name in the entry list of the IAAF but the AFI ruling out her participation in the global event.

Sudha was among the three athletes who did not figure in the original 24-member squad selected by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) despite winning gold in the recent Asian Championships in Bhubaneswar.

But her name surprisingly figured among the Indian participants to be included in the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) late night.

"I just got to know that I am in the World Championships entry list. I am not yet being told by anybody from the AFI whether I have been included in the team or not. But I am ready to run in London," Sudha told PTI from her training base in Dharmsala.

"I have my visa ready and so just as the AFI tells me about my participation in World Cham-

pionships, I will be immediately ready to fly to London. My visa was not obtained till yesterday and the flight (on July 23) I remained hopeful (that I may be included later) and so I did not take the legal route (like what PU Chitra did)," said Sudha, who represented the country in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, respectively in the 2016 World Championships.

But the AFI has other ideas and deputy national coach Radhakrishnan Nair, who is already in London with most of the Indian participants, said Sudha is not taking part in the World Championships.

"No, she is not taking part in the World Championships. She has not been included in the Indian team and whether Sudha will run in the women's 3000m steeplechase event in the World Championships," he said.

It is still not clear whether the AFI included Sudha's name after the announcement of the 24-member squad on July 23 or her name was in the IAAF entry list due to a goof-up by the federation officials. None of the AFI officials were coming out on record to offer any reason why Sudha's name is there in the IAAF entry list for women's 3000m steeplechase.

Winners of the Asian Championships qualify for the world event but the IAAF rules clearly stated

Ex-Juventus midfielder Melo to leave Palmeiras, confirms coach

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 30: Former Juventus and Brazil international midfielder Felipe Melo is set to part ways with Palmeiras, the Brazilian club's coach said.

The announcement came after Melo was left out of Palmeiras' squad for their home clash against Avaí on Saturday, which the hosts won 2-0, reports Xinhua news agency.

"Because of the player that he is, Felipe is clearly upset that he is not playing," Palmeiras coach Cuca told reporters.

"We had a frank and direct conversation, I took into account problems that could arise in the future and told him that he is free to continue his career somewhere else."

Having joined Palmeiras on a three-year deal from Inter Milan in January, Melo made just five of a possible 16 appearances in Brazil's Serie A championship this year.



In May, he was banned for six matches for punching an opponent in a Copa Libertadores match. He has also suffered hand and thigh injuries. Brazilian media reported that Melo's representatives are in talks with Turkish club Galatasaray, where the 34-year-old played from 2013 to 2015. – IANS

Ex-Brazilian midfielder Hernanes scores on return for Sao Paulo

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 30: Former Brazil international team playmaker Anderson Hernanes scored on his return for São Paulo as the six-time Brazilian Serie A football champions recovered from a two-goal deficit to beat Botafogo 4-3 here.

Peru international midfielder Christian Cueva gave the visitors the lead in the 18th minute at Rio's Olympic stadium on Saturday before Botafogo's Marcos Vinicius netted twice in quick succession, reports Xinhua news agency.

Later, second-half substitute Guilherme made it 3-1, but Marcos Guilherme and Hernanes struck in the 84th and 86th minutes respectively as São Paulo drew level.

Marcos Guilherme then secured a stunning victory for São Paulo when he scored again in stoppage time with a low shot after Cueva's through ball.

Hernanes was making his first appearance for São Paulo since 2010, having joined his original club on loan from Hebei China Fortune last week. – IANS



I was not expecting to qualify for World Championship: Sameer

NEW DELHI, July 30: Handicapped a direct entry at the World Championships, rising Indian shuttler Sameer Verma says he was not expecting to qualify for the tournament but now wants to make it count by returning with a medal from the prestigious tournament.

"I had a chance of qualifying in May but I didn't do well in Singapore and with Sai (Praneeth) winning and Srikanth also reaching the finals, the ranking was up and down. I knew I had a 1 or 2 per cent chance of still making it if there were no withdrawals. But I wasn't expecting it," Sameer told PTI.

The 22-year-old from Dharwad was in good form when he clinched his maiden Grand Prix Gold title at Syed Modis International in January. He also reached the quarterfinals at India Super Series.

He also played at Singapore Open before suffering a shoulder injury while going through the strenuous training sessions and it necessitated his with-

drawal from Indonesia and Australian Open Superseries events in June.

"The injury affected my progress as it took 2-3 weeks for me to regain my fitness. It was also frustrating to not

and my game was good but not my best. It takes sometimes to get back to your best. But this one month break will help me to regain my top game and play against the best at

competing in the men's singles competition at the World Championship, while Rituparna Das and Tanvi Lad also qualified behind Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu.

it to hand pressure on myself. My focus is on training hard and playing well there," he said.

"Looking at Srikanth winning at Indonesia and Australia has been a great motivation. We have so many good players against whom we train and I think this is an advantage. I know I also belong there. I have the game to beat the best and I want to crack the top 10. This would be one of the targets," said the 2016 Hong Kong Super Series finalist.

Talking about new Indonesian coach Mulyo Hardoyo's training, Sameer said: "His long sessions have really helped us. If you notice Srikanth's final against Chen Long, he kept playing the rallies even in the third game, he didn't get tired and it is the difference that his training has made."

India will be fielding the biggest contingent at the World Championship to be held at Glasgow, Scotland from August 21 to 27 with four shuttlers qualifying in both men's and women's singles competition. – PTI



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

Tom Westley strengthens England grip on third Test

LONDON, July 30: England debutant Tom Westley's fifty saw the hosts remain in charge of the third Test against South Africa at The Oval.

England were 153 for two in their second innings, already a lead of 331 runs, at lunch on the fourth day of what is the 100th Test staged at The Oval.

Number three Westley was 50 not out following his first-innings 25.

Meanwhile, England captain Joe Root was 38 not out, having so far helped Westley add an unbroken 61 for the third wicket.

South Africa's lone success in the session saw them dismiss opener Keaton Jennings.

But the rain that started to fall during the lunch break suggested that novice skipper Root might have to declare earlier than he would like if he wants to give his bowlers enough time to force a win that would put England an unbeat-

able 2-1 up in this four-match series with just one to play.

England resumed on 74 for one, a lead of 252, with Jennings 34 not out and Westley 28 not out.

South Africa-born and raised Jennings – England-qualified through his mother and residence – had launched his Test career with a century on debut against India in Mumbai in December.

But a duck on the first day of this match meant the Durham left-handed opener was under pressure for his place, having reached double figures just once in his last five innings.

Jennings had batted hard for 48 when he was caught in the gully after fending at a lifting ball from fast bowler Kagiso Rabada.

It was the end of a 115-minute innings that featured 78 balls including nine fours and a stand of 62 with Westley that had taken England to 92 for two.

England's Tom Westley plays one through the off side during day four of the 3rd Test against South Africa at The Oval, on Sunday.



England's Tom Westley plays one through the off side during day four of the 3rd Test against South Africa at The Oval, on Sunday.

Westley, one of three debutants in England's XI, demonstrated many of the grafting qualities critics of the team's top-order had said they lacked during a massive 340-run defeat in the second Test at Trent Bridge.

The Essex right-hander added just nine runs in Sunday's first hour – although he did clip a full length ball on off stump from Rabada wide of mid-on for a well-timed four.

And when Vernon Philander, who spent the second night of this match on a hospital drip with a viral complaint, dropped short outside off stump, Westley eased him behind point for another elegant boundary.

The seamer did go past Westley's outside edge several times, however, as did Morkel.

But the composed Westley clipped fast bowler Morkel off his pads for a boundary that

saw him to a 119-ball fifty, including nine fours.

England established a strong position in this match with a first-innings total of 353 built on Ben Stokes's 112 and former captain Alastair Cook's painstaking 88.

Pace bowler Toby Roland-Jones, another of England's debutants, then took five for 57 as South Africa were skittled out for just 175 in reply.

SCORECARD (lunch)

England 1st Innings: 353
South Africa 1st Innings: 175

England 2nd Innings (overnight): 74-1; A Cook b Morkel 7, K Jennings c Morris b Rabada 48, T Westley not out 50, J Root not out 38. Extras: (LB 9, W-1) Total: (for 2 wkts in 50 overs) 153. Fall of wickets: 1-30, 2-92. Bowlers: Morkel 16-4-39-1; Philander 11-2-41-0; Rabada 13-4-29-1; Morris 6-0-30-0; Mahraja 4-1-5-0. – AFP

IAAF rejects AFI's request to include Chitra

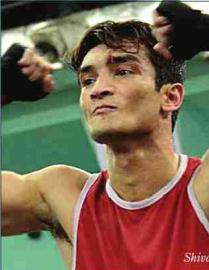
NEW DELHI, July 30: Indian boxers packed quite a heavy punch at the 48th Grand Prix Usti Nad Labem, clinching five gold, two silver and one bronze medal at the event in the Czech Republic.

World Championships bronze-medallist Shiva Thapa (60kg), former Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Manoj Kumar (69kg), Amit Phangal (52kg), Gaurav Bidhuri (56kg) and Satish Kumar (+91kg) claimed gold medals after winning their respective sumit clashes last night.

Kavinder Bish (52kg) and Manish Panwar (81kg), on the other hand, settled for silver medals. Earlier, Sunit Samwan (91kg) had claimed a bronze after going down in the semifinals.

Amit and Kavinder opened the proceedings for the country in an all-Indian final. Of the two, Amit is a light weight (49kg) boxer but competed in the flyweight division in this event. He defeated Kavinder 3-2 to claim the top position.

Shiva, Manoj strike gold at Czech boxing tourney



Next up was Gaurav against Poland's Iwanow Jaroslaw and the Indian had no trouble notching up a 5-0 win.

Shiva, who recently won a silver medal at the Asian Championships, also clinched a dominant 5-0 victory over Slovakia's Filip Meszaro to record another morale-boosting triumph ahead of next month's World Championships in Hamburg, Germany.

Another Hamburg-bound boxer, Manoj, too claimed a 5-0 verdict against local favourite David Kotrc. However, Satish Kumar had to stave off a stiff challenge from German Max Keller for his gold.

Manish, on the other hand, lost to Germany's Ibragim Bazuev to settle for a silver medal.

The tournament marked the end of a fortnight-long training-cum-competition trip for the Indian boxers ahead of the world showpiece scheduled from August 25 to September 2.

Of the boxers competing in this tournament, Amit, Kavinder, Gaurav, Shiva, Manoj, Sunit and Satish will be competing in the World Championships.

The eighth Indian boxer in the fray at Hamburg will be Vikas Krishan (75kg) but he did not accompany the team on this trip, preferring to train in Pune. – PTI

Rajasthan, Maharashtra lift national roll ball titles

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 30: Rajasthan defeated Uttar Pradesh 3-2 to lift the boys title while Maharashtra emerged champions in the girls category defeating Madhya Pradesh 4-3 while Uttar Pradesh got the better of hosts Assam 3-2. BP Hindu of Assam was adjudged the best player in the boys category while fellow State mate Saran Changsan was walked away with the best

player award in the girls category.

In the closing ceremony, State Finance Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma gave away the prizes in the presence of LS Changsan, working chairperson, organising committee; Raju Davade, secretary general, Roll Ball Federation of India and Manoj Yadav, president Roll Ball Federation of India.



Rajasthan players pose for a photograph after winning the boys' title in the 9th Mini Under-11 National Roll Ball Championship in Guwahati, on Sunday. – UB Photos

Assam finish with five medals

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 30: Assam ended their 24th National Strength Lifting Championship campaign with a total of five medals at the Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phukan Indoor Stadium in RG Barua Sports Complex here today.

In the semifinals, Rajasthan

gold medals while Anupam Sarma added a silver medal to the Saturday's tally of two medals. Rakhi went on to clinch gold in Women's Masters above 72kg category and Indian Bench Press category while Anupama had to be content with a silver in the Men's Masters above 95kg category. Babul Bikas Patrabanay, secretary general, Indian Strengthlifting Federation; Dhiren Baruah, chairman, GMDA; Subodh Mala Baruah, president, Sports Journalists Federation of India; Birnam Nunisa, tournament director, among others were present during the closing ceremony.

Flyaway of OIL scored the first goal in the 15th minute while Mamata Chetia scored the second goal. In the second half, F Warry ensured his brace while Tulya Das too went on to add two goals to make it 5-0. Nahin Rabha, Tulya Das, Arup Bora and Santanu Deba of OIL were awarded with the best player, best scorer, best goal-

keeper and best defender trophies respectively. Dergon Mla Bishendra Nath Bhamali, PTC Principal MI Mandal and Dergon Municipality chairman Arunava Kalita were present during the prize distribution ceremony. The champion and runners-up team were awarded Rs 50,000 and Rs 30,000 respectively. – Correspondent

JAGIROAD, July 30: Kanaboni Football Eleven emerged champions in the 17th Gobha De-Raja Football Tournament defeating Tiger Club, Bangthaiagon 4-3 via tie-breaker in the final played today at the Na-khola playground near here. The game ended goalless during regulation time.

In the tie-breaker, Mantu Baru, Tilkey Das, RR Singh and B Marak scored for the winning team while Nirab Deuri, Nilam Das and Biswa Bordoloi netted for Tiger Club. Biswa Bordoloi was adjudged the best player of the final. Morigon District Sports Association joint secretaries Jayanta Deka and Nasir Ahmed, Stajakhala Milk Producers' Co-operative Society secretary Biman Sharma were the guests during the closing ceremony and gave away the trophies. Altogether 14 teams took part in the tournament.

MMA meet from Aug 19

SPORTS REPORTER

GUWAHATI, July 30: The Biding MMA Academy and Trans Virtual under the banner of All India Mixed Martial Arts Association will organise the 1st All India Open MMA Championship for both Men and Women at the Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phukan Indoor Stadium in RG Barua Sports Complex here from August 19 to 20.

Around 150 players will be seen in action during the championship and 12 States have so far confirmed their participation.

The competition will be held in different weight categories. In men's section, the competition will be held in U-52kg, U-56kg, U-61kg, U-66kg, U-71kg, U-77kg, U-84kg, U-93kg and 93+kg while in women's section the competition will be held in U-52 kg, U-56 kg, U-61 kg, U-66 kg, U-71 kg.

OIL annex football title

DERGAON, July 30: Oil India Limited (OIL) Dibrugarh annexed the Gobha De-Raja Invitational Football Tournament title organised by Dergon Veteran Sports Association at the Dergon Higher Secondary School playground here. The OIL team defeated Nagaon Town Club 5-0 in the final played today.

Flyaway of OIL scored the first goal in the 15th minute while Mamata Chetia scored the second goal. In the second half, F Warry ensured his brace while Tulya Das too went on to add two goals to make it 5-0.

Nahin Rabha, Tulya Das, Arup Bora and Santanu Deba of OIL

were awarded with the best player, best scorer, best goal-

keeper and best defender trophies respectively. Dergon Mla Bishendra Nath Bhamali, PTC Principal MI Mandal and Dergon Municipality chairman Arunava Kalita were present during the prize distribution ceremony. The champion and runners-up team were awarded Rs 50,000 and Rs 30,000 respectively. – Correspondent

Vettel wins Hungarian GP in Ferrari one-two

BUDAPEST, July 30: Sebastian Vettel increased his drivers' world championship lead to 14 points on Sunday when he led Kimi Raikkonen home in a dominant Ferrari one-two at the Hungarian Grand Prix.

In his 50th race for Ferrari, the four-time champion German controlled the contest from pole position in stifling heat to reel off his first win in five races since the Monaco Grand Prix.

His main title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes finished fourth, after handing a podium finish back to his teammate Valtteri Bottas on the final lap following a late switch to enable the Briton to attack the two Ferraris.

Pressing Pizzi into surrendering possession as the Benfica defender tried to shepherd the ball out of play inside his own area, Kolasinac saw goalkeeping Julio Cesar out of position and chipped a cross towards Vettel, who volleyed home from 10 yards.

Vettel bagged his second in the 32nd minute, converting a Francis Coquelin cross from close range. – AFP

iel Ricciardo that saw the angry Australian forced into an early retirement, forcing the deployment of the Safety Car.

Two-time champion Fernando Alonso came home sixth and recorded the fastest lap of the race for McLaren-Honda after a stirring and often remarkable drive.

Vettel, who started the day just a point ahead of Hamilton, increased his lead by another 13 after 11 of this year's 20 races as the circus takes a now-traditional three-week European summer holiday before the Belgian Grand Prix.

It was Ferrari's first one-two in Hungary since 2004, when seven-time champion German Michael Schumacher triumphed ahead of Brazilian Rubens Barrichello, the last season in which the race winner in Hungary went on to win the drivers' title. – AFP

Gunners earn comfortable win in Emirates Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

LONDON, July 30: Theo Walcott gave Arsenal a timely reminder of his qualities with a brace in Arsenal's 5-2 friendly thrashing of Benfica as Alexandre Lacazette made his Gunners home debut in the Emirates Cup on Saturday.

Walcott is in danger of being reduced to a fringe figure following a disappointing campaign that ended with the England winger being left out of Arsenal's FA Cup final win against Chelsea in May.

As if that wasn't depressing enough for Walcott, he has watched Wenger splash out a club record £52 million (\$68 million) for Lyon striker Lacazette and make a so far unsuccessful attempt to sign Monaco winger Thomas Lemar.

But, in his 11th year with Arsenal, 28-year-old Walcott served to notice he isn't going to be cast aside without a fight as he produced two clinical finishes and laid on the cross for a Lissandro Lopez own goal.

Olivier Giroud and Alex Iwobi were also on target as Arsenal ran riot in their first match in the four-team friendly tournament at the Emirates Stadium.



Olivier Giroud of Arsenal scores during the Emirates Cup match against Benfica at the Emirates Stadium in London, on Saturday.