

# The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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We remember more by reading-  
especially print - than from...

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England's Heather Knight narrowly misses  
century before India fight back

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Brown sugar seized

**Guwahati, June 17:** The police on Thursday recovered 22 small plastic containers suspected to be brown sugar from Rowa Part II village in Assam's Dhubri district. The drug peddler has been identified as Sahad Ali. However, Ali managed to flee from his residence before the police raided his residence. "A team of police conducted a raid at the premises of one drug peddler at Rowa part II village," said the officer-in-charge of the Dhubri Police Station, Mukul Hazarika. "We covered 22 small plastic containers suspected to be brown sugar his residence," said Hazarika. "The alleged drug peddler, however managed to escape from his residence before reaching the police and a manhunt to arrest him is on," said police.

### 127 Bags of Areca Nuts

**Guwahati, June 17:** The Serchhip Battalion of 23 Sector Assam Rifles has recovered 127 bags of areca nuts from the Pangkhua Forest Gate Guard at Mizoram's Lawngtlai district. A joint team of Assam Rifles and Sangau police conducted an operation at the Pangkhua Forest Gate area on June 16 based on specific inputs. No person has been arrested. The areca nuts are recovered by the Assam Rifles costs around Rs 32, 30,880 in the market. The Sangau seized the contraband items. Over the past few months the Assam Rifles have been conducting similar operations in collaboration with Mizoram police as well as other departments concerned to root out cross-border smuggling activities. Different contraband items, including areca nuts are shipped across the Indo-Myanmar international border in Mizoram by smugglers.

### Microsoft Chairman

**Mumbai, June 17:** Microsoft has named Indian-born CEO Satya Nadella as the company's chairman. With this new role he will lead the work to set the agenda for the board. As per reports, Microsoft Corp on Wednesday announced that the board's independent directors unanimously elected Nadella to the role of board chair, and unanimously elected John W Thompson as the lead independent director, a role he held previously from 2012 to 2014. Microsoft in a statement said, as the new chairman, Indian born Nadella will lead the work to set the agenda for the board, leveraging his deep understanding of the business to elevate the right strategic opportunities and identify key risks and mitigation approaches for the board's review.

## Court orders immediate release of Devangana Kalita and two others



**Guwahati, June 17:** Delhi court on Thursday ordered the immediate release of three activists-Devangana Kalita, Natasha Narwal and Asif Iqbal Tanha-who were granted bail by Delhi High Court on June 15. JNU researchers Devangana and Natasha and Jamia Milia Islamia student Asif were arrested under stringent UAPA for their alleged in-

volvement in the Delhi riot case. Additional sessions judge at Karkardooma Courts Revinder Bedi said the order has been passed for releasing the three accused and an intimation has been sent to the Tihar jail authorities in the matter. The court declined to entertain *Contd...Page 6*

## Serum Institute India set for Novavax COVID vaccine trials on children from July: Report

**New Delhi, June 17:** The Pune-based vaccine makers, Serum Institute of India hopes to start the clinical trials of Novavax's Covid-19 vaccine 'Covovax' on children in July making it the fourth anti-COVID-19 vaccine in trial phase in the country. The SII is also planning to introduce 'Covovax', the Indian version of US firm Novavax's vaccine in India by September, sources told. Earlier on Wednesday, SII CEO Adar Poonawalla has said that they are planning to start clinical trials of Covovax for children from July and that they will be ready to launch it in India by September. However, the required regulatory nod from the Centre is awaited. Meanwhile, Novavax, in a statement, had said stated that the vaccine candidate 'NVX-CoV2373' showed strong efficacy against the coronavirus in a large

trial. The shot was found to be 90% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 and 100% effective at preventing moderate and severe symptoms, the US-based biotech firm had said in a statement. The Serum Institute of India has an agreement with Novavax Inc, a US-based company, to manufacture vaccine which in India is called 'Covovax'. SII is already supplying AstraZeneca/Oxford Covid-19 vaccine, Covishield, in India and to other countries across the world.



## 64 soap cases containing 723 grams heroin recovered

**Diphu, June 17:** 64 soap cases containing 723 grams heroin was recovered at Barpathar by police. Barpathar PS case no :-30/21 u/s 21 (c) NDPS act has also registered. Police inter-

rogated the arrested accused rigorously. During interrogation it revealed that a lady who is known as "Didi" in Dimapur was the main dealer who supplied the above drugs. However from the ar-

rested accused we could not get the pH no of main dealer as pH no was not shared by the dealer. Then we engaged sources to go Dimapur and find out who is Didi. After few days we able to collect the pH no of Didi and analyse it. Her name is Th Paone (50), w/o-Lt Seloune, vill-Chinai Kula, Dist-Senapati, Manipur and she used to deliver huge quantity of drugs to Nagaon, Marigaon, and Guwahati. However due to frequent raids her customers reduced and she was trying to get new customers. We took this opportunity and put our source as customer. A deal was fixed to deliver a good quantity of heroin. It was very difficult to convince her. Finally she agreed and today on 17th June at about 9 AM while she was coming to deliver heroin we apprehended her at Janakpukhuri under *Contd...Page 6*



## China's crewed spacecraft Shenzhou-12 docks with under-construction space stn

**Beijing, June 17:** China's Shenzhou-12 manned spacecraft has successfully docked with an under-construction space station in the earth's lower orbit with three Chinese astronauts, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) said Thursday. It marked

the latest milestone in China's ambitious space programme, which expects to build a habitable space station by 2022. Launched Thursday morning, Shenzhou-12 docked with Tianhe, the space station's core module at 3.54pm, completing *Contd...Page 6*



## Main accused in Kokrajhar double rape and murder case tries to escape, shot by police



**Guwahati, June 17:** Forizul Rahman, one of the accused in the sensational double rape and murder case has been shot by the police as he tried to escape. The accused has sustained grievous injuries and is admitted at the Fakruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College and Hospital (FAAMCH) in Barpeta, Assam. The incident took place during search *Contd...Page 6*

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicates 12 roads con- structed by BRO to the nation

**A strong NE is integral to India's security and progress: Rajnath Singh Assam CM thanks Defence Minister and BRO for infrastructure boost up in interior areas of NE**

**Guwahati, June 17:** In a significant move to boost connectivity in the remote areas of the North East, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today dedicated 20 km long Kimin-Potin road to the nation in a programme held at Kimin at Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border. On the occasion, he also virtually inaugurated nine other roads built in Arunachal Pradesh and one road each in the union territories of Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir. These roads were constructed *Contd...Page 6*



## Northeast Frontier Railways to operate 4 special trains

**Guwahati, June 17:** The Northeast Frontier Railways will operate four more special trains from June and July this year to cater to the demand for passengers. The Dibrugarh -

Chandigarh weekly express special will run from July 7. The train will leave Dibrugarh at 8:05 am every Monday to reach Chandigarh at 1:20 pm on Wednesday. In return direction, the

Chandigarh - Dibrugarh weekly express special will run from July. The train will leave Chandigarh at 11:20 pm every Wednesday to reach Dibrugarh at 7:55 am on Saturday. Also read: Northeast Frontier Railways to resume services of 4 special trains from Guwahati. The Silghat Town - Tambaram weekly express special will start services from June 25. The train will leave Silghat Town at 10:05 am every Friday to reach Tambaram at 9:25 pm on Sunday. The Tambaram - Silghat Town weekly express special will start services from June 28. The train will leave Tambaram at 6:55 pm every *Contd...Page 6*



## Assam Health Minister launches 'Beyond COVID - New Normal for Urban Population'

**Guwahati, June 17:** Assam Health Minister Keshab Mahanta on Thursday launched 'Beyond COVID - New Normal for Urban Population'. 'Beyond COVID - New Normal for Urban Population', is a multimedia interactive document, especially meant for urban populated areas. This 30-page

document accounts for two behaviour sets in the context of COVID affected urban environment - the bad behaviour, which we termed as 'Covidiot' and compared it to the good behaviour, which we termed as 'Covidideal'. The document *Contd...Page 6*



## Zionnghaka, head of world's biggest family, laid to rest

**Guwahati, June 17:** Four days after he was declared dead by doctors, Zionnghaka (77), well known as Ziona, the patriarch of what is believed to be the world's largest family consisting of nearly 200 members, has been finally laid to rest at his village in Serchhip district, Mizoram on Thursday, a local leader said. The mortal remains of the leader were buried in a grave specially arranged for him at the community's sacred place near his



mansion, Chhuanthar Tlangnuam village council president Ramzauba said. The funeral of the Chhuanthar community chief was held at his residence "Chhuanthar Run" in Bawktawng's Chhuanthar Tlangnuam under strict Covid-19 protocols, he said. Members of the Chhuanthar Military Band party have performed during the funeral to give a pious tribute and farewell to the leader, he said. Enthangpuia, the priest of *Contd...Page 6*



## Online sex crimes crisis in South Korea affecting all women, report finds



**Seoul, June 17** : South Korea's epidemic of online sexual abuse has left survivors traumatised for life, and is adversely affecting all women and girls in the country, according to a new report. Molka - the use of hidden cameras to film or share explicit images of women without their consent - is forcing victims to contemplate suicide or to consider quitting their jobs or leaving the country, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in the report, My Life is Not Your Porn: Digital Sex Crimes in South Korea. The trauma is worsened by encounters with unsympathetic police and courts, the US-based organisation said, and called on the government to introduce harsher penalties and educate men and boys about the dangers of consuming abusive images online. "Digital sex crimes have become so common, and so feared, in South Korea that they are affecting the quality of life of all women and girls," Heather Barr, HRW's interim director of women's rights, said on Wednesday. Barr, who authored the report, added: "Women and girls told us they avoided using public toilets and felt anxious about hidden cameras in public and even in their homes. An alarming number of survivors of digital sex crimes said they had considered suicide." Officials in the legal justice system - most of whom are men - often seem to simply not understand, or not accept, that these are very serious crimes. "The report, based on 38 interviews and an online survey involving hundreds of women, said sex crime prosecutions involving illegal filming rose 11-fold between 2008 and 2017, according to data from the Korean Institute of Criminology. In 2008, fewer than 4% of prosecutions involved molka, but that had risen to 20% - almost 7,000 cases - by 2017. "Digital sex crimes are an urgent crisis for South Korean women and girl," said Lina Yoon, a senior researcher in HRW's Asia division. The crime is having a "devastating impact" on women, Yoon added. "Police take the issue lightly because there is no physical contact involved. They don't realise how terrifying it can be." The sharing of covert photos and video online means the crime "never ends for the survivors," she said. "It stays with them throughout their lives." Oh Soo-jin\* was a 20-year-old student when she agreed to pose nude for a part-time modelling job. Despite reassurances in her contract that the photographs would remain private, more than 700 images of her appeared on a website after she quit because her boss had demanded more sexually explicit images. More photographs of Oh appeared - even after she sought help from the police - leading her to contemplate suicide. "I'm quite afraid for my future," she said. "[The images] are going

## Bridge made of string: Peruvians weave 500-year-old Incan crossing back into place

**Lima, June 17** : Peruvians from the Huinchiri community in Cusco region are rebuilding a 500-year-old Incan hanging bridge, made using traditional weaving techniques to string a crossing together spanning the Apurimac river far below. The Q'eswachaka bridge has been used for over 500 years to connect communities divided by the river. But during the Covid pandemic it fell into disrepair and collapsed in March. Members of the affected communities, such as the Huinchiri, decided to rebuild the 30-meter (98.43 ft) long bridge in the traditional Incan style: by weaving it. Members of the Huinchiri community rebuild the Q'eswachaka bridge in Canas province, Peru. The bridge spans the Apurimac river. Teams of workers, starting from both sides of the ravine and balancing on giant main ropes that had been stretched over the river, worked towards the centre, putting in place smaller ropes as barriers between the handrail ropes and the walkway's floor. "Last year because of the pandemic, it wasn't strengthened ... That is why at the beginning of this year the bridge fell," said Cusco Regional Governor Jean Paul Benavente. "But now it is like an answer to the pandemic itself. From the depths of the Peruvian Andean identity, this bridge is strung up across the Apurimac basin and we can tell the world that we are coming out if this little by little." Members of the Huinchiri community use traditional weaving techniques to rebuild the hanging bridge in Canas, Peru, 13 June 2021. In 2013, Unesco recognised the skills and traditions associated to the reconstruction of the Q'eswachaka bridge as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Members of the Huinchiri community rebuild the Q'eswachaka bridge using traditional weaving techniques in Canas province. "This is history. More than 500 years of a paradox in time. The Q'eswachaka, this Incan living bridge, is really an expression and cultural manifestation," added Benavente.



Shillong- Iewduh has erected bamboo fence on Thursday

to always be on someone's computer, and I don't know when this will stop. I thought that if this can't stop, then I want to stop my life." Barr said most women who reported digital sex crimes had "terrible experiences" with the police, with some saying they had been mocked or told they would never find a marriage partner. While upskirting and other non-consensual sexual imagery is now a global problem, it has taken hold quickly in South Korea, where perpetrators take advantage of the near-ubiquitous use of mobile devices and the world's fastest internet speeds. The president, Moon Jae-in, called for police to investigate the growing number of digital sex crimes after mass demonstrations in Seoul gained global attention in 2018. In 2020, however, perpetrators receive a fine or a suspended sentence, or both, in 79% of cases. "It is not at all proportionate to the harm that has been done," Barr said. A year earlier, prosecutors dropped 43.5% of digital sex crime cases compared to 27.7% of homicide cases and 19% of robbery cases, although the sex crime cases that were prosecuted usually ended in a conviction, the report said. HRW said the government needed to introduce tougher penalties for offenders, increase the number of female police officers, prosecutors, and judges, and address South Korea's poor record on gender inequality.

## Israel carries out Gaza Strip airstrike after militants release incendiary balloons

**Jerusalem, June 17** : Israel has launched airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, the first since a truce ended 11 days of conflict last month, in response to incendiary balloons launched from the Palestinian territory. The flare-up in violence, a first test for Israel's new government sworn in three days ago, followed a march in East Jerusalem on Tuesday by Jewish nationalists that had drawn threats of action by Hamas, the ruling militant group in Gaza. The Israeli military said its



aircraft attacked Hamas armed compounds in Gaza City and the southern town of Khan Younis in the early hours of Wednesday, and was "ready for all scenarios, including renewed fighting in the face of continued terrorist acts emanating from Gaza". The strikes, the military said, came in response to the launching of the balloons, which the Israeli fire brigade reported caused 20 blazes in open fields in communities near the Gaza border. A Hamas spokesman, confirming the Israeli attacks, said Palestinians would continue to pursue their "brave resistance and defend their rights and sacred sites" in Jerusalem. Earlier in the day, Israeli police fired rubber-tipped bullets at Palestinians protesting against a march by Jewish ultranationalists through Arab neighbourhoods of Jerusalem, a provocative parade that threatened to damage the fragile Gaza ceasefire. At one point, several dozen young men and teenagers, jumping in their air, chanted: "Death to Arabs!" Palestinian medics said Israeli police had wounded more than 30 people protesting against the parade. Along the frontier inside

Gaza, Palestinians also held rallies, with an unconfirmed report that an Israeli sniper shot one person in the leg. While no rockets were fired, militants attached incendiary devices to helium-filled balloons that floated into Israel, causing dozens of fires. In Jerusalem, thousands of Jewish ultranationalists waving Israel's blue and white flag made their way down to the Old City as a heavy police presence blocked off roads to prevent them from confronting

knows what its purpose is." Meanwhile, Yair Lapid, the country's foreign minister, said in a tweet that the marchers who shouted "Death to Arabs" were a "disgrace to the people of Israel". Knesset member Itamar Ben-Gvir waves an Israeli flag together with other ultranationalists during the "Flags March" in Jerusalem on Tuesday. A similar far-right parade last month - held to flaunt Israel's control of the entire city - played a key role in building the tensions that led to the 11-day Gaza war. However, Tuesday's march was less well attended and appeared more controlled by police. Jerusalem is the emotional centre of a decades-old crisis. Israeli forces took over the holy city in 1967, including Arab neighbourhoods and the Haram al-Sharif complex, which houses al-Aqsa mosque - the third-holiest site in Islam. To many Jews, that compound is the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism, and it is a deeply symbolic place for many Israelis. Christians also revere the city as the place where Jesus died. Israel annexed East Jerusalem after the 1967 war and considers the whole area to be part of its capital, despite most world powers claiming the city's status should be decided in a future peace deal. Annually, Israelis celebrate the capture of Jerusalem in a parade, with flag-waving nationalists marching through the Old City. Previous events have seen participants angrily bang on shuttered doors as they descend through the Muslim quarter. Organisers complain that they were unable to properly hold the march as they usually do on Jerusalem Day, which this year came amid a surge in tensions.

## Bear kills man in Slovakia forest in what could be first fatal attack

**Slovak, June 17** : The 57-year-old man was killed by a brown bear whose population has tripled in 20 years, sparking calls for legal hunting. The number of bears in Slovak mountains has risen to

estimated 2,760 last year from below 900 two decades ago. A 57-year-old man has been killed by a brown bear in central Slovakia, in what the state forestry company said could be the first confirmed deadly attack by a wild bear, whose population has tripled in 20 years. "An autopsy confirmed today that the man from Liptovska Luzna died from injuries caused by this predator," the forestry company, Lesy Slovenskej republiky, said on Facebook. Bears are common in Slovak mountains, and their numbers have swollen to an estimated 2,760 last year from fewer than 900 two decades ago, said the forestry company, which has argued for legal hunting of bears to manage their population. Slovakia's environment ministry said the bear's DNA samples would be collected to identify the animal. It said that while there had been five bear attacks on people last year, none were fatal. News website SME reported the man went missing after going for a



A worker sprays anti-mosquito fog in Dhaka, Bangladesh

## Jared Kushner agrees book deal for 'definitive' account of Trump presidency

**London, June 17** : Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of former president Donald Trump and a senior adviser in his administration, has secured a book deal to recount Trump's presidency. Broadside Books, a conservative imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, announced that Kushner's book will come out in early 2022. Kushner has begun working on the memoir, currently untitled, and is expected to write about everything from the Middle East to criminal justice reform to the pandemic. Financial terms were not disclosed. The signing of the Kushner deal comes amid a debate in the book industry over which Trump officials, notably Trump himself, can be taken on without starting a revolt at the publishing house. Thousands of Simon & Schuster employees and authors signed an open letter this spring condemning the publisher's decision to sign up former vice-president Mike Pence. Broadside said on Tuesday: "His book will be the definitive, thorough recounting of the administration, and the truth about what happened behind closed doors." Trump insists he's writing 'book of all books' but big publishers unlikely to touch it. He may find himself in competition with his father-in-law, who has insisted he is writing "the book of all books" - even though major figures in US publishing said on Tuesday that no big house is likely to touch a memoir by the 45th president. Kushner played a role in building ties between Israel and United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco - the so-called Abraham Accords - and a criminal justice bill passed by Congress in 2018. He has also been the subject of numerous controversies, whether for his financial dealings and potential conflicts of interest or for the administration's widely criticised handling of Covid-19, which has killed more than 600,000 Americans - the highest toll of any country. In April 2020, less than two months into the pandemic, Kushner labelled the White House response a "great success story", dismissed "the eternal lockdown crowd" and also said: "I think you'll see by June a lot of the country should be back to normal and the hope is that by July the country's really rocking again." At a Simon & Schuster town hall in May, employees confronted CEO Jonathan Karp over the Pence deal.

## Peru election: socialist Pedro Castillo claims victory ahead of official result

**Lima, June 17** : The son of peasant farmers says 'a new time has begun' as vote count gives him narrow lead against rightwing rival Keiko Fujimori. Pedro Castillo has claimed victory in the Peruvian election despite allegations of fraud from his rightwing rival Keiko Fujimori. Peru's socialist candidate Pedro Castillo has claimed victory in the presidential election after clinging on to a narrow lead as the lengthy vote count ended, although his rightwing rival has pledged to fight the result and has yet to concede. Castillo ended the count 44,058 votes ahead of Keiko Fujimori, who has made allegations of fraud with little proof and has tried to get some votes annulled. The result of the ballot held on 6 June has not been formally announced by electoral authorities, but Castillo hailed the win on Twitter. "A new time has begun," Castillo wrote, alongside a picture of himself with arms raised, the word 'President' in large font and his campaign slogan: "No more poor in a rich country." He also updated his Twitter profile to include "President-elect of the Republic of Peru (2021-2026)". The abrupt rise of the 51-year-old former teacher has rattled Peru's political and business elite and could have a major impact on the vital mining industry in the world's second-biggest copper producer, with Castillo planning sharp tax hikes on the sector.

No.CHR/PWD/(R&B)/N-14/Pt/2017-18/452

Dated. 16/06/2021

### SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders affixing a non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight & paisa twenty five) only with a validity period of 180 days, which will subsequently be converted and drawn up in the printed F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors under PWD of Class-III (Three), Class-II(Two)&Class-I (A, B & C) (R&B) category according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the work stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to **12.00 Noon on 28/06/2021** and will be opened on the same date & place at **2.15 P.M**

Sl No.	Name of Work	Estimated Amount	Category of Contractor	Demand draft /Bank Draft Amount	Time of Completion
1	Construction of building near Kajalgaon Brahma Mandir under Untied fund in Chirang District, BTC, Assam	Rs. 9,25,370.00	Class-I (A, B & C), Class-II & Class-III	Rs. 500.00	3 (Three) months
2	Construction of building near South Kajalgaon Brahma Mandir under Untied fund in Chirang District, BTC, Assam	Rs. 9,25,370.00		Rs. 500.00	

Detail N.I.T. may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractor or their authorized agent up-to 12.00 Noon on all working days from **18/06/2021 to 28/06/2021** in the office of the undersigned on payment in the form of Bank Draft/Demand Draft, duly pledged to the Executive Engineer, PWD, Chirang (R&B) Division, Kajalgaon. The contractor should submit attested copy of Registration Certificate for the year 2021-22, GST, Labour Licence, PAN along with the tenders. In case the office remain closed on the tender receiving/ opening the same will be received/ opened on the next working day.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer, PWD,  
Chirang(R&B) Division, Kajalgaon.

IPR(BTC)-70/2021





Shillong- Iewduh was closed on Thursday

## Two more succumb to COVID 19 in Nagaon district, 217 fresh cases

**NAGAON, June 17 :** COVID 19 claimed two more lives in Nagaon district today. Including these two death cases, total 77 people died of COVID 19 in the district during the second wave till filing of this report, sources said. Besides, 217 people tested positive for COVID 19 today, taking the total cumulative active COVID cases in the district to 2437 while 347 people who were undergoing treatment in hospital as well as at homes, have re-

covered from the infection of the virus today. Sources claimed that among those who tested positive today, 210 were immediately admitted to hospital as well as other COVID Care Centres set up at various places in the district while the rest were put under home isolation. Rapid Antigen Test was conducted on 7935 people while RT-PCR test was conducted on 79 swab samples, sources further added. Meanwhile Kaliabor MP Gaurab

Gogoi in association with Firm to Food Foundation as well as Gunjan, two separate pioneer volunteer organizations donated masks, PPE kits, oximeters, Thermometers and oxygen concentrators to Juria MPHC, Dagaon PHE, Dhing FRU and Moirabari FRU under Kaliabor Parliamentary constituency today. Besides, he declared to donate one ambulance to Nagaon BP Civil Hospital soon under his MP fund, a release added.

## Steps for beautification of Deepor Beel, realignment of railway track discussed

**Guwahati, June 17:** Beautification of the Deepor Beel on the outskirts of Guwahati city will be taken up to attract tourists. A meeting was held to discuss issues relating to beautification of the Deepor Beel at the official chamber of Guwahati Development Department Minister, Ashok Singhal at Janata Bhavan on Wednesday evening. Minister, Singhal, Environment and Forest Minister, Parimal Suklabaidya along with PCCF, Wildlife, Amit Sahai, DFO, Wildlife, Guwahati and other officials discussed threadbare issues relating to water pollution in some parts of the wetland and the need to clear the waste. The issue of realignment of the railway track in view of the eco-sensitivity of the wetland also figured in the meeting. Minister Suklabaidya said the proposal has been sent by his department to the Government of India for realignment of the railway line running through the wetland which creates

noise pollution and disturbs the migratory birds. Clearance from the National Green Tribunal is expected once the eco sensitive zone is declared by the concerned authorities. To woo tourists, construction of cycling track along the road is being mulled by the authorities. Deepor Beel, a Ramsar site, is a perennial freshwater lake, located 10 km south-

west of Guwahati city, famous for its biological and environmental importance. The wetland also a bird sanctuary covering an area of 414 hectare within the larger spread of the wetland shelters over 200 species of birds, including about 70 species of migratory birds. The wetland is also used by elephants as a major corridor.



Assam Governor Prof. Jagdish Mukhi along with the First Lady of Assam Smt. Prem Mukhi extending a warm welcome to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at Raj Bhavan on Thursday

## Police personnel from Narcotics squad held with suspected heroine at Nagaon

**NAGAON, June 17 :** Sensation prevailed at Nagaon following the arrest of a police constable along with suspected heroine last night by a group of VDP. The police constable has been identified as Ishraf Hussain who was appointed recently as a member of narcotics squad of Nagaon police by newly appointed Superintendent of Police Anand Mishra (IPS) to fight against drug menace across the district, sources said. Significantly, the incident

has drawn sharp reaction among the people of the district. Sources claimed that a group of VDP picked up him along with narcotics substance suspected as heroine near at Chalachali under Haiborgaon Town Outpost when Ishraf Hussain was on his way to his native village under Juria PS right after their operations at Raha area last night. Being informed, police from Haiborgaon TOP rushed to the spot and rescued the

police personnel from the local villagers. Sources claimed that the VDP as well as other local villagers believed him as drugs peddler and immediately informed to Haiborgaon police. But when it came into light that the man was a police constable and engaged in operation against drugs, the villagers went on a rampage and created a ruckus on the spot and expressed their concern over the issue.

are safe houses of the aquatic animals. There are more than five hundred tortoises in both of the ponds. But due to the mini lockdown, visitors and devotees hardly stepped out of their respective homes. In this situation, the tortoises of Nagsankar temple had to strive for food. In this condition, the Biswanath district committee of AJYCP had come forward with a mission to help the animals that are striving for food and distributed dried fishes for the tortoises.



**Biswanath Chari, June 17:** A team of Biswanath district committee of AJYCP including Jitu Sarma, advisor of Biswanath district AJYCP, Diganta Barua, Secretary, Nihar Saikia, Biswajit Das, Anku Bora along

with others had visited the historic Nagsankar Temple and distributed food for the rare species of tortoises in the ponds on Thursday. Notably, the two big ponds located inside the premises of the temple

## Minister Patowary reviews the progress of Transport and IWT

**Guwahati, June 17:** Transport Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary reviewed the activities and progress of Transport and Inland Water Transport (IWT) at Dispur on Wednesday. Patowary directed the transport officials for strict enforcement of Motor Vehicle Act and Rules on road safety by checking over-speeding, monitor overloading and enhancing revenue collection by preventing evasion of road tax, permit renewals, etc. Commissioner of Transport Adil Khan appraised Minister Patowary that revenue collection for 2021-22 (up to June 10, 2021) is Rs. 105.87 crores. Transport Department has undertaken massive state-wise operation against overloading de-

tected in trucks carrying sand, goods, stones, boulders etc. which cause road damage and accidents. Till June 15, total 994 overloading cases were booked and Rs. 2.38 crores fine imposed. Over-speeding is the single biggest cause of road accidents and resultant deaths. Therefore, Transport Department has launched a statewide drive against over-speeding. Traffic Interceptor Vehicles, deployed all over the state, record the speed and registration number of the vehicle and e-challan is issued by post. Total fine imposed due to over-speeding till June 15 is Rs. 1.60 crores. Transport Minister has urged the people to drive within the permissible speed limits. Meanwhile, construction of DTO office is going on at Nagaon, Majuli, Hailakandi, Charaideo, Biswanath, Hojai, Salmora, Amingaon, Darrang, Lakhimpur. Reviewing the progress of IWT, Minister Patowary asked Director Gautam Das to prepare a comprehensive database of all the vessels and renovate the vessels to be used as cruise to boost the inland water sector in the state. He further directed to prepare a survey of the 15 national waterways in Assam to explore the possibil-

ity of construction of jetties for development of industries and commerce within the 5 km radius which will have long-term benefits.

Director Gautam Das appraised the Minister that presently four Ro-Pax are operating viz. two each at Neamati-Kamalabari route and one each at Guwahati-North Guwahati route and Dhubri-Fakirganj ferry route. Revenue generated by IWT during 2020-21 is Rs. 2.82 crores. So far, rehabilitation schemes have been implemented benefitting 1,145 families affected due to the new bridge construction at Bogibael and Dhola-Sadia. Three speed boats for rescue purpose with World Bank funding have been deployed in Majuli, Neamati and Guwahati. Two boats for survey and enforcement will be deployed in Guwahati and Dibrugarh divisions and one Catamaran vessel, which can operate even in shallow draft, will be deployed in Guwahati-Kuruwa ferry service. IWT will soon introduce e-ticketing facility for ferry services and install GPS in commercial and ferry vessels for effective monitoring. Principal Secretary Dr. KK Dwivedi and other senior officials were present in the meeting.

### Containment Zone at Bajali

**Pathala, June 17:** In order to stop the spread of Covid-19 and to protect public health, Gosaipara area of Bajali Revenue Circle under Bajali district has been declared as a new containment zone. The Bajali district Deputy Commissioner Mrigesh Narayan Barua issued an urgent order to seal the area with immediate effect. The administration has also banned any entry and exit from the containment zone. The district administration shows significant improvement to arrest the spread of Covid-19. The Continuous positivity rate is decreasing and the recovery rate is increasing in the district in the last fifteen days. However, people of the district will have to strictly maintain all Covid-19 protocols. The Deputy Commissioner also urged the people to get vaccinated and tested immediately whenever they feel any discomfort.

## Assam Cm Assures Full Support To NCC

**Guwahati, 17 June :** Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma, CM Assam assured Maj Gen Ananta Bhuyan, SM, ADG NCC North Eastern Region of the state his government's full support to NCC in its endeavour to strengthen the unity of the country and spread nationalism among youth of the state. During a meeting on 16 June 2021 with the ADG, the CM was informed about various NCC activities in the state. Gen Bhuyan specifically highlighted expansion of NCC in border areas of Assam and introduction of NCC as an elective subject in the Colleges of Assam as per UGC guidelines. He also assured the CM that NCC cadets are always available to the State adminis-



tration to perform its role in community service, public awareness campaigns and nation building.

## DTO and Enforcement Inspector of Karimganj placed under suspension

**Guwahati, June 17:** As per the direction of Transport Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, two officials namely Apu Mazumdar, DTO, Karimganj and Ahmed Hussain Mazumdar, Enforcement Inspector, office of the DTO, Karimganj have been placed under suspension today. They have been suspended due to gross negligence of duties in checking overloading of vehicles. Transport Minister has directed all DTOs for strict enforcement by checking over-speeding and monitor

overloading diligently. He further added that negligence of duty will not be tolerated and strict action will be taken against those found guilty. Transport Department has directed S.R. Mannan, DTO,

Hailakandi and S.U. Tapadar, Enforcement Inspector, office of the DTO, Hailakandi to take over the charge of DTO, Karimganj and Enforcement Inspector, Karimganj respectively in addition to their own duties until further order.

## BJP helps needy



**Hojai, June 17 :** 200 Childrens' of Harizon Colony in Hojai got pen, copy, Sanitizer, mask, soft drinks, biscuits on Thursday. BJP Hojai District Yuva Morcha along with its mandals namely south, east, Jugijan, Lanka, Dhalpukhuri distributed these items. Legislator of Hojai Constituency Ramkrishna Ghosh, District President BJP Yuva Morcha Binay

Kalita, District President Anup Kumar Deb, VP Chaturthi Rani Biswas along their volunteers marked the occasion. On the other hand, BJP Kisan Morcha, OBC Morcha and Lanka town Mandal jointly distributed essential food items on Thursday. Laitonjam Akham, BJP Kisan Morcha District President, said, "We have distributed the food packets among 200 needy people of the area."

## AJYCP distributes food for tortoises of Nagsankar Temple

### Timbers, illegal saw mill seized at Kaliabor

**NAGAON, June 17:** Forest personnel from Silghat Forest Beat as well as Salna range office led by range officer Nepal Mandal busted one illegal saw mill near at Gahguri under Uluwani PS today. Forest officials in presence of police officials of Uluwani PS and magistrate of Kaliabor Sub Division, seized almost all sawn timbers estimated worth of more than Rs one lakh at the mill - yard, sources added. Sources claimed that the illegal saw mill was being run by one Lotif of the locality and the forest officials lodged an FIR against the owner of the illegal saw mill. All the machinery tools, generator sets and timbers seized by the forest officials were brought later to Silghat Forest Beat office for further legal action, sources added further. Meanwhile police from Kaliabor PS seized one Tata 407 truck laden with illegal timbers estimated worth of Rs one lakh at Kaliabor today while the illegal timbers were being carried from Deopani area under Dolamora forest range in Karbi Anglong district via Kuthori and Burhapahar to unknown destination, sources added.



**Biswanath Chari, June 17:** A team of Biswanath district committee of AJYCP including Jitu Sarma, advisor of Biswanath district AJYCP, Diganta Barua, Secretary, Nihar Saikia, Biswajit Das, Anku Bora along

with others had visited the historic Nagsankar Temple and distributed food for the rare species of tortoises in the ponds on Thursday. Notably, the two big ponds located inside the premises of the temple



Shillong- Domestic Workers Union Protest on Thursday



## The conflict in the Middle East

Rap and K-pop aren't music genres you'd expect an Iranian presidential hopeful to be familiar with. And yet, during the second televised debate ahead of the countrywide poll on 18 June, one of the candidates displayed an impressive knowledge of the contemporary musical landscape. "They play rap on their own programmes, but they have banned rap. Our teens have moved on to K-pop or Korean pop. Our own rap [music] is still underground," said centrist Abdolnaser Hemmati, the former governor of the Central Bank of Iran.

Hemmati's comment seemed to be directed at the hardline frontrunner, the chief of the judiciary Ebrahim Raisi, who lost the 2017 election to incumbent Hassan Rouhani. One of the running jokes at the time was that Raisi failed because of an awkward photo op with Amir Tataloo, a then-popular underground Iranian rapper with tattooed arms (who has since covered himself in tattoos from head to toe and lives abroad). Talking about K-pop during a nationally televised presidential debate appears to be one of many gimmicks deployed in order to draw voters in. But it's unlikely to be enough to rally Iranians - specifically Iranian youth - to an election that is expected to set new records for low turnout. Even before the Guardian Council, a powerful vetting body, approved only seven out of 592 presidential candidates on 25 May to weed out any competition against Raisi - who is also assumed to be the top choice for the next supreme leader - voter apathy was a recognised problem. The February 2020 parliamentary elections - where reformist candidates were also disqualified en masse - had the lowest voter participation since 1979 with only 42.6% of eligible voters taking part. Iranians, growing more frustrated and disillusioned by the day, have an increasing list of complaints. Perhaps ironically, this is something that has developed during the past four years of the moderate Rouhani administration.

At the top of the list is the dire state of the economy, caused by government corruption and mismanagement, and the punitive, broad-based economic sanctions that were reimposed by the Donald Trump administration after its withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018. Additionally, the fact that the Rouhani administration has been in place since 2013, serving for two full terms, seems to confirm that moderate and reformist factions are incapable of delivering tangible change. This is partly due to the limited powers of the presidency compared to the supreme leader, the judiciary and other positions not chosen directly by the electorate. Finally, there is the outright repression. Fresh in the minds of Iranians are the anti-establishment November 2019 protests prompted by a fuel rise in which security forces killed and arrested thousands. Then there was the wrongful execution of the wrestler, Navid Afkari, in September 2020. These two incidents deeply angered the populace. Added to this was the shooting down of a Ukraine International Airlines passenger plane by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, killing 176, including scores of Iranians, during high tensions with the US in January 2020 - after the American drone strike assassination of the Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani.

With these grievances in mind, there have been mounting calls to boycott the election to signal discontent with the nezam, the system. This includes families of the victims of the Ukrainian passenger jet and of state repression, and more than 230 dissidents in Iran who have signed an open letter calling on the Iranian people to boycott the vote. There are even trending hashtags on Twitter that translate as "No way I'm voting" and "I won't vote".

The Green movement leader, Mir Hossein Mousavi, who has been under house arrest since 2011, wrote that he sided with the Iranian people who were taking a stand against "humiliating and engineered elections". While prominent activists including Bahareh Hedayat and Faezeh Hashemi, the firebrand daughter of the late president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, have announced on the audio-only app Clubhouse that they intend to boycott the elections. The conflict in the Middle East is sustained by the

On Clubhouse, which has been making waves in Iran since March, there are nightly debates about the election. In recent weeks, there is a growing theme of Iranians expressing their dissatisfaction with what is essentially a one-horse race. "The president has already been selected, now we're just waiting for the election," said one Iranian. "They told me to vote for Rouhani so Raisi doesn't become president [in 2017], but in the end, they made him judiciary chief," said another, noting that regardless of who they vote for, the outcome will end up being what the establishment wants. On 4 June, there was a subtle change in mood when the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, called on the Guardian Council, a body consisting of six clerics chosen by the leader and six lawyers indirectly chosen by him, to reverse its decision and allow other candidates to run. The Guardian Council quickly shut down that notion, leading some analysts to believe this was merely Khamenei trying to absolve himself of responsibility for the state's anti-democratic manoeuvring. The reality is that the supreme leader has wanted a "young and pious" government to take control for some time, and installing a conservative president would secure his vision of all three government branches being led by hardliners. Some think that might hurt Raisi's chances on 18 June - not to mention his weak performances during the three debates - but with an official poll suggesting a low turnout of about 37-43%, he is likely to be Iran's next president.

## We remember more by reading-especially print - than from audio or video

 Naomi S Baron

During the pandemic, many college professors abandoned assignments from printed textbooks and turned instead to digital texts or multimedia coursework. As a professor of linguistics, I have been studying how electronic communication compares to traditional print when it comes to learning. Is comprehension the same whether a person reads a text onscreen or on paper? And are listening and viewing content as effective as reading the written word when covering the same material? The answers to both questions are often "no," as I discuss in my book "How We Read Now," released in March 2021. The reasons relate to a variety of factors, including diminished concentration, an entertainment mindset and a tendency to multitask while consuming digital content. When reading texts of several hundred words or more, learning is generally more successful when it's on paper than onscreen. A cascade of research confirms this finding. The benefits of print particularly shine through when experimenters move from posing simple tasks - like identifying the main idea in a reading passage - to ones that require mental abstraction - such as drawing inferences from a text. Print reading also improves the likelihood of recalling details - like "What was the color of the actor's hair?" - and remembering where in a story events occurred - "Did the accident happen before or after the political coup?" Studies show that both grade school students and college students assume they'll get higher scores on a comprehension test if they have done the reading digitally.



And yet, they actually score higher when they have read the material in print before being tested. Educators need to be aware that the method used for standardized testing can affect results. Studies of Norwegian tenth graders and U.S. third through eighth graders report higher scores when standardized tests were administered using paper. In the U.S. study, the negative effects of digital testing were strongest among students with low reading achievement scores, English language learners and special education students. My own research and that of colleagues approached the question differently. Rather than having students read and take a test, we asked how they perceived their overall learning when they used print or digital reading materials. Both high school and college students overwhelmingly judged reading on paper as better for concentration, learning and remembering than reading digitally. The discrepancies between print and digital results are partly related to paper's physical properties. With paper, there is a literal laying out of hands, along with the visual geography of distinct pages. People often link their memory of what they've read to how far into the book it was or where it was on the page. But equally important is mental perspective, and what reading researchers call a "shallowing hy-

pothesis." According to this theory, people approach digital texts with a mindset suited to casual social media, and devote less mental effort than when they are reading print. Given increased use of flipped classrooms - where students listen to or view lecture content before coming to class - along with more publicly available podcasts and online video content, many school assignments that previously entailed reading have been replaced with listening or viewing. These substitutions have accelerated during the pandemic and move to virtual learning. Surveying U.S. and Norwegian university faculty in 2019, University of Stavanger Professor Anne Mangen and I found that 32% of U.S. faculty were now replacing texts with video materials, and 15% reported doing so with audio. The numbers were somewhat lower in Norway. But in both countries, 40% of respondents who had changed their course requirements over the past five to 10 years reported assigning less reading today. A primary reason for the shift to audio and video is students refusing to do assigned reading. While the problem is hardly new, a 2015 study of more than 18,000 college seniors found only 21% usually completed all their assigned course reading. Audio and video can feel more engaging than text, and so faculty in-

creasingly resort to these technologies - say, assigning a TED talk instead of an article by the same person. Psychologists have demonstrated that when adults read news stories or transcripts of fiction, they remember more of the content than if they listen to identical pieces. Researchers found similar results with university students reading an article versus listening to a podcast of the text. A related study confirms that students do more mind-wandering when listening to audio than when reading. Results with younger students are similar, but with a twist. A study in Cyprus concluded that the relationship between listening and reading skills flips as children become more fluent readers. While second graders had better comprehension with listening, eighth graders showed better comprehension when reading. Research on learning from video versus text echoes what we see with audio. For example, researchers in Spain found that fourth through sixth graders who read texts showed far more mental integration of the material than those watching videos. The authors suspect that students "read" the videos more superficially because they associate video with entertainment, not learning. The collective research shows that digital media have common features and user practices that can constrain learning. These include diminished concentration, an entertainment mindset, a propensity to multitask, lack of a fixed physical reference point, reduced use of annotation and less frequent reviewing of what has been read, heard or viewed. Digital texts, audio and video all have educational roles, especially when providing resources not available in print. However, for maximizing learning where mental focus and reflection are called for, educators - and parents - shouldn't assume all media are the same, even when they contain identical words.

## A global agreement on corporate tax is in sight - let's make sure it happens

 Nadia Calviño

For more than four years, France, Germany, Italy and Spain have been working together to create an international tax system fit for the 21st century. It is a saga of many twists and turns. Now it's time to come to an agreement. Introducing this fairer and more efficient international tax system was already a priority before the current economic crisis, and it will be all the more necessary coming out of it. Why? First, because the crisis was a boon to big tech companies, which raked in profit at levels not seen in any other sector of the economy. So how is it that the most profitable companies do not pay a fair share of tax? Just because their business is online doesn't mean they should not pay taxes in the countries where they operate and from which their profits derive. Physical presence has been the histori-

cal basis of our taxation system. This basis has to evolve with our economies gradually shifting online. Like any other company, they should pay their fair share to fund the public good, at a level commensurate with their success. Second, because the crisis has exacerbated inequalities. It is urgent to put in place an international tax system that is efficient and fair. Currently, multinationals are able to avoid corporate taxes by shifting profits offshore. That's not something the public will continue to accept. Fiscal dumping cannot be an option for Europe, nor can it be for the rest of the world. It would only lead to a further decline in corporate income tax revenues, wider inequalities and an inability to fund vital public services. Third, because we need to re-establish an international consensus on major global issues. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, with the support of our countries, has been doing exceptional work in the area of in-

ternational taxation for many years. The OECD has put forward fair and balanced proposals on both subjects: the taxation of the profit of the most profitable multinationals, notably digital giants (Pillar 1), and the minimal taxation (Pillar 2). We can build on this work. For the first time in decades, we have an opportunity to reach a historic agreement on a new international tax system that would involve every country in the world. Such a multilateral agreement would signal a commitment to working together on major global issues. With the new Biden administration, there is no longer the threat of a veto hanging over this new system. The new US proposal on minimal taxation is an important step in the direction of the proposal initially floated by our



countries and taken over by the OECD. The commitment to a minimum effective tax rate of at least 15% is a promising start. We therefore commit to defining a common position on a new international tax system at the G7 finance ministers meeting in London today. We are confident it will create the momentum needed to reach a global agreement at the G20 in Venice in July. It is within our reach. Let's make sure it happens. We owe it to our citizens.

## The alacrity with which Olympic-bound athletes are being extended support is impressive



About a month ago, Vinesh Phogat was in a quandary. India's ace wrestler's plans of returning to India from her high altitude training camp in Bulgaria were scuttled by the aftermath of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. Flights to and from India were getting cancelled. Securing visas for travel to Europe was getting tough. Uncertainty was the only steady companion. Worse, even after she re-

located her base to Budapest in Hungary to be able to continue training under the watchful eyes of her coach, Woller Akos, doubts about her securing her first dose of vaccination grew with each passing day. The Hungarians were vaccinating their own and the best efforts by the club and coach came to a naught, with the Poland Open looming on the horizon.

 Viren Rasquinha

athletes to reduce the gap between their two doses to 28 days. It is very heartening to see that the Government has been responsive to the needs of the athletes. Every one percent makes a difference in the final analysis. Come to think of it, vaccination of Indian athletes in the past six weeks is a very good

example of the levels of preparation and the speed of reaction with regard to the Tokyo-bound athletes and officials. It is a strong reflection of how athletes, irrespective of discipline and the region they hail from, have come to occupy pride of place in the corridors of sports administration. Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala, and the SAI Centre of Excellence, Bangalore, are hubs where athletes were vaccinated as soon as Government announced jabs for 18-plus. Besides, the coordination with State Governments has ensured that other Tokyo-bound athletes would be vaccinated in their home cities.

I must say that the levels of empathy, the speed and the quality of work by Government towards helping the athletes stay in good physical and mental shape, with training and competition, have been refreshingly high in this entire last Olympic cycle and this despite the pandemic. The intention has been backed with prompt action so that claims of placing the 'Athlete First' are well justified.

(The writer is a member of the Mission Olympic Cell, he is a former Captain of the Indian Hockey team and the CEO of Olympic Gold Quest)



# Realme Watch 2 Pro, Watch 2, Robot Vacuum launched; Realme Book laptop, Pad tablet set to arrive in 'coming months'

**Mumbai, June 17 :** Realme has simultaneously announced a co-creation programme for fans to create the Realme Book together. Realme has launched a slew of AIoT products ranging from new smartwatches to a smart robot vacuum cleaner while simultaneously announcing that it is set to enter two new product categories, laptops and tablets, soon. This is part of the Oppo spin-off brand's all-new "1+5+T" strategy which is said to be an evolved version of its previous "1+4+N" strategy even as Realme expands further into the global AIoT space. At its first international launch event of the year, held virtually on Tuesday, Realme took the wraps off the Realme Watch 2 Pro, Watch 2, and Robot Vacuum. The flagship Realme GT with Qualcomm Snapdragon 888 SoC was also launched during the same keynote. At the same time, the brand announced that it is working on its first laptop, the Realme Book, and tablet, the Realme Pad, both set to arrive in the coming months. All the announcements were with regards to the European market. Realme usually brings many of its products to India, and therefore, it is highly likely that we will hear about them soon enough. Apple working on new Apple Watch lineup for 2021; developing body temperature, blood sugar sensors for future models. Realme laptop, Realme, Xiaomi, MacBook Air. Realme to launch its first laptop

in India soon, may come with MacBook Air-like design. AIoT is a key component of Realme's long-term vision and growth strategy as it is set to transform the way young people live and work in the future. With our new '1+5+T' strategy, we're



moving further into the AIoT space by creating a truly comprehensive, interconnected, and tailored AIoT experience that will enhance every aspect of the modern lifestyle for today's young consumers," Realme CEO Sky Li said, adding "we will continue to adopt next-generation technologies and expand our AIoT product lineup, while working with promising partners who have similar aspirations, to bring more exciting AIoT products to the world under our TechLife platform." The Realme Watch 2 Pro has a 1.75-inch

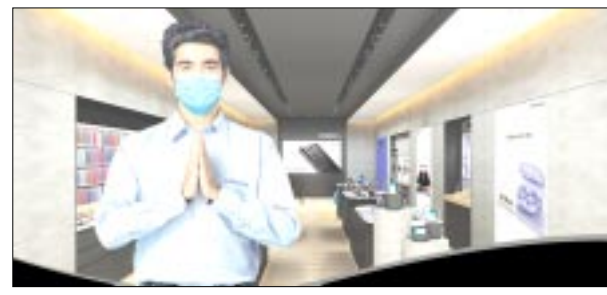
colour display which makes it 56 percent larger than the original Realme Watch. It also has a higher resolution (320x385 pixels) screen which is said to be 58 percent brighter at 600 nits. The smartwatch packs sensors for heart rate detec-

tion and SpO2 or blood oxygen saturation level tracking. Realme is also bumping up the number of workout modes from 16 to 90 in this new version. The smartwatch comes with dual-satellite GPS and a 390mAh battery rated to deliver up to 14 days of battery life. For customisation, the Realme Watch 2 Pro comes with support for over 100 watch faces including a series designed by artist and art director of the Realme design studio, Grafflex, based on graffiti and street art styles. Realme is also launching

a watered-down Realme Watch alongside with a smaller 1.4-inch display keeping much of the Watch 2 Pro features intact. The Realme Watch 2 Pro will sell for Euros 74.99 (roughly Rs 7,000) while the Realme Watch will cost Euros 54.99 (roughly Rs 5,000). This is the first product to launch under Realme's "TechLife" open partner platform for AIoT startups. Realme says it is its "most advanced smart home product to date." The smart vacuum cleaner packs 38 sensors including LiDAR for smart mapping and navigation - for up to 12 percent greater accuracy than the previous LiDAR generations. The Robot Vacuum can judge relative positions at an accuracy rate of up to 98 percent, Realme claims. It has a 2-in-1 vacuum-mop with a mopping power of 3000Pa. On quite mode, it is designed to keep noise levels as low as 55dB. It comes with a 5200mAh battery, a 600ml dust bin and a 300ml smart electronic water tank. It works with both Google Assistant and Alexa. Realme is only sharing a "sneak peek" of its first laptop and tablet for now. All the other details including specs and possible pricing remain a secret. The Realme Book design, shared by the brand, looks a lot like the MacBook but it seems this may not be the final version as Realme has simultaneously announced a co-creation programme for fans to create the Realme Book together. More details are awaited.

## Samsung Rolls Out 'Shop by Appointment' for Consumer Safety and Convenience as part of 'We Care for You' Program

**Delhi, June 17 :** Samsung, India's most trusted smartphone brand, today announced new consumer initiatives as part of its 'We Care for You' program. These new initiatives will ensure safety, health and convenience of consumers looking to buy Samsung products. Consumers can now 'Shop by Appointment', a new feature that allows them the freedom to book an online shopping appointment via WhatsApp for hassle-free experience at their nearest Samsung Exclusive Store. Consumers can also avail additional offers like Samsung Student Advantage program, Samsung Referral Advantage Program and Samsung Smart Club Membership while shopping at Samsung Exclusive Stores. "At Samsung, consumer safety and health remain our top priority. That's why we launched the 'We Care for You' program, which focusses on offering consumers best-in-class products and services with worry-free and safe shopping experience. The newly-launched 'Shop by Appointment' service allows consumers to book a personal shopping appointment at their nearest Samsung Exclusive Store. Consumers can also book a home demo or home delivery service and experience Galaxy devices from the comfort of their homes. These services can be booked easily via WhatsApp by sending 'Book' to 9870-494949 and customers can avail number of exclusive benefits that are lined up for them. We are hopeful that our consumers will utilize these services and benefits and stay safe and healthy," said Mohandeep Singh, Senior Vice President, Mobile Business, Samsung India. List of consumer-centric initiatives part of 'We Care for You' program



\* Appointment Shopping Service - Consumers can book an online appointment to shop at their nearest Samsung Exclusive Stores via 'Shop by Appointment' portal. Once the appointment is confirmed, the customer can visit the store as per the appointment slot for one-on-one interaction with the store executive. Samsung Exclusive Stores follow all safety guidelines including daily disinfection of the store, sanitization of devices, temperature check of staff and consumers and more. \* Easy Connect via WhatsApp - To ensure safety and comfort, consumers can easily book appointment services at Samsung SmartCafe via the WhatsApp Channel. Consumers need to WhatsApp 'Book' on the number 9870-494949 and follow simple steps to book an appointment at Samsung SmartCafe or avail Home Delivery and Home Demo service. The WhatsApp chatbot also provides information about Samsung devices, latest offers, nearby stores among other details. Extra Reward Points upto INR 1000 - Consumers who have previously purchased Samsung

devices from Samsung SmartCafe or Samsung Smart Plaza and those who book a service via WhatsApp will be given special reward points. Interested buyers need to visit nearby Samsung Exclusive Store and purchase eligible devices including Galaxy Z Fold2, Galaxy S21 Ultra 5G, Galaxy S21+, Galaxy S21, Galaxy S20 FE 5G among others and bonus points will be credited to their Samsung Smart Club wallet. \* Samsung Student Advantage - Under the Student Advantage program, students can avail special discounts on Galaxy Tabs, Galaxy Smartwatches and Galaxy Buds over and above the market offers at Samsung Smart Cafe and Samsung Smart Plaza. \* Home Delivery and Home Demo - Consumers can experience and purchase their favorite Samsung devices from the comfort of their homes by booking home delivery or home demo on Experience Samsung at Home portal. All safety guidelines are followed in home visits and transactions are made via a digital channel. \* E-Invoice on WhatsApp - To ensure that all transactions are virtual and contactless, consumers can receive their invoices on WhatsApp as well. \* Samsung Referral Advantage Program - Samsung Smart Cafe and Samsung Smart Plaza customers can avail additional Smart Club benefits up to INR 7500 by referring their friends and family to purchase select Galaxy smartphones from Samsung Exclusive Stores. Once registered, both the consumer and the friend will get reward points on purchase of eligible devices including Galaxy Z Fold2, Galaxy S21 Ultra 5G, Galaxy S21+, Galaxy S21, Galaxy S20 FE 5G among others. \* Samsung Smart Club Loyalty Program - Customers get three additional ecosystem vouchers up to INR 7000 and Fast Track upgrades on select products which allows them to get a direct entry to a higher membership tier than the usual program construct. About Samsung Electronics Co Ltd. Samsung inspires the world and shapes the future with transformative ideas and technologies. The company is redefining the worlds of TVs, smartphones, wearable devices, tablets, digital appliances, network systems and memory, system LSI, foundry and LED solutions. For latest news on Samsung India, please visit Samsung India Newsroom at <http://news.samsung.com/in>. For Hindi, log on to Samsung Newsroom Bharat at <https://news.samsung.com/bharat>. You can also follow us on Twitter @SamsungNewsIN

## Is your cloud storage no longer free?

**Delhi, June 17 :** For the last five years, consumers across operating systems have relied on limited internal phone storage and free cloud storage for data backup and safe-keeping. It was an interesting proposition for Indian customers but only till it was free. Now, users are looking out for alternatives to get rid of monthly subscriptions and brands such as WD and SanDisk have a plethora of storage solutions. The one-time investment

Lightning and USB Type-C connectors that allows users to save and back up their data without fuss. It provides a sleek experience to seamlessly access and move files between Apple™ devices, and USB Type-C devices, including Android™ smartphones. If you want to free up space and/or automatically back up your content without the headache of a poor internet connection, this drive is a must-have. Price - 64GB, 128GB and

Tracking Q1'21, 55% of smartphones feature a USB Type-C interface and this high-capacity storage solution enables content transfer between USB Type-C devices seamlessly. The high-performance USB comes in a sleek all-metal casing and has a read speed of up to 150MB/s. You can now capture more images and simply view them on all your devices! Price - 32GB, 64GB, 128GB, 256GB, 512GB, and 1TB capacities; introductory price of INR 856 for the 32GB version and INR 11,813 for the 1TB version. WD My Cloud Home for Shared Storage Our data is oftentimes scattered across devices and various storage solutions. With Cloud services getting paid, users will now look for a unified solution for their data and, WD My Cloud Home has got your back (UP)! It is a great personal cloud storage device that automatically backs up data from all your devices - not just the ones wired onto your home network, but also over the Internet. You can additionally give access to your family members and use it as a shared central repository while maintaining privacy. It's like a cloud storage service, only it's a physical box that lives in your house. You buy it once and keep it forever instead of paying a monthly membership price. Additionally, you can access everything saved from anywhere at any point of time seamlessly using the My Cloud Home Mobile App. Price - Starting from Rs 12,899 for the 2TB version and available up to 12TB. SanDisk Extreme microSDXC™ UHS-I CARD SD cards are your one-stop solution to provide huge storage space for both professional and personal consumption, that too in

a compact size. Moreover, the ease of data transferability at much higher speeds, makes microSD cards your ideal partner. Such is the case with SanDisk Extreme microSDXC™ UHS-I CARD which ensures extreme speeds for fast transfer, app performance - ideal for your Android™ smartphone, action cameras or drones. This high-performance microSD card is equipped to perform 4K UHD video recording, full HD video, and high-resolution photos. Plus, it's A2-rated, so you can get fast application performance for exceptional smartphone experience. Price - Available on Amazon at Rs 1,590 for 64GB up to 1TB capacity at Rs 18,702. SanDisk Extreme Portable SSD Portfolio SSDs are rapidly bringing about paradigm changes in the future of storage owing to their ease. It's important that your data is protected and accessible to you always, irrespective of your internet connectivity. Specially designed for travel enthusiasts, photographers and videographers, the SanDisk Extreme Portable SSDs are for those who don't like to slow down. These SSDs come with enhanced performance allowing users to move files faster and edit right from the drive. The SanDisk Extreme SSDs have a tough rubberized coating that can withstand impacts, as well as an IP55 rating that protects it from water and dust along with added protection from shocks. With an extremely portable body, these storage devices are the perfect companion for hustlers. Price - 500GB for Rs 7,999, 1TB at Rs 12,999 and 2TB for Rs 27,499, + 4TB model. PRO version - 1TB for Rs 19,999 and 2TB for Rs 34,999.



against monthly subscription helps users save on their recurring expenses and allows them to travel with their data wherever they like. Here are a few solid recommendations: SanDisk iXpand Flash Drive Luxe for Apple Devices. Apple users are in a constant conundrum when it comes to backing up their personal data and chances are that your iPhone has reached its maximum storage capacity in the first few months itself. A one-stop hassle-free solution is the recently launched SanDisk iXpand Flash Drive Luxe. This is Western Digital's first flash-drive with dual

256GB storage variants [Rs 4,449, Rs 5,919 and Rs 8,999 respectively on Amazon India]. SanDisk Ultra Dual Drive Luxe for Type C Android™ Smartphones. Content creators, especially those creating over their smartphones love to keep stock of their old archives. Moreover, with high megapixel cameras and ultra HD experience in today's smartphones, the content created requires huge storage capacities. The SanDisk Ultra Dual Drive Luxe is a perfect fit for you if you own a Type-C device and love creating content. Basis a CMR Report for Smartphone Import

## Filing returns by employer without Aadhaar-UAN Seeding gets extension-Check new deadline

**Mumbai, June 17 :** The ECR is to be filed only for those employees who have their Aadhaar number seeded with the universal account number. Aadhaar-UAN Seeding, last date, deadline, ecr, employer, filing returns. As an employee if you have yet seeded Aadhaar with UAN, initiate the process to link them. If you want to use any of the services offered by the Employee Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), your Aadhaar number needs to be linked with the universal account number (UAN). Unless the Aadhaar number is seeded with the UAN,



making transfer or withdrawal of provident fund (PF) money may become a hurdle. The employers are required to file the electronic challan-cum-returns (ECR) carrying employee's details with the EPFO. The ECR is to be filed only for those employees who have their Aadhaar number seeded with the universal account number (UAN). This new rule was to be implemented from June 1, 2021 but now it has been extended till September 1, 2021. Shugun gift card LIC Card Services Limited eyes foray into e-gift card market with Shagun launch. Check features, benefits. Money 7th Pay Commission: Before DA hike, Modi govt changes TA time limit for retired Central Government Employees. Effectively, the employees now have time to link the two before September 1, 2021. Make sure that you complete seeding the Aadhaar number with the universal account number (UAN) as the last date now stands as before September 1, 2021. "Linking of Aadhaar with the UAN is mandatory. Effective 1 September 2021, employers will not be able to remit PF for cases where such linking is not done. The deadline has now been extended to September 1, 2021 from 1st June 2021. Employers need to use this extended time to make sure that suitable communication is sent to employees advising them of the consequences of non-linking, and provide guidance on how the linking can be completed," says Saraswathi Kasturirangan, Partner, Deloitte India. As an employee if you have yet seeded Aadhaar with UAN, initiate the process to link them. You may log on to the EPFO employee portal to check the status and upload KYC documents. But, importantly, keep tracking and follow up with the employer if the seeding remains incomplete even after a few days of uploading the documents. Your employer will not be able to communicate and intimate your wages, PF details with EPFO, if they remain unseeded till September 1, 2021.

## Truecaller on Android updated with significant new capabilities

### Group Voice Calling, Smart SMS and Inbox Cleaner promise to enhance user experience

**Delhi, June 17 :** Truecaller, a name synonymous with caller ID and spam detection, is rolling out new features to further augment the user experience. These new features include Group Voice Calling, Smart SMS and Inbox Cleaner. All of them are based on user feedback and are designed to cater to the evolving needs of our consumers. With Group Voice Calls, consumers can make cross-border voice calls with up to eight people simultaneously. Smart SMS offers a host of new features designed to make day-to-day communication a lot more



convenient. Finally, Inbox Cleaner lets consumers free up space on their phone by removing unused messages. Commenting on the new additions, Rishit Junhunjuna, MD India, Truecaller said, "We continue to remain focused on the evolving needs of our users and meet those needs with innovative solutions. These features get us closer to our mission: to make communication safer and more efficient for everyone. Truecaller has evolved into a powerful communication hub and for the people who wish to use the app to its fullest, these

features will greatly add value. With Group voice calling, Smart SMS and Inbox cleaner, I am hopeful that consumers will be able to operate more effectively given the benefits of staying connected, using messaging service smartly to stay on top of important information and lastly inbox cleaner to save the mobile phone from running out of space." Highlights of The Key New Features: - Group Voice Calling - Truecaller Voice Calls have always been free. This enhancement allows users to add up to eight participants to a call while retaining the high voice clarity that Truecaller Voice is known for. Truecaller will also help identify spam users in the group if they were added without the user's knowledge. A user will be able to add a new participant to a

voice call without adding them to their phonebook. Typically, a user needs to go through the process of saving a contact to add them to a group but with Truecaller, one can skip this tedious process. In an ongoing call, the app will reflect each participant's city and this will be visible to all people in the call. When initiating a call, Truecaller will also indicate when another user is busy in another call or offline. Importantly, all group voice calls are secured with symmetric encryption. Your calls are between your participants only! Additionally, the feature offers a smooth dial back option from call logs making it easy to manage the group (including adding or removing participants) when dialing them back.



Contd. From Page 1

## Main accused in Kokrajhar double

operation near Bedlangmari in Kokrajhar district of Assam. This was informed by Assam Police's Special DG - GP Singh. "Reference alleged kokrajhar double Rape and murder case - one of the accused tried to escape during search operation near Bedlangmari, Salbari and police had to fire to prevent him from escaping. He's grievously injured and hospitalised," GP Singh tweeted. Reference alleged kokrajhar double Rape and murder case - one of the accused tried to escape during search operation near Bedlangmari, Salbari and police had to fire to prevent him from escaping. He's grievously injured and hospitalised. @assampoliceAlso read: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh Police destroy NDFB training camp in joint operation Notably, Forizul Rahman is one of the main accused in the double rape and murder case. A total of seven persons including the three main accused- Nasibul Ali Sk and Forizul Rahman and Muzammel Seikh have been arrested by the police in the case. Two minors from Assam's Kokrajhar were gang-raped and later murdered by the accused. The two minors found hanging from a tree under mysterious circumstances at Abhiyakuthi village in Kokrajhar district on June 11.

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

by Border Roads Organization (BRO). The roads in Arunachal Pradesh were constructed under Vartak, Arunank, Brahmank and Udayak projects. Chief Minister of Assam Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Pema Khandu, Union Minister of Sports & Youth Affairs (Independent charge) Kiren Rijiju were also present in the programme. Speaking on the occasion, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that a strong NE is integral to India's security and progress. He further said that though the region has tremendous natural beauty and resources; the pace of development in the north east was very slow in the decades after independence. However, the region received a major developmental push with Prime Minister Narendra Modi taking charge of the country in 2014. Stating that the North East, surrounded by five foreign countries is geographically unique, Singh said that from defence point of view, the region is sensitive. He further said that for a long period the region experienced the challenges of insurgency, arms and narcotics smuggling etc. However, with development in recent past, many of these problems have been solved, he observed. While appreciating BRO for the critical role it has been playing in facilitating connectivity boost up in border areas, the Union Defence Minister said that this organization is endowed with enormous capabilities. Its role in nation building is also immense, he added. Whether it is security alertness or helping in the time of disasters, BRO has always been playing its role. The 12 roads inaugurated today would facilitate smooth movement of material and manpower for the armed forces. He termed the improvement in communication infrastructure at the border areas as initiatives under the Act East Policy. He informed that BRO's budget allocation has been increased to Rs 11,000 crore under the present central government from earlier Rs 3,000 crore and for that reason, the organisation could build 48,000 km of roads since 2014 at the geographically challenging and sensitive border areas of the country. Saying that India has never shown aggressive intent against any country, the Union Defence Minister strongly asserted that the country would not tolerate any misadventures towards its integrity and sovereignty from other nations. He also said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership a lot of reforms have been brought in defence sector while all three defence forces have been brought under a unified structure with the creation of the post of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). India would soon able to export weapons and defence equipment to other countries apart from becoming self-reliant to fulfil its own requirement as a lot of steps have been taken in this regard, he said. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma thanked the Union Defence Minister for prioritising Northeast's security through strengthening of road infrastructure in the difficult border areas of the region. He also highlighted how Rajnath Singh, as the Union Home Minister, played a crucial role in giving momentum to peace talks with NDFB and said that people of NE would always remember his contributions in bringing peace to the region. The Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to the Union Defence Minister for helping in setting up a 300 bedded covid hospital through DRDO at Guwahati during the second wave of the pandemic. Appreciating the role played by BRO in building roads at border areas, the Chief Minister said that the inauguration of Kimin-Potin Road along with 11 other roads will script a new chapter in facilitating smooth movements of goods and people in inaccessible border areas of Arunachal Pradesh. The vision of Prime Minister Modi to make North East the new engine of the country's growth will get further momentum with these developments, he asserted. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Union Minister of State (Independent) of Sports and Youth Development Kiren Rijiju also spoke on the occasion and thanked Union Defence Minister and BRO on behalf of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat was also present at the programme where BRO Director General Lt. Gen. Rajeev Chaudhary gave the welcome address. DoNER Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Ladakh R.K. Mathur virtually attended the programme.

## China's crewed spacecraft

the journey in six and half hours. The three men - Nie Haisheng, Liu Boming and Tang Hongbo - on board will spend three months on the Tianhe module, which is said to be orbiting at some 340km to 380km above the earth.It was China's seventh crewed mission to space but marked a number of firsts for the country - the first manned one during the construction of China's space station, the first in nearly five years after the country's last manned mission in 2016 and China's longest crewed space mission to date.The Shenzhou-12 - or "Divine Vessel" - capsule took off atop a Long March 2F rocket on Thursday at 9.22am from the Jiuquan satellite launch centre in the Gobi desert.Shenzhou-12 is the third of 11 missions - four of which will be crewed - needed to complete China's first full-fledged space station.Construction of the space station began in April with the launch of Tianhe, the first and largest of three modules. The station is expected to be completed by 2022.Thursday's launch is Beijing's latest demonstration of its growing confidence and capability in space. In recent months, China has returned rock and soil samples to earth from the surface of the moon and landed a six-wheeled robot on Mars; it also landed a craft on the far side of the moon in 2019.Once built, China's space station will be the only alternative to the two-decade-old, US-led International Space Station (ISS), which may be retired in 2024. Reuters news agency reported.The ISS - from which China is excluded - comprises Canada, Japan, the Russian Federation, the US, and 11 member states of the European Space Agency."The mission's launch was broadcast live on CCTV, China's state broadcaster and also live streamed on China's social media platforms on Thursday morning, drawing hundreds of millions of views and soon topping the trending list on China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo," a state media report said.Since 2003, China has launched six crewed missions and sent 11 astronauts into space, including Zhai Zhigang, who carried out China's first spacewalk ever on the 2008 Shenzhou mission.On May 30, a cargo spacecraft carrying supplies including food and equipment docked with China's first space station's key module Tianhe as part of the preparation for the station to host three astronauts this month.The unmanned Tianzhou-2, or "Heavenly Vessel" in Chinese, docked with Tianhe (the key module).The launch and docking of Tianzhou-2 was carried out a month after Tianhe, the first part of the space station Tiangong, "Heavenly Palace" in Chinese, was launched.In late April, China sent to space Tianhe, the management and control hub of Tiangong, the permanent space station, which it plans to complete by 2022 as part of its ambitious space programme.The Tianhe, which was sent to orbit by a rocket, can provide electricity and accommodate three astronauts for up to six months.

## 64 soap cases containing 723

Khatkhati PS along with 164 packets fine quality heroin weighing 2.125 KG. Another person namely Kevin Movi (23),S/O-Mote Movi, Dimapur 7th Mile has also been apprehended. They have carried the drugs in an Alto k 10 vehicle bearing registration No AS 01AB V 9058.Today's operation was carried by John Das, APS SDPO Bokajan, OC Khatkhati SI (UB) Mwblrik Brahma, Insp. Bhupen Kalita CI Barpathar, SI(UB) Charan Mohan Chetia, IC Laharijan PPSI(UB) Manujjal Gogoi, SI(UB) Mridul Rudra Paul, ASI Mohan Nath, Crpf C 20 camp Bokajan, APRG Camp Bokajan and operation team from Diphu.

## Court orders immediate release

the plea of Delhi Police seeking more time to verify the documents.On Wednesday, the court had deferred the order on release of the accused after Delhi Police sought time for verification of the address of the accused.Delhi police arrested the three student activists in a case of larger conspiracy related to the northeast Delhi riots last year.On Thursday, the accused moved the High Court complaining against Delhi Police for cause delays in their release from the jail.A bench of Justices Sidharth Mridul and Anup J. Bhambhani said, "We are not going to monitor the trial court proceedings."The High Court added it can only say that it has to deal with the matter with promptitude. "Our order has to be implemented, there cannot be two views on that," said the bench.After a brief hearing, the High Court posted the matter for hearing later in the day.The Delhi Police on Wednesday filed an appeal in the Supreme Court challenging the bail granted by the Delhi High Court to the three activists, seeking a stay on the order.

## Assam Health Minister launches

explains the bad behaviour of 'Covidiot', as an antagonist who endangers himself as well as others and thereby suffers the consequences, which is in sharp contrast to the good behaviour of 'Covideal' which is a model of intelligent response, watchfulness and civic responsibility during the pandemic. Covidiot is visualized as unthinking, undisciplined, irresponsible, reckless, self-indulgent, contemptuous of others' safety and scornful of scientific temper. On the other hand, Covideal is visualized as curious about the pandemic and the science behind it, ready to apply his/her mind to overcome the challenge, disciplined and willing to make necessary sacrifices. He/she follows relevant health advisories/guidelines, adopts good practices, takes precautions and makes the needed behavioural adjustments. The entire document is a demonstration of cartoon characters, their roles and activities comically explaining the science behind COVID-19 in the most simple, interesting and possible way to engage the urban population and espouse them for several behavioral changes for survival during and after COVID-19. These behavioural changes are the 'New Normal' which has the only strength to build resilience among the people during and after the pandemic. This work is based on an empirical research work done by Dr Anamika Ray Memorial Trust. Before the preparation of this document, the Trust has undertaken a formative research and developed about 50 Message Matrix on bad behaviour and its consequences and good behaviour and its benefit. Before finalizing the document, a pilot study was also conducted among randomly selected individuals belonging to different parts of Guwahati. 'Beyond COVID - New Normal for Urban Population' has been published by Dr Anamika Ray Memorial Trust with support from UNICEF, Assam and in collaboration with National Health Mission and Directorate of Health Services, Assam.

## Northeast Frontier Railways

Monday to reach Silghat Town at 4 am on Thursday.The Silchar - Coimbatore superfast special will run from June 26.The train will leave Silchar at 8:10 am every Tuesday to reach Coimbatore at 12 am on Friday.The Coimbatore - Silchar superfast special will run from June 27.The train will leave Coimbatore at 9:45 pm every Sunday to reach Silchar at 4:50 pm on Wednesday.The Trivandrum - Guwahati superfast summer special will run for four trips from June 19 to July 10.The train will leave Trivandrum at 6 pm every Saturday to reach Guwahati at 9 am on Tuesday.The Guwahati - Trivandrum superfast summer special will run for four trips from June 23 to July 14.The train will leave Guwahati at 6:45 am every Wednesday to reach Trivandrum at 11:10 pm on Friday.

## Zionnghaka, head of world's

Lalpa Kohhran Thar, performed the last rite for the leader, while many, including some of his wives, made obituary remarks during the funeral, Ramzuava, who is of the follower of Ziona, said. Camera, mobile phone and other electronic gadgets were strictly prohibited during the funeral, he added. Ziona, who headed Lalpa Kohhran Thar, a millennial denomination founded by his uncle Khuanguahaha in 1942, had died in a hospital in Aizawl on Sunday around 3 pm. He was suffering from diabetes, high blood pressure and other old-age related complications. He remained unconscious after being treated at his residence and was taken to Trinity Hospital in Aizawl, where doctors declared him 'brought dead.' Trinity hospital director Dr. Lalrintluanga Zahau had said that the patriarch was already dead by the time he was brought to the hospital. As per Mizo tradition, he was supposed to be buried on Monday. However, his family and members of the religious community refused to bury him as they were not convinced about his death. They claimed that the leader regained a pulse after he was brought to his residence and that his body was still warm and not stiff either. Later, the family declared that the leader passed away finally on Monday around 9 pm, when his pulse stopped beating and body become cold. Ziona was married to 39 wives, of which 38 are still alive. He has more than 90 children and over 30 grandchildren. Nearly 200 family members live in his four-storey mansion located at Baktawng village in Serchhip district about 60 km from Aizawl. After the death of his father Chana in 1997, Ziona headed the religious sect founded by his uncle. The total number of his followers is estimated to be about 2,500 belonging to over 430 families. The religious sect was referred to by the locals as "Chana Pawl" (Chana's sect/group), while the sect members referred to it as "Lalpa Kohhran thar" (New Church of God). It is more or less a millennial denomination as it believes in millenarianism. The religious head is given high respect and treated almost equal to God. The sect allowed its male members to be polygamous. Their community is called "Lalruat Chhuanthar" or Chhuanthar (the new generation established by God). Chhuanthar is sometimes used to refer to the religious sect.

# We didn't back doubling of vaccine dosing gap: Indian scientists

**New Delhi, June 17 :** The ministry of health announced the decision to change the gap from 6-8 weeks to 12-16 weeks on May 13, at a time when supplies of the shot were falling short of demand and infections were surging across the country.The ministry of health announced the decision to change the gap from 6-8 weeks to 12-16 weeks on May 13, at a time when supplies of the shot were falling short of demand and infections were surging across the country.It said the extended gap was recommended by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), based on real-life evidence mainly from Britain. Yet the NTAGI scientists, classified by the government as three of the 14 "core members", said the body did not have enough data to make such a recommendation.M.D. Gupte, a former director of the state-run National Institute of Epidemiology, said the NTAGI had backed increasing the dosing interval to 8-12 weeks - the gap

advised by the World Health Organization. But he added that the group had no data concerning the effects of a gap beyond 12 weeks."Eight to 12 weeks is something we all accepted, 12 to 16 weeks is something the government has come out with," he added. "This may be alright, may not be. We have no information on that."This was echoed by his NTAGI colleague Mathew Varghese, who said the group's recommendation was only for 8-12 weeks.The health ministry, citing the head of NTAGI's working group on COVID-19, said that the dosing decision was based on scientific evidence. "There was no dissenting voices among the NTAGI members," the ministry said on Twitter. The ministry's statement on May 13 said that it had accepted the 12-16 weeks recommendation from NTAGI's COVID working group, as had a group of mainly government officials tasked with vaccine administration, known as NEGVAC.Government health officials told a news conference on May

15 the gap was not increased to address a vaccine shortage but was a "scientific decision".J.P. Muliylil, a member of the seven-strong COVID working group, said there had been discussions within the NTAGI on increasing the vaccine dosage interval but that the body had not recommended 12-16 weeks."That specific number was not quoted," he said, without elaborating.N.K.Arora, the COVID working group head, declined to comment to Reuters on its recommendations but said all its decisions were taken collectively by the NTAGI at large.A NEGVAC representative said it "respects the decisions of the NTAGI and use them for our work", declining to elaborate.Real-world data released early last month by South Korea showed that one dose of the vaccines from AstraZeneca and Pfizer was 86.6% effective in preventing infections among people aged 60 and older.Muliylil said this increased confidence within the advisory body that delaying a second shot would not be

harmful.The AstraZeneca vaccine accounts for nearly 90% of the 257.5 million vaccine doses administered in India.The dispute over doses comes amid criticism from some scientists that the government had been slow to respond to a new virus variant that led to a spike in infections in April and May.The government has denied being slow to react, saying state-run laboratories had studied variants in real time and shared data with local authorities to allow them to take the necessary action.Shahid Jameel, a top Indian virologist who recently quit a government panel on virus variants after criticising New Delhi over its response to the pandemic, said the authorities should clarify their position on the reasons for the decision to double the gap between doses."In a situation where we have a variant of concern spreading, we should really be vaccinating people at scale and making sure that they are protected," he added.

# New SP Interacted with the Media

**Golaghat, Jun 17:** Today New Superintendent of Police Golaghat Dr Robin Kumar, IPS interacted with media persons . The meet was held at the SP office where Senior Journalists Apurba Ballabh Goswami , Diganta Bhuyan , Rituraj Baruah , Jaideep Gupta , Diganta Bora, Dipmoni Khatoniari, Pankaj Hazarika , young journalists Mustak Hussain, Siddhartha Handique , Amit Nagori, Probin Das, Ashok Sahu were present and stated about various problems of Golaghat district and the town in the knowledge of SP . SP Dr Robin Kumar noted the problems and has assured that he will try to sort it out to best of his capability with the coordination of all . Dr Robin Kumar informed the media about ' Crime Free Golaghat ' campaign and has asked the Golaghatians to inform any crime related activities on the number 84718 43460 . He told immediate action will be taken . In the meeting Additional Superintendent of Police Anjan Pandit, Deputy Superintendent of Police (HQ) Madhurjya Prasad Baruah were also present .

# Defence Minister dedicated to the nation 12 roads

**North Lakhimpur, June 17:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh dedicated to the nation twelve roadd,built by Border Roads Organization (BRO) in the Northern and Eastern border areas today, in the presence of CM of Assam Dr.Himanta Biswa Sharma, CM of Arunachal Prema Khandu,Donor Minister Kiren Rijiju, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat Minister for Development of North-Eastern Region Dr. Jitendra Singh was among the dignitaries who attended the event virtually.At an event organised in the Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBP) Camp,Kimin, Arunachal Pradesh, Minister Rajnath Singh e-inaugurated a 20 k.m. long double lane Kimin-Potin Road along with nine other roads in Arunachal Pradesh and one each in the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir. The roads have been constructed under several projects of BRO. Speaking on the occasion, Rajnath Singh lauded BRO for its contribution in infrastructure development of remote border areas of the country. He said the roads inaugurated today hold strategic and socio-economic importance as they will play an important role in strengthening national security as well as promoting development of the North-Eastern Region." These roads will be helpful in fulfilling the needs of our Armed Forces and transporting necessities like medicines and ration to remote areas," he said.The Defence Minister further added that these road projects are part of the'Act East Policy' of the Government. He reiterated the resolve of the Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the development of North-East, describing the region as the gateway to not only the overall development of the country but also to the nation's relations with East Asian countries.Rajnath Singh paid tribute to the soldiers who showed exemplary courage during the Galwan Valley incident last year and made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the nation.He said India is a peace loving nation but its response to aggression has been resolute. Rajnath Singh also touched upon some of the major reforms and constant efforts undertaken by the Government." We are actively working towards making India a defence manufacturing hub, Self-reliance in defence production will reduce our dependence on imports,increase exports and strengthen our economy", he said. In the event, Donor Minister Kiren Rijiju, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Prema Khandu,Chief Minister of Assam Dr.Himanta Biswa Sharma and DG Border Roads Lt. General Rajeev Choudhury also spoke.

# 850 oxygen plants being set up across India from PM Cares Fund, says DRDO

**New Delhi, June 17 :** The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) on Monday (June 14, 2021) said that 850 oxygen plants are being set up across India from the PM Cares Fund to strengthen fight against COVID-19.C Satish Reddy, Secretary DRDO, said that they are prepared to provide all kinds of support when the need arises. He added that more flying hospitals would be ready, as was provided by DRDO during the second wave of COVID-19, to help the people."We established temporary hospitals specific to COVID 19 in many cities. These are modular hospitals, we call it flying hospitals, and these have been made in a way that the virus does not go out of hospitals. If there is any third wave, all the hospitals will be taking the load, and the government is discussing these aspects with various stakeholders," Reddy said.He underlined how DRDO is primarily carrying out research in advanced technology in defence and also concentrating on developing high-quality technology that will be beneficial for the people, at a lower cost to match the international level.Meanwhile, India on Tuesday (June 15) reported the lowest daily rise in COVID-19 cases since April 1. According to the Union Health Ministry data, the country recorded 60,471 new infections, taking the total caseload to 2,95,70,881. In the past 24 hours, the country also added 2,726 deaths and the death toll has now mounted to 3,77,031.

# COVID-19 vaccines 'highly effective' against hospitalisation from Delta variant, claims study

**New Delhi, June 17 :** A new study has claimed that the COVID-19 vaccines are 'highly effective' against hospitalisation from the highly transmissible Delta variant of concern, which was first identified in India.The analysis published by the Public Health England (PHE) on Monday (June 14, 2021) said that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 96% effective against hospitalisation after 2 doses, while the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is 92% effective against hospitalisation after two shots. "These are comparable with vaccine effectiveness against hospitalisation from the Alpha variant," the study said.The analysis included 14,019 cases of the Delta variant - 166 of whom were hospitalised - between April 12 and June 4, looking at emergency hospital admissions in England.



# England v India: women's Test match, day one - as it happened

## England's Heather Knight narrowly misses century before India fight back

**London, June 17 :** A very good day of Test cricket in the end. England got off to a very bright start thanks to Lauren Winfield-Hill, who belted a couple of sixes in a cheerful display. Tammy Beaumont kept going when Heather knight came to the middle, with the former making 66 and the latter very nearly getting a century with 95. But from 230 for 2, that's when India started clawing back into the game. Nat Sciver fell after an aggressive 42, then Amy Jones followed quickly, creating enough disruption that Knight joined the exodus. Georgia Elwiss didn't last long, and it was down to Dunkley on debut to join with the ever-so-experienced Katherine Brunt to see out the day. Dunkley has shown that she can do what's required in this format, and will resume tomorrow with the chance to take England on. The change in the game was all down to India's spinners, with Rana taking three wickets and Deepti two. They were sufficiently suffocating, and just kept asking questions of the batters for long enough to draw mistakes. Still, this is probably already a competitive score given the usual progression of women's Tests. England won't want to soak up too much time batting tomorrow, they would be better off going after faster runs even if it means being bowled out. I'm not confident we'll see that approach, as caution tends to overtake a lot of players in this format. That's it from us today, we'll be back on the OBO with Day 2 tomorrow.92nd over: England 269-6 (Dunkley 12, Brunt 7) Last over of the day to be bowled by Rana. Last over because we've run out of time, not because we've reached the 100 required. Dunkley tries the cut shot again, big under-edge to cover. Not shy. Blocks out the rest, and Dunkley sees out the day.91st over: England 269-6 (Dunkley 12, Brunt 7) The bowling keeps chopping and changing. Goswami is off after two overs, only one of them with the new ball. Pandey is given the Kooka instead. Bowls nicely, swinging it into the pads, hits Brunt but it would have been going down. They get a leg bye. Gets a better line next ball and it hits the pad of Dunkley, with Pandey appealing vociferously. With the

swing, that might have been missing leg stump even though it hit her in front of middle and off India go for the review, and it shows another thing. A faint little inside edge. Sue Redfern once again has her decision vindicated by the review system. Pandey keeps that dangerous line going, swinging into the pads, and Dunkley has her work cut out to keep safe.90th over: England 267-6 (Dunkley 11, Brunt 7) Rana will get to bowl spin with the new ball, and see whether



there's anything for her in terms of pace off the wicket or bounce. Dunkley plays a very good cut shot but Shafali dives well backward of point and stops any run. Runs come from a batting error though, as Dunkley plays for turn when the ball skips on straight, and edges two runs wide f'slip. Dunkley into double figures, England five minutes from safety.89th over: England 265-6 (Dunkley 9, Brunt 7) Now the new ball comes out. Goswami has had her warm-up over, and is ready to go with the fresh one. They're using Kookaburra balls in this match, not Dukes, for some reason. God knows with the intricacies of cricket sometimes. But Goswami makes it swing! Straight away, red and shiny, seam upright, it swings big down the leg side. Brunt signals to her partner. The next ball does the same again. If she gets that line corrected, starting the ball outside off stump, it'll be hard for Brunt to keep out. She over-corrects to the off side, and gets wided for her trouble. No run from the bat in that over, but it didn't threaten.88th over: England 264-6 (Dunkley 9,

Brunt 7) Deepti Sharma continues, so that's why we haven't seen the new ball. Just a single from the over to Brunt.87th over: England 263-6 (Dunkley 9, Brunt 6) This is interesting. Goswami will come on to bowl, with 24 minutes left in the day, but no new ball as yet. Will they keep Rana at the other end, or will Goswami switch in the new ball after a couple of range-finders? Three catchers in the cordon. Straight up and down on the off stump goes The Gos, and Slam

through the leg side but it's well stopped with a dive at midwicket. Only a Brunt single from the over.83rd over: England 255-6 (Dunkley 4, Brunt 3) From slip to the bowling crease, Deepti keeps rolling the arm over. Dunkley steps out, gets her front leg out of the way in T20 style, and flicks behind square for a run. Manipulating her approach to the ball to find a gap. That's good batting. A second bat-pad comes in on the leg side for Brunt, but she clouts three runs through midwicket nonetheless.82nd over: England 251-6 (Dunkley 3, Brunt 0) That'll strengthen the argument to keep the spinners on. Goswami may well not mind, she's done a lot of work today. Katherine Brunt to the middle, can bat. All-run four! That's a sight to see. Elwiss backs away from Rana and carves through backward point, and Deepti at slip takes a while to realise that there's no one back there. She tracks back to the boundary rope, where the ball has pulled up just inside, and launches the long throw back. But at Dunkley's urging, Elwiss comes back for the fourth. Dunkley was done about a pitch length before Elwiss. And it seems that the run tires out Elwiss more than Deepti. Because the very next ball has some lovely drift, away from the right-hander, and Elwiss steps into a cover drive but doesn't time her swing, taking a thick edge to slip. It's travelling, but Deepti snares it at ankle height.

Dunkley just gets forward in defensive pose. Next ball, cuts close to her body to cover and darts for the run, even though Harmanpreet sprawls to stop the ball passing by. Brunt stabs a ball off her pad and gets through for a run.86th over: England 261-6 (Dunkley 8, Brunt 5) Busy work from Brunt, backing away and cutting a couple of times but finding the field, charging and smoking it straight to mid on for no run. Getting a little annoyed at no value for shots. More tweaks to the field, more catchers in close on the leg side, and Rana gets through her over without conceding a run.85th over: England 261-6 (Dunkley 8, Brunt 5) Best moment so far for Dunkley. She sees Deepti overpitch, waits for the ball to float up, then whisks her bat through the line of it, out through cover for four.84th over: England 256-6 (Dunkley 4, Brunt 4) Rana around the wicket, Poonam Raut is one of the players at bat-pat now, so maybe she wasn't having a back problem as I thought was the case earlier. Dunkley opens up that stance again and whips hard

through the leg side but it's well stopped with a dive at midwicket. Only a Brunt single from the over.83rd over: England 255-6 (Dunkley 4, Brunt 3) From slip to the bowling crease, Deepti keeps rolling the arm over. Dunkley steps out, gets her front leg out of the way in T20 style, and flicks behind square for a run. Manipulating her approach to the ball to find a gap. That's good batting. A second bat-pad comes in on the leg side for Brunt, but she clouts three runs through midwicket nonetheless.82nd over: England 251-6 (Dunkley 3, Brunt 0) That'll strengthen the argument to keep the spinners on. Goswami may well not mind, she's done a lot of work today. Katherine Brunt to the middle, can bat. All-run four! That's a sight to see. Elwiss backs away from Rana and carves through backward point, and Deepti at slip takes a while to realise that there's no one back there. She tracks back to the boundary rope, where the ball has pulled up just inside, and launches the long throw back. But at Dunkley's urging, Elwiss comes back for the fourth. Dunkley was done about a pitch length before Elwiss. And it seems that the run tires out Elwiss more than Deepti. Because the very next ball has some lovely drift, away from the right-hander, and Elwiss steps into a cover drive but doesn't time her swing, taking a thick edge to slip. It's travelling, but Deepti snares it at ankle height.

## Locatelli fires Italy past Switzerland and through to Euro 2020 knockout stage



**Milan, June 17 :** This is not a drill. Six days into Euro 2020, Italy became the first team to qualify for the knockout stages courtesy of two brilliant goals from Manuel Locatelli and another from Ciro Immobile, and a display of collective strength that should put the rest of the field on notice. Spirited and united, quick on the ball and ravenous without it, efficient and entertaining, this Italy team has been the revelation of the tournament so far, and here Switzerland had no answers. There is something of Liverpool's 2019-20 title winners in Roberto Mancini's Italy side, a thoroughly modern 4-3-3 formation with daringly high full-backs, brilliant pressing wingers and an ability to control possession without ever fetishising it. Amid a carnival atmosphere at the Stadio Olimpico, Italy put the game to bed within an hour, stretching their unbeaten run to 29 games, of which the last 10 have been clean-sheet wins. The 3-0 win over Turkey on Friday had been impressive enough. The real question, in the context of Turkey's implosion against Wales earlier in the day, was whether they could mete out the same treatment to a superior opponent. That much was answered in a rampant first

half-hour in which Italy tore into the Swiss with their characteristic fast-twitch attacks and concerted pressing game, deservedly going ahead through Locatelli. Mancini had had the luxury of naming an almost unchanged team, with Giovanni di Lorenzo replacing the injured Alessandro Florenzi at right-back, and Lazio's Francesco Acerbi a first-half substitute for the injured captain Giorgio Chiellini. That aside, it was pretty much business as usual. Jorginho, Locatelli and Nicolò Barella controlled the midfield; Leonardo Spinazzola was again an incendiary presence zipping forward from left-back. It was Spinazzola's lovely spin and cross from which Immobile should have put Italy ahead after 10 minutes. A disallowed goal by Chiellini - he had handled the ball shortly before slamming in Lorenzo Insigne's corner from close range - offered only temporary respite. On 26 minutes, Locatelli stepped up to play a sumptuous left-footed ball, first time, out to Domenico Berardi on the right wing. Instead of admiring his handiwork he carried on running. As Berardi twisted and wriggled and crossed, Locatelli was in the perfect location to tap the ball in, having sprinted fully 50



claimed half-century stands for each of their first three wickets, with a top order who have achieved so much in white-ball cricket all managing important contributions. Lauren Winfield-Hill, back opening for England for the first time since 2017, at one point seemed to be ripping up the Test match batting rule book entirely after she ferociously pulled Shikha Pandey for six over midwicket - the first time any England player has hit a six in a women's Test since 2006 - and then repeated the feat 10 balls later. Though Winfield-Hill (35) edged an away swinger from Pooja Vastrakar to Taniya Bhatia behind the stumps shortly before lunch, her opening partner, Tammy Beaumont (66), and the No 4, Nat Sciver (42), both continued the accumulation, with England looking well on top until Sciver's dismissal in the evening session - the dangerous all-rounder leg before to Sharma - sparked the collapse. For much of the day India were left ruing their missed chance to make an early inroad: Winfield-Hill survived a scare in the seventh over of the day, on three, when Smriti Mandhana shelled a sitter at first slip.

yards to finish the move he had started. Switzerland weren't bad, as such: unlike with Turkey, you could at least see the bones of a plan, working the ball up the flanks before releasing Haris Seferovic and Breel Embolo up front. But as they patiently tried to build, they found themselves ambushed by successive waves of blue. With Acerbi and Leonardo Bonucci devouring everything in the air, the long ball was no sort of option either. And so, shorn of ideas, they simply sat back: bystanders in their own tournament game. The second period at least began a little more equitably, as Switzerland pushed a little higher and enjoyed some spells of possession. This, too, turned out to be a cruel illusion. In reality this was simply Italy playing with time signatures, catching their breath, inviting pressure in order to create space for themselves. Six minutes into the half Locatelli again pushed forward into that space, collected Barella's unpressed pass, and looked up to see Switzerland's defenders standing off him. So Locatelli let fly from 22 yards. It was the sort of sweet contact, the sort of ball flight, the sort of satisfying thwack against the net, that will have signalled to Locatelli that this was one of those nights: when the planets align and the wavelengths are just right and everything you do just works. Yann Sommer didn't even bother to move. And so, with victory secure, the informal part of the evening could begin. Insigne and Berardi were given the last 20 minutes off; Di Lorenzo put his masculinity on the line to block a shot from the disappointing Xherdan Shaqiri; Gianluigi Donnarumma, newly signed for Paris Saint-Germain, made a fine low save from the substitute Steven Zuber. With two minutes remaining, Immobile finally got his goal, scoring from distance after Rafael Tolói won the ball high up the pitch. Two games in, Italy look like a team without a serious weakness.

## Real Madrid confirm Sergio Ramos will leave after 16 years at club

**London, June 17 :** After 16 seasons, 671 games, 101 goals, five league titles and four European Cups, Sergio Ramos is leaving Real Madrid. The club's captain will say his final goodbye on Thursday, 13 days before his contract formally runs out. Unable to reach an agreement with the club president, Florentino Pérez, to continue, Ramos becomes a free agent on 1 July. Although he is 35, he has no intention of retiring and the centre-back's final destination is still not finalised, with reports linking him to a catalogue of clubs including Paris Saint-Germain, Manchester City and Sevilla. Although the news came as no real surprise after months in which negotiations over a new deal had come to a halt and, with Ramos's relationship with Pérez a difficult one all too often played out in the press, Madrid's announcement on Wednesday evening still had a huge impact. In May 2019, Ramos had said that he "would play for



Madrid for free" but he had wanted a new two-year deal on the same €15m salary, minus a 10% reduction applied across the squad because of the coronavirus crisis. Real would offer only a single year, and recently signed David Alaba on a free transfer from Bayern Munich. One last round of talks between Ramos and Pérez this week failed to break the deadlock, if indeed there was ever really any intention of doing so. Only Paco Gento has more winners' medals with the club than Ramos, who joined Madrid from Sevilla for €27m in 2005, aged 19. He was the first Spanish signing made by Pérez, going on to win 22 trophies with the club, as well as the World

Cup and two European Championships with Spain. A hugely charismatic figure, his most significant moment was the goal he scored in the 2014 Champions League final against Atlético Madrid with the clock on 92.48. That header rescued his side, took the game to extra time and allowed Real to secure their long awaited 10th European Cup. Ramos's career at the Bernabéu has come to an unexpectedly flat end, injury allowing him to make just four appearances in 2021 and leading to him being left out of the Spain squad for Euro 2020, at a time when he was closing in on an all-time record for international caps. He has played 180 times for Spain and under 14 managerial spells at Real. His final game for the club turned out to be the Champions League semi-final defeat at Stamford Bridge when he was not fully fit and subsequently sat out the rest of the season. Ramos will be joined by Pérez at a Bernabéu farewell on Thursday.

## Rory McIlroy confident of breaking major hoodoo with victory in US Open

**London, June 18:** Rory McIlroy is bullish about his chances of ending his seven year major hoodoo when the 121st US Open shoves off on Thursday morning. The world No 11 said he has charted progress since formally teaming up with the English swing coach Pete Coven in an effort to revive his fortunes and enters the season's third major with renewed confidence after a productive week of practice in Florida. "I'm feeling good about where my game is," McIlroy said. "It's about going out there and playing as free as I can and having that mentality

that I had as a 22 year old and just trying to get into that mindset." The technical and mechanical parts of it are all there. It's just a matter of going out in a US Open setting and just trusting what I've been doing in practice." The 32-year-old Northern Irishman, who secured the first of his four major titles at the 2011 US Open at Congressional in Bethesda, Maryland, remains among the headliners as the world's best have descended on this city owned oceanside course. The winner will claim roughly \$2.25m (£1.59m) from a \$12.5m purse, the highest among professional



golf's four bedrock events. McIlroy will set off alongside the world No 1, Dustin Johnson, and Justin Rose in a threesome of former

US Open champions. "The setup's great," McIlroy said. "It's nice to come to a venue where we all know it pretty well from sort of being on the PGA

Tour schedule." There's not really any secrets out there. We all know what to do and how to play it, and it's just a matter of who can execute over the four days." McIlroy will try to follow in the footsteps of Phil Mickelson, who snapped his own slightly longer drought in becoming the oldest major winner in history at the US PGA Championship last month. The six-times US Open runner-up, who turned 51 on Wednesday and required a special exemption for entry before the win at Kiawah Island last month, will attempt to become only the sixth player to

complete the career grand slam, at the major that has caused him so much agony down the years. "It's been a special place for me to grow up and play our high-school matches, play a lot of golf out here as a municipal course," Mickelson said. "To make the course open to the masses is a special thing, and to have a major championship on that venue is exciting. Although it's a lot different than when I grew up 35 years ago, it still is a special site, and it's in remarkable shape." The many plotlines converging on the Pacific bluffs have largely been

overshadowed by the high profile squabble between Bryson DeChambeau and Brooks Koepka, who are on opposite ends of the draw. DeChambeau won his first major last year at the US Open at Winged Foot, where he finished six shots ahead of the second placed Matthew Wolff. Koepka is a two-times winner, having secured the title in 2017 and 2018. The US Open fancies itself as the toughest test in golf and the narrow fairways, dense rough and glassy greens throughout the 7,652-yard South Course surely fit what has become a familiar recipe.



# Denmark to make loud and clear their love for stricken Christian Eriksen



**London, June 17 :** Play will stop in the 10th minute of Thursday's game against Belgium and there will follow acclaim for the midfielder. A little after 6pm local time, Christian Eriksen may well expect the windows of his temporary lodgings to start shaking. He can see Parken, Denmark's national stadium, from his room in Rigshospitalet and one can only imagine how dislocating it must feel to watch thousands of red shirts funnel through the glorious summer heat while his teammates prepare to face Belgium inside. On the off chance he could not hear the fans before, their noise will resonate loud and clear in the 10th minute of the game: play will stop and they will rise as one to acclaim their No 10 in a show of appreciation, love and sheer relief that he is listening at all. It is a crazy situation for him to be in," said Kasper Hjulmand, the Denmark head coach. Eriksen should have been out there doing what he has done since 2010, making his side tick. Until their world turned upside down on Saturday, Hjulmand had been planning something special on the pitch for

this one: Eriksen was to play an unspecified new role, one intended to give the Belgians extra food for thought, that the pair had discussed for a month. Now nothing will be as expected and the biggest unknown, with the comparative prosaic matter of retaining an interest in Euro 2020 sitting alongside the emotional outpouring, is exactly how everyone makes sense of it all. Saturday had begun as a carnival. Denmark is newly free of most Covid-19 restrictions and, with flags lining Copenhagen's most popular thoroughfares, football represented a perfectly timed release. Then came the intake of breath that stopped an entire country in its tracks, Eriksen's collapse in the 42nd minute against Finland prompting fears of the very worst. The sense of shock was prevalent even when good news about his condition emerged, so Belgium's visit feels like the moment everyone can exhale as one. "I know both the players and I are taking some great steps after what happened," Hjulmand said. "We have more hours with good feelings than bad feelings and we are ready to do our

best." Denmark opted to train at their base in Helsingør on Wednesday, but Hjulmand offered his players the chance to visit Parken quietly in the evening and take their time to recalibrate; those who found it helpful could travel there by bus to process the scenes and feelings that confronted them at shockingly close quarters, rather than being overwhelmed upon arriving for the Belgium game. "The reactions will be different from player to player," said Yussuf Poulsen, the centre-forward. Denmark find themselves in a situation nobody could adequately prepare for. Yet there is an appetite to get back on track: to make this a radiant occasion both by honouring Eriksen and winning. Over the past couple of days, talk around the camp has centred more willingly on football. When the squad trained on Monday for the first time since Eriksen's cardiac arrest, a sombre mood offered little suggestion anyone was ready for a return to normality and it was impossible not to sympathise with the intense frustration felt that Uefa essentially forced them to expose themselves in deciding whether the Finland game resumed. By Tuesday the smiles had begun to return and Hjulmand was at pains to point out that standard preparations - meetings, video clips, training routines - would not be neglected. The sense is that all bets are off: who could fault Denmark if the occasion simply proved too much, but who would be surprised if they ripped into Belgium and played the game of their lives? This time they will be backed by 25,000 supporters, meaning Parken will be two-thirds full, after an increase from the previous 15,900 was agreed. The sun will be out again; it

will be an atmosphere ripe for a happier place in the history books. Belgium will contribute to it willingly. "A celebration for football and for Christian," was how Roberto Martínez described the event his players will walk into. Romelu Lukaku said Belgium would kick the ball out if they are in possession when the clock strikes 6.10pm. Eriksen and Lukaku, teammates at Internazionale, have swapped messages. "I told him to take his time and if he wants to talk I am always here," Lukaku said, explaining he will contact Eriksen again after their teams have met. In plain football terms, Denmark cannot afford to lose given all three of their Group B rivals have wins to their name. Belgium beat them twice in the Nations League last year and Denmark will find themselves scrapping with Russia and Finland for progression if they cannot reverse that recent trend. For all the undoubted sincerity of his goodwill, Martínez's approach will be businesslike; another win would put them in the last 16 and it is a chance to give minutes to Kevin De Bruyne, who has travelled after an improvement in his recovery from a fractured eye socket. But Belgium are not simply coming up against a football team, their tactics, their structure, things for which they can plot and plan. "We're not only going to play for Christian," Hjulmand said. "We're going to play for who we are, our identity and the whole of Denmark who experienced what happened with us. We're not done with this tournament." If Denmark can master the intangibles, they might not be. Even if that is a step too far, the din that reaches Eriksen's ears a few hundred metres away will be joyful enough.

## India v New Zealand how the World Test Championship finalists shape up

**New Delhi, June 17 :** Contrasting cricketing nations meet on Friday with a \$1.6m bonanza for the winners - but the real prize on offer is glory. The India captain Virat Kohli (left) and his New Zealand counterpart Kane Williamson of New Zealand will lead their teams in the World Test Championship final. Cricket, like an elderly relative, prefers to take its time. After inventing the Test match in 1877, it needed 94 years to come up with the one-day international. Now, another 50 years on, we finally have a World Test Championship. Naturally this entailed a qualifying process that was too fiddly for a mere fan to fathom. It ran for only two years, one of them ravaged by Covid, yet somehow it has produced the right finalists. Australia and England, Test cricket's founding members, missed out, finishing third and fourth in the race. The runaway leaders were India, who won 12 Tests in the qualifying period and lost only four. The runners-up were New Zealand, who won eight and lost four - the same as Australia, but the Kiwis prevailed by the barest of margins™. New

Bowl in August 2018, a match England won. The British weather is doing its best to be even-handed. After the mini-heatwave, the pitch will be dry, so the Indian spinners will be licking their lips. But the air is due to turn cool and damp, which will make the Kiwis very much at home. New Zealand used a two-Test series against England as a warm-up, rotating liberally, and still emerged as clear winners. India preferred to hold an intra-squad game in a move that smacked of arrogance, though it paid off for their young guns. Shubman Gill made 85 off 135 balls, and Rishabh Pant raced to 121 off only 94. His ability to dominate could make all the difference. Both teams are solid and led by an all-time great. Kane Williamson and Virat Kohli are both in their prime: in Tests over the past five years, they have averaged 60 and 59 respectively. But both have laboured in England, and only Kohli has conquered those demons. After flopping on his first tour in 2014, he was masterly in 2018, making two hundreds in a low-scoring series. Both teams are exceptional. India have an



Zealand are not often underdogs any more, but they will be here. Their population is 4.9m, whereas India's is 1.4bn. So the Indian selectors have 278 times as many people to choose from as their NZ counterparts. In a more sombre league table - for coronavirus cases - the contrast is just as sharp, with India now second only to the United States, and New Zealand an enviable 180th. The match is a five-day Test, starting on Friday 18 June, with the option of a sixth to make up time lost to bad weather. The ball will be the Dukes, the bowlers' best friend. The prize money is \$1.6m (£1.13m) and there's a mace to be held aloft by the winning captain, but the real prize on offer is glory. The final was going to be at Lord's, but then Covid came along, so cricket's leaving home. The venue is the Ageas Bowl in Southampton, which has a hotel on site. It has hosted six Tests in 10 years, two of them won by England, one by West Indies, the other three drawn, including the last two (both last summer, in England's series against Pakistan). The average score per wicket is 33.58, which makes for good viewing. New Zealand have not played a Test at the Ageas before. India have, in 2018, and they lost - defeated by Moeen Ali's mercurial offspin and Sam Curran's breezy batting. Fans watch the first day of play during India's previous visit to the Ageas

entire attack in the top 20 of the Test rankings: Jasprit Bumrah, Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami to bring the pace and swing, Ravichandra Ashwin and Ravi Jadeja to supply the turn and guile. Ashwin has played 46 Tests in the past five years, the same number as Jimmy Anderson. The difference is that Ashwin has taken far more wickets (233 to Anderson's 163). New Zealand, too, have a rich seam of seamers: Tim Southee is No 2 in the world, Neil Wagner No 4, Trent Boult No 13, Kyle Jamieson No 20. Their left-arm spinner, Ajaz Patel, may be the only journeyman in the village. New Zealand have the world's best slip-catching cordon. Their excellence even extends to Kane Williamson's dog. India used to take little interest in fielding, but the IPL has fixed that - along with Kohli's facial expressions, which tend to come down hard on any fumble. New Zealand keep calm and play old-school Test cricket: they're the kind of team Chris Silverwood wants England to be, all observing the eternal verities, building an innings, bowling line and length (apart from Wagner, who loves to deliver chin music). India are more exciting, more individual, more flamboyant and less dependable. If the game was all about talent, they would win hands down. Because it is also about temperament and teamwork, New Zealand have a chance.

## Miranchuk slots winner against Finland to kickstart Russia's Euro 2020 tilt

**Moscow, June 17 :** Finland were left to rue an early goal chalked off for a marginal offside decision as they fell to a 1-0 defeat against Russia in their Euro 2020 Group B match. Joel Pohjanpalo, who scored in the 1-0 victory against Denmark at the Parken Stadium in Copenhagen on Saturday - a game marked by Christian Eriksen's cardiac arrest on the pitch - had the ball in the net in the fifth minute, but his wild celebrations were cut short by VAR as he was revealed to be slightly offside. "I don't know how far Joel was offside, but it was so close. It's all about fine margins, and today they didn't go our way," the Finland captain, Paulus Arajuuri, said. "It gives you a huge energy boost when you score. And when it's ruled out, it takes a lot of energy out of you, too." The Finns were undone by a goal in first-half stoppage time by

Aleksei Miranchuk, and though they battled hard throughout the second half they could not find an equaliser. Miranchuk, the man of the match, scooped his shot into the far top corner as Russia, unbeaten against Finland since their first meeting in 1912, made amends for



their defeat against Belgium with their first win in their past seven matches at European Championship finals. "We got the job done, we are moving forward," Miranchuk said. "We need to capitalise on our moments. This is a tournament that features good

teams, so each moment can be a unique chance. You have to score." The Finland coach Markku Kanerva said: "Unfortunately the efficiency today with the goal-scoring chances wasn't on a high level, and the Russian defenders were able to block our shots. Overall the offensive game was OK, in the second half we had many more opportunities to control the ball for long periods, but this is not a game of statistics - it's all about having the skill to score and to defend against chances." It was Russia, fired up by the home crowd, who took control in the first half, with Finland sitting back and soaking up the pressure. The visitors waited for the occasional break and Pohjanpalo and Teemu Pukki tested the goalkeeper Matvei Safonov. An injury to Mario Fernandes after a rough fall in the 26th minute did not shift Russia's focus and his replacement Vyacheslav Karavaev almost tapped in a cutback at the far post minutes

after coming on. Their dominance finally paid off in injury time thanks to a piece of magic from Miranchuk, who took on two defenders on the right, changed direction and scooped the ball into the far corner with a superb left footed effort with Russia's first shot on target. "A stinging loss," Pohjanpalo said. "We had our chances, and I guess the goal was somewhat offside, can't help it. Too bad our defensive display wasn't enough for a clean sheet this time. Now all we can do is look ahead and go beat Belgium." The result moves Stanislav Cherchesov's side up to second in the standings on three points, ahead of Finland thanks to the head-to-head result. Belgium, who beat Russia 3-0 in their opener, top the group ahead of their game against Denmark on Thursday. Finland will now face Belgium, their toughest Group B opponents, in their final game, and depending on other results they may need a draw or a win if they are to have any hope of making it through to the knockout stage.

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