

The Assam Rising

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NEWS

IN BRIEF

Mob vandalize forest office

Kokrajhar, August 18 : In a bizarre incident, a group of villagers vandalized the Ultapani forest range office in Kokrajhar district of Assam. Hundreds of villagers from No. 2 Ultapani village, along the Indo-Bhutan border, attacked the forest office on Monday noon damaging office properties and vehicles. According to forest officials, the villagers attacked the range office after the forest department staff detained two forest mafias on Sunday night while cutting 'Sal' trees inside the forest under Ultapani range. Though the duo were allowed to go on Monday morning, later in the afternoon a mob gathered at the range office and started vandalizing office properties. At least four vehicles and office furnitures were totally damaged in the attack.

Indian Coast Guard helps Pakistani Captain

New Delhi, August 18 : The Indian Coast Guard last week helped a Pakistani National, who suffered a heart attack on high seas. The Coast Guard immediately responded to the request of medical assistance and evacuated Captain Badar Hasnain, master of the vessel MV Haykal, to a hospital in Visakhapatnam for treatment. Initial diagnosis at Queen's NRI Hospital, Visakhapatnam pointed out that he suffered from "Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy" and was further recommended his treatment to continue in the hospital. The Pakistan national had suffered a heart stroke on July 13, 2020, while the vessel was en route Gopalpur Port, Odisha. Captain Badar Hasnain left for Pakistan on Monday via Attari Wagah Border. Captain Hasnain's daughter appreciated the humanitarian gesture of the Indian government and the efforts of doctors at the hospital to provide him with medical treatment.

Autonomous Council is not alteranative of ST status : Matak Yuva Chatra Parishad



Tinsukia, August 18 : Autonomous Council is not alternative of ST status to Matak people. Matak yuva Chatra Parishad expresses this view today. Today Matak yuva Chatra Parishad organised a Press Meet in Tinsukia, Rangagarh to reflect the

India prepares roadmap to promote indigenously developed weapons to boost defence exports through diplomatic channels



New Delhi, August 18 : The government has prepared a roadmap to promote the indigenously developed military platforms and weapons to boost their exports and will use diplomatic channels to promote them in overseas markets, a senior Defence Ministry official said on Monday. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh earlier this month had unveiled a major policy decision, announcing the imposition of a phase-wise ban on import of 101 military platforms and weapons

systems with an aim to promote the domestic defence industry. Raj Kumar, secretary, Department of Defence Production, said at a webinar that the domestic defence industry will hold web interactions with the representatives of friendly countries to figure out what kind of products and platforms they require. "We are preparing country-wise profiles of products, weapons and platforms which are probably needed by our friendly countries. So we

are now planning to start web interaction led by the industry," Kumar said. "That country's defence attache, our DPSUs (defence public sector undertakings), industry, will then figure out what is in the store for us to promote there for exports," he said. Kumar said the government will be standing side by side with the domestic industry through its defence attaches, embassies and diplomatic channels to promote exports. To promote indigenous

production, the Defence Ministry on August 9 announced restrictions on import of 101 weapons and military platforms including light combat helicopters, conventional submarines and cruise missiles under a staggered timeline till 2024. Kumar said a second list of import-restricted defence items will also be notified. "This is the first list we are examining and then a second list will also come. We expect you (industry) to come forward and start investing to meet our requirements," he said at the webinar — "Army Make Projects 2020" — organised by FICCI. The senior official said as successful domestic bidders move to the defence equipment production stage, his department will share their details with the Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu defence corridor authorities, who "will compete in attracting your units to their respective states". He said since the three services are making

efforts to push the "Make II" category of defence production projects, he will interact with project participants to understand their concerns and share best practices among the services. As secretary of the Department of Defence Production, Kumar heads the collegiate committee that approves the "Make II" category of projects. Under the Make II category, no government funding is given to the Indian company for the prototype development process. If a prototype developed by the company meets the standards set by the armed forces, an order is placed for such equipment or platforms. "Everything, whether it is defence industrial corridor, or whether it is defence production and export promotion policy, or whether it is a negative list - everything works in the same

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Supreme Court dismisses plea to transfer PM CARES Funds to NDRF



New Delhi, August 18 : Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a petition seeking the transfer of money in PM CARES Funds to National Disaster Relief Fund. The SC said that fresh national disaster plan for coronavirus COVID-19 is not needed and observed that funds collected in PM CARES fund are meant for charitable trust. "There is no statutory prohibition on contributions made to NDRF and the contributions to PM Cares fund are voluntary. Funds collected by the PM Cares fund are entirely different and these funds are funds of charitable trust. Thus, funds need not be transferred," said the apex court.

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Flood re-intensifies as 28 villages, 11962 people still remain affected



Guwahati, August 18 : The ravaging annual floods have claimed a total of 112 lives so far in Assam. Only 3 districts are reeling under floodwaters, according to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority. A total of 11962 people and 1535 hectares of cropland across 28 villages have been affected by the flood.

So far 1345 big animals, 657 small animals are still affected. The mighty Brahmaputra at Neamatighat and Jia Bharali in Sonitpur in Assam are flowing above danger level, causing floods and consequently leaving thousands of families homeless. As per the latest data, the flood-affected

districts are Dhemaji and Baksa. Six relief camps have been installed. In the relief camps, there are so far 136 people. Meanwhile, the Kaziranga National park in Assam is badly affected with 50% area submerged and according to Forest department report, a total of 151 animals have died in this flood season and 172 animals have been rescued. 81 animals have died from drowning, 21 have died from vehicle hits and 17 died under treatment. 2020 Assam floods or 2020 Brahmaputra river floods refer to the floods in Brahmaputra River in Indian state of Assam in 2020. The floods

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Indian hackers give befitting reply to Pakistan's agenda on Ram temple, Kashmir; hack over 80 Pakistani websites

New Delhi, August 18 : On August 15, when the country was celebrating the 74th anniversary of independence, a group of Indian hackers were busy in giving a befitting reply to Pakistan's agenda on Ram temple and Kashmir. On this Independence Day, a group of Indian hackers succeeding in hacking over 80 websites of Pakistan and hoisted the Indian tricolor



on these websites. The Indian hackers went on to

hack one websites after another

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Centre to launch project for conservation, protection of Dolphins in rivers, oceans across country

New Delhi, August 18 : The Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday (August 17, 2020) said that the Centre will be launching a holistic Project Dolphin in another 15 days for the conservation and protection of the Dolphins in the rivers and in oceans across the country. The minister took to his official Twitter account and wrote, "As announced by PM Narendra Modi ji on 74th Independence Day, Ministry of Environment,

Forest and Climate Change will be launching a holistic Project Dolphin in another 15 days for the conservation and protection of the Dolphins in the rivers and in oceans of the country." Javadekar on Monday also attended a States Forest Minister's Conference held in New Delhi and said that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is focused on enhancing forest quality and increasing tree cover for maximizing carbon



stock. Minister of State in the Environment Ministry, Babul Supriyo, other officials in the Ministry, Chief Ministers of the State of Arunachal Pradesh and Goa, Deputy Chief Ministers and 24 Forest Ministers from various States also participated in the four-hour-long meeting held via video conferencing. Javadekar addressing the meeting said that "We have taken many initiatives to bring out transformational changes in

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If Britain looked anew, it could learn so much about the arts from Africa

It's a painful time to tell stories about the arts. This week, hundreds of venues across the UK were lit up in red - not in an inspired display of creativity, but as a cry for help as arts venues find themselves on the brink of collapse. The protest culminated in the iconic chimney at London's Tate Modern art gallery being made bright red, and illuminated with the words "Throw Us a Line" - a reference to the 1m jobs at risk in the live events sector following the Covid-19 pandemic and shutdown. A report from the digital, culture, media and sport select committee warned last month that the UK now faces the prospect of becoming a "cultural wasteland". But it's not just Covid-19 that is responsible for this calamity. Britain has long celebrated its cultural productivity. It is another area in which we are told we are "world leading" - yet the British government fails to offer the sector the same status of recognition and support as other European countries. Here's an idea for our government. Stop co-opting the creative industries into a narrative that has us always boasting of being the best. Instead, invest in the actual artists whose work is of such a quality it speaks for itself. This "world-leading" perception Britain still has of itself is part of a wider deluded colonial narrative. I have learned a lot about British attitudes towards the arts in recent months on the continent where so many of our ideas and history - never mind those delusions of colonialism - reside. The last year of my life was spent filming a three-part series on the art of Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal, for the BBC. Senegal, in particular, has a history that can teach us so much in modern-day Britain. It shook off formal French imperial rule in 1960 - and although its economic base and viability was far from certain at the time, Senegal understood the value of its arts in a way that our government has shown itself totally incapable of. Led by the



poet president, Léopold Senghor, one quarter of the new nation's budget was allocated to the arts. A huge investment by any measure, this money was used to build presses, theatres, museums, art schools, archives, and workshops. It allowed Senegal to position itself globally as a leading proponent of black art, attracting the diaspora of black artists - a legacy still visible today - and hosting annual salons, international exhibitions and festivals, as well as providing a generous system of bursaries and civil service jobs to entrench art in the economy. Britain does not have a track record of learning from countries like Senegal, because the need to be "world leading" clouds our judgment with a narrative of superiority that has a very specific history when it comes to the art of the African continent. The British media talks as little about Senegal, or any of the other Francophone nations that make up the bulk of west Africa, as the French media does about Ghana or Nigeria. Instead, each prefers to stick to the zones in which it wielded colonial power, and continues to retain problematic, possessive ideas. Looking at the art of countries within Britain's zone is perhaps even more complicated. Kenya is a country that has done possibly more than any other to inform the British imagination of Africa. It's no coincidence that the author Binyavanga Wainaina, who so brilliantly satirised the

Afua Hirsch

European perception of Africa, was Kenyan. From this perspective, he wrote, Africa is always characterised as "hot and dusty with rolling grasslands and huge herds of animals and tall, thin people who are starving," and Africans as a people who "have music and rhythm deep in their souls", but also "no history, no past". To learn from and appreciate Kenyan art requires a British audience to first unpick these deeply ingrained - and regularly reinforced - perceptions. Channel 4's recent series The Tribe Next Door, for example, was almost a case study in the kind of stereotyped depiction of Africans that Wainaina cautioned against. Set in Namibia, the series sought to depict African life as nothing more than the "tits and spears complex" so adored by our media. This was confirmed when Channel 4 described the location simply as a "remote African village". It's hardly compatible with a conversation about how countries like Kenya are forging ahead with responses to the climate crisis, and how these manifest in its art. The nation introduced a total ban on plastic bags in 2017 and is now a creative leader in art that explores consumption and sustainability - with artists like the sculpture Meshack Oiro creating powerful works from recycled materials. As a black British person, there is a profound quality to simply witnessing art by black creators. It's hard to escape the impression that this is a different process

when rooted in countries where artists' blackness is so normalised it does not demand a response - and where racism does not constantly invade their conceptual space. The resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement will, I believe, attract more diaspora black artists to the African continent, renew interest in the legacy of leaders like Senghor and his philosophy of négritude - a complicated but important conversation about what blackness means and how we should nurture it. It feels like an important time to engage substantively with African art, but at the same time, in Britain there is so much baggage when it comes to looking at the art of Africa's 54 nations, that the lens itself feels compromised. I encountered some of the most exciting art I have ever experienced in Ethiopia. It feels insulting to think of the photography of Aida Muluneh - regal, diasporic positioning of black women long before Beyoncé's Black Is King - or the painting of Yonas Degefa merely as a response to Bob Geldof's Live Aid in the 1980s. Britain may still choose to see African nations through the filter of charity fundraisers, but Ethiopians are getting on with their art - ancient, contemporary or Afrofuturist, and all of these at once. There is never a bad time to simply show mesmerising works of dance, fashion, painting, sculpture, architecture and photography, knowing that it speaks for itself. It's impossible, if you engage properly with art, not to see it as a value in itself, rather than - as the British government sees it - something that does or does not deserve furlough money based on its export potential. Which is why, as British art institutions stand on the brink of a creative collapse, with potentially generational consequences, we need to broaden our gaze. If we engage with the art of African nations - rather than seeing them as countries waiting for Britain to be their "world leader" - we might find we learn something instead.

TV should expose the flaws of fast fashion, not treat it as entertainment

According to TV industry media, the fast fashion brand Missguided turned down more than 500 requests from TV production companies before agreeing to allow Pulse Films into its head office in Manchester last year. The fruits of that labour, Inside Missguided: Made in Manchester, a four-part series in Channel 4's



"coveted" 10pm documentary slot, were revealed last week. Let's be honest, I did not enjoy the show. A more substantive archive of my distress can be found on Twitter, but the short version is that I'm disturbed that this horror show of turbo-charged consumerism was ever commissioned. Missguided is one of the new generation of fast fashion brands. It is perhaps most famous for selling a £1 bikini, an item that screamed disposability and was calculated to give people like me, who major in cleaning up the fashion industry, a nervous breakdown. The company said at the time it was a loss-making promotional item that cost more than £1 to produce. Predominantly online, the brand's HQ is in Manchester, also home to rivals such as Boohoo and Pretty Little Thing. "What was important was Mancunians telling the story," the show's executive producer, Nelesh Dhand, told Prolific North. He didn't want a "southern team making a sneery cynical documentary about their world and their city". This is ironic because, at the risk of sounding sneery, this is one of the most cynical pieces of TV I have ever seen. In tone and content, this series is very similar to Breaking Fashion, the BBC3 show from last year, which followed fast fashion brand In The Style. Breaking Fashion mentioned eco-detractors but left it there. Inside Missguided does at least devote some minutes of episode three to a performative factory audit in Leicester. We learn that Ashish, who heads "the ethics team", is known for being a stickler and the brand is "a bit stricter" than some of its rivals. "How many of them are migrant workers?" asks Ashish. Why this is a pertinent question isn't really explained. Later in the episode, after a tense meeting on party dress inventory and a baby gender reveal party, a sequence confirms that the recently audited factory run by Mick Cheema of

Basic Premier (already widely rated in Leicester as a good factory that pays legal wages) will win a Missguided contract. Phew. Congrats, Mick! But how much of Missguided's inventory will this factory produce and in what time-scale? As viewers, we are simply not given the information to make an informed judgment. What we do get however are snippets of the CEO, Nitin Passi, being interviewed by a (serious) FT journalist. Passi poses and answers his own question bringing us on to well-trodden ground: "Where people say, how do you make a garment for £5, well you can make a garment for £5 if you buy it smartly and you manufacture it smartly." If this seems a bit light on granular explanation, many manufacturers also struggle with the detail. Members of the Textile Manufacturer Association of Leicestershire have complained that retailers offer such low prices per garment that they simply "cannot be manufactured ethically". Passi also asserts that the demand for newness is being fuelled by the customer and "if we don't do it someone else is going to do it". No doubt. The problem is that we're at a point when this is not good enough. The global fashion industry's annual environmental and social assessment, the Pulse report, led by Boston Consulting, concluded last year that sustainability efforts are "not moving fast enough to counterbalance the harmful impact of the fashion industry's rapid growth". It said: "Projections suggest that by 2030 the global apparel and footwear industry's [output] will have grown by 81% to 102m tons", which amounts to "an unprecedented strain on planetary resources". The more popular and normalised this supply chain becomes, the less appetite politicians have to intervene. One of the major issues with these brands is their speed.

Tabu's 'Haider' puts India on the world map! The film has been ranked as No.7 on Literary Hub's top 40 Hamlet adaptations across theatre, film & series'



When you talk about the most stunning, talented and versatile actresses in Bollywood, the name topping the charts has to be Tabu. The National Award-winning actress has shone in many avatars over more than two decades, and few actors have shown consummate skill as actors as she has.

One of her most lauded performances was definitely in Haider, where she starred alongside Shahid Kapoor. Portraying the role of Ghazala, Haider's mother, the gorgeous actress received extremely high praises from fans and critics alike and was named one of the most notable artists in the blockbuster.

The movie has now featured 7th out of 40 Hamlets Ranked, on the prestigious Literary Hub's page, a list that ranks stories featuring characters similar to Shakespeare's Hamlet. Haider is the third movie Vishal Bhardwaj's trilogy of Shakespeare adaptations.

Tabu has numerous box office hits under her belt, including Gulzar's Maachis, which won her a National Award. An actress whose versatility and talent reigns supreme, she will next be seen in Netflix's A Suitable Boy, and we can't wait for her to blow us away with her performance yet again. Link - <https://lithub.com/40-hamlets-ranked/3/?single=true>

Government should give Official Recognition to Indian Sign Language (ISL): Vaibhav Kothari

Kolkata, August 17 : India, with over 1.3 million deaf and mute citizens, should make the Indian Sign Language (ISL) the 23rd official language under the Indian Constitution said Vaibhav Kothari, a deaf and mute entrepreneur, engineer and motivational speaker at a webinar - Winning Challenges - hosted by Kolkata-based social and cultural activist Sundeep Bhutoria. Vaibhav, who was the guest speaker, used sign language and an interpreter to communicate with those who joined in from different parts of the world. Vaibhav's fervent appeal to the Indian Government came in response to a question posed by conversationalist Sundeep Bhutoria - "How important do you think it is to promote the Indian Sign Language (ISL) by incorporating it in the list of existing 22 Scheduled Languages under the Constitution of India? Vaibhav called upon the Government to listen to its millions of deaf and mute citizens and empower them by promoting the Indian Sign Language (ISL) to gain higher education and effectively contribute to the nation building. "Just as India promotes and preserves our ancient Sanskrit language, which is one of the 22 scheduled languages under the Indian Constitution, there is a need to incorporate the



Sundeep Bhutoria



Vaibhav Kothari

newly-evolved Indian Sign Language (ISL) into the list of scheduled languages. This would immensely empower millions of Indians suffering from hearing impairment to achieve higher education and catch up on missed opportunities," Vaibhav said. Lauding the New Education Policy for taking cognizance of the sign language Vaibhav said that individuals and organisations have been fighting for this for over thirty years. Vaibhav fully endorsed the suggestion of conversationalist Sundeep Bhutoria that one Parliamentary seat should be reserved for a deaf person to articulate and represent the demands of their world or the "deaf eco-system". Sign languages are full-fledged natural languages with their own grammar and lexicon.

Though home to one of the largest numbers of hearing impaired population, India still does not have a formally recognized sign language under the Constitution. As per the 2011 Indian Census there are 1.3 million people with hearing impairment but on the other hand the India's National Association of the Deaf estimates that 18 million people or close to 1 per cent of the Indian population are deaf or suffer from hearing loss. "India's hearing impaired community have faced immense difficulties during the corona virus lockdown unable to access notices, clarifications or call helplines. Under the new online education system, deaf children are unable to study as most parents don't know the Indian Sign Language (ISL). The New Education

Policy must educate Indians on ISL and make it an official language. We are living in an unprecedented time, but in uncertainty lies the power to influence the future, and Vaibhav Kothari is the perfect example. I decided to have this intimate conversation personally with Vaibhav to highlight an important issue pertaining to the cause of the deaf and mute that is under reported and under served in India," said Sundeep Bhutoria who has successfully campaigned with the Government to rectify social issues of national importance.

The Indian Government had set up the Indian Sign Language Research & Training Centre in New Delhi in 2015. In March 2018 the first Indian Sign Language dictionary was launched. India now has its own sign language in place. There are over 130 sign languages in the world with different countries evolving their own system. Vaibhav Kothari's life is an ordinary boy's extraordinary achievement. He learned the American Sign Language (ASL) and got his MBA and engineering degrees from the United States. He is a successful entrepreneur and spearheading his family business Om Metals Infra Projects and Om International LLC. He hosts a talk show OMVAI and is a motivational speaker who inspires millions to overcome their physical

disabilities to strive to become achievers. He has also directed a short film highlighting the plight of the deaf.

Higher education remains a major roadblock for the hearing impaired in India since very few colleges and institutions avail interpreters or lecturers who can teach in sign language. The students thus have to turn to other sources which most cannot afford. According to the Persons with Disability Act 1995, one per cent jobs in government and private agencies are reserved for them. But those jobs have conditions like having degree certificates from known universities across India.

Sundeep Bhutoria, a Kolkata-based social and cultural activist, author, columnist and blogger who has successfully campaigned with the Government to change policies that inconvenienced parents to take their infants to the passport office; or very recently to save the childhood of kindergarteners from the onslaught of online classes. His appeal to the Prime Minister to provide support to the folk artistes and craftsmen of India facing immense hardship due to Covid 19 pandemic prompted swift action by the Government to enlist those craftsmen who were earlier left out.

KSU, KMH flay firing incident

DIMAPUR, August 18 : Khamniungan Students' Union (KSU) and Khamniungan Menyiu Hoikam (KMH) have strongly condemned the firing incident that occurred at International Trade centre (ITC) Dan, Pangsha under Noklak district on August 15, 2020. KSU through its media cell asserted that prior to the setting up of army camp at ITC Dan, no such incident had occurred. However, it said that the current location of army camp, which was close to public dwelling, was putting the lives of people at risk. It asserted that ITC Dan was established for socio-economic prosperity of the region and not battle ground to exchange bullets. KSU said that the incident where a student leader of Pangsha old village was shot dead during the conflict between the Naga nationalist and Assam rifles in early 1990s was still afresh in the minds of the villagers. As regards, KSU has appealed to the Indian Army to set up the camp outside the residential area for public safety. KSU stated that it would be compelled to ask the public to vacate ITC Dan if such incidents occurred in the future. KSU said that creating unwanted situation in its land was a total contempt and disregard to the whole of community. "The beautiful land of Khamniungan is a God gifted land," KSU said, adding that there was no place for "vindictive minds" intending to cause bloodshed. The union also stated that creat-



ing such kind of incident during pandemic was strongly objectionable. "Instead of shelling mortars and bullets in our land; the Naga nationalist must extend helping hand to the needy," it said. KSU said it had no authority to direct the Indian Army and Naga nationalist, but has appealed to all responsible to maintain peace and tranquillity in the region. Further, KSU affirmed to protect the peaceful existence of the general public and student community in particular at any cost. KMH: Khamniungan Menyiu Hoikam (KMH) condemned the firing incident that took place when the rest of the country was celebrating Independence Day. In a press release, KMH president Newkhai and general secretary Sichang said that such incident created fear psychosis and disturbed the peaceful environment in the newly upgraded district. KMG said that it would "never tolerate" such unwarranted and provoking action that disturbed the very peaceful existence and also threatened the security of the people. KMH has, therefore, appealed to all the "nation workers" and security forces to refrain from such "unlawful activities", which led to law and order problem. It also called for honouring the sentiments of the people. Further, assuring to extend its cooperation and support towards those who advocate peace in society, KMH said that peace was prerequisite for all round development and progress.

Oppn Cong demands independent probe on mismanagement of MeECL

Shillong, August 18 : The opposition Congress in Meghalaya on Monday demanded an independent inquiry into the alleged mismanagement of Meghalaya Energy Corporation Limited (MeECL) and also criticised the government on the proposed loan extended to the State-owned MeECL. "Only an independent inquiry would identify the shortcomings as well as people behind the lapses," Congress spokesperson, Zenith M. Sangma said, while pointing out several issues of mismanagement within the power company. He said, chief minister Conrad Sangma and power minister James Sangma has assured in the Assembly that a full time chairman would be appointed in the company, which has not been done till date. "A junior officer has been made CMD of MeECL. Earlier senior officers, not less rank of principal secretary or chief secretary, used to occupy the post of CMD," said the senior Congress legislator. Criticising the MDA government for approving the Meghalaya Power Distribution Cor-

poration Limited (MePDCL) proposal to avail an assistance restricted to Rs 1345.72 crore, Zenith said the MePDCL would be burdened with interest payment of 9.5 per cent "which is very high." "The MePDCL will have to pay interest of more than 10 crore per month from the day it receives the loan. Rather than taking loans for such a huge amount, the government should have tried to increase the efficiency of the MeECL and tried to make it sustainable," Zenith said. Furthermore, the Congress legislator also pointed out on the failure of MeECL to fix some of the machineries at Umiam Hydro Electric Power which has been out of order for the past one year. Due to mismanagement, these machineries have not been fixed and as a result, the State government is losing crores of rupees in revenue, he said. "The entire management is in a mess. The reason may be due to weakness in the leadership or in experience in the leadership in the MeECL," added Zenith.

Shoppers, vehicles flood Dimapur city as markets reopen

DIMAPUR, August 18 : With relaxations on public movement and shops allowed to open from 10 a.m. till 5 p.m. from August 17 to August 31 after months of lockdown, Dimapur witnessed heavy rush Monday as thousands rushed to markets and hundreds of vehicles clogging the main arterial roads. Shops will be open for five days (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday) and remain closed on Wednesday and Sunday as per the decision of the Dimapur District Task Force (DTF) on COVID-19. Despite strict warning being issued by the authorities, in most cases, shoppers were not concerned about maintaining social distancing. Though the odd-even number order on vehicles allowed to ply was in place, there was huge surge in number of vehicles causing traffic snarls at some points during the day. Public transport resumed with auto-rickshaws plying on the road, albeit with a limited number of passengers. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dimapur, Rajesh Soundararajan told Nagaland Post that Monday being first day of total reopening after months of partial lockdown, it was not unexpected that the shopping places were crowded. Keeping in mind that everything could not be in lockdown and as people had to earn their livelihoods, the DC said that the DTF decided on a balanced and re-calibrated opening, even as some restrictions were still there. He said a committee had been formed to enforce all COVID-related precautionary measures. The DC however said New Market, Hazi Park and Hongkong Market areas remained closed as per the directives of the Home department. Further, he said DTF had received a proposal regarding phase-wise reopening of



the shopping areas which has been forwarded to the Home department. However, he said the response from the government was awaited. The DC mentioned that

the order for sealing the inter-State border was also issued by the government. C however asserted that there would be no compromise in precautionary measures

Manipur withdraws gallantry medal of Sub-Inspector

IMPHAL, August 18 : Manipur government has withdrawn the Chief Minister's Gallantry Medal conferred on a police Sub-Inspector, suspended him, and ordered a high-level inquiry after his alleged arrest in a 2013 drug trafficking case was pointed out, officials said Monday. The sub-inspector (Bheishamayum Debson Singh) was among 11-member team of police commando who were arrested along the Imphal-Moreh national highway with Respidated Tablets and pseudoephedrine tablets worth Rs. 3,64,02,000 in 2013. The state police department has also on Sunday constituted a committee headed by IGP (intelligence) K Radhashyam as chairman to enquire into the lapses with the proposal for award of the chief minister's medal for gallantry. A police inspector, E Roshan Singh

posted as reader to the SP Imphal East, who was said to have taken a main role in recommending the award for the sub-inspector, has also been suspended from his service. The controversy in awarding the police officer involved in drug trafficking case came up amid the allegation of N Biren Singh involving in the protection of a drug kingpin who was caught red-handed with heroin powder worth Rs 27 crore and 28 kilograms of amphetamine tablets along with cash and arms in 2018. Meanwhile, opposition Congress in Manipur on Monday demanded resignation of chief minister N Biren Singh who is also in-charge of home department on moral ground. Awarding a police sub-inspector involved in drug trafficking case showed that the incumbent BJP-led coalition government lacked ac-

countability and responsibility, the opposition Congress has alleged. Addressing an online press conference, senior Congress legislator W Meghachandra alleged the selection of a police personnel involved in the drug trafficking case has put a big question mark to the credibility of the government. He also said that taking action against low rank police officials due to lapses in the higher-ups show the lack of accountability on the part of government. "There is no meaning in taking action against low level officers like sub-inspector and inspectors. It will not be able to satisfy the people. This is nothing but fooling the people," the Congress leader said while reacting to the follow up action of the state government after the award was conferred.

DEWS indulges into hunting, thorough investigation leads to arrest of 3 out of 5 hunters

Itanagar, August 18 : In a very saddening state of affairs for the protection and conservation of flora & fauna of D. Ering Wildlife Sanctuary (DEWS), Pasighat, Arunachal a departmental protection squad contingency staff was found indulged in hunting activities inside the sanctuary who led 4 other hunters out of which 3 are already arrested and 2 are still absconding. Following the registration of a case vide Pasighat PS Case No. 131/2020 U/S 447 IPC R/w Sec-27(1) Arms Act, Sec-51(1) Wildlife Protection Act 1972, a departmental staff of Borguli Range one Nirmasing Pertin from Namsing village was arrested on 13th August 2020 and as per his confession and revelation two other hunters namely Nironjon Regon and Yago Perme from Kongkul/Padan village under Mebo Sub-Division here in East Siang District was arrested on 14th August 2020. As per police sources, two others absconding are Oimolsingh Pangging and Kanduram from Namsing village, Arunachal and they are evading the police arrest from last 4 days. As per Dodo Perme and Apuram Sisam, the two staff eye witnesses of the hunting incident the hunting incident reportedly took place on the afternoon of 10th June 2020 at around 3 PM where two gunshots were heard nearby Range Office one after one at the south-east of the Range office camp of the Borguli range. And on being informed to Oson Tayeng, the then Range Officer and Naning Perme, the present Range Officer about the incident on phone, the two staffs were given instructions to search and check the hunters toward the Siang river bank at south-east from where the hunters enters into the sanctuary by using country boat. As per the witness account of Perme and Sisam, the four hunters were seen fleeing with a hunted deer on the boat but the staff duo couldn't confront the armed four hunters. However, both Perme and Sisam informed the Rangers that they could recognize one of the hunters as Nirmasing Pertin by his shirt and physical appearance who was pleading innocence until his arrest. As per the statements



of witness staffs, Nirmasing Pertin was dismissed from the job for his suspected indulgence into the hunting. However, seeing the Range officers being lackadaisical in their handling the case and initial departmental inquiry failed to investigate properly, Nirmasing Pertin challenged the office of DEWS for his dismissal from the job. Pertin was also said of threatening two eyewitnesses of suing them in court by even selling a portion of his agricultural land to defend himself. And to the utter shock for the department both Dodo Perme and Apuram Sisam alleged that the Range Officer was also defending and saving Nirmasing Pertin directly or indirectly and was putting pressure on them to back out from their statement to the Divisional Forest Officer saying Nirmasing Pertin was innocent. It is also noteworthy to quote here that the other prime eyewitness Apuram Sisam was threatened by Divisional Forest Officer, territorial forest Division. In a written statement to DFO Wildlife Tasang Taga, witness Apuram Sisam alleged that, DFO territory, Tashi Mize warned him of dragging in the court and even warned not to spare DFO Wildlife Tasang Taga, Arunachal for removal of Nirmasing Pertin from the job in Arunachal. "Tashi Mize, DFO territory forest division is a brother-in-law of Nirmasing Pertin who engaged Pertin in the Sanctuary

during his tenure as DFO Wildlife a few years ago. I was deeply shocked by the warning and verbal threat of DFO Mize who as a former DFO D. Ering Wildlife Sanctuary shouldn't have defended his second wife's brother as involvement of department staff in hunting activities in the sanctuary demoralizes the morale of other staffs also", said Apuram Sisam sadly. Meanwhile, DFO Wildlife Tasang Taga has lauded both Dodo Perme and Apuram Sisam for their strong stance despite pressure and warning from Range Officer and DFO territory both didn't back out and finally the case was cracked and hunters were arrested including Nirmasing Pertin. Taga informed that the Call Detail Records of Nirmasing Pertin revealed everything who confessed his crime before the police and also before the departmental inquiry team led by Range Officer Sibiya Mukh, Domek Koyu and Dy. Range Officer, Orin Perme. The country boat used in the hunting was also retrieved from a thick jungle near the Padan Korong (river) at Kongkul village on Saturday and as per his confession his other two hunter partners were also arrested but two are still absconding. While talking about the non-cooperation of RFO in the case, Tasang Taga said that he is deeply pained by the irresponsible conduct of the officer who not only warned him of losing the case but also tried to mis-

lead the department by mounting pressures on the eye witnesses. "I am issuing an explanation call to RFO for his intention to defend the offenders. I am also suggesting DFO territory Tashi Mize not to interfere in the case of wildlife and rather he should be protective and supportive to the D. Ering Wildlife Sanctuary as he was DEWS's former DFO as RFO Borguli Wildlife Range, Arunachal. Naning Perme has also confirmed that DFO (T) Tashi Mize had threatened witness of the case Apuram Sisam and myself through Sisam. Such conducts and acts of forest officers are detrimental to the protection and conservation of flora & fauna of the sanctuary", added Taga who have also appealed to people of fringe villages to protect and preserve the wildlife as it is the public asset. Meanwhile, Adi Baane Kebang which have been battling and supporting for conservation and protection of flora & fauna of the sanctuary since the year 2012 has also condemned the act of hunting inside the sanctuary where a departmental staff is found to have indulged in the hunting. "A strong punishment as per law must be given to the hunters, especially to the departmental staff whose joining and connivance with the hunters was giving confidence to the hunters to hunt even in the daylight near the Range Office", said Okom Yosung, ABK Secretary General in Arunachal.

Gadkari lays foundation for 13 highway projects in Mnp

IMPHAL, August 18 : Union minister for road transport, highways and MSMEs, Nitin Gadkari on Monday laid the foundation stones for 13 different highway projects for Manipur through video conferencing. The Union minister also inaugurated a road safety project of the state. The total length of highway projects is around 316 kilometres and the total project cost is around Rs 3000 crore. Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh, who is currently in the national capital, presided over the virtual function from Manipur Bhawan, New Delhi. Union minister of state (independent charge) for DoNER and PMO Dr Jitendra Singh and MoS road transport and highways general (retired) VK Singh also attended the virtual function. Speaking on the occasion, Gadkari announced that the foundation stone for an elevated highway in Imphal city would also be laid soon for which DPR was being prepared. He said that the Centre has taken up various projects keeping with Prime Minister's desire to develop infrastructure in the northeast region of the country. Regarding Central Roads Fund (CRF), Gadkari assured to release additional funds of about Rs 250 crore as soon as the utilization certificates for earlier works are received from the state. He also urged the chief minister to speed up land acquisition and utility shifting works in the state so that road projects could be expedited. The Union minister informed that dredging has been completed in Brahmaputra and Barak rivers, and it was now possible to transport people and consignments through waterways. He also suggested



linking Imphal with this river route. He also called for adopting alternate fuel for public transport in the northeast as it is cheaper and environment friendly. Gadkari highlighted the role of MSME sector in improving the employment and economic scenario in Manipur. Informing about the recent expansion of MSME units, he exhorted the chief minister to consider setting up of special designing centres where quality of local handloom and handicraft products can be improved for export to foreign countries. In his speech, state chief minister N Biren Singh thanked Nitin Gadkari for revamping Imphal-Jiribam and Imphal-Moreh roads. He further said that Makru and Barak bridges, for which foundation stones were laid under the Union minister's guidance, would be completed by the end of this year. Singh also informed that works for upgradation of four-lane highway of Imphal-Moreh road were going on in full swing.

Centre-NSCN (IM) negotiations under rough weather, says Former PM H D Gowda

Kohima, August 18 : Cadres of National Socialist Council of Nagaland -Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM) salute to the Naga national flag during the 39th Naga republic day celebration at the Council Headquarter Hebron, outskirts of Dimapur, Nagaland. Former Prime Minister of India Shri H D Dewe Gowda who oversaw the 1997 ceasefire Naga agreement wrote a letter regarding the current Naga-Centre talks on peace accord. Newspaper reports indicate that the Union government's negotiations with NSCN (IM) to resolve the Naga problem has

run into rough weather. From recent statements made by those involved in the negotiations, it is apparent that distrust has crept in. The Naga ceasefire agreement in 1997, which followed my meeting with Mr. Isak Chishi Swu and Mr. Thuingaleng Muivah in Zurich, in February 1997, was a result of constructive diplomacy. We should ensure that the progress made in the last 23 years by successive governments is not forsaken now. There is the Constitution and also the 2015 framework agreement, which should help us move towards a solution.

State

THE ASSAM RISING

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The mysterious vaccine may turn out not to be dangerous

Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said he had "serious doubts" it would work. It was a transparent and potentially dangerous PR stunt. "It's ridiculous," the head of Russia's Association of Clinical Research Organizations told the magazine Science, "I feel only shame for our country". The mysterious vaccine may turn out not to be dangerous. The technology is similar to several approved vaccines, and Russia has said its release will be limited to healthcare workers and other at-risk populations until further trials are completed. China similarly approved an in-trial vaccine for military use with essentially no fanfare. But it's unlikely to work - most vaccines don't. The point for Russia appears to be to pass off a limited-release in-trial vaccine as completed in order to score a little nationalistic dopamine hit. (The project is even named Sputnik V, suggesting it is a successor to the Soviet rockets that bested the US in the space race.) This seems ridiculous, cartoonish even. Vladimir Putin claimed the treatment was safe because his daughter had taken it, as if his family were a proxy for the public. But before we go crying failed state, and ridicule its scientifically illiterate strongman, we should ask: is it really so different from Donald Trump calling the American Covid response the best in the world? Or the British government's continued insistence it was about to hit testing numbers that took months to materialise? These responses are of a kind: a state fails, and then tells the people it's a success. The WHO last week warned against "vaccine nationalism", noting that unless countries cooperate, an actually successful vaccine could touch off a worldwide frenzy. Similar to the scramble for PPE gear and testing reagents when governments seized exports, and the US reportedly tried to intercept other nation's shipments at global ports, demand for vaccine supplies could result in another pitched battle for limited resources - with the added complication that no one knows which project will succeed, so no one is even sure what they're trying to source yet. And, while some vaccine projects have promised to make the results as cheap and widely available as possible, others are frighteningly marketised. A few weeks ago I spoke with a financial analyst who was positively giddy speculating that the leading US candidate - Moderna's mRNA vaccine - could end up selling for more than \$70 a dose worldwide, a price that would consign the world's poorest countries to the back of the line, or out of the line altogether. The WHO's solution is to ask countries to join its Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) programme, one part of which is dedicated to funding open access research, and buying up stocks of vaccine to ensure equitable distribution. The project recently received \$8bn from a group of EU nations, the Gates Foundation, and the Wellcome Trust. A heartening amount, but likely to be swamped by the waves of cash being thrown around by countries trying to go it alone. In the past month the US has inked or began talks for deals with Pfizer (\$2bn), GlaxoSmithKline (\$2.1bn), Moderna (\$1.5bn), and AstraZeneca (\$1bn) to supply potential vaccines. The UK has signed six such deals, for a combined 340m potential doses, although the pricing isn't yet known for all of them. To call this vaccine nationalism seems unnecessary since every stage of the coronavirus crisis has been marked by resurgent nationalism; and by the states previously most invested in the idea of an interconnected world recoiling from it, thrashing about in anger when the system no longer seemed to serve their interests. Take for instance Trump's sudden discovery that despite its immense wealth, the US doesn't really make drugs (or gowns, or masks, or ventilators) any more. But it is also part of a longer trend. International institutions such as the WHO, which have warned about potential pandemics and created initiatives around vaccine research and distribution and public health preparedness, haven't been taken seriously or funded at a proper level for years. The groundwork needed for a truly cooperative international response to this crisis should have been laid long ago. One of the most terrifying things in the early days of the pandemic was watching the richest and ostensibly most powerful countries in the world fumble their response through a combination of political malpractice and the effects of having let national institutions crumble for years. Meanwhile smaller countries, such as Vietnam and South Korea, have performed admirably. And yet, while we have a tendency to obsessively compare the outcomes, in the early stages it wasn't a zero-sum game. Everyone could have been New Zealand. If a vaccine really does mark the end of the crisis, it will be a particularly perverse tragedy if the very nations that have failed up until now manage to turn it into a zero-sum game in which the country with the most money buys the most vaccine - leaving everyone else shut out.

Modi is now using India's market size as a strategic weapon, like China has done for long

Less than two years ago, Saudi Arabia lent \$6.2 billion (roughly half of it comprising oil on credit) to Pakistan as it teetered on the edge of international default. Now it has recalled the loan and ended the oil credit facility. China has stepped in to help Islamabad with emergency cash, but in the meantime a \$6-billion loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund is on ice. Islamabad's ties with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) too have soured. The provocation is Kashmir, on which both the UAE and Saudi Arabia have ignored Pakistan's wishes because Gulf politics is no longer what it was. There can be little doubt about one reason why: India is the world's third-largest consumer of oil. In a surplus market such consumers are to be humoured, not offended - as Malaysia discovered in January, when India stopped buying its palm oil as a response to its comments on Kashmir. India's market size is a weapon waiting to be used. As is well known, the country happens to the world's second-largest market for mobile phones, the third-largest currently for solar power equipment, the second-largest importer of arms, and the largest consumer base for such companies as Facebook and (until recently) TikTok. This power of the purchaser has rarely been used in the past by New Delhi. That is in part because its middle-class market wasn't quite so big earlier; it is only the other day that India became the world's fifth-largest economy. And in part because it is relatively re-

cently that the world began to move away from rule-based multilateralism, thereby opening up space for tactical bilateral moves. China has long exploited access to its market as a lever to bring other countries to heel. It did so recently against Australia and in the past with the Philippines, Bolivia, and others. It has also systematically discouraged imports from India, making it difficult for India's tech services companies to function in that country. Beijing has had its way with even the bigger powers because Japanese, American, and German companies have been hugely dependent on sales in China, while others like Apple, Nike, and various clothing brands have depended heavily on Chinese suppliers. Now India, pushed on the back foot by Chinese encroachments in Ladakh, is responding in a language Beijing understands. Narendra Modi's new plan for self-reliance in manufacturing in key sectors may or may not work as intended (the risk is of creating a hothouse market all over again, and thereby a high-cost economy). But it is hitting China where it hurts at a time when US pressure and rising costs within China are already gnawing away at its export-oriented manufacturing base. Meanwhile, the oil-exporting countries have been busy conferring their highest national honours on India's prime minister in order to make sure that he is kept happy. Likewise, if the US under deal-maker Donald Trump has

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others like

Four steps to defeating Modi in 2024.

Step one: forget state elections



polls. Separating national and state politics

SHIVAM VIJ

tion, Rahul Gandhi made his resignation from the post of Congress president sound like an act of principled resistance against the party's old guard. He seemed to have a tough time even saying the obligatory words about taking responsibility for the defeat. Perhaps, the real reason Rahul Gandhi stepped down is that he sensed continuing defeat in imminent state elections. Resigning would be a good way of letting the old guard take responsibility for those defeats. The stupendous victory of the BJP with 303 seats made it look like a foregone conclusion that the Narendra Modi and Amit Shah-led party would sweep Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand assembly elections that were to be held in the following months. The Congress was never going to be a factor in the Delhi assembly election. In fact, a state election victory that Rahul Gandhi can jump in to take credit for, and use that to return as party president, is nowhere in sight even now. It was this sort of calculation that took him many years to go from vice-president to president in 2017. As it happened, the Congress as a junior ally of the Hemant Soren-led Jharkhand Mukti Morcha got the treasury benches in Ranchi. Sharad Pawar stitched an unlikely coalition with the Congress and the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, which should have caused Rahul Gandhi much heartburn. The party won more seats in Haryana than anyone had anticipated, making it clear that if they had sacked Rahul Gandhi's chosen leader much earlier, they could even have won the state election. Had Rahul Gandhi not resigned as party president, he could have taken credit for these results and suggested that he can rise from the ashes. These ups and downs of state elections will continue. And they are an annoyance for Prime Minister Narendra Modi too, who has, in his typical undemocratic way, suggested 'one nation, one election'. Narendra Modi has separated his narrative from that of the BJP at the state level. Remember how the BJP campaigns in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in 2018 were not centred around Modi? In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, voters judged Modi in a national sense, and gave very different verdicts in many states just before and after the Lok Sabha

election, these issues aren't going away. In fact, inflation might be added to them. Don't be impatient and expect to be rewarded in the form of state elections. Be an intelligent investor: invest for the long run and have patience. Only three years. Very simple. Make a bullet list of all your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. List all your SWOT analysis points. Even the smallest of them. You may not be able to see all of them, or their scale, which is why you need a survey. Having made this list, create a campaign around each point. If you closely observe Modi's endless campaigns, this is what he does. Each campaign has a specific objective. Hindutva is his strength so he campaigns around it. Nationalism is his strength so he campaigns around it. Falling GDP growth and unemployment are a threat to him, so he pre-emptively the threat with campaigns like 'New India 2022' or 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Before 2014, Modi had a weakness. He wasn't very well known in rural north India. So he did a campaign just to address that. He got farmers from across India to participate in giving an iron instrument, such as sickles or spades, for the Statue of Unity. Be it farmers or Dalits or upper castes, Modi systematically lists his weaknesses and obviates them through campaign or policy (they're the same for him). What are Rahul Gandhi's strengths? The legacy of the Congress party, the rights-based laws of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), his popularity in parts of south India, and having a few state governments. Rahul Gandhi should be devising and cam-

paing around each of these. What are his weaknesses? He is a poor orator, makes too many gaffes, is seen as a serial loser, disappears for days on end and appears inconsistent. He can devise campaigns to obviate each of these. Don't give extempore speeches and instead use recorded video. Take up one issue and march from one end of India to another for it. People call you a loser? Play the underdog. Own the 'Pappu' insult and turn it on its head. The only way to make these happen is to devise long-running campaigns around them. What are the opportunities before Rahul Gandhi? Far too many to count. Modi's unkept promises, the bullet trains in the air, the black money not recovered from abroad, poor economic growth, unemployment, Dalit angst... none of these will become electorally relevant unless the Congress party campaigns to make the most of them. With every passing day, the 'anti-incumbency' against the Modi government keeps rising, but because no opposition party exploits it, Modi is able to prevent an anti-incumbency sentiment from crystallising. If you want to see how an opposition leader should exploit rising multi-term anti-incumbency, just study how Modi-Shah do their anti-incumbency campaigns. What are the threats to Rahul Gandhi? They are Hindutva, fake news, Modi's personality cult, corruption cases against Congress leaders, and so on. Once again, pre-emptive campaigns can be designed. If Rahul Gandhi does a campaign around Truth for a month, for example, his own Satyagraha, he could drill into people's heads that a lot of 'Pappu' stories they hear about him are fake news. Lastly, making a plan is useless unless you stick to it. Opposition leaders are always found postponing their campaigns while Modi's campaigns never stop. Sticking to the campaign plan is so important for Modi that he doesn't let a pandemic come in the way of activating the Ram Mandir construction campaign, a campaign that will no doubt continue consistently until early 2024, each step of which Modi would have planned out on an Excel sheet already. That's a simple four-point guide to defeating Modi in 2024. 1) Forget state elections. 2) Do a SWOT analysis. 3) Make a campaign around each of your SWOT points. 4) Stick to this plan for the next 3 years, no matter what.

We've got to start thinking beyond our own lifespans if we're going to avoid extinction

In a biology lesson about the bacterial growth curve, the parallels with the climate crisis were hard to miss. Stick bacteria in a test tube with food and their population will grow exponentially until, eventually, they run out of resources and kill themselves off. Even a couple of decades ago, the comparison with humanity's predicament felt glaringly obvious; and we have not really strayed since from the inevitable path to extinction. The hope seems to be that a big crisis might be the shock we need to change course. But we are living through the biggest global crisis for decades - and are travelling and consuming less as a result of the pandemic

- yet it already seems unlikely that much will change. It's easy enough to throw around the old adage "never waste a good crisis". But when it comes to existential questions about the future of humanity, it has proved fairly useless. Coronavirus or not, we remain locked into a treadmill that measures progress by growing GDP rather than by wellbeing and environmental sustainability. This is an economic paradigm that has served most of us - particularly the most affluent - pretty well for decades. But the richer we've got, the more the benefits have tailed off. There have been a number of studies showing that, beyond

a certain point, more wealth does not necessarily equal more happiness - true at a societal level as well as an individual one. There is a lot that could account for this flatlining. It was once assumed that increased productivity, driven by technological progress, would result in us having more leisure time: see John Maynard Keynes's prediction in the 1930s that we'd be working just 15 hours a week by now. But instead, luxury beat leisure - in explosion in consumerism has driven us towards ever more consumption. The "happiness" economist Richard Layard has also pointed towards "disorders of development" such as obesity and tech addiction (although it should be noted that within a wealthy society such as ours, obesity is associated with poverty). For a while after the 2008 crash, it looked as if things might change - economists designed global 'happiness' indices. The costs of this consumption have increased. Much of it is subsidised by labour exploitation, both at home and abroad. And then there is the small issue of catastrophic climate change, as we race towards "tipping points" beyond which global heating becomes self-reinforcing and harder to halt without unprecedented levels of coordinated international action. Stack all this up, and the idea of already-rich societies moving towards a "zero growth" economic model - once the preserve of the radical green fringes of politics - starts to look increasingly like a no-brainer. We would have to sacrifice gains in material living standards, but the potential prize would be preserving the planet and achieving a better work-life balance. If we could protect the least affluent from any negative impacts - which would require more redistribution, not to mention paying more for services such as caring and cleaning - what's not to like? The big problem is, of course, no one knows how to get there. The 2008 financial crisis offered a chance to take stock. For a while, it looked like something might happen: economists designed global "happiness" indices and the UN General Assembly declared a "world happiness day". But not only did nothing change: it was used as political cover for darker agendas. Bhutan adopted a measure for Gross National Hap-

piness in an attempt to market itself globally as the "happiness" country, while papering over its record of human rights abuses and ethnic cleansing. In the UK, David Cameron pledged to set up a national wellbeing index as he cut back mental health services, youth services and children's centres. We're back there again: happiness advocates saying we can't afford to waste this opportunity to re-think, even as the government has prioritised pubs over schools - economic recovery over broader measures of wellbeing - in relaxing the lockdown. This is no surprise. Our political and economic systems are utterly indisposed to the radical shifts we need to promote wellbeing over wealth and protect the planet. Short-termism is everywhere, from politicians who face elections every few years to company directors who must account for quarterly results. On the right, there are powerful vested interests who want to maintain business as usual - who go quiet in the wake of a crisis, or even appear to jump on the bandwagon (just look at Davos agendas in recent years), but who do all in their power to obstruct change. The left often makes peace with continuous growth, despite its costs, because a rising tide makes redistribution easier. And it is crazy to think that a shock to GDP caused by a financial crisis or a pandemic could be used as a bridge to a different world because the brunt of the pain is always, always borne by the least affluent and the young. So we need to think far more about the mechanisms and institutions that could get us on to a different path. The Long Time Project is exploring how humans could shift their time horizons so, simply put, we feel more emotionally connected to our future descendants. It points to the fact that we tend to view our future selves, let alone future generations, as strangers. We need to rewire the way we think about the future, and our own ageing and deaths; the projects' founders believe that art and culture can play an important role. And we could learn from those times in history when humans have proved their ability to think beyond their own lifespan: "cathedral thinking" is based on those architects who planned spectacular buildings that would never be finished in their own lifetimes.

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India prepares roadmap

direction that we have to be among the top producers of defence items,” he said. Under the Make I category, government funding of 90 per cent of the total project value is provided to the domestic company to develop the prototype of the item. Both - Make I and Make II - are part of the “Make” category. Lt Gen SK Saini, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, said during the webinar that the army is pursuing “Make” projects in diverse fields of technology including aerial targets, precision ammunition, tank ammunition, auxiliary power units, drone kill systems and mountain radars. He said nine new projects were introduced in 2019 and four more will be unveiled in 2020 in the “Make” category. Out of the 28 projects in progress, 13 of them, valued at Rs 21,264 crore, are suo moto proposals received from the Indian defence industry, he noted. The first RFP (request for proposal) under Make II route has been issued recently on July 13 for Manuverable Expendable Aerial Targets (MEAT), he mentioned. “One more RFP for upgraded assault track way and three project sanction orders (PSOs) valued at Rs 4,919 crore are going to be issued very soon,” Saini added. India is one of the most lucrative markets for global defence giants. The country has figured among the top three global importers of military hardware for the last eight years. The Indian armed forces are projected to spend around USD 130 billion in capital procurement in the next five years. On August 9, Defence Minister Singh said the ministry was now ready for a “big push” to indigenous defence manufacturing in tune with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s call for an “Atmanirbhar Bharat” (Self-Reliant India). The negative list of 101 items includes towed artillery guns, short range surface to air missiles, cruise missiles, offshore patrol vessels, electronic warfare systems, next generation missile vessels, floating dock, anti-submarine rocket launchers and short range maritime reconnaissance aircraft. The list also includes basic trainer aircraft, lightweight rocket launchers, multi-barrel rocket launchers, missile destroyers, sonar systems for ships, rockets, ASTRA-MK I beyond visual range air-to-air missiles, light machine guns and artillery ammunition (155 mm) and ship-borne medium range guns.

New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern

or freight.” Seems clear now that the possibility is being ruled out from that investigation,” Director General of Health Ashley Bloomfield told reporters. New Zealanders celebrated when the country passed 100 days without any community transmission earlier this month. With an election due in mid-October, Ardern is keen to remind voters of her government’s track record on fighting the virus. “Every other single country in the world has experienced resurgence. We went longer than many, our outbreak is certainly not as significant as what we are seeing in Vietnam, in Hong Kong, in South Korea or in Australia,” she told state broadcaster TVNZ.

Indian hackers give befitting reply

while conveying the message of India’s pride. On August 15, when the country was celebrating the 74th anniversary of independence and Prime Minister Narendra Modi was warning Pakistan and China to not engage in anti-India activities, a group of Indian hackers were busy in giving a befitting reply to Pakistan’s agenda on Ram temple and Kashmir. On this Independence Day, a group of Indian hackers succeeding in hacking over 80 websites of Pakistan and hoisted the Indian tricolor on these websites. The Indian hackers went on to hack one website after another while conveying the message of India’s pride. Not only this, the group of hackers which calls itself ‘Indian Cyber Troops’, hacked the Pakistani website and posted a picture of Lord Ram and wrote ‘Ram Lala Hum Aayege, Will build temple in Pakistan and Karachi too.’ The hacking of so many websites in one single day left Pakistanis upset and they took to social media to vent their anger. Talking to Zee News, these hackers said that it is only their tribute to the Indian armed forces and they will not allow anyone to threaten the sovereignty of India. The hackers made it clear that they do not work for anyone and are only interested in teaching a lesson to those who are against India. Earlier, these hackers had also given a befitting reply to Nepal by hacking their websites and advising Kathmandu to act smartly. When on India’s Independence Day, Pakistan was trying to push its false agenda on Kashmir, our hackers showed Pakistan its real place by hacking several of its websites and hoisting India’s national flag on these websites. Notably, it’s being two days that several Pakistani websites were hacked and tricolour is still flying on many of these websites and Pakistani IT experts are finding it tough to remove the Indian flag.

Centre to launch project for

our policies and programmes and implement several schemes which include massive tree plantation, promoting urban forestry through Nagar Van Scheme, Landscape based catchment treatment of 13 major rivers, LiDAR-based survey of degraded forest areas for soil moisture conservation projects and launch of National Transit Portal to facilitate smooth movement of Forest produce.” These efforts are critical to meet our national and international goals under National Forest Policy, Nationally Determined Commitments and restoration of degraded forest land, said Javadekar. Project Dolphin will involve conservation of Dolphins and the aquatic habitat through the use of modern technology especially in enumeration and anti-poaching activities. The project will engage the fishermen and other rivers/ ocean dependent population and will strive for improving the livelihood of the local communities. The conservation of Dolphin will also envisage activities which will also help in the mitigation of pollution in rivers and in the oceans. The Union Minister also stated that the government is working towards the Project Lion, that will involve conservation of the Asiatic Lion and its landscape in a holistic manner. The Project Lion will entail habitat development, engage modern technologies in Lion management and address the issues of disease in Lion and its associated species through advanced world-class research and veterinary care. The project will also address Human-wildlife conflict and will be inclusive involving local communities living in the vicinity of Lion landscape and will also provide livelihood opportunities. At the meeting, Javadekar stressed that states should use CAMPA funds exclusively for afforestation and plantation. “I announce that 80% of afforestation fund shall be utilized only for afforestation/plantation and the rest 20% can be used for capacity building etc. The Centre in August 2019 released Rs. 47,436 crores CAMPA funds for afforestation to various states. Ministry is also going to announce the implementation of School Nursery Scheme shortly, said the Union Environment Minister during the meeting. The Nagar Van Scheme which was announced on this World Environment Day for creation of 200 Nagar Van, on forest land by adopting a collaborative approach, involving various agencies like forest and other departments, NGOs, Corporate Bodies, Industries etc, was also discussed at length during the course of the meeting. Initially, the Ministry will be giving grants for fencing and soil moisture works. The primary objective is to create a forested area in cities with Municipal Corporation, which will act as lungs of the cities. School Nursery scheme which aims at involving school students from the young age in nursery and plantation operations was also elaborated and discussed during the course of the four-hour-long meeting. The objective of the scheme is to inculcate the spirit of forest and environment in the mind of young students. Scheme guidelines will be shared with the States shortly. Another important issue highlighted during the meeting by Javadekar was the study given to ICFRE for river rejuvenation of 13 major rivers which will promote forestry along the river, increase groundwater recharge and reduce erosion. Similarly, LiDAR technology which is an airborne remote sensing method which will assist in the identification of the degraded land for construction of soil and water conservation structures and launch of a nationwide National Transit Portal to promote smooth inter-state movement of forest produce, whose pilot was launched recently was also an agenda item of the meeting. During the meeting, the States gave their status of preparedness for implementation of various programmes initiated by the Ministry and also conveyed their willingness to associate with all other initiatives of Government of India to promote green cover. States showed enthusiasm and expressed cooperation with MoEF&CC in this endeavour.

Flood re-intensifies as 28 villages

also coincided with the worse COVID-19 pandemic in India. Initial flooding started in May 2020 due to heavy rainfall affecting 30,000 and destroying crops across 5 districts. Till July, the floods affected around 2 to 3 million in 27 districts and claiming the lives of more than 60 people. More than half of the area of Kaziranga National Park and Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary are affected by floods forcing animals to move to other places. According to Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), more than 3000 villages are affected, 1.28 lakh hectares of agricultural land submerged and 44 thousand people living in relief camps. Barpeta is the worst hit region with more than 5 lakh cases.

Autonomous Council is not

coming 2021 Assembly election will be a great challenge to ruling BJP in the Matak dominated area. He welcomed the decision of Government to form the Matak Autonomous Council but he also said that this is the not alternative of ST status. In the press meet the chief adviser of Matak Student Union Jugal Barua raised the demand of granting ST status to Matak community before 2021 Assembly election. He also urged the Government to rejuvenate the old monuments of Matak community. In the press meet Tushar Ranjan Chetia, President of Matak Yuva Chatra Parishad and Ratul Gogoi, the executive President of Matak Student Union were also present.

One dies in Jamugurihat

A Correspondent : Biswanath Chari, August 18 : One Sanjay Dahal (27), son of a retired teacher Meghnath Dahal of Panpur, Hakama near here breathed his last in the early hours of August 18 at his residence. He was an employee of Indian Navy and was posted in Bishakhapattanam. He reached home recently and underwent RAT and was tested COVID 19 negative. He had completed his period of home quarantine on August 17 but breathed his last during his sleep. He was taken to North Jamuguri BPHC immediately as and when he was found unconsciously lying on bed, but doctors declared him dead. After COVID 19 test, the body was sent for postmortem to Tezpur. Sanjay had completed seven years of service in Indian Navy. His untimely death was widely mourned.

COVID tally rises to 1729 in Hailakandi district; swab collection under RAT intensified

Hailakandi, August 18: 42 fresh COVID-19 positive cases have been reported from South Assam’s Hailakandi district on Tuesday, taking the total tally to 1,729. Health authorities here disclosed that of the 42 positive cases detected on Tuesday, 41 cases have been detected under the Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) and one under RT-PCR. Altogether 831 cases have been found positive under RAT with over 50 per cent without travel history. 1,265 persons on being cured have been discharged from hospitals. The number of active cases is 453. Four COVID-19 positive patients have breathed their last at Silchar Medical College and Hospital. Seven deaths at SMC&H have been declared as ‘non-COVID’ by the State level Death Audit Board. Six persons are currently under facility quarantine centres while 92 numbers of COVID-19 patients are under home isolation. Of the 16,468 swab samples taken, 14,440 have tested negative. Swab results of 250 persons are awaited. Meanwhile, the district administration intensified swab samples collection under RAT. 40-45 mobile medical teams have fanned out to different parts of the district. The administration has set a target of collecting 2,000 swab samples per day. Deputy Commissioner, Megh Nidhi Dahal has urged people to get their swab tested to prevent further spread of the disease in the community. Dahal has urged the religious leaders, community leaders, political leaders, senior citizens and people’s representatives to join hands with the administration in making Hailakandi a COVID-free district.

NRL launches Paperless Office solution : Total digital transformation of procurement cycle

Guwahati, **August 18:** Numaligarh Refinery Limited, as a part of its roadmap for accelerating digital transformation has added yet another feather to its cap which has consolidated its concerted efforts in this direction. Closely on the heels of Independence Day, the Company today launched its Paperless Office Solution for end to end digitization of its procurement cycle starting from departmental Procurement Requisition, tendering to release of payment to its Business Partners viz. vendors and contractors. The business process was virtually launched by MD NRL Mr. S K Barua in a web meeting attended by Director Technical NRL Mr. BJ Phukan, Director Finance NRL Mr. I Mittra and Heads of Departments. Christened AAROHAN, acronym for ‘ANYTIME ANYWHERE ROBUST OFFICE- SOLUTION FOR HARNESING AUTOMATION’, the application is built on IBM Business Automation Workflow (BAW) software. The advantages of this application is manifold specially at a time when the Company is encouraging Work From Home (WFH) in the wake of COVID-19 and physical handling of files and documents is being phased out gradually. The application would bring about enhanced security and transparency to the total procurement process, ensure seamless movement of the proposals online, ensure accessibility to everyone in the cycle 24x7, thereby making it the single source of information with all approvals and annexures in one single location. Though the application is being implementing for commercial processes to start with, the system will eventually be implemented for all business processes of the organization including HR, benefit management and other internal and external processes which are carried out through SAP.

Railway officials to be issued e-pass as part of the digitization process

Maligaon, August 18 : Chairman Railway Board on last Thursday (13.08.2020) launched the e-pass module for online pass generation and ticket booking by Railway employees in the presence of other senior railway officials via video conferencing. This module on e-pass has been launched under the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) as a comprehensive plan for the digitization of the complete Human Resource (HR) process of Indian Railways. Earlier the process for the issuance of passes to railway officials has been largely manual in Indian Railways. Also, there was no facility for online ticket booking on passes for railway officials. With the introduction of this system, from now railway officials all over the country will be able to apply for a pass online from anywhere and get the E-Pass generated online as they need to travel across distances for official work. It can be mentioned here that railway officials are entitled for pass to travel in different classes while going on duty on sanctioned leave. After introduction of this facility, neither will a Railway official have to come to the office to apply for a pass nor will he/she have to wait for a pass to be issued. The employee will be able to apply for a pass online from anywhere and get the e-Pass generated online. The complete process of application and generation of the pass is mobile friendly. This facility will help railway employee in using their pass hassle-free and simultaneously make working of all officials involve in the issuance of pass smooth. Ticket bookings on these e-passes can be done online, through the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) site. The presently existing facility of counter booking from PRS (Passenger Reservation System) or UTS (Unreserved Ticket System) counter will also continue. HRMS project is a comprehensive plan for digitization of complete HR process of Indian Railway. Total 21 modules have been planned in HRMS. Basic data entry of around 97% railway employees has been completed in Employee master and E-Service record modules of HRMS which had been launched last year.

Illegal band saw mills busted at Borghuli and Samaguri

A correspondent : NAGAON, August 18: Within the last 24 hours, in two separate drives, the forest personnel of Nagaon Salna range office led by ranger Nepal Mandal busted two illegal band saw mills at Borghuli and Samaguri Penai areas respectively and seized the machinery tools and other equipments including generator sets from the spots. Sources claimed that the illegal saw mills were being run by two illegal traders - Saiful and Amir Ali respectively. All the machinery tools and other equipments were brought to the range office for further action after dismantling those illegal band saw mills, the sources added.

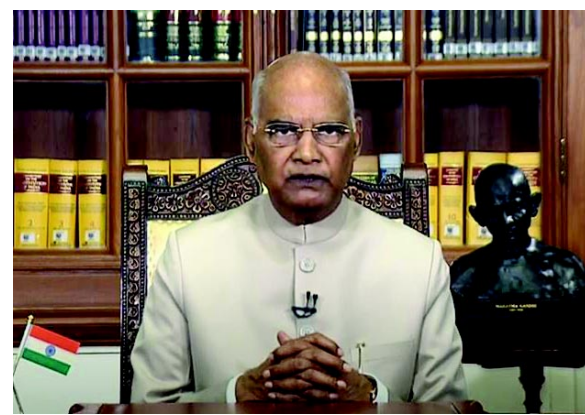
Bollywood actor contributes Rs. 1 crore to CM’s Relief Fund Sonowal thanks Akshay Kumar for his help

Guwahati, August 18: As the state is reeling under flood, Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar donated Rs. 1 crore towards Chief Minister’s Relief Fund for flood relief. Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal acknowledging the generosity of the popular actor, thanked him. He also said that the actor has always been a friend of the people of Assam and his help would go a long way in easing the ordeal of the people facing the flood. It may be noted that last year also the Bollywood actor donated Rs. 2 crores towards flood relief, Rs. 1 crore to CM’s Relief Fund and Rs. 1 crore for the safety of the wild animals of the Kaziranga National Park.

HRD Ministry is now officially Ministry Of Education after President Ram Nath Kovind’s assent

New Delhi, August

18 : President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday (August 17) gave his nod to the change in name of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) as Ministry of Education. It may be recalled that the name change was one among the many recommendations of the draft new National Education Policy (NEP), which was cleared during a meeting of the Union Cabinet in July. On Monday, a gazette notification was published announcing that President Kovind had given his assent to change the name of HRD ministry to Ministry of Education. President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday (August 17) gave his nod to the change in name of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) as Ministry of Education. It may be recalled that the name change was one among the many recommendations of the draft new National Education Policy (NEP), which was cleared during a meeting of the Union Cabinet in July. On Monday, a gazette notification was published announcing that President Kovind had given his assent to change the name of HRD ministry to Ministry of Education. The notification added that the heading Ministry of Human Resources Development stands substituted to Ministry of Education. In 1985, the Ministry of Education was renamed as the HRD ministry when Rajiv Gandhi was prime minister. The NEP was introduced in 1986 and was last amended in 1992. P V Narasimha Rao was appointed the first HRD minister by PM Rajiv Gandhi. A panel constituted by PM Modi-led government had first proposed that the Centre should change the name of HRD Ministry again to Ministry of Education. The panel was tasked with working on the new NEP and was led by former ISRO chairman K Kasturirangan. In 2018, the idea to change the name of HRD Ministry was also proposed by Ram Bahadur Rai, chairman of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and also chairman of the joint organising committee of the Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah admitted to AIIMS for chest infection treatment, condition stable

New Delhi, August 18 : Union Home Minister Amit Shah was admitted All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi on Monday (August 17). Shah was admitted to hospital due to chest infection and his condition is stable. It is learnt that Shah had undergone a CT scan at a private hospital on Monday and the test results showed that he has some infection in his chest. Union Home Minister Amit Shah was admitted All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi on Monday (August 17). Shah was admitted to hospital due to chest infection and his condition is stable. It is learnt that Shah had undergone a CT scan at a private hospital on Monday and the test results showed that he has some infection in his chest. Shah decided to admit himself at AIIMS on the advice of his doctors. Shah is currently under the observation of AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleria, who is a chest specialist. It is expected that Shah would remain under observation for 24 hours at AIIMS. It may be recalled that on August 14 Shah had tested negative for the coronavirus COVID-19, nearly two weeks after he had tested positive for the viral disease. Taking to micro-blogging site Twitter, the Home Minister himself had announced his test results. “Aaj meri corona test report negative aayi hai. Main eeshvar ka dhanyavaad karta hoon aur iss samay jin logon ne mere swaasthyalaabh ke lie shubhkaamanaen dekar mera aur mere parijanon ko dhaadhas badhaaya un sabhee ka hriday se aabhaar vyakt karata hoon. Doctors ki salaah par abhee kuchh aur dinon tak home isolation mein rahaunga. (Today my corona test report has come negative. I thank God and at the moment I express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have blessed me and my family by wishing me well. Will stay in home isolation for a few more days on the advice of doctors).” Shah had tweeted.

Canadian Finance Minister Bill Morneau resigns, says will seek top OECD job

Toronto, August 18 : Morneau said he would not run for parliament again and would instead seek, with the support of Trudeau, to become the next secretary-general of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Trudeau had expressed confidence in his finance minister just last week. Morneau, 57, has been in the job since Trudeau’s Liberals took power in late 2015. Morneau and his team have pushed back against other Cabinet ministers about how much pandemic funding was needed, including to what extent the post-lockdown recovery could be helped by investing in environmental projects. OTTAWA: Canadian Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced his resignation on Monday amid reports of friction with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and after coming under fire for his ties to a charity tapped to run a student grant program. Morneau said he would not run for parliament again and would instead seek, with the support of Trudeau, to become the next secretary-general of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Trudeau had expressed confidence in his finance minister just last week.

Ronnie O'Sullivan's darkness and doubt make his snooker skill so compelling

London, August 18 : Perhaps it was fitting that it should end on a miscue. Maybe this is just the imagination playing trick shots but for a snooker player widely acclaimed as the greatest of all time, Ronnie O'Sullivan does seem to miscue quite a lot? Certainly more than you'd expect from your average preternatural, life-affirming, once-in-a-generation talent. There was one against Mark Williams at the 2016 Masters that cost him the frame. One against Ali Carter at the Crucible in 2018 that cost him the match. In fact, there are compilations on YouTube: the horrible scrape of the cue, the ball skewing through the air, the horrified gasps of shock from the crowd. And so it was again, against Kyren Wilson on Sunday night: a poor one-sided final about to be crowned with a glorious century break, if only O'Sullivan could pot a tricky last black. "Clunk." An audience groan. For O'Sullivan, simply a scowl of grim, placid acceptance. As if this had been coming all along. As if he knew it would end like this. "If I must die, I will encounter darkness as a bride, and hug it in mine arms! Now, to collect my sixth world championship and a cheque for £500,000." Maybe you found this quite a dissonant ending. To me, it was perfect. It was pure Ronnie: beauty tarnished by ugliness, ugliness uplifted by triumph, triumph pursued by fatalism and inevitable talk of retirement. This is why the frequent comparisons with Lionel Messi or Roger Federer, with Picasso or Mozart, have never quite seemed to capture the essence of him. Or why, if he is indeed such an unimpeachable talent, it has taken



him seven years to regain the world title. It's not just about the beauty, or the perfection. It's not just those irresistible passages of play when he makes the game look so easy he may as well have downloaded it. It's also the darkness and the doubt, the wandering thoughts, the duelling contradictions, the quiet madness bubbling beneath the surface, the sheer fragility of what you're seeing. Or, put more simply: you can't truly appreciate an O'Sullivan break without simultaneously confronting the possibility that at any moment, and for no reason at all, he might miss. Often you will find these contradictions rather glibly expressed as O'Sullivan's 'demons', a term that only really serves to underline the inadequacy of sport's mental health vocabulary. As O'Sullivan explains so well in his book *Running*, the relationship between his profession and his state of mind is frequently far less operatic and far more complex. Sometimes it manifests itself in an overactive imagination, other times in a lapse of

concentration. Sometimes it leads him into addiction, other times into ennui, other times - as when he disdainfully tried to smash his way out of a snooker against Mark Selby in the semi-final - into a sort of wilful self-sabotage. "Am I prepared to give blood, sweat and tears?" he said in an interview before the tournament. "No. Would everybody else like to see me give blood, sweat and tears? Probably yes." For us as onlookers, there is a faintly problematic ring to all this. After all, the greatest part of sport is the part you don't understand, and O'Sullivan's thrilling inconsistency and caprice are part of what makes him so compelling to watch. But to what extent is it legitimate to enjoy the spectacle of someone teetering on the precipice? To what extent does O'Sullivan owe us his talent? To what extent is he required to keep practising for hours in dimly lit rooms for our entertainment? There isn't a right or a wrong answer to this, by the way: it's simply an acknowledgement that with certain athletes - Nick Kyrgios and Tyson Fury also spring to mind

- what is in their best interests and what is in ours are not always in perfect alignment. This is a problem for snooker too, which has long been bracing itself for the day when O'Sullivan finally takes his leave. In a way, snooker has been a victim of its own inexorable rise in standards. A sport in which any of the top 16 can now punish the slightest safety error is one that will inevitably tend to reward the steady percentage players: your Selbys, your Wilsons, your Anthony McGills. Even Judd Trump has to become a wiser, less interesting player to reach the game's summit. The truth is that in order to thrive as a flawed maverick in the modern game, you need to be at least as talented as O'Sullivan. And as O'Sullivan so tartly pointed out earlier in the tournament, there are few signs that anyone else currently comes close. In the meantime, we still have Ronnie. And for all the usual wild extrapolations - now for Hendry's record! Sports Personality of the Year! a knighthood! - perhaps the least we owe a man who has provided us with so much pleasure over the years is to accept him on his own terms. He is 44 now, and by all accounts as happy as he's ever been, with a diverse range of interests and a healthier outlook on life. "Everything in moderation" is one of his mottos, from food to exercise to rest to snooker and in that simple phrase lies the secret of his unlikely contentment. Perhaps on reflection, O'Sullivan's greatest triumph was to conquer the ledger of his own happiness. Perhaps the toughest opponent he ever had to crack was himself.

So much heat about so little light in perfectly absurd second Test



finicky the first time they stopped play for bad light. The reading they took then was the benchmark for the rest of the game, which meant they were not able to play for long stretches of Friday and Sunday. They could have waited longer before abandoning play on Sunday, given that the sun came out late in the day. Perhaps the groundstaff were maybe a little backwards mopping up, too, but then, they have had a long few weeks and the listlessness that settles over a game like this becomes infectious. This kind of carry-on is always irritating, but it is especially so this summer, when the ECB, PCB, Cricket West Indies and all the players and support staff have gone to such lengths to get these series on. But it is worth remembering, too, the umpires are part of that staff and must be as tired, and stressed, as everyone else. Besides, add it all up and you come to maybe 30 or so lost overs. The backlash against them has been a little bit over the top because there have been a lot of fed-up people around the ground with nothing else to talk about. Bad light has stopped play at Southampton during England matches against the West Indies and Pakistan this summer. After all, there have been two drawn Test matches in England in the past five years. It feels a little stiff to start nailing people because there has been a third. It may be the reason the game still has an issue with bad light is because it is not so very pressing a problem the administrators have felt absolutely compelled to find a way to fix it. Because they have certainly spent a lot of time talking about it before, in worse circumstances than this. Remember the Ashes Test at the Oval in 2013? It was the last time there was so much heat about so little light. The fourth day of that game was washed out and on the fifth Australia declared to set England 227 to win. They needed 21 from the last 24 balls when the umpires decided it was too dark to play. There was a full house and the game was on the line. It was all a lot more frustrating than the situation we have just seen. In the aftermath of that match, the ECB called for the ICC to change the light regulations. It happened to England again in Dubai three years later, when they were 25 runs short against Pakistan. Dave Richardson explained then the board still had "not really found a solution". The problem was not the administrators. "We have attempted in the past to say to the players, if you have floodlights and they're good enough to use for Test cricket, we should just bite the bullet, and even if conditions are not as good as they might be normally, we should just play on," he said. "However, that approach wasn't accepted by any of the teams. They felt that would be unfair and would lead to unjust finishes." You still sense the players are not willing to make major changes. Joe Root scotched the idea of using a pink ball, like they do in day-night games. He suggested starting earlier the next day, but that would punish the spectators who have paid for tickets. Either way, someone has something to get angry about. Truth is, it is an easier problem to shout about than it is to solve. You may as well be mad at the clouds.+

PSG's Kylian Mbappé fit to start against Leipzig in Champions League semi-final

London, August 18 : Kylian Mbappé is set to start for Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday as they take on RB Leipzig for a place in the Champions League final on Tuesday. Mbappé came off the bench to set up Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting's injury-time winner as PSG dramatically came from behind to beat Atalanta in their quarter-final in Lisbon. The 21-year-old had been limited to the final 30 minutes after struggling with an ankle injury but now looks set for longer involvement. "He [Mbappé] has had no reaction and [has] had six days since to work on fitness, so of course he can start," the PSG coach Thomas Tuchel told the pre-match press conference. "We will decide after training whether he can play 90 minutes." Tuchel also offered praise to Neymar, who was instrumental in PSG's late recovery last Wednesday against Atalanta and set up their last-minute equaliser. "Neymar has always been a leader, even when I arrived," the German said. "He is showing confidence, courage, and that's how a leader needs to act on the pitch." It is the first time PSG have reached the last four in 25 years, and the first time since their Qatari-backed takeover in 2011 saw the French club's expectations and ambition swell. "We are here because we deserve it," Tuchel added. "We played a great season and worked so hard, took every match seriously. We won't talk about the past - only the present. We're hungry for success." Tuchel will take on a Leipzig side managed by Julian Nagelsmann - and the 46-year-old can take some credit for his younger compatriot's coaching success. In 2007, Nagelsmann was an Augsburg player struggling with constant injury problems - so Tuchel, then the Bavarian club's reserve team coach, gave him a scouting assignment.

'One of my best drives' - Lewis Hamilton celebrates Spanish Grand Prix win

London, August 18 : Lewis Hamilton has described his win at the Spanish Grand Prix as one of his best drives and close to perfection. The world champion took a dominant victory in Barcelona and said he felt he had reached a high in his driving technique. Climbing from his car afterwards he also pointed to the Black Lives Matter symbol on his helmet and insisted that he would keep the pressure on to ensure the issue of racism remained in the public eye. Hamilton finished 24 seconds in front of Red Bull's Max Verstappen after a race in which the British driver had led every lap from pole. He had been unchallenged out front. It looked serene and Hamilton believed he had found another level. "We all try for perfection and it is not always easy to

deliver," he said. "When I came across the line I didn't know it was the last lap, I was like a horse with blinkers. I was just going to keep going. For me it was right up there with some of the best drives I have done." Hamilton has extended his lead in the world championship even further and now has four wins from six races this season but, while he has enjoyed more spectacular or hard-fought victories, he nonetheless felt this performance was outstanding. "I felt like I was in the clear zone," he said. "The clarity I had whilst I was driving." It is hard to say what helps you get into that space. I felt fantastic in the car, it was physically challenging but in not making mistakes and delivering lap upon lap I was in the perfect zone.

Joe Root says bad-light rules should be reviewed after 'very frustrating' Test

London, August 18 : Joe Root admitted to frustrations over bad light but defended the umpires following the shortest Test match on English soil for 33 years in terms of balls bowled. Only 134.3 overs were sent down across the five days as rain and problems over the light saw England and Pakistan draw the second Test here, a result that sees the home side go into Friday's series finale on the same ground 1-0 up. Not since the two countries met at Lord's in 1987, when 112.5 overs were bowled, has a Test in England been so badly affected, with the International Cricket Council now set to discuss the matter at the next meeting of its cricket committee. Among the topics up for debate are the use of a



pink ball and encouraging more play under floodlights. The England and Wales Cricket Board is considering bringing in 10.30am starts to make up lost time and may

even start this week with the third Test. Root, whose side reached 110 for four declared in reply to Pakistan's 236 all out, said: "I do think it's hard to blame the umpires [Richard Kettleborough and Michael Gough]. I think there is something bigger that needs looking at, higher up the chain." "I don't think I have ever seen a game be affected by bad light as much as this, which is very frustrating. But also the weather as well, it's been very wet throughout the week. It is frustrating and it's obviously been a huge talking point. I do think it needs to be addressed somewhere, somehow." As well as greater use of the pink ball - either switching to it mid-game or electing to use one before a match that has a poor forecast - the ICC will discuss whether umpires should allow more play under floodlights and the need for increased transparency over the use of light meters and how such decisions are made. Sky, which pays around £20m per Test, became increasingly angered by the lack of cricket here. It centred on the umpires taking the players off for bad light on day two - a call that looked cautious given Pakistan's T20 players continued their training match, without floodlights, on the adjacent ground - and day four being abandoned at 3.45pm before an evening that saw the ground bathed in sunshine. The latter may well have denied the TV viewers an estimated 90 minutes of live action and questions are being asked as to why this decision was made so early despite the players and broadcast crews all staying on site in the biosecure bubble this summer and therefore able to remain in situ for longer. Root said: "It frustrated a lot of people seeing the sun out later on. Of course as players we don't want to be sat watching it rain or on the sidelines. "We want to play. We want to be involved in exciting Test cricket and try to make an impact on the world stage. We are all for playing, as long as it's safe. [But] we don't want anyone getting injured or hurt because of light or wet ground or surfaces." The lack of spectators in the ground this summer and a dedicated Sky cricket channel that does not have other programming to consider has given rise to the talk of bringing start times forward when time lost to rain or bad light needs to be made up rather than simply adding extra overs to the end of a day. This already happens in other parts of the world, where the evenings are shorter, and the ECB is understood to be discussing whether to bring this in ahead of Friday's third Test, despite a more promising weather forecast.

MS Dhoni changed the game forever and captured the hearts of all India fans

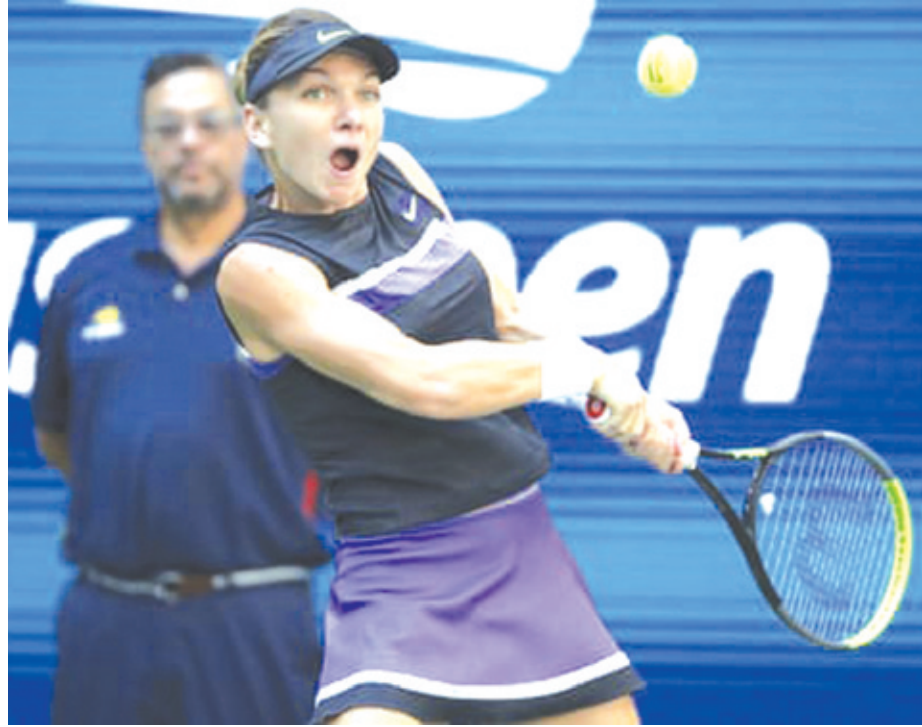
New Delhi, August 18 : The summer of 2005 will for ever be regarded as the most vivid in the memory of those who celebrated or suffered England's victory in the Ashes to emerge from a sea of disappointment that at one point seemed to have no horizon. But England ending 18 years of subjugation by Australia was not the only entry of note in the following Wisden Almanack. At Visakhapatnam on India's sprawling eastern coast that April, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the son of a railway ticket collector from the north, hit the first of his 359 career sixes for India to build the foundations of a maiden one day century of such scintillating brilliance the Pakistan bowlers were reduced to hands-on-hips awe. For the next 15 years, he would repeat his elegant, murderous hitting nearly everywhere he went, with lapses to remind us of his mortality, followed just as quickly by revivals, as if he were riding a wave beyond his control. And, when he was elevated to the captaincy of the one-day team then the Test side, expectations grew like a storm. Yet Dhoni seemed not to buckle, as others sometimes did. Captaining India at cricket surely has the sharpest double-edged dividend in sport. It is a rarefied place that 33 players have been to since they joined the five Test-playing nations in 1932, and the leadership of such a volatile and passionate nation has broken some, elevated others. The price they have all paid is privacy and comfort. Sachin Tendulkar, famously, could go driving in his fancy car only in the middle of the night. None has done the job more often or more successfully than Dhoni, the 31st so honoured, in Tests or the shorter forms: 60 Tests, 27 wins, 18 defeats and 15 draws; a mountainous 200 in one-day internationals, with 110 wins, 74 losses, five ties and 11 no-results for a winning return of 58% in completed games; and, in Twenty20 matches he captained India to 41 wins out of 72. Those are just numbers, as is his Test average of 38.09, considered by some as paltry when compared with his contemporaries'. Dhoni, who played the last of his 90 Tests in 2014 (the same year Chris Gayle left Test matches behind), cared little for such details, and a lot for the end result, as well as the manner of its delivery. His metier was over 50 and 20 overs, and, when on song, he created the sweetest symphonies. It is telling that he averaged 50.57 in 350 ODIs, and 37.60 in 98 Twenty20 games at the highest level. Dhoni epitomised the modern batsman and the modern game. It has been an enthralling journey. As Dhoni plundered with the bat, and whipped



bails away with the quickest gloves in the game since Bob Taylor, a billion Indians loved him for his often exasperating genius. When he confirmed on Saturday that he was retiring from international cricket, it was as if the Ganges had burst its banks in a flood of uncontrolled emotion - even though, at 39, he looked to have timed his departure as perfectly as the six he hit to win the World Cup in 2011. Indeed, he might have crafted his exit with telling symmetry, say his devoted followers. One even claimed he announced his retirement at 7.29pm his time on Instagram because it matched the same tick of the clock as the moment when the World Cup semi final lost to New Zealand ended last summer. Not quite - but close enough to buttress the legend. Nevertheless, Dhoni always gave the impression of mastering his own rhythm, regardless of what was going on around him. Sometimes, it cost India victory; mostly it did not. He was as dead as a finisher as the Australian Michael Bevan according to Shane Warne, during the rain break in the second England-Pakistan Test at Southampton on Saturday. As Nasser Hussain pointed out in that conversation: "This will be a massive, massive story in India. The only story in India." Indeed it was. And is. Soumya Bhattacharya, author and cricket writer, described eloquently why this would be so in his delightful 2006 love poem to the game, *You Must Like Cricket?* *Memoirs Of An Indian Cricket Fan*. "You need to see us to really know the answer to that," he writes in response to his book's own question, "see us out on the streets in the afternoon heat, radiant faces shining through all the colours on this Sunday afternoon." The afternoon of which Bhattacharya spoke was the completion of India's first ever Test win at Eden Gardens over Pakistan, earlier in that summer of 2005, a victory that preceded Dhoni's explosive arrival. In his first appearance the previous year,

he was run out for a first-ball duck against Bangladesh in Chittagong. But his recall was inevitable. His career is not entirely over. Dhoni will resume playing next month for Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League, and is likely to build more hundreds there for a while yet. He undoubtedly is worth his place at the top table of one-day players in the modern era, and there has been much social media chat about who should make an all-time XI, Dhoni or Adam Gilchrist. Both were so good with bat and gloves it would be odd to exclude either of them, even if it unbalanced a batting lineup. Who would really care? They led the way for wicketkeeper-batsmen, setting impossibly high standards, and lifting cricket into a realm of one-day (or one-night) entertainment that seemed inconceivable in a previous generation. Now it is the centrepiece of cricket in most countries. Those who know him best are in no doubt about Dhoni's worth. "Winning the 2011 World Cup together has been the best moment of my life," Tendulkar told him. Hussain got it right too: "Probably the best white ball captain there has ever been. A great finisher. It wasn't over until you got Dhoni out. A phenomenally calm, cool customer."

Simona Halep becomes latest top-10 player to pull out of US Open



London, August 18 : When Simona Halep confirmed on Monday she was joining five other top-10 US Open refusniks, all of them from outside the United States, the tournament organisers could do no more than sigh, reshuffle the women's draw yet again and hope this was the end

of it. It probably is, given most of the serious contenders have arrived in New York to play in the rescheduled Cincinnati Open, the on-site warm-up event that starts on Thursday. However, in the unlikely event Serena Williams, Naomi Osaka or Coco Gauff were to pull out, the US Open would

be in serious personality deficit. They are the big names left in the women's draw of a tournament whose nervous organisers – naturally concerned about taking a \$120m hit through potential lost global television revenue – agonised before deciding to go ahead without fans in the

cavernous stadiums of the Billie Jean King Center. The attention was always going to be on Williams, who needs one more title to equal Margaret Court's record of 24 majors, but who last won there in 2014 and turns 39 next month. The uncertainty around her grew in Lexington, Kentucky, last week when Shelby Rogers won 1-6, 6-4, 7-6 (5) in the semi-finals of the inaugural Top Seed Open to become the first player outside the top 100 to beat her in the past eight years. The scale of the damage in Queens, meanwhile, is already significant. With two weeks to go before what is bound to be a strange opening day, they have already lost the defending champion, Bianca Andreescu, and the world No 1, Ashleigh Barty, along with Elina Svitolina, Kiki Bertens, Belinda Bencic and now Halep, as well as a slew of lesser players. Johanna Konta is one beneficiary of the chaos, moving up to eighth

seed on the latest list. Halep, a semi-finalist five years ago, probably would have started favourite in a shredded field, as she is in excellent form. Yet she pulled out 24 hours after beating Elise Mertens, 6-2, 7-5, in convincing style to win the Prague Open. The Russian Irina Khromacheva replaces her. Halep revealed before Sunday's final she has trained only on clay during the sport's five-month shutdown and will now continue her preparations for the Rome and French Opens next month. It never looked likely she would risk a trip to New York, given her concerns about the continued and random spread of Covid-19 across the United States and it seems she was unconvinced that even the rigid safety precautions of the United States Tennis Association would be sufficient. After weighing up all the factors involved and with the exceptional circumstances in which

we are living, I have decided that I will not travel to New York to play the US Open," Halep said on Twitter. "I always said I would put my health at the heart of my decision and I therefore prefer to stay and train in Europe. I know the USTA and the WTA have worked tirelessly to put on a safe event and I wish everyone there a successful tournament." On the men's side, Kei Nishikori, a US Open finalist six years ago, withdrew on Sunday from the Cincinnati Open after testing positive for coronavirus and is almost certain to rule himself out of the grand slam. Then, when calm seemed to have returned, it was announced Taipei's Hsieh Su-wei and the Australian Priscilla Hon had pulled out. This is a slowly leaking ship, if ever there was. When the USTA shortly afterwards cancelled all national junior events until 12 October and adult category 1 tournaments until the end of the year, it did nothing to lighten the mood.

Women's Champions League last eight team guides – No 2 : Atlético Madrid

London, August 18 : Atlético Madrid qualified for their first-ever WCL quarter-finals in October, but it is probably fair to describe that as the only bright spot in their most inconsistent season since 2016. The team may have finished second in Primera Iberdrola but they were nine points behind

other ways of working with him," the goalkeeper Pauline Peyraud-Magnin told L'Équipe last month. "We're really working on the Spanish game: the passing, the possession. There's also a lot of physical work." The team have changed a lot in the past few months. In May, the Spain



Barcelona and failed to reach the Copa de la Reina quarter-finals for the first time since 2012. Having had three different coaches during the 2019-20 season, Atlético have been unstable and unreliable. First, the coach Sánchez Vera surprisingly left in October. Pablo López was appointed as his successor and although he managed to take them into the last eight of the women's Champions League for the first time, his contract was terminated in January following a spell in which Atlético drew four out of seven games. So now they are preparing for the WCL quarter-final with a coach, Dani González, who has been in charge for only seven games. He has a lot of new players at his disposal, so their playing style and formation under him is still a bit of a mystery. Sánchez Vera was happy for his team to sit back and soak up pressure while Pablo López's team focused more on possession, which is something Dani González favours too. "I'm discovering

international Virginia Torrecilla discovered she had a brain tumour and began treatment. Nine players, including several previous starters, also left during the summer. There are also concerns over whether they will even be able to play their quarter-final against Barcelona on Friday after five players tested positive for Covid-19 last week and they had to cancel all training sessions. Uefa has said Atlético will need a minimum of 13 players, including one goalkeeper, to play. This Atlético looks very different from the one that finished nine points away from Barcelona in March. Some high-profile players have left, including the goalkeepers Lola Gallardo and Sari van Veenendaal as well as Kenti Robles and Elena Linari, but the club have acted to sign good replacements. Hedvig Lindahl and Pauline Peyraud-Magnin are an extremely strong goalkeeper duo while Meryl van Dongen and Alia Guagni will both add depth to the defence.

Venus Williams gives hope of more good days in tennis still to come

London, August 18 : At the turn of the millennium, as the 2000 season arrived, Venus Williams was nowhere to be seen. She was the third-best player in the world and just 19, but for three months she had withdrawn from all tournaments, citing a wrist injury. By March, a curious rumour began to spread: people wondered if she was on the verge of retirement. The rumours soon reached her family, which they responded to by simply tossing a gallon of petrol all over the

flames: "I would like to see her retire now. I would love to see her do that," said her father and coach, Richard Williams. He argued that tennis careers are short and a greater future awaited her as an entrepreneur. Serena, her sister, was coy: "Rumour has it she's retiring," she said, smiling. "I have the inside information. Unfortunately, I'm not able to release that." It seems absurd now given Williams's enduring career, but this talking point was a reflection of the times. It was partly because, a few months earlier, a

hooded Williams watched bitterly as her younger sister leapfrogged her to win the US Open, a failure that seemed to hang over her until she disappeared in 2000. More significantly, both sisters were often criticised for having too many outside interests, not competing in enough events and withdrawing from tournaments at a whim. While their ability was never in question, so much discussion centred around whether they were truly committed like their peers. Instead of retiring, Williams returned from her

six-month lay-off transformed. She shed the beads from her hair and she strutted around the court on a mission. Four tournaments into her comeback, one of the great summers in tennis began as she won Wimbledon, the US Open and two Olympic gold medals and compiled a 35-match winning streak. It was a tone-setter for the rest of their careers – the first of many comebacks to follow. This year, before coronavirus tore the calendar apart, Williams was struggling. She had not won a match since September.



Champions League team guides – No 3: Barcelona

London, August 18 : When the Spanish league was interrupted by the coronavirus crisis in mid-March, Barcelona were having their best ever season. The team had won 19 out of 21 matches, as well as the Supercopa and had qualified for the Copa de la Reina semi-finals and WCL quarter-finals. Once the season was officially cancelled, Barcelona were awarded the league title, their first since 2015. So what made Barcelona



finally click this year? Well, the coach Lluís Cortés has managed to unify the team, creating a

cohesion that had been missing in previous years. This version of Barcelona still likes to control the

game and to keep possession, but its dominance comes from the group's togetherness and hard work. Under Cortés, the team has kept their signature 4-3-3 formation but has added an extra layer of freedom to allow players to express themselves. This summer, the club has focused on maintaining the current group of players that had achieved such great results during the season. "The team is in very good

shape, physically, technically and tactically. It's an advantage that we've kept the core of the team and we are very prepared to work hard and give it our all during the pre-season so that in a month we'll be in the best possible condition," Cortés said before pre-season started last month. Barcelona's main concern right now is whether Marta Torrejón, the team's first choice at right-back, and Ana Maria Crnogorčević,

her natural substitute, will have recovered from the injuries they sustained during pre-season come Friday's all-Spanish showdown with Atlético Madrid. If not, Barcelona B player Jana Fernández, 18, will be asked to step in to what would be her European debut. There has not been a huge upheaval at Barcelona this summer, which perhaps is not that surprising considering their successful 2019-20 season.

What is your view?

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