

NEWS CAPSULE

3 militants killed

SRINAGAR, Sept 24: Security forces today killed three militants in a gunbattle encounter in Kashmir's Uri, thwarting plans to carry out an attack like the one on an Army base in the same area last year, officials said.

Next CAG

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Former Home Secretary Rajiv Mehrishi will take over as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) tomorrow succeeding Shashi Kant Sharma, officials said today. — PTI

Pak goof-up

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 24: In a goof-up today, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Maleeha Lodhi flashed a picture of an injured Gaza girl with no connection to India while alleging she was a victim in Kashmir. — PTI

Hooch claims 5

DOOMDOOMA, Sept 24: Five persons died today and nine others fell ill after consuming country liquor on September 21 and 22 at Talap TE, Tinsukia deputy commissionership, which ordered a probe into the incident. — Correspondent

4 ultras nabbed

KALAGAON, Sept 24: Police today arrested four suspected ULFA members at Bonsobari near Marbat. Two rifles were recovered from those arrested — Phillip Kandulah, John Tanti, Rajesh Nag and Dibruba Sagat. — Correspondent

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



Shoppers throng Fancy Bazaar ahead of Durga Puja, in Guwahati on Sunday. — UB Photos

Fresh plea in SC for deportation of Rohingyas

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: A fresh petition has been filed in the Supreme Court favouring the Centre's stand to identify and deport to Myanmar around 40,000 illegal Rohingyas staying here.

The plea may be heard along with the PIL filed by two Rohingyas Muslim refugees challenging deportation, which is likely to come up for hearing on October 3.

Advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, also a BJP leader, said that his plea has been accepted in the apex court registry and would be heard on the date already fixed.

The plea sought a direction to the Centre and the State

(See page 2)

Abdul Majid passes away

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Eminent actor and director Abdul Majid, who enriched the State's cultural spheres for over half a century, passed away at the GNRH Hospital here around 9:30 this morning. He was 85 and had been unwell for some time.

Born at Balbari in Jorhat district on November 16, 1931, Majid passed the Matriculation examination from Jorhat Government High School in 1950 and had to leave his college education halfway following his father's death and assumed responsibility of his family. He started his job as a government employee in the Power Department in 1955 and retired in 1990.

Majid had his initiation into the cultural world

at an early age and was particularly attracted to stage acting. He, along with a few like-minded individuals, founded the Krishi Sangha at Jorhat

in 1950, and three years later formed the Milita Sipi Majad. It played a key role in the making of the first President's Silver Medal-winning Assamese feature film *Ranga Police* (1958) directed by Bip Baruah. The film also marked Majid's entry into films as an actor where he earned critical acclaim for his negative role as a young man. He went on to play similar roles with élan a number of times.

Chomeli Mensah (1975), which marked a watershed in the annals of Assamese cinema, bears the stamp of Majid's ingenuity as director. His acting prowess also came to the fore in the movie where he played the role of an eccentric teetotal man *Mongoli*. The film won the Rajat Kamal for the best regional film in the 23rd National Film Festival, 1976. Dr Bhupen Hazarika won the best music director award for the film.

(See page 2)

BJP national executive begins

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi may seek to dispel concerns over the state of economy and lay down his government's economic and political agenda at a two-day BJP national executive meeting which began here today.

Party president Amit Shah held a meeting with office-bearers, state chiefs and key organisational leaders to finalise agenda items, including resolutions, which the national executive is expected to discuss on September 25, the birth anniversary of Hindu icon Deen Dayal Upadhyaya.

A key highlight of the meeting will be the presence of the party's all elected lawmakers — close to 1,400 MLAs, 337 MPs and all MLCS, besides its core group leaders from states among others on Monday.

More than 2,000 delegates will attend what has been described by senior party leaders as an "extended national executive" to mark the end of a year-long exercise to commemorate Upadhyaya's 100th birth anniversary.

Modi, who will deliver the valedictory address on Monday, may use the opportunity to highlight his government's pro-poor measures and other policy decisions. — PTI

JOCOSERIOUS

Things work always against Govt. slogans. Zero tolerance is also one such thing too...

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Has been awarded a Ph.D. in Water Resources Engineering by the University of Oklahoma for his dissertation - "Characterization and Prediction of Flash Flood Hydrology". He has worked at Advanced Radar Research Center and his advisors were Dr. Jonathan J. Gourley and Prof. Yang Hong. He graduated with a B.Tech Civil Engineering in 2010. Hailing from Silchar, he is the son of Ramesh Chandra Seharia and Nilakhi Seharia, and the elder brother of Chiraj Seharia.

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Muhajirs protest against Pak at UN

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 24: Muhajirs from Pakistan held a peaceful demonstration in front of the UN headquarters here against the alleged human rights violations in the country.

Displaying placards and banners calling the Pakistan Army "war criminals", the protesters shouted anti-Pakistan slogans.

The protest was organised by the US wing of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). The protesters claimed that thousands of innocent people of their community have been killed in Pakistan over the last three decades and several thousands have been held under illegal captivity without a trial.

Joining the protesters from London over phone, MQM leader Altaf Hussain urged the UN Secretary General to come forward and help the Muhajirs and Balochs who are suffering in Pakistan.

MQM mainly represents Urdu-speaking ethnic Muhajirs, who migrated to Pakistan from India during partition in 1947.

The MQM emerged as a largely ethnic party in the 1980s. It has political dominance in the southern Sindh province's urban areas—notably in Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Sukkur where a large number of Urdu-speaking people reside. PTI

'Not much' of a nuclear deal after Iran tests missile: Trump

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of a heated week of diplomacy at the UN General Assembly in New York, where Trump again accused Iran of

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The US President has threatened to declare Iran to be in breach of the 2015 deal unless it is expanded to punish Iran for pursuing a ballistic missile programme and sponsoring foreign militant groups.

On October 15, Trump is due to tell the US Congress whether he is ready to reclassify Iran's compliance with the 2015 deal. If he refuses to do so, it could open the door to renewed US sanctions and the collapse of the deal. —AFP

Theresa May's top ministers plotted to oust her: book

LONDON, Sept 24: British Prime Minister Theresa May faced a plot from her Cabinet ministers to oust her in the immediate aftermath of the June general election that saw the Conservative Party lose its overall majority in Parliament, a new book has claimed.

The four most senior figures in her Cabinet – Chancellor Philip Hammond, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, Brexit Secretary David Davis and Home Secretary Amber Rudd – plotted to remove her following an election seen as a failed

gamble by the British Prime Minister, according to *Fall Out, A Year Of Political Mayhem*.

Written by *The Sunday Times* political editor Tim Shipman, with extracts published in the newspaper today, the book claims that Hammond texted Johnson in the early hours of the morning following the election on June 8 to say he would step down as the next leader.

It claims that a "triumvirate" plan was hatched under which Johnson would lead the UK as the new Prime Minister, Brexit Secretary Davis

would handle the European Union withdrawal and Hammond would run the country's finances.

According to the latest political book, the plan failed once it became clear that May had no plans to step down and Davis indicated he could not work under Johnson.

Meanwhile, moderates with the Tory party, including former Prime Ministers David Cameron and John Major, and leading figures like George Osborne and Ruth Davidson are said to have gathered behind Rudd, with the Home

Secretary reported to have said she was keen to run.

The revelations of the book came as the division within the top tier of the government are at their most pronounced.

Pro-Brexit Johnson has reportedly demanded a series of assurances over May's recently proposed two-year transition period after Britain leaves the EU.

The Foreign Minister wants

Britain not to adopt any new EU rules and regulations after it formally leaves in March 2019, according to *The Sunday Telegraph*. —PTI

Int'l community must call on India to halt aggressive acts:Pak

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 24: Pakistan today accused India of adopting a posture of that of a "predator" and if the international community wishes to avoid a dangerous escalation between the two neighbours, it must call on New Delhi to halt its provocations and aggressive actions.

Terming India as the "mother of terrorism" in South Asia, Pakistan's Ambassador to the UN, Maleeha Lodhi, accused it of sponsoring terrorism in various parts of her country.

Exercising her right to reply after External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj yesterday hit out at Pakistan for creating terror groups like LeT, JeM, Hizbul Mujahideen and the Haqqani Network, Lodhi

alleged that "in her vitriol, she (Swaraj) deliberately ignored the core issue" of Kashmir.

Swaraj in her remarks did not mention Kashmir.

If the international community wishes to avoid a dangerous escalation between India and Pakistan, it must call on India to halt its provocations and aggressive actions. It must end the ceasefire violations along the Line of Control. It must halt its sponsorship of terrorist groups against Pakistan," Lodhi said.

Given that such responses are normally given by a low-level Foreign Service official, it was quite significant that the top Pakistani diplomat took up the floor to launch a verbal diatribe against India.

India did not immediately

exercise its right to respond to Lodhi's remarks, in which Pakistan for the second time accused the National Security Adviser Ajit Doval of interfering in Balochistan.

Lodhi said if the parties fail to resolve a dispute, the UN and the international community has not only the right but the obligation to intervene and help resolve the dispute.

"UN Security Council resolution does not lapse with time. Or are 'overtaken', as the Indian Foreign Minister put it. Law has no expiry date. Moral has no by-line date. India's posture is that of the predator. It cannot escape its legal and moral obligation to abide by the resolutions of the Security Council," she said. —PTI

—PTI

Abdul Majid passes away

Nadir Dutt Paar, Mon. Priya Jitmal, Juman Simon, Juje Pora, Apurba, Apeksha (Hindi), Son, Jinda, Inma Gunda, Hira Diba, Kama, Mantaz and Sat Nambar Sandhan (2016) have been the other films in which he acted.

Markan Trishna (1965) marked Majid's directorial debut. He followed it up with the movies Chhanchi Mensaab, Banhang, Banjai, Ponakan, Uttarka and Sat Nambar Sandhan. He also made several short films, including Asom Putala Nach, Ajan Fakir and Bahador Gaonburha, be-

sides several TV serials such as the hugely popular Naamgarjya, Ajir Manuh and Ram Rahim. He acted in TV serials like Agnami, Agukt, Gadhuji, Mikasil, Writu Abu Writu Jai, Agajapati and Prabhakti Surj.

A stage actor par excellence, Majid acted in over 200 plays, including many in mobile theatres like Kohinoor, Aradhana, Awahan, Puravijoy, Asom Star, Ma Lakshmi, Puberam, Indrahan, Mancha Konwar and Meghdo for several decades. He was also a vice president of the Indian People's Theatre As-

Fresh plea in SC ...

davit that some of the refugees have links with Pakistan's ISI and terror organisation ISIS and may pose serious threat to national security.

"The Government cannot make a blanket claim that all Rohingya immigrants are terrorists. They have recently filed their rejoinder affidavit responding to the Centre's affi-

Govts ignored warnings on ...

(Contd from page 1) army following close on their heels. By 1921, they virtually conquered Golparia."

The report went on to say that the way they seized upon the vast vacant areas of the Assam valley was almost unham and "without a million of people from East Bengal districts migrated to the Assam valley and such movement can be compared with a mass movement

of a large body of ants."

The report of the then Census officer clearly indicated that he could foresee the problems that Assam would face in the days to come because of illegal migration, but unfortunately, the political leaders of the State failed to understand the gravity of the situation over the years. However, Mulla was not the first and last person to point out the dangers. EH Pakyntem, the Superintendent of Census op-

erations in Assam in 1961, noted, "From 1901 onwards, the men from Mymensingh began to advance to Assam, apparently driven by pressure on the soil at home. They were joined by the people of other East Bengal (now Bangladesh) districts in less numbers."

SL Shakher, the then Chief Election Commissioner of India, admitted in 1978 that names of foreigners were included in the voters lists of India. He said, "In Assam, population in 1971 recorded an increase as high as 34.98 per cent and this increase was attributed to the influx of a very large number of persons from the neighbouring countries. The influx has become a regular feature. A stage will be reached when the State would have to reckon with the foreign nations who may probably constitute a sizeable percentage, if not the majority of the population of the State."

them being radicalised by terrorist recruits operating in India.

Opposing the Centre's reply, they said there was no specific allegations against individual members of the Rohingya community in India and it needs to be dealt with on a case-to-case basis. —PTI

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Rajnath to visit Sino-India border areas soon

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Home Minister Rajnath Singh will this week visit a Sino-Indian border area which has witnessed transgression by China's People's Liberation Army in the recent past, officials said.

During the tour to Barahati, the Home Minister will interact with the personnel of the Indo Tibetan Border Police which guards the border outpost located at an altitude of 14,311 feet.

This is the first visit by a senior minister in the Narendra Modi Government to the Chinese border after the resolution

of the stand-off in Doklam. Singh will also visit ITBP border outposts at Rimkhim (altitude 12,500 feet), Mana (10,500 feet) and Auli (10,200 feet) during the four-day trip beginning September 28, a Home Ministry official said.

There were reports that on July 25, Chinese soldiers had entered 800 metres into the Indian territory in Barnotoli, located in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, and stayed for sometime before returning to the Chinese territory.

The Home Minister will also address the probations

of the IAS, IPS and other services at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration in Mussoorie, besides interacting with the Central Government's additional secre-

tary-rank officials there on the first day of the visit.

The Home Minister is ex-



Court to hear victim's lawyer in Ishrat case

AHMEDABAD, Sept 24: A special CBI court yesterday asked the lawyer of the victim's kin in the alleged fake encounter case of Ishrat Jahan and three others, to argue their case against the discharge plea by ex-IPS officer PP Pandey.

The court of special judge JK Pandya fixed October 11 as the date to make its pronouncements, if any.

During the course of hearing, the court had allowed Ishrat's mother Shamima Kaiser to become a party in the case.

The arguments by lawyers of the CBI and Pandey concluded yesterday.

Pandey, who is currently out

on bail, had moved his discharge plea saying that statement of two witnesses against him are contradictory and had also cited his reinstatement and promotion as in-charge DGP as one of the grounds. He had claimed that none of the 105 witnesses examined by the court have named him in the case.

Pandey had also said that he should be discharged as he does not have any "direct or indirect involvement in the case," and that the court has not yet taken supplementary chargesheet on record.

He had submitted before the court that the CBI initiated ac-

tion against him without taking

sanction from the State Government as per the provisions of the CrPC. Pandey had re-

signed in April as in-charge

DGP of Gujarat after his ap-

pointment to the post was chal-

lenged in the Supreme Court.

Arguing against his discharge plea, the CBI had told the court that it did not enough evidence

against him. In the first

chargesheet filed by the CBI in 2013, seven Gujarat Police offi-

cials were named as accused, in-

cluding IPS officers PP Pandey,

DG Vanzara and GL Singh, who

are facing charges for kidnapping,

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Women dressed in traditional attire performing Garba on the occasion of Navratri festival, in Jaipur on Saturday night. - UNI

Book explores Modi & Trump's rise; 'collapse' of old world order

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: The elevation of Narendra Modi and Donald Trump to top Government positions in their respective countries, the significance of their rise and whether the old liberal world order has collapsed are among a bevy of issues Lord Meghnad Desai has in his new book.

In *Political Shock: Trump, Modi, Brexit & the Prospect for Liberal Democracy*, Desai makes a study of how Modi and Trump won the elections. Desai, who sits as a Labour

Peer in the UK's House of Lords, navigates the issues of populism and nationalism which he says now are cast as "undesirable" tendencies and adds it is "presumptuous" to cast either as an "unmitigated bad".

Talking about Modi, the author brings to the fore his penchant for using social media "imaginatively" to attract youth, a quality elusive to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, then 40, who was pitted against the three-time Gujarat Chief Minister in the race for

prime minister.

"Modi won because he had a message which carried the new voters who were children when the riots had taken place. They did not read newspapers, but relied on social media. Modi had mastered the social media technology. He used Twitter imaginatively, made himself accessible online with a campaign team ever ready to respond to queries. This was the new technology of campaigning which the other parties were slow to replicate," Desai writes. - PTI

Books on Indian culture, morals must at railway platform kiosks

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Books on Indian culture and morals are now to be displayed for sale at all platform kiosks, a new stall policy to all zonal railways has mandated.

In a commercial circular dated September 5, the Railway Board instructed all general managers to ensure that such books are found in railway stalls under the new Multi Purpose Stall (MPS) Policy.

"Zonal railways shall ensure that all MPS must display and sell books pertaining to Indian tradition, culture, values, morals and history," the circular, a copy of which is with this news agency, stated.

All miscellaneous, curio stalls, bookstalls, chemist stalls will now come under the multipurpose stalls, it said.

The policy supersedes the

Bookstall Policy of 2004 which mandated that stalls will keep books on varied subjects like literature, history, children's literature, fiction, travel, light reading, art, culture, current affairs, professional interests, national integration, etc in English, Hindi and regional languages.

The MPS Policy was drafted after it was felt that there was a need to have a single outlet at platforms from where passengers can purchase non-catering items required during travel.

The stalls will also sell artefacts and items of local and regional importance, proprietary article depot items, drinking water, over-the-counter medicines, pharmaceutical items like dry milk powder, the circular said.

The policy also states that it

will be mandatory for such stalls to display and sell prominently the zonal railway timetable as well as the "Trains at a Glance" publication and any other official publications of the railways.

Railators, individuals, self-help groups can apply for a licence to run these stalls. The allotment will be done after a tendering process, the policy states.

The new policy has also made it mandatory for such stalls to have a point of sale or swipe machine for acceptance of credit and debit cards from all customers without charging any additional transaction charge for any sum above Rs 100.

For amounts below Rs 100, payments through e-wallet would be acceptable, the policy said. - PTI

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Call to rally behind fight against terrorism

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Minister of State for External Affairs MJ Akbar has said that terrorism is the greatest challenge faced by the world as of now, and it needs to be fought unitedly without a "compromise".

"The recognition that the initiative once again by our Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) that prosperity is not possible without peace, which indeed it is not, then who

is the most powerful contemporary, where the most powerful contemporary challenge to peace is coming from," he questioned during his speech at an event here recently.

"It is coming from terrorism and therefore you coming to fight terrorism without us, without buts and this may be useful for our European friends to carry back home,

there are no ifs and no buts in the conflict with this terrorism," the minister said at the 'Changing Asia-2017' conference.

Referring to a resolution adopted by the leaders of the five-nation BRICS bloc at China's Xiamen, Akbar said, "You have suffered from isms before, terrorism is the most dangerous ism of the 21st century and therefore the BRICS resolution." - PTI



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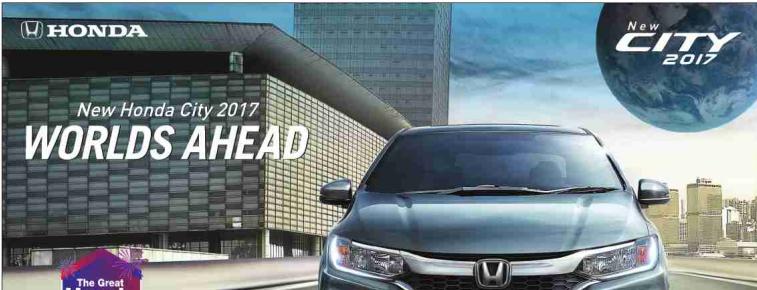
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SC orders allotment of medical seats to 10 Meghalaya students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, Sept 24: Supreme Court has ordered that ten Meghalaya medical students, who were earlier denied admission in Assam, be allotted their seats.

The order has brought huge relief to the students who were denied the seats out of the allotted North Eastern Council quota. Under an agreement, since 1976 ten seats were being allotted to students from Meghalaya willing to study medicine in medical colleges in Assam.

However, after the denial of seats, Meghalaya Government approached the Supreme Court. Since it is an interim order under a special leave petition, the final hearing on the original suit would be held in January next year.

Sohan's close aides surrender

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

TURA, Sept 24: In another blow to an already depleted Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA), two close aides of the outfit's chief, Sohan D Shira, surrendered with arms today at Williamnagar Police Station in East Garo Hills.

The duo from the 6th batch of the outfit have been identified as Chanchan G Momin, 22, of Rupidigre and Challung C Marak, 21, of Adugre. They surrendered today before the acting SP Ringmar TG Momin.

"They said that they surrendered as it was getting very difficult in the jungle to survive due to continued police operations. Further, they did not have any money as the entire cash that had been collected earlier by the outfit through extortion was being handled by Sohan himself", the SP informed.

Br Peter Gomes passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, Sept 24: The funeral of former vice principal of St Edmund's School, Brother Peter Gomes was held today at Goa. He had passed away on Saturday at the age of 94.

Born on July 25, 1923, Br Gomes joined the Congregation of Christian Brothers in 1948 and worked in different schools run by the congregation and spent 32 years at St Edmunds School, Shillong, as a Maths and Science teacher.

Loved and respected by students and fellow teachers alike, the demise of Br Gomes has been condoled by a large number of people from Meghalaya.

Meanwhile, a prayer service would be held at the school chapel of St Edmund's tomorrow at 2.30 pm, said principal of St Edmund's College, Sylvanus Lamare while condoling the death.

Rijiju distorting facts: APCHDRF

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Arunachal Pradesh Chakma-Hajong Democratic Rights Forum (APCHDRF) has vehemently condemned the statements made by Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju and All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) at attempts to distort the facts and spreading falsehood in respect of Chakmas and Hajongs staying in Arunachal Pradesh.

In a statement, the APCHDRF has alleged that both the Union Minister and AAPSU are trying to project the Chakmas as monsters, despite the historical facts stating that the Union Government had brought 14,888 Chakmas and Hajongs to India between 1964-1969 and settled them in Arunachal Pradesh. These Chakmas and Hajongs have valid migration certificates and the Union Government wanted to settle them permanently in Arunachal Pradesh (entwile NEFA).

Incidentally, in 1962, there was an Indo-China War and hence Indian Government rehabilitated them in Arunachal Pradesh for their historical loyalty towards India. Each family was accorded with five acres of land and few of their educated people were given Government employment.

Late Udanga Moni Chakma, who had served as Deputy Commissioner and Resident Com-

'Nagaland Declaration' released at NE Connectivity Summit

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, Sept 24: Following wide-ranging discussions during the two-day 4th North East Connectivity Summit in Kohima, Deputy Secretary General, FICCI, Arun Chawla released the 'Nagaland Declaration' for connectivity-led development of the North East region.

As per the declaration, the Summit, which concluded last night, felt the need to create a North East Implementation Agency to ensure timely completion of projects, including development of roads and highways, inland water transport, power, airports, etc., and a high-powered North East Economic Forum for synchronising planning and efforts for development of the North East with connectivity.

It also announced implementation of North East Ring Road which would cover a distance of 4,000 km and will run parallel to international borders, connectivity-led infrastructure revolution in the North East to attract investment and internal infrastructure of a State including roads, bridges and amenities.

Around 200 delegates from industry, Government agencies, multilaterals and international missions from across the globe participated in the Summit.

Ministry of Ethnic Affairs & Parliament of e-Government Committee, Myanmare, Mandalay Sai Kyaw Zaw, in his speech, said Ethnic Affairs Union Minister's office was opened to promote and look into the ethnic groups' culture, education and health. Apart from Myanmare, people from Mizoram are visiting Myanmare to promote their cultural and business relations, he said. India and Nagaland Government and business community of Myanmare for cultural and business relations.

Stating that such Summit gives us the idea of the potential of the North East's culture, Lok Sabha MP from Assam Gaurav Gogoi, in his address, said the role of administration, industry and entrepreneurs is very important to connect to other parts of the neighbouring States and countries.

In his valedictory address, Nagaland Chief Secretary Pankaj Kumar said the North East Connectivity Summit has provided a very useful platform for Government of India and North East region, State Governments, neighbouring countries, national and international organisations, private sector organisations having interest in development of the region to come together and pass ideas, perspectives and expertise network in the informal time space to take North East connectivity to the next level.

Many corporate houses, multilaterals and bands showed keen interest to work with the Government of Nagaland and in the region for development of various connectivity issues. While an Embassy representative from Russia and Japan suggested a number of areas of cooperation, the Indian companies like Axis Bank proposed to adopt 20 villages in Nagaland for financial literacy.

The Summit saw representation from top corporate houses including banking, aviation, energy, transports, etc. There were international representations from Myanmar, Japan, Bhutan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Laos, Russia and Thailand.

The 5th North East Connectivity Summit will be held at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh in 2018.



Director cum Member Secretary of Arunachal Pradesh State Council for Science & Technology Chow Dhanya Mungya administering the Swachhta Hi Seva pledge to the staff of the Council in Itanagar on Sunday. – Photo: DIPR

Hoolock Gibbon baby born in rehab centre

CORRESPONDENT

TURA, Sept 24: The Hoolock Gibbon population in Garo Hills region got a boost last week with the birth of a male baby of the highly endangered species at HURO programme rehabilitation centre in Silsotchigre village in West Garo Hills.

The birth of the male Gibbon is the second in captivity after another Gibbon named Sanjay was born in 2014 at the centre.

"A highly endangered Western Hoolock Gibbon baby was born on September 18 from a couple under final rehabilitation stage. The little baby, named Noree by the team, is very healthy and the mother is doing absolutely well too, taking very good care of her newborn," said Dr Saljagringrang Marak, the voluntary veterinarian

of the programme.

"HURO being the only rescue centre in India and in the world, to take care exclusively of Western Hoolock Gibbon, the birth is welcome under the care of his family. He will later be released along with his family members, back to the wild, as soon as our team can find an appropriate and safe place for them, in Meghalaya," added Dr Marak.

According to reports North East India has lost over 95 per cent of its Hoolock Gibbon population over the past 50 years, mainly because of deforestation and illegal poaching.

"It is important to keep in mind that being the only apes in India, Hoolock Gibbons are highly protected in Annex I of the Indian Wildlife Act 1972 and in the same Annex of the CITES Washington Convention," said Dr Marak.

The Western Hoolock Gibbon is locally known as Huro giving the programme the nomenclature and it is locally a bad omen, according to locals, to kill one.

come as a hope for conservation of the species," he added.

"Little Noree will not be touched by humans and will remain

under the care of his family. He will later be released along with his family members, back to the wild, as soon as our team can find an appropriate and safe place for them, in Meghalaya," added Dr Marak.

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But, Rijiju, who is from Arunachal Pradesh, was among those migrants. They enjoyed all rights and facilities at par with the locals till 1980s and were entitled to PDS facilities and trade licences till 1990s. But, thereafter, all the facilities were withdrawn one after another in a systematic and planned manner by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

Rijiju is fully aware of the fact that the Chakmas and the Hajongs together had a population of 47,471 during the 2011 census. There is a systematic attempt at overstating this figure relating to their population as exceeding one lakh. Rijiju has further alleged that if one lakh population is granted citizenship, the local tribes will become minority. The APCHDRF states that their surrounding local people are the Singphos, Khamtis and Tangsas. The Singphos and Khamtis are also Buddhists by religion. The Chakmas are having very cordial relationship with them including inter-tribe matrimonial relationships.

It may be mentioned that during 1997 to 2004 only 4,627 citizenship applications were filed with the Central Government by Chakmas and Hajongs in accordance with a 1996 Supreme Court judgment. However, the said applications had not been processed even after two decades and hence the Supreme Court had in 2015 directed the State as well as the Central Government to process these

applications in a time bound manner.

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Therefore, it is nothing but a ploy to avoid compliance of the Supreme Court order which has directed the Chief Secretary of Arunachal Pradesh to remain present in the court in the event its direction is not complied within December 12 next. The APCHDRF states that in a similar manner AAPSU is playing politics by raking up the Chakma-Hajong issue to remain in the limelight, according to the statement.

Job cardholders to get compensation in case of wage delay

SHILLONG, Sept 24: Job cardholders in Meghalaya will be compensated in case there is 15 days delay in payment of wages under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA).

This decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mukul Sangma on Friday.

"The job card holders will be entitled to compensation at the rate of 0.5 per cent of the total outstanding wages in the event of delay in releasing the same," the CM said.

He said that as per MNREGA, 2005, compensation has to be paid to the job cardholders if there is a delay in the release of their wages by 15 days. There are around four lakh job cardholders engaged for implementing the various programmes under MNREGA across 11 districts of the State.

Stating that the State Government is committed to implement the Act in letter and spirit, the Chief Minister said that the State Government has already created a corpus fund of Rs 35 crore with C&RD department.

"The corpus fund will enable the department to pay the compensation whenever needed or when there is delay in receiving funds from the Central Government," he said. – PTI

'Bank accounts of directors of shell companies frozen'

CORRESPONDENT

Shell companies are entities without active business activities and insignificant assets. Some of these shell companies are used legally to raise funds in some cases for start-ups and others are used illegally to disguise ownership and divert funds from time to time.

Under section 248 of Companies Act, 2013, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has the power to deregister companies which have been dormant for significant period of time or have violated other corporate norms.

A large number of these shell companies were found to have misused to conceal black money and engaging in Hawala transaction following the demonetisation process.

"Data mining is continuing. It is also being investigated to find out who the beneficial owners are and we from the Ministry believe that corporate structure should not be misused so that the issues of black money and money laundering are addressed", Chaudhury stated.

He said internal assessment and property checks on these companies by Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Corporate Affairs is going to identify more such companies.

"The government will have more details of companies not complying with the laid norms and how many are defaming the corporate structure," Chaudhury stated.

Man killed by snake bite buried after four days

CORRESPONDENT

as the body did not get stiff like a normal body," Mikaela, a villager said over phone.

However, instead of showing any sign of recovery, the body started to emit bad smell since yesterday. "The villager leaders and the family members made a decision on Saturday night that the body be buried on Sunday, four days after the doctors declared him dead," he said.

Refusing to lose hope, his family and relatives sent for a traditional snake bite healer in Tamhirl village near Aizawl.

"The healer made all efforts to heal the man. The family and villagers had hopes of reviving him.

The body was buried at Darlk village today. Lalramdina is survived by his wife and four small kids.

Meghalaya Youth Cong seeks roll back of duties on petrol

CORRESPONDENT

which has affected the people.

The total levy on diesel is Rs 17.33 per litre and for petrol, Rs 21.48 per litre as on Thursday versus Rs 3.43 per litre for diesel and Rs 9.20 per litre for petrol in November 2014, which is equal to a hike of 400 per cent and 133 per cent on diesel and petrol respectively, the rallyists said.

The activists termed the move of the Centre as "robbery" and "loot" in broad daylight. It further termed demonetisation as "disaster" and GST as "loot through high tax component on petroleum products". "BJP is harassing the common man and killing the poor", the Youth Congress further alleged.

BSF, BGB sector commander meeting held

SONAMURA (Tripura) Sept 24: A sector commander level meeting of BSF and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) held on Wednesday at Srimantapur Indo-Bangla land customs station complex has resolved to share actionable intelligence inputs to curb trans-border crimes.

The issues discussed in the meeting were related to trans-border crimes, mainly smuggling, theft, cattle lifting, border violation, infiltration, breaching and damaging of border pillars and other issues related to border infrastructure like barbed wire erection, BSF sources said. – PTI



Deplorable condition of Senapati district sector of NH 2 in Manipur on Sunday. – Photo: Correspondent

Abdul Majid's death widely mourned



Grieving family members by the side of veteran cine and theatre personality Abdul Majid, who passed away in Gauhati on Sunday. — UB Photos

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Several organisations and individuals have condoled the death of eminent actor-director Abdul Majid.

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), in its condolence message, termed his death as an irreparable loss for Assam's national life. "He strode the State's cultural spheres like a colossus and

enriched it for over half-a-century. His death has created a big void in the State's cultural realms," it said.

A delegation of AASU visited the hospital following the news of the maestro's death to pay homage to the departed soul.

The North East Students' Organisation (NESO) also condoled Majid's death.

The BJP and the AGP also mourned Majid's death and

conveyed their condolences to the bereaved family members.

Among others who condoled Majid's death were the Assam Sahitya Sabha, former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, Industry Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, actor Adil Hussain, Jyoti Chitrabhan, Indian People's Theatre Association, Guwahati, Panjab Senior Citizens' Association, and Octogenarians' Club, Panjbari.

The 16-foot high and 26-foot wide idols, prepared only with clay, will have no fabric or metals for the drapes or ornaments. Made with a budget of Rs 25 lakh,

Welfare bodies petition Guv against Govt move

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Opposing the State government's reported move to issue permits for opening more liquor shops across the State – ostensibly for enhanced revenue generation – a number of organisations engaged in children and women welfare have moved Governor Banwarilal Purohit, saying that the step would cause individual, familial and societal degradation.

"We all agree that the progress of a State is also dependent on its revenue generated. However, we are concerned that with the proposed increase in the number of liquor shops all over the State, besides other vulnerabilities, the vulnerabilities of women and children to abuse, violence and neglect will increase," the organisations said in a petition to the Governor.

Urging the Governor to use his good office to ask the State government to reconsider the decision of permitting more liquor shops, the organisations said that they apprehend its "deteriorative effects on society".

"In spite of various legal provisions, it has also been seen that children have also started consuming different types of liquor and facing numerous problems (including the immediate socio-familial problems and a medium and long-term health and social prob-

lems) which have affected their overall development," the petition said.

Pointing out that though revenue earned through sale of liquor may increase the income of the State, the organisations argued that the morbidity and mortality and law-and-order situation and their effects on society at large associated with liquor consumption correspondingly increase the health and social costs as well.

The organisations added that in view of the associated hazards resulting in individual, familial and societal degradation, "We, as citizens of a welfare state, need to be cautious and if and

where needed, urge the State to take such a step which is very likely to disturb society in any manner."

The signatories to the petition included Dr Charanjeet Kakoty of North East Society for the Promotion of Youth and Masses (NESPYM), Damayanti Devi of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust (KGNMNT) Assam Branch, Nayan Bhandari Sharma of Sarvodaya Trust, Ruchi Neog of Voluntary Health Association of Assam, Nilima Kalaty of Assam Pradeshik Mahila Samiti, Dr Alaka Bhattacharya of University Grants Commission Association and Minati Choudhury of Assam State Red Cross Society, Assam Branch.

Students, teachers take part in cleanliness programmes

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Schools students, teachers and the general public have participated in large numbers at various events held at the Regional Science Centre (RSC), Guwahati, during the first week of the fortnight-long programmes under the Swachh Bharat Mission. RSC Guwahati is organising a series of events on the Swachh Bharat Mission from September 16 at its Kharapara campus, which will continue till September 30.

During the first week, a number of events were organised for students, teachers and the general public.

Oath-taking by the staff of RSC Guwahati, cleanliness of the premises by staff,

demonstrations on cleanliness, health, sanitation and hygiene by the help of videos, open house quizzes on cleanliness, health and hygiene for students and teachers, school plays by different groups of school students, popular talk on puppets, puppet show about dengue and other vector borne diseases and poster display are among the events that have been held so far.

On September 25, a popular talk will be given by Dr Jitika Ojha, Head of the Department of Community Medicine of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital on the topic 'Cleanliness, health and hygiene'.

In addition, art and essay competitions will also be conducted during the next one week as part of the initiative.

Consultation on human capital

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: A State level consultation on Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital organised jointly by the NITI Aayog and the Health and Family Welfare Department, Assam, was held at the Assam Administrative Staff College at Kharapara here on Friday.

SATH is a transformative project undertaken by the NITI Aayog and the Department of Health and Family Welfare in partnership with the McKinsey & Company and the IPE Global.

SATH aims to build three future role models for health systems that can be replicated by other states to help achieve India's public health goals rapidly. The three model states were selected through a three-stage process – expression of interest, presentations by the states and assessment of commitment to health sector reforms.

Assam, Karnataka and UP were shortlisted by a committee comprising members of the NITI Aayog and representatives from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

For the selected states, the

project aims to identify the key challenges, design actionable solutions and finally implement these solutions over the next two years to improve the states' health outcomes.

VIP Pyarelal, Addl Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Assam; Dr Vinod Paul, Member, NITI Aayog; Alok Kumar, Advisor, NITI Aayog; Samir Kumar Sinha, Principal Secretary, Dept of Health and Family Welfare, Assam; Dr R Bhuyan, Director, Health Services, Assam; IYN Subramanyam, Mission Director, NHM, Assam took part in the programme, amongst other dignitaries.

Puja pandals being decked up to attract visitors

MAMATA MISHRA

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: From the mysterious palace inspired by dark fantasy film *Azadkhati* to the jovial world of Chhota Bheem's Dholakpur, the Durga Puja pandals in the city are getting decked up to mesmerise the spectators with their uniqueness. This time the city is hosting nearly 600 big and small puja.

Be it an environment lover who prefers eco-friendly celebrations, or the diehard fans who love a glittering bazaar, the puja party this time will offer something to everyone.

Connecting faiths to spread harmony, Durga and her entourage would be housed in the replica of Sri Sirdi Sai Baba Temple of Sikkim in Gauhati.

The temple, a major tourist attraction in Namchi of Sikkim, has been replicated for the Gauhati Sarbanigan Durga Puja Committee with bamboo and wood by artisans from Bilaspur.

The 16-foot high and 26-foot wide idols, prepared only with clay, will have no fabric or metals for the drapes or ornaments. Made with a budget of Rs 25 lakh,



The Guwahati Railway Station Puja pandal being constructed, on Sunday. — UB Photos

An old tree with bats flying all around and a spooky old golden palace can cause a cool shudder trickling down one's spine. However, it will add a dash of thrill to the revelry in the Shantipur Sluice Gate puja venue where the pandal is inspired by the Shantipuri Sheety and Sonu Sood-starrer *Azadkhati Ek Anokhi Kahani*'s palace.

"With blue hues, the pandal designed by Krishna Das will be a treat for the eyes, especially during night time," Jiten Medhi of the Puja Committee said. Floods that wreaked havoc in Assam just a couple of weeks back will also be portrayed in the pandal through electric projections. The organisers have fixed a budget of Rs 18 lakh for this time.

Kids' favourite Chhota Bheem with his entire team would welcome pandal hoppers to the Bhamohor Durga Puja, where Dholakpur, set up in the cartoon series *Chhota Bheem* has been repli-

cated, which include King Indra Verma's palace located on a hillock and Bheem's companions like Chhukti, Raju, etc. Flying Hanuman and flying Durga are the added attractions for the young puja enthusiasts.

"The entire set-up has been made keeping the kids in mind. Even the main idols have been made in cartoon style," Amit Dharasaria, a member of the puja committee said. Special lighting arrangements are being done by technicians from Cooch Behar.

The light show in the Rest Camp Durga Puja is something one cannot afford to miss, claims Tapas Naha of the Rest Camp Kalibari Durga Puja Samiti. The grand light show, as claimed by the organisers, would be the first of its kind in Assam.

The visitors would walk through a 25-minute long light show to reach the mandap, which has been designed as a big royal boat. "Lighting experts from Diamond Harbour, Kolkata, have been arranged for the majestic show. Pandal interiors have also been decorated in aesthetic ways," added Naha.

This apart, the city will host more than 70 eco-friendly pujas this time.

Human spirit makes 'Durga' rise again!

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: Hu-

mans will prevail over Na-

ture's fury, by the grace of Mother Goddess!

The 110-foot bamboo Durga idol of city's Bishwanath Sarbaginjan Durga Puja Committee, which was brought down by a storm on September 17, has been re-erected again within just six days.

On Sunday, the re-erected idol crossed well over 90 feet, and once the crown is placed on the head, it would be close to 100 feet, qualifying it for two records – for the tallest bamboo sculpture as well as the tallest Durga idol.

"Sheer will of the people made it possible. It only goes on to show that no other power is as strong as will power. We received support from so many

from across the State after the incident," noted artisan Nurul-

din Ahmed, the man behind the gigantic Durga idol, said.

The earlier structure was erected in about one and a half months' time.

"Earlier, the workers had a routine schedule. Around 30 artisans used to work from 8 am to 8 pm. But now, we have doubled the number of workers, who are working day and night. Locals, too, are chipping in, whatever form they can," Ahmed's son Deep said.

As things stand, nearly 90 per cent of the work has been completed, with the organising committee hoping that it would be ready by tomorrow evening.

"After the idol was brought down, the main work was to clear the debris. Our workers had gone home that day for Vishwakarma Puja. But near-



The 110-foot Durga idol

ly 150 local youths trooped in and did the work within just five hours. And that night itself, the area was cleared," Deep recalled.

The work on the platform began the next day around noon and completed by 2 am on the following day.

"The work was easier later, as the workers, from what they had learnt in their first experience, knew exactly what to do. Not much experimentation was required. Unlike before, this time, however, we made the parts on ground and hauled them up. There was only a minor change in the structure as compared to the previous one... one hand of Durga was raised earlier, but this time we are bending it," Deep said.

Moreover, the new structure is being erected from the ground. Earlier, there was a 10

feet platform below, with a canopy made to showcase Majuli's mask art. The mask craft – also made of bamboo – will be on display in a platform built adjacent to the 100-feet idol in the new model.

To protect the new structure this time, workers are also using safety chains on its sides.

The bamboo idol will be kept on display till October 12.

Organisers are in touch with the officials of the *Guinness Book of World Records* and *Lima Book of Records*. Two government officers have been appointed as adjudicators. Besides, the organising committee will have to compile a video of the structure with necessary formalities and send it to the authorities for recognition.

Nearly 5,000 bamboos are being used in the structure.

Journalists protest Tripura scribe's murder

GUWAHATI, Sept 24:

Scribes in the city staged a demonstration in front of the Guwahati Press Club on Friday, protesting the barbaric killing of Shantanu Bhownik, a Tripura-based television journalist. The demonstration was organised by the North-East Union of Working Journalists. Before the demonstration, the journalists gathered on the Guwahati Press Club premises under the leadership of Joyanta Sarma who is the president of the North-East Union of Working Journalists.

In a statement, Sarma expressed his serious concern over the frequent killings of journalists across the country and hoped that the government will take steps for the protection of scribes who often become the targets of anti-social elements, stated a press release.

The Union has also demanded an enquiry by the Tripura government into the dastardly killing of Bhownik.

GU Physics dept, Austrian institute sign MoU

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: The Stefan-Meyer-Institute (SMI), Vienna, Austria recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Gauhati University (GU) Physics department.

According to a press release received here today, Dr Kushal Kalita, a faculty from the GU Department of Physics, is leading the GU group with his PhD students Kamal Dutta, Dr Al Arashid and others, and actively working with the International Postdoctoral Annihilation at Darmstadt (PANDA) at the Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research (FAIR), Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung, Darmstadt, Germany.

An attempt has been made to encourage the younger students towards research and as an initiative, Dr Kalita delivered a talk on topic 'Stefan Meyer Institute in Vienna and studies of hadrons with the PANDA Experiment at FAIR' at the GU Physics department.

Prog on Bhupenda's songs

ANN SERVICE

GUWAHATI, Sept 24: A three-day training programme on performance management organised by the Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) Guwahati concluded here on Friday. The event was organised jointly with the Project and Technology Management Foundation (PTMF), a non-profit professional society based in New Delhi.

The programme was designed to provide in-depth understanding of performance criteria of business organisations and how those can be consistently delivered by aligning available resources with the organisation's strategic initiatives and managing the internal business processes through deployment of effective tools and building a culture of execution and discipline.

This was the second such programme organised jointly by IIE and PTMF. The first one was organised in the month of July on the subject 'Managing start-ups for success'. Addressing the inaugural session, IIE director Manoj K Das said the institute is committed to developing the entrepreneurial culture in this region through several interventions and programmes which will help mobilise investment for the overall economic growth of this region.

Training on performance management

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MESSAGE FOR TODAY

Success is a journey, not a destination. The doing is often more important than the outcome.

— ARTHUR ASHE

The Assam Tribune**First step**

Education of the girl child in India has taken a giant leap in recent times. Figures for the year 2015-2016 released by the Union Ministry of Human Resources show that girls constitute 48% of the total student population of India. Even a few decades back girls in many parts of India were considered to be problems rather than assets and getting them educated was less of a priority than getting them married off! Such a negative mindset was responsible for the shocking number of female foeticide which had been prevalent in the nation. The very fact that today almost half the student population comprises of girls indicates that attitudes are changing. India has the world's largest student population, which means that millions of girls are getting educated, a positive phenomenon since it will provide them with an even playing field later on in life. It needs to be noted that in the period immediately following Independence, only 25% of girls had access to education, which rose to 39% in 1990-1991. Thus there has been a progressive rise in the enrolment of girls in educational institutions which is heartening news indeed. Educationists are of the opinion that the dropout rate among girls is far lower than boys since the former, once enrolled, show greater determination to complete their studies and thus also acquire more degrees than boys.

The girl enrolment figure in India compares favourably with those of advanced nations – the figure for the US, for instance, is 55%. With 54% China has a slightly higher percentage than India, but lack of knowledge of any international language proves to be a handicap in that nation. However, progress in education is merely the first step towards empowerment of women in a male-dominated society. Gain accruing from this needs to be translated into other spheres such as employment, politics, etc. Figures show that only 27% women constitute India's workforce and amongst the CEOs of 500 top Indian companies, only 17 are women. Women constitute only 11% of Indian Parliamentarians – that the 33% seat reservation issue is still pending after so many decades reveals the aversion of our politicians to endowing greater political power to women. In many parts of the country, there is strong male resistance to any attempt to empower women politically, while in the corporate sector there is a distinct bias towards hiring males over females. One can only hope that as more and more women get educated and show their mettle, such a scenario will change. The onus of bringing about such a change also rests on the shoulders of women. They have to prove to their male counterparts that they can do any job with equal efficiency if being 'educated' is to have real meaning.

Healthcare concerns

The latest CAG audits have revealed that the State Government lost a whopping Rs 2,200 crore Central funds between 2011 and 2016 for its failure to submit utilization certificates and for under-utilizations of funds. This ought to be a matter of serious concern, more so when the State's healthcare has miles to go to be ranked at par with the advanced States in terms of service delivery. As the CAG findings show, the unutilized amounts pertain to implementation of two crucial interventions – National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) programme. The importance of foolproof implementation of these projects hardly merits any reiteration, given the poor status of rural healthcare infrastructure and services. The CAG report pulled up the Government for the delay in the audit Central fund, which is strongly indicative of financial malpractices. Indeed, successive CAG reports have been corroborating the popular perception that our governments are abetting corruption and misuse of public money by trampling on the principles of transparency and accountability. The CAG findings are disturbing because they lay bare why the development process has failed to gain ground in the State even after the supposed spending of huge amounts of funds. Earlier also, the CAG had rapped the State Government for the unholy nexus between contractors, officials and politicians but with the State Government remaining unfazed, the nexus continues to thrive. This explains why the impact of the Centre's generous financial aid in recent years has not been visible on the ground.

Notwithstanding some improvements made in the State's healthcare sector in the past few years, visible constraints remain, especially in rural healthcare delivery. A major and persisting issue concerns dearth of doctors in rural and interior areas. In fact, shortage of doctors and paramedics for rural posting is acute and even the incentives provided by the Government for rural posting has failed to yield the desired result. While the State Government had made it mandatory for MBBS pass-outs to serve in rural areas for a certain period, this is not serving much purpose with few doctors inclined to continue with rural posting once their mandatory tenure ends. The avowed goal of 'health for all' will remain a mirage if medical care remains out of bound for a vast segment of the rural populace. The Government needs to view the situation seriously and devise a mechanism to ensure that doctors do not shun rural posting. One option could be to effect a further hike in salary and allowances for rural posting. Another pragmatic step could be to introduce a rural medical service (for primary health centres) based on medical diploma courses. It is only when we have a matching healthcare infrastructure together with a pool of professional and competent manpower that the goal of 'health for all' would be realized.

Crowd management and its likely nightmares**Rajib Prakash Baruah**

India is well-known all over the world as a country of cultural, religious and traditional festivals, characterized by numerous events of mass gathering across the nation, such as Kumbh Mela at Allahabad. In addition, on the sporting arena, India is late organizing many big sporting events such as the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and World T-20 Cricket Championships. As far as organization of sporting events is concerned, Assam is not lagging far behind. In fact, in recent years, it has come up very fast by successfully showcasing events like the National Games, South Asian Games, ODI cricket, etc. Further, Guwahati is due to hold two big sporting extravaganzas, namely, FIFA U-17 Football World Cup and an India versus Australia T-20 cricket match in October this year, in addition to organizing the ISL Football League for the fourth year running.

In view of the above, crowd management as distinct from crowd control assumes great significance from the point of view of governance and public safety. The increasing frequency and intensity of various disasters have further compounded the challenges of crowd management.

The crowd disasters are, in general, man-made disasters especially at religious gatherings. Recurring stampedes at places of mass gathering, which include religious places, railway stations, and sports and political events are of serious concern to the nation.

People still remember the un-

derly crowd behaviour in the India vs England 12th ODI match held in Guwahati on April 9, 2006 when the organizers announced the abandonment of the match due to incessant rain after about two hours of scheduled time. Heavy pelting of water bottles and forceful occupation of the field by the crowd entering from a particular side of the gallery caught the organizers, police and civil administration unaware as they were not anticipating

the disasters in case of sporting events happen for a variety of reasons. A few such examples are mentioned here: overbooking of tickets; mad rush by a few in panic/excitement; lack of assigned seat numbers and heavily-discounted or free tickets to people with clout and thus allowing people excess of the holding capacity of the venue.

Also, crowd disasters are multiplied manifold by the non-availability of fire extinguishers, unauthorized fireworks in enclosed places, lack of adequate flood lighting of the assembly area and pathways used by the crowd, electricity supply failure creating panic and triggering sudden exodus, illegal electric connection and short circuit from electric generator, synthetic tent catching fire, closed/locked exits and reliance on one major exit door and crowds attempting to enter a venue after starting time. Lack of CCTV surveillance is also a major cause for such disasters.

Besides, there are structural causes also for crowd disasters especially in case of religious gatherings. A few such causes include structure collapse of barricades, bamboo railings and makeshift and temporary structure as well as poor guard railings and lighting; absence of emergency exits, and narrow streets and absence of sufficient numbers of entry and exit

such a mayhem and thus unprepared to deal with the resulting chaos.

Besides, there are structural causes also for crowd disasters especially in case of religious gatherings. A few such causes include structure collapse of barricades, bamboo railings and makeshift and temporary structure as well as poor guard railings and lighting; absence of emergency exits, and narrow streets and absence of sufficient numbers of entry and exit

points. Different terrain and muddy roads to shrines situated at hilltops are other problems.

For successful crowd management, apart from rectifying the above-mentioned shortcomings, there must be absolute coordination between stakeholder agencies like the district magistrate, superintendent of police, PWD, fire services, medical officers, forest officials and sport organizers/shrine managements, etc., so that all the deficiencies are properly attended to.

For planning of crowd management, the basic element is to understand the type of events (religious, cricket/sports events, youth festival, music concert, etc.), season in which it is conducted and the type and location of the venue (temporary/permanent), bus stand, railway station, etc. Based on these and from prior knowledge and experiences, one can and should determine the crowd expected (age, gender, religion, etc.) and their estimated number. The various elements of crowd management strategy are a) capacity planning (long term and short term), b) understanding crowd behaviour, c) crowd control and d) stakeholders' approach.

There is a need for long-term planning for infrastructure development which should depend on the periodicity of the event, weather, terrain, popularity and local population. Each staging point

PRANAM: an adorable initiative**Kritanjali Kashyap**

According to the 2011 Census, India has 100 million people over the age of 65, a number second only to China. While this accounts for only 8% of the population, the number is expected to double by 2040.

In Indian culture, it is considered immoral and cruel to neglect the needs of one's elders; care-giving is a highly important task in India.

Provisions for the senior citizens of the country are mentioned in the Constitution of India. The Directive Principles of State Policy talk about these provisions. Article 41 and Article 46 are the constitutional provisions for them. Although the Directive Principles are not enforceable under the law, but they create a positive obligation towards the state while making any law. Therefore, while making any law, the state should consider the Directive Principles mentioned for the elderly people.

According to Article 41, the state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of

unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other similar cases.

Taking care of one's old parents is more or less a legal duty as well as a moral obligation. Personal laws of every religion have made it a legal and moral obligation for the children to take care of their parents.

Under the Hindu personal laws, every Hindu has the obligation to take care of their aged parents who are not able to maintain and take care of themselves. Earlier, it was the legal obligation of the son to maintain his aged parents but now, it is the right and duty of a daughter also to maintain her parents who are not able to maintain out of their own earnings or property. This is the first act related to the personal law which imposes an obligation on children to maintain their parents.

Section 20 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 makes it an obligatory provision to maintain an aged parent. Under this Act, a legitimate or illegitimate child may claim maintenance from his/her father or mother so long as the child is a minor. Hence, every old parent has a right to be maintained

by his or her son or daughter provided they are unable to maintain themselves out of their own earning or property. According to Muslim personal law, both the son and the daughter are under the obligation to provide maintenance to their aged parents.

There is no personal law for the Christians and Parsis for providing maintenance to the aged parents. If the parents want to seek maintenance from their children, they can apply through the Criminal Procedure Code to seek maintenance. Under Section 125 (1) (d) of CrPC, 1973, a magistrate can order children to make a payment of monthly allowance as maintenance to their parents, provided the father or mother must be unable to maintain himself or herself. The fulfillment of parental obligation is not a precondition to claim maintenance; daughter is liable to pay maintenance to parents, adoptive mother can claim maintenance; stepmother can claim maintenance; application for maintenance to be filed where the son/daughter lives – these are landmark judgements of the Supreme Court of India. According to the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, 'children' mean

adult son, daughter, grandson and granddaughter.

The Assam Assembly on September 15 last passed a first-of-its-kind Bill that has made it mandatory for the Assam Government employees to look after their aged and dependent parents and physically-challenged siblings, if any, who don't have their own source of income.

The Bill has provisions for deducting 10% of an employee's pay and transferring it to the account of the relative concerned. Another 5% would be deducted if the employee has a differently-abled sibling.

The Assam Employees Parents Responsibility and Norms for Accountability and Monitoring (PRANAM) Bill, 2017 which has been passed in the House unanimously has made it compulsory for the State Government employees to take care of their dependent parents and specially-abled siblings as any income source from immediate effects.

In case of violation of provisions of the Bill or if any State Government employee is found to ignore his/her responsibility to look after his dependent parent/s or disabled sibling/s, 15% of the employee's monthly salary will be deducted at source and deposited to the bank

Rohingya crisis and India's stand**Sexual harassment**

Sir – This refers to the thought-provoking article 'Sexual harassment: Do we know the laws?' (AT, Sept 22) by Partha Pratim Hazarika. We are living in a country which is witness to innumerable incidents of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a serious issue that has long been ignored and treated with complacency. Although it is heartbreaking to see women making stupendous progress in almost every sphere of activity, one cannot be oblivious to the fact that they continue to be victims of violence of different hues. Every human being has the right to live with dignity and respect. It is noticed that the prevalence of crimes against women in a certain place depends to a large extent on the social ambience of that place. Efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women should have high priority by way of implementing various measures. The punishment for battering, molestation and unlawful threat must be increased. Projects must be launched for a better cooperation between the police, social service organizations and other relevant parties. The Government should come out with much more essence and urgency to

check the indecent behaviour against women. There is a need to chart out stern measures on the part of the administrative authorities for curbing down such events. People also need to come out with determination against such evils. Yours etc., VINOD C DIXIT, SM Road, Ahmedabad.

UNSC membership

Sir – Time and again it is being discussed at many national/international forums regarding India's claim to the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). India is the second largest populated country in the world representing about one-fifth population of the world. She is being backed by Germany, Brazil, Japan and few African nations. Even the former US President Barack Obama also supported India in her bid to secure a permanent position in the UNSC. India has been elected seven times as a non-permanent member of the Security Council so far. India was able to garner 188 votes polled among the 190 member states in the UN General Assembly last time. India is trying its best to maintain peace and prosperity among its neighbours, which is the main motto of establishing the UN, the Indo-Bangla land sweep deal is

the best example. India's rising stature in the global arena is enough to secure her the UNSC permanent membership. Yours etc., CHAMPAK DEKA, Gauhati.

Worshipping Durga

Sir – Devi Durga is known as the Goddess of Power. People worship the Devi to invoke her blessings for materialistic gains such as positions of power or money. Others propitiate her to win control over negative feelings and materialistic desires. Besides, people in search of Moksha or salvation also worship Durga with sincerity.

We as a child used to enjoy a lot on the eve of Durga Puja. Nowadays, the Puja has become commercialized to a great extent, especially in the urban areas. Earlier, we used to visit various Puja pandals to see what was on offer on the cultural front. But, now one gets to hear only recorded songs. No one wants to listen to Chandi Stuti nor anybody wants to listen to Bhakti Sangeet or Katha. No one is interested on 'Oppal'. This is unfortunate. Yours etc., KOUSHIK LAHKAR, Gauhati.

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

Letters to the EDITOR

Sir – India might not have signed the UN Convention on Refugees, 1951 but history depicts India as a nation which has always followed the principle of empathy, i.e., a country which never forces the seekers of asylum to return to conditions of jeopardy. However, the victims of the Rohingya massacre encounter a different side of India. In a country where decisions of providing refuge to a number of communities have already been creating problems which need to be resolved, it was mandatory on the Government's part to take a firm step. Whether driven by its diplomatic relations with Myanmar or not, the Centre has refused asylum to this 'friendless community' and has made it stand clear citing them as a threat to national security as the sole reason behind the executive action.

Though India is extending help to Bangladesh sending food grains and other materials for the Rohingya as humanitarian grounds, yet deportation of many without a huge number of people without any proper investigation and in a way considering all of them as



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Towards a prosperous & energised New India

Kalaigaon girl qualifies for 'Voice of India Kids' final round

CORRESPONDENT

KALAIAGAON, Sept 24: People of Kalaigaon hail Manashi Saharia, a talented Class VI student of Udmani village in Kalaigaon, for being qualified for the final round of audition in the 'Voice of India KIDS 2017', sponsored by Essel Vision Production, a Mumbai-based TV production company.

Daughter of musician parents Anupam Saharia and Jitu Moni Saharia of Udmani village, near Kalaigaon, Manashi earlier qualified in the preliminary audition for Northeast region on September 3 in Guwahati.

Later, she could prove her talents in the eastern zone audition held in Kolkata on September 11 to be qualified for the national audition to be held in Mumbai this month.

It needs to be mentioned that she was adjudged as the 'Voice of Darrang' twice also securing first position in the All Assam Jyoti Sangeet competition held at Rabindra Bhawan, Guwahati.

Her father Anupam Saharia has been a well-known artist in tabla and drum while mother Jitumoni Saharia is a singer with a degree in Classical Music as one of the feather of her wings.

Manashi has left for Mumbai on Saturday. People of Darrang and Udaguri have expressed best wishes to Manashi.



Activists of Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti staging a protest, in Nagaon on Saturday. — UB Photos

Training imparted on bamboo propagation & vermicompost

ANN Service

special reference to its domestic use and commercial prospect.

According to him, bamboo is versatile green gold and is closely associated with our lives till death. He informed that about 7.5 million bamboo artisans depend on bamboo for their livelihood, while 2.5 billion people use it in their day-to-day lives.

The scientist during his presentation maintained that of the 1,250 bamboo species in the world, 136 species are found in India. As per survey in 2011, Assam has 36 species of bamboo, while other north-eastern States, including Arunachal Pradesh supports 20 to 50 species of bamboo in natural vegetation.

Stating that the soil of Assam is naturally suitable for bamboo cultivation, scientist Kalita explained the farmers to select economically viable species. He also explained to them about treatment of bamboo before use in order to ensure their utility and sturdiness.

Imparting training on vermicomposting as organic fertiliser

used for cultivation activities, another RFRI scientist R Bhattacharya elaborated preparation of low-cost bed for vermicompost and its management to produce organic manure. He explained to the farmers about its utility in cropping and commercial supply, while ACF from Jorhat, Matiu Rahman gave a presentation on bio-gas production and its usage.

During the technical session, ACF, BB Sandeep laid stress on conservation of greenery through Joint Forest Management (JFM) activities, while wildlife activist Prafulla Kaman spoke on "Man-animal Conflicts and its Scientific Management".

There was a practical demonstration on preparation of vermicomposting bed and its management for worm culture, on the concluding day.

A total of 30 farmers, including the president and secretaries of JFM and Eco Development Committees, besides the foresters attended the two-day training programme.

Meet on human trafficking and drug abuse held at Tangla

CORRESPONDENT

KALAIAGAON, Sept 24: Tangla College Women's Forum (TCWF) organised an awareness programme on human trafficking and drug abuse at Tangla on the occasion of fifth death anniversary of former HoD of Finance, Tangla College, Dr Hemen Kr Barah, at the conference hall of the college recently.

Foral tributes were offered

to the image of Late Dr Barah

before the commencement of the awareness meet which was attended by hundreds of people. The programme was inaugurated by Dr Prasen Dasari, Principal of the college, while Amina Bhuyan was anchored to the proceeding of the meet.

Speaking on the occasion as the resource person, Dr MK Boro of Udaguri Civil Hospital expressed deep concern about the growing drug menace in the State. He also highlighted the rising trend of drug

abuse among youths, including the student community. According to him, curiosity among teenagers lead to drug abuse in the long run and both boys and girls are equally vulnerable to the drug abuse.

Addressing the gathering, senior advocate of Udaguri Jayanta Kumar Brahma spoke on the growing menace of human trafficking in the State and problems of existing child labour due to illiteracy and poverty of parents.

World Rhino Day observed

CORRESPONDENT

KAZIRANGA, Sept 24: The Director of Kaziranga National Park, Satyendra Singh, said that maintenance of grassland areas and the remaining waterbodies and lakes inside the park area of Kaziranga are very important for the sustenance and continuous survival of rhinoceros in Kaziranga and other rhino habitat areas of Assam.

Singh made this observation on Friday while motivating the school students coming from different parts of Bokakhat subdivision to participate on the occasion of World Rhino Day on Friday at Mihimukh area of Kaziranga.

Director of KNP urged the students to know about the flora and fauna of Kaziranga, understand the habitat of wildlife including rhinos since our ecology intact and balance. He informed the students that rhino horn had no medicinal value and asked them to



priate decisions for the protection and conservation of environment and forest and its wildlife habitats. He also appreciated the efforts made by Corbett Foundation for organising the event to celebrate World Rhino Day.

Divisional Forest Officer of Kaziranga, Rohini Ballav Saikia asked the students to understand the importance of rhino and other wildlife which keep our ecology intact and balance. He informed the students that rhino horn had no medicinal value and asked them to convey the same to others so that gradually its demand at the market gets decreases and the species could be saved in a better way.

Later, a quiz competition was organised among the students where 21 teams from different schools from Bokakhat subdivision participated. This was followed by a speech competition. The prizes were distributed by Dr Navin Pandey from Corbett Foundation and ACF of Kaziranga Mukuri Das. The programme was anchored by Dibyajyoti Saikia from Corbett Foundation.

Puja preparations in full swing at Badarpur

DEBASISH BANIK

BADARPUR, Sept 24: Preparations are going on in full swing at Badarpur to celebrate the Durga Puja from September 26 to 30 with various programmes. Office-bearers of more than 200 puja committees are working hard to make the celebrations a grand success.

Activities related to formation of puja committees and preparations of budgets are already over. Other works like pandal construction, illuminations and subscription-raising activities are now going on in full swing. Various 'dhaakis' teams from different parts of West Bengal and Tripura have already reached Badarpur and several parts of Barak Valley.

The puja markets in Badarpur, especially the Badarpur Railway Market, was flooded with people for buying clothes and other items for the ensuing puja.

have been celebrating the Durga Puja with great pomp and grandeur every year.

Maintaining the tradition, the Badarpur ST Road Durga Puja Committee has decided to install 12-foot tall Durga idol this year, said the secretary of the puja committee.

It is worth mentioning that the puja celebration at Badarpur Ghat will also be one of the must visit dazzling site for the pandal hoppers as all the arrangements are being done by local women. Dasha - Bhujya Sarbojanin Puja Committee and Badarpur ST Road Durga Puja Committee have been celebrating the puja for last few years.

Talking to this correspondent, the chairman of Badarpur Town Committee, Dipankar Roy Karmakar, said that it will provide special facilities in the Badarpur Town during the puja, like supply of drinking water twice a day in the town and uninterrupted electricity in every lane of the town.



An artisan busy giving finishing touches to an idol of Goddess Durga, ahead of the Autumn Fest, in Tezpur on Saturday. — UB Photos

PHE employee posted in remote place for 33 years with no work

CORRESPONDENT

DIPHU, Sept 24: The Public Health Engineering Department's non-functioning office buildings located at Dili, around 55 kilometres from Diphu, may be referred

to as a classic example of wastage of public money.

According to locals of the area, this office was commissioned in 1984 and for the last 33 years the office building, staff quarter, ring well etc., have remained in a neglected condition. Only one employee with no duty has been kept posted in that place for the last 33 years and he is also retiring soon. Office rooms, signboard, fencing, staff quarters, bathrooms and other amenities are totally run-down and the only

employee stays in the office premises in a house built by himself.

It is learnt that many departmental officials have visited that place but have done nothing either to make the establishment functional or withdraw it from that place. "There was nothing to do here since the past 33 years and now I am about to retire from my work. No one told me what to do and I am posted here without being assigned any specific work," the only employee present said.

He said that mock exercises were car-

ried out mostly in educational institutions and conducted by the departmental officials.

This time the theme was 'Zero Casualty' and awareness was generated on proper use of power and electrical appliances, besides on how people should take precaution in flooded areas and look out for snapped electrical wires or uprooted poles and take utmost care in such areas to avoid fatal incidents.

"In the district, a total of 26,000 people were sensitised. The day-long programme included *Prabhk Pheri*, procession taken out by the students and local citizens by displaying placards and holding of open meeting where students as well as members of the general public took part. Various competitions like quiz, drawing, extempore speech, debate etc.

There were held among the school students. A mock drill on earthquake safety titled 'Drop-Cover-Hold' was also conducted

in the educational institutions," said Choudhury.

He said that the departmental officials, specifically from Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd (APDCL) delivered lectures on safety and security from electrical hazards that may follow after any disaster, especially flood and earthquake. The Village Land Management and Conservation Committee (VLIMCC) members, PPI members, village people, NGO workers, teachers, Govt. officials and school children evinced keen interest in the programme.

Each one of the participants pledged to help create a safe environment and promote Kamrup as a disaster-resistant district. The programme was jointly hosted by the District Disaster Management Authority, Kamrup, APDCL and supported by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority.

Mukhya Dutta: a tribute

Born: Dallang village in Kamrup district under Kamalpur constituency on December 10, 1944. Mukhya Dutta passed away on September 14 last. He was 76.

After passing the HSLC examination, he started his service life as a teacher in the Borka MV School. In the meantime, he passed the 'Normal' training from Jorhat

Basic Training School. He also took Primary Teachers' Training from Titabor Primary Teachers' Training Centre. He was transferred to Guia MV School when Borka MV School was closed. Before that he worked in many MV and primary schools as a teacher, such as Changsari MV, Maihati, Alta, Bagta, Nawkuchi, Pub Borka, Pub Dallang Prathamik Vidyalaya and retired from Dallang Miyan Prathamik Vidyalaya as a headmaster.

Prominent social worker Dutta was involved with various social and religious organisations such as Dallang Sri Sri Vishnu Puja, Borka Durga Puja, Panitema Anchale Raas Mahotsav, Dallang Library and Padma Dutta Smriti Rajahua Puthibharal, Borka. His death was widely mourned.

On the day of his *adya shradha* today, I pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul.

Dhirendra Dutta, Dallang



19th Assam Police Battalion personnel protesting at Tangkhakhat in Dibrugarh district, on Saturday. — UB Photos

Raha set for Durga Puja celebration

CORRESPONDENT

RAHA, Sept 24: Like the previous years, the residents of Raha town are all set to celebrate the Durga Puja with great fervour. The five-day celebration of Durga Puja brings a festive look to Raha town.

The festival beginning from Tuesday will end on September 30 when the people celebrate Bijoya Dashami with the immersion of idols of Goddess Durga, organisers of the Durga Puja Udaguri Committee said.

There are four puja pandals in Raha town, nine pandals at Chaparmukhi, three at Baruolia, and one at Phulaguri. The puja pandals have been decorated colourfully with eye-

catching looks. It is not just the puja pandals that are the crowd pullers. Lavishly decorated welcome gates are catching up too with each puja committee diverting a major share of their collection towards them.

According to an estimate, erecting huge bamboo gates, electronic gates with colourful lights cost between Rs 1 lakh to 2 lakh for each pandal. The local administration has completed all necessary preparations to ensure peaceful puja celebrations. The administration has urged the people, including the puja committees and common citizens, to extend their cooperation to the administration so that during the festival no untoward incident takes place.

In a memorandum to Education Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, the committee alleged that due to the absence of regular principals, the academic atmosphere in both the colleges have virtually been ruined. They criticised the higher authorities for not taking any steps for appointment of regular principals in these colleges and expressed serious concern for not publishing any advertisement for filling up the vacancies.

The memorandum, signed by president Abdul Ahad Laskar and general secretary Farid Uddin Laskar also demanded the appointment of teachers in the different departments of the college, as due to the absence of teachers, the classes are often suspended and the students are unable to complete the courses within the stipulated time, the memo added.

The memo also alleged that the results are declared only after three months have passed, though there is a standing UGC guideline to declare the results within 45 days, but this is not followed by the university. They threatened to start an agitation if the demands are not fulfilled immediately.

It was the summer of 1921 and Brajanath Sarma had just returned to his native village, Sila (Barpeta), after serving as a Military clerk at Baghdad in erstwhile Mesopotamia, during the Great War. During his stay there, he became a prominent member of a cultural organisation named "West Bengal Democratic Club" and also imbibed the basics of western classical music. After he came back and settled down in his native village, he contemplated forming a 'Jatra Party' and communicated the same to some of his fellow villagers. Among the enthusiastic ones were his two brothers Krishnakanta and Uday. Together they formed the 'Sila Kalika Opera Party'. However, it soon broke up due to a conflict between the members. Braja Sarma then joined the 'Sarbhog Dakhin Ganakgari Party' and directed a number of popular plays like *Dhatri Panna, Basaspati, Shanti, Kalaphad, Ranjit Singh*, etc. But soon, in 1922, the group had a similar fate as its predecessor and Brajanath began searching for other avenues.

Sometime in the year 1928, Sarma met the head clerk of the Paneti Tea Estate, Bipin Chandra Barua, who asked him to organise a professional mobile theatre group and agreed to be its financier. Accordingly, Braja Sarma trained a group of young actors, including a 21-year-old Phani Sarma from Tezpur and a 15-year-old Chandra Choudhury from Barpeta. In the year 1930, Kohinoor Opera, the first professional mobile theatre group of Assam, was formed. The team – under the direction of Brajanath Sarma, travelled across undivided Assam, from

A theatre movement



Golapi Das, one of the first female artistes to act on stage



Brajanath Sarma with Bindu Gogoi, a fellow actor from Kohinoor Opera

Sadiya to Cooch Behar and gave birth to a theatre movement of sorts. The success of the party astounded many and as a mark of acknowledgement, they were presented a shield by the theatre loving audience of Jorhat in 1933. Engraved in it was the name – 'The Assam Union Kohinoor Party'.

At the peak of their popularity, the Assam Kohinoor Party (as it came to be known) decided on what would be a pathbreaking initiative of 20th century Assam. During their performance at Jorhat Theatre, a Parsi theatre group visited the town and staged a play in the Bengali Theatre Hall (present-day Lakshmi Union

Hall). People thronged to see the group perform. Bipin Barua, the managing proprietor of Kohinoor noticed that the crowd had gathered in such large numbers due to the appeal of the female actors who enacted their roles to perfection, along with their male counterparts. The Assamese *jatra* scene had never seen women's participation, except for a group named *Nitoror Gaan*, in which the *Devaladasis* (temple dancers) played their role as dance artists. Otherwise, co-acting was unimaginable in the society of early 20th century Assam. However, both Bipin Barua and Brajanath Sarma were determined to give a platform to female artistes,

knowing well that this would give a rude shock to the conservative section of the Assamese society. As expected, barbs and threatening followed.

They first approached two *Devaladasis* – Savitri and Sajani, who had acted in *Nitoror Gaan* but not a single woman came forward. It was during this time of disenchantment that Bipin Barua found two girls named Lerelei and Dinnai at Barua Chuk in Purangidum, Nagaon. Their father Rohan Kochi gave his consent after much persuasion. Both the girls were taken to Sarbhog and renamed Sarbeswari and Golapi, respectively. Bipin Barua found another girl at Samoguri. Her name was Phuleshwari. She was the youngest among the three; aged 12. Phani Sarma and Chandra Choudhury were assigned the task of training them in dancing, acting and dialogue delivery. The fact that they were illiterate made the task extremely difficult for the trainers. It was almost decided that the girls would be sent back and the male actors would continue enacting female roles. To make matters worse, the three foremost actors of Kohinoor Opera, namely – Krishna Sarma, Uday Sarma and Haren Sarma came out of the group in protest. Undeterred, Brajanath went ahead with his trip.

They first travelled to Goalpara and then performed in Guwahati and Nagaon, en route to

Jorhat. In these places, the female artistes were used only as dancers. In the meantime, Phani Sarma brought along a child widow named Sailabala Devi. She had passed her MV and, therefore, it was much easier to train her, compared to the other three.

The group then travelled upstream and reached the tea town of Doooomoona in October, 1933, where the training of the young girls continued. Just then, the tragic news of the death of Brajanath's second son reached him. He went back to Sarbhog to be with his grieving wife Gunavati and rejoined the group in November. The play *Moran Fijori* was staged at the Doooomoona Natya Mandir with two female artistes playing the roles of Padmini and Lakshmi, thus, creating history. It caused a great social upheaval in the aftermath of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Encouraged by Brajanath Sarma's revolutionary initiative, Jyotiprasad Agarwala began the search for female artistes to portray the role of Joymoti in the first Assamese talkie of the same name. However, Brajanath's initiative was panned by critics and the leading newspapers carried several hate mails. The only newspaper that published a constructive criticism was *Sadiniya Asomiya*.

The negative reactions turned Brajanath into a despondent man. Moreover, the lack of financial resources compelled the first mobile theatre group to shut down in 1939. But if the mobile theatre is an industry now, it was due to the vision and pioneering efforts of the late Brajanath Sarma. As regards, the first female artistes, they are the heroes who showed us the way.

Honouring a legend

JB Productions, an amateur drama group based at Tezpur, recently felicitated senior artiste of yesteryears Baruna Choudhury with a citation, mementos and cash award as part of their annual ceremony. Instituted in the memory of noted stage personality Kironmoyee Bora, the Kironmoyee Manchabhinietri award is given to such veteran artistes for their valuable contributions in the field of stage performances. It will be pertinent to mention here that JB Productions has proved instrumental in giving an impetus to the amateur drama circuit by organising drama festivals such as the 'Mancha-

Dibyendu Goswami

konwar Chandradhar Goswami Memorial Drama Fest' and other initiatives over the years.

Born in Punjab and later shifting to Assam, Baruna Choudhury, now an octogenarian, started her innings in acting with the play *Pratibhadhi* in 1950, which was staged at the Kumar Bhaskar Natya Mandir, Uzbaran, now renamed as the Kumar Natya Samiti. Henceforth, she has performed in innumerable stage and radio plays, besides facing the camera for several films, which includes *Matir Swarag, Meghamukti, Manashi*, to name a few.

Felicitated earlier by several other organisations too, Baruna Mukherjee



turned Choudhury tried her hand in penning verses also, besides being a relentless worker striving towards setting up a progressive society through a socio-cultural revolution, along with stalwarts like Bishnu Prasad Rabha, Mohanlal Mukherjee, etc.

(dibyendugoswami21@gmail.com)



Adil Hussain in cycle rally

Adil Hussain, the internationally acclaimed actor from Assam, recently participated in a cycle rally on the streets of Delhi on September 11, along with Gautam Gambhir, and some BSF and Delhi police officials to bring attention to children's rights and their education. Adil said, "I have a



seven-year old son and I think we should not look at them only as kids, but as our future. If we give proper education to all kids and groom them well, they will create a better future than what we have." NGO volunteers and metro commuters too participated in the cycle rally chanting, 'Support Child Rights'.

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Prastuti steals the show

Prastuti Parashar, the uncrowned queen of mobile theatre, proves her mettle again by portraying a dual role in the play *Moi Maor Suwali*, in one of the plays by Awahan Theatre. Prastuti plays the role of a delinquent teenager in the play, carrying a message about the burning issue of differently-abled children, written and directed by Abhijit Bhattacharya. The mind-blowing portrayal by Prastuti Parashar has left the audiences amazed. She is ably supported by Nirmal Dutta in the role of Azam Khan – a mentally imbalanced elderly man, Srimanta Madhav Dutta, Jayanta Das and others – making the teamwork memorable. Ajay Phukan's music has greatly contributed to the overall presentation of the play.



Sushant Singh Rajput seems to be on a signing spree these days. Recently, there were reports about him doing a biopic with a big studio. Well now, the details about the same have finally been revealed interestingly, it's a biopic on the life of wrestler Dalip Singh Rana, better known as Khali or The Great Khali in the WWE circle.

According to a source, "The studio has spoken to the Punjabi wrestler and he has given them the rights to make a film on his life. Sushant has been approached to play the titular role and he has in principle agreed to do the film."

Virat and Anushka are planning to open a restaurant

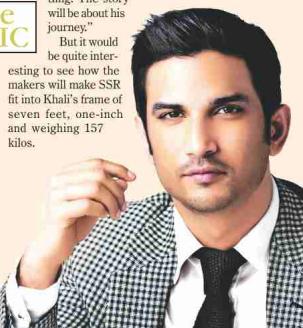
As per a leading tabloid, Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli are planning to invest in real estate together. Anushka and Virat have apparently purchased a property on the town side of Mumbai and also in Delhi. Reports state that the duo is planning to open a restaurant in both the properties. But before this, Virat and Anushka will be seen together in a commercial. It was only a few days ago that the pictures of the two from the sets went viral. It is not yet clear what the advertisement is for, but given that Virat endorses an ethnic-wear brand, the photos could be from a commercial for the same.

We hear that this film will explore the life of Khali, beyond the public eye. The daily further quoted the source saying, "People only know about the sporty side of this Indian-born American semi-retired professional wrestler, promoter and actor. But there's an untold story behind his super success. He was an officer for the Punjab State Police and struggled for years before making it big in wrestling."

Sushant Singh Rajput to play Khali

The story will be about his journey."

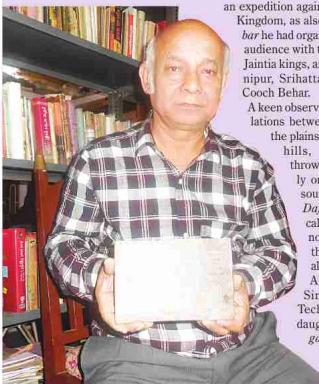
But it would be quite interesting to see how the makers will make SSR fit into Khali's frame of seven feet, one-inch and weighing 157 kilos.



Onward to the past

He is a person who knows every nook and corner of the district he lives in. Deeply rooted to Biswanath — Dr Nityananda Gogoi is primarily a teacher and essentially a very passionate researcher. He knows various hitherto unknown facets about the history of not just Biswanath, Gopur or Sonitpur, but also of the whole of Assam.

Retired as the Principal of Biswanath College, Dr Gogoi is a historian who solely depends on materials found and discovered by his own humble efforts. He is a foot-soldier, who spends his days digging the earth, literally, to find rocks and sculptures, inscriptions and symbols of the past. Attacted to learning about the past because of his father Moloh Chandra Gogoi (who had) filled my childhood with various stories about Biswanath, Pratappur, Pithaguri Doul, and so on.



on", Dr Gogoi honed his research skills under the guidance of his teacher and noted historian Dr Jogenad Nath Phukan, and has become a historian of contemporary times.

Dr Tapati Baruah Kashyap

His *Buranjye Parasha Biswabratna Prantar*, an illustrated book on the archaeology, history and culture of the Biswanath region, is one of the works based on long years of in-depth research. The book records the rich history and heritage of the area. He begins a chapter on the story of the Biswanath region from the pre-historic times to the 15th century, and then gives details of the place during the Ahom era, many temples and monuments, the ramparts, roads and tanks, before dwelling at length about an assembly of the Ahom Army that *Swaragadeo Rudra Singha* had organised for training and orientation before launching an expedition against the Kachari Kingdom, as also a special *durbor* he had organised to hold an audience with the Kachari and Jaintia kings, and those of Manipur, Srimanta (Sylhet) and Cooch Behar.

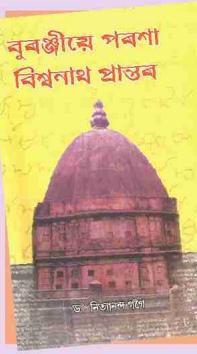
A keen observer of historical relations between the people of the plains and the adjoining hills, Dr Gogoi also throws light particularly on the sweet-and-sour relations of the *Daffla* people (now called Niyishi) of the northern hills with the plainmen. He also mentions about the Ahom King Rudra Singha marrying Techi Yashi Gamini, daughter of a *Daffla gam* (chieftain), who later came to be popularly known as Batalu *kunwarei*, whose name was almost unknown till 2014. I think it is a big achievement."

Author of several other books, which include *Historical Geography of Medieval Assam* and *Assam Buranji*, Dr Gogoi has contributed several research papers in different journals as well as in popular magazines and

newspapers. *Historical Geography of Medieval Assam* contains a rich harvest of materials – both ancient and medieval, and represents chapterwise the hills and mountains, rivers and lakes, administrative divisions, cities and towns, religious institutions and sites, villages and routes and roads of Assam. His greatest advantage is that he is also a distinguished epigrapher and because of this, Dr Gogoi has been able to also extract a lot of near-extinct information from numerous rock and copper-plate inscriptions lying scattered in the region.

A member of several prestigious research organisations, including the Indian Historical Congress and North-East India Historical Society, Dr Gogoi is the executive president of the Biswanath Anusandhan Aru Sanrakshan Samiti, a former General Secretary of the Purchbanchi Tai Sahitya Sabha, and had chaired the History Session of the 70th Dhemaj Session of the Assam Sahitya Sabha in 2009. It is for his expertise on evidence-based historical facts that the Government of Assam had appointed him as a member of the Expert Committee on Inter-State Borders in 2005.

"I enjoy digging the past. While teaching history is my profession, digging history to reconstruct the past is my passion, one that has become inseparable from my life. I cannot explain what kind of a thirst is there inside me to dig the past, bring it to the surface and then take it to the future," Dr Gogoi says. He also has a rich collection of copper-plates, rock inscriptions, ancient *sanchi-paat* manuscripts, silver and gold coins, some of them dating back to the 14th century, apart from having helped others identify such findings in the greater Biswanath-Gopur area.



Witching hour



An official adaptation of a short story by celebrated Indian author Ruskin Bond, the film *The Black Cat* is a fantasy or a children's fantasy film — a genre which is not often explored in Indian cinema. The film's target audience is wide, because there is a huge Ruskin Bond fan base in India. The film's unique and entertaining treatment is appealing to a wide range of audiences, namely children, teens and adults. Additionally, the film's theme, language and treatment are expected to attract a global audience. It evokes a sense of nostalgia and unfolds like a storybook or fable. Previous official adaptations of Ruskin Bond's stories include *Vishal Bhardwaj's 7 Khoon Maaf* and *The Blue Umbrella*, and *Shyam Benegal's Janman*.

The film *The Black Cat* stars veteran film and theatre actor Tom Alter as Ruskin Bond and Shernaz Patel as an English witch, Miss Bellows. According to the director of the film, Bhargav Sai-

ki, Tom Alter's close friendship with Ruskin Bond in real-life makes his performance special. Tom Alter is from Mysore, where Ruskin Bond also resides. This association and Tom Alter's casting have already generated curiosity about the film. Shernaz Patel gives a memorable performance as an English witch in this 20-minute film. Bhargav feels that the last such memorable performance in Indian cinema was Shabana Azmi in Vishal Bhardwaj's debut feature film *Mahadevi*. Other iconic witches in world cinema include those in films like *Wizard of Oz* (Margaret Hamilton as the Wicked Witch of the West), *Into the Woods* (Meryl Streep as the Witch), the witches featured in the *Harry Potter* movies and the witches of the iconic Halloween-themed film, *Disney's Hocus Pocus*.

The film has been directed and produced by Saikia, a budding filmmaker from Biswanath Chariali, Assam, who is presently based in Mumbai. An alumn-

us of the Assam Valley School, Balipara, Bhargav had gone to the UK for higher studies, but he returned to India and started making films. His previous film – *Awakenings*, a short horror film, was screened at some of the world's top film festivals, winning as many as 15 awards in international film festivals across the globe, in 2015.

The international premiere of *The Black Cat* took place at FilmQuest in Utah, USA, on September 13. FilmQuest is one of the top festivals in the USA for genre cinema (fantasy, sci-fi, horror). It is featured consistently in *Moviewander Magazine*'s top film festivals in the US. *The Black Cat* was nominated for the Best Fantasy Short Film award at FilmQuest. It has also been selected for the following film festivals: the Bengaluru International Short Film Festival, India (Indian Competition Section), Signs Festival, Kochi, India (Fiction Competition Section), McMinnville Short Film Festival, USA (Competition Section), and the Jaffna International Cinema Festival, Sri Lanka (International Short Film Competition Section). Future screenings are expected in the upcoming days.

The visual effects for the film have been done by Phantasm FX in Chennai. They were responsible for the VFX of major parts of the *Baahubali* film franchise. The film has been shot at a beautiful colonial property near Nainital in Uttarakhand, which was built in the late 1880s by the British. It also features some important landmarks of Mysore and Nainital. *The Black Cat* will release on the internet in November, 2017.

Apart from the direction, Bhargav Saikia has also penned the screenplay, while the director of photography is A Vasanth, editor is Arjun Mogre, art director/production designer is Poja Ramesh, costume designer is Malvika Bajaj, music composer is Advait Nemlekar and the visual effects supervisor is Bejoy Arputharaj.

(hiranyakothakur@gmail.com)

prelude

Vauderville is a form of theatrical entertainment, most typically, a kind of variety show popular in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is the counterpart of music hall and variety in Britain. The term dates from the 15th century, when it was used to describe a convivial supper. By the 18th century, variety shows became contemptuous of *vauville* acts ("vulgar voices"), and such songs were frequently inserted in spoken and mimed dramas, since the performing of legitimate drama was forbidden by the monopoly of this dramatic form held by the Comédie-Française.

One form of *vauderville*, a collection of songs arranged to accompany a dramatic sketch or an operatic parody, was roughly similar to the English light theatrical form, the ballad opera. In the 19th century, the term *vauderville* came to refer to a stage entertainment made up of several individual "acts" performed by a single ensemble, such as musicians, comedians, jugglers, magicians, trained animals, and so forth. This kind of *vauderville* evolved both

from British music-hall entertainment and, more directly, from bar-room entertainment. In the 1850s and 1860s, variety became extremely popular.

E-mail your questions with answers to: collesum@assamtribune.com

harmonisers

From Adish Agarwalla, Moranhat –

- Who is the author of the 1990 science fiction novel *Jurassic Park*?
- Name the book launched by Radha Mohan Singh on March 23, 2017, to commemorate 50 years of the National Dairy Development Board.
- Who was the first Surveyor General of the Archaeological Survey of India?
- If White Revolution refers to milk, then what does the Blue Revolution refer to?

From Adish Agarwalla, Moranhat –

- Name the first Assamese actress to win the National Film Award for Best Actress for her performance in the Assamese film *Firingoti*.

the colosseum

Neelotpal Deka

side screen

- Picture Clue: It is a 2017 American biographical sports comedy-drama film directed by Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, and written by Simon Beaufoy. The plot is loosely based on the 1973 tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs. The film stars Emma Stone and Steve Carell as King and Riggs, respectively, with Andie MacDowell, Elisabeth Shue, Austin Stowell and Sarah Silverman in supporting roles. Name the film. (Hirak Jyoti Lanu, PTC, Dergaon)
- Which was the first 3D film of India?
- Who, along with George Fenton, composed the music for Richard Attenborough's Oscar-winning film *Gandhi*?
- Which book by popular Indian writer has the following dedication – *For my Mother / For rural India / For the non-English types?*
- On the last day of his life, Bhagat Singh was reading a book about the ideology of which revolution?
- What *ojasvi* did Yudhisthira perform after the Battle of Kurukshetra to free himself of his sins?
- Designs on the walls of Mahakali Ahilya Bai's palace became the inspiration for the patterns of a kind of saree. Name the saree.

ANSWERS

- 1) *Battle of the Sexes* 2) Michael Crichton 3) *50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution* 4) Alexander Cunningham 5) Aquaculture 6) Molyo Goswami 7) My Dear Kutikkathan 8) Pandit Ravi Shankar 9) Half-Girlfriend 10) Vladimir Lenin 11) Ashamed 12) Maheshwari 13) *Gatka* 14) Karan Johar 15) Dara Shikoh



The essence of Islam

Saikh Md Sabah Al-Ahmed

The Arabic root-word *salam* from where the word 'Islam' is borrowed, means 'peace'. In the religious sense, Islam means submission to the will of God and obedience to His law. This very interpretation of Islam has been, to a large extent, subjected to perverted and often self-motivated interpretations by self-styled jurists who do not even sense an iota of the harm they have done to Islam.

Sanjiv Bhatia, an alumnus of IIT (Kanpur), who one day realised that 'pen and poetry' were his true calling, comes up with a courageous and supremely informative work, *Islam Is Good: Muslims Should Follow It*, based on extensive as well as exhaustive research on the real essence of Islam, and why it has been grossly misunderstood. He also offers suggestions which he honestly confesses "as his own opinion, with a sense of responsibility and a feeling of camaraderie towards his fellow-Muslims which will be taken in the right spirit."

The richness of Bhatia's wonderful work could be gauged from the sources that he so humbly confesses to have taken help from in penning down his highly commendable work. This includes the biography of Prophet Muhammad by Martin Lings, translation of the *Quran* by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and Farida Khanam as well as the translation of the *Quran* by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. In fact, Martin Ling's book is itself a treatise of information that Ling had laboriously collected from the earliest sources, including the first and most detailed account of Prophet Muhammad's life by Ibn Ishaq.

The 330-page book comprises of seven enriching chapters with a glossary that serves as a 'mini Islamic encyclopaedia' to many interested and curious souls who might want to delve deep into the myriad Islamic jargons and terminology. This book is like a whiff of fresh air, trying to 'unveil' real truths about Islam that the modern society has unfortunately tagged and branded, mostly because of its own undoings, and partly because of the 'bulish Occident gagging the orient' from time to time. All the seven chapters are a refreshing read, with the first chapter vividly giving us a picture of the socio-economic and socio-cultural scenario in Arabia, even before Islam and the Prophet.

It is hoped that this book will successfully restore the place that Islam truly deserves, which can only be done by simply following the real Islam that it stands for – peace!

Magical discovery

Partha Pratim Hazarika

Pradyut Kumar Deka's *Ambari* is his first attempt at penning a novel in English. As admitted in the preface to the novel, the story of *Ambari* is fit to be made into a film. Pradyut – who is a known filmmaker of Assam, a writer and a filmmaker have one common thing – both try to communicate a story.

The story of the novel revolves around the excavation at the Ambari archaeological site in Guwahati. It may be mentioned here that the Ambari archaeological site was accidentally discovered in the course of digging the foundation for the building of the Reserve Bank of India in 1969. The plot of land where the site is presently located was officially handed over to the RBI authorities. During the digging work, a lot of artefacts, including the remains of pottery hearths (the base or lower part of a furnace), iron objects, mixed pottery, copper objects, iron slabs, etc., were found. Many of them were taken away by the people at that time without realising their historical and archaeological value. Though ancient scriptures like the epic *Mahabharata* and several *panamas* mention the place Pragritiashwara and the State of Karuna, the documented history of this place starts only from the Varman Dynasty. The Ambari excavation indicated that there must have been an ancient civilisation flourishing much before that period.

Pradyut Kumar Deka's *Ambari* revolves around a snake ring found by the lead archaeologist during the excavation. The ring dates back to 2000 years. The archaeologist's mysterious death led the ring to change ownership to his young secretary Wahida. She discovers a shocking secret and has nightmarish experiences. The author has linked the ring and its curse to the erstwhile kingdom of Mayong, the land known for its unbelievable stories of black magic and witchcraft (that the Mayong of today has lost its past glory is an acknowledged fact). The snake ring belonged to the princess of the Mayong Kingdom who was enamoured by the king of Kamrupa. As the priests of Kamrupa who held their sway over the society were against the union, they conspired to kill both the king and the princess. The princess, who was wearing the magically powerful ring at the time of her death, cursed it. It takes an old tantric of Mayong to bring Wahida out of that curse and rescue her from disaster.

Deka must be credited for bringing an interesting chapter of history into the realm of a novel in English.

AMBARI

Pradyut Kumar Deka



Ambari

Pradyut Kumar Deka,
Education Publishing, New Delhi.
Price: Rs 255/-

13) Name this traditional Sikh martial art form named after a stick that is used to practice sword-fighting?

14) *An Unsuitable Boy* is a memoir of which Bollywood actor?

crescendo

15) He was heir-apparent to a famous Mughal emperor. He dedicated himself to create a bridge of Hindu-Muslim unity and was so learned that he translated 50 *Upanishads* from Sanskrit to Persian for the Muslim scholars. This work is called *Siri-i-Sikandar*, the great mystery. He also documented the Quranic terms and their Sanskrit equivalents from *Upanishads*. Who is being referred to here? (Shajid Khan, Tangla)

CAPSULE**Maruti Dzire**

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Maruti Suzuki India's compact sedan Dzire, in its new avatar, became the best selling model in the country for the first time in August, taking the pole position from its sibling Alto. - PTI

Usha Martin

KOLKATA, Sept 24: Highly leveraged Usha Martin Limited has got feelers from overseas and domestic buyers to sell its wire rope business, the proceeds of which would mostly go towards reducing the debt burden. - PTI

Max Healthcare

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Max Healthcare is bringing its domain expertise in patient care to people within the environs of their homes with the launch of its new vertical Max@Home, a senior company official said. - PTI

GST Network

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: GST Network (GSTN) has tweaked some of the features on its portal over the past month to make the system more robust and allow glitch-free tax payment facility to nearly 3 lakh assesses, its CEO Prakash Kumar said today. - PTI

Glenmark Pharma

MUMBAI, Sept 24: Pharma firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals has said its pipeline of specialty and innovative products over the next three to four years is expected to act as a defence against generics price erosion and competition, and will boost profitable growth. - PTI

IndiGo

MUMBAI, Sept 24: Budget carrier IndiGo has grounded one more Airbus A320 neo plane after it was forced to return to Bhubaneswar following high engine vibrations experienced by the aircraft on the way to Bengaluru. - PTI

Strategy group formed to boost India-Korea trade

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Seeking greater economic cooperation with South Korea, Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu today said a joint panel has been set up to identify areas of high-end technological components to boost trade and investments between the two countries.

The minister was in Korea for Asia-Europe (ASEM) Economic Ministers meeting. He also participated in the third Joint Ministerial Review of the India-Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

In a series of tweets, Prabhu said huge untapped potential exists in both the countries to strengthen strategic partnership.

"Let us set ourselves quantitative targets for bilateral trade to drive the negotiations more purposefully. I invite full business delegation from S Korea to India," he said.

The bilateral trade in 2016-17 increased to USD 16.82 billion from USD 16.57 billion in the previous fiscal.

Both the countries are negotiating to review the existing free trade agreement, officially dubbed CEPA, to enhance trade and investments. - PTI

Gold will not glitter this Diwali!

APARAJITA GUPTA

With Goods and Services Tax (GST), demonetisation and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) regulations coming into effect, gold will not glitter much this Diwali, feels Somasundaram PR, Managing Director – India of the World Gold Council (WGC).

"Diwali this time has its own challenges. But I am optimistic now, as everything has settled down. It is the AML part which is probably hurting people at the moment. Wedding purchases will be more affected than Dhanteras buying," Somasundaram told IANS in an interview here.

"I still think there will be a lot of issues with the authorities, but not so much at the consumer end. The organised sector has picked up very well. Demonetisation and AML, though, are definitely hurting," he added.

Somasundaram said last Diwali came before demonetisation and after three years India had witnessed good monsoons. So "there was really good demand".

The government has brought the gems and jewellery industry under the purview

India's rice output likely to dip

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: India's rice output is likely to fall by 1.9 million tonnes (MT) to 94.48 MT in kharif season this year on account of poor rain as well as floods, official sources said.

The production of pulses and coarse cereals is estimated to have fallen, dragging the overall foodgrain output in kharif summer-sown season to 134.67 MT from record 138.52 MT in last kharif, as per the sources.

Kharif foodgrain basket comprises rice, pulses and coarse cereals. Harvesting will start from next month.

Barring sugarcane, the production of all major kharif crops is likely to de-



cline. The Union Agriculture Ministry will release its first advance estimate on Monday.

Rice output is estimated to fall at 94.48

MT in the kharif season of the 2017-18 crop year (July-June) from the record 96.39 MT in last kharif, the official who did not wish to be named said.

Pulses output could drop to 8.71 MT from the record 9.42 MT due to depressed prices and poor rains. The production of tur and urad are pegged at 3.99 MT and 2.53 MT, respectively.

Coarse cereals output is also seen lower at 31.49 MT against 32.71 MT in last kharif, as per the sources.

However, sugarcane output might rise to 337.69 million tonnes from 306.72 million tonnes. Oilseeds output is estimated to be down at 20.68 MT from 22.40 MT in the year-ago period. Soyabean output has been pegged at 12.22 MT.

The fall in kharif output is attributed to dry spell as well as floods in some parts of the country.

The overall southwest monsoon, crucial for rain-fed kharif crops, was projected normal, but till first week of this month it was less by five per cent.

Assam, Bihar, Gujarat and Rajasthan witnessed floods, while parts of Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu faced dry spell.

The kharif output estimates might be revised later taking feedback from the states. The ministry releases four estimates before the final one at different stages of harvesting. - PTI



Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad delivering a lecture on "Emerging Digital World in India", in New Delhi on Sunday. - PIB

New data bank for artisans soon

PUDUCHERRY, Sept 24: The Central Government is preparing a data bank of artisans and will also provide them with relevant training to facilitate their access to national and international markets, Union Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said here on Sunday.

A web portal has been prepared to provide national and international markets to artisans and craftsmen from across the country, he said while inaugurating 'Hunar Haat' organised

by his ministry with the aim to encourage master artisans from poor sections of the minority communities.

He said that a data bank of artisans will be prepared by the year end and thousands of artisans across the country have already registered.

Besides, he said, the ministry is working to establish 'Hunar Hubs' across the country to provide a platform to artisans to display as well as sell their products.

"Encouragement to talent and skill

development will be an essential part of the vision of 'New India', Naqvi said. The 'Hunar Haat' is being organised at Craft Bazaar, Gandhi Thidal Beach, Goubert Avenue here and will continue till September 30.

Artisans from 16 states are showcasing their wares including Hyderabad pearl, wrought iron and wood carving, wooden and sandalwood items, handmade jewellery, hand embroidery items and hand-made paintings. - IANS

Essar to invest \$ 500 mn

VISAKHAPATNAM, Sept 24: Ruia-owned Essar Ports is looking to invest around USD 500 million or over Rs 2,500 crore to set up one liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal each on the western and eastern coasts in the next 18 months, a top company official said.

"Total investment in the first phase could be in the region of about USD 500 million," Ravi Agarwal, managing director and chief executive of Essar Ports, told PTI at a company-run facility here.

He said the company is looking at a cluster of small ports which will be closer to potential customers, adding that Hazira and Salaya, where it already operates ports, could be the sites where it can set up the LNG terminals.

"We are already working on

it in the next one to one and half years, we should have something started. One on west coast and one east coast could come within that period," Agarwal said.

Typically, each terminal will cost between USD 150-300 million, depending on the amount of work to be carried out, he said, adding that the capacity will range between 2.5-5 million tonnes. - PTI

Ford targets Indian market

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: US auto major Ford Motor Co is looking to tap opportunities in India for its smart mobility services with the government's push for smart cities providing a good platform, a top company official said.

The company's arm Ford Smart Mobility LLC will initiate a pilot project of its smart shuttle services involving its employees in Chennai by the end of this year.

It has also been in talks with authorities in Indore to provide smart infrastructure as part of mobility services.

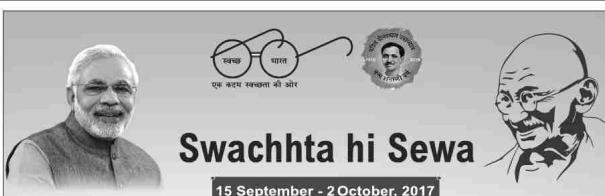
"We think India is going to be a fantastic market for mobility services for a number of reasons. The first reason being that the government is initiating a number of programmes to allow cities to experiment with new mobility options," Ford Smart Mobility (FSM) LLC CEO Rajendra Rao told PTI.



As per the latest auction sale held at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre, the total tea offerings were 188721 packages, of which 81% were sold. Brighter Assam teas were steady around last level, while medium teas were irregular and plainer sorts were firm to occasionally dearer. Major Blenders lent good support, along with internal and local buyers. The auction average price for this week stands at Rs 150.42, up by Rs 6.04 from the last year.

Top garden price	BOP	Price	BOPMBP	Price	OF/PF	Price
HALIMARI	313	HALIMARI	286	LOHPOHIA	236	
SOCKLATINGA	246		256	BANAMALIE	236	
BUKHAL	240	LUKWAH	250	LUKWAH	235	
HRAJULI	237	MADCHUPUR	246	DOOMNI	226	
SOOKLETING	236	BANAMALIE	246	HRAJULI	226	

Secretary, Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers Association (GTABA)



“Cleanliness is next to Godliness”

Mahatma Gandhi

Cleanliness drive for trains and stations.

Throw all your
garbage, fruit peels,
wrappers etc. into
the dustbins

Do not spit on
station premises,
trains and tracks

Maintain
cleanliness
while using toilets
at stations and on
trains



Avoid using toilets on
stationary trains

Do not throw Bottles, Tea
Cups, Clothes,
Sanitary Napkins,
Polythene Bags, Gutka
Pouches etc.
in Bio-Toilets



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New scale to measure wisdom

Level of wisdom dictated to a large degree by neurobiology

Researchers from the University of California San Diego School of Medicine have developed a new tool to assess an individual's level of wisdom.

Called the San Diego Wisdom Scale (SD-WISE), the scale is based upon a conceptualisation of wisdom as a trait with a neurological as well as psychosocial basis.

"There is evidence to suggest that the level of wisdom is dictated to a large degree by neurobiolo-

gy and distinct regions and systems in the brain govern the identified components of wisdom," said Dilip Jeste, Director of UC San Diego Centre for Healthy Aging.

"There are measures now that assess a person's level of wisdom, but they do not incorporate these emerging neurobiological models of the trait. SD-WISE reflects the latest thinking. We believe it may be a useful tool in clinical practice, in addition to its value in bio-psychosocial research, especially investigations into the neurobiology of wisdom and possible interventions to enhance it," Jeste added.

For the study published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research, the researchers randomly recruited 524 residents of San Diego county, ages 25 to 104, from an on-going longitudinal investigation called the Successful Aging Evaluation (SAGE) study, focusing on physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects of successful ageing across the adult lifespan.

Participants were administered the SD-WISE, along with two existing measures: the 12-item

Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale and the 40-item Self-Assessed Wisdom Scale.

"Both scales are well-established and well-repected," said Michael Thomas, Assistant professor of psychiatry at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

"They have demonstrated reliability and validity as scientific tools and were good measures against which to compare SD-WISE."

Studies suggest that wisdom may be defined by six specific domains and that these domains are linked to distinct regions of the brain, based upon neuroimaging and other scientific evidence.

For example, the domain of prosocial attitudes and behaviors, such as empathy, altruism and social cooperation, is mediated by the prefrontal cortex (PFC), located in the front part of the brain and responsible to complex executive functions.

The other domains are social decision-making/pragmatic knowledge of life, emotional regulation, reflection/self-understanding, tolerance of diverse values, and ability to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity in life.

All of these domains are associated with specific brain regions, including different parts of the PFC, the limbic system and amygdala, and specific neurotransmitters, especially monoamines.

The researchers found that SD-WISE successfully measured five of the six targeted domains, and made effective distinctions between individuals' differing degrees of wisdom.

The sixth domain – social decision-making – was partially covered as "social advising".

The results showed that SD-WISE is a reliable and valid scale, said Jeste.

Wisdom, as measured with SD-WISE, correlated with measures of psychological well-being. Importantly, the overall results supported the notion that wisdom is a specific entity with different components.

Source: IANS



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Source: IANS

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! For Monday, Sept. 25, 2017:

This year you are more optimistic than you have been in many years. Sometimes you experience a brief moment of insecurity, but you manage to cruise right through it. Supportive friends surround you. If you are single, you easily could charm the socks right off someone. You might opt not to move down your career ladder, but if you do, you will be well taken care of. The odds of sharing many mutual interests and always have something to share with each other. You both can enjoy a day just chatting about this or that. SAGITTARIUS takes a lot of risks.

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 have a lot of ground to cover. Confirm meetings with others who might be involved. A mistake is easily made. An associate is likely to need some time to before committing to a plan. Be more available to this person. Tonight: Squeeze in some exercise.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

This person doesn't understand you well or grasp what is going on. Work on taking a new approach in order to get your message across. You might feel uncomfortable at some point. Tonight: Get with the program.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

You'll go with the flow, yet you might feel tense when dealing with a routine domestic master. You could go back and forth trying to handle one issue after the other. Stop and decide which situation stresses you out: maybe they will be first. Tonight: Choose a fun stress-buster.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

You can loosen up a situation with your playful personality. Still, someone close to you could be a downer just by making a sharp comment. Confusion surrounds communication. It would be wise not to take any comments or accusations personally. Tonight: Craft the right on!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Speak your mind loud and clear with the full expectation of being heard. You see life from a different perspective. Stay as upbeat as possible. You have tendency to go overboard, whenever your feelings are involved. You might be a bit of a neighbor's or neighbor's news.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Your intensity, when focused, can make a big difference. Your concerns come from a desire for more possessions to sticking to your budget. You desire to go overboard, whenever your feelings are involved. You might be a bit of a neighbor's or neighbor's news.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Focus on the outcome, and know full well what is needed in order to reach your goal. You might have a brief moment of insecurity, which you will bypass with the encouragement of one or two close friends. You will see that a smile goes far. Tonight: Do what pleases you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You might want to low and rethink a problem more carefully. Your intuition can help you figure out the outcome of what is happening. Pick your adviser accordingly, keeping in mind each person's natural biases. Tonight: Spend time with a favorite younger person.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Emphasize a friendship with your long-term partner. A moment of disagreement with someone could occur as you re-evaluate this bond. Know that this could probably only go through a lot that he or she has not yet shared. Tonight: Get together with loved ones.

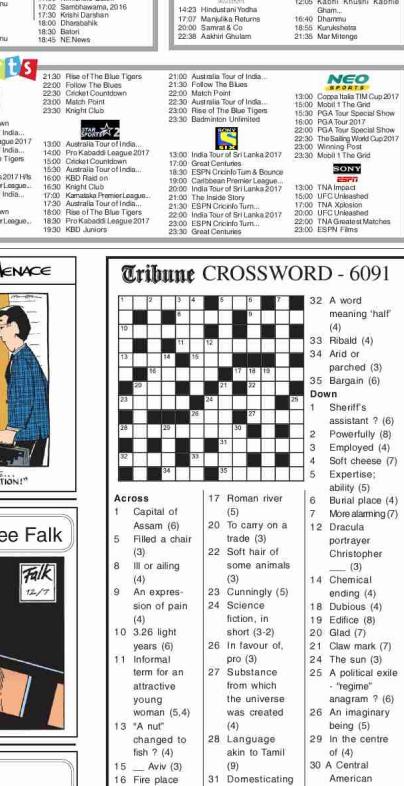
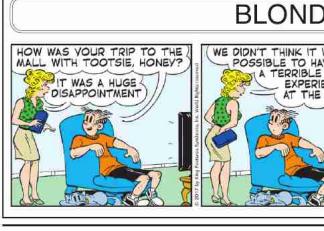
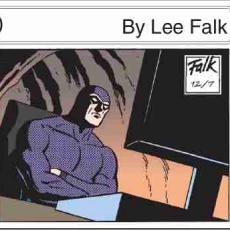
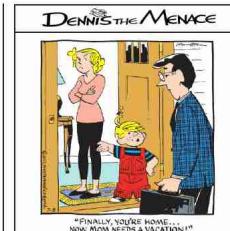
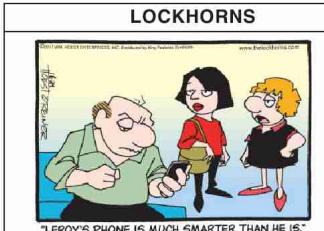
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

You want to make a change, but you seem to be holding back for several reasons. Otherwise, run the show. Let them, as you could find it difficult to take charge right now. Perhaps you aren't as strong-willed as they are about a key matter. Tonight: Could be a late night.

Thought for the day

Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary.

— ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



Tribune CROSSWORD - 6091

1 2 A word meaning 'half'

3 Ribald (4)

4 Arid or parched (3)

5 Bargain (6)

Down

1 Sheriff's assessor? (6)

2 Womble (8)

3 Employed (4)

4 Soft cheese (7)

5 Expertise (ability) (5)

6 Burial place (4)

7 More alarming (7)

12 Dracula, portrayer Christopher ___ (3)

14 Chemical ending (4)

18 Dubious (4)

19 Edifice (8)

20 Glad (7)

21 Claw mark (7)

24 The sun (3)

25 A person exiled "agine" anagram? (6)

26 An imaginary being (5)

29 In the centre of (4)

30 A Central American people (4)

Across

1 Capital of Assam (6)

5 Fired a chair (3)

8 Ill or ailing (4)

9 An expression of pain (4)

10 3:26 light years (6)

11 Informal term for an attractive young woman (5,4)

12 Substance from which the universe was created (4)

13 A "nut" changed to fish? (4)

15 ___ Aviv (3)

16 Fire place (5)

31 Domesticating or subduing (6)

17 Roman river (5)

20 To carry on a trade (3)

22 Soft hair of some animals (3)

23 Cunningly (5)

24 Science fiction, in short (3-2)

26 In favour of, pro (6)

27 Substance from which the universe was created (4)

30 India's capital Sri Lanka (2017)

32 Great Circuses (2)

33 Australia Tour of India (2017)

34 Cricket (2017)

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German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier casts his note on election day in Berlin, Germany on Sunday. - UNI

Kabul suicide attack on NATO convoy wounds three civilians

KABUL, Sept 24: A suicide bomber targeting a NATO convoy wounded three Afghan civilians in Kabul today morning without causing casualties among Danish troops on board, officials said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the bombing in the west of the Afghan capital.

"Around 11:02 am, a suicide car bomber detonated himself, targeted a convoy of foreign forces near Ashar neighbourhood of Kabul city," Najib Danish, interior ministry spokesman, told AFP.

"Unfortunately as a result of the attack, three Afghan civilians were wounded."

Bill Salvin, a spokesman for NATO's Resolute Support train and assist mission, confirmed the attack had targeted a military convoy.

"There are no Resolute Support

casualties as a result of the explosion, and a team from Resolute Support is on the scene to recover the vehicle," Salvin said, adding that "there is no impact to Resolute Support operations."

In a statement on Twitter today, Taliban insurgents claimed to have killed and injured up to 16 American soldiers in the attack. The militants routinely exaggerate claims.

NATO has nearly 13,000 troops in Afghanistan including 8,400 Americans, with an additional 3,000 troops expected to be deployed in support.

The alliance's mission in Afghanistan is focused on training, advising and supervision of domestic security forces to counter the Taliban insurgents – who oppose the Western-backed government of President Ashraf Ghani – and the Islamic State group. – AFP

"Independence is not given, it's taken!" reads another banner hanging below a cluster of red, green, yellow and white Kurdish flags.

Iraq's Kurds are set to vote tomorrow in a referendum on support for independence that has stirred fears of instability across the region as the war against the Islamic State group winds down.

The Kurds are likely to approve the referendum, but the non-binding vote is not expected to result in any formal declaration of independence.

The United States and the United Nations have condemned the referendum. Turkey, which is battling its

KALAK (Iraq), Sept 24: "For the sake of the sacrifices and blood of the martyrs, let's all say yes for Kurdistan independence," reads a large billboard in the centre of Kalak, a small town in Iraq's northern Kurdish region.

"Independence is not given, it's taken!" reads another banner hanging below a cluster of red, green, yellow and white Kurdish flags.

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"Our participation in Astana does not in any way mean that Russia is a friendly or neutral country," Idlib al-Raed told AFP. "The Russian bombing is not surprising, since its policy since its intervention in Syria is based on criminality and killing," he added. – AFP

skirts of the village of Tal Mardikh. Faylaq al-Sham is an Islamist rebel group considered close to the Muslim Brotherhood movement. It has fought against the former

rebels of Idlib, which is part of a so-called "de-confliction" zone agreed in a deal between Syrian regime allies Russia and Iran, and rebel backer Turkey.

The strikes hit the group in the province of Idlib, which is also part of a so-called "de-confliction" zone agreed in a deal between Syrian regime allies Russia and Iran, and rebel backer Turkey.

It was unclear why the strikes, which took place yesterday, targeted members of the Faylaq al-Sham rebel group, which has taken part in peace talks supervised by Moscow in the Kazakh capital Astana.

The strikes hit the group in the province of Idlib, which is part of a so-called "de-confliction" zone agreed in a deal between Syrian regime allies Russia and Iran, and rebel backer Turkey.

The Observatory initially reported a lower toll, but said the figure had risen as bodies were recovered after the strike on one of the rebel group's headquarters on the out-

ern Rakine told AFP they had been "buried with 10-15 bodies in each hole." The village where the army chief said the bodies were found, Ye Baw Kya, is near a cluster of Hindu and Muslim communities in northern Rakhine called Kha Maung Seik.

Hindus from the area have told AFP that militants swept into their villages on August 25, attacking people who stood in their way, killing many and taking others away into the forest. – AFP

More than 430,000 Rohingya

Mass grave of 28 Hindus found in Myanmar: army

YANGON, Sept 24: Myanmar's army said today that a mass grave of 28 Hindus had been discovered in violence-wracked Rakhine state, blaming the killings on Muslim Rohingya militants.

The announcement could not be independently verified in an region that has been seized by communal violence since Rohingya militant raids on August 25 triggered a sweeping security crackdown.

"Security members found and

dug up 28 dead bodies of Hindus who were cruelly violently and killed by ARSA extremist Bengali terrorists in Rakhine State," a statement posted on the army chief's website said.

The army said that security officers found 20 dead women and eight men in the graves, including six boys under the age of ten. Myanmar government spokesman Zaw Htay confirmed the discovery of the 28 bodies on Sunday. A senior police officer in north-

ern Rakhine told AFP they had been "buried with 10-15 bodies in each hole." The village where the army chief said the bodies were found, Ye Baw Kya, is near a cluster of Hindu and Muslim communities in northern Rakhine called Kha Maung Seik.

Hindus from the area have told AFP that militants swept into their villages on August 25, attacking people who stood in their way, killing many and taking others away into the forest. – AFP



Television presenter Mary Berry is accompanied by Freemen of the City of London as she opens the wool fair by walking sheep across London Bridge in London, on Sunday. - UNI

Trump warns N Korea; says 'they won't be around much longer'



US and its allies should "think twice" before threatening his country.

He said that repeatedly calling

Kim "Rocket Man." Trump is making "our rocket's visit to

the entire US mainland inevita-

ble all the more."

The foreign minister also said

Trump is a "gambler who grew old

using threats, frauds and all other

schemes to acquire a patch of land."

Trump jumped into the nickname

game as well, saying Americans call

Trump the "Commander in Chief,"

"Lyn' King," and "President Evil."

Trump and Kim have traded in-

creasingly threatening and personal

insults as Pyongyang races towards

its goal of developing a nuclear-tipped

missile capable of reaching the US.

Tensions have dramatically

risen on the Korean peninsula after

North Korea early this month

conducted its biggest nuclear

test, which its state-run KCNA

news agency described as a hy-

drogen bomb. - PTI

Suspected acid attack injures six in London

LONDON, Sept 24: A suspected acid attack after an altercation between two groups left six people injured in a shopping centre in London, with police arresting a 15-year-old boy in connection with the case.

But beneath the sea of flag-waving, the Kurdish region continues to be plagued by endemic corruption and economic decline.

Among the portraits on Kalak's main street is that of Amen Jadr Mahmoud's 18-year-old son, Gaylan, one of the more than 1,500 Kurdish fighters, known as the peshmerga, killed in the fight against the Islamic State group. "His death was noble, he died fighting for Kurdistan," Mahmoud said.

But even Mahmoud, a die-hard nationalist who lost four other relatives to fighting with Iraqi government forces decades earlier, has misgivings about the Kurdish region's political leadership. - AP

perintendent Ade Adelekan, the Borough Commander for the local Newham area, said: "I would like to be very clear concerning this incident. What initially may have been perceived as a number of random attacks has, on closer inspection, been found to be one incident involving two groups of males."

"I recognise the lasting impact on victims of corrosive substance attacks. Our response to such attacks is continually improving through training and joint working with partners and we are working with the Home Office to explore possible restrictions around the sale of corrosive substances in conjunction with retailers and manufacturers." Witnesses at the scene said an argument had broken out among a group of people. - PTI

Teen arrested

Iranian Guard drills near Iraq ahead of Kurdish vote

TEHRAN, Sept 24: Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard has begun a military exercise in the north-western Kurdish region near the Iraqi border ahead of a Kurdish independence referendum in the neighbouring country.

The Guard's website did not say

how long the drill will last, only that airborne and missile units will participate in the exercise.

Iran's Kurds are set to vote to-

morrow in a referendum on sup-

port for independence. The Kurds are likely to approve the referendum, but the non-binding vote is not expected to result in any formal declaration of independence.

Iran and Iraq have been close allies

since the 2003 US-led inva-

sion of Iraq toppled dictator

Saddam Hussein. Both are opposed to Kurdish independence, and Bagh-

dad has said the referendum is un-

constitutional. - AP

Brexit may give

rise to Euro English language

LONDON, Sept 24: The exit of

the UK from the European Union

may give rise to "Euro-English,"

a new language tailored to the cul-

tures and needs of continental Eu-

ropean societies, a study claims.

The term Euro-English best

suits those continental Europeans

whose speech is characterised by

influences from standardised Eng-

lish as well as their native tongues,

researchers said.

Researchers from Gavle Uni-

versity in Sweden argue that when

the English leave the European

Union (EU), 98 per cent of the

population will not have English

as their native language, and the absence of native speakers will lead the language to develop into its own variant, "Euro-English".

"The departure of the British

from the European Union will with-

out doubt mark the beginning of a

new era for the English language,"

said Marko Modiano, language re-

searcher at Gavle University.

"Europeans who speak English al-

ready show signs of developing their

own words and phrases and their own

way of speaking," said Modiano. Re-

searchers point out that with the Brit-

ish gone, nobody will be there to de-

feat UK English for competition, not

only from American English but also

from other languages. - PTI

New turbine can harness power from ocean currents

TOKYO, Sept 24: Scientists have developed a new turbine that can harness energy from ocean currents to produce low-cost and sustainable electricity.

Researchers from the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST)

researchers said.

Researchers from Gavle Uni-

versity in Sweden argue that when

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ish gone, nobody will be there to de-

feat UK English for competition, not

only from American English but also

from other languages. - PTI

line to weaken the force of incoming waves and protect the shore from erosion.

"Thirty per cent of the seashore in mainland Japan is covered with tetrapods and wave breakers," said Tsumoru Shintake from OIST.

Replacing these with "intelli-

gent" tetrapods and wave breakers with turbines attached to or near them, would generate energy as well as help to protect the coasts, researchers said. - PTI



in Japan began a project titled "Sea Horse," which aims to harness energy from the Kuroshio ocean current that flows from the eastern coast of Taiwan and around the southern parts of Japan.

It uses submerged turbines anchored to the sea floor through mooring cables that convert the kinetic energy of sustained natural currents in the Kuroshio into usable electricity, which is then delivered by cables to the land.

Barca remain perfect in Girona, Real bounce back



Barcelona's Luis Suarez celebrates after scoring against Girona during the La Liga match at the Montilivi stadium in Girona.

Wozniacki whips Russian to retain Tokyo crown

TOKYO, Sept 24: Defending champion Caroline Wozniacki romped to a 6-0, 7-5 victory over Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova today to win her third WTA Pan Pacific Open.

The Danish former world number one needed only 75 minutes to complete the rout under the Tokyo sunshine, capturing her first title of the year after losing in six finals.

Third seed Wozniacki stormed through the first set in just 22 minutes, blazing winners past a stunned Pavlyuchenkova.

The Russian saved a match point in the 10th game of the second set before Wozniacki converted on her third opportunity, the world number six fizzing a backhand pass down the line to claim her 26th career title.

"It was my seventh final this

year and obviously after a while it gets harder and harder," said Wozniacki after winning her first tournament since Hong Kong in October last year.

"Obviously I've won here in the past and it has great memories for me so I'm happy I

was able to stay focused and aggressive," she added.

"Everything was going my way in the first set. The second set was tough but I managed to stay positive and it feels great to win the title again. It was awesome." — AFP



Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark holds the championship trophy after her victory against Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia at the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo, on Sunday.

Nadal, Federer rule out full-time partnership

PRAGUE, Sept 24: Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer took Team Europe to within two wins of lifting the Laver Cup after they played doubles together for the first time, but ruled out a full-time partnership on tour.

The world's highest ranking duo handed Team Europe, skippered by Bjorn Borg, a 9-3 lead over Team World, captained by John McEnroe, after two days of play in Prague.

After Nadal and Federer had won their singles rubbers, all eyes at Prague's sold-out O2 Arena were then on the two legends who played on the same side of the net for the first time in careers which have stretched the best part of two decades.

They started the doubles against Sam Querrey and Jack Sock on a high, earning a break in the first set to win 6-4.

They quickly enjoyed the experience, with Federer laughing off a massive air shot half-way through the set.

However, they were in far more serious mood in the second set as both lost their serve, allowing the American pair to level with a 6-1 win.

Much to their relief, the world's top two players, with 35 Grand Slam singles titles between them, regained their composure in time to sweep their rivals 10-5 in a

super tie-break.

They both denied planning a future as a doubles pair, saying it was "not a good idea."

"I don't want to kill your expectations," Federer



Roger Federer (R) and Rafael Nadal of Team Europe in action against Sam Querrey and Jack Sock of Team World during the Laver Cup in O2 Arena, in Prague.

told Nadal.

Nadal, 31, said he will remember the night he teamed up with his old rival and close friend for the first time.

"It was unforgettable for both of us after the history we have behind us as rivals. Something we really enjoyed a lot," said the Spanish star.

"To have the possibility to help Roger next to me is a huge privilege... Something I wanted to make it happen at some point and today I made it happen."

"He said it all," chuckled 36-year-old Federer.

"For me personally it was a great moment too. After this we'll be rivals again, thanks God or unfortunately, but this was something very special."

"This is a memory for the rest of the lifetime."

"My last doubles was so long ago that I hardly remembered how to react at the net," said Federer, forcing the ball extremely well with his forehand.

Despite losing, Querrey said it was "fun to be a part of it."

"It was a great match, everyone played well. It really could have gone either way."

In Saturday's opener, Federer, this year's Australian Open and Wimbledon

winner and the world number two, swept 16th-

ranked Querrey 6-4, 6-2 after earning a break in the first set and two in the second. — AFP

Montpellier threw away possession on the edge of their own area and Maxime curled a tame shot straight at home goalkeeper Benjamin Lecomte.

Striker Edinson Cavani, who missed a penalty last week after an argument with Neymar, had an appeal for a spot-kick waved away after going down in a heap under a potentially goal-saving tackle from defender Pedro Mendoza.

But last season's runners-up were left frustrated by Montpellier's organisation and 5-4-1 formation.

Bordeaux preserved their unbeaten record as substitutes Alexandre Mendy and Jonathan Cafu scored in a 3-1 home win over Guingamp.

Jimmy Briand had missed a penalty for the visitors before Francois Kamano put Jocelyn Gourvenec's side ahead and Yannis Salibur equalised.

But Gourvenec's changes worked perfectly as Bordeaux moved into third.

Emery wants his men to be able to break down stubborn opposition without their key playmaker.

"We need all the players, when a player is missing it's important to maintain the level and pace," the Spaniard added, after his side mustered just one shot on target.

"Others have had time to play and they've helped the team, but we can't say that the match would have been different with Neymar."

"We will play more matches with Neymar this season, but we also need to work (when we're) without a player."

Rising star Kylian Mbappe had the best of the visitors' chances at the Stade de la Mosson, but the 18-year-old was profligate in front of goal.

"Without Neymar pulling the strings, Paris were toothless for the first 45 minutes, with some players perhaps keeping one eye on the Bayern game.

PSG did finally create a decent chance shortly after the restart, as

marked from only a few yards out.

Mbappe was starting to make an impact, as he raced toward goal only to scuff his shot and allow the home defence to clear.

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But Gourvenec's changes worked perfectly as Bordeaux moved into third.

MADRID, Sept 24: Barcelona maintained their perfect start to La Liga with a sixth straight win as Luis Suarez and two own goals secured a 3-0 win at Girona in a match laced with political tension.

Real Madrid remain seven points behind Barca thanks to Dani Ceballos' double on his full debut to bounce back from a shock midweek defeat against Real Betis with a 2-1 win at Alaves yesterday to move up to fourth. Girona were hosting Barca in a Catalan derby for the first time in the top flight, but a one-sided game on the pitch was marked by persistent chants in favour of independence for Catalonia.

Catalonia's pro-independence president Carles Puigdemont was in attendance, whilst the pro-independence Estelada flag was waved by sections of both supports.

"The game had its difficulties," said Barcelona boss Ernesto Valverde.

"It's a derby, there was a great atmosphere, tension. It is normal, but we played well."

On the field there was much less controversy as Barca were rarely troubled after Aday Benitez turned Jordi Alba's wayward shot into the net after just 17 minutes.

Another own goal extended their advantage three minutes after half-time when goalkeeper Gorka Iraizoz was foisted by Suarez's dummy from Alexi Vidal's cross.

And Suarez rounded off the scoring himself with just his second goal of the season

by whipping the ball into Iraizoz's near post from Sergi Roberto's pass over the top.

At Mestalla, Madrid were once again wasteful in front of goal, but still sneaked an Alaves side that remain with a point after six games.

"Today we needed the three points. We were in brilliant form, but for sure we will play better on other days," said Real boss Zinedine Zidane.

Ceballos was one of three changes made to the side that lost to Betis by Zidane as Luka Modric and Gareth Bale were left on the bench ahead of Tuesday's Champions League trip to Borussia Dortmund. And the Spanish under-21 international Dortmund's nerves after just 10 minutes as he caught Fernando Pacheco's foot.

Alaves did register their first goal of the season five minutes before half-time when Manu Garcia met Munir El Haddadi's cross flush to power a header into the top corner.

Madrid retold the lead just three minutes later, though, as Ceballos pounced on a poor punch from Pacheco to fire into the bottom corner.

Real had ensured a far more comfortable afternoon after the break as Pacheco made a great save to deny Isco, Cristiano Ronaldo struck the woodwork twice and Sergio Ramos blazed over with the goal at his mercy.

Yet, Alaves could also have snatched a first point of the season as Alfonso Pedraza's

deflected effort hit the bar before Pedraza struck the post when clean through on goal.

"When you go away having only scored two goals for the chances we had it isn't a lot," added Zidane.

Earlier, Diego Costa was an interested spectator as Atletico Madrid leaptfrogged Sevilla into second thanks to goals from Yannick Carrasco and Antoine Griezmann in a 2-0 win at the Wanda Metropolitano.

Costa won't be able to feature until January after completing his prolonged return to the club from Chelsea for a reported club record fee of 35 million euros (\$65 million), plus 10 million euros in add-ons.

"We are happy that a player of his stature wants to come to Atletico Madrid," Atletico boss Diego Simeone said of Costa's return.

Filipe Luis smashed the underside of the bar with Atletico's best effort of a first half short on clear-cut chances.

But it took less than a minute of the second period to break the deadlock when Carrasco showed great awareness and pace to latch onto a short back pass from Steven N'Zonzi to beat Sergio Rico to the ball, round the keeper and slot into an empty net.

Griezmann then made the game safe 20 minutes from time as the French international won a tackle inside the Sevilla box before lifting himself off the floor to receive Luis's pass and drill through Rico's legs. — AFP

Parker edges Fury to keep heavyweight belt

MANCHESTER, Sept 24:

Joseph Parker beat Hughie Fury by a majority points decision to retain his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) heavyweight title at the Manchester Arena.

The New Zealander endured a frustrating night and did not look confident ahead of the scores being announced, but the judges

scored it to Parker by 118-110, 118-110 with the other seeing a 114-114 draw yesterday.

Mandatory challenger Fury, 23 last Monday, suffered his first defeat in 21 fights while a second title defence for Parker improved his undefeated record to 24 wins, 18 by KO.

After a scrappy fight, two judges

scoring it 10 rounds to two for Parker seemed generous as the Kiwi had not seriously troubled the challenger.

"I feel I won the fight, he put up a great fight," said Parker.

"Heft the aggression was good on my side. He was really awkward and his movement was good. But I caught him with the harder punches, I felt."

Fury boxed smartly in his first world title fight and his jab, along with his nifty footwork, frustrated Parker who was unable to land cleanly.

"I don't know what happened there with the judges," said Fury.

Parker kept chasing and had more success in the second half of the fight to secure the win that keeps him in contention for bigger fights next year, possibly against Fury's fellow Briton Anthony Joshua.

A lot of the rounds were close, with few clean and powerful punches landing, but it was Fury's movement and flicking jab that gave the champion problems in the first six rounds especially. — AFP

Morata propels Chelsea to victory



Alvaro Morata completes his hat-trick during the Premier League match against Stoke City at the Bet365 Stadium.

STOKE-ON-TRENT (UK), Sept 24: Alvaro Morata will approach Chelsea's Champions League trip to Atletico Madrid next week in top form after his hat-trick inspired his side to a 4-0 win at Stoke City.

Morata struck three times at the Bet365 Stadium yesterday to take his Chelsea tally to seven goals in six games since his impressive move from Atletico's local rivals Real Madrid.

There was also relief for Morata and manager Antonio Conte, that Chelsea's fans dropped a controversial chant about the Spaniard's performance and Iago Aspas.

"I think Alvaro performed very well. He scored a hat-trick and for our strikers it's very important. It means we created chances for our strikers to take, but I am pleased for his performance and I'm pleased for the performance of the team."

Morata had previously asked Chelsea's fans not to sing the song about him and they responded by dreaming up a different chant in his honour.

He opened the scoring after just 81 seconds and added two more goals in the second half after Pedro had punished Darren Fletcher's error make it 2-0.

"It's not easy to win away against Stoke. This game is always difficult," added Conte, whose side trail leaders Manchester City and Manchester United by three points.

"Our fans were fantastic today and they pushed a lot for the team in every moment of the game," said Conte, whose side follow their trip to Spain with a home game against Manchester City next weekend.

"In this stadium the crowd pushes a lot and I want to thank our fans because I repeat they have been a lot the team today. It was great also to change it the song."

"Today we started very well and then we started to suffer and it was important not to lose our

composure, to always stay in the game. In the second half we scored two goals and created many chances to improve the final result. The final result was 4-0, but I think that it was a difficult game."

Conte confirmed goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois had suffered no ill-effects from a heavy landing on his neck during the second half and will be fit to face his former club Atletico.

Stoke manager Mark Hughes had had no such comfort after he saw his side undone by horrible defensive errors, then reported his centre-back crisis could extend into next week's home game against Southampton.

Hughes will have Kurt Zouma available after the Chelsea defender was prevented from playing against Conte's men by the terms of his loan to Stoke.

But Bruno Martins Indi, the only central defender who was available to start against Chelsea, has joined Ryan Shawcross, Geoff Cameron and Kevin Wimmer on the injured list after limping off with a groin problem. — AFP

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