

The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

Vol. No. V ■ Issue No. 300 ■ RNI-ASSEN/2014/58385 | GUWAHATI ■ FRIDAY ■ DECEMBER 05, 2020 | PAGES 8 ■ PRICE RS. 7.00

Small Axe is great: now let's have some films about black life ...

04

Ben Stokes believes England's T20 World Cup potential ...

07

NEWS IN BRIEF

KMSS Stages Protest

Guwahati, December 4 : The Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) has staged a protest at Goreswar in Baksa district ahead of Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's road yatra. The protest has been staged against the visit of the minister by burning tyres in the street. The KMSS demanded to release the peasant leader Akhil Gogoi who was in jail since December 2019. It may be mentioned that Himanta is scheduled to participate in the rally at Barsimlaguri, Merkuchi, Devachara, Nikachi Dihira, and Goreswar.

Tree Falls On Running Auto

Guwahati, December 4 : In an unfortunate incident on Thursday, two people were killed and three others injured after a tree fell on a moving auto-rickshaw in Cachar district's Berenga. The deceased were identified as Abdul Razzak and Enamul Haque. The incident happened on Thursday late evening.

Arunachal Gears Up For Vaccination

Itanagar, December 4 : Arunachal Pradesh is gearing up for the first phase of COVID-19 vaccination. 1362 health workers from both Government and private institutions have been identified by the East Siang district administration who will be administered the COVID-19 vaccine dose in the first phase of the vaccination drive. Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kinny Singh informed about the first phase of vaccination drive during a meeting of the District Task Force on COVID-19 at the Siang guest house on Thursday. He further stated that advance planning and preparation would be necessary considering the magnitude of the vaccination drive. The entire exercise would be taken up in a phase-wise manner, added Singh.

IIT Guwahati's placement season kicknote despite starts on a positive the pandemic

Guwahati, December 4 : The placement process at IIT Guwahati has started in a completely virtual mode. The placement process for Phase 1 started on Tuesday. By the end of Day 2



(December 2), the total number of offers made by companies is 486. Above numbers are inclusive of 133 Pre Placement Offers (PPOs). Close to 128 Companies have participated in the campus placement in the first two days. The highest domestic package offered this year is Rs 70

Coal Scam : IT Dept Raids 3 Places In Assam



Guwahati, December 4 : Income Tax Department on Friday raided Nabin Singhal's business establishment along with his residence in Guwahati. As per sources, the IT Department raided at Mahalaxmi Group which is at Unique Plaza's 3rd floor, Beltola, and the residence at Manik Nagar, Ganeshguri. Nabin Singhal and his wife

were not at home when the raid was conducted. While their son was left behind at their residence, the rest of the family had fled to Delhi yesterday. Simultaneously, the IT Department also raided the residence of established businessman Pankaj Chaudhary in Margherita on Friday morning. They searched

Chaudhary's residence as well as his business establishment. It may be stated that he was related to coal mining and his name was taken in a coal mining scam by various news channels. The reason behind the raid has not been ascertained yet. The search is still underway. In total, the IT department conducted raids in three different places in the state in connection to the case. Income Tax Department on Friday raided Coal mafia Satyanarayan Agarwal's residence in connection with illegal business in Digboi. Sources said, he had connections with many other illegal businesses. It may be stated that he maintained a good relation with most of the ministers and other powerful personalities. It is

noteworthy that he issue this time around is not illegal immigrants but the government's approval of coal mining in a proposed reserve forest in Dehing-Patkai Elephant Reserve along the state's border with Arunachal Pradesh. The Assam Environmental NGO Forum, consisting of 20 groups, has demanded a complete ban on coal mining as the reserve has already suffered substantial damage. After an outburst on the episode from different sections of people, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal tweeted **Contd...Page 6**

We should have come to BTC earlier, says Himanta Biswa Sarma

Guwahati, December 4 : Assam Finance, Health, and Finance Minister today claimed that Kalyug has arrived in the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) with full force, and assured that his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would solve the problems plaguing the insurgency-torn region if it is voted to power in the ensuing polls (which will be held in two phases on December 7 and 10). "We have come to you to every village and locality. The things that I have learnt from you people has confirmed my belief that we



should have come to BTC earlier," Sarma said, adding that Kalyug (the end of days) has arrived in the BTC with full force. "Compared to the other regions of Assam, Kalyug has arrived here in greater force," the Minister said. "I have

heard that the people here do not even have job cards and that they are with the VDCs," he added. Condemning the former rulers Bodoland People's Front (BPF), Sarma said that the prevailing atmosphere in the region **Contd...Page 6**

Baghjan Blowout Well finally abandoned, says Oil India; Emergency Declaration withdrawn

Guwahati, December 4 : Consequent upon uncontrolled flow of Natural Gas and Blowout at Baghjan well No 5 on 27th May, 2020, all declared Emergency Situation for its internal control

purposes. Today, after final abandonment of the well, the Emergency Declaration has been withdrawn with immediate effect. All the jobs pertaining to capping, killing and final abandonment of the well was successfully completed in the evening hours on December 3, 2020. OIL manage-

ment acknowledged the tremendous support received from all stakeholders during this period, especially the team from Mis Alert, CMT personnel from ONGCI, Indian Army, Indian Air Force, Tinsukia District Administration, Assam Police, NDRF, SDRF **Contd...Page 6**



New Delhi, December 4 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday healthcare and frontline workers and the elderly suffering from serious diseases will be inoculated on priority when the vaccine against the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) is available. The Prime minister said, during, an all-party meet to discuss the Covid-19 situation in the country, said the Centre was in talks with state governments over the price of the vaccine and the decision regarding it would be taken keeping public health as the

topmost priority. "Experts believe that a Covid vaccine will be ready in the next few weeks. As soon as scientists give a green signal, vaccination will start in India. Healthcare and frontline workers and the elderly suffering from serious diseases will be given priority in vaccination," PM Modi said during the meeting. "Teams of central and state governments are working together for vaccine distribution. India has the expertise and capacity in vaccine distribution and fares better compared to other nations. We have a very big

and experienced network in the field of vaccination. We will fully exploit it," PM Modi said. Our scientists are very confident of succeeding in their endeavour of making COVID vaccine. The world is keeping a watch on the cheapest & safe vaccine. That is why the world is watching India: PM Narendra Modi <https://t.co/D1WVapSxkm> He also the world was keeping a close watch on the cheapest and safest vaccine against the coronavirus



disease and is looking at India. "Our scientists are very confident of succeeding in their endeavour of making Covid vaccine. The world is keeping a watch on the cheapest **Contd...Page 6**

Govt agrees to review farmers' key demands

New Delhi, December 4 : A make-or-mar round of talks between the Union government and farmers protesting three farm laws moved a step forward on Thursday after being repeatedly deadlocked, with the government agreeing to review the recently enacted legislation and "bring amendments" if required to address demands of farm unions. The farmers, however, stuck to their stand that the government should roll back all three laws. The negotiations on Thursday were the fourth round of meeting between three Union



ministers and farmers' representatives, as protests by thousands of agriculturalists on Delhi's borders simmered for the seventh straight day. Agriculture minister Narendra Tomar, railways,

food and consumer affairs minister Piyush Goyal and minister of state for commerce Som Prakash, a lawmaker from Punjab, led the government side, while representatives of some of the

Biswajit Daimary denies allegations of corruption

Kokrajhar, December 4 : Former Bodoland People's Front (BPF) leader Biswajit Daimary today slammed former Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Chief Hagrama Mohilary for accusing him of taking money from "supervisors" in return for jobs and said that Hagrama has no knowledge

about the goings-on in his own Council. Lambasting Mohilary for his accusations of corruption, Daimary said that the "supervisors" of the Social Welfare Department that he has been accused of taking money from, have not received money as they have not received regular appointments even though they sat



for exams. "Later, I went to Delhi and after talks with the

Centre, managed to gain approval for the regularization of jobs. Later, we were asked to hold exams for these posts where the contractual employees would get the priority. The exams have not been held yet," Daimary said, adding that the lives of these supervisors have been imperiled **Contd...Page 6**

Crystal stones found in Nagaland, not diamonds

Dimapur, December 4 : It's official now. The crystal stones found at Wanching village in Mon district of Nagaland by the locals and presumed to be diamond have turned out to be quartz. The four-member team of geologists who were sent by the state geology and mining department confirmed that the stones found in the village last week were actually quartz. Geologists Abenthung Lotha, Longrikaba, Kenyelo Rengma and David Lhoupenyi were deputed

by the directorate of geology and mining on November 27 to investigate the occurrence of the mineral after the news of its finding was circulated on social media. The team has identified the said mineral crystals circulated on social media as quartz crystals which are found abundantly in the sedimentary rocks of Nagaland along veins, fractures, faults etc. The gem quality of quartz crystals are determined from its optical and physical properties such as refractive index, colour, hardness etc. The ge-

ologists told this correspondent that real diamond cannot be scratched and cut by any other metal other than the diamond itself, is transparent and colourless while the stones that were found in Wanching village could be scratched, were brittle and not transparent. From these preliminary tests, they could ensure that these stones were not diamond of any kind. They said some buyers from Assam bought the shining stones from some Wanching villagers at a rate ranging from Rs 20,000 to Rs 1 **Contd...Page 6**



As predicted, women are suffering because of the two-child benefits limit

Mothers-of-two finding themselves pregnant again are having terminations, even though they wanted a third child, for fear of impoverishing their family because of the two-child benefit limit. This was entirely predictable. In these hard times, families unexpectedly crashing on to universal credit are discovering the full brutality of Britain's benefits system, the meanest among comparable European countries. Stripping a third child of any support smacks of China's former one-child policy, which forced abortions on women pregnant with a second. The British Pregnancy Advisory Service survey shows that more than half the women likely to be affected by the two-child limit who have had an abortion during the pandemic said the rule - introduced in April 2017 - was important in their decision to terminate. Fear for the household's precarious finances, and knowing a third child would be shorn of so much once provided by the state, propelled them into the decision to abort. Bringing up a third child without the annual £2,900 that universal credit and tax credits can provide per child pushes many families into poverty. Mothers who wanted that baby, often accidentally conceived, dare not inflict extra financial hardship on their existing children. Heart-rending comments from mothers who terminated a pregnancy reluctantly include: "If there was no two-child limit I would have kept the baby, but I couldn't afford to feed and clothe it... I've really struggled to come to terms with my decision." Expect many more pregnant women to face this dilemma, as tens of thousands lose their jobs in collapsing high-street retail and hospitality. A record 5.7 million people were on universal credit in October, a figure that has risen by 90% since

March. When furlough ends at the end of March, an avalanche of families will fall out of work and on to universal credit for the first time. If they already made the error of having three children (with one born after April 2017), they will be paid for only two, and that will catapult many households into further poverty. The abhorrent limit was first floated with nasty glee by Iain Duncan Smith back



in 2012, and was announced in the 2015 budget as part of a £12bn benefits cut, which included an overall benefits cap. Duncan Smith rabble-roused at that year's Conservative party conference that he was being "fair to the vast bulk of taxpayers who pay for other people's welfare while taking responsibility for themselves". Echoed by George Osborne that year, Duncan Smith said his tough policy would "bring home to parents the reality that children cost money and if you have more kids you have to make the choices others make and not assume taxpayers' money lets you avoid the consequences of such choices". Iain Duncan Smith (who has four children) effectively devised a policy that was always destined to push more women

towards terminations. Incidentally, why has the lavishly financed anti-abortion lobby not been hammering at the DWP's door in outrage at this? Where are the loud protests outside the Treasury from all those violent extremists terrorising women going into abortion clinics? The right to choice means women should have the number of children they want: no more, no fewer. Around a quarter

of five households affected by the two-child policy are in work. The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimates the two-child limit tips another 300,000 children into poverty. This pandemic has lifted the lid on the nature of poverty, from the Covid hotspots of overcrowded housing and the lack of protection for manual workers, to the shocking numbers of children with no access to the internet for their homework. This week the Trussell Trust, the UK's biggest food bank network, found that half of households needing food parcels are driven to it by debts they owe to universal credit. How so? Every family has to wait five weeks before their first payment and is given an advance loan to tide them over, tipping them into debt. That repayment could cut their income by a third. Why the five-week wait? Osborne said they should behave like people in a new job, waiting for their first pay cheque. But many have no savings buffer. In the pandemic, lower-income families have been saving less and taking on more debt to survive, the Resolution Foundation finds. Women's freedom to bear or not bear children is always cast as a moral hazard. Career women leave it too late, selfish women eschew motherhood altogether, and feeless welfare queens breed just for extra benefits - see the Daily Mail for proof. The government that imposes the two-child policy is led by a man with six or more children - he won't say how many; maybe he doesn't know. Others in the cabinet with more than two include Matt Hancock (three) and Robert Jenrick (three). The leader of the House, Jacob Rees-Mogg, who opposes abortion, has six. How little their "freedom-loving" libertarianism has to say for all those mothers on the receiving end of the Tories' cruelty.

Polly Toynbee

of pregnancies end in abortion because unwanted pregnancy is a normal part of life; making termination easy is a mark of civilisation. But sadly, for many decades, women have had fewer children than they want, in Europe and the US. Fertility has been falling, and one reason is child-hostile societies where childcare is astronomically expensive and hard to come by, while families need two incomes to get by. No wonder the two-child limit tipped the balance for many in low-paid work that has to be topped up with benefits. Child poverty seems to have been a deliberate goal of this government. With the rise in low-paid, insecure jobs, work has not been the promised route out of poverty that Osborne and Duncan Smith said it was: three

Covid vaccine is not far from us



Most of us have had endured some very dark days in 2020, whether trying to juggle working from home alongside schooling children, worrying about how to pay the bills as a consequence of unemployment or, like me, attempting to balance scientific research alongside clinical work in the fight against Covid-19. As a scientist, I firmly believe that scientific progress will provide the exit strategy from this pandemic. But I've often worried that we may not be able to achieve what's needed to prevent the spread of this virus, or that doing so would take a very long time. Never have I been happier to be proved wrong. Britain is the first country to authorise emergency use of a vaccine for Sars-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. So how did we get here so quickly? To gain the seal of approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the UK body that makes sure medicines are safe, the vaccine, developed by Pfizer and BioNTech, has been through three phases of clinical trials. In the third phase, it was administered to more than 43,000 volunteers with no serious safety concern. The data shows that the vaccine is 95% effective at preventing the development of Covid, with similar efficacy observed across age, gender, race and ethnicity groups, including older adults. The vaccine is a messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine, which stands for "messenger ribonucleic acid". Messenger RNA is essentially the blueprint that living cells use to turn gene sequences into the proteins that form their fundamental structures. Once injected, the mRNA in the vaccine is translated into a viral protein, which our immune systems detect. The body generates an immune response in reaction to these viral proteins, which can't by themselves cause disease, and this provides protection against developing Covid-19. In the field of vaccine research, this kind of technology is entirely new. Some scientists were sceptical that mRNA vaccines could provide the key to controlling this pandemic. But mRNA vaccines are surprisingly straightforward: they're just a smart way of getting a viral protein to generate an immune response, and after a few days the mRNA is degraded by the body, leaving behind only immunity to Covid. To generate a good immune response, two doses of the vaccine will be given 21 days apart, with recipients protected from about a week after their second dose. To avoid unnecessary delays the MHRA, with advice from the Commission on Human Medicines, the government's independent expert scientific advisory body, has undertaken a rigorous "rolling review" of data about the vaccine as it became available from continuing studies. This showed the vaccine was safe, and it has been approved for use in the UK population as of next week. The European commission had recommended that member states wait for approval from the European Medicines Agency (EMA) before authorising the vaccine, which is expected to arrive later in December. But despite the claims of some ministers that Brexit played a role

in the UK's ability to quickly approve the vaccine, this isn't true: under EU law, national agencies in Europe are permitted to use emergency procedures allowing them to domestically distribute a vaccine for temporary use. The MHRA, which is considered the world leader in the regulation of medicines and vaccines, confirmed this in a recent statement. The UK has already purchased 40m doses of the vaccine, with 800,000 due to be rolled out to some of the most vulnerable people in our society through a network of more than 50 hospitals. The NHS and government departments have been working on the logistics of the programme for

Charlotte Summers

some time. First in line to receive the vaccine are people most at risk of mortality and morbidity from Covid-19. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) issued a revised vaccine priority list on 2 December, based on the phase of the pandemic we're in. The JCVI has determined that the best strategy is for older adults - especially those in care homes and their carers, as well as frontline health and social care workers - to be the top priority in the first phase of the vaccination programme. Clinically extremely vulnerable adults, many of whom have spent this year shielding indoors, have been moved higher up this list since the JCVI's last guidance was published, and will now be fourth in line to receive the vaccine. Once the most vulnerable people have been vaccinated, the plan is to vaccinate those who are at increased risk of exposure to Covid-19 because of their jobs, such as first responders, teachers, transport workers and the military. This phase of the programme may alter over time as more data and information becomes available about

the impact of the pandemic and the vaccine. The greatest remaining challenge is whether we are all willing to accept and trust the vaccine. Some worry that, in order to have made a vaccine so fast, corners must have been cut. But they really haven't been. Others have been concerned that mRNA vaccines represent a new technology that could potentially alter the DNA of the recipient - again, this is untrue. It's certainly the case that vaccines have taken years to develop in the past, but most of that time was often not spent undertaking clinical trials, but raising the money for trials to take place, negotiating contracts and applying for regulatory approval. Historic vaccine trials have rarely taken place during a pandemic like this one, while millions of people are being exposed to infection on a daily basis and thousands of them are keen to participate in trials. Despite the many horrors of 2020, there have been benefits - we have learned that if you divert an almost limitless amount of funding and focus a large proportion of the world's scientists, regulatory bodies and other critical infrastructure towards a single endeavour, you can achieve extraordinary things very fast. For me, the question is not how have we managed to achieve a vaccination for Covid-19 in such a short period of time, but rather: why have we not yet managed to make the same impact on diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV and malaria, which have been killing millions of people for many years? And what could happen if we turned this urgent global effort towards the other challenges we face - such as environmental breakdown, or the insidious creep of antimicrobial resistance? Much as we hate to admit it, humans are not entirely rational creatures. Many of our fears about vaccines will not be abated by people presenting us with scientific data.

As regional mayors, we urge Rishi Sunak to step up support for people this winter

This winter is set to be the most challenging chapter of the pandemic for many people across the country, with unemployment growing and many families struggling to put food on the table or heat their homes. The government has gone a long way this year in supporting many working people hit hard by the pandemic through the furlough scheme, business support schemes, the new Local Restrictions Support Grant, and so on. However, too many people have fallen through the cracks and received insufficient financial support. Stark new analysis from the

New Economics Foundation shows that, based on current trends, a third of the entire population will be experiencing some form of financial difficulty by the spring. Yet in last week's spending review, the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, failed once again to offer meaningful support for every person in the country who needs it. Exceptional times demand exceptional measures. And so we need solutions that match up to the scale of the economic crisis we are facing. But the chancellor failed to mention social security despite the fact that many people have lost their

jobs, or have been excluded from government support schemes. On top of this, the review fell short of the level of investment needed to create good, green jobs to deal with record levels of unemployment. In many parts of the country, such as

Sadiq Khan

Manchester, Liverpool, Yorkshire and the north-east, businesses and residents have been living under various severe forms of local restrictions for many months, some since July. Many areas, especially in the north of the country, will

OPPO ranked as the No 1 brand in customer satisfaction for After-sales: Counterpoint Research

In pursuit of constantly listening to customers and empowering them with ease & convenience, OPPO was ranked as the No.1 brand in customer satisfaction for aftersales. The second in the series, this recognition reiterates how OPPO has revolutionized its after-sales experience for customers with its consumer-first approach. The research conducted across top six metro cities found that OPPO leads in after-sales service experience with 93% of the respondents rating their experience as "very good" or "excellent". Waiting time was the lowest among OPPO customers with about half of the respondents being attended within just 15 minutes of their arrival, the report, said.

Mr. Elvis Zhou, President, OPPO India said, "We are ecstatic at being recognised as the number 1. Smartphone brand in customer satisfaction for after sales by Counterpoint research. With our underline vision 'Technology for Mankind, Kindness for the world, we aim to bring all the benefits to users. This accreditation is a testimony to our efforts in ensuring highest customer satisfaction while making the world around each of our user better in every way that we can. As we continue to grow and strengthen our footprint in India, we will keep on innovating and delivering extraordinary experiences to more and more people"

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the study mentioned that service status update was a vital part of customer support. OPPO was leading in customer support with most of the users receiving status updates through WhatsApp and SMS. As per the study, OPPO was the

fastest in turn-around time during after sales delivery with maximum respondents receiving their device on the same day.

With a strong focus of maintaining its spare parts, almost all respondents among OPPO users received their device after full resolution of their current issue. As a result, satisfaction after the current service was highest among OPPO users. Also, recognized at the most cost-effective brand, OPPO users spent the least amount on out-of-warranty smartphones as compared to other brands.

Keeping in mind the current trying situation and the need to maintain social distance, earlier this year OPPO announced its 'Go Green Go Digital' initiative where the brand has introduced digital invoices for their customers across service centres in the country. Under this, all the OPPO service centres are sharing repair invoices with customers through WhatsApp Broadcast. The brand also introduced a dedicated AI powered Chatbot called 'Ollie' that is available 24x7 for consumers to resolve 94.5% of their queries. During the nationwide lockdown a human chat support on WhatsApp was also started to support customers 24x7 in resolving their queries. This was first-of-its-kind initiative by any smartphone brand to assist it's users.

OPPO strive to provide comprehensive customer experience across verticals has revolutionized the after sales experience for the customers. With a robust network of over 500 exclusive service centers across 500+ cities, the brand has serviced consumers even from the remotest places in the country.

Samsung to Offer 150 New Scholarships for IITs, NITs under 5th Edition of Star Scholar Program to Jawahar Navodaya Students

India - December 2020: Samsung, India's largest and most trusted consumer electronics brand, today announced to offer 150 fresh scholarships to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya students starting a full term course in an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) or a National Institute of Technology (NIT) for academic year 2020-21, under the 5th edition of its Star Scholar program. Each year Samsung offers scholarships to outstanding students from JNVs who pursue full term courses from these prestigious engineering colleges. The application period for the academic year 2020-21 will be open until January 25, 2021.

Samsung is equipped with an interactive program provides financial support of up to INR 2 lakh every year for up to five years to the scholarship recipients that covers a significant share of their educational expenses, including tuition, examination, hostel and mess expenses. Under the Star Scholar program, the selection of 150 first-year students is based on their ranking in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main for B.E./B.Tech/Dual Degree (B.Tech + M.Tech). "At Samsung, we believe in nurturing young minds and Star Scholar program is aligned with the company's ongoing effort to support deserving young talent with quality education and encourage a culture of innovation among the next generation of the country. As we embark on the fifth year of the Star Scholar program, we are looking forward to extending more such scholarships to foster young and bright talent that holds the potential to build the nation," said Peter Rhee, Corporate Vice President, Samsung India. Initiated in 2016,

Star Scholar program is currently into its fifth year and students selected for the program are supported through scholarship renewal for subsequent four years, if they meet the qualifying criteria every year. Samsung India has partnered with Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti since 2013 and runs Smart Class in 583 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya schools across the country. At present, Smart Class program is operational at 583 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya schools. So far, over 4.37 lacs students have benefited from it and over 8.1 thousand teachers have been trained on how to use interactive technology to teach. Every Samsung Smart Class is equipped with an interactive Samsung Smartboards, Samsung tablets, a printer, Wi-Fi connectivity and power backup. During the Star Scholar program, the selection of first-year applicants is based on their All India Rank (AIR) in JEE Main. However, to get a renewal of the scholarship for the 2nd - 4/5th year, the applicant is required to maintain a Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) or Cumulative Grade Point Average (CPGA) rating of 5 or above. The 'Star Scholar' program is aligned with the Company's ongoing effort to nurture deserving young talent with quality education. Students can visit Samsung's website <http://www.samsung.com/in/microsite/sapne-hue-bade/star-scholar> to learn more about the 'Star Scholar' program, and to download an application for enrollment. The application period for the 'Star Scholar' program will remain open until January 25, 2021.

by a lack of tourists and office workers. There is a moral case for the government to act to stop any family from suffering, but there's also an indisputable economic case. How can Britain possibly be called a prosperous country when people don't have enough to eat, when people can't pay their rent, when families can't afford to go out? Without action, the ripples may well last for generations. We are doing everything we can for those in our regions, but we need the firepower of central government to tackle a problem of this magnitude.

DEO Holds Meet with Election Observer, forms DTF for Covid-19 Vaccine



Aalo., Dec 04 : A review meeting for Panchayat Election was conducted by Shri Mito Dirchi DC cum DEO panchayat Election 2020 at DCa@Ms Office Chamber at Mechuka on 3rd Dec last. Er. Bar Takum, Election observer for Shi-Yomi District took stock of the ground preparedness for Panchayat Poll. Shi Yomi DC cum DEO briefed the observer that the preparation is on full swing. Shri D. Dajangju, SP DShi Yomi also briefed on the security preparedness for the election despite shortage of police personnel in this this new district.

Police dept is fully prepared to tackle law and problem which may arise during the election. Dr. Smt. Millo Kunya DMO Shi Yomi District also briefed on the SOP that has to be followed during voting day. In the meeting Shri Biaro Sorum RO cum ADC Mechuka and ARO Dr. Honjon Perme and Shri Habung Moda was also present. District task force committee for implementation of covid vaccine in Shi Yomi District was formed under the Chairmanship of Mito Dirchi, DC Cum Chairman DHS Mechuka.

ASU opposes ENSF demand for 45% reservation in NSSB

DIMAPUR, December 04: Close on the heels of the Naga Students' Federation (NSF) expressing disapproval of ENSF demands on 45% job reservation in Nagaland Service Selection Board (NSSB); Angami Students' Union (ASU) has also aired its opposition to the ENSF demand for 45% reservation in Nagaland Staff Selection Board (NSSB). Terming the demand as "totally unreasonable, unfair, selfish and arrogant", ASU president Vizokho Zashumo and general secretary Petekhrietuo Kiewhuo in a press release termed it as "absolutely unacceptable". ASU said that such a "detrimental factor" cannot be allowed to be implemented, the Union maintained that such a destructive policy would destroy "our very fragile society". ASU has called for reflecting morally the fact that every mother sweats to see the triumph of her children and emphasised that no mother was less important. ASU also asserted that it would resort to every possible democratic action against the implementation of the ENSF's demand by the State government. Further, ASU said reservation and quotas among "our people" was a useless measure and required to be done away with and dumped in the waste bin for good. According to signatories, no coercive force should decide the fate of "our people" in any case. ASU also reiterated that its desire was to ensure that no one was suppressed, at the same time, none having merit should be denied either. "Human civilisation has evolved with time, situation and reality. No civilisation evolved overnight. Naga society is still in the process of developing since the introduction of education by American missionaries in the 18th century. Some evolved late, others later as part of the undeniable truth of life," ASU added. It may be recalled

Annual Journal of Ramdhenu Sahitya Chakra released

Book reading is one of the best mental exercise--Chandra Saharia



SIPAJHAR, Dec 4 : The annual journal of Ramdhenu Sahitya Chakra, an organization dedicated to the promotion of literature and book reading funded in 2004 at Namkhala was released by prominent writer and Oil Siksha Ratna Awardee teacher Chandra Saharia at an attractive function held at the premises of Hirimba Bathou Sansali Kshetra of Sinakona village. Addressing the function Chandra Saharia stressed on the need of habit of book reading specially among younger generations and students. He said that the book reading is one of the best mental exercise. The function was presided over by Fazlul Haque Choudhury, Working president of Ramdhenu Sahitya Chakra while it was inaugurated by prominent poet Dr Kamala Kanta Sharma. Delivering the special lecturer on selected book Binapani Deka, distinguished book reader discussed on the various aspects of the well known book of the Former president of India late APJ Abdul Kalam's "The Wings of Fire" a Assamese translation "Agnir Deuka". The function was attended by Secretary of Nanadanik, Kamala Kanta Deka, Secretary of Darrang district Senior citizens Association, Atul Barua, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Kartik Kalita, Professor Dr Uttam Kalita, Writer Liladhar Hazarika and some other distinguished individuals of the locality. Secretary of Ramdhenu Dr Dulal Hazarika moderated the programme. Earlier the programme began with hoisting of flag by Rajeswar Sarma, prominent artist and president of Ramdhenu. The foundation stone of permanent building of the Ramdhenu was laid by Retired Employee and social activist Girish Kalita and Bhupen Saharia, president of Namkhala Ras festival celebration committee.

Bagra calls for promotion of organic farming, formulation of export policy

ITANAGAR, December 04: Commerce and Industries Minister Tumke Bagra called for promotion of organic farming and formulation of an appropriate state export strategy. Agriculture plays a vital role in the state's economy, although the agriculture activities that have been taken up in the state are for self-consumption and only countable prospective entrepreneurs have taken up agriculture on a commercial level," Bagra said during the second national level virtual consultative meeting of the Board of Trade (Earlier Council for Trade Development and Promotion), which was chaired by Union Minister for Commerce and Industries Piyush Goyal on Wednesday. He said the state government under the initiative of the agriculture department has launched the ambitious State Organic Mission on 15 April, 2017, with a vision and action plan for transforming the state into complete organic state. The minister informed that the state government under the initiative of the agriculture department has also

worked out an action plan with a target to convert 100,000 hectares of area under agriculture and allied departments by 2022. The proposal has been submitted to the central government. Bagra said the Pangsau Pass Land Customs Station in Nampong, notified way back in 1951, needs to be included in the Bilateral Trade Agreement between India and Myanmar. The minister also urged the Centre to initiate and approve for establishment of a camp office of the directorate general of foreign trade in the state for dissemination of information on implementation of policy of the central government for smooth facilitation of trade, and also for proactive measures like awareness campaign on export and import documentation. He also raised the issue of constraints in logistics, gaps in export infrastructure, including testing and certification and streamlining of regulatory processes. "The commercial commodities produced in the state are organic kiwi, apple, orange, honey, large cardamoms, pineapples, pears, medicinal herbs, tea and other organic agro-horti produces etc, along with its rich textiles, handloom and handicrafts products. Though these have high potential for export, these cannot be exported due to lack of export enabling facilities and infrastructures," lamented Bagra. He said the border infrastructure should be strengthened at border trade-points, along with liaison with border countries through diplomatic channels for re-opening of its feasible border trade-points viz. Dongshengmang-Bleeting in Tawang district under the Indo-Bhutan sector in the first phase and Bumla-Kenzamane in Tawang district, Taksing in Upper Subansiri district, Monigong-Mechukha in West Siang district, Gelling in Upper Siang district and Kibithoo in Anjaw district under Indo-China sector. Bagra advocated frequent trade delegations from north-eastern region involving trade-bodies, like the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Indian Industry and North East Federation on International Trade and others to ASEAN nations

to help establish people-to-people contact and help in establishing new markets to harness the Act East Policy in a more meaningful way. Stating that abrupt fluctuation of the rate of different commodities like large cardamom, ginger, tea, raw rubber discourage the farmers, the minister said a mechanism to control the rate of dif-

ferent commodities may be devised by the central government and special export package formulated for landlocked and underdeveloped states of the Himalayan region. Other issues he raised during the meeting included early posting of customs officials at LCS Nampong (Pangsau Pass), setting up of an export-oriented industrial park in Itanagar and other feasible locations in the state, establishment of a spice park in Namsai, establishment of a common facility center for storage & marketing of large cardamom and other agro-horti products at ALGs at Tezu and Pasighat and at proposed greenfield airport at Hollongi, along with establishment of extension & marketing facilities at Siliguri in West Bengal, establishment of an industrial corridor along the TAH with state-of-the-art cold chain, processing and marketing infrastructure on cluster-based industries and setting up inter-state integrated domestic trade centres in feasible inter-state



Kra Daadi districts; at Ruksin/Pasighat to cater to East Siang, West Siang, Siang and Upper Siang districts; at Tezu for Lower Dibang Valley, Dibang Valley, Lohit and Anjaw districts and at Namsai/Changlang for Namsai, Changlang, Tirap and Longding districts. Terming road connectivity a determinant to trade, Bagra said that re-building of the Stilwell Road into TAH will connect the North East India with ASEAN countries and re-opening of the trade route through Pangsau Pass will greatly improve the trade relation between India and Myanmar and will also benefit the local population. Bagra was accompanied by Hage Tari, IOPS, Secretary, Commerce & Industries and Tokong Pertin, Director, Trade & Commerce, GoAPMoS for Commerce & Industries Hardeep Singh Puri, ministers and secretaries of Commerce & Industries from various states/UTs and senior officers of both central and state governments attended the meeting.

Virtual 8th Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum 2020 held with 110 speakers across 23 countries

Guwahati, December 4: The 8th edition of the Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum, the flagship annual event of the Balipara Foundation, wrapped up the first of its kind virtual forum on the road to recovery through the theme of "Ecology is Economy", bringing together over 110 speakers across business, government, the diplomatic community, academia and conservation across 23 countries. Earlier Balipara Foundation Founder, Ranjit Barthakur, opened the Forum by introducing a striking vision for the North East and the Eastern Himalayan countries for creating the natural wealth of nations. He called for the better valuation of nature, and the creation of an ecological budget across the Eastern Himalayan region. With luminaries like Amitabh Kant (NITI-Aayog), Amb. Shyam Saran, Dr. Shashi Tharoor, N. G. Subramaniam (TCS), Paul Polman (IMAGINE), Her Excellency Razan Khalifa al Mubarak (Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi), Lord Nicholas Stern (LSE), Mark Gough (Capitals Coalition), Vivek Pathak (International Finance Corporation, World Bank), Her Excellency Shaikha Al Daheri (Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi), the Forum saw a lively conversation on the case for rethinking our fundamental economic principles. "The North East can be a powerhouse for ecology is economy," said Amitabh Kant, CEO of the NITI Aayog. "One thing that the government can do, and we should lobby for, is to incentivise more green innovation in India, which I would like to see being encouraged and rewarded", said Dr. Shashi Tharoor. "The management of land and forests in the Himalayan region, is critical to the region itself and to the rivers that flow out of there, and to the future of our planet. The next 10 or 20 years will be absolutely decisive," said Lord Nicholas Stern. "We know the way forward and it is now our time to implement these measures," said Her Excellency Razan Khalifa al Mubarak, in a special message for the Eastern Himalayas. "As we all know to sustain a thriving humanity, we need to sustain nature and make sure nature is thriving." They were joined by Chief Ministers from across the eight states of the North East, adding their insights to the debate on the way forward for Eastern Himalayan states and regions through policy and practice. Delivering a keynote address in the session, Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal said, "Nature is the key to our future. Today, environmental awareness is a must for preserving our rich biodiversity and for the human race." Conrad Sangma, Chief Minister of Meghalaya in his key note address says "We have vast areas of enterprises to look at, from eco-tourism to value-addition of minor forest products, to replacing fossil fuels, with their debilitating carbon footprints." With case studies from snowline to sealine, the Forum explored critical issues, challenges and opportunities facing each of the states and countries of the Eastern Himalayan region from Nepal to Myanmar. Speakers discoursed on various topics like achieving net zero, natural assets, indigenous knowledge of biodiversity, lowering zoonotic diseases, employment and livelihood opportunities and green energy, among others, in the context of the Eastern Himalayan region. The last and final closing comments on the theme of the virtual 8th Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics Forum "Ecology is Economy" was delivered by His Excellency Vikram Doraiswami, High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh, highlighting the urgent need for cross-border collaborations in the region. It can be opt mentioning that 8th edition of the Eastern Himalayan Naturenomics™ Forum, the 8th Balipara Foundation Awards will air live at 16.30PM on 5th December on ehnf2020.virtualmnc.com, recognizing and lauding the extraordinary visionaries of the Eastern Himalayas and their indomitable contribution to living in harmony with nature and adopting sustainable methods for greening the economy.

8th North East Festival will be held in Guwahati on 19th and 20th December, 2020



Guwahati, December 4 : After successful completion of seven editions, this year 8th North East Festival will be held at Radisson Blu, Guwahati on 19th & 20 December. Following all the Covid19 protocols and guidelines, this year the festival will be organized with minimum human presence and broadcasted on all over the globe through digital platforms. Due to the pandemic North East's first and foremost source of income and livelihood, tourism has been affected severely and everything has come to a standstill. The focus of the festival will be Growth Agenda for North East Post Covid19. A new entity NEF Ideation Conclave will have a series of discussion sessions. Success stories of North East Youth - Session will have prominent personalities of the region such as Zubeen Garg, Anshu Jemsepa, Armstrong Palme, Hima Das, Larsing Ming, Riyan Parag Das, Niti Deb and many others speaking about their journey. A session Market linkage on Agriculture will have Farmer producing companies of the NEF interacting with Buyers from outside, a B2B Meet on Tourism will be

organized wherein tourism stakeholders of North East will interact with prominent tour operators of the country. A session on Make in North East

will have prominent investors in the NER such as NRL, Patanjali, ITC etc will share their experience of investment in the region. Some successful Start Ups of the region will share their story and interact. A virtual walk through of North East Festival, will be showcased at 4 PM on both the evenings, will present North East tourism destinations, Festivals such as Hornbill, Sangai, Tawang Festival etc, cuisines of the region, dance forms, crafts and the tribes of the region to give a feel of the region. Evening Cultural programme will showcase dance forms of the North East, Spectacular Fashion show by top designers and models of the region and NEF musical evenings will have Zubeen Garg, Soulmate and other top musical icons of the region performing to a global audience. Assam Govt led by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal is the

host State. The Inaugural Session on Development Agenda for North East will be about highlighting the positive works done by the various Chief Ministers of the region in the presence of Union DoNER Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh. The programme will be live streamed in Facebook and Youtube links of North East Festival and can be seen across the globe. Special promotion of North East Festival is planned in major cities of the Country and specially in the South East Asian Countries. More than 2 lakh digital footfalls are expected. "North East Festival over the years have been able to create a positive perception about the region. This time focus is to highlight the strength of North East as an investment destination and focus on the region as an ideal tourism destination post Covid. The Virtual North East Festival will aim at creating a market linkage for North Eastern products and will try to motivate youngsters of the region for entrepreneurship, sports and other activities" said Shyamkanu Mahanta, Organiser-in-Chief, North East Festival. The North East Festival is an attempt to showcase and create awareness about India's North East and to promote entrepreneurship and tourism. One of the major aims of the festival is an attempt to attract tourism and investments and create positive vibes during these trying times.

SALES AND MARKETING NOTICE: For the 100 percent water soluble mixture of fertilizers					
In pursuance to the order no S.O.2900 (E) dated 24th October, 2015 and its amendment dated 30th December 2017, issued by Department of Agriculture Co-operation and Farmer Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, Govt of India, M/s DCM Shriram Limited, Registered Office: 2nd Floor, (West Wing), World Mark-1, Aerocity, New Delhi-110037 India (its Unit, Shriram Fertilisers and Chemicals) hereby notifies that it intends to sell 100 percent Water Soluble Mixture of fertilizer Grades as per specification given below.					
Sl No	Description	N-P-K 10-30-20, S-4%	N-P-K 15-10-30 S-4%	N-P-K 15-05-32, S-2%, B-0.1%, Mo-0.01%	N-P-K 05-40, S-2.5%, B-0.2%
1	Moisture per cent by weight, Maximum	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
2	Total Nitrogen per cent by weight, Minimum	10	15	15	10
3	Nitrate Nitrogen per cent by weight, Maximum	5.5	7.0	8.3	9.7
4	Ammoniacal Nitrogen per cent by weight, Minimum	4.0	2.0	0.1	0.3
5	Urea Nitrogen per cent by weight, Maximum	0.5	6.0	6.6	0
6	Water soluble phosphorus (as P2O5) per cent by weight, Minimum	30	10	5	5
7	Water soluble potassium (as K2O) per cent by weight, Minimum	20	30	32	40
8	Sulphate Sulphur (as S) per cent by weight, Minimum		4	2	2.5
9	Boron (as B) per cent by weight, Minimum	0.1			0.2
10	Molybdenum (as Mo) per cent by weight, Minimum			0.01	
11	Total Chloride (as Cl) per cent by Weight, Maximum	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
12	Matter Insoluble in water per cent by weight, Maximum	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
13	Sodium as NaCl per cent by weight, Maximum	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
14	Lead (as Pb) per cent by weight, maximum	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003
15	Cadmium (as Cd) per cent by weight, Maximum	0.0025	0.0025	0.0025	0.0025
16	Arsenic (as As) per cent by weight, Maximum	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
To know more about doses, method of application and benefits, please contact below given regional offices of Shriram Fertilizer and Chemicals					
Marketing Office Address & Contact Details					
SHRIRAM FERTILISERS & CHEMICALS					
Kirti Mahal, 19, Rajendra Place, New Delhi - 110008, India, CIN No.: L74899DL1989PLC034923					
Customer Care No.: 0120 - 4040188, Email: sfs@dcmsriram.com, Website: www.shriramfertilizersolutions.com					

THE ASSAM RISING

VOL. NO. V, ISSUE NO. 300 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 05, 2020

China dam on Brahmaputra river

Proposals for dams on the Brahmaputra have evoked concerns in India and Bangladesh, the riparian states, and China has downplayed such anxieties saying it would keep their interests in mind. As a lower riparian State with considerable established user rights to the waters of the trans-border rivers, the Indian government has consistently conveyed its views and concerns to the Chinese authorities and has urged them to ensure that the interests of downstream States are not harmed by any activities in upstream areas. China has already operationalised the \$1.5 billion Zam Hydropower Station, the largest in Tibet in 2015. About the new dam, the Global Times report said that speculation about China planning to build a "super hydropower station" in Medog county, where the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon is located, have circulated for years. Medog is the last county in Tibet which borders Arunachal Pradesh. In his address, Yan said that the hydropower exploitation of the Yarlung Zangbo River downstream is more than a hydropower project. It is also meaningful for the environment, national security, living standards, energy and international cooperation. According to the report, the mainstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River has the richest water resources in Tibet Autonomous Region, about 80 million kilowatt hours (kWh), while the 50-kilometer section of the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon has 70 million kWh that could be developed with a 2,000-meter drop, which equals more than three Three Gorges power stations in Hubei province. Tibet has about 200 million kWh of water resources, accounting for 30 per cent of the total in China. The 60 million kWh hydropower exploitation at the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River could provide 300 billion kWh of clean, renewable and zero-carbon electricity annually. The project will play a significant role in realising China's goal of reaching a carbon emissions peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality in 2060, he said. "It is a project for national security, including water resources and domestic security," he said, noting that the project will also smooth cooperation with South Asia. The hydropower station could generate income of 20 billion yuan (USD three billion) annually for the Tibet Autonomous Region, he said. India and China established Expert Level Mechanism (ELM) in 2006 to discuss various issues related to trans-border rivers. Under existing bilateral Memorandums of Understanding, China provides hydrological information of Brahmaputra River and Sutlej River to India during the flood seasons. Under the arrangement, China provides flood season data of the Brahmaputra river between May 15 and October 15 every year. Amid simmering border tension with India along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh, China is planning to build a major hydropower project in Tibet's part of the Brahmaputra River. According to reports, China is planning to build the dam as part of the proposal for the country's 14th Five-Year Plan that will be implemented next year. It is learnt that Chinese government has already finalised a company to construct this dam. China's ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), which is led by President Xi Jinping, has already been formulating the five-year plan for the communist nation, as well as long-term goals through 2035. Yan Zhiyong, chairman of the Power Construction Corp of China, said China will "implement hydropower exploitation in the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River" (the Tibetan name for Brahmaputra River). The project could serve to maintain water resources and domestic security, the Global Times reported, quoting an article on the WeChat account of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League of China. "There is no parallel in history. It will be a historic opportunity for the Chinese hydropower industry," Yan told the conference organised to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the China Society for Hydropower Engineering. According to Yan, the hydropower exploitation of the Yarlung Zangbo River downstream is not just any hydropower project as it will have effect on the environment, national security, living standards, energy and international cooperation. Yan added that the new hydropower station could generate income of 20 billion yuan (USD three billion) annually for the Tibet Autonomous Region. China's decision to build a new dam has raised concerns in India. Beijing's inclination to control the flow of Brahmaputra river. The Brahmaputra flows for over 3,000km through Tibet, India and Bangladesh. Brahmaputra river is crucial for India too as its basin is a critical water source for Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Nagaland and West Bengal. The Brahmaputra valley support the lives of several indigenous communities. China said on Monday that its projects on the Brahmaputra river will not have any negative impact on flood management and ecology of downstream areas, as Beijing was "bearing in mind" Indian concerns and the "bigger picture" of its relations with India as it goes forward with projects. China put into operation the first section of its 510 MW hydropower project at Zangmu, in Tibet - its first major dam on the middle reaches of the Brahmaputra, or Yarlung Zangbo as it is known in China. Also read: China puts first Brahmaputra dam into operation. China last year also gave the go-ahead for three other hydropower projects, which Beijing says are run of the river dams that will not divert the river's flow. China said it was keeping "close communication" with India on the projects, indicating that the issue had figured in recent talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping during the latter's visit to India in September. "The cooperation and communication we have [with India on transboundary rivers] is sound, and we are bearing in mind the bigger picture of the China-India good relationship," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said at a regular press briefing. "We have been providing hydrological data and emergency management to the Indian side, which has played an important role in flood prevention and disaster relief of downstream areas. The facts have shown that our assistance in these areas is effective, and the channels are smooth." Hua added that "during President Xi's visit to India both sides issued a joint statement in which India thanked China for the provision of hydrological data and assistance in emergency handling." She said both sides were using a joint expert-level meeting mechanism to "enhance cooperation on transboundary rivers", following an agreement signed in 2013 when then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Beijing. The Chinese Foreign Ministry said the government would "take full account of concerns of downstream areas". "The hydropower stations China has built will not affect flood prevention and ecological systems of downstream areas," Hua said. China said last year it would "vigorously" push hydropower generation projects to tap the fast-flowing Brahmaputra's upper and middle reaches, and address its energy shortfall in Tibet.

Talmudic debates on India's strategic autonomy an artefact of a bygone era, says strategic thinker Dhruva Jaishankar

Dhruva Jaishankar hardly needs any introduction. Director of the US Initiative at ORF and a non-resident fellow at the Sydney-based think tank Lowy Institute, Dhruva's research has spanned issues such as India-US relations, India's relations in Asia and the Indo-Pacific, the interaction of technology with politics, and defence and national security. Dhruva is a regular contributor to Indian and international publications offering his insights on Indian foreign policy. A strategic thinker, Dhruva took time out to interact with Firstpost for an interview on recent developments, Indo-US relationship and the possible impact of upcoming US presidential polls in bilateral ties. Do you interpret India's Malabar invitation to Australia as the natural arc of a trajectory that has seen a broader and more cooperative bilateral relationship in recent times (mentioned explicitly in Indian readout), or do you see this decision as India's signalling mechanism to China that may even be open to revision depending on the situation at the border? I would read Australia's inclusion in the Malabar exercise as part of a natural progression that has taken place since 2000, albeit at an uneven pace. After 1999-2000, India normalised ties with the United States and its regional allies (particularly Japan and Australia). Their 2004-05 tsunami relief effort and the mainstreaming of India's nuclear programme after 2005 were natural accompaniments to the first iteration of the Quad in 2007 and the Malabar 07-02 exercises in which all four countries and Singapore participated. The pace of such intensified cooperation between India, Japan, Australia, and the US changed after 2008, for a number of reasons. Structurally, the global financial crisis played a role, but equally political changes in all four countries in 2008-09 put closer security cooperation on the backburner. The last few years have seen a resumption and an acceleration. One major driver - not the only one - has been clear evidence that China's behaviour as a rising power has been accompanied by territorial revisionism, mercantilism, political interventionism, and an undermining of accepted norms. Additionally, there is a conscious effort at delinking the Quad from any specific policies by China or anyone else, so as not to make it a bargaining chip. Therefore, a wholesale reversion of the trends towards cooperation is unlikely. After all, all four Quad countries had made prior attempts at engaging Beijing only to be rebuffed. Political leaderships will come and go, but there is today a qualitative difference in how the foreign and defence bureaucracies in



Australia, India, Japan, and the US perceive China's rise. The natural outcome is a greater appreciation of relations with one another. The Trump administration has been quite clear that Quad is not an Asian NATO. And yet, it is dropping large hints of formalizing it into a soft security alliance, which basically refers to India since the other two are US treaty allies. Considering that the bilateral defence relationship has been flourishing already, how may the future of Quad shape up? NATO is a terrible analogy for any contemporary security system because it evolved under

Sreemoy Talukdar

very specific circumstances that resulted in pooled resources and joint command structures. Creating NATO from scratch today would be impossible, even in Europe. But the reality is that we are already witnessing the elements of a new emerging security architecture forming in the Indo-Pacific as a consequence of China's behaviour, inadequate regional institutions, and the uncertainty and inability of the US to play the sole role of security guarantor. These elements include the sharing of classified information, geospatial intelligence, secure communications, military interoperability - overseen by political-level strategic direction - by Australia, India, Japan, and the US, among many others. The Quad is an important - but not the sole - vehicle in the advancement of this new Indo-Pacific architecture. I would add that it is not just about India's gradual integration with the US and its allies. The US and both its allies have also been resetting the terms of their cooperation, especially as Japan remilitarises. And Japan and Australia are also making strides in improving their bilateral relationship, such as the visiting forces agreement under negotiation. India will be ready to work with whoever Americans choose on 3 November. However, given the fact that Biden is

a traditionalist in foreign policy and Democrats place a huge weight on climate change, China may offer grandiloquent declarations in return for reduced geostrategic pressure, as Greg Sheridan points out in The Australian. Similarly, greater stress in US-Russia ties under Democrats may work to India's disadvantage. Surely, a second Trump term may be more aligned with India's interests than a Biden team to whom China is offering a fresh beginning? The picture is mixed. Under Trump, the US has been a high-maintenance relationship for India, although not without its advantages. There have been important developments on defence cooperation and high technology sharing, combined with difficulties on bilateral trade and immigration. At the same time, a Biden administration will also have its concerns about China. Many younger Asia hands among Democrats share similar perspectives with some of the more "hawkish" elements on the political right. And while the Democrats' incentives for economic and climate change cooperation with China will remain, this could be mitigated by growing concerns about human rights, not to mention the implementing of sweeping national security laws in Hong Kong. It is hard to predict which factors will have greater sway over a Biden administration's China policy, but there are many reasons to think that the competition is more structurally defined than in 2015, let alone 2009. From an Indian perspective, the Democrats may also be more advantageous from a narrow economic standpoint, while contributing a little more to strategic predictability. Overall, I would not be too concerned about the outcome of the election for India, although any new administration - Democrat or Republican, should Trump somehow be reelected - should hopefully embark upon a steep learning curve. You have written recently

about Indo-US relationship entering beyond basic conceptual agreements to a more constructive yet challenging phase. Would you call it an unprecedented phase in bilateral ties? I was motivated to write that article by a disjuncture I've noticed between, on the one hand, the more basic public debates that you still find in Washington and New Delhi, and the far more detailed and advanced bilateral negotiations taking place between officials from the two countries such as substantive issues as defence, trade, aid, and technology. There is no doubt that we have reached an unprecedented level of coordination between the US and India. The question remains as to whether both sides are interested in deeper cooperation, which is by necessity more intrusive and requires adjustments by one or both parties. Do you align data regimes, or engage in joint military scenario planning? Do you engage in sensitive research and development, secure each other's investments, or jointly finance foreign aid projects? My intention was not to advocate for one position or another, but simply to highlight that while closer cooperation is possible, it would involve much more difficult negotiations. The Talmudic debates on strategic autonomy are, in a sense, an artefact of a bygone era. Would you agree with the assessment that a difference in perception over values - beyond strategic, defence or economic ties - may interfere with the trajectory of India-US relationship? India and the US are both proud and large democracies, with noisy politics and decentralized governance structures. But these similarities, while important, obscure critical differences, which the superficial characterizations in both countries of each other fail to appreciate. India is still a developing country that has had to contend with a very particular kind of pluralism: its social and political trajectory since 1947 has in some ways been unique. The United States' origins in the 18th century and its legacy of race and immigration is equally unique. I have seen some unrealistic assessments - some unfortunately motivated by wishful thinking - that these different attitudes will result in a decisive break in India-US relations. But I also recall discussions with very serious US policymakers more than a decade ago, who did not think that India was a democracy even then because of casteism, corruption, and some restrictions on free speech. So different perceptions and contexts will persist, no matter the political outcomes of elections in the US or India. The solution will have to involve (to use Joe Biden's words) an honest conversation between the two countries as close friends.

Small Axe is great: now let's have some films about black life outside London



Small Axe is a giant leap forward for black British film-making: five films made by the most celebrated British director of his generation going out at primetime on BBC One. I, along with many others, have appreciated every second, partly because I know a camera has never been allowed to linger on the black British experience like this. The whole project is rooted firmly in Steve McQueen's London, but when I interviewed him he said there was a plan for another series with stories from black communities outside of the capital. "There are amazing stories that haven't been told," he said. I can't wait to see them, because frankly, we've waited long enough. Black Londoners can reach for a slim but established canon of films: from Burning an Illusion via Babylon and Baby Mother all the way to Bullet Boy and Blue Story. But what about those of us who are black British and from outside of the M25? My own experiences are rooted in the black Yorkshire experience, and if I went to look for that representation on screen, particularly in fictional stories, I'd find a pretty bare cupboard. As would a black person from Bristol, Manchester, Liverpool or

Birmingham. Part of the explanation lies in demographics. More than 70% of the film industry is based in London and the south-east, and just under 60% of the UK's black population lives in the capital. It makes sense that there would be a focus on London-based stories. But you'd still expect there to be a noticeable sub-strand of black British cinema that had developed in other cities with large established black populations. In cities like Birmingham, the film-makers are there but they struggle to get their films properly backed and distributed - especially if they fall outside the "urban" categorisation. Hanging over all of this is the simple scarcity of black British films. Since Horace Ové's Pressure in 1975, considered by many as the first black British feature film, there has been just a slow drip of productions rather than a steady stream. To give an example of the institutional brick wall, look to the BBC's Play for Today: between 1970 and 1984, in more than 300 dramas of the anthology series, just three productions were even partly scripted by black writers. And black northern film-makers have never fared well in the industry: Welcome II the Terrordome, Ngozi Onwurah's

debut in 1995, was critically mauled because she presented a futuristic vision of a racially fraught Britain. As a Geordie, she is still one of only a handful of black film-makers from outside of the capital to ever make a widely distributed feature. The Black Lives Matter movement prompted a pledge from the BBC to spend £100m on diverse programming and ITV's efforts to invest in black talent and creativity. It all sounds impressive, but there remains a London-centric commissioning system that can't seem to comprehend black life in a regional setting. For many in the media, "authentic" black British life begins and ends in the capital. The black people who choose to live outside it should be pitied or asked, as Benjamin Zephaniah was of his life in rural Lincolnshire, "Why do it to yourself?" His answer probably came as a revelation to many. "Because it's great, and we're British and we can live anywhere we want to," he said. "This is our country, and if we keep living in inner cities people will stereotype us as inner-city people." Recently there has been a surge in Yorkshire-centric commissioning by Channel 5, with viewers flocking to several programmes offering a comforting, pastoral and almost exclusively white vision of the county I grew up in. When asked why his programming is so pale, Ben Frow, Channel 5's controller, said "Sometimes when I'm talking to producers they say that Yorkshire is very white. I say, find them, you've got to make the extra effort." Having grown up in Bradford, a city where more than 20% of the population is of Pakistani heritage, I consider the idea of someone struggling to "find them" in Yorkshire as insulting - it is hilarious. Perhaps the real issue is that more racially diverse places like West Bowling, Chapeltown and Burngreave don't fit with the idealised Yorkshire "identity" Channel 5 is wedded to. More damaging is that a lack of representation on-screen comes alongside a

lack of understanding in the real world. "We don't know in terms of drama what it's like to be Caribbean, or a Nigerian or Ghanaian-British person living in Moss Side, Liverpool or Bristol, beyond what we think historically around questions of riots or the odd character in Brookside," says Dr Clive Nwonka, author of the forthcoming book Black Boys: The Aesthetics of British Urban Cinema. Representation in drama matters. One of the most powerful scenes in McQueen's Mangrove happens when the police randomly pick up a young black man walking home with his shopping. They beat him and dump him in a police cell, where he is later found by his mother and others. Her reaction, taking one look at her son's battered face then attacking the officers, tells you more in a few seconds about the impact of police brutality than any news story. It's visceral, you can feel it. It changes you once you've seen it. The Anthony Walker drama did something similar, so did Shola Amoo's The Last Tree. You'd think by now a country that has produced dozens of state-of-the-nation dramas would have seen the worth in one about Liverpool's black population, the oldest such community in Britain, in the wake of the 1981 uprising in Toxteth? Lovers Rock, the second film in the Small Axe collection, was a celebration of culture, so why can't there be projects that look at the black dancers of the northern soul scene or the electro-funk scene in Huddersfield? Steven Knight's forthcoming drama series looks at Coventry's 70s/80s 2-Tone music scene - but there could be much more. McQueen has hacked down one door with Small Axe and I can't wait to see what he does next. But can more commissioners and producers see the value in black stories that aren't set in London or will McQueen be left to do the heavy lifting for them? Our impact has been huge, now we need a film and TV industry that finally sees us.

Lanre Bakare

Cyclone Burevi: Trivandrum airport operations shut from 10am to 6pm today



Trivandrum, December 04: In the wake of the extreme weather conditions due to cyclone Burevi, Trivandrum airport operations will be shut from 10 am to 6 pm on Friday. A total of nine services will be affected - seven domestic and two international. Airlines have been advised to reschedule services, to the convenience of passengers. Airport operations will remain open for any emergency situation. As of now, the situation is normal in and around the

airport area with no rains or wind. Cyclone Burevi has weakened into a deep depression and will cross the Tamil Nadu coast on the morning of December 4, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Thursday. The IMD had earlier predicted that Burevi, which crossed the Sri Lanka coast on Wednesday night, would hit the Tamil Nadu coast as a cyclonic storm. Deep depression is a stage of cyclone formation or intensification. The Kerala government has declared a holiday in five districts for Friday as the state remains on high alert with heavy rains expected when cyclone Burevi makes landfall. The India Meteorological Department (IMD),

in its latest bulletin, has said Burevi may make landfall in Kerala on December 4 and has issued red alert and cyclone warning for south Tamil Nadu and south Kerala coasts. A statement issued by the state government said a public holiday has been declared for the districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha and Idukki in the state. Over 2,000 relief camps have been opened in Kerala, it said. The international airport here will remain shut from 10 am to 6 pm on December 4. The IMD has predicted that the course of the storm will be through the border areas of Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts and the government, along with various departments and the Army, were ready to face the contingencies, he said. The Thiruvananthapuram International Airport will remain closed on December 4 from 10 am to 6 pm, district collector Navjot Khosa said.



A man performs a martial art at the launch of the Brunei December Festival in Bandar Seri Begawan, capital of Brunei

Govt says vaccinating 'critical mass' for Covid herd immunity an option. Some experts not sure

New Delhi, December 04: The central government's announcement that vaccinating a "critical mass" of the population against Covid-19 is among the options on the table has left experts wondering about the feasibility of any such initiative. Vaccinating a "critical mass" would mean giving the Covid vaccine to enough people that the chain of transmission is broken - or effecting "herd immunity" in the population. However, experts doubt that is possible, at least for now, since the current lot of promising Covid vaccines aren't the 'sterilising' type. This means that they won't stop the novel coronavirus from entering the cells of a vaccinated individual - all they promise to do is prevent the infection from taking on a severe form. These vaccines, they say, would at best shrink a Covid-infected person's window of infectivity - the amount of time they serve as a carrier of the virus - rather than closing it altogether. Breaking the chain of transmission becomes difficult in such a situation, experts say. The central government announced its "critical mass" plans at a Union Health Ministry briefing this week where it took a U-turn on PM Narendra Modi's promise that "everyone will be vaccinated". In an interview to The Economic Times in October, PM Narendra Modi had said, "First and foremost, I would like to assure the nation that, as and when a vaccine becomes available, everyone will be vaccinated. None will be left behind. Of course, initially we may focus on protecting the most vulnerable and the frontline workers. A National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 Vaccine has been constituted to chart the way forward." However, at the briefing, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan was emphatic that the government had never made a Covid-vaccine-for-all commitment. "The government never spoke about vaccinating the entire country. It is very important to get the factual information on these things," he said. Speaking after him, Union Secretary for Health Research and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Director General Dr Balram Bhargava said, "We may or may not need to vaccinate all. If we can reach a critical mass before doing so, then it is not required. That is why measures like masks etc will need to continue." "Critical mass" for Covid is not known for certain and is currently a matter of conjecture, say experts. Decisions based on this figure,

they add, will have to be driven by the past and the future trajectory of the pandemic. In an article published in The Lancet in September, researchers from the University of Hong Kong wrote that "perhaps about 25-50 per cent of the population would have to be immune to the virus to achieve suppression of community transmission". Looking at the performance of various vaccine candidates, including in pre-clinical studies, they said: "These observations suggest that we cannot assume Covid-19 vaccines, even if shown to be effective in reducing severity of disease, will reduce virus transmission to a com-

parable degree. The notion that Covid-19-vaccine-induced population immunity will allow a return to pre-Covid-19 'normalcy' might be based on illusory assumptions." Dr Anurag Agarwal, director of the Delhi-based Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, which is overseen by the Union Ministry of Science & Technology, is more inclined to suggest 50 per cent as the mark for herd immunity, but admits it is difficult to say so for certain. "The 'critical mass' is an inexact number as of now but, looking at cities like Delhi and Mumbai, it is likely to be in the range of 50 per cent or so - one confirmation will be if Delhi, for example, does not have another spike in the coming days," he said. The August sero survey in Delhi showed that about 30 per cent of the population has been exposed to the novel coronavirus. After the third wave - which has been bigger than the past two waves - it is safe to assume that the figure could have reached 50 per cent, Agarwal added. "Risk levels of various population groups will also have to be taken into account. The scientific way of doing vaccinations could be to test people for antibodies before giving them the shot but that may not be feasible. Although if the availability is too small, it may still be an option,"



he added. While the central government has identified priority groups like healthcare workers, elderly and comorbid people for vaccination, children may not feature anywhere in the list as most vaccines have only been tested on adults. This means around 40 per cent of the population is straightaway not likely to get the vaccine. Two experiments conducted early on in the pandemic have queered the pitch for the 'herd immunity' approach. The first was in the UK, when Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plan to let the virus run through the population was halted by immediate backlash. The

second was in Sweden, which bucked the lockdown approach to adopt what is now known as Covid-appropriate behaviour in the quest for herd immunity. It seemed to be successful initially, but was eventually overwhelmed by infections and was making headlines for its handling of the pandemic. Anders Tegnell, Sweden's state epidemiologist, now says it's still not clear to what extent transmission rates are reduced when more people have been exposed to the virus. However, with the UK rolling out a vaccine for public use by next week, and the Russians looking at a January launch for their candidate, the herd immunity conversation may get a fresh lease of life. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes herd immunity or 'population immunity' as a "concept used for vaccination, in which a population can be protected from a certain virus if a threshold of vaccination is reached". Herd immunity, it says, is "achieved by protecting people from a virus, not by exposing them

to it". "Vaccines train our immune systems to create proteins that fight disease, known as 'antibodies', just as would happen when we are exposed to a disease but - crucially - vaccines work without making us sick. Vaccinated people are protected from getting the disease in question and passing it on, breaking any chains of transmission," it states. However, the current crop of Covid vaccines that have been approved or are at an advanced stage of trial do not aim to give foolproof protection against the disease as, for example, is done by some influenza vaccines that are given nasally and do not allow the pathogen to enter the body at all. "For the initial infection to be blocked, we need inhaled mucosal vaccines which produce secretory IgA antibodies. Those vaccines are still under early evaluation. The injectable vaccines may limit the period of infectivity by preventing a severe infection but not fully guarantee stoppage of transmission even for a limited period from a vaccinated person who acquires the virus," said Dr K. Srinath Reddy, president of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) and member of the International Steering Committee of the WHO Solidarity Trial, which is aimed at finding an effective treatment for Covid-19. "For that reason, it is difficult to predict what percentage of people need to be immunised to be assured of breaking the chain of transmission. If the main goal is to prevent severe illness and death, as it must be, all vulnerable persons in the population must be prioritised for immunisation," he added. "Disrupting the chain of transmission through limited immunisation coverage is a possible but uncertain outcome." The systemic vaccines on the frontlines, including the two mRNA vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna (the former has now been approved in the UK), are positioned to reduce the severity of the Covid-19 infection, not the risk of acquiring infection per se, he said. "That is the clinical outcome which they are reporting to the regulators from the trials. It is still possible that they will not be able to prevent the initial infection of the respiratory tract or the transmission of the virus to others from that person," he said.

Tata set to buy 80% of BigBasket as race to dominate India's online grocery heats up

Bengaluru, Dec 04 : India's Tata Group is in advanced talks to buy as much as 80% of BigBasket in a deal that is likely to value the local online grocer backed by Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. at about \$1.6 billion, a person familiar with the matter said. The conglomerate is now negotiating how much stake it would purchase in innovative Retail Concepts Pvt., which is commonly known as BigBasket.com, the person said, asking not to be identified discussing details of private talks. Mint newspaper reported earlier that Tata may buy close

to 80% for \$1.3 billion. A spokeswoman for Tata declined to comment, while BigBasket didn't respond to requests for comment. Mumbai-based Tata Group, with a combined revenue of about \$113 billion and marquee brands such as Jaguar Land Rover and tea maker Tetley, is scouting for local e-commerce assets at a time when the race for Indian online shoppers is heating up. While billionaire Mukesh Ambani's JioMart is seeking to shake up the industry dominated by the local units of Amazon.com Inc. and Walmart Inc., Tata is seeking potential acquisitions to narrow the gap with its rivals. Online grocery in India has been growing at a rocketing pace during the pandemic, but the field is still wide open as none of the players has yet made a dent.



This simulated image shows Chang'e-5 spacecraft blasting off from the lunar surface. The Chinese spacecraft carrying the country's first lunar samples blasted off from the moon

Farmers protest chokes Delhi borders; Singhu, Tikri, Chilla closed for traffic, avoid NH 24

New Delhi, December 04: Farmers, who have been camping on the borders of Delhi blocked key entrances to the national capital, leading to traffic snarls and inconvenience to the commuters. Singhu and Tikri are closed and commuters have been advised to "avoid NH 24". There's no relief in sight for the weary commuters from long traffic snarls as the farmers continued their agitation against the farm laws, choking the key entrances to the national capital for the eighth day on the trot. The Singhu border which connects Delhi and

Haryana and also the main protest site for the farmers has been closed since Thursday, last week where thousands of farmers have been camping. The Delhi Traffic Police has closed the Haryana-Delhi border at Singhu and Tikri for any traffic movement in view of the farmers' protest. For now, Singhu, Lampur, Auchandi, Safiabab, Piao Maniyari, and Saboli borders are closed for all traffic movements. While the police have kept the Haryana-Delhi border at Singhu and Tikri closed for traffic, the protest at Ghazipur which connects Delhi and Uttar Pradesh led to the closure of a key route connecting the national capital with the state for the third consecutive day. People coming to Delhi have been advised to avoid NH 24. "The Gazipur border on NH 24 is closed for traffic from Gaziabad to Delhi due to farmers' protests. People are advised to avoid NH 24 for coming to Delhi and use Apsara/ Bhopra/DND for coming to Delhi," the Delhi Traffic Police said on Friday. The Gazipur border on NH 24 is closed for traffic from Gaziabad



are closed for any traffic movement. The Chilla border on the Noida link road has also been closed for traffic due to the farmers' protest ay Gautam Budh Dwar. "The Chilla border on Noida link road is closed for traffic from Noida to Delhi due to farmers protests near Gautam Budh Dwar. People are advised to avoid Noida link road for coming to Delhi and use DND," traffic police said. "Singhu, Lampur, Auchandi, Safiabab, Piao Maniyari, and Saboli borders are closed. NH 44 is closed on both sides," the Delhi Traffic Police said, adding, "Please take alternate routes via NH8/Bhopra/Apsara border /Peripheral expressway." Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba and GTK road. "Avoid Outer Ring Road, GTK road, NH 44," it said. Badusarai border is open only for light motor vehicles like cars and two-wheelers. Jhatikara border is open only for two-wheeler traffic. To Haryana, the borders that are open today included Dhansa, Daurala, Kapashera, Rajokri NH 8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar, and Dundaheara.

Congress monitoring developments in BJP-JJP ties in Haryana over farmers' agitation

New Delhi, Dec 04 : The Congress is keeping a close watch on the developments in the ruling alliance in Haryana, where the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) is under pressure to review its ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in view of the ongoing farmers' agitation. A Congress functionary said on the condition of anonymity that his party has adopted a "wait and watch" policy and insisted that the ruling coalition will "collapse on its own" due to the mounting pressure on the JJP to withdraw its support to the BJP over the agitation by farmers demanding an immediate repeal of

three farm laws enacted in September. Farmers have been staging protests at several border points of Delhi since last week. The ruling coalition suffered its first setback when independent legislator from Charkhi Dadri Sombir Singh Sangwan withdrew his support to the government, calling it anti-farmer. He also resigned as chairman of the Haryana Livestock Development Board. Sangwan's exit has sounded alarm bells in the ruling camp and put pressure on JJP and other supporting legislators to review their ties with the BJP as the agitation is gaining momentum.

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender in F-2 form affixing Court Fee stamp of Rs 8.25 (Rupees eight and twenty five paise) only with a validity period of 180 (one hundred eighty) days are invited from Registered APWD (Building) Contractors for the work as detailed in the table below-

Table									
Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated value of work (Approx)	Bid Security/ Earnest money	Cost of Tender paper	Date of Application	Date of issue of tender paper	Time & date of receiving/ opening of Tender	Time of completion	Eligibility of contractor
1	Painting works in the Bungalow No.4 at Kharghuli, Guwahati (Painting works on exterior wall of the Bungalow, boundary walls around the campus including painting on roof of the Bungalow at Kharghuli, Guwahati)	Rs. 14,38,500.00	2% for general and 1% for reserved category	Rs. 500.00	07.12.2020 up to 4:00 PM	08.12.2020 to 09.12.2020 up to 4:00 PM	Receiving up to 2:00 PM of 10.12.2020 and opening at 2:30 PM of 10.12.2020	15 (fifteen) days	Registered APWD (Building) Class-I (A.B.C) Class-II (Under Guwahati Bldg Circle-II) & Class-III (Under this Division).

Detailed particulars may be seen during office hours of any working days in the office of the undersigned. Contractors will have to submit application for Tender paper along with attested copy of current APWD Registration Certificate GST Registration, Pan Card, Labour Licence and cost of tender paper as detailed above in the form of Bank Draft/Banker Cheque drawn in any Nationalized Bank in favour of Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Guwahati Building Division-I, Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-1. Tender paper will be issued to the contractors or to their authorized agents up-to 4.00 PM in working day as mentioned above from the office of the undersigned. Bid security in the form of FDR/CDR duly pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Guwahati Building Division-I, Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-1 is to be submitted along with the tender paper.

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD
Guwahati Building Division-I
Fancy Bazar, Guwahati-1

Janasanyog/C/7685/20

Contd. From Page 1

Coal Scam : IT Dept Raids 3

that Minister of Environment and Forest Parimal Suklabaidya had been instructed to visit the region for "taking stock of the condition", and that the government was committed to protect the environment. The assurance has hardly helped lessen fears, which have been compounded with new evidence emerging on the state government's dreadful role in the incident. With the assembly polls only 10 months away and its list of successes not many, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Assam government would not want to link its name with the mining in the reserve forest. Consider these developments: After the controversy erupted, the government decided to initiate departmental proceedings against 12 Divisional Forest Officers (DFO) for their complicity in the illicit mining of coal in the forest. Certainly, the government has to be seen to be taking some action, but rumour is that there are many politicians and highly-placed officials involved in these activities. The evidence comes from an internal report compiled by the state department of environment and forest in July, which was based on field visits by two senior officials. The report categorically underscored the involvement of "other agencies/depts" in the racket. No action was taken on this report, which has now been put on the backburner. So why has the government ignored this report? Coal has been mined legally and illegally in the Dehing-Patkai forest region for some time now. The current controversy stems from the mining that Coal India Ltd has carried out since 2003 without permission in a proposed reserved forest called Saleki within the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve. This is in gross violation of the Assam Forest Regulation Act 1891, and Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. The government's reply to an RTI query from environment activist Rohit Choudhury revealed that 39 percent of forest land in the proposed reserve forest has already been mined. Such rampant destruction of the forest could not have happened without the knowledge of the state government, including the previous Congress regimes. News reports quoting official documents suggest that the State Board of Wildlife (SBWL) under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister recommended the proposal to the ministry of environment, forest and climate change for diversion of 98.59 hectares of land in Saleki for open cast mining. Based on the recommendation, the National Board of Wildlife also gave the green signal for open cast mining at Saleki early in April, during the lockdown. Incidentally, all the illicit syndicates in Assam came to a halt after the lockdown was announced on March 24. The seizure of a coal truck by the police at Kokrajhar along Assam's border with West Bengal three weeks ago signalled the revival of illegal coal mining. Certainly, the truck could not have travelled undetected all the way from eastern Assam without the approval of highly placed officials and even politicians. This apart, local TV news channels have been highlighting the names of politicians and officials involved in the racket. On December 6, DY365, an Assamese satellite news channel, even named an official close to Sonowal, and alleged that large sums of money was pocketed through this scam. The government is yet to come out with a clarification challenging the news reports. Likewise, in September, the ministry of environment forest and climate change requested the Assam government to provide information as to why the details of the violations by Coal India Ltd, as sought by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), was not provided for six years. The Sonowal government is yet to answer. The central and state government, both led by the BJP, must not only realise the ecological fragility of the region but also swiftly act to stop any further degradation. If the perpetrators of this crime against nature are brought to book it will help the Sonowal government, which will soon face the test of the people.

Frontline workers, elderly

and safe vaccine. That is why the world is watching India," Modi said. He further urged all leaders to send their suggestions in writing and assured that they would be considered seriously. This was the second all-party meet called by the Prime Minister to discuss the Covid-19 situation since the outbreak. Modi had visited Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Pune last week to review the vaccine development work at Zydus Biotech Park, Bharat Biotech and the Serum Institute of India (SII)?respectively. India's Covid-19 tally on Friday went over 9.5 million after 36,595 fresh cases and 540 deaths were added in the last 24 hours. The tally now includes 416,082 active cases, more than 9 million recoveries and 139,188 deaths, according to the Union health ministry's dashboard.

We should have come to BTC

is so foul that nobody can set foot without facing some kind of confrontation. "Whenever we, BJP leaders, come here, we are shown black flags. However, we will have to put an end to that. People do not get jobs here based on merit. Government jobs are handed out based on the names written on a piece of paper carried around by ex-Chief Hagrama Mohilary." Sarma, during his address, assured that these issues will be rectified once the BJP party comes to power in the region. With 3 days to go till the commencement of the elections in the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), former Chief Hagrama Mohilary launched into a tirade against friends-turned-foes Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The former BTC Chief also exuded hope that the Bodoland People's Front (BPF) will win 25-30 Seats in the polls. Campaigning in Nagrijuli - one of the 40 Constituencies in the Council - BPFD supremo Hagrama earned thunderous applause by greeting rally attendees in Bengali. Bengali, it needs mention here, is spoken by a significant population in Nagrijuli. Addressing a gathering here, Mohilary said that the BPF party would take care of the land pattas for the people once the elections are over and it has been restored to power. "Be it Bengali, Muslim, or Nepali. We know a lot of harassment in the name of NRC. However, that will change once we assume power again." Mohilary further added that the BPF party would be able to form the BTC administration once again by winning 23-25 of the Seats in the ensuing polls in the Council. The former BTC Chief also accused former BPF Working President of taking bribes from people in return for jobs. Taking potshots at Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Mohilary stated that the leader will be forced to resign as Minister as he will "lose his self-respect." Mohilary also stated that the BJP rally attendees in the BTC have been bussed in from other parts of the state in exchange for sums of money. "The CM, as well as Himanta, are organizing rallies here, but there are no people at those rallies. The BJP's rally attendees in BTC are all being ferried in from outside in exchange for money," Mohilary said. The Council polls in the BTC will be held in two phases on December 7 and 10, while the counting of the votes will be held on December 12.

Biswajit Daimary denies

as they have been deprived of their salaries. Responding to Hagrama Mohilary's claim that Himanta Biswa Sarma would lose his Ministerial post after the election in the Council, Daimary said, "These words are not suitable as politics is not like that. In the BTC, the concerns should be different. All the communities should benefit from the developmental initiatives and all problems should be resolved. The issues of land should be resolved. All the schemes — of both State and Centre — should be implemented. The houses sanctioned by the Centre should be built on time. The funds allocated to the BTC should be used for development. Bright students should get students. Those are the real issues. However, Hagrama is diverting from the real issues and speaking about irrelevant issues. Daimary also stated that the BJP's policies, if it indeed comes to power, have been laid out in the election manifesto. "All our proposed schemes have been laid out in the manifesto," Daimary said, adding that the BJP intends to implement all the schemes that have been earmarked for the region.

Baghjan Blowout Well finally

and all Oillindians, who were directly or indirectly involved throughout the control operations. Company also said that the OIL Management is indebted to the constant guidance and support received from the Government of Assam, Central Government and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG) in particular. OIL Management also expressed its gratitude to the brave Oillindians who laid down their lives while performing their duties at Baghjan. OIL Management thanked all the residents of the nearby areas around the blowout site for their patience and support to OIL during this period. We can assure all stakeholders that all will remain a people's company with support of the residents of its operational areas. Meanwhile, OIL has already deposited the requisite amount to the office of Deputy Commissioner, Tinsukia towards compensation to all concerned as per the interim order of Hon'ble NGT and advice of DC, Tinsukia, said the company.

Govt agrees to review farmers'

on its new reform agenda to raise farm incomes and spur investments in the sector. The recent laws allow businesses to freely trade farm produce outside the so-called government-controlled mandi system, permit private traders to stockpile large quantities of essential commodities for future sales and lay down new rules for contract farming. Farmers fear the reforms could pave the way for the government to stop buying staples at federally fixed minimum support prices (MSPs), erode their bargaining power and leave them at the mercy of private buyers. The government enlarged the group of farmers' representatives from 35 to 40 for Thursday's meeting in response to the farmers' demand. The farmers' side for the first time included a women's representative, Kavitha Kuruganti of the Forum for Women Farmers' Rights. "The farm minister said the government may bring amendments. We pointed out that if a law goes wrong on its very objective, then its various provisions are bound to go wrong. That is what happened here. That farmers have been left to fend for themselves in their market interfaces," said Kuruganti. In the last meeting on December 1, which was inconclusive, the agriculture minister had suggested that farm leaders identify specific issues related to the farm-reform Acts. The farmers' delegation spoke at length about what they saw as threats to their interests because of the reforms. These included the danger of existing notified government-controlled markets collapsing because a proposal to set up free markets in competition with traditional ones that give farmers assured prices for staples. A new contract-farming law could imperil the landholding rights of farmers, the farmers said. They also demanded the government reverse all penalties on farmers for crop-residue burning under a new anti-pollution ordinance promulgated in October. The farmers also sought a review of a bill that provides for direct cash payments to farmers to offset costs of electricity for farming in lieu of the existing practice of providing subsidised power supply. "We will go back review each of these provisions. We will see how we can bring parity between existing Agricultural Produce Market Committees (regulated markets) and free markets. We may bring new measures to strengthen APMC markets," Tomar said. The farm minister also said the government would review the impact of a power supply amendment bill pending in Parliament on farmers and review a recent law, which provides for settlement of disputes between farmers and traders at the magistrate level. Farmers have demanded that they be free to approach civil courts to settle such disputes. The farmers also sought a legal guarantee to federally fixed MSPs so that no private buyer can purchase any major farm produce below state-set threshold prices. The government assured the farmers that the MSP system, under which it buys staples at profitable rates, will continue but did not commit to a law prohibiting sale of any major farm produce below state-set support prices, as sought by farmers. The farmers concluded by saying that the issue is not about "any one particular clause", but about the "direction in which the government is pushing farming in India", said Avik Saha, secretary of the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKCC). Jagmohan Singh, a farm leader who was part of the talks, said farmers unanimously demanded a repeal of the "three black laws". "All our objections and fear will go if the three laws are taken back."

IIT Guwahati's placement

the placement process so far. Under the dynamic leadership and able guidance of Prof T G Sitharam, Director IIT Guwahati, the placement team is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring smooth placements for the students of the institute. IIT Guwahati Published: 03rd December 2020 Under the leadership and guidance of Professor T G Sitharam, Director IIT Guwahati, the placement team is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring smooth placements for the students of the institute. Despite the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic and the resulting standstill in employment, the placement process for Phase 1 at IIT Guwahati ensued from December 1 2020 through a completely virtual mode. The highest domestic package offered this year is Rs 70 Lakh compared to Rs 52 Lakh received last year. In addition, so far, 4 international offers have been grabbed by the students. By the end of Day 2 (December 2, 2020), the total number of offers made by companies have reached 486. The above numbers are inclusive of 133 Pre-Placement Offers (PPOs). Close to 128 Companies have participated in the campus placement in the first two days. Companies like Google, Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, Qualcomm, Texas Instruments, Adobe, Oracle, Walmart, Bajaj, American Express, Uber, Accenture Japan, MTX, PhonePe, Jaguar, Mercedes, JP Morgan, Amazon, SAP, Cisco, EXL, Intel, Sprinklr, Clearatx, Axis Bank, SocGen, Flipkart and many more have participated in the placement process so far. Under the leadership and guidance of Professor T G Sitharam, Director IIT Guwahati, the placement team is leaving no stone unturned in ensuring smooth placements for the students of the institute.

Crystal stones found in Nagaland

lakh per stone after the news of discovery of the minerals went viral. They wondered why the stones were bought without being verified to be stones. "Maybe they were purchased for therapeutic or religious purposes," geologist Lhoupenyi said. Director of geology and mining S. Manen, in a release, said the said mineral crystals found in Wanching village occur in the veins/fractures of sedimentary rocks of Disang-Barail Groups. It is spread over a shallow depth and may be formed due to silicification of crystals along the fractures of sedimentary rocks formed at few kilometres depth and less than 100 million of years. However, in the case of diamond, crystals are formed in igneous rocks known as kimberlite and lamproites. They are formed under extremely high pressure and temperature, at a depth ranging from 150km and 250km and older than a billion years, he said. Manen clarified that diamond crystals of that size speculated on social media cannot occur or be found in sedimentary rocks, except in rare cases of transportation by natural agents as fine grains or micro-diamonds.

An audio cassette released at Biswanath

Biswanath Chari, Dec 4: 'Aama Ko Mamata' an audio cassette in the Nepali language was released in a function held at Gela Pukhuri near Biswanath Chari on December 3. The songs sung by Milan Adhikari in the cassette were composed by veteran writer Hari Prasad Upadhyaya. Notably, Milan is an emerging singer of the locality who has attained mass popularity through his melodious songs. In this connection, a meeting was organized with Loknath Sarma in the chair. Dr. Khem Raj Nepal, advisory member of the Nepali language of Sahitya Akademi released the cassette. Child artists Sushruta Devi, kritika Upadhyaya, Dimpal Upamanyu, Akhita Devi, Ashmit upadhyaya performed cultural programmes in between the proceedings of the meeting. Writer Parshu Chetry, veteran journalist cum chief advisor of AAJU (All Assam Journalist' Union) Naren Bora addressed the small gathering. The meeting was also attended by Dr. Sanjib Upadhyaya, Hari Prasad Upadhyaya along with others.



International Day of Persons With Disabilities observed at Sipajhar

SIPAJHAR, Dec 04: Along with the rest of the world the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was also observed at Sipajhar in Darrang district. The special programme was organized under the auspices of Samagra Siksha Abhiyan, Sipajhar Block in Darrang at the premises of Sipajhar Academy. The meeting organized as part of the programme was presided over by Gita Devi, Block Elementary Education Officer, Sipajhar Block. Nila Kanta Bora, Head Master, Sipajhar Academy inaugurated it. Dr Jowahira Tabasum, District Elementary Education Officer, Darrang graced on the occasion as distinguished guest. Sasadhar Sarma was addressed the meeting as appointed speaker. Citta Ranjan Kalita, Programme Officer of the Samagra Siksha Abhiyan, Gagan Kumar Nath, Journalist and Lakhyadhar Sarma were also spoke on the occasion. The other guest attended in the meeting includes Ranjit Kumar Nath, Journalist, Rakesh Sarma, Co ordinator, Ghorabandha Cluster Resource Center, Dipak Kumar Deka, Accountant, Block Education Office, Sipajhar Block. The prizes of the on line competition organized on the occasion by the department was distributed among the winners in the meeting. Pranab Kumar Deka, Co ordinator, Sipajhar and Dhakipara Cluster Resource Center was moderated the programme. Archana Deka, Programme Officer offered the vote of thanks at the end.

KKWS, LAWS Condole Sad Demise of former Education Director, Pratik Potom

Aalo, Dec 04 : The Kargu Kardi Welfare Society and Lodu Ao Welfare Society have condoled the sad demise of veteran academician and first tribal Director of Education, Pratik Potom who breathed his last on 3rd Dec. last. President KKWS Shri Toyi Raksap and President LAWS Shri Bidu Poyom said that in his demise we are losing one first generation of educationists and pioneers in growth and development of education in the state in general and KKWS and Lodu societies in particular. His excellent academic track record in the NEFA days and his contributions to govt. of Arunachal in the field of education right from School teacher to the post of Director by dint of his sincerity, dedication and disciplined life is immense. He was instrumental in bringing light of education in the interior and source of inspiration to many of successors of the society he belongs to. He was appointed as Member of State Public Service Commission after his retirement in recognition to his meritorious rendered to the state. He was not only an academician of great repute but a thorough gentleman and firm social workers who worked constantly for preservation of indigenous culture and faith associating himself with various NGOs, taking out time from his busy office works and after retirement. The legacy left behind by him is unparalleled and society will continue to draw inspiration from his works and continue to follow his footprints. The KKWS and LAWS have also extended their profound grief and sorrow to the bereaved family members of late Pratik Potom in this hour of Crisis.



Foundation stone laid at Itakhola

Biswanath Chari, Dec 4: Fulfilling the long pending demand of the people living to the northern part of Jamugurihat, the Sootea MLA Padma Hazarika had laid the foundation stone of a nearly 11 KM's long PWD road which connects Chengamari, Hokajan, Borpan and Pabhoi to the north of Biswanath Chari on December 3. The said road was in a dilapidated condition for a long time. MLA Padma Hazarika managed to sanction a sum of rupees 18 crore for construction of the said road. In this connection, a meeting was held at Itakhola centre with Lakhi Kanta Bora in the chair.

Hamren Constituency Distribution of Aronodoi card at Jengkha

Kheroni, Dec 04 : West karbi Anglong District under No.8 Hamren MAC Constituency the distributed Aronodoi card programme was held at Jengkha here today (Friday). The programme presided Biren sing Tisso (BJP Hamren Mandal Committee president) as object of the meeting explained Jowelson Tokbi. Attendet as the chief guest Local MAC & Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council Executive Member Mongal sing Timung, Hamren Co-operative LAMPS chairman Jaysing Engti, Hamren Town Committee chairman Biren Tisso, Soil Department Board chairman Rongit Teron many Dinerities present. meanwhile the Joint Extended meeting of BJP Hamren Mandal Committee also held. 1645 totally Benifiseries benifited of Aronodoi card from Hamren Constituency. KAAC'EM was addressed the Bharatiya Janata party first help for the poor family, specially the women's. Difference govt. schemes only for the women's. different political party may be said the Aronodoi scheme is flatter, but the scheme is good enough for the helping of poor family also added EM Mongal sing Timung. He also urged the people of no.8 Hamren MAC Constituency Mandal committee, Polling station president/ Gsecretary to keep strong enough and alert party of BJP in regards votes keep in hand. Due the MLA election arrive soon in karbi Anglong. Now time is coming to tell people every nuk of corner of village ready to vote for BJP said EM Mongal sing Timung. The good chance of face Karbi Anglong District by BJP govt. Not others govt. BJP govt. formed 3 Today showing BJP govt. has very good sign for the Karbi Anglong District also in future.



Jharkhand's Bokaro Airport to connect with Patna and Kolkata under RCS-UDAN

New Delhi, December 04 : Airports Authority of India, in its continuous endeavor to link under-served and un-served airports through RCS routes, is developing the airport at Bokaro in Jharkhand state, for commencement of civil flight operations. The city will be connected to Patna and Kolkata under Regional Connectivity Scheme. Presently, Bokaro Airport is an aerodrome owned and handled by Bokaro Steel Plant, SAIL. Currently the airport is handling non-scheduled flights operation for SAIL aircraft or VIP movement. For commencement of scheduled flight operations, AAI has undertaken the development work at an estimated cost of Rs 46 Crore which includes construction of terminal building along with associated facilities like ESS, Car Parking, ATC tower, Security huts, Fire Station. The terminal is being designed to process 300 passengers during peak hours. The work for strengthening and re-carpeting of runway, apron and taxi track is also underway to make the airport suitable for operation of ATR-72 Aircraft. Raising of existing boundary wall, construction of new boundary wall and provision of connecting & approach roads is also part of the development project. Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for enhancement of Regional Air Connectivity under RCS-UDAN at the SAIL owned Airports; Burnpur, Rourkela and Bokaro. More than 80% of the project work is completed and soon airport will be ready for civil operations. The operationalization of Bokaro Airport will help boost the local economy of the city and provide better connectivity to the air travelers especially the business class.



Extension and Corrigendum- Notice Inviting Tender

Refer to the tender notice dated 29.10.2020 in the website www.iittraining.org for **Construction of Workshop Area, CTC & Fermenting Room, Dryer Room, Sorting Cum Warehouse and Packing & Dispatch Area, Heater Room, Trough House, Engine Room, Office Building, Water Impurity removal plant and Electrical works (including Board Panel, Transformer, Cables, installation and APDCL Load sanction & Load Security) at Rampur Tea Cluster, Vill- Rampur 5th Mile, Margherita Revenue Circle, District Tinsukia, Assam**, which has been extended and last date of submission of tender is 21st December 2020, 01.00 P.M. and Opening of the tender will be on 21st December 2020, 02.00 P.M.

Corrigendum: Detailed Plan and Drawing of the mentioned works have been revised and the same has been updated in the website (www.iittraining.org).

PSG cut Manchester United down to size with Neymar double and Fred's red card

Manchester, December 04 : Manchester United began the evening within touching distance of the Champions League last-16. At one stage, as they tore into Paris Saint-Germain on the counterattack early in the second half, they seemed closer to it than ever. Yet by full time, the point they needed had eluded them. They will have another shot at it next Tuesday at RB Leipzig on the final night of this wild group-phase section. Fail and they will be out. Rather abruptly, it has all become extremely nervy. Those were the broad brushstrokes on an occasion when PSG not only kept their hopes of progress alive but also remained in control of their destiny. The beaten finalists from last season now need a draw at home to Istanbul Basaksehir to make sure, although they could squeak through with a defeat. The detail from a United perspective took in a glaring miss by the out-of-sorts Anthony Martial for 2-1 when it seemed easier to score and a 70th minute sending-off for Fred that he had flirted with aggressively

all evening. The Brazilian had been spared a straight red card on 21 minutes after he pressed his forehead into that of Leandro Paredes and then thrust it at him while he stamped on the same opponent before the end of the first half. On this occasion it was



Paredes who was booked for going into the challenge with a degree of force. It was a mystery not only how Fred avoided a dismissal for the misuse of his head but why Ole Gunnar Solskjær did not substitute him at half-time. The United

manager played with fire and he would be burned, although Fred did get the ball before he caught Ander Herrera for his second yellow card. The former United midfielder's reaction was theatrical. The darker arts were a theme of the evening. PSG might have

former PSG striker Edinson Cavani floated a chip over Keylor Navas and against the crossbar. On the rebound, Bruno Fernandes teed up Martial only for Marquinhos to leap into a saving block. Martial cannot buy a break at the moment. Marquinhos scored the crucial second goal for PSG which they had advertised, but they failed to defend as a collective all evening, offering spaces and hope to United. Solskjær's team nearly got a second equaliser through Paul Pogba, who entered as a substitute, and Fernandes before the final twist saw PSG punish United on the counterattack - a reversal of the pattern for much of the game. Kylian Mbappé dragged wide when he had to score - he is without a Champions League goal since last December - before Neymar showed him how, finishing after a cut-back from the substitute Rafinha. How costly does United's shock defeat in Istanbul last month look now? PSG took charge at the outset here, with Neymar slamming home from a tight-ish angle after an Mbappé shot had ricocheted off Victor Lindelöf. And they might have scored again before the tie was 20 minutes old. Alessandro Florenzi extended David de Gea from range after a terrible clearance by Fred; Neymar stretched but could not reach a Florenzi cross and the forward then worked De Gea with a hooked volley. The big chance came when Mbappé led a break and combined with Neymar only to fail to play in Moise Kean. Fred's escape came after the referee was advised to review his confrontation with Paredes on the pitchside

monitor. From PSG's point of view it began badly when he ran towards the wrong touchline and, incredibly, he would be satisfied that a yellow card was sufficient punishment. It made no sense. Neither did Fred's decision to stretch into a challenge on Paredes in the 37th minute. Risky did not begin to cover it. By that point, United were level but it did not reflect the balance of the first half. Although Marcus Rashford looked threatening, there was a lack of direction and poor final choices from his team. The goal was marked by a huge deflection, Rashford's shot going in off Danilo after Navas had denied Martial. United recalibrated at the interval and they were in the ascendancy for the first time at the beginning of the second period. Cavani released Rashford with a glorious flick and when he crossed, Martial lifted high. Cavani was then unlucky. How he would have loved to hurt PSG after his acrimonious departure at the end of last season. Tempers bubbled throughout. Neymar complained about being stamped on by Scott McTominay at the end of the first half while Martial bloodied Marquinhos in an aerial challenge. The referee struggled for control. Back came PSG. Marquinhos headed off the top of the crossbar and De Gea saved brilliantly from the substitute Mitchel Bakker, before Marquinhos made his mark. It was the scruffiest of goals, Herrera's wild shot being turned across goal by Abdou Diallo for the centre-half to bundle home. PSG only saw the beauty in it.

World Athletics opens door for Russia to potentially compete at Tokyo Olympics



London, December 04 : World Athletics has opened the door for Russia's track and field stars to compete at the Olympic Games in Tokyo next year - providing the country now fulfils its promises of serious reform. The Russian Athletics Federation (Rusaf) looked close to being expelled from the sport in September but the election of a new president, Peter Ivanov, on Monday has led to cautious optimism that Russia could finally end its five-year suspension from the sport. Rune Andersen, the chair of the World Athletics taskforce on restoring Russia's membership, admitted there had been progress in developing "a meaningful reinstatement plan" to drive the cultural change required for Russia to return to full international membership of the sport by the deadline of 1 March 2021. "A new framework agreement has been put in place," he said. "The international experts have already begun working with the senior Rusaf management team, and have reported that that team has been very responsive and constructive in its approach." Rusaf was initially suspended in November 2015 following allegations of state-sponsored doping and appeared close to being kicked out of the sport after its former leaders attempted to cover-up an anti-doping investigation into Danil Lysenko, the 2018 world indoor high jump champion. It led to Dmitry Shlyakhtin, the president of the Russian track and field federation, being charged by the Athletics Integrity Unit and stepping down. However, Russia was granted a reprieve after the sports minister, Oleg Matysin, who promised they were committed to solving a number of issues, gave an "unconditional" promise to pay an outstanding fine of £5m. The president of World Athletics, Sebastian Coe, said he would be "pleased" to see Russian athletes competing in Tokyo - even if it was under a neutral flag - but said that was dependent not only on the behaviour of Rusaf but on what the International Olympic Committee decided in the months ahead.

Ben Stokes believes England's T20 World Cup potential is 'scary'



London, December 04 : Ben Stokes has described England's potential in Twenty20 cricket as "scary" and, while wary of sounding cocky, fancies they are reaching the stage where they can take down any team in the world. As the heartbeat of the dressing room, Stokes is always a useful barometer of confidence levels. After the 3-0 series win in South Africa these appear to be soaring, much like the 94-metre straight six that Dawid Malan launched off Lungi Ngidi while plundering Tuesday night's unbeaten 99 from only 47 balls. "It's a scary thing to think about where this team could go when we've played some games together," said Stokes, acknowledging the series was a rare chance in a packed schedule that Eoin Morgan could call on a full-strength squad. "We're very confident in our ability as a side and what we've always done is focus on ourselves. We look at the other team - their strengths and weaknesses - but what we do well is concentrate on ourselves and put pressure on ourselves." "We know if we play our best game of cricket we can beat most teams which isn't an arrogant thing to say, it's where we're at. We know how strong this team is and it's really exciting to be a part of it." Perhaps the greatest leap during the series was taken by Malan, whose back-to-back man of the match awards extended his lead at the top of the T20 batting rankings and saw him become the first player to break 900 points (he now has 915). Previously something of an outsider, the left-hander has now been dubbed "the Milky Way Boss" by his teammates. It follows the England analyst Nathan Leamon pointing out that his 10 scores north of 50 in his first 19 T20 innings beat the 25 it took the previous record holder - and self-styled "Universe Boss" - Chris Gayle. "His contribution with the bat in the games he's played has been

phenomenal," Stokes said. "As the series got deeper we really showed what we are about and it's great to see some guys playing so freely in a short space of time. It's amazing to see where this team can go when we get it together." With Morgan's side having also moved to the top of the T20 rankings a year out from the World Cup in India, Stokes sees clear similarities with the 50-over side that rose to No 1 in 2018 before going on to lift the trophy 12 months later. In typically blunt fashion the all-rounder said it would be "pretty pointless turning up" if England did not believe that next year could culminate in them winning a second piece of white-ball silverware and then the away Ashes series that follows. Achieving these lofty goals will ask much of the multi-format cricketers, not least a multi-format all-rounder such as Stokes. Along with Jofra Archer and Sam Curran, the 29-year-old will now leave the tour to rest at home during the forthcoming ODI series. Stokes added: "I don't have the mental capability to look that far ahead or I'll give myself a headache. I just take things as they come. Playing a part in all three formats you've got to stay in the moment. There's a massive year coming up again and hopefully I'll be able to play a full part in it. That's the big challenge, just making sure we stay fit, especially throughout the lockdown and quarantine periods we have to go through now." Stokes actually departs with a minor injury after slicing his right hand on the LED perimeter advertising boards while trying to stop a four. As a result, the boundary rope will be brought in before Friday's return to Newlands for the first ODI. England approached the ICC match referee Andy Pycroft about the issue, with the regulations stating there should be a minimum 2.74m gap beyond the rope "before the first solid object" in order to minimise injuries and encourage dynamic fielding in the deep.

Anthony Joshua ready to take pay cut if he can fight Tyson Fury in Britain

London, December 04 : Anthony Joshua would consider fighting Tyson Fury for less money next year if it ensured an anticipated world heavyweight unification title bout between the two current champions could be held in Britain. "Yeah, why not?" he said on Wednesday afternoon during a press conference to publicise his IBF, WBA and WBO world title defence against Kubrat Pulev in London a week on Saturday. "I'm now fighting Pulev for a massive pay cut. Matchroom [Joshua's promoters] are taking pay cuts this year because we have to keep the sport alive." "We are all doing our part at the minute so I wouldn't mind doing it again. It's not harming me, and it's for a bigger cause as well. It's a big fight, but the main objective is how do we get Fury in the ring?" That last sentence was a typically canny caveat from Joshua which indicates that negotiations for the fight will be predictably complicated and protracted. While Joshua stressed that such significant contests



should "always [be] for the fans", he also pointed out that economic realities will decide the location. "My management team are going to do what is financially viable and see what is going to get Fury to step in that ring. It's a balance." The likelihood that the fight will be staged in the Middle East rather than Britain remains. Eddie Hearn, his promoter, made it clear he could not advise Joshua to fight in Britain if the money offered by a country such as Saudi Arabia is far more attractive.

Joshua's last fight, when he won a rematch against Andy Ruiz Jr a year ago this week, was held in Saudi Arabia. "You're damned if you do, damned if you don't," Joshua said over the choice of location. "The main objective is getting this fight done, but there is definitely the element that the fans are the most important and getting them together to watch a British classic. What finances can we gather to get Fury in the ring? It's a tough one but I would definitely go for the fans this time around." Joshua looked back to his Saudi excursion last year. "It was a great success. For me, losing the belts [to Ruiz in New York in June 2019] and then winning them back was my success. I focused on the training camp and winning the fight. In terms of the event itself it showcased Saudi as a country that is hospitable to people from around the world. They can put on events, so they were really happy." Joshua and Hearn were criticised last year for failing to acknowledge Saudi's dismal human rights record but, in readiness for Pulev, the 31-year-old from Watford said: "I've been away for two years but I'm back in the UK and I want to stay here as long as possible. I definitely want to go back to MSG [Madison Square Garden] to avenge that loss [against Ruiz]. Saudi, great hospitality, and feedback, is definitely an option. When I first turned professional I had offers from America, Germany, but I knew the UK was where I wanted to be. This is where my base is and this is always my priority." But fighters have to travel. Like Fury. He says: "I've fought in Germany [when Fury beat Wladimir Klitschko], I've

beaten [Deontay] Wilder in America.' There is a sense of a trail blazer, a road warrior, so I don't mind getting on the road. I did it last year and I'll do it again." It was announced on Wednesday that 1,000 fans will be allowed into the SSE Arena in Wembley to watch him fight Pulev, and Joshua said: "It's going to be nice for people because when will there be another chance to witness a heavyweight championship fight when there are only 1,000 people in the room?" It's going to be intimate, it's going to be closed circuit. You won't have to worry about your missus having a pint of beer chucked on her head or 15 guys by the side of you getting into a fight." Joshua remembered the last time he fought in front of a small crowd. "It was Hungary [in February 2012]. It's not bad. The pressure is off, you can get in your rhythm. And I think I need that sometimes. I am under a lot of pressure. I am physically good but mentally you have to stay strong. This year has been good to unload a lot of pressure and you have to take fighting in front of 1,000 fans as a positive. I am going to perform with no pressure and showcase the styles I have merged, which is sticking and moving and aggression and knockout power." Joshua has watched a lot of boxing in lockdown. "It just isn't the same without seeing the fans' reaction and the noise but, at the same time, I've enjoyed it. It's been fun to sit back and watch it. We're all in lockdown together so even watching the fighters go through it is different - but they've adapted well." He also said that lockdown has meant that "I've lived the life of an athlete for the first time. Since I turned pro we were straightaway selling out the O2, and with that there is pressure. Building the sport with my companies has meant putting myself forward. With [his various business ventures] shut down during the pandemic I have spent my time training. I have lived these nine months as an athlete and it has been a blessing. I have progressed a lot." Next year, on condition he beats Pulev, Joshua's progression should face its most stringent test against Fury - most probably in the Middle East.

BBC turns down Tyson Fury's request to be removed from Spoty shortlist

London, December 04 : The BBC Sports Personality of the Year award descended into confusion and then farce on Wednesday after the corporation rejected a demand from the world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury to be the first ever athlete to be taken off its shortlist. The BBC's decision came after the controversial fighter took to social media to claim that he didn't need any "verification" from awards before imploring his supporters not to vote for him. But after several hours of crisis talks the BBC insisted that Fury, who is the third favourite for the award behind the Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton and the snooker champion Ronnie O'Sullivan, would remain on its six-strong shortlist. "The shortlist is decided by an independent expert panel who choose contenders based on their sporting achievement in a given year," a BBC spokesperson said. "On this basis Tyson Fury will remain on the list for SPOTY 2020. As always the winner will be decided by the public voting during the live show and it is of course up to Tyson if he



chooses to participate in the show." Fury, who was also joined on the shortlist by Stuart Broad, Jordan Henderson and Hollie Doyle, started the controversy earlier on Wednesday with a post on his Instagram account. "This is a message for bbc sport and their SPOTY award - please take me off your list as I'm the people's champion and have no need for verification or any awards," he wrote. "I know who I am and what I've done in the sport. I have the love of the people which means more to me than

all the awards in the world. To anyone who supports me, don't vote." Fury's initial inclusion had sparked controversy given he has previously served a two-year doping ban and is under active investigation by the UK Anti-Doping Agency following allegations that a member of Tyson Fury's team offered a farmer £25,000 to provide a false defence after the heavyweight champion failed a drug test in 2015. Fury and his cousin Hughie both blamed their positive tests for nandrolone on eating uncastreated wild boar or ingesting contaminated supplements - citing two defence statements from the Preston farmer Martin Carefoot saying he had given them the meat. In March, however, Carefoot changed his

story, telling the Mail on Sunday that he provided two false statements after being offered a financial inducement by a member of Fury's team to lie. Fury's subsequent promoter, Frank Warren, described the allegations as "total bullshit". This is only the second time in the history of the awards that a shortlisted athlete has asked to be removed from the shortlist. In 2015 the Olympic long jump champion Greg Rutherford wrote a private letter to the BBC because he felt uncomfortable being part of the ceremony with Fury - who earlier that year had claimed that "there are only three things that need to be accomplished before the Devil comes home. One of them is homosexuality being legal in countries, one of them is abortion and the other is paedophilia." Rutherford, whose sister is gay, was eventually persuaded to take part in the ceremony after his letter was leaked. But in his autobiography he admitted he wishes he hadn't changed his mind. "I didn't enjoy it one bit," he wrote. "I turned up late and left as soon as I possibly could."

Virat Kohli-led India eye change of fortunes against Australia in T20I series

Canberra, December 4 : Virat Kohli-led Team India will look to pose a tougher challenge to the Australian team when they square off in the first game

ODI in Canberra when they take on the hosts in the shortest format of the game. India had registered a rare 5-0 clean sweep against New Zealand in a

fidence from it. India more balanced in T20Is. The Indian team possesses a much more balanced squad in the shortest format while the hosts are without a

Gavaskar Test series while Warner has injured his groin and is racing against time to be fit for the Test series. D'Arcy Short is likely to open the batting with Aaron Finch for Australia in David Warner's absence. Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne should follow the opening duo. Glenn Maxwell and Alex Carey will form the team's middle-order. For India, KL Rahul should open the batting along with Shikhar Dhawan. Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, and Manish Pandey should form the team's middle-order. Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja formed a good partnership in the 3rd ODI and the duo will continue at the No. 6 and No. 7 positions. India have an edge over Australia when it comes to overall T20I clashes as they have won 11 in comparison to hosts' 8. In 2018, India won one of the two completed T20Is while in 2016, they regis-

tered a clean sweep win, 3-0, over the hosts. Virat Kohli's boys have their best chance of winning a series in Australia in the T20I format and could begin well at the Manuka Oval in Canberra. India : Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (vice-captain and wicket-keeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, T Natarajan. Australia: Aaron Finch (C), Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Daniel Sams, Kane Richardson, Steven Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, A'Arcy Short, Adam Zampa.



of the three-match T20I series on Friday (December 4). India lost the ODI series 2-1 but they will look to gain momentum from the win in the final

five-match T20I series before the sporting activities around the world were suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic and would also take con-

couple of their key players like David Warner and Pat Cummins. Cummins has been rested from the T20Is to get some much-needed rest before the Border-

India vs Australia, 3rd ODI : Was taken back by how nice KL Rahul was behind the stumps, says Cameron Green

Canberra, December 4 : Cameron Green became the 230th player from Australia to play ODI cricket. He bowled four overs and conceded 27 runs without taking a wicket. With the bat, he scored 21 off 27 with a four and six, before he was dismissed by Kuldeep Yadav. Australia all-rounder Cameron Green, who made his debut in the 3rd ODI against India on Wednesday, has said that he was taken aback by the friendliness of India wicket keeper batsman KL Rahul when he arrived on the

crease. Green had come in to bat at the Manuka Oval in Canberra on Wednesday when Australia was in a spot of bother at 117/3 in the 23rd over. He revealed that he was a little nervous to start off with but India wicket-keeper KL Rahul shared a few words that made him feel welcome. "I was actually taken back with how nice KL Rahul was behind the stumps. He asked me whether I was nervous or not and I just replied saying 'Yeah, I was a little bit nervous'. He was like 'Yeah, go well youngster' type of thing. So I was actually a bit taken back,"

Green said at the post-match presser. He also added that he was expecting a bit of a hostile reception from the Indians and particularly Virat Kohli, and therefore was even more surprised by the friendly gesture of KL Rahul, which he said that he will always remember. "I thought it would have been pretty opposite because (while bowling), I think Virat was trying to be pretty loud at the time. Finchy tried to get under his skin with a couple of words. So yeah, I was a bit taken back with how nice that was. I'll remember that forever," Green said. Green had a pretty av-

erage day on the field where he bowled four overs and conceded 27 runs without taking a wicket. With the bat, he scored 21 off 27 with a four and six, before he was caught by Ravindra Jadeja off the bowling of Kuldeep

Yadav. Cameron Green became the 230th player from Australia to play one-day international cricket for his country and received his cap from former captain and team-mate Steve Smith.



'Scary' to think how far this England team can go in ICC T20 World Cup, says Ben Stokes

New Delhi, December 4 : World Champions England cricket team is sitting at the helm of ICC rankings across both limited-overs formats. With their latest 3-0 away win in South Africa T20Is, England have sent a message to opposition teams ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup 2021 in India. All-rounder Ben Stokes believes that England have a great prospect in the ICC event and can beat any side if they keep performing like this. In the last edition of the T20 World Cup, held in 2016 in India, England had

lost the final to West Indies with Carlos Brathwaite blasting Stokes for 4 con-



secutive sixes in the final over. Since then, England have only gotten better as a white-ball side and have also won a World Cup. In the next edition of the ICC T20 World Cup, England are sure to be favourites. "It's a scary thing to think about where this team could go when we've played some games together. We're very confident in our ability as a side

and what we've always done is focus on ourselves. We look at the other team - their strengths and weaknesses - but what we do well is concentrate on ourselves and put pressure on ourselves," Stokes said. "We know if we play our best game of cricket we can beat most teams which isn't an arrogant thing to say, it's where we're at. We know how strong this team is and it's really exciting to be a part of it. "England are not only the top-ranked team in the shortest format, but they also sport the best T20I bats-

man in the world. The top-ranked T20I batsman Dawid Malan, with scores of 55 and 99 in the 2nd and 3rd T20Is, recently became the player with the highest ever points (915) in the format. "His contribution with the bat in the games he's played has been phenomenal," Stokes said. "As the series got deeper we really showed what we are about and it's great to see some guys playing so freely in a short space of time. It's amazing to see where this team can go when we get it together," Stokes added.

Oisin Murphy admits seeing cocaine being taken on night before positive test

I feel like the sentence fits the crime. I made a massive error and I'm missing out on plenty.

London, December 4 : Oisin Murphy has said he saw cocaine being taken on the night before he tested positive for the drug in July. The champion jockey, whose three-month suspension from race-riding begins next week, continues to insist

ported as saying in reference to the night of 18 July. He had been riding at Newbury that day and flew out to compete at Chantilly the next day, when a sample was taken that proved positive. "I got up the next morning and went to France and thought

at a hearing in France included reference to a sexual encounter with someone who, he later learned, was a user of cocaine. Asked about this by the BBC, he said: "The threshold in France is 50ng, so very much if you touch an area repeatedly two or three times over a period of hours then you will fail that drug test. It's very hard to pinpoint exactly how it was transmitted but it was and that is obvious and clear. "Murphy says he will undertake charity work during his suspension, part of his efforts to restore his reputation, at a time when he may otherwise have been taking part in major races overseas. "This is going to go down on my CV. Nobody is going to forget about this overnight. I've projected myself as a good ambassador for the sport, but clearly a good ambassador for the sport doesn't fail a drug test, no matter how minimal that quantity is. "I feel like the sentence fits the crime. I made a massive error and I'm missing out on plenty. But I need to put things right and I need to use my time over the next three months to do the right thing and take the right steps. This is a huge lesson."



he has never taken the drug but told the BBC he still made "a massive error" in allowing himself to be exposed to environmental contamination. "I became aware of a situation where cocaine was present in my environment and I saw it there and didn't remove myself from that situation immediately," Murphy is re-

nothing of it. But I should have thought much more of it and that was the block I have stumbled on. "When you sign for your jockey's licence every year you have got to abide by the rules. That was my error, and I very much have no self-pity. I made a mistake and I've got to live with the consequences. "Murphy's line of defence

স্মৃতিগ্রস্তৰ বাবে লেখা আহ্বান

বিগত বৰ্ষৰ দৰে এইবাৰো আলোকপ্ৰভঞ্জন বেলফেয়াৰ ছ'চাইটিৰ সৌজন্যত **দৈনন্দিন বাৰ্তা** গোষ্ঠীয়ে আয়োজন কৰিছে **Assam Rising-2020** শীৰ্ষক বঁটা প্ৰদান আৰু সম্বৰ্ধনা অনুষ্ঠানৰ। এই উপলক্ষে প্ৰকাশ পাব এখন স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থ। আগ্ৰহী লেখক-সাংবাদিকে উক্ত স্মৃতিগ্ৰন্থলৈ লেখা প্ৰেৰণ কৰিব পাৰিব **৩১ ডিচেম্বৰ, ২০২০** তাৰিখৰ পূৰ্বে। লেখাৰ বিষয়বস্তু প্ৰাধান্য দিয়া হ'ব— **আত্মনিৰ্ভৰ ভাৰত-আত্মনিৰ্ভৰ অসম, জাতীয় অৰ্থনীতিৰ নিৰ্মাণ, ক'ভিডকালীন সংবাদ মাধ্যমৰ প্ৰত্যাহ্বান আৰু ভৱিষ্যতৰ নতুন দিশ ইত্যাদি** বিষয়ত। **তলৰ ই-মেইলত লেখাসমূহ প্ৰেৰণ কৰিবলৈ অনুৰোধ জনোৱা হ'ল —**

ই-মেইল : araward2021@gmail.com

The bond of love and devotion.

100% DEPENDABLE... That's our guarantee !

CHIMNEYS WITH APPS | R.O. WATER PURIFIER | HOBS | GAS STOVE | OTHER KITCHEN APPLIANCES

Abhayapuri-94350-22784 | Agartala-98560-93668 | Baihata chariali-94351-42568/98641-40488 | Bangaigaon-7002184811, 9435547654, 9435121367 | Barpeta road-94350-17865 99541-41975 | Barpeta town -94350-25127 | Bhawanipur-7002206773 | Banderdewa-98649-84753 | Bijoynagar -99570-98392/94010-01157/94353-40662 | Boko-94010-02588 | Chaygaon-9435014549 | Dadara -98546-98027 | Dhupdhara-96785-16189 | Dhamaji-99546-51322 | Dhubri-94350-29279 | Diphu-94350-66701/94350-66643 | Dudhnoi-94357-21505/94351-28048 | Goalpara-70023-10904/88762-23858 | Golaghat-96132-30384 | Guwahati -94355-59057/97065-94950 | Hajo-94353-47024/88763-09327 | Hojai-94357-29521/84028-59256 | Jorhat -94350-53934/98541-06776 | Kharupitia -98541-44223 | Kokrajhar-97070-29429/99548-88721/94354-81234 | Karimganj-97061-39061 | Krishnai-88224-15337 | Lumding -94351-63327/97066-14137 | Mangaldoi -94350-87284/94351-86435/97065-39174/73994-79163 | Mirza-98540-71983/99572-81858 | Morigaon -94350-64986/80111-17171 | North lakhimpur-88224-21077 | Nagaon-97061-79408/94355-18665 | Nalbari -98644-14515/98540-30209 | Pathsala-80110-06658 | Dhekiajuli-98548-29934 | Dibrugarh-98548-11265 | Rangia -94351-05888/96782-26563 | Silchar -97061-39061/70054-86129 | Silapathar-70028-94393 | Shillong-90869-66640 | Suwalkuchi -98643-54859 | Tinsukia-94350-35156/94350-35511/94350-36463 | Tezpur-97060-73481 | Tihu-97068-53124 | Udalguri-97063-46492

Trade enq. 9435146909/9435559057/9435559056 www.capsindia.in Toll Free: 1800 103 4646