

The Assam Rising

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Foreign Cigarettes

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

Troopers of Assam Rifles have seized 75 cases of foreign cigarettes in Mizoram's Champhai district. According to an official statement by Assam Rifles, the consignment of foreign cigarettes is estimated to be worth over Rs 97 lakhs. "The operation was carried out by a joint team of Assam Rifles and customs department Champhai based on specific information," the statement read. "Approximate cost of the seized foreign origin cigarettes is Rs. 97,50,000/-". Recovered items handed over to Customs Preventive Force Champhai," it added.

Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

The Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra in Jalukbari, Guwahati reopened for visitors from today on the day of 95th birth anniversary of the Bard of Brahmaputra. Paying rich tribute to the legendary singer, Assam Health & Family Welfare Minister Keshab Mahanta announced the reopening of the Samadhi Khetra from today with COVID-19 protocol. The Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra was closed for many months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The visitors will be allowed to visit the site by maintaining COVID protocols.

65,000 Bottles of Cough Syrups

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

National Control Bureau (NCB) on Wednesday seized a huge cache of cough syrups comprising as many as 65,000 bottles in Kamrup district on Wednesday. As per initial reports, the worth of these cough syrup bottles have been estimated at rupees three crores in the international market. The bottles have been recovered in two rice-carrying trucks from Madanpur toll gate in Amingaon. The bottles were hidden inside the rice sacks.



Nimatighat Ferry Accident

Two Boats With 100 Passengers Collide In Brahmaputra, Several people are missing

CM Expresses Deep Concern Over Majuli Ferry Accident, orders Bimal Bora to Take Stock of Situation

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

Several people are missing after two passenger boats collided with each other in the Brahmaputra River in Assam's Jorhat today. Sources said at least a 100 passengers were onboard the boats when they crashed into each other at Nimati Ghat

in Jorhat, around 350 km from Guwahati. One of the boats, a government passenger ferry of the Inland Water Transport department, was coming from Majuli (a river island in the Brahmaputra River) to Nimati Ghat while the other boat was going in the opposite direction. Videos from the accident showed the boat capsizing after the collision, as some

passengers tried to hold on to it while others jumped into the water to save themselves. The passengers' luggage along with motorbikes and cars on board the boats also washed away in the river. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) officials reached the spot and started rescue operations. Many people have been rushed to hospitals after being

rescued. Soon after the incident, Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa directed the district administration of Majuli and Jorhat districts to carry out the rescue mission expeditiously with the help of the National Disaster Response Force and SDRF. "I am pained at the tragic boat accident near Nimati Ghat, Jorhat," he tweeted. I am

pained at the tragic boat accident near Nimati Ghat, Jorhat. Directed Majuli & Jorhat admin to undertake rescue mission expeditiously with help of @NDRFHQ & SDRF. Advising Min @BimalBorahbjp to immediately rush to the accident site. I'll also visit Nimati Ghat tomorrow. He also directed state minister Bimal Bora to immediately travel to Majuli and take stock of the situation, and asked principal secretary to the chief minister Samir Kumar Sinha to monitor

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Govt To Send Covid Vaccines To 10 Districts From ISBT Through Special Vehicles

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

The Assam Health Ministry has taken a very special step towards the vaccination of Covid-19 in the state on Wednesday. The Health Department of Assam Government will send Covid-19 vaccines to 10 districts of the state from ISBT through special



vehicles. As per sources, the covid-19 vaccines will be sent to the 10 different districts with the help of special vehicles for the sole purpose of sending the vaccines. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma will be inaugurating the Covid-19 vaccine motors through an inaugurating programme. As per the latest

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Taliban form all-male Afghan government of old guard members

News Desk
Kabul, September 08 :

The Taliban on Tuesday announced an all-male interim government for Afghanistan stacked with veterans of their hard-line rule from the 1990s and the 20-year battle against the U.S.-led coalition, a move that seems unlikely to win the international support the new leaders desperately need to avoid an economic meltdown. Appointed to the key post of interior minister was Sirajuddin Haqqani, who is on the FBI's most-wanted list with a \$5 million

bounty on his head and is believed to still be holding at least one American hostage. He headed the feared Haqqani network that is blamed for many deadly attacks and kidnappings. The announcement came hours after Taliban fired their guns into the air to disperse protesters in the capital of Kabul and arrested several journalists, the second time in less than a week that heavy-handed tactics were used to break up a demonstration. Drawn mostly from Afghanistan's dominant Pashtun ethnic group, the Cabinet's lack of representa-

tion from other ethnic groups also seems certain to hobble its support from abroad. As much as 80% of Afghanistan's budget comes from the international community, and a long-running economic crisis has worsened in recent months. Near daily flights from Qatar bring in humanitarian aid, but the needs are massive, and the Taliban can hardly afford isolation. In announcing the Cabinet, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid emphasized that the appointments were temporary. He did not say how long they would serve and what would be the catalyst for a change. Since taking over Afghanistan in mid-August after U.S. troops



withdrew, the Taliban have shown no indications they will hold elections. The U.S. State Department in a statement expressed concern that the Cabinet included only Taliban, no women and personalities with a troubling track record, but said the new

administration would be judged by its actions. The carefully worded statement noted the Cabinet was interim, but said the Taliban would be held to their promise to give safe passage to

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National Conference ready to contest election, fight for Article 370, 35A: Farooq Abdullah

News Desk
Srinagar : September 08 :

National Conference chief and former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday (September 8) said that his party is ready to fight elections whenever it is held. He said that NC would



continue its fight to seek restoration of Article 370 and 35A. "We don't know when the elections would be held in Jammu Kashmir but we will be a part of elections," said Abdullah who had gone to pay tributes to his father Sheikh Abdullah on his death anniversary at his me-

low and Police Commissioner Bungalow in Guwahati as both the bungalows will be demolished to implement the river beautification project. The long-pending project of Brahmaputra River beautification will be completed soon with the old DC bungalow

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40 bedded ICU to be set up at SMCH

Govt of Assam signs MoU with Coal India Limited

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 08 :

Coal India Limited has inked an MoU with the Directorate of Medical Education of Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of Assam in presence of Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma set up a 40 bedded Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH) at the conference room of Chief Minister's Office in Janata Bhawan



today. The ICU will be built in convergence between the Coal India Limited and government of Assam. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma while

thanking Coal India Limited for its benevolence, expressed his deep gratitude to the management of Coal India Limited.

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Women will be allowed in NDA, given Permanent Commission : Centre informs Supreme Court of historic move

News Desk
New Delhi, September 08 :

Following the Supreme Court direction, Armed forces have taken decision to allow female candidates in National Defence Academy (NDA), Centre informed the apex court on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Centre requested the top court to exempt the women entry in this year

admission process, citing the requirement of infrastructural changes. The Centre told the Supreme Court that Army, IAF and Navy chiefs have agreed over the proposal to allow the entry of women into the NDA, Naval academies. "It is a delight to share this...The girls will be admitted in the NDA," Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati told the Supreme Court. "We do hope that defence forces value the impor-

tant role women are performing. We want them to take proactive approach in gender based roles rather than courts to intervene," the Supreme Court said. The top court in its verdict earlier mentioned that the policy decision is based on "gender discrimination". The petitioner argued that the eligible female candidates have been denied the opportunity to join the National Defence

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shows a view of a dock in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality

New Zealand to rethink plan to reopen borders amid Delta outbreak

Wellington, September 08 : New Zealand's plans to reopen its borders to the world early next year will have to undergo a complete reworking, the government has warned, as the country races to stamp out an outbreak of the highly infectious Delta variant. The nation recorded 15 new cases of coronavirus in the community on Wednesday, bringing the total number in the outbreak to 855. It was the fifth day in a row that case numbers have been at or below 21, in an encouraging sign the country is on its way to stamping out the virus. But how the virus got into the community in the first place remains a mystery. All of the new cases were in Auckland, which remains in a level 4 lockdown until next week, and all but two were epidemiologically linked to existing cases. There were 25 unlinked cases in total. Three-quarters of the recorded cases were in isolation throughout the period they were infected. The rest of the country was in level 2,

although some restrictions remained on gathering size and using masks in some public places. The likelihood of New Zealand reopening its border to the world any time soon is looking less promising. The country has had strict border measures in place since the pandemic started. Hipkins told parliament on Tuesday night that the government's reopening plan, unveiled just days before the outbreak would have to be completely reworked. Part of that strategy included risk-profiling of other countries, so places with high rates of vaccination and low levels of Covid-19 could be treated differently to places where the virus was rampant. "We were looking at a situation where you could stratify countries based on risk, and I think in the Delta environment, we actually have to consider whether, in fact, that's an appropriate thing to do, recognising that all countries, all people coming into



the country at this point, have a degree of risk associated with them," Hipkins said. At Wednesday's media briefing, Hipkins added that talks of a Trans-Tasman bubble were ongoing but that it would be a while before the bubble could resume. Of the total cases in New Zealand, 215 people had recovered from the virus. There were 37 people in hospital, with 6 people in intensive care and 4 on ventilators. Most of the 855 people in the outbreak had not had a vaccine, while 115 people have had one dose and 38 were fully vaccinated. As of Wednesday,

more than 38,000 close contacts had been identified, with 87% of those having had at least one test. There were more than 72,800 vaccine doses administered on Tuesday, bringing the total number of doses given out to 4,032,710. More than 60% of the eligible population (12 years and older) have now had their first dose, with a third of that population fully vaccinated. Hipkins said on Wednesday that a significant investigation into the Crowne Plaza, a managed isolation quarantine facility in Auckland, shed no light on how the virus was transmitted into the community.

rests come amid increasing crackdown on political, professional and civil society groups, which the government has accused of unpatriotic conduct or national security offences. Chow Hang-tung, vice-chairwoman of the organisation, was arrested at her office in Hong Kong's central business district, according to local media. Chow had earlier posted to Facebook saying people, presumed to be police, were ringing her doorbell and attempting to crack the door code: "Any words of farewell for me?" she said. At least three others were also arrested, according to the South China Morning Post, including standing committee members Leung Kam-wai, Tang Ngok-kwan and Chan Dor-wai. Chow, who is also a barrister, was due to appear at a bail hearing later on Wednesday to represent Gwyneth Ho, an opposition politician charged with conspiracy

to commit subversion. Ho is among 47 politicians and campaigners who were arrested for holding unofficial primaries ahead of a general election which was later postponed. On Tuesday the Hong Kong Alliance formally refused a police request to hand over information about its finances, membership and operations last week, saying police were abusing their power to invoke fear, by making "a fishing attempt to construct stories and conspiracies" against civil society groups. In its letter demanding the information, police accused the alliance of being "an agent of foreign forces" and requested the information by 7 September. Failure to comply could bring six months' jail time or a HK\$100,000 (£9,300) fine, it said. After the refusal, Hong Kong's security chief, Chris Tang, vowed follow-up action and said law enforcers would act quickly. Without naming the Alliance, the police force's national se-



curity department said one of several organisations had refused requests to provide information, and "police severely condemn such acts". The 32-year-old organisation formed amid student protests in China in 1989, which later saw Chinese authorities killing untold numbers of protesters in Beijing and other cities. In subsequent years the alliance held annual mass candlelight vigils on the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre on 4 June, often attended by hundreds of thousands of people. The previous two vigils have been banned by authorities citing pandemic restrictions,

and there are widespread concerns that under the national security law it will not be legally held again. The national security law punishes acts which authorities deem to be secession, subversion, terrorism or collusion with foreign forces with sentences of up to life in prison. Samuel Chu, a US-based Hong Kong activist and founder of the Hong Kong Democracy Council, which he has since left, told the Guardian the national security law "has proven to be the perfect weapon against civil society, forcing self-censoring and the disbanding of both new and old groups."

Former BJP MP Kanwar Singh Tanwar booked for cheating real estate firm of Rs 65 crores

New Delhi, September 08 : The Economic Offences Wing of the Delhi Police has booked BJP MP Kanwar Singh Tanwar for allegedly cheating a real estate company of Rs 65 crore. A senior police officer said that last week a metropolitan magistrate had ordered the police to

lodge an FIR against Tanwar in a property dispute case. In an FIR registered on August 23, Tanwar has been accused of cheating and criminal breach of trust by the director at Brahma City Pvt Ltd. Police say they plan to question the leader soon. However, the leader has denied any foul play and called it a ploy to malign his image. "He (the complainant) is lying to the police and the courts... They are lying about the case. If it all happened in 2010-2015, why wait till now? They are trying to malign my image and my political career. I have

already approached the Delhi High Court for justice. I didn't do anything wrong," he said. Meanwhile, the complainant - Brahma City Private Ltd, told police that they were looking for land in Gurgaon and met Tanwar in 2008-09. The real estate company paid Rs 84,35,00,000 to the accused and his associate persons or companies for transfer of all rights of 63 acres of land, however, the company never received rights to Tanwar's 65 acres of land which had led to disputes. The FIR said that later, Tanwar asked for an additional Rs 15 crore for

arranging 54 acres of land. The company paid a total of Rs 210.18 crore to the accused for transfer of all rights of 63 acres of land. Whereas, as on date, the accused has transferred only 48 acres of land in favour of the company, it said. According to the agreement executed between them, the total amount receivable by Tanwar against the transfer of all rights of the said 48 acres of land is only Rs 158.75 crore, the FIR stated. The accused is liable to refund a total sum of Rs 51.43 crore to Brahma City Private Ltd.

US-led meeting to set out framework for Taliban cooperation

Washington, September 08 : The US is convening an expanded group of western nations to set a framework for cooperation with the new Taliban government, amid fears that isolating the militant group could backfire. The meeting on Wednesday, chaired by the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, and the German foreign minister, Heiko Maas, faces an all-male, Pashtun-dominated caretaker government that has ignored calls to form an inclusive administration. The virtual meeting, convening as many as 20 nations, will run through a familiar set of conditions for cooperation with the Taliban, including free movement for Afghan and foreign nationals who wish to leave, protection of rights for women and a commitment to protect aid workers. The meeting is likely to discuss the terms for giving humanitarian aid, after the UN warned this week that the Afghan economy was on the brink of collapse. Although diplomats sense that the west was mistaken in isolating the Taliban when they held power in the 1990s, the composition of the administration gives them little encouragement. The former Afghan women's minister Habiba Sar'bi expressed surprise that the west had initially held out hope regarding the new government, saying it was obvious from the talks in Doha that the Taliban had not changed. Blinken said there was no sign of the Taliban reneging on their commitment to allow foreign nationals with travel documents to leave. Neither Turkey nor Russia, who are relatively close to the Afghan government, have said they will provide official recognition yet. Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of Iran's supreme national security council, tweeted his country's concern about the makeup of the cabinet, and China will also feel rebuffed. Asked on Tuesday if he was worried about China funding the Taliban, the US president, Joe Biden, said: "China has a real problem with the Taliban. So I'm sure it will try to reach an agreement with the Taliban. The same goes for Pakistan, for Russia. It's true of Iran. They are all trying to figure out what to do now." The eight-member Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is due to meet in Dushanbe Tajikistan on 16-17 September to discuss the crisis. The SCO, a political and security body comprising China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, India, Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

All eyes on NSA Ajit Doval ahead of his meeting with Russian counterpart on Afghanistan situation

New Delhi, September 08 : Amid a volatile situation in Afghanistan, Taliban takeover and the formation of a new "Islamic Emirate" government in the war-torn country, National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval will meet his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev on Wednesday in New Delhi. This comes after the Taliban announced its new caretaker government on



Tuesday, consisting of hardliners, devoid of any women in the decision-making process. As per sources, Patrushev will also call on

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. They will discuss the political, security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the sources said. The high-level India-Russia inter-governmental consultations on Afghanistan will be led by the two NSAs that will include representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs, Minis-

try of Defence and security agencies. These consultations will reflect an entirely new situation in Afghanistan created by the withdrawal of US forces. Both countries share similar concerns on terrorism, especially to ensure that the Taliban adhere to their promises and assurances. Both NSAs will also review activities of terrorist groups including Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed,

threats from drugs, the role of regional countries and details of Indo-Russia cooperation to meet current and future threats and measures to assist Afghanistan, said the sources. Earlier, Doval hosted the 11th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives Responsible for National Security through video conferencing on August 31.

Britney Spears' father files to shut down conservatorship that controls his daughter's life

New York, September 08 : Britney Spears' father has filed an unexpected request to terminate the controversial conservatorship that has controlled the singer's life for 13 years. In a stunning move, Jamie Spears, who is the conservator of his daughter's estate, said "recent events" called into question whether she still needed a court to oversee her personal affairs and finances. The filing at a court in Los Angeles states: "Ms Spears has told this court that she wants control of her life back without the safety rails of a conservatorship." She wants to be able to make decisions regarding her own medical care, deciding when, where and how often to get therapy. "She wants to control the money she has made from her career and spend it without supervision or oversight." She wants to be able to get married and have a baby, if she so chooses. In short, she wants to live her life as she chooses without the constraints of a conservator or court proceeding. "Spears, 39, has twice addressed the court in recent months, describing the conservatorship as "abusive" and strongly calling for her father to be removed from his



role. Britney Spears fans hold signs outside the Los Angeles courthouse where the pop singer's conservatorship hearing was being held on 17 March. Lawyers for Jamie Spears said: "As Mr Spears has said again and again, all he wants is what is best for his daughter. If Ms Spears wants to terminate the conservatorship and believes that she can handle her own life, Mr Spears believes that she should get that chance." Spears was placed under the conservatorship - a complex legal arrangement - informally reserved for the very old or infirm - in 2008 after suffering a series of mental breakdowns. She has not performed since 2018 and told the court she would not return to the stage while her father was conservator. Jamie Spears' rep-

resentatives have previously defended the conservatorship and his role in the arrangement. Her father long had control over her finances and healthcare, but stepped down as a personal conservator in 2019. A licensed conservator now oversees her medical treatment, and her father has maintained authority over her money. The father's new filing also noted that his daughter had previously requested that the conservatorship be dissolved without her having to face another psychological evaluation, and that she had testified that she was unaware she was able to petition for termination.

Mexico hit by powerful 7.0-magnitude earthquake, killing at least one

Mexico City, September 08 : A powerful earthquake has struck south-west Mexico near the beach resort of Acapulco, killing at least one man who was crushed by a falling post, and causing rock falls and damaging buildings. The US Geological Survey (USGS) said a 7.0 magnitude quake struck 11 miles (18km) north-east of the resort of Acapulco, Guerrero, in the early hours of Wednesday sending people running into the street for safety. The quake shook the hillsides around the resort, downing trees and pitching large boulders on to the road. "We heard loud noise from the building, noise from the windows, things fell inside the house, the power went out," Sergio Flores, an Acapulco resident

told Associated Press by phone. "We heard leaking water, the water went out of the pool and you heard people screaming, very nervous people." The USGS said the quake in the early hours of Wednesday was very shallow at only 7.8 miles (12.5km) below the surface. The US tsunami warning centre issued an alert following the quake, saying hazardous waves were possible within 185 miles (300km) of the quake site. The agency later updated their advice to say the threat had passed. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said the temblor had not caused major damages in Guerrero, the neighbouring region of Oaxaca, Mexico City or other areas. The country's

civil defence agency said it was conducting reviews for the safety of residents and damage in 10 states. In Mexico City, 230 miles (375km) away, the quake caused the ground to shake for nearly a minute in some parts of the capital. In the Roma Sur neighbourhood of Mexico City, lights went off and scared residents rushed out, some wearing little more than pyjamas, a Reuters witness said. Residents huddled together in the rain, holding young children or pets, too worried to return to their homes in the dark. "It was terrible. It really reminds me of the 1985 quake every time something like this happens," said Yesmin Rizk, a 70-year-old Roma Sur resident.



shows a giant panda in Zoo Aquarium in Madrid, Spain. Two giant panda cubs born in the Madrid Zoo Aquarium

CM inspects proposed sites of new office buildings of Commissioner of Police and DC



Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 8

Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today inspected the proposed sites identified for construction of new office buildings of

the Commissioner of Police, Guwahati City and Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup (Metro) at Khanapara and Rupnagar respectively. Inspecting the sites, Chief Minister Sarma asked the concerned departments to

expedite the preliminary works of the proposed buildings so that construction works could be completed within a time-frame. Later, Dr. Sarma also inspected the sites of erstwhile DC Bungalow, residence of DGP, SP etc. at Brahmaputra River Front, Panbazar. He also inspected the plots adjacent to the Ropeway Terminal at Kachari, Guwahati. After inspection, the Chief Minister directed the authority to demolish all government buildings along the river which have not completed 100 years for beautification of the riverfront. However, the Chief Minister directed

to preserve the buildings which are more than 100 years old to transform them into heritage buildings. Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Ashok Singhal, DGP Bhaskarjyoti Mahanta, Police Commissioner, Guwahati City Hammet Singh, DC Biswajit Pegu, senior officers of PWD (Buildings & NH), GMC, GMDA etc. were present during the CM's visit to the sites.

The 30th Edition Boutiques of India Exhibition starts in Guwahati

Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 8

Guwahati! Are you worried about going shopping with Durga Puja coming round the corner? Well there is nothing to be tensed about as the Boutiques of India Exhibition is here to resolve your problem! You can get a wide range of products including Indian, and contemporary wear, real jewellery, fashion jewellery, chikankari, footwear, home decor and many more just under one roof! The 30th Edition Boutiques of India Exhibition has come up with its ever awaited 'Festive Edition'. One of the most popular exhibitions in country Boutiques of India Exhibitions (BOI) started in Guwahati on Wednesday. Two days long 30th Edition of BOI exhibition inaugurated by Deepika Agarwal, Area Chairperson of Ladies Circle India (NGO), in presence of Megha Jalan president of Guwahati City Ladies Circle 159, IPP Nupur Agarwal and the Host of BOI Sanjay Agarwal at Ambiance banquet hall,

Dr Bhupen Hazarika's Birth Anniversary: National Webinar Held in Golaghat

CORRESPONDENT
Golaghat, September 8

Today on the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of Bharatratna, Berd of Brahmaputra, Music Legend Dr Bhupen Hazarika a National Level Webinar was held at Hemo Prova Borborah Girls College Golaghat. The Webinar was organized by the Cultural Cell and Student's Union of the college. The Webinar on the topic 'Folklore and Folklore in the Songs of Dr

Bhupen Hazarika' was inaugurated by the Principal of HPB Girls College Dr Bipul Chandra Bhuyan. Well known folk artist, researcher Loknath Goswami attended the Webinar as Chief Speaker. Dr. Palash Handique, Co-ordinator IQAC delivered the Welcome speech. Dr Rashmi Burhagohain from the Cultural Cell, IQAC of Hemo Prova Borborah Girls' College Golaghat was the co-ordinator of the Webinar.

PIB Guwahati organises webinar on POSHAN Abhiyaan

Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 8

With the clarion call of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, POSHAN Maah is being observed, to improve the nutritional outcome for children, adolescent, pregnant women and lactating mothers across the country during the month of September and to address the issue of Malnutrition on a mission mode. Accordingly, Press Information Bureau, Guwahati organised a webinar on POSHAN Abhiyaan on Wednesday where discussion on the importance of nutrition was discussed threadbare. The theme of the webinar was POSHAN Abhiyaan- Women and Child Empowerment with Healthy Nutrition. In his welcome address, Joint Director PIB, Guwahati Samrat Bhandopadhyay highlighted how POSHAN Abhiyaan intends to significantly reduce malnutrition in the next three years. He also informed that the chief objective of the mission is to reduce the level of under-nutrition and also enhance the nutritional

status of children in the country by 2022. Joint Director Social Welfare Department, Assam Manjori Borthakur had elaborated on the overall POSHAN Abhiyaan in Assam and how the mission is going to achieve the target of increasing nutrition standards among the children in the state while eliminating the menace of malnutrition. She focused on the prevalence of malnutrition in tea garden areas of Assam and informed about the initiatives taken by Govt of Assam to address the issue. Through timely implementation of all the action plans, the dream of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to eradicate malnutrition will turn into reality very soon, she said. Deputy Technical Adviser, Food & Nutrition Board, Kolkata Nagendra Nath Tiwari, in his address, threw light on how POSHAN Abhiyaan has been envisaged as India's flagship scheme to improve the nutritional outcomes of adolescents, children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. He highlighted how the programme has specific targets for reducing stunting, anaemia, under-nutrition and low birth weight

while the mission also encompasses mapping of various other schemes related to malnutrition and enabling synergies by optimising Anganwadi centres' functioning. Talking about malnutrition he said that the problem of malnutrition is affecting the development of the country. Government is trying its best to solve the problem of malnutrition and everyone should come forward to create awareness among the masses. Demonstration Officer Food & Nutrition Board, Guwahati Smt Ishita Adhikary Patra emphasised on the importance of proper nutrition during the first 1000 days in a child's life and made a presentation on various nutritious recipes for children. Resource persons from departments such as Social Welfare, Food & Nutrition Board, took part, while senior officers and staff of Ministry of Information & Broadcasting of NE region also attended the webinar. Media & Communication Officer, PIB, Guwahati Smita Saikia moderated today's webinar.



Zoo Road in Guwahati. The exhibition is happening while taking care of the pandemic situation, it will be working with 50% occupancy for this special edition and will be abiding by the all covid protocol. BOI is an exclusively designed exhibition. The unique fashion and lifestyle exhibition will this time feature many renowned designers and participants across all over India metro cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Lucknow, Bangalore, Kanpur etc. The host of BOI Mr. Sanjay Agarwal brings to the city the latest designer collection by some of the popular brands across the country which includes Divya Kochar, Neyha Banka, Siha-the angel, In You, Toxic, Posh Affair and Turquoise studio

among many others. The BOI offers a grand platform for a brand to showcase their products and services and communicate their key message. He further said we always encourage the local designers, jewellers and fashion accessories by providing them with a platform to exhibit their talent. Two days long exhibition will conclude on September 9.

Avataran, first Assamese Sci-fi Feature film, gets censor certification

NEWS DESK
Guwahati, September 8

The censorship certification for Avataran, Assamese cinema's first sci-fi feature film, is finished today, September 8 2021. With over a hundred cast and crew members involved in the project, Writer/Director/Producer Tarunabh Dutta completed the entire film production and post-production independently on his own strength, with all stages of the filmmaking process executed in-house from his home studio - TD Film Studio, with his wife Himakhi Dutta serving as primary Chief Assistant and financial assistance from his father, Dr. Nalini Kanta Dutta. Production work on the commercial debut venture of TD Film Studio - 'Avataran', began in 2012 and has lasted nearly nine years, making it one of the longest-run-



ning films in production. Avataran will be Assamese cinema's first feature-length science fiction film. Technically, the film comprises almost 80% 3D computer-generated imagery (CGI) shots layered on live video, a first for the northeast region on this scale. Pranjal Saikia, Purima Saikia, Rimpri Das, Saurabh Hazarika, Ananya Parashar, Samir Ranjan, Govinda Malakar, Sangeeta Pachani, Vishal P. Chaliha,

and Child Artists Reema Kaif and Devyam Seal play pivotal roles in the film. Music for the songs has been provided by Nilutpal Choudhury and Dhiraj Dutta, supported by Rakesh Baro, lyrics by Hridoy Parash and songs sung by Rupam Bhuyan, Arundhati Bezbaruah, and Rimi Bhuyan. The film was shot using a Canon 5D Mark III camera in scenic spots throughout Guwahati, Assam.

KRSS feted master teacher in North Lakhimpur

A CORRESPONDENT
North Lakhimpur, Sep 8

Koch-Rajbonshi Sangram Sommitte (KRSS) Lakhimpur district unit, in association with KRSS North Lakhimpur town unit, felicitated Hamidur Rahman, the Headmaster of Bakulbari LP School, North Lakhimpur, a master teacher who has got the master teacher award from the government on the Teachers' Day in this year, at his

own residence at Moidomia village near North Lakhimpur town today. The delegates of the organization, led by KRSS Central Committee Vice-president Rupjyoti Dutta, felicitated the teacher with phulam gamosha, pens, betel nut and complementary letter. Vice-president Rupjyoti Dutta also delivered a complementary speech. After taking felicitations, Hamidur Rahman said that he would continue

his service to education and society diligently. "I will be doing work for the welfare of humans", he further expressed. Notably, Hamidur Rahman's father Mohammad Hanif who was a teacher of Chutiakari LP School, North Lakhimpur, got the Merit Teacher Award in 1983, and his grandfather Mohammad Basiruddin who was a teacher of Pathalipam Minor School, Lakhimpur district, got the Selection Grade Award in 1952.

CANOPY FINANCE LIMITED
CIN: L65910AS1981PLC017921
Registered Office: Divine Plaza, 3rd Floor, G.S. Road, Dispur Supermarket, Guwahati, Assam- 781006; Ph: 9867309169
Website: www.canopyfinance.org; Email id: info@canopyfinance.org
Corporate Office: 301 Corporate Arena Off, Aarav Piramal X Road, Behind Mahindra Gardens, Goregaon West Mumbai-400062

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the 40th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company will be held on Thursday, 30th day of September, 2021 at 1:00 P.M. through video conferencing or other audio visual means as per provisions of Companies Act, 2013 and rules framed thereunder and SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 read with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) circular dated April 8, 2020, April 13, 2020, May 5, 2020 and January 13, 2021 (collectively referred to as MCA circulars) and Securities and Exchange Board of India Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020 and SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD2/CIR/P/2021/11, dated January 15, 2021 (referred to as 'SEBI Circular') without the physical presence of Members at a common venue.

The Annual Report of the Company for the year ended 31.03.2021 including the Notice convening the Annual General Meeting has been dispatched to the member only by email on Tuesday, 07/09/2021 to all to those members who have registered their e-mail IDs with the company/Depository Participant(s) for communication purpose in accordance with MCA and SEBI Circulars. Shareholders are hereby informed that the Notice of the Meeting and Annual Report are available on the website of the company www.canopyfinance.org and on the website of BSE Ltd. i.e., www.bseindia.com & CSE Ltd. Further members holding shares in physical are requested to dematerialize their shareholding in the view of SEBI guidelines for transfer of shares.

Members can join and participate in the AGM through VC/OAVM facility only. The instructions for joining the AGM and the manner of participation in the remote electronic voting or casting vote through the e-voting system during the AGM are provided in the Notice of the AGM. Members participating through the VC/OAVM facility shall be counted for the purpose of reckoning the quorum under Section 103 of the Companies Act, 2013. Members holding shares in physical mode and who have not updated their email addresses with the Company can obtain Notice of AGM, Annual Report and/or login details for joining the AGM through VC/OAVM facility including e-voting by sending scanned copy of (a) Copy of the signed request letter mentioning the folio number, name and address of the Member, (b) Self attested copy of the PAN card and (c) Self attested copy of any document i.e., Aadhar, License, Voter ID, Passport in support of address proof by email to info@canopyfinance.org.

Pursuant to provisions of Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the Regulation 44 of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015, the Company is providing e-voting facility to its members through the e-voting services provided by CDSL. The members holding shares either in physical form or dematerialized form, on the cut-off date i.e. Thursday, 23rd September, 2021 may cast their vote electronically to transact the business set out in the Notice of AGM. The details of e-voting, required under Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, are given hereunder:

E-Voting commences on Monday, 27th September, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. and ends on Wednesday, 29th September, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. Any person who becomes the members after the dispatch of the Notice and holding share as on cut-off date 23rd September, 2021 may obtain user id and password by sending a request at support@purvashare.com. E-Voting shall not be allowed after 5:00 P.M. on 29th September, 2021. The members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting may attend the meeting but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again. In case you have any queries or issues regarding e-voting, the members may email at helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or contact at 1800 200 5533 or contact Purva Share Registry (India) Pvt Ltd at 022-23012518/6761 or email at support@purvashare.com for clarification.

NOTICE: Pursuant to the provisions of Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013, the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company shall remain closed from September 24, 2021 (Friday) to September 30, 2021 (Thursday) (both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.

The result of the e-voting/voting at Annual General Meeting shall be declared on or before 1st October, 2021. The result, along with the Scrutinizer's Report, shall be displayed at the Registered Office of the Company and also be placed on the company's website and communicated to the Stock Exchange where Company's share are listed.

For CANOPY FINANCE LIMITED
Sd/-
(Lalit Kumar Tapadia)
Managing Director
DIN No. 08117881

Place: Guwahati
Date: 08.09.2021

ACPL
ASSAM CARBON PRODUCTS LTD.
Corporate Identification Number (CIN) : L23101AS1963PLC001206
Registered Office : Birkuchi, Guwahati, Assam - 781026, Tel: (0361) 2640262/630; Fax: (0361) 2640368
Email: acplghy@asscarbon.com, Website: www.assamcarbon.in

NOTICE OF 58TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE AND ELECTRONIC VOTING INFORMATION

NOTICE is hereby given that the 58th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of Assam Carbon Products Limited, will be held on Thursday, the 30th day of September, 2021 at 04:00 P.M. (IST), through Video Conferencing ("VC") or other Audio Visual means ("OAVM"), to transact the businesses, as set out in the Notice dated 29th June, 2021 convening the AGM (the "Notice").

In view of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (the "MCA") vide its General Circulars No. 14/2020, No. 17/2020 and 20/2020 dated April 8, 2020, April 13, 2020 and May 5, 2020 respectively (hereinafter, collectively referred as the "MCA Circulars") read with SEBI Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020, have allowed companies to conduct their AGMs through VC or OAVM, in compliance with the said circulars and the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 (as amended) (the "Act") and Rules made thereunder and the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (as amended) (the "Listing Regulations").

In accordance with the aforesaid Circulars, the requirement of sending physical copies of Annual Report has been dispensed with and hence the Notice convening the AGM along with the Annual Report including the Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended March 31, 2021 has been sent on Wednesday, September 8, 2021, only through e-mails to those Members whose e-mail addresses are registered with the Company or the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent (the "RTA") i.e., C B Management Services (P) Ltd or the Depository Participant(s) and holding Equity Shares of the Company as on 20th August, 2021. The Notice of the 58th AGM and the Annual Report is also hosted on the Company's website at www.assamcarbon.in and at the website of NSDL at www.evoting.nsdl.com and also on the website of the Calcutta Stock Exchange Limited at www.cse-india.com where the Equity Shares of the Company are listed.

Members who have not registered or updated their e-mail addresses are requested to refer to the Newspaper advertisement dated 31st August, 2021 in "The Assam Rising" (English newspaper in Assam/ Guwahati), "Dainandini Barta" (Assamese newspaper in Assam / Guwahati) and "Business Standard" (English newspaper in Kolkata/ West Bengal). The said advertisement is hosted on the Company's website at www.assamcarbon.in.

Members are also hereby informed that:

- Pursuant to Section 108 of the Act and Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 (as amended), Regulation 44 of the Listing Regulations and the Secretarial Standard on General Meetings [SS-2] issued by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India, as amended from time to time, the Company is pleased to provide e-voting facilities through NSDL to its Members, in respect of the businesses to be transacted at the AGM. The manner and instructions to cast votes through remote e-voting system during the Meeting have been provided along with the Notice.
- The businesses set out in the Notice shall be transacted through e-voting only. The Members, whose names appear in the Register of Members or in the Register of Beneficial Owners maintained by the Depositories as on the cut-off date i.e. Thursday, the 23rd day of September, 2021, shall be entitled to avail the e-voting facility. Once vote(s) on Resolution(s) are cast by any Member, the same cannot be changed subsequently. The remote e-voting will commence on 27th September, 2021 at 9:00 A.M. IST and ends on 29th September, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. IST. The remote e-voting module shall be disabled by NSDL for voting thereafter. A person who is not a Member as on the cut-off date i.e., Thursday, the 23rd day of September, 2021, should treat the Notice for information purpose only.
- Members attending the AGM, who have not cast their votes by remote e-voting, shall be eligible to exercise their voting rights during the AGM through e-voting system via www.evoting.nsdl.com. Members who have exercised their voting rights by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend the AGM through VC or OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their votes again during the AGM.
- Any person, who acquires equity shares of the Company and becomes a member after dispatch of notice of AGM and holds shares as on the cut-off date i.e. Thursday, the 23rd day of September, 2021 may obtain the login id and password for e-voting, by sending a request to NSDL at evoting@nsdl.co.in or to the Company at acpl.compliance@gmail.com.
- All documents referred to in the Notice and Explanatory Statement thereto shall be made available for inspection by the Members of the Company, without payment of fees, upto and including the date of AGM. Members desirous of inspecting the same may send their requests at acpl.compliance@gmail.com from their registered email addresses mentioning their names and folio numbers / demat account numbers.
- In case of any queries / grievances relating to e-voting, Members may refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on e-voting (For Shareholders).pdf and e-voting Manual - Shareholder.pdf" available at the Download section of NSDL's e-voting website, i.e., www.evoting.nsdl.com or contact Mr. Amit Vishal, Senior Manager / Ms. Pallavi Mhatre, Manager, NSDL, Trade World, "A" Wing, 4th Floor, Kamala Mills Compound, Lower Parel, Mumbai 400 013 at Telephone No.s (022) - 24994360 / (022) - 24994545 or toll free no. 1800 - 222 - 990 or at E-mail id: amitv@nsdl.co.in / pallavid@nsdl.co.in and evoting@nsdl.co.in.

Mr. Anant Kashiwali, Practicing Chartered Accountant (Membership No.-302972) of M/s. Anant Kashiwali & Co. (Firm Reg. No. 328654E) has been appointed as the scrutineer to scrutinize the e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner, whose email ID is kashiwalanant@yahoo.in.

The Results on resolutions shall be declared within 48 hours of the conclusion of AGM of the Company. The results declared along with the Scrutinizer's Report shall be placed on the website of the Company at www.assamcarbon.in and also available at the Registered Office of the Company and on the website of NSDL at www.evoting.nsdl.com and would also be communicated to the Calcutta Stock Exchange Limited.

BOOK CLOSURE / RECORD DATE

Notice is also hereby given that pursuant to Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rules framed thereunder and Regulation 42 & 47 of SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the Register of Members and the Share Transfer Books of the Company shall remain closed from Friday, 24th September, 2021 to Thursday, 30th September, 2021 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of the AGM. The Company has fixed Thursday, 23rd September, 2021, as the cut off date / record date.

For ASSAM CARBON PRODUCTS LTD.
Sd/-
Kali Krishna Bhattacharya
Managing Director

Place: Kolkata
Date: 08.09.2021

INDIA CARBON LIMITED
Regd. Office: Noonmati, Guwahati- 781020, Assam
CIN NO: L23101AS1961PLC001173
Tel: (0363) 2248-7856/2248-7859, Fax No. - 91-33-2230-7507
Email : compliance@indiacarbonltd.com, Website: www.indiacarbonltd.com

NOTICE FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE AND ELECTRONIC VOTING

NOTICE is hereby given that the 59th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of India Carbon Limited scheduled to be held on Thursday, the 30th day of September, 2021 at 12:00 Noon through Video Conferencing ("VC") or other Audio Visual means ("OAVM"), to transact the businesses, as set out in the Notice dated 30th June, 2021 convening the AGM (the "Notice"). The Company has completed dispatch of Notice of the AGM on 08.09.2021 through e-mail. Notice of the AGM is available on the website of the Company at www.indiacarbonltd.com.

In view of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (the "MCA") vide its General Circulars No. 14/2020, No. 17/2020 and 20/2020 dated April 8, 2020, April 13, 2020 and May 5, 2020 respectively (hereinafter, collectively referred as the "MCA Circulars") read with SEBI Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020, have allowed companies to conduct their AGMs through VC or OAVM, in compliance with the said circulars and the relevant provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 (as amended) (the "Act") and Rules made there under and the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (as amended) (the "Listing Regulations").

In accordance with the aforesaid Circulars, the requirement of sending physical copies of Annual Report has been dispensed with and hence the Notice convening the AGM along with the Annual Report including the Audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended March 31, 2021 has been sent September 8, 2021, only through e-mails to those Members whose e-mail addresses are registered with the Company or the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent (the "RTA") i.e., C B Management Services (P) Ltd or the Depository Participant(s) and holding Equity Shares of the Company as on 20th August, 2021.

Members who have not registered or updated their e-mail addresses are requested to refer to the Newspaper advertisement dated 31st August, 2021 at "The Assam Rising" (English newspaper in Assam/ Guwahati), "Dainandini Barta" (Assamese newspaper in Assam / Guwahati) and "Business Standard" (English newspaper in Kolkata/ West Bengal). The said advertisement is hosted on the Company's website.

Members attending the AGM, who have not cast their votes by remote e-voting, shall be eligible to exercise their voting rights during the AGM through e-voting system via www.evotingindia.com. Members who have exercised their voting rights by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend the AGM through VC or OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their votes again during the AGM.

The Share Transfer Books and Members Register of the Company shall remain closed from 24th September, 2021 to 30th September, 2021 (both days inclusive) to determine eligibility of the members for casting vote through remote e-voting and voting during the AGM at the close of working hours on 23rd September, 2021. During this period the members of the Company, holding shares either in physical form or in dematerialized form, as on the cut off date (record date), i.e. 23rd September, 2021 may cast their vote electronically. Any person, who acquires shares of the Company and become a member of the Company after dispatch of the notice and holding shares as of the cut-off date i.e. 23rd September, 2021 may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request at helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com.

The remote e-voting period shall commence from 9.00 a.m. on Monday, 27th September, 2021 and will end at 5.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 29th September, 2021. The e-voting shall not be allowed beyond the said date and time.

Mr. Anant Kashiwali, Practicing Chartered Accountant (Mem No.-302972) of M/s. Anant Kashiwali & Co. (Firm Reg. No. 328654E) has been appointed as the scrutineer to scrutinize the e-voting and voting by ballot process in a fair and transparent manner, whose email ID is kashiwalanant@yahoo.in.

For any grievance in the matter of e-voting, one may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for shareholders and e-voting user manual for shareholders available at www.evotingindia.com under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or rtat@cbmsl.com.

For INDIA CARBON LIMITED
Sd/-
RAKESH HIMATSINGKA
(Managing Director)

Place : Kolkata
Date : 08.09.2021

THE ASSAM RISING

VOL. NO. VI, ISSUE NO. 205 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 09, 2021

Digital revolution in India

Digital solutions that enable basic functions essential for public and private service delivery, i.e. collaboration, commerce, and governance. Think about our existing shared public infrastructure such as roads and education, but online: that's DPI in a nutshell. Typical examples include digital identification platforms such as Aadhaar in India, data exchange streams such as X-road in Estonia, or digital payment systems such as UPI in India and Raast in Pakistan. Take Togo, for example. The West African country used digital payments and data to target COVID-19 emergency cash transfers to the most vulnerable and got the programme up and running in 10 days. The programme paid more women than men, and also provided support to informal workers. In another example, Sri Lanka built and deployed a real-time COVID-19 screening, contact tracing and monitoring system on its existing health platform and began deploying it within days after the first case of COVID-19 was registered. The country also shared the new tools with other countries using the same health software platform. The beauty of software and standards is that anyone, anywhere, can contribute to and use them and that they only gain value as they are shared and reused. Software developers have understood this and used open source as the basis for collaboration for years. We can do the same in building digital public infrastructure to address urgent global challenges and development needs. Digital Public Goods (DPGs) - open source software, open data, open AI models, open standards, and open content that adhere to privacy and other applicable best practices - are a critical tool for building infrastructure in ways that address some of the limitations of solutions that rely on proprietary software. A good example is the District Health Information Software 2 (DHIS2) which was first created in post-Apartheid South Africa to address gaps in health data collection, access, and use at the local level. Today it is the world's largest health management information system platform, managed by the University of Oslo, Norway, and is used by ministries of health in 73 low and middle-income countries representing 30% of the world's population. During the pandemic, countries such as Sri Lanka built new modules on DHIS2 for real-time disease surveillance and for vaccine rollout planning and monitoring. The core DHIS2 team refined and shared these modules with the broader community and they are now in operation in 41 countries and in development in others. The system has accelerated vaccine rollout in some of the world's most vulnerable countries and streamlined clinical lab and travel certification processes. MOSIP, also a digital public good, is a foundational digital identification system available to all governments for deployment as part of their DPI. It is designed to be secure, inclusive, and protect privacy. Morocco, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Guinea, Ethiopia, and several other countries are now assessing or implementing their own systems based on MOSIP, making adaptations to meet their own needs. Reports from Afghanistan indicate that people are worried that databases held by the collapsed government could be used against them by the Taliban. No one should have to feel this way, highlighting why it is crucial to get things right from the start and anticipate how things could go wrong. Bad DPI can have dramatic consequences - which is why building "good" DPI should not be an afterthought when developing such infrastructure. "Good" infrastructure must be inclusive, protect the privacy and security of citizens, and be governed by regulations that ensure accountability and transparency in their implementation. It must be built to enable governments to collaborate with the private sector and to promote vendor diversity and innovation on top of the foundational systems. This is essential for ensuring that users get access to a range of services like healthcare, insurance and financing and that thriving local ecosystems evolve to provide these services. And there must be alternatives and redundancies to ensure those who can't or choose not to use them aren't excluded. This is not easy to get right for any country and the consequences of getting it wrong can be dire - not only in terms of cost overruns and delays but also in terms of human rights abuses. As governments worldwide try to respond to the pandemic, the least developed countries in particular, need urgent comprehensive support to implement good DPI, and as a protection against hasty implementation of bad DPI. Building meaningful public-private partnerships is going to be instrumental in developing good DPI, and businesses, large and small, will also win from this. In India, the digital payments ecosystem grew after Aadhaar and UPI were put in place, and attracted many new companies - domestic and international - who were able to build and deliver new services and gain sizable market shares.

Giving booster shots before the world is vaccinated won't keep the UK safe from Covid

Should Britain approve booster doses for broad swathes of the population? The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is deciding this week, and has already advised a third dose be offered to over-11s who had severe immunosuppression at the time of their first or second jab (including people with conditions such as leukaemia). Approving a mass booster programme would bring Britain in line with countries such as the United States and Israel that are already offering third doses to their vaccinated populations. These plans are based on concerns that the protection offered by vaccines may wane over time. Indeed, data from a widely cited study in Israel has shown that the efficacy against severe disease of the Pfizer vaccine decreased from 91% in individuals aged 60 or over who were vaccinated four months prior to the study, to 86% in those vaccinated six months before the study. For 40- to 59-year-olds, the protection against severe disease dropped from 98% to 94%. But while these results suggest a decline in vaccine effectiveness over time, they also show that vaccines remain highly effective against severe disease six months after two doses. In a study of more than 7 million people in the UK across 718 English general prac-

tices, antibody levels in the blood of people with immunosuppression gradually reduced after receiving a Covid-19 vaccination. Despite this, vaccines remained effective at preventing clinical disease - suggesting that antibody levels may not tell the whole story of how our immune systems respond. Why is this? Primarily, we can't yet be certain about the best way to measure the protection offered by Covid-19 vaccines. The markers of protection against getting infected with the vi-

Charlotte Summers

rus that causes Covid, becoming ill with it, or becoming severely ill (resulting in hospitalisation or death), may all be different. Although antibody levels in the blood provide us with an indication of how that person's immune system responded to the vaccine, they don't necessarily tell us how an individual's immune system will respond when encountering the virus. The immune system is a complex attack system that behaves differently in different people. Measuring antibody levels to tell us how effective a vaccine will be at protecting someone from severe Covid may turn out to be the equivalent of assessing the strength of an army based on its number of tanks, rather than the full might of its forces and armoury. With this

uncertainty in mind, the World Health Organization (WHO) has called for a moratorium on Covid-19 booster shots. It has pointed out that there isn't enough compelling science to approve boosters yet. Mike Ryan, director of the WHO's health emergency programme, has likened plans for administering boosters to handing out "extra lifejackets to people who already have lifejackets, while... leaving other people to drown without a single lifejacket". By the end of August 2021, 57% of adults in high-income countries had received at least one dose of a Covid vaccine. In the UK, this figure exceeds 88%. Yet in low-income countries, just 2% of adults had received one or more doses (in Benin, Madagascar, Turkmenistan and Tanzania, among other countries, less than one in 100 people had received a single dose). I'm an intensive-care physician; because of this, I received my first Covid vaccine dose in early January 2021, followed by a second dose in late March. Months later, healthcare workers in other regions of the world are still having to care for patients who have Covid, risking their lives without vital vaccine protection. Vaccine supplies are not currently limitless, and ensuring the infrastructure is in place to deliver them across the world requires careful planning.

Hinduphobia is a reality. Scholars at 'Dismantling Global Hindutva' conference must know



In certain academic circles, nuance, rigor, and reasonable disagreement in scholarly discourse surrounding India and Hinduism is supplanted with polemics, tendentiousness, and bad faith. We, as a group of academics, write with specific concern about the exacerbation of this trend through the upcoming Dismantling Global Hindutva (DGH) conference, which has claimed the apparent sponsorship of over forty academic institutions. The conference, to be held virtually between 10-12 September, aims to "address the threat and power of Hindutva" by relying on perspectives from scholars, journalists, and activists. However, these perspectives - as expressed through the conference's promotional materials - pose an inherent threat to the well-being of the Hindu community, and to academic freedom itself. As scholars, we embrace academic freedom - the right of scholars to conduct inquiry and engage in constructive debate and disagreement without threat or intimidation; yet, this upcoming conference imperils our ability to freely do so in good faith and thus constitutes the very antithesis of this ideal. DGH has promulgated the "Hindutva Harassment Field Manual" (HHFM) as an official resource for the conference. Three basic claims made by this document therefore underline the foundational premise of DGH and its participants. The document claims that Hinduphobia was coined recently by the Hindu Right and that it "relies on flawed analogies with anti-Semitism and Islamophobia." It continues, "individual cases of discrimination, no matter how painful, do not amount to Hinduphobia

since Hinduphobia rests on the false notion that Hindus have faced systematic oppression throughout history and in present times." The note concludes, "Scholars of South Asia overall consider the term 'Hinduphobia' problematic." Earlier this year, academics - including signatories to this letter - created a working definition of Hinduphobia, which has also been recognised by the Student Assembly of at least one DGH-sponsoring institution. This definition is specific to Hindu experiences across time and geography. As defined, the word 'Hinduphobia' has been used in media and politics since the nineteenth century. To claim it was coined by "the Hindu Right" is an easily disproved, prejudicial falsity. Many DGH scholars are aware and have even publicly acknowledged that a free, public conference at Rutgers University was held to examine Hinduphobia earlier this year. Yet, they refuse to engage with the definition, even as an intellectual exercise, perfunctorily dismissing the possibility that Hinduphobia exists. A nascent literature that examines Hinduphobia within the United States and United Kingdom already exists, including within religious studies. A survey of British Indians conducted by The 1928 Institute in collaboration with Oxford University found that "80% of respondents experienced prejudice as a result of their Indian identity," with "Hinduphobia... the predominant type of prejudice reported." Altman's *Heaven, Hindoo, Hindu: American Representations of India, 1721-1893* (Oxford

University Press, 2017) incisively demonstrates the way in which representations of "Hindoo heathenism" were used as a foil to the "supremacy of white Protestant American identity." Reflecting on this and other scholarship, to suggest offhand, as DGH does, that anti-Hindu bias is not engrained systemically into the consciousness of the Anglosphere is fundamentally anti-intellectual and ahistorical. The conclusion that Hinduphobia does not exist rests on a pernicious and violent assertion - that there is no evidence that "Hindus have faced systematic oppression throughout history and in present times..." The anti-Semitic ideology of Nazism led to the Holocaust. Islamophobic foreign policies over time

resulted in the killing of civilians in the Middle East as well as the recent anti-Muslim ban of the Trump administration. Anti-Hindu bias, on the other hand, cannot be easily linked to casualties on such horrific scales. Such an assertion is disturbing, and dangerous when put forth by those with academic credentials. As this scholarly definition notes, "outright denying or accusing Hindus or any people of inventing or exaggerating the persecution of Hindus, including genocide," constitutes Hinduphobia. It is not difficult to connect anti-Hindu bias with anti-Hindu violence on a mass scale. Erasure of violence and genocide against any community is of grave concern. Denying the existence and the anti-Hindu animus that lies at the origin of these events of massive historical, political, and economic import is unscholarly, Hinduphobic, and gaslights victims of anti-Hindu persecution and the global Hindu community. Those who disagree with claims 1 and 2 above are complicit in "Hindutva atrocities." The most distressing claim made by the DGH scholars is that reports of Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu violence "act as a smokescreen for casteism and anti-Muslim prejudice." The implication is that those who disagree are complicit in the atrocities they attribute to Hindutva. This is an ad hominem attack formulated to stifle debate and disagreement, even from fellow academics. As Adluri and Bagchee argue in their eponymous monograph, "Crying Hindutva to discipline and silence non-conforming scholars is hardly new. What is more

disturbing is that questioning Indologists' criteria, arguments, and application of methods... now suffices to be accused of... espousing Hindutva causes. No evidence for such a serious accusation is required." The definition of Hinduphobia further inveighs, "accusing those who organize around or speak about Hinduphobia (including the persecution of Hindus) of being agents or pawns of violent, oppressive political agendas" is itself a form of Hinduphobia. By arguing that those who disagree with their central arguments about "global Hindutva" are members of "the Hindu Right," the DGH scholars seek to weaponise "academic freedom" and the power asymmetry that exists between themselves and other scholars within the academy to insulate themselves from reasoned critique. This is absurdist logic. In civilised discourse, name-calling and labeling are highly problematic. Notwithstanding any degree of sanctimony on the subject, we worry that those who seek carte blanche to intimidate opposing voices are not in search of truth or "academic freedom," but of power. As scholars, we recognise that critique - no matter how reasonable - of the assumptions underlying an event with such apparent broad-based institutional support may carry some risk for our own career prospects. It is also highly unusual for academics to challenge other scholars in such direct language. Yet, the language utilised by DGH is even more extraordinary; quite frankly, language that denies the historical persecution of a religious minority and brooks no dissent, has no place in scholarly debate. Of equal concern is that these scholars amplify this message in their capacity as public intellectuals. Recently, several SASAC members (the scholar collective behind the HHFM) were interviewed on WNYC, where this language was replicated to the general public. Because we operate in the academic space, we have a responsibility to ensure that the study of South Asia and Hinduism remains ethical, inclusive, and methodologically rigorous. Accordingly, we identify a clear moral duty to speak publicly in this case. We find that DGH represents none of these ideals and therefore flag in no uncertain terms our concerns about the ethos of this conference.

What ISI chief Faiz Hameed's visit to Kabul has to do with new Taliban govt

Afghan journalist and spokesperson of the anti-Taliban National Resistance Front (NRF), Fahim Dashty, has been killed. Panjshir province, the last holdout against the Taliban has fallen. NRF leaders Amrullah Saleh and Ahmed Massoud are believed to have fled Panjshir. Pakistan's intelligence chief Faiz Hameed has returned from Kabul. The Taliban have announced a new government - and invited China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Qatar to the inaugural. That, in a nutshell, is how the story of Afghanistan has played out, three weeks after the Taliban took Kabul on 15 August. The trauma of these last few days is giving way to a

recognition that the Taliban is here to stay. Even the UN has informally accepted the reality on the ground with its under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, Martin Griffiths, traveling to Kabul to meet Taliban leader Mullah Baradar. Note the Afghan, not the Islamic Emirate flag, between the two seated gentlemen in their meeting. As Afghanistan turns a new page, this is the granular reality on the ground: Almost 20 years exactly to the day that Ahmed Shah Massoud, Afghanistan's iconic leader, was assassinated on 9 September 2001, by two al-Qaeda men posing as journalists in his hideout in the Panjshir valley, Fahim Dashty was killed Sunday in the battle



for Panjshir. The NRF was being led by commander Massoud's son Ahmed Massoud and key Afghan leader Amrullah Saleh. Only hours before Dashty's death, Pakistan's ISI chief Faiz Hameed, had left Kabul. He was said to have flown there on Saturday to talk to the Taliban to put together a government - some reports claimed there were differences between the Taliban and the Haqqani Network over key positions. Dashty's death is a sobering finality in what has obviously been one of the dirtiest conflicts of our times; in fact, Afghanistan is worse than any ordinary conflict, when at least you know who is fighting on which side. In Afghanistan, war and peace have been inter-changeable, with players cutting deals with the enemy without fully informing even their friends. For example, US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad brokered a peace deal with the Taliban, without the Afghan government being on board. Or former President Ashraf Ghani fled Kabul without informing even his Cabinet - one of them was busy attempting to secure the city against the Taliban when he heard that his president had run away. Unlike Ghani, my friend Fahim Dashty - one of Afghanistan's most respected journalists - fled to the Panjshir valley, barely a 100 km from Kabul, along with commander Massoud's son Ahmed

Massoud. Twenty years ago, when commander Massoud was killed, Dashty had been in the room, but survived the explosion. When Kabul fell to the Taliban on 15 August, Fahim exchanged his pen for the sword and became a spokesperson of the National Resistance Front - hoping to recreate the spirit of 2001. It was not to be. According to Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid, Panjshir has fallen, the last of the provinces. According to The Washington Post, Saleh has fled to Tajikistan, while Massoud's son has tweeted that he is alive and well. The effort to normalise the Taliban as the new rulers of Kabul continues apace. The new Taliban head of state, according to Pakistani media reports, is Mohammed Hasan Akhund, who, analysts believe, was among those who pushed to destroy the Bamiyan Buddhas back in 2003. Sirajuddin Haqqani, the dreaded head of the anti-India Haqqani Network, is set to become the new interior minister. The Haqqani Network is on the UN sanctions list and Sirajuddin carries a \$5 million US bounty on his head. Taliban founder Mullah Omar's son, Mullah Yaqoob, is expected to be the new defence minister. Mullah Ameer Khan Muttaqi has been nominated to be the new foreign minister. Mullah Baradar will work as a deputy to Mullah Akhund.

Flipkart partners with Urbanic to bring global fashion

Guwahati, Sep 8: In preparation for the festive season and much-awaited Big Billion Days, Flipkart announced a partnership with Urbanic - a London-based Gen Z fashion brand, to bring a wide range of global fashion to young consumers across India. A stylish collection of almost 1,000 unique styles will be available to a growing registered customer base of over 350 million - from metros to tier 2 and 3+ regions. The partnership with Urbanic is the first of several exciting launches lined up for this season for Flipkart. This comes at a significant juncture, as people, especially the younger generation, are slowly beginning to step out in a safe manner and are seeking stylish fashion options. The partnership with Flipkart enables Urbanic to democratise fashion by reaching out to a wider array of shoppers through Flipkart's reach in smaller towns and cities. This launch aligns with Flipkart's priority to continuously expand its fashion portfolio



and make the latest trends accessible to fashion-seekers across the country. Consumers can choose from a range of styles across categories, including apparel and loungewear. Priced from INR 299 onwards, the Urbanic selection includes tops, denims, winter wear, lingerie and swimwear; and is available on Flipkart today. Urbanic's growth vision is tied to engaging more shoppers in India through

this partnership with Flipkart. Speaking about the launch, Nishit Garg, Vice President - Flipkart Fashion, said, "Fashion plays a key role in onboarding new consumers during the festive season for Flipkart, and we believe that this launch is going to grow our Gen Z customer base. Fashion

needs have evolved in different ways this past year, and global styles continue to be a big influence as we prepare for this much-awaited season. We are happy to announce the launch of Urbanic on Flipkart, which is one of our biggest fashion partnerships this year. We believe that the latest styles should be made accessible to every aspiring consumer across the country." He further added, "We will continue to play a role in equalising fashion trends and bridging the gap between customers in metros and Tier 2+ regions. Another step in this direction was the recently launched 'Trend Stop!' - an in-app curation of over 55,000 latest youth styles in partnership with smaller labels, which has also witnessed great success.

We will be collaborating with the best in the industry to grow our youth fashion portfolio, and this partnership with Urbanic is in line with this vision." Sharing his views on the partnership with Flipkart, Rahul Dayama, Head of Marketing, Urbanic, India said, "It's a great opportunity to collaborate with Flipkart and bring Urbanic's edgy, uber chic and in-vogue collection onto India's best shopping destination. Through this partnership, we aim to scale our reach and leverage Flipkart's reach across the length and breadth of the nation and their technology to give our community of style icons a superior digital shopping experience." James Wellwood, Partner at Urbanic, London added "We want to make sure that all individuals have equal access to fashionable and trendy outfits that Urbanic provides at an affordable range."

Honda commences deliveries of all-new CB200X

Faridabad, Sep 8: Bringing a steady evolution in the 180-200cc segment, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd. has started the deliveries of all-new CB200X in India. The new CB200X is a well-crafted machine built to provide utmost comfort for everyday commuting and pushing the riders in exploring new destinations over the weekends. With its unique features and rugged character, it is a true urban explorer meeting expectations of enthusiasts. The deliveries com-



menced through company's Red Wing dealerships and the maiden customer key handover ceremony was conducted at Faridabad Honda (Haryana).

Speaking on the occasion of first delivery of CB200X, Mr. Yadvinder Singh Guleria, Director - Sales & Marketing, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd., said, "From the day it was launched, our dealer network has been receiving inquiries especially from new-age customers. As the situation is getting normal and people are moving out for work and leisure trips, they are looking for the machine which meets all their expectations.

Delhi Airport's Eastern Cross Taxiway to be ready by December 2022

New Delhi, Sep 8: India's first-ever elevated Cross Taxiway at Delhi Airport is scheduled to be ready by December 2022. Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) has completed about 60 per cent of the work on ECT. Once commissioned, the 2.1 km-long dual elevated Eastern Cross Taxiways (ECT) will not only help decongest the airport and improve circulation paths of aircraft, but also reduce approximately 55,000 tonnes of CO2 emission annually, said the company. The 2.1 km-long dual elevated Eastern Cross Taxiways (ECT) will also help in enhancing passengers' experience, as they will have to remain inside a plane for a much shorter duration after landing or during take-off. At present, after landing at RWY 29/11 or to take-off from this runway, an aircraft has to cover a distance of about 9 KM. During this period, passengers have to remain inside the plane. After commissioning of the ECT, the aircraft taxiing distance will significantly go down (to just 2 KM) as it will taxi along the taxiway parallel to RWY 11/29 and use the ECT to take a straight path to Terminal 1 or vice-versa.

The ECT will also help airlines to save approximately 350 kg of fuel every time an aircraft uses the taxiing route provided by the ECT from RWY 29/11 to Terminal 1 and vice-versa. This would translate in reduction of nearly 1,114 kg of CO2 emissions for each aircraft taxiing along this route. Annually, the ECT is estimated to reduce emission of approximately 55,000 tonnes of CO2 from aircraft. In March 2021, DIAL started mounting of girders of ECT across the pillars in the median of Central Spine Road. A total of 590 girders would be mounted. By the second week of July, over 200 girders have already been mounted. DIAL has ensured that an environment-friendly approach is followed in the construction of ECT. It is using fly ash, a waste product of coal-fired power plants, in the filling material. DIAL is using around 9,715 MT of fly ash in the construction of ECT. If not used, fly ash would



have been disposed in specially designed landfills which could lead to leaching of heavy metals into ground water. Under Phase 3A, DIAL is also constructing 4.4-kilometre-long 4th Runway, parallel to runway 11/29 on the Southern side. Once commissioned the 4th runway would handle the increased traffic movement. Delhi Airport would become the first airport in India to have four operational runways. The 4th Runway also would help reduce Carbon emission significantly. As part of the expansion project, DIAL is also carrying out integration of the departure and arrival terminals of T1, construction of new T1 Apron, 2.1 km-long dual elevated Eastern Cross Taxiways (ECT), landside develop-

itel targets the aspirational millennials with its premium affordable Vision 2S smartphone with 5000 mAh battery

New Delhi, September 8:

After the huge success of its premium-affordable Vision series in India, itel - India's most trusted smartphone brand today announced the launch of yet another innovative and next-gen smartphone 'itel Vision 2S' under its flagship Vision series. With this launch, itel reinstates its commitment towards providing seamless and superior smartphone experience at a highly affordable quotient to cater to the aspirations of new age consumers. Positioned as 'Live Life Big Size', Vision 2S is high on battery capacity of 5000mAh and boasts premium bigger Immersive 6.5-inch HD+ IPS waterdrop display. Vision 2S is all set to be a game



changer with premium design and technologically advanced features such as an AI-enabled vision camera, dual security features like Face Unlock and Fingerprint Sensor, 8.9mm Slim, latest Android OS, fast processor and all

packed at an affordable price point of INR 6999. It also comes with an exclusive VIP offer where consumers can avail free one-time screen replacement of a broken screen within 100 days of purchase without paying any service charge.

Direct selling firm Vestige focuses on digitalisation to drive growth

New Delhi, Sep 8: With the coronavirus pandemic severely testing the direct selling industry and affecting the nature of trade, Vestige Marketing is focussing on digitalisation and will continue to leverage technology to drive its growth, according to a top company official. The home-grown direct selling firm is looking to tap on an increase in distributors from tier II and tier III cities with more people, who lost jobs due to COVID-19, taking up direct selling as an alternative source of livelihood. "The pandemic has severely tested the direct selling industry. The need to always follow social distancing, the constant fear of infection and, of

course, the lockdowns have had a significant impact on the business dynamics of the industry," Vestige Marketing Pvt Ltd Managing Director Gautam Bali told PTI. The old, meet and greet model of referrals, meeting customers, showcasing, and demonstrating products critical to the business has shifted online, he added. "It is seen that in the post-pandemic world, this will continue as shopping virtually is the easiest, most time-efficient and productive method. It has opened newer sales avenues and dramatically enhanced incomes of sellers as well," Bali said. Commenting on how the company plans to build on the shift in trend, he said, "Vestige will continue to

leverage technology and innovation to serve customers and communities within a changing environment through digitalisation. These measures helped online orders to grow by over 300 per cent." Even during the peak of the pandemic, he said, "Vestige recorded over 52 per cent increase in its distributor network with over 60 per cent of them being below the age of 35 in 2020. This increase was led by distributors joining from tier II and tier III cities." While he did not disclose the total number of distributors citing business confidentiality, Bali said the company currently has "48 branches, with over 3,500 online and offline centres" with over 600 employees.

Truecaller Crosses The 500 Customer Milestone For Its Business Offering

National, September 8: Truecaller announced a milestone of 500 customers for its Truecaller for Business offerings. This success has been achieved within a few months of conscientious efforts by the team in helping brands connect with their customers better. The businesses are from more than 25 countries including India who have adopted the solution to add value to their existing business. The offering allows businesses to verify their identity on Truecaller which increases consumer safety by preventing fraud and scam calls. This includes various types of businesses, across large public listed companies, digital natives, startups, e-commerce, education, healthcare, banking and financial services (BFSI) and more verticals. With frauds & scams using spoofed identities on the rise across the world, there was a dire need to bring in more trust in communications. This is exactly why Verified Caller ID was introduced at the beginning of this year. Today, after repeated user requests, Truecaller is happy to announce another interesting feature to the Verified Business Caller ID solution: Call reason. Call Reason enables Truecaller Verified Business customers to let their end customers know why they are calling them. It helps in adding context to business calls and improves customer confidence by communicating the reason for the call, even before the call is answered.

With GameStop earnings on tap, options traders bet on muted moves



New York, Sep 8: Options traders are expecting comparatively subdued moves in GameStop Inc (GME.N) shares around its earnings report, as the company that helped spark the so-called meme stock phenomenon prepares to report quarterly results on Wednesday. Traders are pricing a 14% swing for GameStop's shares by Friday, according to pricing in options expiring at the end of the week. By comparison, the video game retailer's shares have moved about 30% on the day after each of its last two earnings reports. The expectations for smaller stock swings comes as the daily moves in GameStop's shares have also grown tighter. The company's shares have logged average daily moves of around 3.6% in either direction over the last month, compared with average daily moves of 12% for the first half of the year.

SEC threatens to sue Coinbase over crypto lending programme

Hong Kong, Sep 8: The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has threatened to sue Coinbase Global Inc (COIN.O) if the crypto exchange goes ahead with plans to launch a programme allowing users to earn interest by lending crypto assets, Coinbase said on Wednesday. The SEC has issued Coinbase with a



Wells notice, an official way it tells a company that it intends to sue the company in court, Paul Grewal, the company's chief legal officer said in a blog post. He said Coinbase would delay the launch of its 'Lend' product until at least October as a result. Coinbase shares fell about 2.5% to \$260 by 0845 GMT in pre-market trade on Wednesday.

Programmes that allow owners of cryptocurrencies to lend these in return for interest are becoming more common around the world, but some regulators, particularly in the United States have started to raise concerns, arguing that such products should comply with existing securities laws. The U.S. state of New Jersey ordered the cryptocurrency platform

BlockFi Inc in July to stop offering interest-bearing accounts that have raised \$14.7 billion from investors. Grewal said in his blog that the SEC's concerns about Coinbase's 'Lend' were related to the fact that the regulator believed the product involved a security. Grewal said Coinbase felt that this was not the case.

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Body of college lecturer

Parimita Das recovered. She was associate professor of Ranga sahi college. The horrific accident is suspected to have taken the life of more than 100 people who were travelling to Majuli from the Nimatighat. More than 150 people were travelling in the ferry while 40 bikes were loaded. Meanwhile, few people has been rescued. 25 people including a woman and a two months old child and sent to Jorhat Medical College and Hospital (JMCH) for treatment. A woman rescued in the operation was declared brought dead by doctors at JMCH. About 60 other people are still missing. The sunk boat has been found in upside-down position but due to strong current of the river, divers cannot search inside the boat. We are looking into cutting into the boat. Assam Governor Professor Jagdish Mukhi while expressing concern over the unfortunate incident said that though several lives are feared to be at stake, the state government with its men and materials has launched massive rescue operations. All possible steps are being taken to rescue the victims and give adequate medical attention to the rescued people.

Nimatighat Ferry Accident

the developments. The chief minister said he will visit Nimati Ghat tomorrow to evaluate the situation. According to the initial reports, the incident took place between Kamalabari in Majuli and Nematighat in Jorhat around 4pm. Both the ferries were carrying over 100 passengers in all. "Both ferries hit each other around 4pm. State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel have started rescue operations." Jorhat deputy commissioner Ashok Kumar Barman said. According to reports, the incident took place around 100 metres from the Nematighat when one small ferry going towards Kamalabari hit the bigger ferry coming from the other side. The smaller ferry is reported to have capsized. "Not much detail is available yet but one of the ferries involved in the accident belonged to our department," said Gautam Das, director, inland water transport department. Chief minister Himanta Biswa expressed concern over the accident and directed the district administrations of Majuli and Jorhat to undertake rescue mission expeditiously with the help of NDRF and SDRF. He also directed minister Bimal Bora to travel to Majuli to take stock of the situation. Principal secretary to the chief minister, Samir Kumar Sinha, has been asked to monitor the developments. Sarma will visit Majuli on Thursday to evaluate the situation. The Brahmaputra and its tributaries are in full spate due to the rains and floods in the state and rescue efforts are likely to be hampered because of that. Union Cabinet Minister and former Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal expresses deep concern over Majuli's ferry accident in Brahmaputra river on Wednesday. Union cabinet minister Sarbananda Sonowal expressed deep concern over the news of a sudden accident between two ferries heading towards Kamalabari in Majuli and Nimatighat in Jorhat. He immediately held a phone call with Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma. The chief minister said over phone that all necessary measures have been taken for the rescue of passengers. Sarbananda Sonowal directed the concerned authorities to extend all possible assistance in this regard from the Union Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways. Sonowal tweeted, "Anguished to learn of the ferry accident in Majuli. I have talked with Assam CM Shri @himantabiswa regarding the accident and he has informed me of ongoing rescue and relief operations. I have directed @shipmin_india to provide all necessary support to help the victims." Around 20 people has been rescued after the ferry accident reported at Nimatighat in Jorhat on Wednesday. As per latest updates, 7 children have been rescued along with 1 woman. While, many other are still missing, reporters confirmed that many passengers also saved their life by swimming back to the river bank. Meanwhile, SDRF and NDRF are carrying out their search operations in the Brahmaputra river. However, due to darkness, the search operation is also getting tough. The boat that sank completely is called Maa Kamala and had around 150 people loaded in it.

Taliban form all-male Afghan

both foreign nationals and Afghans, with proper travel documents, and ensure Afghan soil would not be used as to harm another. The interim prime minister, Mullah Hasan Akhund, also headed the Taliban government in Kabul during the last years of its rule. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who had led talks with the U.S. and signed the deal that led to the withdrawal, will be one of two deputies to Akhund. A policy statement accompanying the Cabinet announcement sought to allay fears of Afghanistan's neighbors and the rest of the world, but was unlikely to calm the fears of women, who didn't get a single post. "Our message to our neighbors, the region and the world is that Afghanistan's soil will not be used against the security of any other country," the statement said. It urged foreign diplomats, embassies, consulates and humanitarian organizations to return to Afghanistan. "Their presence is the need of our country," it said. The statement spoke of protecting the rights of minorities and the underprivileged, and it promised education "to all countrymen within the framework of Sharia." Women were not mentioned in the three-page statement. Abdul Salam Hanafi, an ethnic Uzbek, was named as second deputy to Hasan Akhund. A long-time Taliban member, he is unlikely to satisfy demands for inclusivity and minority representation. Besides Haqqani as head of the police, the other top security post of defense minister went to Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, the son of Taliban founder and near mythic figure Mullah Mohammad Omar. The Haqqani network, which dominates most of eastern Afghanistan, has been blamed for dramatic attacks in Kabul in the past two decades and for orchestrating kidnappings, often of Americans. Washington believes it still holds Mark Frerichs, a civilian contractor, who was abducted in January 2020 and hasn't been heard from since. The new foreign minister will be Amir Khan Muttaqi, another prominent figure from the Taliban's last time in power. He faces a difficult task, given the Cabinet's lack of diversity. The Cabinet selection defied the many voices that had urged inclusivity and moderation. Instead, it seemed to be a bow to the Taliban's tens of thousands of fighters, who would have struggled to accept figures from previous governments that they see as corrupt and that they believe they were called upon to oust. "The fighters made the sacrifices. ... They are the decision makers, not the politicians," said analyst and author Fazlminallah Qazizai, who has written extensively about the Taliban. Yet even with a Cabinet dominated by ethnic Pashtuns, the Taliban's fighting force would appear to have already attained some diversity, with their ranks bolstered considerably by ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks. That may have helped hand the Taliban a surprising win in the mostly Tajik province of Badakhshan, which they overran with hardly a fight. When they last ruled, the province was the only one they failed to control. At Tuesday's demonstration that was broken up by gunfire, protesters had gathered outside the Pakistani Embassy to accuse Islamabad of aiding the Taliban's assault on northern Panjshir province. The Taliban said Monday they seized the province - the last one not in their control - after their lightning advance through Afghanistan last month. Afghanistan's previous government routinely accused neighboring Pakistan of aiding the Taliban, a charge Islamabad has denied. Dozens of women were among the protesters, and some carried signs bemoaning the killing of their sons by Taliban fighters that they say were aided by Pakistan. One sign read: "I am a mother. When you kill my son, you kill a part of me." At one point, a Taliban fighter responded: "We have announced amnesty to everyone who has killed our sons." The Taliban moved quickly and harshly to end the protest as demonstrators arrived near the presidential palace. They fired their weapons into the air and arrested several journalists covering the demonstration. At one point, a Taliban member waving a Kalashnikov rifle took a microphone from a journalist and began beating him with it. The journalist was later handcuffed and detained for several hours. "This is the third time I have been beaten by the Taliban covering protests," the journalist told The Associated Press, speaking on condition he not be identified because he feared retaliation. "I won't go again to cover a demonstration. It's too difficult for me." A journalist from Afghanistan's popular TOLO News was detained for three hours by the Taliban before being freed. He was given back his equipment and his video of the demonstration was intact. On Saturday, Taliban special forces in camouflage fired their weapons into the air to end a protest march in Kabul by women demanding equal rights.

Assam Governor expresses

men and materials has launched massive rescue operations. All possible steps are being taken to rescue the victims and give adequate medical attention to the rescued people.

Govt To Send Covid Vaccines

Covid-19 updates in the state, Assam on Tuesday reported 471 new cases of Covid-19, pushing the active caseload to 5,110. The positivity rate of the state has dipped to 0.58 per cent. The overall count of the positive cases in the state so far has touched 5,93,087. The new cases have been detected out of 80,937 tests conducted in the last 24 hours, of which, the highest cases have been reported from Kamrup Metro (105), Sonitpur (32), Sivasagar (30), Golaghat (29). The district-wise deaths that have been registered are Jorhat (2) and Morigaon, Biswanath, Dibrugarh, Hojai, Kamrup Rural, and Lakhimpur have all reported one death each. At a death rate of 0.96 per cent, the total death tally of the state has increased to 5,719, while, the recoveries have escalated to 5,80,911 with a recovery rate of 97.95 per cent.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta

will be preserved. "The police quarters which are more than 100 years will be preserved and the others will be demolished from tomorrow," CM Sarma added. He further said that a memorial in the memory of the martyred police will be constructed replacing the quarters. The visitors will also be able to enjoy the scenic beauty of River Brahmaputra very closely. During his visit to the site, the Chief Minister also announced that the Dispur flyover will be inaugurated on Dipawali and the new road from Pandu to Kamakhya Temple will be inaugurated before Ambubachi next year.

National Conference ready

run their country peacefully and respect basic human rights values and make good friendly relations to rest of the countries. Last week, Abdullah had said that his party would sweep polls in Jammu and Kashmir if they are conducted in a fair manner. Abdullah had said he regretted not participating in the panchayat elections held in 2018.

40 bedded ICU to be set up at SMCH

India Limited for helping the State government in increasing the ICU capacity at SMCH. He said that the gesture made by the Coal India Limited under its Corporate Social Responsibility Programme would go a long way in making critical care treatment more accessible to the patients of Barak Valley Region. Health and Family Welfare Minister Keshab Mahanta, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Samir Kumar Sinha, Principal Secretary to Health and Family Welfare Anurag Goel, Director of Medical Education Dr. Anup Kumar Barman, Director (Personnel) Coal India Limited Vinay Ranjan, Executive Director (Community Development) Coal India Limited B. Sairam and others were present during the MoU signing ceremony.

Women will be allowed in NDA

Academy on the basis of their sex, which later becomes a hurdle in the career advancement opportunities for female officers. Candidates will be selected on the basis of their performance in written examination to be conducted by the Commission followed by intelligence and personality test by the Services Selection Board of candidates who qualify in the written examination. The written examination will be held for two subjects - Mathematics and General Ability Test. Both papers will be of two and half hours. Mathematics paper will be of 300 marks and General Ability Test will be of 600 marks.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika BYATIKRAM solidarity award to Dr. Mainu Devi



STAFF REPORTER

Guwahati, Sep 8: Byatikram Group in association with India Tourism North and Assistant High Commission of Bangladesh in Guwahati had successfully organized the 95th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna, Bard of Brahmaputra Dr. Bhupen Hazarika paying tributes to the legendary singer of Assam. Transcending the boundaries of country and region, Dr. Hazarika was able to establish Assamese identity on the global cultural map and introduced the

world to the music and culture of the land. The birth anniversary was attended by Manisha Hazarika, Eminent Singer, Professor & Guitarist Kamal Kotoky, Dr. Shah Mohammad Tanvir Monsur, Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Guwahati, Sankha Subhra Devbarman, the Regional Director India Tourism Northeast, Govt. of India, and many others. The cultural program was followed by a prestigious award segment: "Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. Byatikram Solidarity Award 2021" which was awarded to Dr. Mainu Devi, Eminent Singer, Professor & Writer of Assam. Earlier this award was presented to the Director-General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Bangladesh Liaquat Ali Lucky and eminent singer of Assam Dr. Sangita Kakati. Attending the program, the eminent Singer Manisha Hazarika said that "I have been a great supporter of Byatikram and attended earlier events organized by them. This time also I feel privileged to be an integral part of this journey of the celebration of Assam icon Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's Birthday. The Assistant High Commissioner Dr. Monsur said that "Bhupen Hazarika was very close to Bangladesh as well. It is a very good

initiative taken by Byatikram MASDO, such events are mandatory in order to maintain a good essence of culture in the society". Dr. Saumen Bharatiya, the President of Byatikram MASDO said that "'We have been celebrating this day for a very long time. We must follow the ideals of the Assam icon to strengthen the bond of unity and harmony in the state. The program had the song and dance performances performed by the students of "Sangeet Satra" and the disciple of Guru Ranjumoni Saikia, Guru Rinjumoni Saikia, and Guru Dhrubajyoti Pathak and the students and the disciple of Guru Jollymoni Saikia. The young artists performed a few beautiful dance performances like 'Sattriya', 'Nadu Bhangi', 'Ekalavya', 'Borgeet' and a few other group dance performances based on the popular songs of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, reminiscing about the legendary singer. The program ended with a beautiful Sattriya Presentation on 'Dashavatar' which was performed by Sattriya Exponent Jollymoni Saikia, music composed by Dr. Keshabananda Deva Goswami and Choreographed by Jollymoni Saikia.

International literacy day observed in Guwahati

STAFF REPORTER

Guwahati, Sep 8: The Byatikram Group in association with KA School of Design and Gauhati Artists Guild successfully celebrated the "International Literacy Day" on September 8 at ITA Machkhawa Seminar Hall Guwahati. The main purpose of this celebration was to promote and ensure quality education for all. Many eminent personalities such as Dr. Shah Mohammad Tanvir Monsur, Assistant High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Guwahati as the Chief Guest, Sankha Subhra Devbarman, the Regional Director India Tourism Northeast, Govt. of India as the Guest of Honour, Kishor Kr. Das, General Secretary, Gauhati Artists Guild as the Special Guest, Karishma Kakoti, Director and Founder of KA Design as the Guest Speaker, Antara Das, Faculty of IAM, Guwahati and Dr. Saumen Bharatiya, Co-Founder of Byatikram Group has graced the occasion. Marking the occasion of Literacy Day, the



program had a seminar session where the guest speaker Karishma Kakoti, Director and Founder of KA School of Design enlightened the audience with her inspiring speech. Regarding the celebration of the day, Ms. Kakoti said that "In India still many people are deprived from basic education. This is an

attempt to raise awareness and remind people about the importance of education." The Regional Director of Indian Tourism Northeast, Sankha Subhra Devbarman has also stated that "Education is our birthright. It helps to make us better human beings. By celebrating this day we can take an initiative to encourage people to take their basic education." "This day has great importance. Being literate is the pride of every human being. Our country is still struggling to increase the literacy rate. This is a small effort to showcase the significance of education among the people of our society," added Dr. Saumen Bharatiya, the Co-founder of Byatikram group. The program was attended by the students of various institutions and colleges such as IAM guwahati, Gauhati Artist's Guild, Sangeet Satra and the students of Sanskriti. At the end, the co-founder of Byatikram Group Priti Kumar Gupta thanked everyone for making the event a successful one.

Central Govt. enters into Ceasefire Agreement with NSCN (K)

STAFF REPORTER, Guwahati, Sep 8: In fulfilling the vision of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi of 'Insurgency free and prosperous North East' and in a significant boost to the Naga peace process, under the guidance of Union Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah, the Government of India has entered into a Ceasefire Agreement with National Socialist Council of Nagaland (K) Niki Group, with effect from 08th September, 2021 for a period of one year and more than 200 cadres of this group along with 83 weapons joined the peace process. The Ceasefire Agreement and Agreed Ceasefire Ground Rules were signed on 08th September, 2021. The Government of India has already signed a Framework Agreement with NSCN(IM) and Ceasefire Agreements with other Naga groups namely, NSCN(NK), NSCN(R) and NSCN(K)- Khango. The Government of India had signed an Agreement with NLFT(SD) in August, 2019 by which 88 cadres along with 44 weapons joined the mainstream of society in Tripura. In January 2020, with the signing of Bodo Agreement, more than 2,250 cadres of insurgent groups, including all factions of NDFB, along with 423 weapons and huge quantities of ammunition surrendered in Assam and joined the mainstream. On 23.02.2021, 1040 leaders/cadres of various underground Karbi groups of Assam surrendered along with 338 weapons which was followed by signing of Karbi Anglong Agreement on September 4.

NCC to reach remote and border areas of Assam : Maj Gen Kalita

STAFF REPORTER, Guwahati,

Sep 8: NCC will reach every nook and corner of the state of Assam. Efforts are in full swing to ensure that the students of remote and backward areas of Assam, particularly the border areas, benefit from NCC. A wider footprint of NCC will ensure better national integration. This vision was shared with the officers and staff of Group HQ NCC



Guwahati by Maj Gen Bhaskar Kalita, YSM, ADG NCC NER while on his maiden visit to the HQ on 08 Aug. He impressed upon the Units to work to achieve this aim. Maj Gen Bhaskar Kalita, YSM, reminiscing about his cadet days in Sainik School Goalpara, brought out how the training imparted as a NCC cadet shaped him into an enlightened and responsible citizen of the country. The general officer was presented with a Guard of Honour by cadets of 1 Assam Bn NCC. A band of St Francis De Sales Higher Secondary School was also present for the Guard of Honour. The General Officer congratulated Lt Moitree Hazarika and Third Officer Dilip Subedi for their contribution and asked others to emulate them. Brig JC Talukdar, Group Commander NCC Guwahati briefed the visiting ADG about various NCC activities and contribution of NCC cadets towards Covid 19 management, social services, community awareness programmes, nation building and efforts towards national integration.

Matru Vandana Saptah concluded in Hojai

CORRESPONDENT,

Hojai, Sep 8: Along with the rest of the Country, under the aegis of Social Welfare Department in association with Hojai District Administration the closing ceremony of week long Matru Vandana Saptah (September 1 to September 7) under Prime Minister Matru Vandana Yojana concluded here at DC's conference room in Sankardev Nagar On Tuesday. The objective of the meeting was explained by District Program Coordinator Queen Bora. Deputy Commissioner Shri Anupam Choudhury graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Addressing the officers and employees, DC Choudhury said, "We have to keep working for the public interest with integrity and a positive mindset. DC said Our work will speak up and find true places in the hearts of the people, it will be our true accomplishment and satisfaction in our working life. He further said District Administration will ensure all kinds of possible help for the successful implementation of this program. Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner honoured the best compatible child upgrade project for transparency in the successful implementation of this scheme along with Anganwadi Worker, Anganwadi Helper, Data Entry Operator, Supervisor, Lanka ICDS Block. The Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad Devashish Vaish, Additional Deputy Commissioner Raktim Barua, along with several other officials were present in the meeting.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika BYATIKRAM solidarity award to Dr. Mainu Devi

initiative taken by Byatikram MASDO, such events are mandatory in order to maintain a good essence of culture in the society". Dr. Saumen Bharatiya, the President of Byatikram MASDO said that "'We have been celebrating this day for a very long time. We must follow the ideals of the Assam icon to strengthen the bond of unity and harmony in the state. The program had the song and dance performances performed by the students of "Sangeet Satra" and the disciple of Guru Ranjumoni Saikia, Guru Rinjumoni Saikia, and Guru Dhrubajyoti Pathak and the students and the disciple of Guru Jollymoni Saikia. The young artists performed a few beautiful dance performances like 'Sattriya', 'Nadu Bhangi', 'Ekalavya', 'Borgeet' and a few other group dance performances based on the popular songs of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, reminiscing about the legendary singer. The program ended with a beautiful Sattriya Presentation on 'Dashavatar' which was performed by Sattriya Exponent Jollymoni Saikia, music composed by Dr. Keshabananda Deva Goswami and Choreographed by Jollymoni Saikia.

International literacy day observed in Guwahati

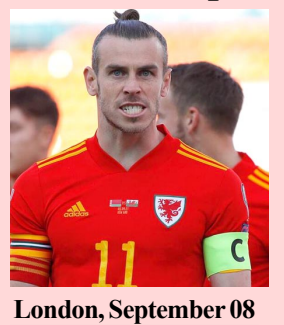
attempt to raise awareness and remind people about the importance of education." The Regional Director of Indian Tourism Northeast, Sankha Subhra Devbarman has also stated that "Education is our birthright. It helps to make us better human beings. By celebrating this day we can take an initiative to encourage people to take their basic education." "This day has great importance. Being literate is the pride of every human being. Our country is still struggling to increase the literacy rate. This is a small effort to showcase the significance of education among the people of our society," added Dr. Saumen Bharatiya, the Co-founder of Byatikram group. The program was attended by the students of various institutions and colleges such as IAM guwahati, Gauhati Artist's Guild, Sangeet Satra and the students of Sanskriti. At the end, the co-founder of Byatikram Group Priti Kumar Gupta thanked everyone for making the event a successful one.

Agricultural equipment distributed

Correspondent, Udalguri, Sep 8: The Department of Land Conservation provides agricultural equipment to 96 farmers at Mummela High School under Khalingduwar constituency in Udalguri district. Govinda Basumatary, Deputy Chief, BTR, by providing agricultural equipment among the farmers, said that the needy farmers will benefit from it. Basumatary humbly requested the beneficiaries to use the agricultural equipment properly and also requested no one to sell. All the farmers should know the proper use of these equipment which the government has provided. Out of 96 farmers of Khoirabari, Ghionola and Paneri Rajah village under Mummela VCDC, rotary tillers distributed to 14 farmers, paddy cutters distributed to 21 farmers and spray machines distributed to 61 farmers. Dilip Boro, MCLA of Khalingduwar constituency, President of Bhergaon District UPPL, Nandaram Boro, Deben Boro, Buddhiram Boro, officer of department of Land Conservation and headmistress of Mummela High School, and teachers were present at the agricultural equipments distribution program.



Gareth Bale not in favour of biennial FIFA World Cup



London, September 08

Wales captain Gareth Bale said he is not in favour of a FIFA proposal to hold the World Cup every two years. The 2022 World Cup in Qatar could be the 32-year-old's last opportunity to play in the tournament but the winger said making the competition a biennial event would diminish its appeal. "I like the tradition of every four years. It has that prestige, like the Olympics where it comes around every four years. It feels that little bit more special because it's not happening too often," Bale said. "It does make it that bit more prestigious ... I don't really like that every two years because it loses that bit of history." Manchester City's chief executive Ferran Soriano said the football calendar was already overwhelmed. "There is no space for anything," he said. "No room at all. The players cannot play more games." Nasser al-Khelaifi, the European Club Association (ECA) president and Paris St Germain chief executive, and Leeds United owner Andrea Radzizzani urged FIFA to engage with clubs on the matter. "I would like every four years but perhaps there could be a discussion around every three," Radzizzani added. A joint statement signed by Football Supporters Europe (FSE) and fans' groups from across the six confederations called on FIFA to abandon their proposals. "Such a move threatens to destroy the already fragile balance between local, domestic, continental, and international competitions and calendars," the statement read. "The game needs to change. But it needs to change for the better. We do not want or need more World Cups."

FIFA World Cup Qualifiers: Griezmann shines for France; Depay hits hat-trick



Paris, September 08

Antoine Griezmann played chief tormentor as France sprung back into life to end a five-game winless streak by beating visitor Finland 2-0 in a World Cup Group D qualifier on Tuesday. Griezmann struck in each half after his partnership with Karim Benzema bore fruit in satisfying fashion to put the world champion on 12 points from six matches at the top of the group. The Atletico forward has now scored 41 international goals to become France's joint third

US Open: Giantkiller Leylah Fernandez topples Svitolina to reach semi-finals

Washington, September 08

Leylah Fernandez has reached the US Open semi-finals, one day after turning 19. The Canadian ingenue continued her stunning run through the tournament by upsetting No 5 seed Elina Svitolina 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5) before a lively afternoon Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd squarely in her corner. Fernandez won the last two points of the tiebreaker to give her another three-set victory after knocking off past US Open champions Naomi Osaka and Angelique Kerber in her previous two matches. Fernandez, whose father was born in Ecuador and whose mother is Filipino-Canadian, becomes the youngest player to defeat two players ranked in the WTA's top five since

Serena Williams at the 1999 US Open, where the American won the first of her 23 career grand slam titles. The young Canadian, who becomes the youngest semi-finalist at Flushing Meadows since Maria Sharapova, has demonstrated ferocious ball striking, immense athleticism and a tremendous competitive zeal in her run. It was another sensational match at a tournament that keeps hitting new heights, and Fernandez said: "I honestly have no idea what I'm feeling right now. Throughout the whole match I was so nervous. "I was trying to do what my coach told me to do. Thanks to the New York crowd, cheering me on, fighting for me and never giving up, I was able to push through today." Svitolina, she's a great player, she fought for



everything, she runs for everything. I'm honoured to have a fight with her. I just told myself to trust my shots, trust that everything's going to go well. Even if I lose, I've got

to go for it, and I'm glad I did." Fernandez has become a big crowd favorite and there was a first glimpse of what has already become a trademark celebration - part exhortation to the stands,

part fist pump - when she broke Svitolina to lead 4-2 in the opening set. Svitolina, who had not dropped a set through four matches, has reached the latter stages of grand slams many times without ever really threatening to win one. It has been an excellent summer for the Ukrainian on and off the court, though, with her wedding to fellow player Gael Monfils followed by a much treasured Olympic bronze medal. Monfils cheered from the stands alongside Svitolina's British coach Andrew Bettles as the fifth seed mounted a second-set recovery, cutting out the errors and moving into a 5-1 lead. Back came Fernandez, who had chances to get back on serve at 5-4, but Svitolina quelled the teenager's fire to level the match.

Ben Stokes set to be left out of England's T20 World Cup squad



London, September 08

Ben Stokes looks set to be missing when England announce their squad for this year's T20 World Cup campaign on Thursday. The all-rounder, 30, was the star for Eoin Morgan's white-ball side when they won the 50-over World Cup in 2019 and, though less dominant in T20 cricket, was still central to their goal of uniting the titles in the United Arab Emirates next month. However Stokes is currently taking an indefinite break from cricket in order to prioritise his mental health and continue rehabilitation from finger surgery in April and England's head coach, Chris Silverwood, appears unwilling to rush a second return after Stokes briefly captained a depleted 50-over side earlier this summer. Speaking on Monday evening, Silverwood said: "I haven't spoken to him just as yet because I want to give him as much space as possible, but there are people talking to him outside of me and it is something we will be revisiting shortly." But I will not be putting pressure on him and whatever support

he needs he will get. First and foremost my only concern is for him and making sure he's OK. That's the starting point I will be at and the rest of the questions will come. "If Stokes is absent from the 15-man squad, plus a pool of up to eight travelling reserves permitted by the International Cricket Council, it would represent the latest setback to England plans after Jofra Archer was ruled out of the entire winter due to the recurrence of a stress fracture in the fast-bowler's right elbow. It may be that Tymal Mills, the Sussex quick who specialises in short-form cricket, earns his first England call-up for four years as a result of the latter. Morgan, a de facto selector, name-checked the left-arm back in June before his exceptional death bowling helped Southern Brave win the inaugural men's Hundred. The loss of Stokes is offset by the emergence of Liam Livingstone, with the big-hitting right-hander, who offers a spin option with the ball, having struck a maiden T20 century against Pakistan at Trent Bridge from a record-breaking 42 deliveries.

Oval spell proof that Jasprit Bumrah's rise is linked to Team India's emergence

New Delhi, September 08

It was as though yesterday, under the towering gaze of the Table Mountain, on a blazing Cape Town afternoon, off his 66th ball in Test cricket, Bumrah snaffled his first Test wicket. Victim No 1: AB de Villiers, with a ball that tailed inwardly off the seam from a good length outside the off-stump, snaking and bursting through the out-stretched willow of the South African. It was yesterday, on Monday afternoon, three-and-a-half years on, 1,341 days later, under the spinning gaze of London's Millennium Wheel, beside the River Thames, Bumrah completed a century of wickets. Victim No. 100: Ollie Pope, symbolically, and fittingly, blasted out by a fast in-swinging off a good length. A dervish grin spread across his face again, his arms opened wide again. Between the wickets of Villiers and Pope - not a long time in Test cricket - Bumrah has emerged as the foremost cross-format bowler in the world, undisputedly the

best fast bowler India has produced, and could potentially end up as one of the finest in the game's history. Between then and now, he has fashioned some of India's most memorable moments in Test cricket, won hordes of admirers, baptised critics into fans, made fraternal greats drool over his uncanny skills, and legendary batsmen admitting they would rather face some others than Bumrah. It's hard to think of a more celebrated cricketer since he wrapped the Test whites around him. The curiosity and novelty of his unorthodox action have blurred, yet not the wonderment and amusement when he arches into his jittery, eight-step run-up with a ball, red or white or pink, shiny or ragged, in his stiff right arm. A buzz of anticipation bubbles, possibilities begin to brim, time freezes, eyeballs converge into the almost six-footer. That's perhaps the most glorious aspect of him - 1,341 days and 101 wickets into Test cricket, he still instills the belief in the audience that they have not seen him

fully, or understood him really. There is only so much contortion a fast bowler could do with the ball, but with Bumrah, there is always a sense of the magical, the unfathomable unfolding. They have seen so much, yet he creates a belief that there is so much more to be seen. For batsmen, just when they think they have understood the craft of Bumrah, he comes up with something different, burns both their ego and morale.

US Open: Medvedev reaches third straight semi-final, to face Auger-Aliassime



Washington, September 08

World number two Daniil Medvedev dropped his first set at this year's U.S. Open but eventually overcame Dutchman Botić van de Zandschulp 6-3, 6-0, 4-6, 7-5 to reach his third straight semi-final at Flushing Meadows on Tuesday. Van de Zandschulp had enjoyed a remarkable run, taking down 11th seed Diego Schwartzman to reach his first Grand Slam quarter-final, where he fired off 20 forehand winners and was the first player here to take Medvedev past the two-hour mark. The Dutch qualifier outlasted the Russian in a 20-shot rally and then converted on break point in the fifth game

of the third set before taking it on Arthur Ashe Stadium, the first sign of weakness Medvedev had shown since arriving in New York. But the 2019 runner-up, who fired down 13 aces in the match, came roaring back in the fourth set, winning all but two of his first-serve points and never facing a break point. Van de Zandschulp fended off match point in the 10th game, holding his serve to wild applause from a rowdy New York crowd, but Medvedev responded with a quick hold and a break, helped by a double fault from the Dutchman. The match was the first real challenge of the tournament for Medvedev, who looked on track to flatten yet another competitor at the

start after getting up two breaks through the first five games. The Australian Open runner-up never faced a break point in the second set, which he wrapped up in a brisk 22 minutes, but struggled in the third set, making 13 unforced errors, and van de Zandschulp pounced. "First two sets were kind of under control. He was missing some balls, some important points," said Medvedev. "Then third and fourth set was really tough. He played top level, served really big." Was breaking the rhythm a little bit, so was really tough set. I'm really happy that in the fourth I managed to, first of all, hold my serve really easily and managed to break him in the end where I had few opportunities to do before also. "Medvedev, who lost in the semi-finals a year ago to eventual winner Dominic Thiem, is one of the main candidates aiming to thwart world number one Novak Djokovic's bid for a calendar Grand Slam - though he is not thinking about facing the 20-times major winner just yet.

Ethan Hayter takes overall lead in Tour of Britain after Ineos win team time trial

London, September 08 : Ethan Hayter is packing more into his 23rd year than most people manage and after his Ineos team won the Tour of Britain's 18km team time trial in south Wales, he added the race lead in his home Tour to six stage victories and an Olympic silver medal this season. He goes into Wednesday's extremely tough mountain stage through the north of the Principality with a slender lead over the two race favourites, Wout Van Aert and Julian Alaphilippe. The 22-year-old from south London won the overall classification at the Tour of Norway a few weeks ago, but the competition in the British Tour is at a different level and on Wednesday's long, steep finish climb up the Great Orme above Llandudno, a margin of 16sec on Van Aert and 23sec on Alaphilippe offers little room for manoeuvre. "It will be hard to control, we will be up against it, but it's better to be 16 seconds ahead than behind," said Hayter. Given the season the Londoner has enjoyed, whether or not he holds on to the lead up the Orme, before the race reaches Aberdeen on Sunday there is a good chance he will add more wins to a record which already makes him Ineos's most prolific winner this season.

Manchester City and Gareth Bale speak out against biennial World Cup

Manchester City, September 08

Manchester City and Gareth Bale are the latest voices to oppose a biennial World Cup amid widespread anger at Fifa's lack of consultation over plans to radically alter the football calendar. The proposals - which have been developed by Arsène Wenger, Fifa's chief of

global football development - would lead to a World Cup or European Championship every summer, as well as potentially no club football in October while international qualifiers are played instead. But speaking at a meeting of the European Club Association, the Manchester City chief executive officer, Ferran Soriano, warned Fifa that its proposals risked players' wellbeing. "There is

no space for anything," he said. "No room at all. The players cannot play more games, that's for sure." Bale, meanwhile, believes a World Cup every two years would rob the tournament of its "special feeling". "I like the tradition of every four years - it has the prestige, like the Olympics coming around every four years, it feels that little bit more special it's not happening too often," said



Bale, captain of a Wales squad currently seeking to qualify for the 2022

tournament in Qatar. "I don't like every two years, I feel it loses that bit of history."

Leona Maguire credits her 'plan' after leading Europe to Solheim Cup win

London, September 8 :

It wasn't quite the "Hello world" of Tiger Woods in 1996. Nonetheless, Trans World Sport's feature on 13-year-old twins in rural Ireland taking the "junior golf world by storm" at least hinted at greater things to come. Now 26, Leona Maguire's rise to the top has been steady rather



than sharp; and completely by design. Maguire was easily the star of the show as Europe retained the Solheim Cup in Toledo, Ohio. Four and a half points from a possible five made this one of the finest team golf debuts in history. "She is the one we are going to have to fear for a

long time," conceded the beaten United States captain, Pat Hurst. As Maguire joined in the celebrations on the 18th green at the Inverness Club, draped in a flag of Ireland - she is the first from that country to play in a Solheim Cup - it was fitting that her sister Lisa was by her side. "Now the whole world knows how incredible you really are," tweeted Lisa. Too

do something, I was here for a reason. Catriona [Matthew] and the vice-captains put a lot of trust in me, using me in all five matches and I wanted to win every single point I could. It has been amazing. "Maguire smiles when it is pointed out that this rather begs the question of why she did not join the party sooner. She has heard it all before. Rather than turn professional

team around me had a plan. It was always important to me to get my education. I had a fantastic four years at Duke. "I have no doubt that I wouldn't be where I am now without the choices I have made. Everything has been done meticulously, I have worked my way through every level, ticked every box and I think I stepped up another level this week. I have stuck to my guns, done everything I possibly can and it's nice to be in this position now. "Maguire does not seem to have looked on enviously at all as players younger and, to be candid, less talented, earned riches at a far younger age. "I won't be any different after this," she added. "I will keep going with the plan that I have. It has been working pretty well so far. I think I proved out there that I can compete with the best players in the world. "Maguire, the world No 43, credits Dermot Byrne, a highly rated caddie who previously enjoyed success with Shane Lowry, as a "phenomenal" influence. "I am very lucky to have him by my side," she said. There was pre-Solheim guidance, too, from Ireland's 2014 Ryder Cup captain Paul McGinley. "He just emphasised the importance of being me," said Maguire.

"Being relentless, showing no mercy and doing what I do best. I felt I did a pretty good job of all that. "Indeed, Maguire's showing included two foursome victories against the world No 1, Nelly Korda. The first day result in particular was significant; Korda and her sister, Jessica, had won both their matches in the Solheim Cup of 2019. "That gave us huge momentum," said Maguire. "It was huge to take down the Korda sisters. There wasn't a single easy match this week, everybody played such good golf. "We won the trophy but women's golf won this week. I think it has been a fantastic showcase of how good these girls are and this is week in, week out. It was great that everybody got to see it. "I am competitive, I don't like to lose. Match play is perfect for that, I gave it absolutely everything every time I played out there. It's very satisfying to hole a putt when there's people cheering against you. I was fortunate to have two great partners in Mel [Reid] and Georgia [Hall] as well, it wasn't just me. You couldn't have written it any better. "The public chapter may have started at 13 but you get the unavoidable sense there is still much, much more to come.

Serena Williams Is Not at US Open 2021, but her coach is everywhere

New York, September 8 :



Maybe it's the beard, the persistent salt-and-pepper whiskers, always trimmed to a perfect length that makes Patrick Mouratoglou initially seem more like a French existentialist philosopher rather than tennis coach. Or maybe he is a tennis venture capitalist. Or a tennis "guru," as Stefanos Tsitsipas, the Greek star, has referred to him. Depending on the moment, Mouratoglou can be all of those things, which can make it difficult for him to also be a coach, at least in the way he thinks a professional tennis coach should coach. That may seem odd for a man best known as one, a man who wrote a book about himself called "The Coach," but it is the way he always intended it to be. For years, Mouratoglou has been court-side at Serena Williams' matches. He has coached her since 2012, and was presumed to be her boyfriend for a time. Coaching her from the stands during the 2018 U.S. Open final led to one of the most notorious meltdowns of Williams' career. She is not at the U.S. Open this year, having withdrawn to recover from a hamstring injury. Mouratoglou, though, has been everywhere, just as he is at every major tennis tournament these days. There he is sitting a seat away from Tsitsipas' father and coach, Apostolos, during early-round matches against Andy Murray and Carlos Alcaraz. After a match, he grabs a microphone for one of any number of television interviews he does about the state of the modern game. Sometimes he camps out in the plaza of the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center and signs autographs for fans who know him better than they know most of the players. Last Tuesday night, he passed a sports drink onto the court of Arthur Ashe Stadium, trying to help relieve the cramps of Holger Rune, the 18-year-old Danish player who trains at his academy, as Rune fell in four sets to Novak Djokovic in the first round. At age 51, Mouratoglou has become one of the most recognizable stars in tennis, even though he was never more than a middle-rung junior player as a teenager in France. Corey Gauff, father and coach of rising American star Coco Gauff, often

wears a baseball hat with Mouratoglou's "M" logo above the brim when he watches his daughter play. He is the rare coach who has turned himself into a brand, which may mean he is better at marketing than he is at coaching. Don't ask Mouratoglou to boil down his approach to tennis into a simple strategy or formula. "My philosophy is I know nothing," he said days before the start of the U.S. Open. "I learn the person and I learn my player. A lot of coaches start with their method. There is one method per player and I need to find it. "Tennis is in an odd spot at the moment. The careers of most of its biggest stars are in repose. Its greatest men's player, Djokovic, is worshipped in his own country but has never been universally embraced. Naomi Osaka is already a tennis megastar, but she has played little this year and announced Friday night that she was going to take another break from the game. That leaves enough space for a coaching figure like Mouratoglou to fill. Tennis does this every so often, producing a coach who is a savvy marketer and business owner to become far more than a teacher and trainer, usually with the help of television cameras that pivot to them as they watch their star players. Think of Australian Harry Hopman in the 1970s and New Yorker/Floridian Nick Bollettieri in the 1980s and 1990s. His empire includes the Mouratoglou Academy, in the south of France, which houses 200 student tennis players, many of whom live and attend school and train there full time. He runs camps for another 4,000 players, including some adults, each year. Next year, he will offer an e-coaching product. He is also a chief organizer of the Ultimate Tennis Showdown, a made-for-television competition that has included several top players and has introduced a faster scoring sys-

tem for matches. There are Mouratoglou tennis centers at resorts in Costa Navarino in Greece and at Jumeirah in Dubai. He is an investor in the tennis media website Tennismajors.com. With only 24 hours in a day, he recently gave up his gigs as a commentator for ESPN and Eurosport. He is the full-time coach of just one player, Williams, but helps oversee to varying degrees the training and development of several others, including Tsitsipas, Gauff, Rune and Alexei Popyrin, the 22-year-old Australian who reached the third round of the U.S. Open. Having a portfolio as lengthy as Mouratoglou's would seem to run counter to someone whose authority flows from his stature as a coach and whose philosophy relies on spending enough time with each player to tailor his methods and strategies to the individual. That approach, Mouratoglou said, requires a deep knowledge of each player's strengths and weaknesses, both mental and physical, as well as their cultural and family background. The simplest explanation is that Mouratoglou is no longer really a coach, if he ever was one in the first place, with his work for Williams as an exception. But she may not be around for much longer. It's not a role he ever intended to play. He took it on out of necessity. His vision for his tennis empire was not going to work otherwise. As a child, Mouratoglou dreamed of becoming a top professional, but his parents told him it would be too risky and would not support the endeavor. He quit tennis at 16, pursued his education, and at 20 went to work for his father, a leading French industrialist and the owner of a major renewable energy company.

US Open: Sabalenka beats Krejckikova to set up semi-final against teenager Fernandez

Washington, September 8 :

World number two Aryna Sabalenka bulldozed her way past Barbora Krejckikova 6-1, 6-4 on Tuesday to reach the U.S. Open semi-final for the first time. Sabalenka had three double faults in the first game at Arthur Ashe Stadium but still managed to hold serve, then came back in the second game to break a listless Krejckikova, who had just five winners in the first set and struggled badly with her serve. Krejckikova, who captured her maiden major at Roland Garros this year, saw her serve broken at the start of the second set and while she got a bit of her spark back as the match went on it was too little, too late. Belarusian Sabalenka, who reached the semi-final at Wimbledon, won eight of the first 10 points in the second set and did not face a single break point after fending off five of the six she faced in the first set. She closed out the match after

one hour and 26 minutes with an ace and beamed at the cheering New York crowd. "I'm really enjoying my game here and every second on this court," said Sabalenka, who won the Madrid Open in May. In the semi-final, she will face 19-year-old Canadian Leylah Fernandez, who has defeated former champions Naomi Osaka and Angelique Kerber, as well as world number five Elina Svitolina, to reach the last four. "She's playing well, she's moving well," said Sabalenka. "I would say it's like nothing to lose for her. "Canadian teenager Leylah Fernandez continued her U.S. Open dream run on Tuesday by storming into her first Grand Slam semi-final with a battling 6-3, 3-6, 7-6(5) win over Ukrainian fifth seed Elina Svitolina. It was yet another upset win for Fernandez but hardly a shock considering she had already knocked out four-time major champion Naomi Osaka in the third round and three-time Grand Slam winner

Angelique Kerber in the fourth. If there was any lingering worry that the fearless Canadian would buckle under the mounting pressure, Fernandez removed it by prevailing in a nerve-jangling third set tiebreak 7-5 to clinch a spot in the last four. Rated one of the best players yet to win a major, Svitolina might have fancied her chances of returning to the U.S. Open semi-finals against a 73rd ranked teen. But Fernandez, who celebrated her 19th birthday on Monday, has shown that she is no ordinary teenager after registering a string of upsets that have made her a Flushing Meadows darling. "I would say it's the maple syrup," said Fernandez when asked what they were feeding them

up north to make the Canadians perform so well at the U.S. Open. In a U.S. Open hit by a number of big-name withdrawals, young talents such as Fernandez and 18-year-old Briton Emma Raducanu have stepped up to grab the spotlight in the

absence of Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal and Serena Williams. Raducanu will get her chance to follow Fernandez into the semi-finals on Wednesday when she takes on Olympic champion Belinda Bencic.



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