

# The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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Is Britain really about to embrace chaos and misery for the sake...

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Richard Freeman claims he 'would never put a rider ...



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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Baksa girl rescued in West Bengal

Tamulpur, November 18

In a remarkable development, a Kolkata man who allegedly made a girl from Assam fall in love with him while playing the online game PUBG and took her away to West Bengal, has been nabbed by Tamulpur authorities. The Baksa girl and her lover have both been brought to Assam. The controversial PUBG, we are all aware, is quite capable of wreaking havoc on people's personal lives. The family of the Baksa girl found that out the hard way after she eloped with her 'PUBG lover' in Kolkata. The 22-year-old girl and her 23-year-old lover were finally tracked down in Kolkata after an extensive manhunt launched by the Assam Police. The girl in question - hailing from Tamulpur's Mohkuma - sensationally went missing on November 5, causing great distress to her family members. After the missing girl's family members raised a complaint at the local police station, she was finally tracked down at a nondescript village in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.

### Zubeen to pay bills of patients

Guwahati, November 18

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Assam icon Zubeen Garg, in a bid to give back to society, has decided to organize a session to help patients in Guwahati city. Around 3.30 pm, renowned singer Zubeen Garg reached the Ayursundra superspecialty Hospital. Zubeen along with his wife, eminent fashion designer Garima Saikia Garg, was received by Manoj Kr. Deka, the Chief Executive Officer of Ayursundra Super specialty Hospital. The team interacted with the hospital management, doctors, and discussed the facilities, service, and infrastructure provided by the hospital.

### PM Modi speaks with US President-elect Biden

Discusses COVID-19, Indo-Pacific, climate change

New Delhi, November 18

US President-elect Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi hold phone conversation on Tuesday. PM Modi congratulated Biden on his victory and also discussed on issues of "shared priorities and



concerns". Matters related to COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region was addressed. New Delhi: US President-elect Joe Biden spoke with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday night in their first phone conversation since the results of the US elec-

## Sonowal dedicates 15.447 KM NH 37 re-alignment Dibrugarh Bypass to the nation

Assam witnesses revolutionary changes in road development under the present dispensation: CM



Guwahati, November 18: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today inaugurated realignment of NH 37 from Bogibeel Junction to Bakul (Dibrugarh Bypass) at a programme held at Japisajia in Dibrugarh today. It may be noted that the construction of Dibrugarh Bypass/ Re-alignment of NH-37 from Bogibeel Junction at KM 581.700 to KM 597.147 on

Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) basis of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been implemented by National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited. The length of the project is 15.447 km which is constructed for a project cost of Rs. 96.84 crore. Chief Minister Sonowal as a part of the project also inaugu-

rated a railway overbridge on the stipulated stretch. Speaking on the occasion, Sonowal said that the present Narendra Modi led Central Government after assuming power in 2014 took the initiatives of bringing about revolutionary changes in connectivity of the country especially in the Northeast though championing the cause of "Transformation through

Transportation". He said that the Central government realising that a region no matter how prosperous it is cannot prosper without seamless connectivity, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought about policy changes and as result of which Assam along with other Northeastern states have witnessed Rs. 3 lakh crore investment on road sector. He, therefore, thanked the Union Minister on behalf of 3.5 crore people of the state. Chief Minister Sonowal also said that contrary to 60 years of rule of the Congress, the BJP led Central government brought about unprecedented changes in the last six years. He also attributed AIIMS at Changsari, Indian Agricultural Research Centre at Gogamukh, Indian Institute of Design at Jorhat, Multi-

modal Logistic Hub at Joghghopa to the goodwill and sincerity of the Central Government. He also said that people of Assam had to resort to agitation for a single bridge over the Brahmaputra. However, now under the leadership of Narendra Modi the Central Government has approved the construction of five new bridges over the river. Sonowal also said that the amount of works performed by the present State government over 4.5 years becomes clear if anybody does comparative analysis between the performance of the present BJP led government and the previous Congress governments at the state. He also said that in the last 15 years the Lok Nirman Department constructed more than 15 thousand kilometre road, besides conversion of more than one thousand wooden bridges into concrete bridges. He Contd...Page 6

## Traffic Guidelines Issued For Chhath Puja

Guwahati, November 18: Guwahati traffic police on Wednesday issued traffic guidelines for the occasion of Chhath Puja on November 20 (Friday) and November 21 (Saturday). Special instructions were issued as well as restrictions on certain parts of the city on the occasion. Below are the guidelines issued -

1. No vehicles will be allowed on MG Road except for those of devotees.
2. Vehicles coming from Bharalumukh can go through AT Road or HB Road.
3. Public buses coming from Chandmari can go via District Library to Panbazar towards AT Road.
4. Light vehicles will also be allowed to cross GNB Road from TC School Point in the same manner.
5. Buses coming in from Khanapara will also be required go via AT Road.
6. Heavy vehicles, ASTC buses coming from outside Guwahati will not be allowed to enter the city. They will be diverted towards NH 37.
7. Trucks coming from Lohra, Gorchuk, Six Mile will be barred from entering the city on November 20.
8. Devotees can park their vehicles in MG Road. Arrangements are also made for parking in TRP Road (Fancy Bazar), Lakhi path, Chambers road (Machkova), MS Road (Fancy Bazar), SRCB Road (Lakhtokia).
9. There will be no interruptions for ambulance and essential services.
10. It was informed that parking space is also made available at Sonaram Field and MCH.
11. On November 20, parking will be barred at AT Road, MLN Road, ARB Road, SS Road and HB Road from 7am onwards.
12. Puja Volunteers are asked to assist the police in helping them during the occasion.
13. Commuters are requested to avoid MG Road during the festival and are advised to Contd...Page 6

## BJP to contest all 12 BTAD seats in 2021 Assm Assembly Election



Guwahati, November 18: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is about to break its alliance with the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) in Assam. In the current Assam government, the BPF is BJP's coalition partner with its 12 MLAs (Member of Legisla-

tive Assembly) in the 126 member house. As per Ranjeet Kumar Dass, President, BJP Assam, a meeting with the BJP central committee for the Assam Assembly Elections 2021 will be held in New Delhi on 20 November. The continuation of the part-

nership with BPF will be decided in the meeting. It will be attended by chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma and other office-bearers. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP President JP Nadra will also be present during the meeting. The Assam Assembly Elections are due in mid-2021 and there are clear indications that this partnership with BPF will be abandoned. This year's Bodoland Territorial Council election has become a straight fight between the BJP and the BPF. The BJP Assam is confident

that it will form the council and does not need the help of BPF. There have been severe allegations on BPF of running the council like a fiefdom. Hagrama Mohilary, the BPF chief is facing the wrath of its current alliance partner. Top BJP leaders like Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma are lambasting Hagrama's 15-year rule for gross negligence and corruption. Much to the enjoyment of supporters and crowds, the war of words between BJP and BPF has reached a different level this time. BPF under the leadership of Hagrama Mohilary has been ruling the BTC for 15 years and normally allies with whichever party forms the state government in Dispur. In Contd...Page 6

## Direct Funding to KAAC have been agreed by the Central



Diphu, November 18: "Direct Funding to Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) have been agreed by the Central Government in all Central Sponsored Scheme, including AIBP, 15th Finance Commis-

sion, NLCPR, Special Package, NITTI Aayog etc. This can be termed as the greatest achievement to KAAC," said Tuliram Ronghang, Chief Executive Member (CEM) of KAAC in a Press Conference at KAAC Conference Hall to-

day. As notification from Central Government order issued by Hills Area Department (HAD) reference No. HAD.120/2015/53-A Dated 6th November 2020, direct funding of all Central Sponsored Scheme Contd...Page 6

## Patricia Mukhim Resigns From Editors Guild of India

Guwahati, November 18: Editor of The Shillong Times Patricia Mukhim has resigned as a member of the

Editors Guild of India (EGI) on Tuesday in protest against what she called, the organizations "complete silence" on the recent High Court ruling which refused to quash an FIR against her and held her guilty of creating communal disharmony through her Facebook post in July. Resigning from the Editors Guild of India, the veteran journalist said the Guild was silent about her case, while it issued statements condemning the arrest of non-member Arnab Goswami whose arrest was not even on grounds of journalistic pursuits. On November 10 the single bench judge of Meghalaya High Court in his ruling found Mukhim



guilty of creating communal disharmony a crime under Section 153 CrPC and refused to quash an FIR filed by the Lawsohtun Dorbar Shnong (a traditional institution). Now that Diwali is done and dusted and things are back to business as usual, I wish to convey to you and all the members of this much-revered league of editors of the most prestigious publications in this country Contd...Page 6

## National Rail & amp; Transportation Institute (NRTI) launches 7 new Programmes

2 B. Tech UG Programmes, 2 MBA and 3 MSc Programmes on core applied sector

Guwahati, November 18: With an eye on future, Indian Railway launches 7 new academic programs aimed at creating best skill sets in Railway Infrastructure Management, Systems & amp; Communication Engineering and Transportation cum Supply Chain Management. National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI), Vadodra has launched 2 B. Tech UG Programmes, 2 MBA and 3

MSc Programmes on core applied sector. The 2 B Tech Programs are focused on Rail Infrastructure, Rail Systems and Communications Engg, while the MBA programs are focused at Transportation and Supply Chain Management which are of highest priority in the coming years. The MSc Programs are focused on the Systems Engineering and Integration, Systems and Analytics, Policy and

Economics which are the core areas the Nation is looking forward to. The MSc Program on Systems Engineering and Integration is offered in association with the University of Birmingham, UK and is highly promising. The international exposure to the students will be unparalleled. These programmes are highly interdisciplinary and application Contd...Page 6



## The 17th General Conference of All Assam Students Union (AASU) begins from today

Guwahati, November 18: The 17th General Conference of All Assam Students Union (AASU) begins from Wednesday at Duliagan in Dibrugarh district. The four-day conference is expected to announce the office-bearers of the new political party and also witness several prominent faces of AASU leaving the platform to

join active politics. The terms of AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath and general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi are ending and both the leaders are expected to take contest in the next assembly polls. While Gogoi was slated to join BJP, there's no clarity yet on which party Nath would join. Since both have been vehemently opposing the



BJP-led coalition in the state, it is expected that they will join anti-BJP fronts. Speculations are

also on that the chief adviser of AASU Samujjal Bhattacharya will be retiring from the outfit during the general conference. Bhattacharya, who is reported to be unhappy with the way BJP is shaping up, has remained mum on the speculations. There's no indication yet on whether he will join any political party and contest the next

polls. Incidentally, BJP is the second political party to be formed by AASU after Asom Gana Parishad, which came into being in 1985 after signing of the Assam Accord that ended the six-year-long anti-for-eigners agitation-in which both AASU and AJYCP played a key role. Both organizations had spear-headed Contd...Page 6

## Trump campaign abandons part of legal challenge to Pennsylvania election results



**A Report :** Allegation that 682,479 mail-in and absentee ballots were illegally processed without its representatives watching has been dropped. A supporter of President Donald Trump holds a protest sign as police stand guard behind, outside the Pennsylvania Convention Center. President Donald Trump's campaign has withdrawn a central part of its lawsuit seeking to stop the certification of the election results in Pennsylvania, where Democrat Joe Biden beat Trump to capture the state and help win the White House. Ahead of a Tuesday hearing in the case, Trump's campaign on Sunday dropped the allegation that 682,479 mail-in and absentee ballots were illegally processed without its representatives watching. The campaign's slimmed-down lawsuit, filed in federal court on Sunday, maintains the aim of blocking Pennsylvania from certifying a victory for Biden in the state, and it maintains its claim that Democratic voters were treated more favorably than Republican voters. The Associated Press on 7 November called the presidential contest for former vice president Joe Biden, after determining that the remaining ballots left to be counted in Pennsylvania would not allow Trump to catch up. Trump has refused to concede. The remaining claim in the lawsuit centres on disqualifying ballots cast by voters who were given an opportunity to fix mail-in ballots that were going to be disqualified on a technicality. The lawsuit charges that "Democratic-heavy counties" violated the

law by identifying mail-in ballots before election day that had defects - such as lacking an inner "secrecy envelope" or lacking a voter's signature on the outside envelope - so that the voter could fix it and ensure their vote would count, a move called "curing". Republican-heavy counties "followed the law and did not provide a notice and cure process, disenfranchising many", the lawsuit said. Cliff Levine, a lawyer representing the Democratic National Committee, which is seeking to intervene, said it was not clear how many voters were given the chance to fix their ballot. But, he said, the number was minimal and certainly fewer than the margin - almost 70,000 - that separates Biden and Trump. "The numbers aren't even close to the margin between the two candidates, not even close," Levine said. In any case, there is no provision in state law preventing counties from helping voters to fix a ballot that contains a technical deficiency. Levine said the lawsuit did not contain any allegation that somebody voted illegally. "They really should be suing the counties that didn't allow [voters] to make corrections," Levine said. "The goal should be making sure every vote counts." Pennsylvania's top election official, secretary of state Kathy Boockvar, a Democrat, responded in court on Sunday, asking the judge to dismiss the case. State courts are the proper jurisdiction for the subject, and the lawsuit contains no "plausible claim for relief on any legal theory", the state's lawyers wrote. More than 2.6m mail-in ballots were reported received by counties, and no report of fraud or accuracy problems has been made by state or county election officials or prosecutors. A key theme of Trump and his supporters has been their claim that Philadelphia - a Democratic bastion where Trump lost badly - had not allowed Trump's campaign representatives to watch mail-in and absentee ballots processed and tabulated.

## Is Britain really about to embrace chaos and misery for the sake of Brexit dogma?

British business and finance are holding their breath. Few can quite believe that a British government could drive the British economy this close to the brink. Surely no sane government, entrusted with our collective wellbeing, could calmly contemplate imposing on its citizens immense trade disruption, transport chaos, shortages in medicine, fresh foods and key technologies? Then there's the rise in unemployment created by two lockdowns and widespread bankruptcies. Even a minimalist deal, as John Major said last week, will be far more brutal than anyone expects. Yet for what? A utopian conception of sovereignty that even in the full flush of empire never held true? Surely rationality must prevail and a deal that goes well beyond the skinny Canada-style deal with the EU - which Boris Johnson says is all he wants - will be struck? But here we are. As I write, with days to complete negotiations and secure ratification, nobody knows whether there will be no deal - or "Canada", which is barely better. The reasons are well rehearsed. A reckless, unfocused, Brexit-obsessed prime minister. A Tory party in thrall to its Brexiter ultras. A lapdog rightwing media. And too many of the potential countervailing forces, from the opposition through to business itself, are afraid of offering high-profile arguments for something better out of fear of being cast as undemocratic Remoaners. Thus the obvious goes unsaid. Britain has no option but to engage extensively with the

continent of which it is part. It always has. It always will. Global Britain is just another vacuous slogan. Whatever happens on 1 January is but the beginning of another chapter in Britain's relationship with Europe.

Of course we will have to strike trade bargains on everything from organic food to cars. Equally, with services, whether we're talking trade in data or mutual recognition of audit standards, and drive there will have to be an accommodation with the 450 million people on our doorstep. And because they are part of a bigger unit, they will get more of their way than we will ours. Only Brexit ideologues, in the same la-la land as Donald Trump in their denial of reality, could think otherwise. Three weeks ago, the outgoing director-general of the CBI, Carolyn Fairbairn, did manage to gather an astonishing 71 trade associations and professional bodies, encompassing virtually the entire British economy, to jointly insist on an ambitious trade deal - and warn of the consequences of no deal. Steve Elliott, CEO of the Chemical Industries Association, says as the

leading manufacturing exporter, "we need that deal". From Ian Wright, CEO of the Food and Drink Association: "No deal would... put at risk the choice, quality and affordability of food and drink."

David Wells, CEO of Logistics UK, says a deal is "vital to keep the trucks moving". Mike Hawes, speaking for the motor industry, says: "Only an ambitious deal... will safeguard livelihoods and drive investment." There was more in the same vein from farmers, chartered accountants, the pharmaceutical industry, ceramics, the City, motor manufacturers, airports, airlines, energy, creative industries, hi-tech. Even country landowners and the security industry added their weight. I can't remember such urgency and unanimity from every nook and cranny of British business. For their pains, it was hardly reported. And yet, even if there is no deal by 1 January, with all the immediate chaos it will cause, there will have to be some arrangement negotiated over 2021, as the environment secretary, George Eustice, conceded to the BBC in September, arguing that the intransigent EU would by then have to come to its senses. More to the point, so would the British government. A comprehensive deal encompassing goods, services and regulatory standards in which the interests of the EU are respected and the integrity of the Good Friday agreement is upheld is an inevitability. Johnson simply lies, as John Major says, when he declares



**Will Hutton**

strengthened its lifestyle TV portfolio that consists of The Frame and The Serif TVs. A First of its Kind Design. Geared towards new age and design conscious consumers, 'The Sero' provides a modern design that stands out in any space, even when it is not in use. 'The Sero' moves to fit your content, landscape for TV and movies and portrait for all your mobile content and apps. Its stylish All-in-one Stand offers a 360-degree clean look to your living space without the clutter of wires peaking from behind. It provides the same smart TV experience whether you are watching TV in vertical or horizontal mode. One Tap Content Sharing. Just one tap on the bezel. That's all it takes to show content from your mobile on The Sero. If you're listening to music or watching a video on your phone, Tap View will have it playing on the TV in seconds. The Sero shows your content, including apps and social media, with an optimized viewing ratio so you can enjoy it on the full screen. Powerful Sound. The Sero comes with powerful, beautifully designed 4.1ch 60W Front Firing speakers. With a simple Bluetooth connection, one can enjoy powerful sound from their smartphone. With its protruded Front Firing speakers sending powerful sounds to the front and 4.1ch speakers that are embedded with base-enhancing woofers, the TV delivers impressive audio that is particularly good at low-frequencies. Intelligent Noise Detection to Enhance Voice Clarity. When that crucial scene in the show you are watching is overwhelmed by a loud noise around you, the Active Voice Amplifier (AVA) feature is automatically activated.

## Samsung Expands its 2020 Lifestyle TV Line-up with TheSero TV: The TV that Rotates

**India :** Samsung, India's most trusted and largest consumer electronics brand, today expanded its lifestyle TV range with the launch of The Sero, the world's first mobile optimized TV that champions content viewing by rotating between horizontal and vertical orientations at the flick of a button. The Sero will be exclusively available at Reliance Digital stores at a price of INR 1,24,990. The new TV is a design testament that caters to consumers who want their gadgets to be unique and stylish yet high on functionality. The Sero is a space-saving and stylish addition to any room's design. Elegantly minimal with a navy blue stand, it has a 360° clean design. The Sero redefines what a TV screen can do. The Sero - named from the Korean word for 'vertical' - has the ability to pivot between horizontal and vertical orientations just as a user might handle their smartphone or tablet. Geared toward a younger social media generation with an interest in viewing experiences such as the ones found on their mobile devices, The Sero is optimized for social media content, streaming services and gaming. All this is wrapped up with an eye-catching design and innovative user experience formulated after extensive consumer research. It delivers a mobile-optimized experience while rotating the screen automatically to mirror mobile content. The screen can also be rotated by remote control, voice command and via the SmartThings app. The Sero comes with uniquely designed 4.1ch 60W Front Firing speakers that deliver an exceptional sound experience. Consumers will be able to amp up the sound for a fully immersive entertainment experience, whether streaming music, mirroring content from



smartphones and scrolling through their social media feeds, or watching their favourite shows. The innovative design has been paired with powerful features to enhance the viewing experience, including Samsung's industry leading QLED technology. The Sero is designed to adapt to each consumers' needs, whether for mirroring phone content which can be done simply by tapping your phone on the TV or for transforming movie nights, as it delivers 100% colour volume with over a billion colours and shades for a truly cinematic experience. The Sero also uses AI to upscale content to 4K resolution, so users can stream their favourite content in spectacular detail, regardless of the source. Not only does The Sero let you enjoy 4K entertainment on TV, it stands out even when it's not in use. Its unique Portrait Mode lets consumers choose from various stylish vertical backgrounds to enhance their home. The Ambient Mode+ on the TV allows users to display useful information or blend the TV into its surroundings, making the big blank screen a thing of the past. The Sero is also equipped with other smart features such as Adaptive Picture, Responsive UI, Tap View technology, Active

Voice Amplifier (AVA) etc. for an advanced viewing experience. "With The Sero, we want to tap in to the social media generation. With consumers now using their TVs in different ways than ever before, including scrolling through social media, watching the latest viral videos or binge watching their favourite OTT shows, we wanted to redefine their content viewing experience by moving it to a bigger screen. The Sero has been designed to seamlessly adapt and enhance whatever content the user is watching, bringing in a more optimized experience to consumers," said Raju Pullan, Senior Vice President, Consumer Electronics Business, Samsung India. Price, Availability, Offers & Warranty The Sero will be available in 43-inch screen size and features a contemporary navy-blue bezel design. The lifestyle TV is priced at INR 1,24,990 and will be available exclusively at Reliance Digital stores. Additionally, consumers can enjoy a host of other benefits like 5% cash back and EMIs as low as INR 1,190. Reliance Digital is also offering gift vouchers from AJIO and Reliance Trends till November 16, 2020 during the on-going "Festival of Electronics" sale that the retailer is running. The Sero will come with a 10-year no screen burn-in warranty, one-year comprehensive warranty and one-year additional warranty on panel. Features of The World's First Mobile-friendly TV, The Sero With the new addition to its 2020 line-up, Samsung has

strengthened its lifestyle TV portfolio that consists of The Frame and The Serif TVs. A First of its Kind Design. Geared towards new age and design conscious consumers, 'The Sero' provides a modern design that stands out in any space, even when it is not in use. 'The Sero' moves to fit your content, landscape for TV and movies and portrait for all your mobile content and apps. Its stylish All-in-one Stand offers a 360-degree clean look to your living space without the clutter of wires peaking from behind. It provides the same smart TV experience whether you are watching TV in vertical or horizontal mode. One Tap Content Sharing. Just one tap on the bezel. That's all it takes to show content from your mobile on The Sero. If you're listening to music or watching a video on your phone, Tap View will have it playing on the TV in seconds. The Sero shows your content, including apps and social media, with an optimized viewing ratio so you can enjoy it on the full screen. Powerful Sound. The Sero comes with powerful, beautifully designed 4.1ch 60W Front Firing speakers. With a simple Bluetooth connection, one can enjoy powerful sound from their smartphone. With its protruded Front Firing speakers sending powerful sounds to the front and 4.1ch speakers that are embedded with base-enhancing woofers, the TV delivers impressive audio that is particularly good at low-frequencies. Intelligent Noise Detection to Enhance Voice Clarity. When that crucial scene in the show you are watching is overwhelmed by a loud noise around you, the Active Voice Amplifier (AVA) feature is automatically activated.

## Bhushan Kumar & Anurag Basu collaborate on several projects along with Ludo 2

After collaborating for a multi starrer comedy crime caper, Ludo, producer-director duo Bhushan Kumar and Anurag Basu have decided to strengthen their association. India's one of the largest production houses Bhushan Kumar's T-Series and acclaimed filmmaker Anurag Basu are joining hands to create several more entertaining commercial cinema after Ludo.



While the audiences will enjoy Ludo that is streaming now on Netflix, the duo has started discussing their next collaborations now. Anurag Basu and Bhushan Kumar has started working on a few projects they want to collaborate on together. While details are under wraps at the moment, one of the many films that the duo will announce the sequel to Ludo apart from numerous other developments in the pipeline.

Excited with his latest release filmmaker Anurag Basu says, "While working on Ludo with Bhushanji it was an easy and smooth collaboration on cinema which we both are passionate about. I am glad that we have more projects we plan

to jointly work towards and create fascinating stories." Finding a trustworthy partner to collaborate on several films, producer Bhushan Kumar adds, "Anurag Dada is one of the finest filmmakers in the country and has done a superlative job with 'Ludo'. He has many mind blowing story ideas I am keen on collaborating with him for one of which is Ludo 2. We will soon make an official announcement of our next film once everything is finalized."

Ludo, an ensemble film, that released on Netflix yesterday is an edgy crime drama with lots of comedy produced by Bhushan Kumar, Anurag Basu, Divya Khosla Kumar, Taani Somarita Basu & Krishan Kumar and directed by Anurag Basu

## The MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition launched in India

**Guwahati, Nov 18 :** MINI India introduces a new Limited Edition MINI John Cooper Works Hatch inspired by the MINI John Cooper Works Hatch. Offered as a Completely Built-Up unit (CBU), only 15 units of the MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition are available and can be booked exclusively onshop.mini.in. A tribute to the MINI John Cooper Works GP, the MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition brings authentic racetrack flair to the road. An intensive expression of motor-sport passion, this Limited Edition



MINI comes with the John Cooper Works GP Pack, which is perfectly harmonised with the design and character of the MINI John Cooper Works Hatch. With exclusive design attributes, this MINI transfers the fascinating aura of the MINI John Cooper Works GP to the road and to everyday life. Mr. Vikram Pawah, President, BMW Group India said, "MINI John Cooper Works has always been in a league of its own with a unique combination of heritage, exclusivity and performance. Inspired by MINI's motorsport

genes and legendary racing successes, the MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition is a tribute to MINI John Cooper Works GP. This uncompromisingly dynamic Edition is built to give you a guaranteed thrillworthy of the racetrack experience. The MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition makes the most thrilling MINI ever even more exciting". MINI John Cooper Works models deliver the highest driving dynamics and substance combined with an unruly and unrestrained spirit - the racing genes that were passed on by its inventor John Cooper. Following in the footsteps of the 2006 and 2013 MINI John Cooper Works GP models, this Limited Edition is inspired by the latest MINI John Cooper Works GP Model. The MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition is exclusively available in Racing Grey Metallic exterior colour at an ex-showroom price of INR 46,90,000\*\*.

\*Price prevailing at the time of invoicing will be applicable. Ex-showroom prices inclusive of GST (incl. compensation cess) as applicable but excludes Road Tax, Tax Collected at Source (TCS), RTO statutory taxes/fees, other local tax cess levies and insurance. Price and options are subject to change without prior notice. For further information, please contact the local Authorised MINI Dealer. The MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition. The MINI John Cooper Works models are built to thrill. Bold, racing-inspired looks, finest quality materials along with visual enhancements put the John Cooper Works models in a league of their own. Wide, long and low, MINI John Cooper Works sports a silhouette that spells exclusivity and action all at once. The MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition exterior offers an ideal expression of motor-sport passion. The Racing Grey Metallic exterior colour is exclusive to this Edition

along with the contrasting Melting Silver Metallic roof, mirror caps and John Cooper Works rear spoiler. The 18"/46.20 cms John Cooper Works Cup Spoke 2-tone Alloys come with GP badged Wheel Hub Caps. The exterior surrounds & inner parts of Headlights and Rear Lights, Door Handles, Fuel Filler Cap, Front Grille surround and MINI Emblem in the front & rear are part of the Piano Black Exterior package. The John Cooper Works Side Scuttles and Air Intake Trim in carbon fibre highlight the impressive appearance of the car. The interior of MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition exudes its pure racing heritage with John Cooper Works Sports Seats in Leather Dinamica finish with GP badging. The GP logo is also featured on the Floor Mats for the driver and front passenger, while both front and rear mats are finished in red stitching. The John Cooper

Works Steering Wheel is crafted in 'Walknappa' Leather with Red contrast stitching. The metal-clip centre marking at the top provides a further motor-sport accent and helps focus on the line of driving. The exclusive 3D-printed paddle shifts with distinctive GP badging, further enhance the race track feeling by allowing even faster gear shifts. The key also acquires its exclusive character with the exclusive 3D printed GP inspired key cap. John Cooper Works DNA is reflected in every detail including the John Cooper Works stainless steel pedal caps and the Door Sill Finishers with a GP badging. Further, the panorama glass roof allows ample amounts of natural light and fresh air in the cabin. Performance is paramount and keeps the adrenaline pumping in the MINI John Cooper Works GP Inspired Edition. Awe-inspiring torque is

generated by the 2.0 litre, 4-cylinder TwinPower Turbo engine that can hit 100 km/h in 6.1 seconds, mobilising a peak output of 170 kW/231 hp and a maximum torque of 320 Nm. The precision-tuned, 8-speed Steptronic Sport transmission enables smooth gear shifts with limited slip differential that improves handling and contributes to the sophisticated characteristics of the drive system. The iconic circular central instrument panel is surrounded by an LED ring offering a brilliant colour display in 6.5-inches. The standard infotainment features include Apple CarPlay®, MINI Navigation System, Radio MINI Visual Boost with touch functionality, USB interface and Harman Kardon Hi-Fi Audio System, featuring 12 high-performance speakers and an eight-channel digital amplifier, delivers 360 watts of crisp, natural and powerful sound.

## NSCN (I-M) on Z-plus security by GoI to its leadership

**DIMAPUR, November 18:** Drawing attention to comparison made by WC, NNPGs over the issue of Z-plus category security provided by the government of India top leadership of NSCN (I-M), the MIP said this arose because of New Delhi's seriousness of dealing its leaders who had arrived New Delhi at Centre's invitation, to carry forward the Naga political talks and therefore, drawing any comparison was superfluous. In a statement, NSCN (I-M) through its MIP narrated the sequence of events by recalling that once its collective leadership reached New Delhi they were provided Z-plus security with Intelligence Bureau (IB) quarter at their official residence. MIP said the leaders were extended the high profile security because they carried the Naga political mandate after the Centre signed ceasefire with NSCN (I-M) to pave way for solution. MIP said everything was done by the government of India which NSCN (I-M) leaders had not asked for. NSCN (I-M) said "New Delhi knows too well who carried the Naga political issue and who required high profile security cover" and for which no group can mislead the Naga people on Naga issue. Further NSCN (I-M) reiterated that who is doing what to

defend the political identity of Naga struggle is already laid bare before the people and also what was delaying the peace process needed no further elaboration. NSCN (I-M) reminded that the Framework Agreement of August 3, 2015 was the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra



Modi and was signed in his presence along with other high dignitaries of the government of India, including India's defence minister, Indian Army chief and national security adviser (NSA) also witnessed by the whole world as it was telecast live. NSCN (I-M) emphasised that this was the political significance of the agreement that was mutually agreed upon and signed. NSCN (I-M) said that after realising the futility military solu-

tion to the Naga political movement, the Centre came looking for NSCN (I-M)'s collective leadership who were based abroad that time. It said that Prime Minister PV Narashimha Rao had gone all the way to Paris in 1995 to meet NSCN (I-M) leaders chairman Isak Chishi Swu and gen-

eral secretary Th Muivah. NSCN (I-M) pointed out that it had put a precondition that to start political negotiation, New Delhi should recognise Naga issue as "political" and stop terming it as "India's internal law and order issue". Ultimately, the ceasefire was officially declared on August 1, 1997 after NSCN (I-M) was convinced of the change of policy of government of India towards the Naga issue. NSCN (I-M)

said it was agreed that political dialogue would be held at the highest level, i.e. Prime Minister level, without pre-condition and outside India in a third country. Accordingly, it said, the talks were held abroad in Paris, New York, The Hague, Bangkok and Chiangmai (Thailand), Zurich, Geneva, Osaka, Kuala Lumpur, Vienna and Milan. The peace process further changed for the better with the signing of Amsterdam Joint Communiqué on July 11, 2002, giving official recognition to the "unique history and situation of the Nagas". This was considered as the first realistic step forward in the political negotiation. In order to further boost the peace process, it said government of India then invited NSCN (I-M) leaders to come to New Delhi and gave full commitment to take care of their security concern. Accepting the invitation, it said Swu and Muivah reached New Delhi in December 2002. Prior to this, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on November 18, 2002, in Milan to formalise their travel to New Delhi, even as government of India took the "conscious decision" decision to discontinue its ban on the organisation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the statement added.

## 12,13,409 total electors in state: Draft electoral roll



**DIMAPUR, November 18:** The State Election department has informed that draft publication of electoral rolls in connection with special summary revision of photo electoral rolls with respect to January 1, 2021 as the qualifying date, has been done by the electoral registration officers in all the 60 assembly constituencies in the state on November 16, 2020. As per the draft published electoral roll, the total number of electors in the state stood at 1213409 (612429 male and 600980 female), which includes a total of 1205655 general electors (604758 male and 600897 female) and 7754 service electors (7671 male and 83 female). In a press release, the chief electoral officer (CEO) Nagaland Abhijit Sinha stated that if, in reference to the qualifying date, there was any claim for inclusion of name in the electoral roll or any objection to inclusion of name or any objection to particulars in any entry, one could

lodge on or before December 15, 2020. CEO stated that every such claim or objection should either be presented to the electoral registration officer or to the booth level officer (BLO) or sent by post to the office of the electoral registration officer. One could also visit [www.nvsp.on](http://www.nvsp.on) or download voter helpline app from Google playstore for online registration and for submitting objections. In addition, CEO said the special campaign dates for special summary revision 2021 have also been fixed on November 20 and November 21, 2020 and December 4 and December 5, 2020. On those days, the respective BLOs would be present in the polling stations with the electoral roll and the various forms to facilitate any eligible citizens who want to enrol or correct one's particulars or delete one's name or submit objections to the inclusion of any name.

## CM Rio's statement nothing but a sheer sign of arrogance: Naga People's Front

**Kohima, November 18:** NPF took a jab at the CM by stating that the minister might have "exhausted with other words to defend himself" in a press statement by Naga People's Front, the members strongly rejected Chief Minister, Neiphiu Rio's recent statement in the media. The statement by Rio about the opposition party voicing for the extra tax levied on petroleum products by his PDA Government as "barking", is nothing "but a sheer sign of arrogance" stated the release. The release took a jab at the minister by stating that the minister might have "exhausted with other words to defend himself." The release posed a question for CM Rio of "How can a Chief Minister of a State behave like a dictator and trying to shut the mouth of the opposition party for opposing his Government 'cruel decision' over the heavy tax levied on petroleum?" Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio on Friday stated that, it is the duty of the opposition (here NPF) to keep on "barking" upon being asked about NPF's stand on increase in tax. NPF even pointed out that Rio's government has failed to drain the public money in the name of 'Covid-Cess' and that his government has again come up with a new formula to extract public money. On Friday Rio termed the State Government's decision to increase the tax on petrol and diesel as a "normal hike." He added that the fuel prices in the state were still lower in comparison to other neighbouring states. While interacting with media persons he said, "That is a normal hike and our price is lower than our neighbouring states... still we are below our neighbouring states." Upon being probed by the media to comment on NPF's stand who termed the increase in tax as a "cruel decision" by the state government and demanding an immediate rollback, Rio replied, "it is the

duty of the opposition to keep on barking." Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio on Friday stated that, it is the duty of the opposition (here NPF) to keep on "barking" upon being asked about NPF's stand on increase in tax. "It is a known fact that every state is running through difficult times due to the pandemic but the Government has no right to drain the public pocket at the cost of their livelihood. There are many ways and means where the Government can regain its deficit but not through the right of the people to Food and Shelter," said NPF. NPF further warned the Naga public to not be carried out by the CM's statement of petroleum prices in Nagaland being lower than the other neighbouring states. "When our neighbouring states like Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh to mention a few and whose states, the transportation route covers more distant than our state is cheaper in petroleum rate, then how can the Chief Minister claimed that even after his Government impose huge tax percentage, Nagaland petroleum prices is still lower than other neighbouring states?" added the release.

## IIT-G to transform wastes into valuable chemicals

**Guwahati, November 18:** The Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT-G) on Monday said its researchers have formulated efficient 'pincer' catalytic systems that transform industrial/biomass wastes into valuable chemicals. According to the research team, tiny amounts of these 'pincer catalysts' repeatedly convert large amounts of industrial waste such as glycerol into lactic acid and hydrogen. Such catalysts also efficiently convert bioethanol, a low-energy density fuel, into high-energy density butanol. "Pincer catalysts are complex molecules in which, an organic moiety holds on tightly to a metal core, much like the claws of a crab," Dr Akshai Kumar Alape Seetharam from the Department of Chemistry and Centre for Nanotechnology, IIT Guwahati, said in a statement. The conversion of valuable intermediates such as glycerol and ethanol, produced during the processing of biomass, into industrially useful chemicals has elicited much interest worldwide, the team said. Glycerol, for example, which is a by-product in biodiesel production, can be transformed into lactic acid and hydrogen, the former used extensively in food, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and polymer industries, and the latter in the energy sector. Likewise, ethanol obtained from biomass can be converted into high quality fuel. While bioethanol has lower energy density than gasoline and corrodes engine parts when used directly, it can be transformed into higher energy butanol that is immiscible in water and non-corrosive in nature. The conversion of glycerol and ethanol into such useful products hinges on the development of efficient catalysts that can bring about these transformations. The research team rationally designed and tested a large library of "pincer catalysts" to be used for these transformations. The experiments were carried out under environmentally benign conditions without the use of hazardous reagents and solvents. The most efficient "pincer catalyst" was found to be one that had least crowding around the metal centre.

## Notification for election of Tiwa Autonomous Council declared at Nagaon

**A correspondent : NAGAON, Nov 18:** As per directives of Assam State Election Commission, the Deputy Commissioner of Nagaon, Kabitha Padmanavon (IAS) declared notification today for election of Tiwa Autonomous Council in almost 10 seats in the district.

In a press release issued by Samar Kalita, district information and public relations officer stated that the last date of submission of nomination papers is till 3pm on November 25 next and the nomination papers will be examined on following day ie on November 26. Besides, the date of withdrawal of nomination papers is scheduled on November 28 up to 3pm.

It is however stated in the release that vote in those 10 constituencies will be held on December 17 next from 7-30 am to 4-30pm and re-vote if it is needed will be held on the day next ie on December 18. Similarly, counting of votes will be held on December 19, 2020, the release stated.

## PIB Guwahati Webinar on 'Assam as Potential Destination for Industries and Services to bolster Economic Growth and Development'

**Guwahati, Nov 18:** Emerging Tourist and Business Destinations of North-East to spur Socio-Economic development of AtmaNirbhar Bharat, experts opined in a Webinar organised by Press Information Bureau, Guwahati on the topic 'Assam as Potential Destination for Industries and Services to bolster Economic Growth and Development' here today. Experts from Industry fraternity including organisations of Ministry of Power, Water Resources, Steel, Coal, Cement and Hydel Energy and allied sectoral Industries along with academicians deliberated and discussed about the market potential and its awareness from socio-economic, academic and policy perspective. Talking about Central Government initiatives and its efficacy for public awareness, Shri Shibasis Basu, ED (Materials Management), SAIL-IISCO Steel Plant, Bumpur, Paschim Bardhaman said that Emerging Destinations of North-East has tremendous potential for various Sectors, be it tourism, hospitality, culinary, services, Industry, Hydel and Power sector, entrepreneurial potential in agro-food, fruits and value-added secondary sectors of Assam and the region. He said these have potential to be 'Engines of Socio-economic Growth and Development' of the North-Eastern India. He said that resources of the region have the advantage of bio-diversity and being environment friendly. He said that whether it is Hydel Power, Steel, Coal or Cement, the region has tremendous opportunities for its marketability and potentially. He said that optimised resource management and better talent development is the competence which would provide an advantage and which has to be leveraged in competitive markets. Shri Satyabrata Banerjee, Chief Engineer Civil and HoD, DVC, Maithon that learning from other regions of the country would provide the competitive advantage for industrial products and services sector. He said that with environment-friendly technologies, Civil Engineering Constructions are dynamically improving its construction techniques along with its environment-friendly processes for construction, capacity building and infrastructure development. He said that Assam has huge potential in textile, culinary, eco-tourism, Adventure tourism, environment-friendly hydel power and socio-cultural development of the region. Talking with

optimism the potential of North-Eastern India, Shri Saurav Chakrabarti, Vice-President, Tata Teleservices said that services sector are dynamically affected by demand and supply of the market and a smooth workability of power and infrastructure sector adds to the ease of doing business and affecting its marketability, potentially and competence of its services. Enlisting all the vital processes in hospitality and tourism sector, Shri JP Shaw, former Regional Director (East) for Indiatourism Kolkata, Ministry of Tourism said that huge potential in waterways, highways and railways would provide the momentum for development socio-economic development of the region including tourism with advantage of bio-diversity and rivers and water resources including Brahmaputra. He said resource optimisation and technology efficacy is pivotal for business development. Talking about the provisos of the Constitution, Abdur Rahman Mallick, Advocate Delhi High Court said that awareness of socio-economic development and potential of the North-East India is of prominence for its marketability and serviceability. Dr Kishor Goswami, Professor of Economics in Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kharagpur that competence of the tourist and business destinations of North East is its strength which has to be strategically and optimally developed for capacity business and talent development of the region. The informative and knowledge webinar was planned and coordinated by Shri Samrat Bandyopadhyay, Joint Director (M & C), PIB, Guwahati. Senior officers of PIB were present in webinar. Ms Barnali Mahanta, Information Assistant, PIB welcomed the experts as the webinar delved into details on the various aspects of the topic such as market potential, socio-economic, growth and development, among others. The interactive Webinar has enthusiastic participation of students, academicians and industrial fraternity of Assam as they said that this information cum knowledge Webinar would help them in informed decision making and to celebrate and experience the joy and success of Industrial development. Along with students, eminent journalists and other government senior officials from Doordarshan Guwahati, Regional Outreach Bureau, Guwahati, All India Radio Guwahati were also present on the occasion.

## Upendra Chandra Nath remembered

**SIPAJHAR, Nov 18:** As part of the programme of paying tributes to Late Upendra Chandra Nath, leading social activists of greater Sipajhar area in Darrang district on his second death anniversary a memorial meet was organized at Rajapukhuri village. The memorial meet was presided over by Dharma Kanta Nath, retired principal of Garukhuti Higher Secondary School. Addressing the meet Dr Lokeshar Nath, retired principal of Mangaldai college, Dandadhar Nath, principal, Garukhuti Higher Secondary School, Fakharuddin Ahmed, social activists, Upendra Kumar Nath, retired principal, Garukhuti Higher Secondary School, Lohit Chandra Nath, founder head master, Sathkhal-Hatimuria High school were discussed on the life and achievements of late Nath in details. A book on life and social contributions of late Nath titled Pita Sarga, edited by Padum Nath and published by the family members of late Nath was released by Jitendra Kumar Nath. Earlier the ceremonial lamp was lit and portrait of late Nath was garlanded by Bijoya Hazarika, wife of late Nath. It may be mentioned here that retired teacher of Sipajhar Academy Upendra Chandra Nath was one of the leading social activists and he was the ex president of Garukhuti Gaon Panchayat, Rajapukhuri Tarun Sangha, ex vice president of Kurua Samaby Samitee Limited, Garukhuti Anchalik Yuvak Sangha and also advisor of Rajapukhuri Gaon Unnayan Samitee, Garukhuti Social and Cultural Organization (GASCO). Furthermore he was one of the founder of Jaymoti Konwari Girls High School and Rahmat Chikari-Kanti Oja Primary school. He was also actively associated with Garukhuti Anchalik Bhagavat Sangha, Garukhuti Pensioners Association and Garukhuti Senior citizens Association.



## Nagaland COVID-19 tally breaches 10,000 mark; 1 more death in Kohima

**DIMAPUR, November 18:** Nagaland's COVID-19 tally breached the 10,000 mark after 140 new positive cases were reported on Monday-- 116 in Kohima and 24 in Dimapur. The tally as on November 16 stood at 10,025 cases. Meanwhile, one more COVID death was reported from Kohima, taking the total death toll to 57. According to Health department's data, 47 deaths were COVID related, 6 deaths not COVID related while 4 deaths were still under investigation. Further, out of 10,025 cases,

the distribution across various categories include 4128 cases from the armed forces/police, 1738 returnees, 3685 traced contacts and 474 frontline workers. P.T.I: Meanwhile, India's COVID-19 caseload mounted to 88,45,127 with 30,548 infections being reported in a day, according to data updated by the Union health ministry on Monday. The death toll also climbed to 1,30,070 with 435 new fatalities. The number of active cases remained below 5 lakh for the sixth consecutive day. There are

4,65,478 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country as on date which comprise 5.26 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated. The total number of recoveries has surged to 82,49,579, pushing the national recovery rate to 93.27 per cent. The COVID-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.47 per cent. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11 and

crossed 80 lakh on October 29. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a total of 12,56,98,525 samples had been tested till November 15 with 8,61,706 being tested on Sunday. The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. "Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

## THE ASSAM RISING

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## Te progress of covid vaccine

This week's announcement that the Moderna vaccine proved 94% effective in trials, following a similar announcement last week from Pfizer, has felt like the first good news in months. The Oxford team too should report soon, with other candidates worldwide to follow. But the next giant leap towards herd immunity will be persuading everyone to actually take whatever emerges, a task made harder by the viral spread of anti-vaxer sentiment online. What really keeps public health experts awake at night, however, isn't a handful of people convinced that Bill Gates wants to inject them with invisible microchips, nor the Russian bots now amplifying their loopy theories. It's the "vaccine hesitant"; people in a sense not so very different from Lydia Guthrie. The first group causing concern is older men, often from ethnic minority backgrounds who may be wary of going to the doctor and have proved harder for immunisers to reach in the past. Reassurance from community and religious leaders, perhaps along the lines of the Muslim Council of Britain's campaign to promote winter flu jabs following concern about pork gelatine being used in some vaccines, may be key. But the second are the sort of university-educated, broadsheet-reading women who pride themselves on doing their research and absolutely know their Jonathan Van-Tam from their Chris Whitty. You almost certainly know one. She's been taking vitamin D supplements ever since she first read something about Covid patients being deficient in it, watches all the Downing Street press conferences, and hates being misplanned at by older men (sometimes including GPs). She shops ethically, eschewing chemical additives for "natural" alternatives, and was comforted by the idea of lockdown allowing the planet to heal. She'd have been appalled by Donald Trump's ramblings about bleach and wears a mask. But the caution that made her comply diligently with lockdown now makes her wary. When she hears ministers talk about "fast tracking" the vaccine to save lives, she's worried that corners might be cut. Only 7% would definitely refuse a Covid vaccine, according to a poll published last week by JL Partners. But around one in five are reluctant to some degree, with women more likely than men to believe it hasn't been tested thoroughly enough. It's these wobbling "vaccine hesitants" who could most easily be swayed by something their friend puts on Facebook; who'd rather wait and see what happens when others have the jab. Helpfully, those in greatest danger from Covid are most enthusiastic about vaccination, with almost nine in 10 older people willing to take it. Those who remember classmates dying from measles know what a world without immunisation looks like. But reaching herd immunity requires bringing their children and grandchildren on board too, and that means taking questions about why everything seems to be happening so fast seriously. Part of the answer is that Oxford was working on a novel vaccine process that could be used in a future pandemic before Covid actually happened, putting them ahead of the game when it did. But the rest involves grappling with the now rather counterintuitive idea that for once in the chequered history of Britain's battle against coronavirus, we might have actually got something right. The European commission last week signed a deal with Pfizer to buy its vaccine, allowing member countries to begin preparing for rollout. Kate Bingham, the biotech investor charged by government with identifying the most promising candidates, did her deal in July. The vaccine taskforce she chairs has been working through the next steps - like procuring special freezers for a vaccine that needs storing at -70C - for months, while building a manufacturing chain for other promising candidates. The Oxford vaccine has been rolling off production lines since summer, even though we don't yet know if it works, in the kind of gamble inconceivable outside a national emergency. If it's a dud then all that expensive work will be wasted, but if not, lives could be saved. A process that usually takes years when worked through sequentially - first the scientific breakthrough in the lab, then entering clinical trials, then winning approval from the independent safety regulator, then beginning production - is effectively happening all at once, as if a restaurant brought out your starter, mains, and pudding simultaneously. The cooking time for each is no shorter, but the meal isn't half speeded up. It's unprecedented, and like Lydia Guthrie, I'm naturally cautious. But if all goes to plan in the coming weeks, I'd take a vaccine. The question is, would you?

## What the Owaisi phenomenon says about Indian Muslims & future of 'secular' parties

**A report:** The Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-E-Itehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) bagged five seats in the Bihar assembly elections, prompting critics such as the Congress to accuse it of dividing the secular vote and behaving like the BJP's "B-team". "Secular parties are now paranoid about Owaisi because they're worried that now he's made inroads into Maharashtra and Bihar, what if he does so in Uttar Pradesh?" says ThePrint's Editor-in-Chief Shekhar Gupta in episode 616 of 'Cut The Clutter' Wednesday. Gupta adds that while the Congress is willing to team up with the Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) in Kerala, it is shy of an arrangement with Owaisi for fears that it could be seen as anti-Hindu. Congress should realise that it "cannot become more Hindu than the BJP" and it needs to start looking at political players like Owaisi differently to counter a force as dominant as the BJP, Gupta says. Gupta explains that when Owaisi divided the secular vote or the Muslim vote in the past, it did not evoke such a strong negative response, adding that the political question around him has now evolved. According to Gupta, in the 2015 Bihar assembly elections, AIMIM candidates didn't fare well because Muslims in the state thought it best to vote for parties that were "tried and tested" - the RJD and Congress. But then the AIMIM started to become successful in other states. In the 2019 Maharashtra assembly election, AIMIM picked up two seats, challenging the Congress and NCP grip over

the Muslim vote. After Bihar, it shows that no secular party in India can take the Muslim vote for granted, Gupta adds. In the 1920s, when Mahatma Gandhi was concerned that Congress was still seen as a Hindu party, he got the party involved with the Khilafat movement. This created a new Muslim leadership in India and the first impulse for the two-nation theory. Gupta adds that for the next six decades, Muslims trusted the Congress party and members of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. They, however, became disillusioned by the Shah Bano case and tensions around the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute during Rajiv Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister. That sentiment was cemented with the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. Gupta says that Muslims then opted for other non-Muslim leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh, Lalu Yadav and partly Nitish Kumar in Bihar and Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal. They still voted for the Congress in places where there weren't strong political alternatives. However, the Congress, which has benefited the most from the Muslim vote, hasn't produced one Muslim leader of consequence despite the likes of Zakir Hussain Gesawat and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, adds Gupta. In the 1960s, a Muslim party, the All India Muslim Majlis, did emerge in the Hindi heartland but once it joined the informal coalition against Indira Gandhi, it became "subsumed by socialist politics" and went into decline. Owaisi is a very good example of how India's Muslims are still not entirely keen

to have a Muslim represent them, adds Gupta. Like Owaisi, a new political figure in Assam, Badruddin Ajmal has emerged, Gupta says, but adding that since Muslims are concentrated in a few constituencies in Assam, especially those nearer to Bangladesh, the politics there has become polarised. Gupta then describes the BJP and RSS' "35-year-project" to create a narrative in Assam that Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh, who Ajmal represents, pose a threat to the indigenous Assamese causing Ajmal to be "demonised" in the state. Comparatively, Owaisi has been able to expand his footprint beyond Hyderabad and he's also English-speaking and media savvy, observes Gupta. To explain the dearth of Muslim leaders, Gupta recalls how senior BJP leader Balbir Punj once explained that Muslims have a "veto" on who will rule India. Take the fall of the Vajpayee government in 2004 and its inability to form a coalition government as other parties were afraid they would lose their Muslim vote. Alternatively, Congress was able to form a coalition government which was UPA-I, he says. Gupta observes that today, the BJP has stopped reaching out to Muslims completely and there is a situation where other than the Ministry of Minority Affairs, there are no Muslims in the Union Cabinet. To counter such a dominant force, Congress and other secular parties must reach out to the likes of Owaisi and Ajmal, make their arrangements with them and not be afraid of sharing their support base, Gupta adds.

## How Mohan Bhagwat outlined a vision for a casteist, theocratic Hindu state on national TV

Mohan Bhagwat, the organisation's chief-officially titled the sarsanghchalak-laid out his vision for a casteist, theocratic Hindu state. The next day, newspapers covered the speech on its front pages, but mainly reported his comments on issues such as China's incursions into Indian territory, the recently introduced controversial farm laws and the COVID-19 pandemic. Bhagwat's thinly veiled articulation of the Hindu theocracy, broadcast to the nation on Doordarshan, was wrapped in a specific vocabulary of the Sangh that needs decoding. "This word 'Hindu' [includes] those who accepted India as their own, those who adopt its culture's global and perpetual values into their conduct, and those who take pride in its glorious ancestral traditions," Bhagwat said in his Vijayadashami-the term for the RSS's foundation day-speech. "It applies to all 130 crore individuals of our society. This is what we believe." He added that this identity included non-Hindus as well because they were "Bharatiya purvajon ke vansaj"-the descendants of Indian ancestors. But it became clear through the course of his speech that "Bharatiya purvaj" meant "Hindu purvaj," or Hindu ancestors. He clarified in unequivocal terms, "Apne rashtra ka swa Hindutva hai"-the true self of this nation is Hindutva. Accordingly, Bhagwat said, every Indian must "adopt the word Hindu" as their common identity for the sake of "the country's unity and security." He did not explain how the country's security would be at risk if they failed to do so. Bhagwat's speech reflected the Sangh's vision for India, and must be considered seriously for the significant influence the organisation wields over Indian politics, policy and society. The RSS is an unregistered voluntary paramilitary corporation and the parent of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. At present, 38 of the 53 BJP ministers in the Modi government-over 70 percent-have a Sangh background. Modi himself served as an RSS pracharak, or full-time worker, for over three decades. The Sangh also controls dozens of affiliates across the country, including India's largest trade union, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, which boasts of over ten million members, and the largest student union, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad. It runs over 74,000 shakhas, its smallest organisational unit, nearly one thousand NGOs that are executing over fifty thousand projects, and operates at least twelve thousand schools. Bhagwat was appointed as the RSS's fifth sarsanghchalak in 2009, but there was nothing novel about his vision for the country-he merely repeated what his predecessors and others from the Sangh had said in the organisation's 95-year-long history. To understand the speech in all its context, I studied Bhagwat's words alongside the works of four other Hindu nationalists and Sangh ideologues: VD Savarkar's Essentials of Hindutva, written in 1923; Deen Dayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism, written in 1965; MS Golwalkar's Bunch of Thoughts, written in 1966; and Dattopant Thengadi's Third Way, written in 1995. On such a reading, it becomes apparent that Bhagwat seeks to transform Indian into an unequal theo-



cratic society with graded freedoms based on each individual's caste and religious identity. His speech is alarming not for the audacious rebuke of India's constitutional principles, but for the fact that recent trends indicate a very real possibility of it being converted into policy. In June this year, I wrote for The Caravan how the Narendra Modi government's economic policies following the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown mirrored the "Hindu economics" developed by Thengadi in Third Way. Bhagwat

### VIPIN KUMAR

himself said in the speech that recent changes to India's agricultural, labour, education, economic and industrial laws were "hope-awakening steps that were brought in with a desire to bring swa," which he earlier identified as Hindutva. He further said that the RSS can keep "expectations" from the current "political leadership" in seeing policies shaped up on the basis of swa. Moreover, the solicitor general, Tushar Mehta, has submitted to a constitution bench of the Supreme Court, which was adjudicating matters concerning the freedom of religion, that aspects of the fundamental right can be regulated by the government and court. In August, Mehta presided over a virtual meeting of lawyers organised by the RSS's legal wing, Adhivakta Parishad. It cannot be ruled out that the RSS's ideological thinking influences, and even shapes, the central government's policy formulation. It thus becomes of paramount importance to study the speech and recognise it for its theocratic ambitions. Bhagwat spoke extensively on the concept of swa, referring to the meaning of self in India and the role of families in driving it, Hindutva, and Hindu parampara and mulya-traditions and values. He also spoke of India's foreign policy and the coronavirus pandemic, but one basic thought underpinned Bhagwat's speech that only a Hindu way of thinking is the right approach to state and social policy. The writings of the four Hindu nationalist ideologues I referred to help explain the RSS parlance and these concepts as understood in the Sangh. Bhagwat has previously tried to distance the Sangh from the openly communal words of Golwalkar in Bunch of Thoughts, in reference to his predecessor calling Muslims the "enemy." Bhagwat had said those words were said in a different "context" and had lost its "relevance." Yet, a study of the five articulations of Sangh ideology reveal that the underlying principles have remained the same for almost a century, even if the language may have now been sanitised to present a more moderate façade. Within the Sangh, Savarkar is celebrated alongside the RSS's founder and first sarsanghchalak, KB Hedgewar, even though he never formally

held any post within the Sangh. He enjoys massive support nonetheless because he is considered the father of the idea of Hindu nationalism. His notion of a Hindu identity was based on racial purity and on a "common flow of blood" among Hindus, and bears striking similarities to Bhagwat's idea of Hindutva based on a common ancestry and tradition. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya was among the founders of the Jan Sangh, the political predecessor to the BJP, and Golwalkar is the second sarsanghchalak of the RSS. Though Thengadi never chaired the RSS, he founded the Sangh's labour, agriculture, and trade wings. The writings of Golwalkar, Upadhyaya and Thengadi show that the RSS's ideas about Hindu identity, Hindu nation and Hindu society have remained the same throughout. All the three advocated for a state to be functioning under the treatises enshrined in Brahmanical scriptures and a society

divided into castes, and the same ideas were reflected in Bhagwat's interpretation of Hindus constituting the entire population subject to the condition that they "take pride in Bharatiya ancestors" was effectively a reiteration of Savarkar's idea of an exclusivist Hindu nation. In his 1923 book Essentials of Hindutva, Savarkar wrote, "A Hindu then is he who feels attachment to the land that extends from Sindhu to Sindhu as the land of his forefathers-as his Fatherland." He continued to list the makings of a Hindu, as one who "has inherited and claims as his own the Hindu Sanskriti, the Hindu civilization, as represented in a common history, common heroes, a common literature, common art, a common law and a common jurisprudence, common fairs and festivals, rites and rituals, ceremonies and sacraments." Even though Savarkar believed that Indian Muslims and Indian Christians were descendants of Hindus, and therefore cleared his test of racial purity, he discarded their entries into Hindu fold. Savarkar reasoned, "Their heroes and their hero-worship, their fairs and their festivals, their ideals and their outlook on life, have now ceased to be common with ours." By insisting that Hindus "take pride in Bharatiya ancestors" and its "sanskriti," or culture, Bhagwat effectively reiterated Savarkar's exclusivist ideas of a Hindu nation, because for him, the Bharatiya identity meant being Hindu. Golwalkar's Bunch of Thoughts is clearer on the Sangh's understanding of "Bharatiya ancestors." He wrote, "Let us revive that glorious tradition which produced a Vasishtha, a Vishwamitra, a Chanakya, a Vidyaranya and a Samartha, that blossomed forth in a Sri Rama, a Chandragupta, a Krishnadevaraya and a Shivaji." According to Brahmanical scriptures, Vasishtha, Vishwamitra, Chanakya and Vidyaranya were all Brahmin priests who served under different Kshatriya kings as advisors or counselors in different periods of time. Samartha was a spiritual guru in Maharashtra; Chandragupta and Krishnadevaraya were kings during the fourth century and sixteenth centuries, respectively, whose kingdoms had seen Hinduism flourish. Ramwas a Kshatriya king as mentioned in Tulsidas's Ramayana. Shivaji was a Maratha king in the seventeenth century, who is considered a Hindu icon because of his battles with the Mughals. Golwalkar expressed his apprehensions about the word Bharatiya and how its usage by India's political leaders caused "confusion and leads one away from the truth." He wrote, "It is commonly used as a translation of the word 'Indian,' which includes all the various other communities like the Muslim, Christian, Parsi, etc., residing in this land. So, the word 'Bharatiya' too is likely to mislead us when we want to denote our particular society. The word 'Hindu' alone connotes correctly and completely the meaning which we want to convey." Bhagwat insisted that all Indians must take pride in their "Bharatiya ancestors," mirroring a Hindutva practice of hero-worshipping Kshatriya kings and Brahmin priests, subject to the condition that they regarded these Hindu icons as their ancestors and felt proud of them. But he, too, echoed Golwalkar's apprehensions. He said, "If intent is the same in hearts, then we have no issue in using any other word. But, for the sake of the country's unity and security, by adopting this Hindu word... the Sangh moves forward." Bhagwat added that those who want to "break the society" are the same ones who say, "Hum Hindu nahi hai"-We are not Hindus. He referred to such people who refused to adopt the Hindu identity as the "tukde-tukde gang," and called them a bigger threat to India than China. Ultimately for the Sangh, the word "Bharatiya" still referred only to Hindus and Hindu society. Bhagwat's description of all Bharatiyas as sons and daughters

of the same ancestor is historically inaccurate, though in 2017, Modi went so far as to appoint a 14-person committee of scholars with a mission to establish that Hindus descended from India's first inhabitants. A Reuters investigation termed the committee's focus as an effort to "rewrite the history of the nation." It has now been well-established that the modern-day Indian population is a result of mass migration. As far back as 1916, BR Ambedkar had noted in a paper, "Castes in India," which was presented at an anthropology seminar in Columbia University, that "according to well-known ethnologists, the population of India is a mixture of Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians and Scythians." Ambedkar added, "All these stocks of people came into India from various directions and with various cultures, centuries ago, when they were in a tribal state." The Sangh's idea of Bharatiya does not allow for any other such cultures. In 2019, two different papers on the study of ancient DNA published in the journals Cell and Science confirmed the migration of large populations into the subcontinent after the Harappan civilisation. One of the points Bhagwat focused on in his speech was the idea of swa, or self, and how Hindutva was nothing but the "desh ka swa," meaning the nation's self. According to Bhagwat, people would progress only if they made swa as their basis for everything, so that individuals can ultimately attain "param vaibhav samapann," or supreme grandeur. Thengadi explains the concept of "Param Vaibhav" in Third Way, and defined it as the "pinnacle of greatness of the Hindu Rashtra." Bhagwat noted that the underlying principle behind acting in accordance with one's swa was that of purushartha, which is a Vedic treatise that fixes four goals for an individual to achieve-dharma, which is moral and social righteousness; artha, or accumulating wealth; kama, or seeking pleasure; and moksha, which refers to observing spiritual values. While Bhagwat only referred to the ideas of swa and dharma to prescribe the social practices that he believed Indians must adopt, it is clear from the writings of the other Sangh ideologues that the current sarsanghchalak was propagating casteist, Brahminical practices in doing so. To explain the concept of dharma, for instance, Golwalkar, Upadhyaya and Thengadi all quoted verses from Brahmanical texts including the Bhagavad Gita, the Mahabharata, and the Manusmriti. These texts prescribe the social conduct of society, ranging from the rights and duties of individuals and kings, to daily social interactions such as how men should interact with women. The Manusmriti divides society into four varnas-Brahmins, the priestly class; Kshatriyas, the martial class; Vaishyas, the trading class; and Shudras, the artisans-in descending order of hierarchy and stipulates laws for each, with duties for individuals based on their birth in a varna. Golwalkar, Upadhyaya and Thengadi not only supported the caste system in their writing, but also propagated it as a means of preserving Hindu values. Golwalkar went as far as saying that the caste system prevented Indians from "succumbing to foreign invasion" and it was rather essential for "social cohesion." He wrote that swa was "our dharma and sanskriti" and for India to be called truly independent, it was necessary to ensure the "protection and propagation" of both. Upadhyaya, in Integral Humanism, explained dharma by narrating an incident from the Mahabharata when "greed and anger dominated" society. "The Rishis were perturbed over the developments," he wrote. He said the priestly class went to the Hindu deity Brahma to seek counsel. "Brahma gave them a treatise on 'Law and the Functions of the State,' which he himself had written. From thereon, life was good." Through the course of his speech, Bhagwat made several references to how Indians ought to follow their swa, which always centered around adopting Hindu cultural practices. For instance, Bhagwat claimed that COVID-19 protocols formed part of Bharatiya sanskriti, and therefore reflected swa. "Our homes have built some habits-every time we come from outside, we wash our feet, we wash our hands before touching anything," he said. "Such small-small habits, which were accumulated from our culture, came to us once again." Although Bhagwat suggested that these habits were a reflection of hygienic practices propagated within Hinduism, it is well-established that notions of purity, and not health, form the bedrock of the Hindu idea of sanitation, which is rooted in Brahminical casteist practices. Another example cited of swa by Bhagwat also revealed his support for caste-based divisions in society, and the idea that an individual's duties were determined by their birth into a particular varna.



Students attend classes following strict COVID-19 safety protocols at a college that reopened amid the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangalore

## Anti-China alliance: Japan, Australia reach security pact amid fears over South China Sea row

Tokyo, November 18: Japan and Australia agreed on a breakthrough defence pact on Tuesday allowing reciprocal visits for training and operations, and voiced concern over the disputed South China Sea, where China is extending its military influence. It is Japan's first agreement covering foreign military presence on its soil since a status of forces agreement in 1960 that allowed the United States to base warships, jets and troops in Japan as part of an alliance that Washington describes as the bedrock of regional security. The Reciprocal Access Agreement strengthens defence ties between the two US allies at a time when China is asserting its role in the region and the United States is going through a messy leadership transition. The pact allows Japanese and Australian troops to visit each other's countries and conduct training and joint operations and was agreed in principle by Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart, Scott Morrison, who is visiting Tokyo. "I hereby announce that we reached agreement in principle on a reciprocal access agreement, which had been negotiated to elevate security and defence cooperation between Japan and Australia to a new



level," Suga told a joint news conference. The pact "establishes streamlined arrangements to support the deployment of defence forces more quickly and with less administration", Morrison said. The two sides also agreed on the need for a framework to allow Japanese military to protect Australian forces if needed, the joint statement said. Since mid-August, the United States has repeatedly riled China by sending warships to the South China Sea and has blacklisted 24 Chinese entities over their involvement in building and militarising artificial islands there. China said it was conducting military training in the South China Sea from Tuesday through the end of November. The legacy of Japan's invasion and occupation of parts of China in World War Two still haunts relations, and the two sides dispute ownership of islands in the East China Sea. Australia's relations with China have deteriorated after Australian allegations of Chinese meddling in its affairs and calls for an international inquiry into the source of the coronavirus, first identified in China almost a year ago. The two leaders expressed their worries about "recent negative developments and serious incidents in the South China Sea, including militarisation of disputed features, dangerous coercive use of coast guard vessels", their statement said. Japan and Australia said they also shared concerns about the East China Sea and the former British colony of Hong Kong where China has imposed a strict new national security law, clamping down on dissent. They also agreed to deepen their ties in 5G networks technology, and undersea cables and resource security for critical minerals supply. "Trade should never be used as a tool to apply political pressure," Suga and Morrison said.

## Palghar girls to Sameet Thakkar case - all Maharashtra govts tried to shut online dissent

Mumbai, November 18: Sameet Thakkar, a Nagpur resident and a BJP sympathiser, was arrested earlier this week for the third time in 17 days over alleged offensive social media posts against Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and his son, state minister Aaditya Thackeray. Thakkar is, however, not the first to have been arrested by the state police for alleged offensive online content. There have been several such arrests in the past under the Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. BJP leaders have severely criticised such police action, slamming it as a clamp down on freedom of expression. However, not too long ago, it was the BJP that was on the receiving end of such criticism when the police in Maharashtra was registering cases and arresting people for posting "objectionable" social media posts against then CM Devendra Fadnis and his government. Using police force to clamp down on alleged offensive content on social media has been a hallmark of all political dispensations in Maharashtra. There have been at least 10 such cases, including five arrests, under the current MVA government, at least six cases during the previous BJP-Shiv Sena regime, and at least three under the Congress-NCP dispensation when social media was still a nascent phenomenon in the country. Every political party has made justifications for such arrests or cases under its government, while slamming the rival party's action when in opposition. "While there hasn't been a detailed study around this, a lot of such cases across the country are from Maharashtra... Politicians across the board have used the levers of the press, police and court to the extent they can," Apar Gupta, lawyer and executive director of advocacy group Internet Freedom Foundation, told Gupta's foundation in August wrote to the Maharashtra government, suggesting that the state should constitute a committee under a retired Supreme Court judge to draft a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for police to handle cases about alleged sedition, hate speech,

pornography, obscenity, and insult to women among others, based on judicial precedents. "An SOP will bring a higher degree of objectivity and stop this kind of political interference in selective action. These kinds of cases are not conducive to the creativity and expression required by the industries housed in the state, especially Mumbai. The tendency to politically pick and choose which cases to act on should be minimised," Gupta said. Thakkar, who is followed on Twitter by many senior BJP leaders, including even Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was first arrested last month by the Nagpur Police. Just as a city court granted him bail, police officials from Mumbai's VP Road Police station arrested him on 2 November. Then earlier this week, as Thakkar got bail in the case against him filed at the VP Road Police station, he was arrested again, this time by the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) cyber police. The BJP sympathiser has multiple FIRs against him, including three filed by the Shiv Sena. His latest arrest by the BKC Cyber Police is about one of his tweets in August, alleging that Aaditya Thackeray was involved in actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death. Thakkar's arrest last month and on 2 November were over his Twitter comments in the last week of June calling CM Thackeray a "modern day Aurangzeb". He has also called Aaditya "Baby Penguin" and has also allegedly hurled abuses at women, politicians, and journalists, among others on the micro-blogging site. Thakkar is, however, not the first against whom the police, under the MVA government, had taken action. The first was Paresh Borse, a Navi Mumbai resident, who was arrested in April this year for allegedly posting an image on Facebook showing the CM and his son carrying a coffin on their shoulders and smiling, taking a dig at Maharashtra recording the highest number of Covid-19 cases and related deaths. In August, Twitter user Sunaina Holey was arrested for allegedly posting objectionable content about the Thackerays and circulating messages on social media aimed at disturbing peace. Then in

September, the Mumbai Police arrested YouTuber Saahil Choudhary for allegedly posting offensive content against women. Choudhary had also allegedly posted content linking Aaditya to the probe into Rajput's death. Then last month, the Mumbai Police arrested Delhi-based advocate Vibhor Anand for allegedly spreading conspiracy theories in connection with Rajput's death. Keshav Upadhye, BJP Maharashtra spokesperson, had last month told ThePrint, "In a democracy, there is bound to be criticism and dissent, but here they seem to have come up with a new law that no one speak

Renu Srinivasan, were arrested over a Facebook post questioning the shutdown in Mumbai due to Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray's death. While Dadha had written the comment, her friend Srinivasan had 'liked' it. The case drew national attention and the Congress-NCP government faced a lot of flak from political opponents, activists and netizens. In 2013, in an affidavit to the Supreme Court, the state government accepted that the arrest had "a chilling effect and was unwarranted". While the Palghar case received national attention, there were similar cases

rumours and create conditions politically conducive for the BJP. It is part of a national conspiracy," Sawant said, adding the police are trying to unravel the alleged "systematic crime," while the action taken against social media users under the Fadnis government was arbitrary and simply to target political opponents. In July 2015, Nagpur Police booked Ajay Hatewar, a city-based youth Congress activist, under the IT Act for tweeting an old picture of Fadnis' family on a yacht while the then CM was in the US on an official trip. The complainant, a BJP leader, claimed Hatewar had "defamed the CM" by linking the two trips. While the Nagpur Police was looking for him, Hatewar allegedly went into hiding. In June 2017, Mumbai Police's cyber cell booked comedian Tanmay Bhat for tweeting a meme where a Snapchat 'dog filter' was used on a photograph of PM Modi. In August 2017, Mahadev Balgude, a resident of Baramati, was arrested for allegedly creating a fake Facebook profile of Nidhi Kamdar, then officer-on-special-duty to former CM Devendra Fadnis. Balgude had allegedly posted lewd and defamatory comments about her as well as the CM. In May 2018, Mumbai Police arrested Aniket Patil, who worked with a private tourism firm, for allegedly abusing Modi and Fadnis on Twitter for the Fadnis-led government's decision to build a contentious oil refinery at Nanar in Ratnagiri district. The same day as Patil's arrest, Mumbai Police booked writer and director Ram Subramanian for allegedly posting abusive tweets criticising PM Modi's China policy, as well as Fadnis. A year later, in August 2019, Baliraj Dhote, a social activist from Chandrapur district, was arrested for alleged offensive posts on Facebook against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, and showing PM Modi and Smriti Irani in a bad light. Congress, BJP trade barbs On the arrest of Baramati resident Balgude, Congress' Sawant told ThePrint he was kept in jail for 90 days. "All these things have happened under the BJP government.



against the government and its leaders. "But Manisha Kayande, a Shiv Sena MLC, said: "Calling people names, using abuses is not freedom of expression. Generally, there needs to be a conscious effort by all political parties to not tolerate such irresponsible content. Such statements can affect anybody's life or political career, but somehow the tolerance changes when you are on the other side." Incidentally, the BJP had also approached the police in cities across the state such as Mumbai, Nagpur and Ratnagiri, to complain about "vulgar and unparliamentary language" being used to troll its senior leaders, especially Fadnis, the former CM who is currently the leader of opposition. Mangal Prabhat Lodha, BJP Mumbai President, told ThePrint: "There was no FIR or any investigation into this despite repeated follow-ups." One of the most talked about cases of police action against social media posts dates back to November 2012, from when the Congress-NCP was in government. Two girls from Palghar, Shaheen Dadha and

filed earlier too during the Congress-NCP reign. In March 2012, Mumbai Police booked two Air India employees, cabin crew members Mayank Mohan Sharma and K.V.J. Rao, for allegedly sharing lewd jokes about politicians, making derogatory comments about then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and insulting the national flag in their Facebook posts. They were arrested in May and even suspended from the airline. In September 2012, Mumbai Police arrested political cartoonist Aseem Trivedi on charges of sedition, cyber crime and for allegedly insulting Parliament and the national flag. The police also banned his website 'Cartoons Against Corruption'. Maharashtra Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant told ThePrint: "Everyone has the right to criticise. Freedom of expression has been given in the Constitution, but the responsibility of what you are saying also lies with you because you shouldn't hurt anyone's sentiments." "Now, there is a deliberate professional effort to create fake accounts to malign the image of the government, float

## CBI arrests BSF officer Satish Kumar in connection with cattle smuggling case

Kolkata, November 18: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday (November 17, 2020) arrested the then commandant of 36 Battalion of the Border Security Force (BSF), Satish Kumar in connection with a cattle smuggling case. Kumar was questioned for several hours at the CBI office in Kolkata on Tuesday. He was later arrested by the agency in the evening. Charges slapped against Kumar are 120B IPC and Section 7, 11 and 12 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. Earlier on September 23, the investigating agency had carried out searches at his office and residence across several locations in Kolkata. Kumar is presently posted at the BSF unit in Raipur. The CBI had registered a case on September 21, 2020, against Satish Kumar,

Md Enamul Haq, Anarul Sheikh and Mohammed Golam Mustafa. The preliminary enquiry conducted by the CBI revealed that during Kumar's tenure as Commandant of 36 Battalion in Malda district of West Bengal between December 2015 and April 2017, more than 20,000 cattle were apprehended during a smuggling bid but were not seized and the smugglers were not apprehended. "The cattle were auctioned within 24 hours of being seized and seizure lists were made arbitrarily categorising the breed and size of seized animals with an intention to reduce the upset price of the cattle during auctions. In lieu of that favour, Md Enamul Haque used to pay Rs 2,000 per cattle to BSF officials and Rs 500 to concerned customs officials," the FIR by CBI read.



Two kids talk with each other as displaced people prepare to leave the al-Hol camp run by the Kurdish militias in the northeastern province of Hasakah, Syria,

## After several days, Delhi records air pollution in 'moderate' category with PM 2.5 at 132

New Delhi, November 18: The national capital breathed a little easy on Wednesday (November 18, 2020) morning with air pollution recorded in the 'moderate' category. The PM 2.5 level in Delhi was registered at 132. The change of pollution level is a welcome change after the national capital region reported 'severe' AQI levels for nearly 40 days. The PM 2.5 recorded at Pusa was 111, at Lodhi road 121, at Delhi University 108, at IGI Airport 173 and at IIT Delhi 139. In Noida, the PM 2.5 level is at 173 while in Gurugram the PM 2.5 level was recorded at 169. On November 16, the air quality had improved significantly in Delhi and surrounding areas in Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon due to light rain and favourable wind speed and was recorded in the 'poor' category after a 15-day spell of 'very poor' and 'severe' air days. The city's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) improved to 221 on Nov 16, which falls in the 'poor' category. The AQI recorded on November 15 was 435 and on Nov 14 (Diwali) AQI was 414.

No. SDM.503/2020-21/18/1804  
**NOTICE INVITING QUOTATION**  
 Sealed quotations on plain paper affixing Court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees Eight and twenty five paise) only are hereby invited from registered Finns/ Suppliers etc. for supply of Furniture and utensils etc. at Borgang Guest House Biswanath District under the scheme "Construction of Sericulture Guest House at Borgang, Biswanath District" under SOPD-G for the year 2019-20.  
 Detailed bid documents along with Terms & Conditions may be obtained from the office of the undersigned w.e.f. 19/11/2020 during working days on payment of Rs. 100.00 (Rupees One hundred) only being the cost of bid documents in the form of demand draft (DD) pledged in favour of Director of Sericulture, Assam.  
 Last date of submission of quotation to the Office of the Directorate of Sericulture Assam, Guwahati is on 09/12/2020 up to 1:00 PM and will be opened on the same day at 1:30 PM in presence of the quotationer or their authorized representative in the office of the Directorate of Sericulture, Assam, Guwahati. If the date of receiving quotation falls on Govt. holiday, the quotation will be received on the next working day.  
 Sd/- Director,  
 Sericulture, Assam. Guwahati-22  
 Janasanyog/C/7066/20

No. TE(Ex)Admn-1/2020/545  
**EDUCATIONAL NOTICE**  
**Regarding Probable Cancellation of Seats of Admitted Students in Different Govt. Engineering Colleges for Non-Attending Online Classes**  
 It has been observed that many students who took admission in different Govt. Engineering Colleges of the State through online mode, have not attended their online classes or are having very poor attendance record. With reference to our earlier Public Notice No. TE(Ex)Admn-1/2020/465 dated 3rd October, 2020 and subsequent undertaking by the students, such students will forfeit their allotted seat and the seat will be filled up by the aspiring candidates in the queue within the stipulated time frame fixed by the AICTE. If such students do not fulfill the following instructions which has been resolved in the interest of all concerned:  
 1) Such students will have to report to their respective colleges at 10 AM on 23rd November, 2020 and to justify why their seat will not be cancelled.  
 2) To avoid undesirable complications due to filling up such seats by the other aspirants, such students will have to submit their Original Mark sheets of 12th Examination to their College for temporary retention as a proof that the candidates will be continuing their studies at that Institution.  
 3) Any such students, who remain indifferent and who fails to report/ justify to the college on the specified date will imply his unwillingness to remain a student of that college and his/her seat will be cancelled automatically.  
 Sd/- Director of Technical Education, Assam  
 Kabilipara, Guwahati-19  
 Janasanyog/D/7174/20

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## Sonowal dedicates 15.447 KM NH

also said that his government has also constructed roads using pavers block in all the 850 tea gardens of the state. Chief Minister Sonowal also said that as against the rule of discrimination, neglect and indifference, the BJP led State government has ushered in development based on peace and harmony. As a result, the state has not witnessed any discord or disharmony in the state. Stating that the construction of Dibrugarh Bypass will help in beautification, development of the historic Dibrugarh town, Sonowal thanked all functionaries associated with NHIDCL for completing the bypass. He at the same time asked NHIDCL to complete all ongoing projects of the state within the stipulated time frame. Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister of State for Food Processing Rameswar Teji said that the synergy between the Central and State governments have resulted in an unprecedented development in communication and transportation of the state. He also thanked Chief Minister Sonowal for bringing about extraordinary changes in the socio-economic and cultural milieu of the tea garden dominated areas in the state. Executive Director NHIDCL gave welcome address in the programme which was also addressed by MLA Lahowal Rituporno Baruah. Minister of State (i/c) Tea Tribe Welfare Sajay Kisan, MLAs Prasanta Phukan, Naren Sonowal, Bimal Bora, Chakradhar Gogoi, Chief Executive Member Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council Dipu Ranjan Makrany, Managing Director BPCL R. Hazarika and a host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

## Direct Funding to KAAC have

which were meant to KAAC will be sent through KAAC Account No. 39810430900. Before, all the Central Sponsored Scheme Fund which was released by Central Government had to proceed through HAD after placing Supplementary Demand and passing from Assembly, then only the fund was released to KAAC. So, it was quite a lengthy process and troublesome, because the fund of AIBP for last financial year was not released yet till now. After being requested to the Central Government time and again, they (Central Govt.) have agreed direct funding to KAAC in all Central Sponsored Schemes with effect from this financial year, told KAAC CEM Ronghang. It was a long standing demand by the people of Karbi Anglong to achieve Autonomous State under Article 244(A) of the Constitution of India and Direct Funding to the Council. But, the matter could not resolved at the time of the signing of MoU in 1995 and the MoS in 2011, although MoS provided for the amendment of Art 280 to bring the Council under the purview of the Finance Commission of India. But, the relentless effort made by Team Karbi Anglong under my leadership, the Union Government has agreed to effect Direct Funding of all Centrally Sponsored Scheme to the KAAC, told KAAC CEM Ronghang. If all the MoS Package including Economic Lifeline have implemented, then the needful amount will be above Rs. 15,000 Crores. So, for the interest of implementing the MoS, it is the duty of MP Horensing Bey to raise the matter in the Parliament time and again, informed KAAC CEM Ronghang to reporters. KAAC CEM Tuliram Ronghang also stated that some political activists have erroneously accused the BJP government of imposing Pachayati Raj system in Karbi Anglong. It is therefore required to put the record straight from our side. Like in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and other hill tribal areas of Northeast, we have Village Development Committee (VDC) which is headed by Chairman. But the MIS in the Government website maintain a uniform system throughout India including Sixth Schedule areas as 'Gram Panchayat' (GP) and its head as 'Sarpanch'. That's why the data is also entered as GP and Sarpanch in their website since the beginning when the Congress Government started the system. The same manner of data is also entered in Government MIS system for Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram also. We have already written twice to the Government to correct the data management system. So, it is nothing but to intent of stoking social tension for their vested political mileage. In the Press Conference KAAC Executive Member (EM) Anarsing Tisso, EM Prodig Difusa, EM Maduria Dekhial Phukan, Forest Board Chairman Richard Tokbi, Principal Secretary Sanjeeb Kumar Das, ACS and Secretary Si-Im Taro, ACS were also attended.

## BJP to contest all 12 BTAD

the bargain of this support BPF gets a few ministerial portfolios and other perks. BPF's continuous reign in BTC has ultimately resulted in allegations of widespread corruption at the grassroots level. The BJP is trying to portray itself as the savior of BTC and capture the council so that it can have those 12 additional MLA seats in its kitty without having to share the power. Bodoland People's Front (BPF) president Hagrama Mohilary is confident that his party will win 30 seats of the 40 and form the BTC (Bodoland Territorial Council) government. While addressing a political rally the BPF chief commented that even though Assam cabinet minister and senior BJP leader Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma has been campaigning against the BPF, not a single seat of the BPF has been harmed. "Himanta Biswa Sarma does not know anything about BTC. The bullying attitude of Himanta Biswa will not be entertained in the BTC region," said the BPF chief. Mohilary also commented that the crowd at the Gosaigaon meetings of BJP was brought from outside the BTC. Questioning the BJP government, Mohilary said, "Modi government was supposed to give Rs. 1,000 crore to the BTC area, but he gave us only Rs. 600 crore. Where are the remaining Rs. 400 crore?" When it comes to the BJP rule, Koch Rajbongshi, Adviser were to be given the ST status in three months. This was the commitment made by PM Modi. This is not the first time that I've heard of such a thing. I urge the people not to fall for such sweet talk. The BPF is always ready to provide landholding (Pattas) rights to the people living on annual patta lands", said the BPF chief. The BTC polls will be held in two phases on 7 and 10 December. The counting of votes will take place on 12 December. There are 46 seats in the council of which six are nominated by the Assam Governor. The tenure of an elected council is of five years and elections are announced thereafter. This year, the elections were supposed to be held during May, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic it got delayed. The main parties contesting against each other are BPF, UPPL and BJP. The BPF under Hagrama Mohilary has been ruling the BTC since 2005.

## PM Modi speaks with US

climate change, and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region. "Further, PM Modi said Kamala Harris' victory is a matter of great pride and inspiration for the Indian-American community." I also conveyed warm congratulations for VP-elect @KamalaHarris. Her success is a matter of great pride and inspiration for members of the vibrant Indian-American community, who are a tremendous source of strength for Indo-US relations," the PM said in another tweet. While, the Biden-Harris Presidential Transition team in a press release informed that the president-elect thanked the prime minister for his congratulations and expressed his desire to strengthen and expand the US-India strategic partnership alongside the first vice president of South Asian descent Kamala Harris. "The president-elect noted that he looks forward to working closely with the prime minister on shared global challenges, including containing COVID-19 and defending against future health crises, tackling the threat of climate change, launching the global economic recovery, strengthening democracy at home and abroad, and maintaining a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region," the statement read. The readout highlighted key areas in which the Biden administration "looks forward to working closely" with Prime Minister Modi which include "containing COVID-19 and defending against future health crises, tackling the threat of climate change, launching the global economic recovery, strengthening democracy at home and abroad" and "maintaining a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region." During the telephonic conversation, PM Modi warmly recalled his earlier interactions with Biden, including during his official visits to the United States in 2014 and in 2016. On area which both readout mention is Indo-Pacific, a concept that was the key focus of the Trump administration and New Delhi and shows continuity on the issue. The concept, backed by India, the US, and like-minded partners is seen suspiciously by China. Biden has been a supporter of close New Delhi-Washington ties, in his capacity as senator and the vice president. In August 2001, Joe Biden had written a letter to then-President George W. Bush calling on the new administration to drop US sanctions against India and during his tenure as the Chairman of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he worked towards the US Senate's approval of US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008. Biden had chaired the Joint Session of the US Congress that was addressed by the Prime Minister during his 2016 visit.

## The 17th General Conference

the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act stir in the state opposing the Centre's move to grant citizenship to religious minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan-which many in Assam feared would lead to large-scale influx of Bangladeshis to the state. All eyes are on the four-day general conference of All Assam Students Union (AASU) which will start on Wednesday as the state's premier student body gives final shape to a new political party ahead of next year's assembly polls. In September, AASU and Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chitra Parishad (AJYCP), another influential student body, had joined hands and announced formation of Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP), which will contest the polls due in March-April. The general conference, to be held at Duliajan in Dibrugarh district, is expected to announce the office-bearers of the new political party and also witness several prominent faces of AASU leaving the platform to join active politics. The terms of AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath and general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi are ending and both the leaders are expected to take contest the next assembly polls. While Gogoi was slated to join AJP, there's no clarity yet on which party Nath would join. Since both have been vehemently opposing the BJP-led coalition in the state, it is expected that they will join anti-BJP fronts. There's also speculation that AASU adviser Samujjal Bhattacharya, one of the most prominent student leaders from the region, will be retiring from the outfit during the general conference. Bhattacharya, who is reported to be unhappy with the way AJP is shaping up, has remained mum on the speculations. There's no indication yet on whether he will join any political party and contest the next polls. Incidentally, AJP is the second political party to be formed by AASU after Asom Gana Parishad, which came into being in 1985 after signing of the Assam Accord that ended the six-year-long anti-foreigners agitation-in which both AASU and AJYCP played a key role. Both organisations had spearheaded the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act stir in the state opposing the Centre's move to grant citizenship to religious minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan-which many in Assam feared would lead to large scale influx of Bangladeshis to the state. Earlier, leadership of both AASU and AJYCP had stressed that formation of the new party won't affect the organisations and they would retain their non-political character.

## National Rail & amp; Transportation

oriented and not being offered by any other Institute in India and thus, unique in its contents. It offers project-based learning at Railway establishments. Indian Railways will be at the core of implementing the key features of the programmes. It will serve as an experiential learning laboratory for the student community as well as the faculty development initiatives, thereby creating a distinct character for the University through a highly experiential and application-based learning approach. Following are the details of courses being offered at National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI), Vadodra:

1. BBA in Transportation Management (3 years)
2. B Sc in Transportation Technology (3 years)
3. B. Tech. in Rail Infrastructure Engineering (4 years)
4. B. Tech. in Rail Systems & amp; Communication Engineering (4 years)
5. MBA in Transportation Management (2 years)
6. MBA in Supply Chain Management (2 years)
7. M Sc in Railway Systems Engineering (2 years)
8. M Sc in Transport Technology and Policy (2 years)
9. M Sc in Transport Information Systems and Analytics (2 years).

## Traffic Guidelines Issued

choose other routes. 14. Parking can be done in Chunsali and surrounding areas as well on the side of the road. This year Chhath puja will be held at Brahmaputra riverfront (Uzan Bazar to Bharalumukh), Suniali, Pandu ghat, Malgoan Railway stadium, Birubari fishery, Basistha, Lalmati, Khanapara Farmgate, Hatigaoan, Jyotikuchi, Narengi, Pathar Quarry, Narengi, Azara, and Chandrapur.

## Youth Beheaded In Front Of Church

**Madurai, November 18:** In a shocking incident, a 22-year old youth was murdered and beheaded in broad daylight by an unidentified gang in front of St. Mary's Church in Madurai's Uthangudi village on Sunday. As per reports, the incident happened when the youth was walking with his friend near the church on Sunday evening along with one of his friend Muniasamy when a gang which came in a car intercepted the two. On seeing them, the two tried to escape but was chased down and attacked. The deceased, who was identified as one B Muruganatham, died in the attack. The gang then decapitated his head and placed in front of the church. His friend Muniasamy, who escaped with injuries, was undergoing treatment at a government hospital. A team of police reached the spot upon being alerted and conducted an inquiry.

## Cm Sonowal Lays Foundation Stone Of Koch Rajbongshi Museum In Bongaigaon

**GUWAHATI, Nov 18:** To preserve the rich culture and heritage of Assam's Koch Rajbongshi community, chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid foundation stone of a museum in lower Assam's Bongaigaon town on Friday. Sonowal was accompanied by ministers Pijush Hazarika, Phani Bhusan Choudhury and Bongaigaon deputy commissioner Dr. MS Lakshmi Priya. Speaking on the occasion, Sonowal expressed hope that the museum would play a pivotal role in preserving the cultural resources and heritage of the Koch Rajbongshis. He also laid the foundation stone of various other developmental projects for the Bongaigaon town. Among the developmental projects, a clock tower will be constructed at the cost of Rs. 25 lakh.

## Patricia Mukhim Resigns

that I now wish to resign from its membership. Kindly, therefore, accept my resignation today, November 16, 2020, the Padmashree awardee said in a letter addressed to EGI president Seema Mustafa. The letter also stated that she had shared the High Court order with the Guild hoping that it would at least give out a statement condemning the court order but there was and has been complete silence from the executive. Ironically, the Guild responded with alacrity and issued a statement condemning Arnab Goswami's arrest (a non-member), not on grounds of journalistic pursuits but on abatement to suicide case, she said. "I am resigning because the Guild is very discriminatory - while it takes up some cases, it does not pay heed to others. There has been complete silence on their part in regards to my case, which is rather unfortunate. I don't care what their stand is on my resignation. They were quick to take up Arnab Goswami's case and he is not even a member. They have not even said that they are sorry for not taking up my case which is what made me resign," Mukhim told, adding that she will now be approaching the Supreme Court with the case. "I see this as a classic case of the Guild playing to the gallery to defend celebrity editors/anchors whose voices matter while choosing to deliberately ignore a plea (unstated) from its one of its members. Clearly, this is also a case of prejudice and a deliberate attempt to push those in the margins even further away so that they disappear completely from the national discourse (since the Guild is a national association of editors) and leave them to deal with the matter in their personal capacity. A Facebook post is also another form of media to draw attention to a serious issue. It may not be a purely 'journalistic' pursuit but it still is a platform of communication which is taken seriously by the powers that be, hence an FIR being filed because of it. As such, it is no longer tenable for me to be part of this hallowed group of editors whose loyalties are to those that occupy a certain elite space. In fact, I feel completely out of place; almost an outlier in the Guild. Kindly therefore accept my resignation today, November 16, 2020," Mukhim wrote in her resignation letter to the guild. Patricia Mukhim also gave the example of how the journalists' body responded with "alacrity", and issued a statement condemning TV news anchor Arnab Goswami's arrest but did not issue any statement in her case. Last week, the Meghalaya High Court had refused to act over a police complaint filed against Patricia for a Facebook post in which she had demanded justice for non-tribals beaten up during a brawl. In the post in question, made against the backdrop of furor over a skirmish between tribals and non-tribals at Lawsohnut the senior journalist stated that since the attackers have not been attacked since 1979, Meghalaya is a "failed state." After complaints were raised about the allegedly controversial post, the police registered a criminal case under Section 153A/500/505C IPC against her and also issued a notice under Section 41 A Cr.P.C. In response to this, approached the High Court by filing a petition under Section 482 Cr.P.C. Mukhim had contended that she had only expressed her concerns regarding the handling of the case by the police and the Dorbar Shnong and has only expressed hope that justice would be dealt in this particular instance.

## OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL

### CHAIRPERSON, CITY LEVEL CIDF IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING (CCIMC), DIPHU KARBI ANGLONG, ASSAM

No DMB/W/CIDF/2019-20/10/

Date 10/11/2020

### Short Notice Inviting Tenders

Sealed Offers are hereby invited for the following works

#### I(A) Name of Works:

SL. NO	NAME OF SCHEMES	ESTIMATED AMOUNT (Rs in Lakh)	EARNEST MONEY (Rs in Lakh)	
			1%	2%
1	2	3	4	5
1	Construction of Lawn Tennis and Volley Ball Court with Gallery at KASA Stadium at Diphu under CIDF	100.00	1.00	2.00
2	Construction of Waiting Shed at each and every Ward of Diphu Town under CIDF	100.00	1.00	2.00
3	Wall painting and decoration (Mural) of all major Govt boundary wall of Diphu Town under CIDF	50.00	0.50	1.00
4	Construction of Water Fountain at Main Market Diphu Town under CIDF for the year 2020-21	50.00	0.50	1.00
5	Construction of Heritage Building of CST Memorial Hall at Lorulango of Diphu Town under CIDF	400.00	4.00	8.00
6	Construction of Basketball Court with Gallery at KASA Stadium Diphu under CIDF	100.00	1.00	2.00
7	Construction of New Market Complex at Rongkhehan Land Presently occupied by Vety Dept. Diphu Town under	1000.00	10.00	20.00
8	Construction of Inter State Bus Terminus at Diphu, DM Road near recreation centre at Diphu Town under CIDF	1200.00	12.00	24.00
9	Construction of Truck Terminus at Sweeper colony, cremation ground at Diphu under CIDF	500.00	5.00	10.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3500.00</b>	<b>35.00</b>	<b>70.00</b>

#### (B) Scheme under: CIDF UNDER DIPHU TOWN FOR THE YEAR 2020-21

The offer should bear a Diphu Municipal Board fee stamp of Rs. 1000.00 (Rupees One thousand) only (non-refundable) to be affixed with the offer without which no offer will be considered for acceptance.

#### 2. The offers should be placed in a sealed cover/container marked as 'Offer for Group No: \_\_\_\_\_ As stated above)

1. EARNEST MONEY @ 1% (Tribal) & 2% (Non-Tribal) of the project estimated amount as quoted above should be submitted in the form of Bank Draft in favour of Principal Secretary, KAAC, Diphu.
3. The offers will be received in the office of the Principal Secretary KAAC, Diphu up to 15.00 hours of 25-11-2020 and will be opened on the same date at 15.30 hours in presence of attending bidders or their authorized representatives. The time allowed for completion is six months from the 15th day of the issue of the formal work order.
4. The undersign reserves the right to accept or reject any Or the tenders without assigning any reason thereof and does not bind herself to accept the lowest rate.
5. The selected bidder will have to sign the formal offer F-2 form within 7 (seven) days from the date of issue of selection order failing which an amount equivalent to 2% of the offer value of the work shall stand forfeited
6. Canvassing in connection with offer is strictly prohibited and the offers submitted by the contractors who resort to such canvassing will be liable to rejection.
7. On acceptance of the offer, the name of accredited representative(s) of the contractor who should be responsible for taking instructions from the Principal Secretary KAAC, Diphu
8. All rates shall be quoted on flat percentage basis as per/below/above the APWD S/R of Building for 2013-14.
9. The Bidder must produce the Registration of contract under PWD or any other State Govt. Deptt. Registration Of GST including Clearance, Professional Tax Clearance Certificate, Trading Licence for Non Tribal Contractor, Income Tax Clearance Certificate. On the latest from as prescribed by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India including the Tender Papers and their respective Bank A/C No. of any
10. The offer for works shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 180 (one hundred eighty) days from the date of opening of the offers. If any bidder withdraws his offer before the said period or makes any modification in the items and conditions of the offer which are not acceptable to the department, then the Government shall without prejudice to any other right or remedy, be at liberty to forfeit an amount equivalent to 2% of the value of the contract either from the registration fees of the contractor or any other dues payable to him by the Department.
11. The offer for the work shall not be witnessed by a contractor or contractors who himself/themselves has/have bid or who may offer for the same work/ Failure to observe this condition should render Offers of the Contractors offering as well as witnessing the offer able to summary rejection.
12. The offer shall be for the composite work mentioned in the notice-inviting offer.
  - a) Before offering the intending bidder shall inspect the site to fully acquaint himself about the condition in regard to accessibility of site and locality, nature and extent of ground, working condition including stacking of materials, installation of T & P etc. Conditions affecting accommodation and movement of labour etc. Required for the satisfactory, execution of the work/contract No claim whatsoever on such account shall be entertained by the Department under any circumstances.
  - b) The intending bidder should also inspect the quarry and satisfy himself about the quality and availability of the various materials shall not consider, after acceptance of the contract to pay any extra charges for lead or any other reasons, in case, the contractor is found later on to have misjudged quality and availability of materials in the quarry.
13. The contractor's responsibility for the contract shall commence from the date of issue orders of acceptance of offer.
14. Unsealed offers shall be summarily rejected.
15. The Contractor should read the specifications and study the other terms and conditions carefully before submitting the offer.
16. If it is found that the offer is not submitted in the proper manner or conditions, too many correction or assured rates or amount, it would be open for the Department to take suitable action against the contractor.
17. The Bidders shall sign a declaration under the official secret act for maintaining secrecy of the offer documents drawings or any other records connected with the work given to them.

Sd/-  
Principal Secretary  
Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council  
&  
Chairperson, City Level CIDF Implementation and Monitoring (CCIMC), Diphu Karbi Anglong, Assam

## Richard Freeman claims he 'would never put a rider in serious harm's way'



**London, November 18:** Dr Richard Freeman, the former British Cycling and Team Sky doctor, claimed he had "never, ever taken any undue risks with a rider" and one had "never come across any harm" as a result of his care at his fitness-to-practice hearing. Freeman has admitted 18 of the 22 charges against him, which include ordering 30 sachets of testosterone gels to the Manchester Velodrome nine years ago and lying to British Cycling and UK Anti-Doping about it. However, he denies the General Medical Council's central charge of "knowing or believing" the Testogel was to be administered to a rider to aid their performance. While Freeman said the nature of elite sport means pushing the boundaries occasionally is a necessity, he told a Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service hearing that a rider's safety was always of paramount importance to him. "My job is to protect the health of

the riders even against themselves," he said. "We do have to take risks because these are elite sportsmen, there's no time to sit down if they have asthma or something. They all want to win but it's not at all costs. You have to take a risk/benefit analysis, this is elite sport. I would never, ever take risks or put a rider at serious harm's way and I have to be prepared to fall on my sword and if senior management sack me then so be it. I have never, ever taken any undue risks with a rider and they have never come across any harm because of my care. I will stand to that until my last breath." Freeman contends that he was bullied into ordering the Testogel by former British Cycling and Team Sky technical director Shane Sutton to treat erectile dysfunction, with both claims strenuously denied by the Australian. Freeman reiterated that he finds Sutton "intimidating and frightening even now" as his cross-examination entered its seventh week, with the medic answering questions from his QC Mary O'Rourke for the first time on Tuesday. Up until now, Freeman has been responding to the GMC's QC Simon Jackson as a cross-examination that was expected to last five days was heard over six weeks. "I'm here to assist the tribunal and tell the truth," Freeman said. "I was never told how long it was going to be. So many times I felt ambushed and unprepared. I have found that pressure very difficult.

## Saul 'Canelo' Álvarez to face Liverpool's Callum Smith in world title showdown

**Paris, November 18:** Saul 'Canelo' Álvarez will take on Liverpool's Callum Smith on 19 December, it has been announced by promoter Matchroom. The pair will face off in the United States just before Christmas with the WBA and Ring magazine world super-middleweight titles on the line. Smith had set his sights on the Mexican, who is considered one of the finest fighters in boxing, back in June. The 30-year-old finally has his man and speaking about the upcoming bout, he said: "I've been wanting a big fight since becoming world champion, so I'm

pleased that during these challenging times we can deliver to the fans a fight between the very best in the division. I truly believe I beat him and will prove that 168lbs is my division." Álvarez has held world belts in four weight divisions but recently became a free agent after parting with streaming service DAZN and Golden Boy Promotions. He has lost just once - to Floyd Mayweather in September 2013 - in 56 fights, while Smith is undefeated in 27 bouts and has defended his world title twice since winning it from George Groves in 2018.

# Ferran Torres's treble helps Spain humble Germany in Nations League

**London, November 18:** Ferran Torres pulled at his red shirt and kissed it, just above the badge. There is a star on it and there is a star inside it too, applause accompanying him as he stood there wearing a huge smile and trying to comprehend what was happening. The Manchester City attacker, still only 20 years old, playing his seventh international game, had just scored his third goal of an astonishing night in which Spain reached the final four of the Nations League by crushing Germany with the kind of performance for which the word perfect would not be out of place. It was the fifth goal, and it wasn't even the last. With two minutes remaining, Spain walked the ball in again, José Luis Gayá setting up the substitute Mikel Oyarzabal to complete a 6-0 victory. Yes, six. Against Germany. This was historic, the kind of occasion that 65,000 people should spend the rest of their lives boasting they were at. Instead, barely 300 can do so, but they will. Joachim Löw's team were not just defeated for the first time in 13 games, they were demolished. Spain's doubts disintegrated: just listing the opportunities would fill this page and the next and by the end, it seemed bizarre to recall that 90 minutes before there had been nerves. Most felt that the need to win meant that this was a task beyond la selección, who arrived in Seville on a three-game run without a victory - their longest in 18 years. Yet Luis Enrique had said it was "almost better" that they had to win. That way, he reasoned, there would be no doubts: they would have to go for it. And, boy, did they. In wave after wave and from the first whistle to the last, they tore at



Germany, who were left wondering where they were coming from. The answer, as it turned out, was everywhere - although to start with it was on the right where they were most incisive. There, Torres repeatedly ripped into Philipp Max. Inside him, Koke took control, ably supported by Rodri. Watching the Atlético midfielder dominate, there was just one doubt: how could it have been two years since his last call up? And yet it would be wrong to single out individuals: they were all superb. Even two first enforced substitutions, Sergio Canales and Sergio Ramos injured, did not slow them down. Canales's fantastic replacement, Fabián Ruiz, provided the first goal when his deep corner was headed in superbly by Morata. They had only been playing 15 minutes but it had been coming. Manuel Neuer saving from Ramos in the sixth minute and Spain refusing to let up. Torres especially: he pulled one past the far post, provided another for Morata to score a second

that was ruled out, and then was stopped by Neuer. He slipped to his knees, shocked that he had been denied but it did not last. Almost immediately, Koke's inswinging ball was headed off the bar by Dani Olmo and Torres smashed in the rebound. Gorgeous footwork from Torres and Ruiz drew applause from this almost empty arena, the silence mostly filled by the sound of crickets and the caress of the ball, before Rodri guided in a header to make it 3-0 by half-time and 13-1 in shots. It looked easy but there was no easing up. Spain were enjoying it too much. Olmo opened the second half by racing away only for Neuer to save and Morata was next, wide spaces opening and the feeling building that Spain could run through Germany at will. So, they did. Ruiz set off next, releasing Gayá to fly past and set up Torres - one of two Spaniards alone in the penalty area - to score the fourth. The City man might have made it five from Koke's backheel

## Nations League round-up

# Spain hand Germany worst defeat, Ronaldo remains scoreless, France beat Sweden

**Berlin, November 18:** Germany's only five-goal loss in a competitive game had been West Germany's 8-3 defeat to Hungary at the 1954 World Cup group stage. West Germany went on to beat Hungary in the final. In non-competitive matches, Germany had also lost 6-0 to Austria in a friendly in 1931. Spain handed Germany its worst defeat in a competitive match on Wednesday, winning 6-0 to advance to the Final Four of UEFA's Nations League. Ferran Torres scored a hat-trick to lead Spain to the historic victory in the decisive match in Group 4. Germany's only five-goal loss in a competitive game had been West Germany's 8-3 defeat to Hungary at the 1954 World Cup group stage. West Germany went on to beat Hungary in the final. In non-competitive matches, Germany had also lost 6-0 to Austria in a friendly in 1931. The victory ended a three-match winless streak for Spain, which hasn't gone four games without a win since the late 1980s. "It's important to get back to winning with a great performance like this," Spain coach Luis Enrique said. "We have to enjoy this great result." Last year, Spain failed to advance to the Final Four after conceding late in a match against Croatia. The Germans would have advanced with a draw, but Spain dominated early and took control with three goals in each half. The visitors had only two total attempts, none on target. "This is definitely one of the worst defeats of my career," Germany and Real Madrid midfielder Toni Kroos said. "It hurts." Spain got the convincing win despite playing most of the match without captain Sergio Ramos, who missed two penalty kicks in the 1-1 draw at Switzerland. Ramos had to be replaced by Éric García just before the break with an apparent muscle injury in his right



leg. "Historic night that will help us grow as a team," Ramos said on Twitter after the match. Spain constantly threatened up front, forcing Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer to make a few good saves to keep the visitors from going into a bigger hole. Spain squandered several counterattack chances throughout the match in an empty La Cartuja Stadium in Seville. "To put this type of pressure on a team like Germany, you need great collective work by everyone, in attack and defense," Luis Enrique said. "We made them

suffer and kept them from threatening." Álvaro Morata opened the scoring in the 17th minute with a header into the top of the net off a corner kick taken by Fabián Ruiz, who came off the bench after an early injury to Sergio Canales. Torres added to the lead in the 33rd with a shot from close range after Dani Olmo's header ricocheted off the crossbar, and five minutes later it was Rodri's header off a corner that gave the hosts a 3-0 half-time lead. Torres added to the rout in the 55th and 71st minutes after other fast counterattacks by the hosts, and Mikel Oyarzabal closed the scoring in the 89th. Croatia avoided relegation in Group 3 of UEFA's Nations League despite a 3-2 loss to defending

champion Portugal on Tuesday. Croatia needed to better the result of Sweden, which lost 4-2 to group-winner France in the other match. Portugal was already eliminated and had secured second place. Croatia played with 10 men from early in the second half after one of its midfielders was sent off. Cristiano Ronaldo was held scoreless for the second consecutive match to stay seven goals shy of the 109 scored by former Iran striker Ali Daei, the only other male soccer player to surpass the 100-goal milestone for a national team. One of Ronaldo's best chances to move closer to the all-time international record was a first-time header that missed wide. Mateo Kovacic opened the scoring for the hosts in the 29th minute and netted an equalizer with a shot from outside the area in the 65th after Portugal had rallied with goals by Rubén Dias in the 52nd and João Félix in the 60th. Dias netted the winner in the 90th. Croatia midfielder Marko Rog was sent off with a second yellow card for a foul on Ronaldo just before Portugal's second goal. Striker Olivier Giroud scored twice to move closer to France's national team's scoring record as the Nations League group winner beat Sweden 4-2 and relegated it on Tuesday. Giroud's tally of 44 goals puts him seven behind France and Arsenal great Thierry Henry's record of 51. "It always feels like he has to prove himself, he scored two good goals," France coach Didier Deschamps said, praising Giroud. "We're not talking about a player who has never done anything up until now. People are often too hard on him." Unbeaten France had already booked its place in the Final Four after ensuring the top spot in League A, Group 3 with a 1-0 win at defending champion Portugal last Saturday. France ended with 16 points from a pos-

sible 18 and Deschamps praised his players for doing so in a considerably tough group. "I'm a very factual person. No other team has done or will do better. We had the World Cup runner-up (Croatia) in our group and the reigning European champion (Portugal)," he said. "Not everything was perfect, so we're not going to brag, but you also have to appreciate what we've done. We finished with panache, bravo to my players." Croatia stayed in the top league despite losing 3-2 to Portugal at home, meaning Sweden finished bottom on goal difference behind the Croats. The Swedes took the lead at Stade de France in the fifth minute when midfielder Viktor Claesson broke into the area, skipped past two tackles and poked a shot that clipped defender Raphael Varane and wrong-footed goalkeeper Hugo Lloris. Marcus Thuram - son of famed France defender Lilian Thuram - was involved in both goals as Giroud equalized in the 16th and right back Benjamin Pavard put Les Bleus ahead in the 36th. After Giroud started a counterattack from midfield, the ball was fed to Thuram down the left and his pinpoint cross was adroitly turned into the bottom left corner by Giroud. Thuram then showed great footwork to weave past three defenders in the area and spin around a fourth. Although he lost control of the ball, it broke to Pavard on the right of the area and he drilled it firmly into the bottom left with the outside of his foot. Giroud, who has hardly played for Chelsea in the Premier League this season, should have scored when he headed Pavard's cross from the right wide when unmarked in the 53rd. But he made no mistake six minutes later, meeting substitute Kylian Mbappé's cross from the left with a diving header. Then Giroud almost set up Antoine Griezmann, directing a pass down with his chest which the Barcelona forward blazed over the crossbar in the 75th. Substitute Robin Quaison gave the Swedes hopes of rescuing a draw when he bundled in left back Pierre Bengtsson's cross with two minutes left in regulation time. With every Sweden player, including the goalkeeper, camped around the goal for a last-gasp corner, France cleared the ball and Kingsley Coman ran through from midfield to roll the ball into an empty net from 40 meters out with the game's last kick.

## ECB calls review in face of umpires' accusation of institutional racism

**London, November 18:** The England and Wales Cricket Board has admitted its pool of professional match officials is lacking in diversity and a review of the system is now under way after two former umpires accused the governing body of institutional racism. John Holder, who retired in 2009 after 30 years as an umpire, and Ismail Dawood, a former first-class cricketer who then struggled to break into the umpiring ranks, have come together as part of a grassroots campaign called Stump Out Racism that has highlighted the absence of non-whites in the ranks. The pair have also called for a QC-led inquiry and the involvement of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, with 28 years having passed since a non-white umpire - Vanburn Holder in 1992 - was promoted to the ECB's full-time panel. They also point out that no one from a black or Asian minority ethnic background has ever been employed by the ECB as a pitch liaison officer, cricket liaison officer, match referee or umpires' coach - roles which all come under the same department. John Holder, who stood in international cricket and is a regular guest on BBC Test Match Special, has given the example of the former England fast bowler Devon Malcolm, who he says was dissuaded from moving into umpiring after retirement. "It's a concern of mine that not one black cricketer has progressed on to the full-time panel in nearly 30 years," Holder told the Guardian. "When I heard about Devon being talked out

of it, I was quite appalled. And in the meantime other white umpires have been encouraged. To me that is more than suspicious." When I retired in 2009 I received a glowing testimonial from the ECB but when I later applied for a role as a mentor, I never even got a reply. There have been ex-players moved to these roles, without having umpired. At one point a rugby referee was hired as a mentor. Some of the choices, there was no logic. "Holder's suspicions grew further when learning about Dawood, who after a playing career as a wicketkeeper for Northamptonshire, Worcestershire, Glamorgan and Yorkshire found his path into umpiring hit by setbacks inconsistent with others. Speaking to the Guardian on Tuesday, Dawood said: "When I first put my CV forward to the ECB about umpiring a reply came back that included lots of reasons why I couldn't, including a lack of experience. And yet a few years later a white ex-player went straight from playing to umpiring." One year I was told I hadn't done the relevant exams to progress - my plan was to do them that winter - then at the same time another [white] umpire got on to the reserve list and began standing in matches without any qualifications at all. "I did get on to the reserve list of umpires and got first-class games, but I was passed over for promo-

tion on six different occasions. In 2013 I was told in my appraisal I was 'technically sound' and this was supported by stats and reports from captains. However I was told 'consideration' had to be made 'about who best fits in'. "In 2014, when I started to speak up, I suddenly wasn't given any first-class games at all that season. It didn't make sense, I raised the issues with ECB but I felt totally isolated. I ended up walking away from umpiring altogether. They did a job on me." Dawood insists the "numbers don't lie" and the fast-tracking of others is an example of "white privilege". He also claims to have heard the word "Paki" used in a meeting, only to be ignored by the ECB management who were present. As such both Dawood and Holder have little faith in the ECB's ability to address the issue, with the Stump Out Racism campaign claiming to have evidence of "obstruction and interference" in the past. During the summer a senior member of ECB staff was suspended amid an allegation of racial discrimination.



## ATP Cup uncertain due to 'new challenges' highlighted by Tennis Australia

**London, November 18:** Tennis authorities have encountered "challenges" over the arrival dates of players in Australia ahead of the new 2021 season, the ATP Tour said on Tuesday, throwing the ATP Cup and other Australian Open lead-up events into doubt. Tennis Australia had planned for players to arrive in the southern state of Victoria by mid-December to give them time to undertake a mandatory two-week quarantine before com-

peting but the ATP said that was now under review. "In discussions with Tennis Australia over the past 24 hours, we have been informed there are some new challenges around the previously planned arrival dates for players and team members," the ATP said in a note to players. "We continue to work with Tennis Australia on confirming plans for January, and we will provide an update as soon as more information is available in the coming

days. We understand there is uncertainty about the start of the 2021 season, and we are working as hard as possible to deliver the best possible calendar of events to players." TA boss Craig Tiley said earlier this week that the governing body had decided to shift the team-based ATP Cup and all of the Australian Open warm-up events to Victoria to mitigate the risk of logistical problems arising from Covid-19 protocols in different states.

# Players moved to NSW after Covid-19 outbreak in South Australia

**Melbourn, November 18 :** In light of the state border closures following a Covid outbreak in South Australia, Cricket Australia (CA) asked the Australian players to travel to Sydney on Tuesday as a proactive measure. Players from Western Australia, Tasmania and Queensland, who are part of Australia's limited-overs squads for the series against India, were travelling to Sydney today to begin their preparations. "Players and staff from Western Australia, Tasmania and Queensland who are part of the Australian men's Dettol One-Day International and

Dettol Twenty20 International squads are travelling to Sydney today to commence their preparation for both series," stated a CA press release. CA also explained the decision, saying: "This decision was made after players returning from the Marsh Sheffield Shield hub in South Australia after the last round were subject to changes in border conditions by the aforementioned state governments." Three ODIs and three T20Is will be played in Sydney and Canberra, with the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) hosting the first ODI, the series opener,

on November 27. At the same time, CA spoke about remaining "committed" to hosting the first Test in Adelaide as per schedule. This is regardless of the fact that there's a recent Covid-19 outbreak in certain clusters in South Australia, with the state recording five new cases on Tuesday. As per the figures given by the Government of South Australia on their website, the latest additions have taken the number of active cases in the state to 34. The day-night Test at the Adelaide Oval starts from December 17. "CA continues to monitor the situation in South

Australia but remains committed to hosting the first Vodafone Test against India at the Adelaide Oval," stated the press release, while mentioning the actions taken following the outbreak, forcing state border closures. Coming back to Sydney, according to the New South Wales government, four new cases have been detected "in the 24 hours leading up to 8pm 16th of Nov". Sydney is the capital of the New South Wales state. The Indian team players, along with the Aussies who participated in the Indian Premier League (IPL), are serving their 14-day quarantine in Sydney at the moment, but they are training in their bio-bubbles. Apart from two ODIs and two T20Is, the SCG will play host to the third Test from January 7 as well. Melbourne, Victoria's capital and the venue for the Boxing Day Test, is pretty safe at the moment. Covid-wise, the Victoria State Government posted on their website: "As of 17 November 2020, no new cases have been diagnosed since yesterday... This is the eighteenth consecutive day with no new cases." Queensland, Brisbane's capital, has recorded one new case in the last 24 hours, according to the Queensland Government. The fourth Test will be

played in Brisbane from January 15. Over the last two days, 19 active cases of coronavirus have been recorded in South Australia. This is an outbreak because on November 1, Australia had recorded zero local cases of Covid-19 for the first time in almost five months. South Australia's capital is Adelaide. Adelaide is a Sheffield Shield hub this season. From November 8-11, it hosted three matches - NSW versus Tasmania, Queensland versus South Australia and Victoria versus Western Australia (WA). All the players who played in those matches were asked to self-isolate after returning to their respective states. Australian players and staff from WA, Tasmania and Queensland, who will feature in the series against India, were airlifted into Sydney in light of the state border closures. Sydney will host the ODI series opener on November 27, which is a reason why CA has chosen the NSW capital. The Indian team is quarantining - and training - there. So are the Aussies, who played in the IPL. The Covid situation in NSW is better, with the state government claiming just, four new cases were detected "in the 24 hours leading up to 8pm 16th of Nov".



## Phil Neville hands Lauren James first England call-up for November camp

**London, November 18 :** Phil Neville has packed his England squad for this month's training camp with youth and handed the Manchester United forward Lauren James her first senior call-up. "I'm delighted to give Lauren James her first call-up," the manager said. "She is an exciting young player that we want to help develop further. She joins the squad alongside many

against Arsenal. Manchester United's Abbie McManus and Katie Zelem, Everton's Izzy Christiansen and Chelsea's Fran Kirby have all dropped out having been involved in September's camp. The cancellation of the Germany and Norway games means Jill Scott will have to wait for an opportunity to claim her 150th cap, which would make her the second Lion-



other young players who we've introduced over the last few months." James, who is the sister of the Chelsea defender Reece, is part of a 29-player squad. Following the cancellation of the 1 December match against Norway, which had been due to be played at Bramall Lane, two internal friendlies will instead take place. "Although sadly we no longer have a competitive fixture every minute spent on the training pitch and in planning is crucial and plays an important part in preparing for the Euros," said Neville. Missing out once more are the fit-again Manchester City goalkeeper Karen Bardsley, the Manchester United goalkeeper Mary Earps, the Atlético Madrid forward Toni Duggan and the Lyon forward Jodie Taylor. The Chelsea centre-back Millie Bright is also omitted, though it is believed she picked up a knock in Sunday's London derby

ess to reach that milestone, behind her former teammate Fara Williams. There is a return to the squad for Manchester City's Laura Coombs, whose last appearance for England was in October 2015. Rinsola Babajide and Lotte Wubben-Moy, of Liverpool and Arsenal respectively, both receive their second senior call-ups following their involvement in the September camp. Neville said: "This has been a challenging time for everyone, but it will be good to finish the year with an intensive training camp during which the squad will develop further and in which every player has the chance to prove themselves ahead of our upcoming major tournaments." This camp will give us another excellent opportunity to integrate young promising players with our experienced internationals and align everyone on the team's long-term vision."

## Mumbai Indians' success can be emulated by other teams with better planning and scouting: Analyst Simon Hughes

**Mumbai, November 18 :** With a fifth Indian Premier League (IPL) title in eight years, Mumbai Indians have become the most dominant franchise in the history of the competition, taking over the mantle from Chennai Super Kings. But according to former cricketer and analyst Simon Hughes, it's not as if they have cracked the code for success or achieved something out of reach of other teams due to the financial resources at the disposal of their owners. Mumbai Indians' 2020 campaign was arguably the most commanding for any side over the 13 seasons of the league. They won 11 out of their 16 matches, but more impressive was the manner in which they went about their business. They seemingly had no weaknesses and extricated themselves from tricky situations time and again. What's more, they easily beat Delhi Capitals, the second-best team in the league in all their four meetings. Even missing skipper Rohit Sharma in the middle of the season hardly derailed their engine. Hughes, a former

**" I think other teams can learn from that and there's no reason why they can't catch up, Hughes felt."**

county professional for Middlesex and Durham, probably best known for his work as The Analyst on British television, where he deconstructs and explains various aspects of the game, has followed the IPL over the years and even helped out Rajasthan Royals on the planning side ahead of the inaugural edition in 2008, which the team famously won, against almost all predictions. He was an observer travelling with the team during the 2019 season. Hughes has now come out with a book titled New Innings, co-authored with Manoj Badale, lead owner of the franchise. "They (MI) have obviously been very successful, but they don't spend any more money than any other team. The way the IPL is structured, everybody has a chance of winning because they change the teams every two or three years," Hughes told in a video interview. "Obviously, every team has to have the

enforced salary cap." He indicated that MI's success could be a result of more than just luck or the deep pockets of their owners. A lot of planning, preparation and foresight goes into it. "Maybe, the MI scouting... I talked to Rahul Dravid about this the other day and he said their scouting is very good. The players they have spotted, like the young (Jasprit) Bumrah and Hardik Pandya, have made a big difference to them while keeping a core of very experienced T20 players like Rohit Sharma. They have found the balance very successfully between some very experienced players and spotting some new young talent. But other teams could have easily done it (won the IPL), the league was so close," Hughes said. "That's the essence of a successful league, that everybody has got a chance of winning. And I believe although Mumbai Indians have done extremely well, most of the

other teams are as good." "Their key was two things. They had five batsmen who had a strike rate of over 140... Kieron Pollard is amazing. It's amazing how he keeps performing for all those years. But the other thing is the bowling. Bumrah and (Trent) Boult, they went for it with early wickets. And James Pattinson as well, aggressive fast bowler. It's important to be aggressive with your fast bowling, and aggressive with your bat. They had so many bowling options. They had a very good opening pair with the bat, very good opening pair with the ball, and then these guys down the order who score at 170-180. The Pandya brothers giving you the impetus at the end, at Nos. 6 and 7 is absolutely vital. I think other teams can learn from that and there's no reason why they can't catch up," Hughes felt. Rajasthan Royals' 2008 triumph was a fairytale, but there has not

been a similar success story of an underdog since then. Hughes believes if things fall in place, something on those lines is not out of the realms of possibility. It can happen again. I think the key is to get very good coaches and you need your overseas players to perform. You need your star players to be consistent. The one thing that has evolved, probably in this tournament, is the impact of fast bowling and Powerplay fast bowling. Boult, Bumrah, Jofra Archer, those guys have done

incredibly well, taking early wickets. "In the future, if you have a team like Rajasthan Royals were in 2008 - with no stars but a couple of key bowlers, wicket-taking bowlers in the first six overs - you can still win without a team of total stars," Hughes said, adding a small caveat. "It's probably a little bit harder now. Rajasthan Royals caught everybody by surprise slightly in that first season, but there's still potential for a team without loads and loads of stars to do well."



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