

The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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Cuomo faces most serious allegation yet as aide ...

02



Katarina Johnson-Thompson's medal hopes end with injury ...

07

NEWS IN BRIEF

Traffic congestion

Correspondent

Nagaon, September 13 :

Asking for a scientific solution of the ongoing traffic congestion as well as one way road connectivity in the town, Nagaon Mohkuma unit of All Assam Students' Union (AASU) today staged a sit in protest in front of the office of Deputy Commissioner. The participants shouted various slogans against those issues and demanded for a permanent solution of those hardships as early as possible. During the stir, the agitators also asked for scientific car parking to reduce the traffic congestion in the district. The organization later on submitted two separate memorandums in this regard to Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police. District president and secretary of the students' organization respectively Gauri Shankar Saikia and Amarjyoti Phukan were also present in the stir.

COVID 19 claims one more life, fresh 18 cases detected in Nagaon

Correspondent

Nagaon, September 13 :

COVID 19 claimed one more life in the district today, taking the total death toll to 104 while 18 fresh COVID cases were recorded in the district today, sources added. Abdul Rahim (65) of Roumari under Dhing PS was admitted in Nagaon BP Civil Hospital yesterday afternoon after being deteriorated with the infection of the virus. He was immediately referred to Guwahati Medical College Hospital on the same day. But he succumbed to the virus on the way to Guwahati Medical College Hospital, sources added further. Among those who tested positive for COVID 19 today, 17 were admitted to hospital as well as other COVID Care Centres while one was put under home isolation on special ground, sources added. Rapid Antigen Test was conducted on 4463 today while RT-PCR test was conducted on 91 swab samples, sources said further. It is pertinent to mention that around 17-18 people were being tested positive for COVID 19 on a daily basis for over a couple of months.

Assam Chief Minister's Signature Forging: Key Accused Arrested

Abhijit Chaliha

Guwahati, Sept 13: Guwahati Police on Sunday arrested the prime accused in a case related to the forging of the signature of Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The accused - Imran Shah Choudhury - was arrested in Delhi by a police team from Guwahati and "is in the process of being brought back". He, and another accused - Rajib Kalita - had fled from Assam to Delhi after learning an FIR had been filed. "Imran Shah Choudhury had claimed it was very easy for him to get them (four others) a contract in the PHE (public health en-



gineering) department directly via the Chief Minister's Office... he would take three per cent as commission," Assam Police said in a statement. The police said Choudhury gave the four men forged papers that they submitted to the Chief Engineer of the

PHE department. Police further said Imran Choudhury created the forged documents with the help of three people - Dilip Das, Anupam Choudhury and Prakash Basumatary. The four scanned Dr. Sarma's actual signature to create the forged document in the

shop of a fifth person - Naba Roy. All but two of the suspects have been arrested. "Two accused - Anupam Choudhury and Prakash Basumatary - are absconding. Searches are ongoing," the police said. The investigation began after an FIR was lodged by the Chief Minister's Office, stating that "a note had been given to the Chief Engineer (PHE,

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6

26 Myanmar Nationals, Going To Delhi, Arrested In Assam Over Fake Papers

AR Staff Reporter

Guwahati, September 13 :

26 Myanmar nationals, including 10 women, who were in possession of fake Indian documents, were arrested from a lodge in Assam, police said. "Acting on a secret information, the police arrested the 26 Myanmar nationals, seven of them teenagers and remaining are 20 to 28 years old, from a private lodge at Rehbari in Guwahati," according to

an official police statement. Upon interrogation, they disclosed that they belonged to Falam district of Chin state of western Myanmar and they were on their way to Delhi to study theology, police sources said. Fake Indian Aadhaar cards, voter identity cards were recovered which were prepared in Mizoram, the statement further added. Police have registered a case at the Paltan bazar police station under the Indian Penal Code, For-

eigners act, 1946, Passport (entry into India) act 1920. According to officials in Aizawl, around 11,500 Myanmar nationals of Chin stock have taken refuge in 11 districts of Mizoram since the military coup in the neighbouring country on February 1 and few of them have crossed over to neighbouring Manipur too. This is believed to be the first case of the Myanmar nationals, sheltered in Mizoram, venturing out of the northeastern states.

India Vaccinations Cross 75 Crore Doses, 43% Coverage At This Rate By December

New Delhi, September 13 :

India launched a nationwide Covid vaccination drive in January this year. New Delhi: India has delivered more than 75 crores of Covid vaccine doses since the launch of the nationwide drive in January this year, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said today. At this rate, up to 43 per cent of the country's population will be covered by December. Referring to the "milestone" of 75 crore doses, Minister Mandaviya today sought to link it to India's celebration of 75 years of its Independence -- Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav ("The great immortal celebration of freedom"). "Congratulations India! With PM Narendra Modi's 'sabka saath, sabka

vikas' mantra, the world's biggest vaccination campaign has been relentlessly creating new dimensions. # Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, in the 75th year of independence, the country has crossed 75 crore doses of vaccination," Mr Mandaviya tweeted in Hindi. To stop a third wave of the pandemic, experts have said India needs to cover at least 60 per cent of the population with both doses of the vaccine by the year end. This requires a vaccination rate of 12 million doses per day. The government had, however, announced a more ambitious target of 200 crore doses by December. The rate of inoculation managed by India over the past seven days was 7.7 million a day, leaving a shortfall of 4.3 mil-



lion doses, according to data released by the Union government. India the past 24 hours alone, India delivered 5.3 million doses, with a shortfall of 6.7 million. India recorded its first Covid case on January 30 last year. Over 3.3 crore Indians have by now been infected with COVID-19 since then, with more than 4.4 lakhs suc-

cumbing to the disease. Up to 3,74,269 people remain actively infected as of today. PM Modi launched the country's Covid vaccination programme in January this year. Two vaccines -- Covaxin and Covishield -- were deployed in the drive at first, with the government giving the nod to others later

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6

Sumit Sattwan Lakhimpur District Deputy Commissioner inspection new Marine engine for river boat arrive at Khaboli Ghar on bank of river Subansiri in Lakhimpur

CM holds crucial meeting with National Dairy Development Board

CM lays stress on welfare of milk farmers and ensure their optimum benefit from milk revolution

AR Staff Reporter

Guwahati, September 13 :

In an attempt to expedite the economic development of the milk farmers and make the dairy sector more commercially viable, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today held a meeting with the senior officials of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) at the conference room of his office in Janata Bhawan today. The meeting had a threadbare discussion on key steps that NDDB had undertaken for the development of dairy sector in the state. In the meeting it was decided that a joint company would be formed with a joint coordination of State government and NDDB which would decide on an action plan and act on that for the promotion of dairy sector. The Chairman of the company will be Animal Husbandry and

Veterinary Minister as the company will be formed with equal share holding pattern between the State government and NDDB. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma asked Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department to complete all modalities to form the company by October so that the company can start its work by November. He maintained that the steps will be taken to give a new momentum to milk revolution of the state. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma during the meeting also asked the department to make sure that as a result of reform in the dairy sector, milk farmers get the highest dividend. He also said that steps have already been taken to increase the milk production of the state to the tune of 10 lakh litre per day. He also stressed on ramping up dairy processing infrastructure to give a new impetus to value addition to milk. Animal Hus

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Assam directs Foreigners' Tribunals to not pass 'consequential orders' on detention, deportation

AR Staff Reporter

Guwahati, September 13 :

People undergo a verification process for National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Guwahati, June 26, 2019. (PTI Photo) The Assam government has directed the Foreigners' Tribunals (FTs) — which adjudicate citizenship in the state — to stick to giving "opinion" on a person's nationality, and refrain from passing any "consequential orders." A written communication from Parijat Bhuyan, deputy secretary of the Political (B) Department of the Assam government, to members of FTs on September 4, said that the State Judicial Department had carried out a performance assessment exercise of "opinions" passed by FTs,



and found that members had passed "consequential orders" while rendering opinion — something the state's Judicial Department "has viewed with seriousness". Set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1964, FTs are quasi-judicial bodies that adjudicate citi-

zenship in Assam, and are now the last recourse for the 19 lakh excluded from the contentious National Register of Citizens (NRC). Apart from NRC drop-outs, FTs have been adjudicating cases of 'doubtful voters' and other references made by the Border Police in

Assam. As per the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964, FTs were constituted to give an "opinion" on whether a person is a foreigner or not, as per Foreigners Act, 1946 (31 of 1946). However, as per the letter on September 4, the FT members were passing

"consequential orders/directions", while giving opinion. "This may not be a correct approach," the letter said. In "consequential orders", the courts can direct government departments to take action, while in an "opinion, the government decides what action needs to be taken. Speaking to The Indian Express, an official of the state's Home and Political department said that the recent letter was part of an ongoing process of "educating members of the FTs." "Some of them are not properly trained and they end up giving 'consequential orders', or extra opinion in the order. That is not their mandate," the official said. Also Read | Karbi Anglong peace deal points to importance of addressing smaller insurgencies that

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6



Assam Health Minister Keshab Mahanta Visited Nimati Ghat boat accident site and also took stock of the overall functioning of the two 108 ambulance ferry services for facilitating emergency medical help to the people of at

A two-day conference of Tourism and Culture Ministers of North Eastern States in Guwahati

Rs 200 crore has been sanctioned under PRASHAD scheme for a number of projects in the region: G. Kishan Reddy

AR Staff Reporter

Guwahati, September 13 :

"Tourism can be a game changer that can bring socio-economic change in the nation especially in NE region" said G. Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER while addressing the inaugural session of

a conference here today. The two-day conference of Tourism and Culture Ministers of North Eastern States is being organized under the Chairmanship of Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER, to discuss development of tourism and issues related to connectivity in the North Eastern Re

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6



Japan marks 10 years since triple disaster killed 18,500 people

Tokyo, September 13 : Japan has observed a moment's silence to mark the 10th anniversary of an earthquake and tsunami that killed more than 18,000 people and triggered a nuclear meltdown in Fukushima. At 2:46 pm, the moment Japan's north-east coast was struck by a magnitude 9.0 earthquake on 11 March 2011, people attending private and public service across the affected region bowed and fell silent,



some clasp their hands in prayer. In Tokyo, the prime minister, Yoshihide Suga, and the emperor, Naruhito, offered their condolences at a socially distanced ceremony at the national theatre. After the wave: a decade of grieving for a daughter lost to the Japanese tsunami Naruhito said the "unforgettable memory of the tragedy" persisted a decade on, adding: "Many of those afflicted, in spite of their having suffered from

unimaginably enormous damage, have overcome numerous hardships by helping one another." Suga said the challenges faced by survivors had been compounded by the pandemic and natural disasters, including a recent strong quake in the region, classified as an aftershock of the 2011 tremor. But he said Japan had always "overcome every crisis with courage and hope". Events to mark the anniversary of the March 2011 triple disaster have been scaled down due to the coronavirus epidemic, with many people choosing to hold small gatherings to remember friends, colleagues and family members

who died. In Iwaki, a city 50 km (31 miles) from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, Atsushi Niizuma prayed for his mother, who was killed by the tsunami. "I want to tell my mother that my children, who were all close to her, are doing well. I came here to thank her that our family is living safely," said Niizuma, a restaurateur. Much of the coastal towns and villages swept away by the tsunami have been rebuilt at an

estimated cost of ¥30 trillion (\$280bn). Mariko Odawara holds flowers as she prays to mourn the victims of the earthquake and tsunami. Roads, train lines, housing - and miles of protective seawalls have mostly been completed, but large swathes of land remain empty, with many communities struggling to restore their populations to pre-disaster levels. Ten years on, more than 40,000 people are unable to return home, most of them from areas near Fukushima Daiichi, where the triple meltdown forced the immediate evacuation of 160,000 people. While the plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power [TEPCO], stabilised the damaged reactors at the end of 2011, work has barely begun to locate and remove melted nuclear fuel - a complex decommissioning operation that is expected to take at least 40 years and cost of billions of dollars. TEPCO and the Japanese government must also decide what to do with a million tonnes of contaminated water being stored in more than 1,000 tanks on the site. TEPCO says the tanks' 1.37 million tonne storage capacity will be full by the autumn of 2022. The most likely option - slowly releasing it into the Pacific Ocean - is opposed by neighbouring countries and local fishers, who say the move would

ruin efforts to rebuild their industry and livelihoods. The anniversary came just two weeks before Fukushima hosts the start of the torch relay for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, billed by Games organisers as a showcase for recovery efforts there and in the prefectures of Miyagi and Iwate, where most of tsunami deaths occurred. Nayuta Ganbe, a resident of the city of Sendai, usually marks the anniversary in private, but said he had decided to take part in an official event this year to help process his grief. "This is the day when I lost my classmates. People died before my eyes. March 11 is a day that I hoped would never come again," the 21-year-old said. Reverend Akira Sato, who ministered at several churches in areas near the nuclear plant that are still off-limits, planned to visit one of the abandoned churches. "Together with my wife, I will silently think back over the days of the disaster and offer a prayer," he said. In Ishinomaki, where the tsunami killed an estimated 3,300 people, officials and guests attended the unveiling of a cenotaph to the victims. "As a place that was hit hard by the disaster, we want to carry forward its memory so that such a sacrifice never needs to be made again," the city's mayor, Hiroshi Kameyama, said.



Kids have fun at Shuangjiang ancient town in Tongnan District of southwest China's Chongqing

China adopts new laws to ensure only 'patriots' can govern Hong Kong

Beijing, September 13 : China's rubber stamping parliamentary body has unanimously - bar one abstention and to sustained and loud applause - approved new laws ensuring that only people it deems "patriots" can govern Hong Kong, in a move critics say signals the end of the city's remaining autonomy. The final meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC) at the annual "two sessions" political gathering also approved new domestic amendments and budgets, and the 14th five-year plan, intended to strengthen and expand China's domestic technology industry and market, and reach new GDP and population targets amid economic uncertainty and declining birth rates. In a formal vote the almost 3,000 NPC delegates approved a decision to amend Hong Kong's mini constitution, the basic law, and the electoral system to ensure that people opposed to the Chinese Communist party and its rule over Hong Kong are ineligible to sit in the city's parliament. The UK's foreign minister, Dominic Raab, was quick to criticise the move. "This is the latest step by Beijing to hollow out the space for democratic debate in Hong Kong, contrary to the promises made by China itself," he said. "This can only further undermine confidence and trust in China living up to its international responsibilities and legal obligations as a leading member of the international community." According to Chinese state media, the decision will increase the number of seats in Hong Kong's legislature from 70 to 90, and the election committee charged with choosing a chief executive from 1,200 to 1,500. The published details did not say where the extra 20 seats would come from. Hong

Kong's legislature currently includes 35 directly elected legislators, and 35 from mostly pro-Beijing representative constituencies. The changes will also establish a vetting panel responsible for "reviewing and confirming the qualifications" of committee and political candidates in line with the national security law and basic law. Early media

Wednesday that the Biden administration would "follow through on sanctions ... against those responsible for committing repressive acts in Hong Kong". The US and other countries have repeatedly objected to the crackdown with little effect. Hong Kong's government has welcomed the Beijing crackdown, including Thursday's changes. Its chief executive,



reports cited unnamed sources as saying the panel would be made up of some of the most pro-Beijing members of Hong Kong's political elite, including delegates to the NPC and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). "The meeting made the decision to approve the electoral system in Hong Kong, and won the approval from all deputies, including those from Hong Kong," said the chair of the NPC standing committee, Li Zhanshu. The decision will now go to the standing committee for further processing before it is promulgated. In the past year new laws and regulations in Hong Kong, including a draconian national security law and a concerted campaign of protest-related prosecutions, have resulted in almost every significant voice of opposition being in jail, on trial or in exile overseas. The changes have drawn international condemnation. The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, told Congress on

Carrie Lam, said on Tuesday that the decision was "timely, necessary, lawful and constitutional", and that the leadership and decision making-power of Beijing were "out of the question". After the NPC vote an editorial in the state mouthpiece, Xinhua, praised the approval and said "in some sense, Beijing had no choice". "Anti-China, destabilising forces and radical localists in Hong Kong have manipulated the electoral system to enter the governance structure ... pushed for their secessionist agenda, repeatedly challenged the central government's authority," it said, adding that "reckless foreign intervention" also warranted the change. "Hostile forces overseas have intensified their efforts to stoke 'color revolutions' in the Chinese city, seeking to turn it into an outpost to contain China's development," it said. "No central government would tolerate such chaos or ignore outside disruptors running amok on its soil."

Police surround protesters and raid compound in Yangon

Yangon, September 13 : Police in Myanmar have surrounded and arrested at least 200 students and civilians protesting against the military coup on the outskirts of Yangon, according to witnesses who said those detained were driven away in unmarked trucks. Video footage from North Okkalapa showed protesters fleeing under fire. At least one person appeared to be seriously wounded. Earlier, military forces raided a compound in a Yangon neighbourhood that is home to state railway workers who have been on strike. Riot police sealed off the Mingalar Taung Nyunt area where the Ma Hlwa Kone train station and housing for rail employees are located. Photographs on social media showed officers blocking streets and what appeared to be people escaping. At least three arrests were reported. These could not immediately be confirmed. There was no apparent resistance to the raid, and local media said the authorities forced at least some residents from their homes. The latest clampdown follows mass arrests a week ago when about 400 young people were put in prison. As demonstrations continued in towns and cities across the country, the US embassy in Yangon condemned the police action against "innocent" people. It urged security forces to withdraw and to release all of those arrested. Soldiers near a railway staff compound during the raid near Yangon on Wednesday. The military junta, led by Min Aung Hlaing, appears determined to crush

the country's general strike. Hlaing seized power on 1 February, overthrowing a civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi, whose National League for Democracy won elections in November and was about start a second term. The coup undid years of slow progress towards democracy following five decades of military rule, and sparked a wave of non-violent protests. A civil disobedience movement has united large numbers of public-sector employees - some of whom have taken to the streets - and there has been a boycott of military-owned companies. The raid on state rail workers comes days after several unions issued a joint call for a nationwide work stoppage. They said their strike would be part of a broader effort for "the full, extended shutdown of the Myanmar economy". Despite the increasingly violent tactics of security forces, protests continued on Wednesday in cities including in Mandalay, Monywa, Dawei, Myitkyina, Myittha, Bago, Kalay and Myingyan. Some were met with police force, while others were brief and free of violence. Riot police in the small southern city of Dawei fired teargas, forcing marchers to disperse and hide. There were reports of the use of rubber bullets. No injuries have been confirmed. A leading organiser of protests was arrested, according to the Dawei Watch news service. The city has become a hotspot for anti-coup protests and been subjected to heavy police crackdowns. Up to five deaths have occurred. Reuters

and the BBC carried interviews on Wednesday with police officers who had abandoned their positions and fled across the border to India. They said their superior officers had commanded them to shoot directly at protesters. "I had no choice," one officer, Tha Peng (giving only part of

his name), told . Security forces have used lethal force on numerous occasions as the situation in Myanmar has worsened. At least 60 protesters have been killed since the military takeover, according to the independent Assistance Association for Political Prisoners. Authorities have moved to shut down independent reporting through arrests of journalists and the closure of independent media outlets. On Tuesday the military regime revoked the licence of five publications including Mizzima Media, whose offices were raided. State railway workers in Yangon and across the country were among the earliest organised supporters of the protest movement, and



the state administration council, indirectly acknowledged the effectiveness of the rail strike. The state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper on Tuesday cited officials saying that rail transport between Yangon and Mandalay would resume "in the near

stun grenades and staging selective raids to arrest people. The Democratic Voice of Burma news service reported on Wednesday that the anti-military People's party said a protester detained at Insein prison in northern Yangon had died and that his body was left unclaimed.

Cuomo faces most serious allegation yet as aide says governor groped her

New York, September 13 : An aide to Andrew Cuomo says the New York governor groped her in the governor's residence, marking the most serious allegation among those made by a series of women against the embattled Democrat, according to a report published in a newspaper Wednesday. The Times Union of Albany reported that the woman, who was not identified, was alone with Cuomo when he closed the door, reached under her shirt and fondled her. The newspaper's reporting is based on an unidentified source with direct knowledge of the woman's accusation. The governor had summoned her to the Executive Mansion in Albany, saying he needed help with his cellphone, the newspaper reported. The three-term governor faces harassment allegations from five other women, including former aide Charlotte Bennett. The 25-year-old's attorney, Debra Katz, said in a statement released Wednesday evening that the

latest allegations are "eerily similar" to Bennett's own story. Bennett has said she was summoned to the Capitol on a weekend and left alone with Cuomo, who asked her for help with his cellphone. She has said Cuomo asked about her sex life and propositioned her. "The governor's sexual harassment, which Charlotte Bennett reported, was buried by his aides and never properly investigated," Katz's statement said. "Because of their enablement, another young woman was left in harm's way." The woman whose account was reported by the Times Union also indicated that Cuomo had touched her and made flirtatious comments on multiple occasions. According to the newspaper, her allegations came to light as Cuomo staffers watched the governor's 3 March press conference, his first after initial sexual harassment claims made in late February. In it, he denied ever touching a woman inappropriately. The aide subsequently became emotional, and



told a female supervisor who approached her about her encounters with the governor. At least one supervisor reported the allegation to an attorney in the governor's office Monday, the newspaper reported. Prior to Wednesday's report, the allegations against Cuomo include a combination of claims that he made the workplace uncomfortable for young women, ranging from

flirtatious comments to a nonconsensual kiss. At least five accusers - Bennett, Lindsey Boylan, Anna Liss and Karen Hinton - worked for the governor in Albany or during his time in Bill Clinton's cabinet. Another, Anna Ruch, told the New York Times that she met Cuomo at a friend's wedding. The three-term governor has denied inappropriately touching anyone, but said he is sorry if he made anyone uncomfortable and didn't intend to do so. "As I said yesterday, I have never done anything like this. The details of this report are gut-wrenching," Cuomo said through a spokesperson Wednesday evening. "I am not going to speak to the specifics of this or any other allegation given the ongoing review, but I am confident in the result of the attorney general's report." The state attorney general, Letitia James, has put together an investigative team to probe Cuomo's workplace conduct. The governor has called on lawmakers and the public to await the results of that investigation.



People head to a mass COVID-19 vaccination site at the United Center in Chicago, the United States

Co-Vice-Chairman Ramen Deka reviews projects

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sep 13: Ramen Deka, Co-Vice-Chairman of State Innovation and Transformation Aayog (SITA), held a review meeting with concerned institutions of its ongoing projects as well as project proposals today at his office at Janata Bhawan. A detail discussion were held on the projects Samridhi Poultry which is to be implemented by the Assam Agriculture University (an MoU is yet to be signed), Development of Solar Power Driven Water Treatment Plant to be implemented by Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati,



Dying Rivers of Assam: A study on degradation of selected rivers and riverine ecosystems in the Brahmaputra Valley for developing a community based action plan for their rejuvenation to be implemented by Aaranyak and Project proposal on Organic Solid Waste Management for Guwahati City to be implemented by Department

of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. All the concerned institutions had a brief powerpoint presentation of their respective projects to the Co-Vice-Chairman. Ramen Deka, Co-Vice-Chairman is of the opinion that without technology there can be no success. He stressed that all the work carried out should be tech-

nically sound and remedial measures should be given the utmost importance in all the projects. Some of the projects like solid waste management which needs quick remedial measures, he said, will be discussed with concerned authorities to be successfully implemented. In the review meeting, Assam Agriculture University was represented by Dr B.N Bhattacharjee, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati by Professor M.K Purkait, Aaranyak by Partha Jyoti Das and Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati was represented by Prof. Ajay Kalamdhad.

CM holds crucial meeting with National Dairy Development Board

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 13: In an attempt to expedite the economic development of the milk farmers and make the dairy sector more commer-



cially viable, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today held a meeting with the senior officials of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) at the conference room of his office in Janata Bhawan today. The meeting had a threadbare discussion on key steps that NDDB had undertaken for the development of the dairy sector in the state. In the meeting it

was decided that a joint company would be formed with a joint coordination of the State government and NDDB which would decide on an action plan and act on that for the promotion

of the dairy sector. The Chairman of the company will be Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Minister as the company will be formed with an equal share holding pattern between the State government and NDDB. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma asked the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department to complete all modalities to form the company by October so that the

company can start its work by November. He maintained that the steps will be taken to give a new momentum to the milk revolution of the state. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma during the meeting also asked the department to make sure that as a result of reform in the dairy sector, milk farmers get the highest dividend. He also said that steps have already been taken to increase the milk production of the state to the tune of 10 lakh litre per day. He also stressed on ramping up dairy processing infrastructure to give a new impetus to value addition to milk. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Minister Atul Bora, Additional Chief Secretary Maninder Singh, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Samir Kumar Sinha, Chairman NDDB Meenesh Shah, Regional Head Jignesh Shah and other senior officers of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department were present at the meeting.

Ph.D. Degree



Mr. Devo Kanta Pegu has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Bioinformatics by the Dibrugarh University for his thesis entitled "Modeling and Molecular Dynamics Analysis of Helicobacter pylori proteins and search for target by blind Docking approach". He carried out his research work under the guidance of Professor Tazid Ali, Deptt. of Mathematics, Dibrugarh University and Dr. Rajeev Sarmah, Associate Professor of Allied Health Sciences, Assam Down Town University. He is the Son of Mr. Tongkeswar (Hiranya) Pegu and Mrs. Hirawati Kutum Pegu of Dighali Chapari Village, Kulajan, Dhemaji. He is also the younger brother of Mr. Mohan Pegu and Mrs. Kunjalata Pegu and elder brother of Mr. Hiron Pegu and Ms. Chinilata Pegu.

Ex-NDFB Welfare Society appealed to take initiative for Post Accord

Correspondent

Udaluri, Sept 13: A press statement was released today by Udaluri District Ex-NDFB Welfare Society about the Post Accord condition of ex-NDFB. In the statement, president of Udaluri District Ex-NDFB Welfare Society, Kamal Basumatary and secretary Bishnu Basumatary asked the government why are Ex-NDFBs being neglected? After two years passed since the BTR accord between NDFBs, ABSU, Assam Govt and Indian Govt as the outcome of the

prolonged dedication and commitment solely of the NDFB. However, in the MoS of BTR accord there are some clauses, inter alia, 9.2(iv) recruitment of Ex-NDFBs in appropriate Govt jobs as per eligibility, 9.2(i) lump sum payment of ex-gratia, 8.4 financial compensation of Rs 5 lakhs to each next of kin of persons who lost their lives in the struggle and 10.2 recruitment of Boro youths in security forces. But still Ex-NDFBs are being deprived of all the rights, dues and provisions recorded in the mentioned MoS of the Ac-

cord. As per clause 9.2(i) the amount of four lakhs INR deposited in the bank account of Ex-NDFB members by the Govt in the last January 2021 as the fixed deposit for the period of three years is also a rather conditional one. Moreover the so-called stipend of INR six thousand per month, we have got only three months whereas the ninth month is going on. So it is very difficult for us to survive. Therefore Govts of BTR, Assam and India should take initiative before long to give proper rehabilitation to Ex-NDFB

cadres through jobs of any kind III or IV grade or others. Otherwise the situation will compel us to go back to the former stream in which Govts themselves must be held accountable and responsible. On the other hand, Ex-NDFB Welfare Society is also observing 33rd Martyr's day of NDFB on 14th September at the home of the 1st Martyr B. Bangbwrgrwa then Action Commander. With a one day long program the Ex-NDFB organization will pay homage to all the martyrs of the organization.

ADG, BSF (Eastern Command), Kolkata Reviewed the operational readiness of BSF Guwahati Frontier

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 13: Y B Khurainia, IPS, Additional Director General, BSF Eastern Command visited Frontier Headquarter BSF Guwahati on September 13 to review the current security situation. He was briefed by S.S Gehlot, Inspector General, Guwahati Frontier on the operational preparedness and measures to combat various challenges on the Indo-BD border. Khurainia, will also visit the area of responsibility of FTR HQ BSF



Guwahati from 14 to 16 Sept' to review the border domination. During this period he will interact with the ground level troops and commanders, who are performing duty at Indo-BD international Border and evaluate the real time

problems faced by the troops deployed on ground in border domination. During his visit to Guwahati Ftr Khurainia, IPS also met Himanta Biswas Sarma, the Chief Minister of Assam and Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta,

DGP Assam police and discussed about various aspects of border management at Indo-BD border in the state of Assam. During interaction with officials of Guwahati Frontier, Khurainia, lauded the efforts made by the BSF Guwahati Frontier on fight against the Covid pandemic and operational preparedness along the border. He also mentioned that BSF is doing a commendable job and effectively guarding the international border and also taking up several welfare measures for overall improvement of the force.

Oath taking ceremony of Marwari Yuva Manch Hojai unit



CORRESPONDENT

Hojai, Sept 13: The oath taking ceremony of the newly selected office-bearers for sessions 2021-2022 of Hojai Unit of Marwari Yuva Manch was held at Rupkonwar Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla Smriti Bhawan in Hojai on Sunday. The oath was administered by former president of the Unit Shri Ramesh Munda as per the constitution of All In-

dia Marwari Yuva Manch to the new president Navin Bhimsaria, vice president Binay Sarawagi; secretary Ashish Agarwal; joint secretary Abhi More; treasurer piyush kayal and Sanjay Murarka; cultural secretary Nikhil Kumar Munda and Prateek Agarwal; blood coordinator Subham Kejriwal, Vishal Kayal and Karan Pansari; sports secretary Subham Sarawagi, Bikram Bhimsaria and Mohit

Kayal; bhawan incharge Ashish Sharma and Rohit Sharma and ex-president Amit Bhimsaria. On the other hand, the members of Marwari Samellan Hojai branch comprising of branch president Pradip Kumar Sureka, vice president Niranjan Sarawagi, general secretary Ramesh Munda, joint-secretary Praveen Sarawagi and executive member Manoj Kejriwal and Sunil

Bhimsaria felicitated and congratulated the newly formed body of MYM Hojai unit. Both the units expressed their willingness to work together for the welfare of the society as a whole.

Tribal Development programmes in Assam must be prioritised: Arjun Munda

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 13: Arjun Munda, Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs, accompanied by Pravir Krishna, Managing Director, TRIFED and other senior officials, successfully concluded a two-day visit to

Sonitpur district administration announces slogan writing competition

Correspondent

Rangapara, Sept 13: As part of a campaign to pro-

Assam on September 13. The Union Minister, who addressed a Press Conference at Assam Administrative Staff College today, said that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is committed towards proper implementation of tribal development programmes in the

mote tourism in Tezpur, the Sonitpur district administration has launched a slogan writing competition which is open for all persons and students above Class XIII. Interested participants may submit entries in either English or Assamese language to issdctezpur@gmail.com before September 25, 2021. Participants should mention their names, age and mobile number correctly along with their submissions. Winners will be felicitated on September 27, 2021 on the occasion of World Tourism Day. Top ten entries in each category will receive certificates from the administration and top three in each category will receive cash prize and certificate of Rs. 5000, Rs.3000 and Rs. 2000.

State and he also informed about future plans for augmenting tribal development here. While addressing the media persons, the Union Minister informed that his Ministry's focus is on bringing holistic development of tribal inhabited areas through marketing

and promoting tribal and ethnic products at national and international levels while keeping their organic and natural processing ways intact. He said that the Tribal Affairs Ministry coordinates with around 40 ministries and has been working with a

coordinated approach for all-round development of the tribal areas in the country. Another 184 Van Dhan Kendras will be established in Assam as discussion held with the Hon'ble Chief Minister of the State on Sunday, he said.

Pre-revision activities begins in Tezpur Election district

Correspondent

Rangapara, Sept 13: Along with the rest of the country, the process of Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral rolls, with January 1, 2022 as the qualifying date has begun in Tezpur Election district. This was announced by Deputy Commissioner and District Election Officer Bhupesh Chandra Das at a

press meet held at the conference hall of the Deputy Commissioner's here today. As per the schedule announced by Election Commission of India, the draft electoral rolls will be published on November 1, 2021 after completion of the pre-revision activities on October 31, 2021. The period for filing claims and objections is from November 1, 2021 to

November 30, 2021. All claims and objections will be disposed of by December 20, 2021 and the final electoral rolls will be published on January 5, 2022. As part of the Special Summary Revision, the pre-revision activities have already begun in Tezpur Election district. During this period, removal of DSEs/multiple entries, logical errors, etc., along with ra-

tionalization of polling stations, proper formation of sections and disposal of all pending forms, and other related activities will be carried out. The update of electoral rolls is done throughout the year through nvsp.in. All new voters who will be attaining 18 years of age as on January 1, 2022 are eligible to apply for inclusion of names in the electoral roll.

Aruhan Samaj-Cultural Samannay Award to Pankaj Kalita

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 13: Pankaj Kalita, a noted cultural worker, secretary-general of Assam Cultural Mission and forest range officer currently posted at Sonitpur forest divisional office, Govt of Assam, has been honoured with 'Aruhan Samaj-Cultural Samannay

Award' by Aruhan Artists Guild at a cultural function held at Uzan Bazar-based Kumar Bhaskar Natya Mandir auditorium on September 8 to celebrate the 95th anniversary of legendary singer Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. Dilip Nath, president of Aruhan Artists Guild, delivered the welcome speech on the oc-

casion. Retired professor Bhabani Prasad Adhikari; All Assam Primary Teachers Sanmilani general secretary Ratul Goswami; Guwahati Zilla Bodo Sahitya Sabha president Lohit Brahma; All Assam Journalists Forum chief editor Nakul Takukdar and a host of other dignitaries attended the function.

The only son of late Satish Kalita and Manumati Kalita of Hajo Gayantola in Kamrup district (R), Pankaj Kalita has been actively involved in social work, literary, cultural and sport activities since his student days. A resident of Maligaon here, he has been rendering yeoman's service to the cause of public welfare



in spite of his busy official schedule.

AJYCP submits memorandum to the education minister

Correspondent

Biswanath Chari, Sept 13: The Dakshin Chari regional committee of Assam Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) submitted memorandum to the education minister of Assam through the office of the deputy commissioner, Biswanath on Monday with a demand to increase intake capacity in Biswanath College for admission into HS and BA courses. Due to the limited seat capacity, the Biswanath College being the only college of the entire area is unable to provide admissions to all the students who have passed out



the HS and HSLC examination this year. If the seat capacity of Biswanath College increases, then a large number of students can opt for higher education at their doorstep. The student body demanded that the education minister look

into the educational issue of the student fraternity and to provide a helpful hand in this regard. The programme was attended by Jatin Bora, president, Matrusman Bhuyan, Sourav Bora, Ashim Bharali, Hiraikyoti Hazarika along with others.

Executive meeting of Biswanath AASU held

Correspondent

Biswanath Chari, Sept 13: The first executive meeting of Biswanath subdivision AASU was held with support of Jingiya regional committee at the Guesthouse of Jingiya with Bhaskar Samuwa; president of Biswanath subdivision

AASU in the chair on Sunday. Rupam Das, state executive, addressed the gathering and delivered a lecture on organizational issues. The meeting was also addressed by Bikram Bikash Bora, Ajmat Sheikh, Nayan Bora along with others. Many important resolutions for strengthening

the Biswanath subdivision AASU were taken. Two student leaders Hiraikyoti Bora and Nabajyoti Bora were expelled from the AASU as per the unanimous decision of the meeting. Nitu Bora, secretary of Biswanath sub-division AASU conducted all the proceedings of the meeting.

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Covid-19 and children

Few issues seem to provoke such a range of opinions among experts as Covid-19 and children. When the WHO-China Joint Mission first reported on the virus in February 2020, one of the nuggets of good news was that children seemed to be relatively unaffected by it. This was surprising; like other acute respiratory infections, coronaviruses usually spread among and infect younger children. China's strong suppression of the virus meant cases remained extremely low, preventing the virus spreading into other age groups. At the time, Covid appeared to be a disease of elderly and overweight people and those with underlying health conditions. One year into the pandemic, richer countries embarked on a mass vaccination programme to protect not only older age groups but entire adult populations. The success of vaccines in weakening the link between hospitalisations and deaths is clear (although the link is not completely broken). With vaccinated adults now largely protected from the severe consequences of Covid-19, the questions for children have changed. In the UK, there has been a surge of infections among children and adolescents. These will only increase when the school year starts again in the autumn. Is it better for children to catch Sars-CoV-2, as they do the common cold, or is it better to protect them through vaccinations, and measures such as social distancing and face masks? This is the question many countries are now asking. Some may worry about potential side-effects from vaccines, but these are extremely rare and clearly outweighed by the benefits. Fortunately, healthcare regulators in the UK and US have approved the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine as safe for use in children between 12 and 15. Already 25% of 12- to 15-year-olds across the US are fully vaccinated, while a third of them have received one dose. Elsewhere, Israel, Italy and France are steaming ahead with vaccinating children in this age group, while Germany gives parents the ability to "opt-in" for the vaccine based on informed consent. The current approach in England seems to be to let teenagers get on with it and see what happens once they're infected. The result will be an uncontrolled epidemic among younger age groups. Some British scientists aren't alarmed by this, pointing to other diseases such as seasonal flu, which cause more hospitalisations among children than Covid-19. By contrast, paediatricians in the US argue that exposing children to a new virus with potentially long-term complications is a major risk that should be avoided. Covid-19 was among the top causes of child death in the US in 2020. Though I'm not a paediatrician, I struggle to understand how a disease considered risky to adolescents in the US can be considered innocuous in Britain. Children under 12 are a trickier challenge for scientists and governments. No vaccine has been approved for use in this age group, although the results from early trials are promising. In Israel and the US, health authorities hope that vaccinating enough adults will suppress Covid-19 among children. While this seemed a valid approach against earlier variants, it may prove more difficult with Delta. The Delta variant is more transmissible. It has pushed up the threshold for herd immunity; for this to be achieved, some estimate that as much as 98% of the population would need to be vaccinated. Paediatricians appear split over how dangerous Covid-19 is in younger children, too. Long Covid is a major risk here: recent studies suggest it can cause long-term illness, physiological changes to the body and issues with the heart, kidneys, blood vessels and lungs in children. How common is long Covid in children, and will those who have it get better? Are some children at greater risk than others? Answers to these questions will emerge over time as science progresses, but there is currently no obvious consensus. The prevailing view is that long Covid is a major challenge - but the details are still unclear. For all countries, schools are the major minefield that lies ahead. It is hard to understate the harms endured by children during the pandemic. Sexual and domestic abuse, child hunger and mental health problems have all risen. The widening education gap will take years to close. Children need to be in school for their social, mental and physical wellbeing. But Delta means children now transmit the virus more than before, meaning clusters are likely to emerge, particularly in secondary schools. There are things that can be done. Improving ventilation can help stop the spread of both Covid-19 and seasonal infections. Current mitigation measures in schools are also far from ideal; weekly lateral flow testing is uncomfortable and voluntary, which has resulted in low uptake. And requiring children to wear masks all day when adults have been told in England they can go to nightclubs without masks seems contradictory and unfair. The alternative of letting the virus spread among young people seems reckless. England is alone in doing this. It is acting as a laboratory for other countries, which are watching to see what happens before they decide on their own policies towards children. The UK government's comparatively relaxed attitude may also create a petri dish for Covid variants. The consequence could be a new variant that makes our current vaccines less effective, or has more severe outcomes for unvaccinated children. Will Covid become a disease of the young? Will children who suffered under restrictions for 18 months now have to face a wave of infections with unknown consequences? There's no good path forward until we have approved vaccines for all age groups. Until then, we need to continue to have an open and honest debate about how to put children first, protect their health, education, and general welfare, and listen and learn from other countries discussing this same issue.

To mask or not to mask? That shouldn't be the question

England has now entered the strangest phase to date of its Covid experience. Though the health secretary insisted, in a tweet he eventually deleted, that we must not "cower from" the virus, the contradiction between the lifting of restrictions and most epidemiological wisdom sits in the midst of our national life like a dull headache. The same prime minister who promised his ideological soulmates a new dawn of liberty is now embracing vaccine passports, and reportedly facing the prospect of defeat in the House of Commons. Meanwhile, references to "personal responsibility" have brought a new unease to everyday life, as the government reverts to type and does what Tory administrations usually do, transferring risk from the state to individuals. Wearing a mask now feels a bit like putting on a badge. On what the rightwing press rather laughably called "freedom day", I did some shopping at my local Asda, observed a masked-to-unmasked ratio of about 70:30, and sensed - or thought I sensed - the crackle of judgment and mistrust, passing between those who were sticking with face coverings and those who had decided to go without. Two days later, I was in Stoke-on-Trent, where the ratio in a huge Tesco was more like 60:40 in favour of masking up. Despite announcements over the PA advising people to behave as if restrictions were still in place, the fact that some were sticking to the old rules while others were not felt like a matter of dull normality. Only when I spoke to people did something more uneasy reveal itself: an apparent belief that things were now so messed up that whether individuals were taking precautions or not was really not that significant. One woman I met worked in a care home, and said that she was going to carry on wearing a mask in enclosed spaces. But she had no faith that her behaviour, in tandem with vaccinations, was going to play a part in returning us to our pre-Covid state of innocence: "I don't think we're ever going to go back to normal," she said, with a shrug. Meanwhile, the versions of reality presented by the



old and new media continue to explode with polarised fury. On the right, a loathing of the state has fused with hostility to vaccines, and everything is tied together by the belief that those who want restrictions to endure are not just killjoys but enemies of freedom. Some on the left, by contrast, have seemed to

John Harris

want restrictions to go on for as long as possible: not just, perhaps, to keep the virus under control but also because life in such conditions has ticked so many of their political and philosophical boxes: a huge expansion of the state, the primacy of "the science", clear benefits for the environment, and an insistence on collective sacrifice. With all this has come often swingeing judgment of "Covidiot", and the assumption that going maskless or being sceptical about getting jabbed puts you in the same category as irate callers to talk radio stations and the dreaded Laurence Fox. Somewhere in between these two ideological camps are millions who are too easily forgotten: those for whom lockdowns and stringent restrictions have not been the subject of a gleeful ideological war but a byword for misery and strife. Many of these people have had to leave home every day to work in

dangerous circumstances. Some live in overcrowded conditions, and as part of dysfunctional and abusive families. Small business owners have either had their livelihoods shredded or live with the fear they are about to go under; for millions of young people, some of the most basic necessities of life have been put in hold for unbearably long stretches of time, with no sign of concern from the people at the top. In that context, even if some people are simply being irresponsible, I understand why others have quietly delighted in binning their masks, and greeted the end of most restrictions in England with a sigh of relief. A couple of months ago, I was in the Alum Rock area of Birmingham, where I met a twentysomething British-Asian man who talked about his life and the shared experiences of his community before and during the pandemic. He emphasised the state's neglect of local needs, and his awful experiences at the hands of the police - and went from there to his antipathy to getting jabbed, even though the local Covid death toll had been grim. He was, it seemed, a perfect example of another overlooked part of the population: those who have been sceptical about both restrictions and vaccination, not out of ideological zeal, but because they have an understandably cynical and fearful

view of the state and its edicts, and making oneself known to the authorities. Thinking of government as essentially benign and well-intentioned is, perhaps, the preserve of a certain section of the middle class. If you have had any experience of the nastier aspects of policing, the benefits system or this country's immigration regime, you too might balk at the idea of downloading the official Covid app, dutifully turning up for your injection or registering Covid tests. In large part, this country's dire experience of Covid-19 is a result of awful government incompetence. But the past 16 months have also shown that societies ridden with inequality and institutional prejudice cannot cope with any convulsive crisis. The basic point is almost banal, but it seems to elude far too many people: if too many are insecure and isolated, and successive governments have made a point of kicking them around, they will either not be able to do what they are told, or treat edicts from the top and disapproval from those living more privileged lives with the utmost cynicism. Given that the worst effects of Covid have been visited on our most marginalised communities, such behaviour may look irrational, but that tension is hardly surprising. There is a very persuasive school of thought that claims Covid will turn out to have been a dress rehearsal for the imminent worsening of the climate emergency. Both crises, after all, require us to follow instructions from the top, move in lockstep and engage in difficult acts of self-sacrifice. As things stand, some people can do those things, but others cannot. The danger is that, as one crisis follows another, amid the individualistic noise generated by social media and politicians happy to speak the language of blame, the noise of swingeing personal judgment will be much louder than any voices pointing out that our social model is now broken beyond repair. Dysfunctional societies usually produce deeply dysfunctional outcomes: until we start to address that basic modern truth, sneering and finger-pointing will only make things immeasurably worse.

The woman who predicted global warming in the 1800s

... The cylinder containing carbon dioxide got much hotter than the one with air, and Foote realized that carbon dioxide would strongly absorb heat in the atmosphere. Foote's discovery of the high heat absorption of carbon dioxide gas led her to conclude that "... if the air had mixed with it a higher proportion of carbon dioxide than at present, an increased temperature" would result...

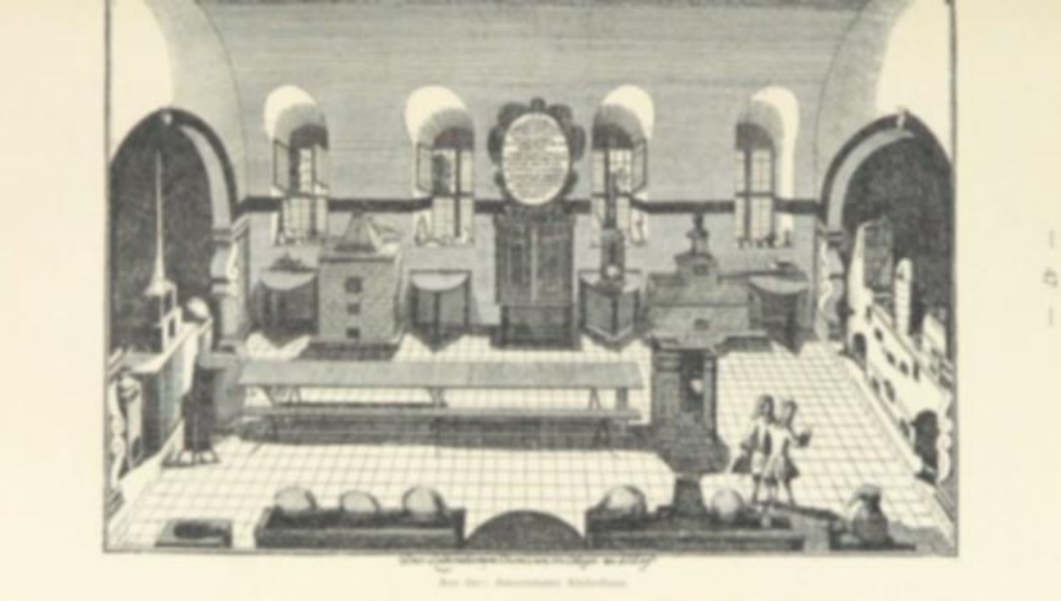
heat that he "made several hundred experiments with this single substance." Tyndall also recognized the possible effects on the climate, saying "every variation" of water vapor or carbon dioxide "must produce a change of climate." He also noted the contribution other hydrocarbon gases, such as methane, could make to climate change, writing that "an almost inappreciable addition" of gases like methane would have "great effects on

bon dioxide-induced climate change was made by Svante Arrhenius, a Swedish scientist and Nobel laureate. In 1896, he calculated that "the temperature in the Arctic regions would rise 8 or 9 degrees Celsius if carbon

Sylvia G. Dee

dioxide increased to 2.5 or 3 times" its level at that time. Arrhenius' estimate was likely conservative: Since 1900 atmo-

continues ... it must undoubtedly cause a very obvious rise in the mean temperature of the earth." Ekholm also noted that carbon dioxide acted in a layer high in the atmosphere, above water vapor layers, where small amounts of carbon dioxide mattered. All of this was understood well over a century ago. Initially, scientists thought a possible small rise in the Earth's temperature could be a benefit, but these scientists could not



climate. "By the 1800s, human activities were already dramatically increasing the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Burning more and more fossil fuels - coal and eventually oil and gas - added an ever-increasing amount of carbon dioxide into the air. The first quantitative estimate of car-

spheric carbon dioxide has risen from about 300 parts per million to around 417 ppm as a result of human activities, and the Arctic has already warmed by about 3.8 C (6.8 F). Nils Ekholm, a Swedish meteorologist, agreed, writing in 1901 that "The present burning of pit-coal is so great that if it

envision the coming huge increases in fossil fuel use. In 1937, English engineer Guy Callendar documented how rising temperatures correlated with rising carbon dioxide levels. "By fuel combustion, man has added about 150,000 million tons of carbon dioxide to the air during the past

half century," he wrote, and "world temperatures have actually increased" In 1965, scientists warned U.S. President Lyndon Johnson about the growing climate risk, concluding: "Man is unwittingly conducting a vast geophysical experiment. Within a few generations he is burning the fossil fuels that slowly accumulated in the earth over the past 500 million years." The scientists issued clear warnings of high temperatures, melting ice caps, rising sea levels and acidification of ocean waters. In the half-century that has followed that warning, more of the ice has melted, sea level has risen further and acidification due to ever increasing absorption of carbon dioxide forming carbonic acid has become a critical problem for ocean-dwelling organisms. Scientific research has vastly strengthened the conclusion that human-generated emissions from the burning of fossil fuels are causing dangerous warming of the climate and a host of harmful effects. Politicians, however, have been slow to respond. Some follow an approach that has been used by some fossil fuel companies of denying and casting doubt on the truth, while others want to "wait and see," despite the overwhelming evidence that harm and costs will continue to rise. In fact, reality is now fast overtaking scientific models. The megadrought and heat waves in the western U.S., record high temperatures and zombie fires in Siberia, massive wildfires in Australia and the U.S. West, relentless, intense Gulf Coast and European rains and more powerful hurricanes are all harbingers of increasing climate disruption. The world has known about the warming risk posed by excessive levels of carbon dioxide for decades, even before the invention of cars or coal-fired power stations. A rare female scientist in her time, Eunice Foote, explicitly warned about the basic science 165 years ago.

Asia makes watchful start Nikkei nears 30-year high

Sydney, Sep 13: Asian shares made a guarded start on Monday to a week packed with important U.S. and Chinese economic data and the launch of Apple's latest iPhones, while the Nikkei was tantalisingly near heights last visited in 1990. Japanese shares have been on a tear as hopes for fresh stimulus from a new Prime Minister saw the Nikkei (N225) surge 4.3% last week. The Topix (.TOPX) has already scaled that peak, while the Nikkei turned hesitant early on Monday. Reports U.S. Democrats were considering proposals to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy, while not exactly new, could make for a cautious mood. Adding to concerns about Beijing's regulatory crackdown was an FT report it aimed to break up Alipay, the hugely popular payments app owned by Jack Ma's Ant Group. China releases a swath of data on retail sales, industrial output and urban investment on



Wednesday that analysts fear will show a further slowdown in the world's second biggest economy. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan (.MIAPJ0000PUS) eased 0.1%, after bouncing on Friday. Both Nasdaq futures and S&P 500 futures were up 0.3%, after running into profit taking last week. Wall Street suffered its worst run since February as doubts about the resilience of the global

economic recovery hurt former reopening darlings in energy, hotels and travel. Apple (AAPL.O) will be a focus after sliding on Friday following an unfavourable court ruling related to its app store, just days before it unveils the new iPhone line up. Also highlighting are readings on U.S. consumer prices on Tuesday, which is expected to see core inflation ease a touch to 4.2%, while retail sales on Thursday

could show another decline as the spread of the Delta variant spooks shoppers. The importance of Philadelphia Fed President Patrick Harker who told the Nikkei he wanted to start tapering this year just in case the spike in inflation proved more than transitory. Harker favoured scaling the tapering down over an 8 to 12 month period, which is longer than some hawks have touted. "Global markets are fixated on the timing of tapering of QE by central banks, particularly the Fed," said analysts at ANZ in a note. "That's unsurprising, given the support that the extra liquidity has provided to equities and assets more generally," they added. "The latest guidance from senior FOMC officials is that tapering is still very much on the agenda this year, but is unlikely to be announced until November." The tension is only set to mount ahead of the Fed's next meeting on Sept. 21-22, and played a part

in nudging U.S. 10-year yields up toward a major chart bulwark around 1.38% last week. The drift higher in yields and the general air of risk aversion helped the dollar recoup some losses last week and left its index at 92.624, off the recent low of 91.941. The euro has faded back to \$1.1810, from the September top of \$1.1908, and risks breaking support under \$1.1800. The dollar remains sidelined on the yen at 109.87, having spent an entire month trapped in a tiny range of 109.40-100.46. Gold has also had trouble breaking higher and was last flat at \$1,786 an ounce, after shedding 2.1% last week when it repeatedly failed to clear resistance above \$1,1830. Oil prices were a shade firmer on Monday supported by growing signs of supply tightness in the United States as a result of Hurricane Ida. Brent added 44 cents to \$73.36 a barrel, while U.S. crude rose 47 cents to \$70.19.

Kansas City Southern plans to accept Canadian Pacific's \$27 bln bid

Mexico, Sep 13: Kansas City Southern (KSU.N) said on Sunday it planned to accept Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd's (CPTO) \$27.2 billion cash-and-stock acquisition offer as superior to its \$29.6 billion deal to sell itself to Canadian National Railway Ltd (CNR.TO). Canadian National now has until the end

its offer was lower than Canadian National's, according to people familiar with the deliberations. There is a silver lining for Kansas City Southern. The Canadian Pacific offer it now plans to accept, worth \$300 per share in cash and stock, is better than the \$275 per share cash-and-stock deal that the two companies had

quest for comment on its next steps. The STB said last month that even though the overlap of Canadian National's and Kansas City Southern's networks was confined to 70 miles (113 km) between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, the two railways operated parallel lines in the central portion of the United States and



of Friday to submit a better offer or lose its deal with Kansas City Southern. At stake is the creation of the first direct railway linking Canada, the United States and Mexico. read more Kansas City Southern's change of heart came after the U.S. Surface Transportation Board (STB) rejected a temporary "voting trust" structure last month that would have allowed Kansas City Southern shareholders to receive the \$325-per-share cash-and-stock consideration under the deal with Canadian National without having to wait for full regulatory approval. Canadian Pacific has had its proposed voting trust cleared by the STB. The regulatory certainty this provided convinced Kansas City Southern's board to switch to a deal with Canadian Pacific, even though

clinched in March, before Canadian National gatecrashed it and entered into an agreement with Kansas City Southern in May. Were Canadian National to lose out to Canadian Pacific, it would receive from Kansas City Southern a \$700 million break-up fee and would be reimbursed for another \$700 million it paid Kansas City Southern to pass on to Canadian Pacific as a break-up fee for terminating their March deal. Canadian Pacific has said it will cover the cost of this \$1.4 billion that Kansas City Southern would owe Canadian National. Canadian National has also faced pressure from some of its investors, including hedge fund TCI Management Ltd, to abandon its pursuit of Kansas City Southern. Canadian National did not immediately respond to a re-

could be under less pressure to compete if the voting trust for that deal was approved. It added that it was not making a final determination on whether the competitive issues that the deal faced could be resolved under a full regulatory review. U.S. President Joe Biden has issued sweeping executive orders aimed at promoting competition in the U.S. economy. One order encouraged the STB to consider Amtrak's statutory rights when assessing whether a rail merger is in the public interest. Passenger railroad Amtrak, majority owned by the U.S. government, had opposed the Canadian National's voting trust, saying its pledge to divest the Baton Rouge to New Orleans line will harm future passenger service in Louisiana.

UK employers, stung by new levies, call for overhaul of tax system

London, Sep 13: British businesses demanded that finance minister Rishi Sunak stop raising their taxes and instead offer more help to meet the challenges of Brexit, COVID-19 and climate change when he makes major budget statements next month. The Confederation of British Indus-

try urged Sunak to "flip business taxation on its head" when he sets out new tax proposals and a three-year spending plan on Oct. 27. "The lack of detail and pace from the government on some of the big economic choices we must make as a country are the biggest concerns for

business," CBI Director General Tony Danker said in excerpts of a speech to be delivered later on Monday. Danker told Sunak to stop hitting companies that invest in making their premises less carbon-intensive with increased property tax payments, a quirk of the business rates system. He

also said more needed to be done to boost skills training, speed up the development of new infrastructure projects such as Britain's delayed high-speed railway and rewrite market rules to attract more private investment. The CBI and other employer groups protested last week that jobs would be lost after the government said it would increase social security contributions to fund social and health care. That followed March's announcement of a big increase in corporation tax from 2023 to help fix the hole in Britain's public finances left by Sunak's 350 billion-pound (\$485 billion) spending response to the coronavirus pandemic. "I am deeply worried the government thinks that taxing business - perhaps more politically palatable - is without consequence to growth," Danker said. As well as next month's budget announcements, Sunak and Prime Minister Boris

Johnson are due to discuss investment plans with business leaders and institutional investors in October. British productivity levels have been more than 20% lower than those in the United States, France and Germany for the past two decades. Business investment has also lagged behind those three countries every year since at least 2000, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Danker said a two-year tax break introduced this year by Sunak to spur businesses investment would simply bring forward investment planned for later years and was limited in scope.



Carlyle considers \$6 billion sale or IPO for Novolex: Bloomberg

Washington, Sep 13 : Carlyle Group Inc (CGO) is considering either a \$6 billion sale or initial public offering (IPO) for packaging company Novolex Holdings, which it bought more than four years ago, Bloomberg said on Sunday, citing people familiar with the matter. The private equity firm has been interviewing banks for a strategic review of the

Hartsville, South Carolina-based company in the first half of 2022, the report added. Novolex could be valued at about \$6 billion should Carlyle choose to sell the company or opt for an initial public offering, although no final decision has been made and the firm could elect to keep the business, Bloomberg reported. Novolex operates dozens



of plants globally with brands including Hilex Poly, Duro Bag and Burrows Packaging, according

to the company's website. Carlyle and Novolex did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Sydney, Sep 13: A sale of Australia's biggest airport moved closer on Monday as an infrastructure investor group won permission to conduct due diligence on Sydney Airport Holdings Pty Ltd (SYD.AX), after sweetening its takeover offer to A\$23.6 billion (\$17.4 billion). The move sent the airport's shares up 5%, with analysts saying a rival bid appeared unlikely given the scale of the funding needed and foreign ownership rules that mean the airport must remain 51% Australian owned. "We assign a high probability of a deal succeeding given the board's commitment to unanimously recommend the (current) offer if there is no alternative higher offer," Credit Suisse analysts said in a note. Sydney Airport is Australia's only listed airport operator and a purchase would be a long-term bet on the travel sector which has been battered by the pandemic. A successful takeover would be among the largest buyouts ever of an Australian firm and underline a year of stellar deal activity, that has already seen a mega \$29 billion buyout of Afterpay (APT.AX) by Square (SQ.N). The improved offer of A\$8.75 a share - an increase of 3.6% - follows prior proposals from the consortium pitched at

A\$8.45 and A\$8.25, both of which were rejected by the airport operator's board as inadequate. read more Sydney Airport shares were trading at A\$8.40 on Monday morning, below the offer price, due to the length of the time the transaction will take to complete as well as the limited prospects for a rival bid. "An alternative bidder appears highly unlikely," Jefferies analyst Anthony Moulder said in a note to clients. The bidding consortium, Sydney

ners. Record-low interest rates have prompted pension funds and their investment managers to chase higher yields. Australia's other major airports are unlisted and owned by pension funds and infrastructure investors. SAA has been granted non-exclusive due diligence that is expected to take four weeks after signing a non-disclosure agreement, Sydney Airport said. If SAA makes an acceptable binding proposal, the current inten-

holder with a 15.3% stake, has indicated it is open to rolling that equity into an investment in the privatised company, as required as part of the bid conditions. The deal will require an independent expert's report, approval from 75% of shareholders and a green light from the competition regulator and the Foreign Investment Review Board, in a process that typically takes months to complete. An SAA spokesperson said



Aviation Alliance (SAA), is comprised of Australian investors IFM Investors, QSuper and Australian Super and U.S.-based Global Infrastructure Part-

tion is for the board to recommend it in the absence of a superior offer, the airport operator added. UniSuper, Sydney Airport's biggest share-

the consortium welcomed the announcement and looked forward to working with Sydney Airport's board to finalise the transaction.

'Fortnite' creator Epic Games to appeal ruling in Apple case

New York, Sep 13: "Fortnite" game maker Epic Games said in a legal filing that it plans to appeal a ruling in its antitrust case against Apple Inc (AAPL.O) after a federal judge on Friday handed down a mixed decision. The judge on Friday said Apple would have to loosen some rules on developers. But the ruling favored Apple on many counts, including allowing the iPhone maker to



continue its prohibition of third-party, in-app payment

systems. It also allowed Apple to continue to charge

commissions of 15% to 30% for its own in-app payment system. Epic had said it would continue its legal fight. Analysts said the impact may depend heavily on how Apple chooses to implement the judge's decision. Apple's critics and rivals said they are more likely to turn to legislators, rather than courts, to pursue the changes they seek. Both Apple and Epic declined to comment on Sunday.

Contd. From Page 1

A two-day conference of Tourism

gion. Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs, Ajay Bhatt, Union Minister of State for tourism and Defence and Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma also graced the inaugural session of conference. While addressing the forum, G. Kishan Reddy said that under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, which focuses on integrated development of theme based tourist circuits, the Ministry has sanctioned 16 projects in the North Eastern region. He further added that his ministry is giving special emphasis on developing infrastructure, on ground capacity and skills in the Northeast region. He said that the tourism ministry is also providing branding and marketing assistance to the north-east region through its various schemes and flagship initiatives. Reddy informed that under the PRASHAD schemes the ministry has sanctioned a number of projects in the region. Approximately Rs 200 crore has been sanctioned for these projects, he added. Talking about the initiatives under DoNER ministry the minister informed that in the budget of 2021-22, the budget allocation to North eastern states is Rs 68,020 crore. He urged all the state governments in the region to submit viable proposals so that the full amount allocated across various ministries can be successfully utilized. Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister of State for Culture and Parliamentary Affairs in his address said that tourism development is the core subject of this conference and the North East has all the potential for it. North Eastern States have made their own identity in various sectors and each State has unique talent and potential, he said. Asserting that the infrastructural development in North East will enhance the tourism development, the minister said that the development in the tourism sector will automatically help the other allied sectors to develop and it will help the nation to grow. Talking about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision he said that according to our Prime Minister without the development of North East India the overall development of the country is not possible. Ajay Bhatt, Union Minister of State for Tourism and Defence said that under PM Narendra Modi's leadership the country is seeing development in every sector. Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma asserted that a holistic approach is required for the development of the tourism sector in NE zone. As a whole the North East as a brand has to be promoted and connectivity and infrastructure facilities need to be developed, he added. In today's event an MoU between the Ministry of Tourism and IRCTC was signed for cooperation in promoting domestic tourism and development of new tourism products. Senior officials from various Central Ministries, State Governments in the region as well as industry representatives participated in the conference. The conference aimed to apprise the participants about the several projects and initiatives being undertaken by the Central Government for the development of the northeast region.

Assam directs Foreigners' Tribunals

scar Northeast landscape "The sole purpose of the FTs — which are quasi-judicial forums — is to give an opinion whether someone is a foreigner or an Indian. After that the state's executive agencies take consequential action accordingly," he said, adding that the order was passed so that FT members follow the rules and abstain from passing such opinions in the future. According to Bhuyan's letter, the Judicial Department has noted that consequential orders for "deletion of names from voter list, arrest, detention and deportation of the declared foreigners" had been passed. It requested the FT members to adhere to the views of the Judicial Department. According to Mustafa Khaddam Hussain, advocate, Gauhati High Court and legal advisor, All Assam Minority Students' Union, FT members "have the habit of passing orders that suggest deletion of names from voters lists, references against other family members of the person being tried, arrests, detention and deportation etc." "Such orders are being passed beyond their jurisdiction. We have raised this issue time and again — so such an action should have been taken earlier," he said.

India Vaccinations Cross 75 Crore

on. owever, India saw its worst phase of the pandemic in the second wave that swept the country in the middle of the year. In recent months, though, things have eased up much. Fears of a third wave linger, however.

CM holds crucial meeting with

bandry and Veterinary Minister Atul Bora, Additional Chief Secretary Maninder Singh, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Samir Kumar Sinha, Chairman NDDB Meenesh Shah, Regional Head Jignesh Shah and other senior officers of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department were present at the meeting.

Assam Chief Minister's Signature

Water) - for work to be allotted in the name of Lohit Construction - with the forged signature of the Chief Minister. Subsequently a case was registered at the Dispur Police Station. The remarkably rapid investigation into the Chief Minister's forged signature bore fruit in a few hours, after police from Guwahati and Sibsagar picked up the four persons - Binit Poddar, Dipjoyti Dutta, Jaimini Mohan, Pankaj Gogoi - connected to Lohit Construction. Interrogations revealed they met Choudhury via Mohan's brother-in-law. Police said Poddar and Dutta managed to collect ? 9 lakhs from friends and family, and delivered the money to Chaudhary, who gave them the forged papers.

Efforts On To Resolve Border Dispute With Assam: Mizoram Minister

Guwahati, September 13 : The Mizoram government has devised strategies and making massive efforts to resolve the long-standing border dispute with neighbouring Assam, state Home Minister Lalchamliana told the assembly on Thursday. The state government had in 2018 constituted a core committee to study and assess the state boundary. It was re-constituted with chief secretary Lalnunmawia Chuaunog as the chairman in 2019, he said. "The core committee is currently doing research and analysis on the state border by collecting topo-sheets and important documents related to the state boundary with Assam," Mr Lalchamliana said, replying to a query from Congress Legislature Party leader Zodintluanga Ralte. The state government has already appointed a nodal officer on the border issue and submitted a report to the Centre as per the Union Ministry of Home Affairs instruction, he said. According to the home minister, the state government has also constituted a team to compile important documents, supportive of Mizoram's stand on the border issue and it will be tabled before experts from Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies when they visit the state. A boundary committee involving all political parties and NGOs, headed by Deputy Chief Minister Tawnluia, has also been formed recently to deal with the issue, Mr Lalchamliana said. On Wednesday, the home minister claimed in the assembly that Assam has encroached and is currently occupying a vast area of lands belonging to at least 20 farmers from Kolasib district. These lands are located in Aitlang area, bordering Assam's Hailakandi district, and Buarcheap and Phainuam areas on the border with Assam's Cachar district, the home minister had said. "There is no report of any encroachment from the neighbouring state at Thinghlun in western Mizoram's Mamit district, which borders Assam's Karimganj district," Mr Lalchamliana was quoted as saying by assembly officials. Mizoram's three districts -- Aizawl, Kolasib and Mamit share a 164.6 km long inter-state border with Assam's Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj districts. Tension escalated on July 26 when police forces of both states exchanged fire, leaving at least six police personnel and a civilian from Assam dead and more than 60 people injured. The boundary dispute between the two Northeastern states is a long-standing issue and several attempts to resolve it since 1994 have yielded little result.

Tamil Nadu Chennai Live Updates: TN Assembly adopts Bill to exempt state from NEET, BJP stages walkout New delhi

Tamil Nadu Assembly on Monday adopted a Bill to dispense with the National Entrance-cum-Eligibility Test (NEET) and provide for admission to medical courses based on Class XII marks to ensure social justice, as the death by suicide of a medical aspirant fearing the outcome of the test he was to take echoed in the House with the main opposition AIADMK targeting the government over the incident. Chief Minister M K Stalin introduced the Bill and all parties, including the main opposition AIADMK and its ally PMK, besides others like Congress, supported the Bill, which seeks to provide for admission to UG courses in medicine, dentistry, Indian medicine and homeopathy on the basis of marks obtained in the qualifying examination (Class XII exmans). The opposition BJP staged a walkout, protesting against the government move. Earlier, as soon as the House convened, Leader of the Opposition K Palaniswami referred to the death by suicide of 19-year old Dhanush in his native Salem district on Sunday and targeted the government on the matter. He said that though the DMK had promised "cancelling" NEET, it was not done and several students had not prepared well. Some of his remarks were expunged by Speaker M Appavu. Palaniswami sought a job for a person from the family, besides cash assistance. Also Read [TN MBBS aspirant dies by suicide, AIADMK slams govt; CM promises Bill to exempt state from test] Condoling Dhanush's death, Stalin had on Sunday said, "Our legal struggle against NEET starts now after taking over the reins of the government. The state government has the responsibility and duty to build a good future for students and realising this, "our struggle will continue till the Union government rescinds NEET." amil Nadu State Election Commissioner V Palanikumar on Monday notified the dates for the rural local body polls in the nine newly constituted districts in the state. Addressing reporters, he said the polls will be held in two phases on October 6 and October 9 and the counting will take place on October 12. Elections are being held to 27,003 seats in Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts. Read more As Chief Minister M K Stalin tabled the Bill in the state Assembly, almost all other parties, including the main opposition AIADMK and its ally PMK, supported the Bill. The BJP, however, staged a walkout, protesting against it. But what are the key provisions in the Permanent Exemption Bill for NEET? Read our explainer here Tamil Nadu recorded 1,580 positive cases of Covid-19 on Monday, bringing the state tally to 26,35,419. Among these, Coimbatore accounted for 204 cases while Chennai saw 185 positive cases. The state recorded 22 deaths on Monday, putting the state toll at 35,190. A total of 1,509 patients were discharged following treatment, taking the total number of recoveries to 25,83,707. As of Monday, the number of active Covid-19 cases in Tamil Nadu is 16,522. After initially suspecting that the woman whose body was found on the road in a mangled condition in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore last week had been thrown off a vehicle, police in Coimbatore have now found that she was mowed down by an Innova before being dragged along the road under another car. Cops have detained Faizal, the owner of the Innova. The deceased woman has been identified as a resident of Kariyampalayam village near Annur in Coimbatore. The 74-year-old had been working at a private college canteen. The Tamil Nadu Farmers Association has said it was against the proposal of the state overnment to shift the Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department from here to Chennai. In a memorandum submitted to Coimbatore District Collector on Monday, president of the association S Palanisamy said the organic farmers of the Kongu region, comprising eight western districts of the state, would face problems, including transportation if the department was shifted to the capital city Tamil Nadu State Election Commission Monday said the rural local body election for the newly constituted nine districts including Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupathur, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi will take place in two phases on October 6 and October 9. The polling will happen from 7 am till 6 pm. It was said that nominations for the polls will commence from September 15. Votes are set to be counted October 12. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin said after careful consideration of the recommendation of the high-level committee, with a view to ensure social justice, the state government has decided that the admission to undergraduate courses in Medicine, Dentistry, Indian Medicine, and Homeopathy in the state would be based only on the marks obtained in the Class XII examination. He added that the committee in its findings has reported that NEET clearly undermined the diverse societal representation in MBBS and higher medical studies, favouring mainly the affordable and affluent segment of the society while equally thwarting the dream of pursuing the medical examination by the underprivileged social groups. He said the most affected among those social groups were students of Tamil medium, having rural backgrounds of government schools, those having parental income of less than 2.5 lakh income per annum and the socially depressed and disadvantaged groups like MBC, SC and ST. The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Monday adopted a bill to dispense with the National Entrance-cum-Eligibility Test (NEET) and provide for admission to medical courses based on Class XII marks to ensure social justice, as the death by suicide of a medical aspirant fearing outcome of the test he was to take echoed in the House with the main opposition AIADMK targeting the government over the incident. Chief Minister M K Stalin introduced the Bill and all parties, including the main opposition AIADMK and its ally PMK, besides others like Congress, supported the bill, which seeks to provide for admission to UG courses in medicine, dentistry, Indian medicine and homeopathy on the basis of marks obtained in the qualifying examination, (Class XII). The opposition BJP staged a walkout, protesting against the government move. n eight-year-old boy drowned in the Bhavani River while their parents were washing clothes there, police said on Monday. The boy was the son of a painter. He, his wife, two daughters and the boy went to the river in Kallipatti to wash their clothes on Sunday. Both the husband and wife were washing the clothes and their daughters sitting on the river bank were watching their parents, the police said. The boy was taking a bath in the waters. Later, he got pulled under by a current and got washed away. His parents raised an alarm. Soon, the Fire and Rescue Service personnel were informed and body of the boy was recovered after a two-hour-long search, the police said Tamil Nadu man arrested for cheating Chinchwad woman of Rs 11 lakh in marriage fraud The Pimpri-Chinchwad police have arrested a man from Tamil Nadu for allegedly cheating a Chinchwad woman to the tune of Rs 11 lakh and entering into a "false marriage" by signing fake documents. The police have identified the accused as Premraj Thevraj, a resident of Chennai. An FIR was registered at the Nigdi police station on Sunday. As per a press release issued on Monday, the woman met the man through a matrimony site last year. He said he would marry her and after phone conversations for about three months, he sought financial help from er. The police said the accused got Rs 11,04,500 from the complainant. A total of 45,85,433 people have been vaccinated in Chennai till date, with 1,91,350 people inoculated on Sunday alone, according to the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC). Among these, 34,30,374 people have been administered Covishield, with 23,96,864 people having taken the first dose and 10,33,510 people having taken the second dose. A total of 11,55,059 people have been administered Covaxin, with 6,94,149 people having taken the first dose and 4,60,910 people having taken the second dose.

Haryana govt extends suspension of mobile Internet services in Karnal

New Delhi, September 13 : With protesting farmers continuing their sit-in "indefinitely" at the district headquarters in Karnal, the Haryana government has extended the suspension of mobile Internet services in the district till Thursday midnight, an order issued by state Home Department said. "Mobile Internet services in Karnal district will remain suspended from 07:00 hours till 23:59 hours of September 9," said the order issued on Thursday. Another round of talks between district officials and farmers protesting over a police lathicharge in Karnal last month had failed on Wednesday after which the protesters said they will continue their sit-in "indefinitely" at the district headquarters. Earlier, mobile Internet services in Karnal were suspended from 12:30 pm on September 6 till 11:59 pm on September 7 and the suspen-

sion was extended till Wednesday midnight as the situation was considered "still volatile". "Whereas, it has been brought to my notice vide..dated September 9 by ADGP (CID), Haryana that the situation has been reviewed and observed to be still tense and would trigger any time which may adversely affect public safety and law and order situation in district Karnal..." said the order referring to the protesters' call to continue the sit-in "indefinitely". The order, issued by Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajeev Arora, said mobile Internet services (2G/3G/4G/CDMA/GPRS), SMS services, including bulk SMS (excluding banking and mobile recharge) and all dogle services etc provided on mobile networks, except voice calling, will remain suspended in Karnal district. It said that the suspension of mobile Internet services was ordered to

stop the spread of misinformation and rumours through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter on mobile phones and SMS. It said this could facilitate mobilisation of mobs who can cause serious loss of life and damage to public and private properties by indulging in arson, vandalism or other violent activities. All telecom service providers of Haryana are, hereby, directed to ensure compliance of the order, it added. Meanwhile, into the third day of the dhama, protesters are staying put at the gate of the mini-secretariat complex in Karnal, though farm union leaders have said officials and the public won't be stopped from entering it. Their demands centre around the suspension of IAS officer Ayush Sinha, who was caught on tape allegedly telling policemen to "break heads" of farmers if they cross the line during their August 28 protest.

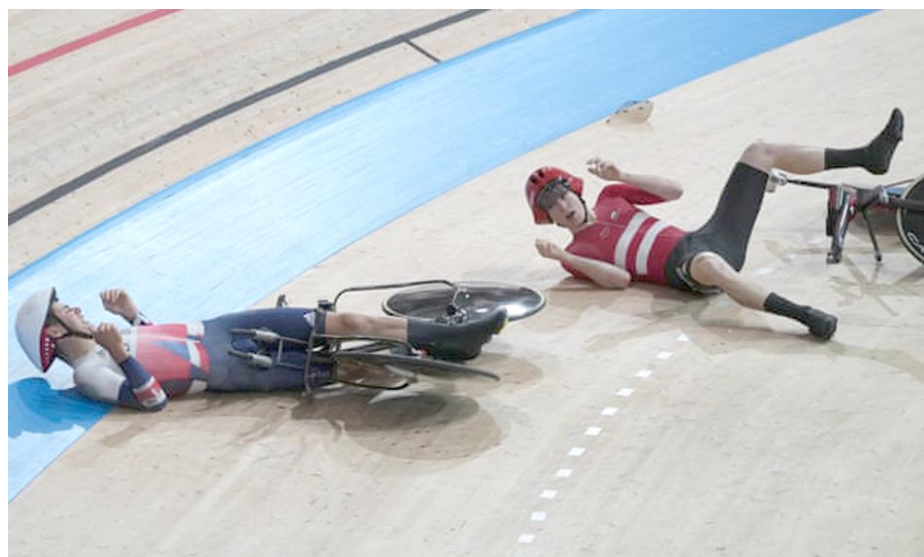
Brexit: trade survey finds 74% of British firms hit by delays with EU markets

London, September 13 : Three-quarters of British manufacturers are struggling to cope with delays in moving goods in and out of the EU amid continuing disruption caused by Brexit and the Covid pandemic, industry figures said. Two months after the UK left the EU on trade terms agreed by Boris Johnson's government, research from the manufacturing trade group Make UK has shown that 74% of firms in a survey of more than 200 leading industrial companies are facing delays with EU imports and exports. Faced with mounting Brexit red tape, customs checks and disruption to global trade caused by the pandemic, more than half of companies said they were suffering from increased costs. More than a third had lost out on sales, while fears over continued disruption was losing firms future business. The warning comes as pressure grows on the government to resolve difficulties at UK borders amid concern over the impact on the British economy and jobs at a time when businesses are grappling with the Covid recession. A government spokesperson insisted that freight volumes between the UK and the EU were now "back to their normal levels" and said there was "no general disruption at UK ports". Ministers have made £20m available to help small businesses adapt to the new trade relationships. "We will ensure businesses get the support they need to trade effectively with Europe and to seize new opportunities as we strike trade deals with the world's fastest-growing markets," the spokesperson added. However, business leaders said trading activity was under severe strain and only likely to worsen as further border checks came into force. Ray Singh, managing director of Russel Finex, a London-based manufacturer of high-performance sieves and filters, said his firm was still experiencing delays with exports to the EU and to a plant it operated in Belgium. "Eventually we manage to get the goods over, but it just takes a lot longer. It's not smooth like it was. There are additional checks and paperwork and it sounds like in a few months' time that's actually going to ramp up, which is more stuff not to look forward to. It's created a lot of extra bureaucracy that just wasn't there before," Singh said. Catherine Bedford, founder of Dashel, which makes carbon fibre and recycled cycle helmets, said the disruption was killing her business. "Thanks to Brexit, we've gone from profitable to barely scraping by," she said. "We can't predict delivery times as items are being held up at French customs, our entry point into Europe. There is a massive backlog and items are being turned back despite up-to-date paperwork." Figures from Germany this week showed that imports from the UK had fallen by more than 56% to €1.6bn (£1.4bn) in January from the same month a year ago amid Brexit disruption. Official UK trade figures are due to be published on Friday. The international trade secretary, Liz Truss, is pushing to expand trading opportunities outside the EU, and next week the government is expected to set out Britain's post-Brexit trade priorities as part of a delayed review of foreign policy. However, Make UK said that ministers urgently needed to "get back around the table" with EU leaders to solve problems closer to home. The EU accounts for almost half of UK imports and exports, while the government's own analysis suggests that trade deals outside the EU will not make up for the impact of Brexit on the UK economy. Stephen Phipson, chief executive of Make UK, said: "Government needs to move smooth out difficulties at UK ports so that shipments can easily be delivered. We are encouraged that the government is already working to train more high-quality customs officials and to give more assistance with customs paperwork, but this needs to be driven forward at speed to give the quickest possible assistance to British companies already struggling to get back to normal as trade recovers from the Covid pandemic."

CoWin tweaked so Modi photo won't show on vaccine certificates in poll-bound states, says govt

New Delhi, September 13 : Necessary filters have been applied in the CoWin software to ensure that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's photo does not appear in vaccination certificates issued in the election-bound states of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal as well as the union territory of Puducherry, the health ministry has informed the Election Commission (EC). This was in response to an order from the EC asking for the photo to be removed in line with the election code of conduct. In a letter dated 9 March, Rajesh Bhushan, secretary, health ministry, wrote to Deputy Election Commissioner Sudeep Jain: "...technical measures to comply with the directions of ECI have been explored promptly. Thereafter, necessary filters in Co-WIN have been applied for the vaccination centres situated in the four states of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Union territory of Puducherry, as suggested by the commission." Vaccination certificates, which are provisional after the first dose and final after the second dose, carried PM Modi's photo since 16 January when the national Covid-19 vaccination programme began. Several non-BJP states were upset by the photo but the Trinamool Congress, which is fighting a pitched poll battle with BJP in West Bengal, wrote to the EC on 2 March calling it an "unfair advantage and undue publicity at taxpayer's cost". The EC order citing the model code of conduct came on 5 March asking for the photo to be removed but the implementation was not immediate. Certificates issued after 5 March continued to have the photo, but now that the necessary measures are in place, they will no longer have Modi's photo, health ministry officials explained. The Print had reported that photos of PM Modi were being used on vaccine certificates, a fact that several opposition parties objected to. The EC order asking for removal of the photo in poll-bound regions came as a result of the Trinamool Congress's petition. The party, which is in power in West Bengal, argued that the photo is a clear violation of the provisions of part VII (Party in Power) of the Model Code of Conduct that clearly states: "The party in power whether at the Centre or in the State or States concerned, shall ensure that no cause is given for any complaint that it has used its official position for the purposes of its election campaign and in particular..." (4) Issue of advertisement at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media. "In their reply to the EC, the health ministry had defended the move saying the certificate with the photo was designed at a time when there were no elections in the country. The EC said the photo needed to go in order to maintain the sanctity of the model code of conduct and to ensure a level playing field, and also asked for a report from the chief electoral officer in West Bengal.

GB dethroned in men's Olympic team pursuit amid Danish crash controversy



Tokyo, September 13 : There were dramatic scenes at the Izu Velodrome during the second day of track cycling at Tokyo 2020, with Great Britain calling for Denmark to be disqualified before the teams raced in the men's pursuit and then blasting the sport's governing body for inconsistency over the rules. Britain were among several nations to protest against Denmark's use of shin tape and undergarments during qualifying on Monday. The petition was unsuccessful and tensions then boiled over when a Danish rider, Frederik Madsen, crashed into the wheel of Britain's Charlie Tanfield in a crunch team pursuit heat. After almost an hour of confusion at the velodrome it was announced

that Denmark would proceed to Wednesday's gold medal race while Great Britain were relegated to the race between seventh and eighth, ceding the Olympic pursuit title they have held since 2008. "I've got a lot of carbon fibre shrapnel and an injured rider and not a lot to show for it," said the aggrieved British coach, Iain Dyer. Madsen, for his part, said he had not realised Tanfield was so close. "It's awful for this to happen in an Olympic semi-final," he said. "There are just so many emotions running through me and them. I just hope Charlie is okay." The Danish coach, Morten Bennekou, later suggested that race officials were required to flag that an opponent had dropped from their team, as Tanfield had, and failed to do so. "There is a rule that, when

another team is split, they should flag I think at three or four places in the circuit," he said. "So that the other team is aware that [they] can race to meet only one rider somewhere, which they didn't do. Our rider who is always doing the last kilometre [Madsen] always just looks down - he is just following the line." Madsen was seen venting his frustration after the crash but denied he had been directing his anger at Tanfield. "I'm not saying things at Charlie - I'm basically just shouting because I'm frustrated, not at Charlie but at the situation. I'm not at the Olympics to run into someone and crash." While the governing body, the UCI, has yet to issue a statement, the Guardian understands that the Danish team were

deemed to have won the race on the basis that they had caught the British team (and hence won the heat). But the crash meant that the British team were unable to race for a time that might have seen them progress to the bronze medal race. Meeting with race officials after the crash, Dyer said he raised a precedent from a recent UCI World Cup where a similar situation saw the rider that caused the crash disqualified. "But they didn't see it that way," he said. "When I raised the issue of the precedent, and the regulation, the commissaire's reply was that she wasn't commissaire [in the prior race]. The British Cycling performance director, Stephen Park, confirmed Britain had been one of the teams to call for the Danes' disqualification over the use of illegal equipment. The appeal was rejected but Denmark did not ride with shin tape on Tuesday. Bennekou said that his team had been given explicit permission by the judging panel to use the shin tape as an injury prevention mechanism. "We asked for permission - and obviously we didn't try to cheat," said Bennekou. "That would be stupid - it's pretty easy to see - you cannot hide it." But Dyer alleged that Denmark had misrepresented their request. "The UCI believed that the Danes had asked them on the premise that

it was for one rider only and on the basis of an injury," he said. "They were shocked to see all four riders get up and do it." Park said that at a lively meeting of teams before Tuesday's session the UCI confirmed the equipment could not be used for the rest of the competition, but indicated there would be no retroactive punishment despite rules saying a team should face elimination in such circumstances. Great Britain also alleged that an undervest worn by Danish riders in qualifying was not commercially available at the beginning of the year (all equipment used by teams must be on retail sale). "We don't believe they were commercially available on the 1st of January this year, like they were supposed to be," said Dyer. "It's even my understanding that the website that retails the undervest, at 8.30am this morning, changed the wording on their product to suggest it was available at that time, but we don't believe it was on sale until May." But when it was put to Dyer that he had accused Denmark of cheating, the coach sought to walk back on his comments. "I'm not alleging foul play by Denmark," said the coach. "I'd like to see the UCI uphold the regulations, as they had the opportunity to do. It's not sour grapes but you'd just like to think you're on a level playing field," he said.

Harry Kane spends further time in Florida and delays Tottenham return



London, September 13 : Nuno Espirito Santo has admitted he is yet to speak to Harry Kane as it emerged that the striker, who is desperate to quit Tottenham and join Manchester City, had prolonged his unauthorised leave of absence, spending another day out of the UK. Kane angered the Spurs hierarchy when he failed to report for his first day of pre-season work on Monday and it came to light that he was on a family holiday. The 28-year was in the Bahamas before moving on to Florida and he was still there on Wednesday. The England captain intends to report to Spurs' training ground over the weekend for a Covid test but he will not now be able to work with his teammates until the early part of next week, at best. Both the Bahamas and the United States are on England's amber list, which necessitates at least five full days of quarantine once back in the country. Kane would be able to undertake a day-five test which, if negative, would allow him to end his isolation. It appears the earliest that could happen would be Monday. Given his lack of training, he is certain to miss the opening round of Premier League fixtures, with Tottenham hosting City on Sunday 15 August. "I expect to speak with Harry soon and I haven't had the chance yet,"

Nuno said, after his team's 2-2 friendly draw against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge on Wednesday night. It was a remarkable statement, given that Nuno was appointed on 30 June, but this is a remarkable situation and the manager adopted a diplomatic tone. Kane believes he has a gentleman's agreement with the Spurs chairman, Daniel Levy, that allows him to leave this summer. Levy, though, has interpreted this differently and is against selling to a domestic rival. If he did, it would be for at least £150m for a player who has three years to run on his contract. If Kane was watching the game at Stamford Bridge, which had a partial return of fans, he will not have enjoyed the first half, when Chelsea threatened to run riot. The evening began with Chelsea's players forming a guard of honour for the club captain César Azpilicueta, who emerged from the tunnel to parade the Champions League trophy. Spurs were lucky to trail only 1-0 at half-time. A feature of the first period was the sight of Nuno spinning on his heels in frustration as any one of his players either gave away possession or lost out in challenges. Chelsea were sharper and stronger and Spurs struggled to play out from the back. The opening goal came when Lucas Moura was robbed by N'Golo Kanté and Hakim Ziyech ran at the retreating

Spurs centre-halves, Japhet Tanganga and Eric Dier, before shooting low past the debutant goalkeeper, Pierluigi Gollini. Chelsea should have had a second on 22 minutes when Timo Werner took a pass from Ziyech and rounded Gollini to score, only to be flagged offside. TV replays showed he was on but there was no VAR. Spurs were better in the second half and, after Ziyech had made it 2-0 with a shot into the bottom corner, they launched their fightback. Son Heung-min, who played most of the evening as the No9 in Nuno's 4-3-3 system, ought to have equalised for 1-1 on 46 minutes after an Edouard Mendy fumble, but Trevoh Chalobah made a saving block. Spurs did score when Moura's shot deflected off Antonio Rüdiger and, after wholesale Chelsea changes, the visitors found an equaliser on 70 minutes. Malang Sarr, one of the substitutes, gave the ball away to Moura and, having collected a pass from Son, Steven Bergwijn sprinted outside Chalobah before shooting low through Mendy's legs. Earlier in the day, talkSPORT were forced to apologise after a caller made an offensive remark about Levy, concerning the chairman's valuation of Kane. Despite being dumped on air, meaning it was not broadcast on radio, the remark was carried on the outlet's YouTube channel.

Jack Grealish poised to join Manchester City from Aston Villa in £100m deal



Manchester, September 13 : Jack Grealish is close to joining Manchester City from Aston Villa on a five-year contract. Talks are in their final stages and, barring an unexpected hitch, the playmaker will move for £100m. Villa have tried hard to keep Grealish, offering an improved deal, but a transfer for a record fee paid by an English club is poised to be completed. The 25-year-old has spent his whole career with his boyhood team. Harry Kane pictured during the warm-up for Tottenham's game against Aston Villa in May. City are also keen to sign Harry Kane, who has stayed away from Tottenham this week in the hope of forcing a move. The Spurs chairman, Daniel Levy, does not want to sell and it would take an offer substantially above the £100m already rejected for a deal to go through. City, Villa and Grealish's representatives are involved in the last stage of negotiations on a day when Villa added to their attacking options by signing Danny Ings from Southampton in an eye-catching £25m move. That swoop came on the same day they brought in Leon Bailey from Bayer Leverkusen for about £30m. Villa's manager, Dean Smith, said that Bailey, who scored 39 goals in three-and-a-half Bundesliga campaigns for Leverkusen, would bring

"great pace and creativity". On the move for the England striker Ings, Smith told the club's official website: "Danny is an outstanding Premier League footballer who has scored goals wherever he has played. He is also a top professional with a great character who will be a leader in our squad and a role model for our rapidly developing young academy players who are now in and around the first team." Villa's outlay looks set to be financed by Grealish's record sale. It will be City's most expensive signing and would eclipse the largest fee paid by an English club - the £89m spent by Manchester United to bring back Paul Pogba from Juventus five years ago. United top the list of fees paid by one English club to another, too, with their £80m purchase of Harry Maguire from Leicester in 2019. Grealish, like Kane, wants to play in the Champions League this season and secure the first trophies of his career.

Katarina Johnson-Thompson's medal hopes end with injury in heptathlon

Tokyo, September 13 : Katarina Johnson-Thompson's heptathlon dream was torn apart in Tokyo as her right calf gave way while she was surging towards medal contention. But, even on one of the most painful and despairing nights of her career, her Olympic spirit remained undiminished. First the 28-year-old hopped on her left foot a dozen times, before flopping to the floor. Then, as the tears began to flow, she covered her eyes and took refuge in the dark. But when a wheelchair was rolled out, she was determined to go out on her feet. It took a while. And there were echoes of Derek Redmond at the 1992 Barcelona Games as, slowly and bravely, she moved towards the finish line of the 200m. Every step looked more tortuous than the last, but she got there. Yet when she did, after the longest 93 seconds of her life, insult was added to injury as she was disqualified for going out of her lane. It was a heartbreaking end to what until then had been an

unexpectedly heartwarming day. "I am so gutted for her," said Denise Lewis, the 2000 Olympic heptathlon champion, who has been a guiding voice to Johnson-Thompson. "She has worked so hard to get to this stage. Someone's heart has been trashed on the track. It will be hard for her to come back from this emotionally - but she will. "Not much had been expected of Johnson-Thompson in her first major competition since rupturing an achilles tendon in her left leg in December. Instead, with the smell of glory in her nostrils, the reigning world champion surprised us all. A vibrantly strong challenge began with her running her second-fastest ever 100m hurdles in 13.27sec, scoring her 1,084 points and putting her 40 clear of the big favourite Nafi Thiam of Belgium. A reasonable high jump of 1.86m - albeit 12cm below her best - kept her in the hunt before an excellent shot put of 13.31m, the second-best of her life, reinforced the fact that she was a genuine contender. That was if her body could

hold up. The fact that her legs were strapped up and she was receiving treatment suggested it wasn't a given, and the London 2012 long jump champion Greg Rutherford had noticed early on that something was not quite right. "I was having conversations with people after she'd done her morning session, and you could see that there were a few issues there, she looked like she was limping a bit off of the high jump," said the Eurosport commentator and Guardian columnist. "But again we just got a couple of words as she came through, just asking if she was OK. It was a tentative 'yes', and you obviously have to go with the athlete when they say that, but clearly it wasn't to be." Johnson-Thompson was fifth in the standings at the start of the 200m, but the way she powered around the bend suggested she would be in silver or bronze medal position overnight - until her hopes and her calf were torn apart. It meant at the end of day one the Dutch athlete Anouk Vetter led on 3,968 points, with

the Belgium Noor Vidts second on 3,941 and Thiam in the bronze medal position. Meanwhile Johnson-Thompson - just as at the 2015 world championships when she fouled three times in the long jump while in gold medal contention - was left picking up the pieces. It was the latest bad-luck story to befall Britain's athletes in these Games with Dina Asher-Smith and Adam Gemili having suffered injuries either in the build-up or during the Games. There was better news for Britain as Jodie Williams produced the performance of her career to break the 50-second barrier for the first time by running 49.97 to move into the 400m final. "It's crazy because three weeks ago I broke 51 seconds for the first time," she said. "I saw all of those girls go 49sec in the first heat and I was like: 'You have no choice now' and I ran for my life," said Williams, who has had more than her share of injury worries. "I'm so happy. It began sinking in when I was walking just then and I started crying. It's been such a long journey but in that



final anything can happen. "Elsewhere Laura Muir qualified for Friday's 1500m final by finishing second to Sifan Hassan, whose historic treble attempt lives on, while Andy Pozzi made the 110m hurdles final as a fastest loser. Peruth Chemutai became the first Ugandan woman to win an Olympic gold medal in any sport when she became a surprise winner of the women's 3,000m steeplechase. The 22-year-old clocked a time of 9min

01.45 to finish over three seconds ahead of American silver medallist Courtney Frerichs with Kenya's Hyvin Kiyeng taking the bronze. "I'm so happy and proud of myself. It was a good race - I enjoyed myself and I enjoyed the weather," Chemutai said as she joined John Akii-Bua's 400m hurdles win in 1972 and Stephen Kiprotich's victory in the 2012 marathon as Uganda's Olympic victories.

Chelsea closing on Romelu Lukaku after striker tells Inter he wants move

London, September 13 : Chelsea are preparing a new bid for Lukaku after having an offer rejected this week and the deal is beginning to look inevitable despite Inter's reluctance to sell the striker. Inter's financial difficulties mean that they need to make a big sale and it is increasingly likely they will be forced to part company with their best player. Chelsea hope that a bid of £120m (£102m) will be enough to land Lukaku, who spent three years on their books from 2011. Lukaku played a key role in his club winning Serie A last season and he has previously shown little desire to move back to England. In June he pledged his future to

Inter but the Belgium international has had a change of heart. Chelsea's determination to sign him is understood to have convinced the former Manchester United and Everton player that it is time for a new challenge. Lukaku is set to become the most expensive signing in Chelsea's history if he joins, and he could earn about £250,000 a week. The 28-year-old is seen as a more attainable target than Borussia Dortmund's Erling Haaland and Tottenham's Harry Kane. Following Chelsea's 2-2 draw with Spurs on Wednesday night in a Stamford Bridge friendly, Thomas Tuchel was asked about his interest in



Lukaku. He said: "I will not talk about players who don't play in my squad. He is a fantastic player but a player from Inter and with all due respect I will not talk about him. Not everybody but I can imagine a lot of players want to come and join [Chelsea] but we don't comment on that. "On

the need for a top-class striker, the Chelsea manager added: "I think with the exit from Olivier Giroud [to Milan] we could use a player used to playing with their back to goals whose strength is to keep possession from long balls, so we can add this direct style of play to our portfolio and this is the characteristic of player that is not Tammy, Tino or Kai so this is a profile we don't have in the squad and could be useful but not for any cost. We are relaxed and very well aware of our situation at the same time." Chelsea's pursuit

of Sevilla's Jules Koundé has stalled after their attempts to make space in their squad for a new defender were frustrated by Kurt Zouma's refusal to join West Ham. Tuchel is on the hunt for defensive reinforcements and has identified Koundé as a key target. However, Chelsea are yet to reach an agreement with Sevilla on a price for the France centre-back, with the uncertainty over Zouma's future causing negotiations to slow down. Koundé has a release clause of £80m (£68m), which Chelsea are not willing to trigger. They initially proposed paying £35m for the 22-year-old and including Zouma, only to find that Sevilla want more money.

Sevilla do not agree with Chelsea's £30m valuation of Zouma because they are unsure of the 26-year-old defender's resale value and have decided to hold out for at least £60m for Koundé, who is one of the best centre-backs in Spain. Chelsea's squad contains four centre-backs, with César Azpilicueta and Reece James also capable of operating on the right side of a back three, and they will need to move one on to facilitate a move for Koundé. Zouma is available after falling down the pecking order under Tuchel and there was a sense that the centre-back would favour a move to West Ham instead of Sevilla after they registered their interest last week.

Rohit Sharma's 161 puts India in driving seat against England in second Test

London, September 13 :

England rang the changes for the second Test in Chennai, but the only rotation Joe Root had no control over was that of the coin. When he called incorrectly at the toss, and Virat Kohli unsurprisingly opted to bat first, there will have been concerns about



what was to follow. Three sessions later, India looked the side in control of the game's destiny despite England, 1-0 up in the series, claiming three wickets after tea. Rohit Sharma had whipped the 12,000 returning spectators into a frenzy with a sizzling 161 which, along with a precious 67 from vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane, left the hosts on 300 for six by the close of play. On paper that score was only slightly more progress than England's 263 for three at the end of day one in the first Test and for the loss of three additional batsmen. Yet on this

new pitch at the Chepauk Stadium, one where balls burst through the black top-soil from the outset and offered the spinners spiteful bounce, the value of India's runs felt far greater. This was not boots being filled on a road, rather a quite brilliant display of batting from Sharma and Rahane in conditions that could easily have

Stokes sending down two overs, and Root eight that included the wicket of Ravichandran Ashwin, they appear to be a spinner light, not least when looking across at their hosts. If Jack Leach was the pick with two for 78 from 26 overs, then Stone ran him close in his second Test. The Warwickshire quick removed Shubman Gill with

months out of red-ball cricket, but Sharma's footwork and powerful use of the sweep also threw him off. That said, Moeen's removal of Kohli for a fifth-ball duck was a true collector's item. Leach had just teased an edge to slip of Cheteshwar Pujara for 21 - a smart bit of bowling as the No 3 tried to push into the vacant point region - prompting the spectators to produce that typically Indian phenomenon of cheering in anticipation for the next man in. But moments later Moeen hit the mute button, a lovely drifting delivery tempting Kohli to swipe away from his body only for the ball to spin sharply out of the already visible footmarks and into his stumps. India's captain wore a look of disbelief, refusing to budge until the umpires confirmed via the replays the ball, not the gloves of the recalled Ben Foakes, had knocked off the bails. This was Kohli's 11th duck in Tests but his first to a spin bowler. Sharma was playing on a different surface to everyone else, however, and went into lunch unbeaten on 80 from only 78 balls, with the hosts 106 for three, in a quite superb display of aggressive batsmanship that simply refused to allow England's bowlers to settle and had fielders chasing leather. After this breakneck start to proceedings the afternoon went wicketless as Sharma and Rahane held firm for 83 runs, the latter happy to soak up the pressure at his end while his partner ploughed on to his seventh Test century in 130 balls. There were some nerves on 98 as Broad tried to prey on

the looming milestone but otherwise it was chanceless. The evening session repeated the chaos of the morning, India adding 112 to their score of 188 for three at tea and losing three more batsmen. England also had two decisions from the third umpire go against them, both of which left them feeling somewhat aggrieved, even if neither proved costly. Sharma had just ploughed to his 150 when a ball from Leach fizzed past his outside edge. Foakes, back behind the stumps with Jos Buttler resting, whipped off the bails and appealed for the stumping only for the third umpire, Anil Chaudhary, to decide there was a scintilla of boot behind the line; it was not obvious. Rohit did not last much longer, holing out in the deep off Leach, but England's feelings of injustice returned when they believed they had Rahane caught at short-leg on 66 from a ball that hit the pad and then glove on its way through. Given not out on the field, the review was struck down by Chaudhary before the secondary contact was checked. England did at least have this review restored once the error was confirmed and ended their day feeling brighter about their work when Moeen bowled Rahane on the sweep in next over and Root teased an edge off Ashwin to Ollie Pope at short-leg. But with Rishabh Pant crashing five fours and one six in an unbeaten 33 and India having drafted in two new spinners in Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav, the tourists already know they have a job on their hands when it is their turn to bat.

Rafael Nadal overcomes discomfort to defeat dogged Cameron Norrie

London, September 13 :

Cameron Norrie, the last British singles player standing at the Australian Open this year, was unable to pull off the improbable achievement of beating Rafael Nadal across the best of five sets in his first ever official meeting with a member of the 'big three'. In a scrappy match played out in the renewed silence of crowdless tennis, Norrie offered ample resistance in their two hours 14 minutes on Rod Laver Arena but Nadal was able to survive in straight sets 7-5, 6-2, 7-5. The first week of Nadal competing in Melbourne has been a peculiar affair. His transparency while discussing the nature of the back injury that forced him to withdraw from the ATP Cup means that each match has been an opportunity to examine which aspects of his game are affected by it. When he opened against Norrie with a series of uncharacteristic backhand errors, eventually falling down an early break, it was easy for many to assume that his physical ailment was to blame. Nadal instead said that this marked the first day of his back's condition improving. Any rustiness was a logical reflection of not practicing on Friday as he sought further treatment. Above all, Nadal said he was made uncomfortable by the quality across the net from Norrie, who gave a solid account of his game and underlined why he has been able to remain in the top 100 for two years. Norrie is an interesting player with a unique, asymmetrical game. His forehand loads up with a heavy topspin, generated with an elaborate swing, but it is counterbalanced by an extremely flat, compact backhand that Nadal struggled with throughout. Along with his movement and stamina, the deep contrast between his two differ-



ent strokes can be a menace for many players around him in the rankings. Throughout the match, Norrie demonstrated his ability to lengthen rallies and to make Nadal uncomfortable in the tight opening set, while his lack of weaponry was on show as Nadal took hold of the match and quickly established a two-set lead. In the final set, he showed the direction his game will have to move in should he wish to ascend beyond his current career-high ranking of 41 as he effectively stepped into the court and dictated in his service games. "It was just a couple of loose points, a couple of errors and they can cost," said Norrie. "A lot of positives to take and a lot of things that I want to get better at. I've got a lot of stuff that I want to tidy up in my game. I think I want more from myself. It was obviously tough to play him but it was a good experience. While this week marks the eighth grand slam tournament in the past 11 that has seen no British player reach the round of 16, Norrie has been one of the few bright lights at the top level of British tennis since the tour returned in August. He is clearly improving, achieving his first two grand slam third round results in Melbourne and at the US Open last summer. The 25-year-old is

also finally stringing together enough wins to test himself against the best players in the world. His game has a clear ceiling but, if he can maintain his level over the season, his ranking will rise and he will face better opponents and offer himself a chance to improve. When asked about whether he believes Norrie, who is currently ranked 69th in the world, can take the next step and establish himself inside the top 40 and beyond, Nadal responded positively. "There are a couple key matches per year that creates a big difference on the year-end ranking," said Nadal. "So these kinds of matches can decide if you're gonna be 30 or you're gonna be 55, for example. Because there is a big gap of points in some key matches." His level is good. He has a lot of positive things. If he's able to keep improving, why not? I don't see why he can't reach that level. In the women's draw, sixth seed Karolina Pliskova was upset 7-5, 7-5 by 25th seed Karolina Muchova, her fellow Czech who Pliskova practiced with during the quarantine period. Ashleigh Barty, the world No 1, reached the fourth round with a 6-2 6-4 win over Russian 29th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova.

Barty gains focus in empty arena to reach Australian Open fourth round

London, September 13 :

Having stayed in Australia when the tour resumed largely behind closed doors last summer, this was a new experience for Barty as Melbourne's coronavirus lockdown kept the fans away for the first of at least five days. Barty trailed Ekaterina Alexandrova in both sets but recovered strongly to win 6-2, 6-4 and set up a clash with Shelby Rogers - who beat Anett Kontaveit 6-4, 6-3 - in the last 16. "It doesn't change for me," said Barty. "Obviously tonight was something I have never experienced before. I almost had to cut myself some slack and give myself the time to get used to it

and adjust to it." The top seed even felt there were some advantages, adding: "You can narrow your focus in to listen to the sound of the ball. I find it a way where I can listen to the spin the opponent is hitting on the ball, the pace it's coming. "Barty had her left thigh strapped but is confident it will not affect her chances. "It feels good," she said. "We had to give it time to rest and recover. We are doing all the right things to make it as good as possible. It's a pretty small tape job that looks a little more dramatic. It won't affect me at all." Adjusting to a lack of fans again was a challenge for all the players, and Elina Svitolina said she had to remind herself she was playing

at a grand slam. The fifth seed has been impressive so far and claimed another straight-sets win, beating Yulia Putintseva 6-4, 6-0. "It was very different conditions," said Svitolina. "It was for sure a bit disturbing. I would say, in some ways sad. I actually had a few thoughts about it, it feels like a practice match. I tried to convince myself that it's a grand slam and that we are playing an important match." Svitolina will next play the unseeded American Jessica Pegula, the world No 61. Sixth seed Karolina Pliskova was punished for smashing a racket off court after losing her cool during a 7-5, 7-5 loss to fellow Czech Karolina Muchova. After breaking one racket during the

first set, which earned her a code violation, she took her frustration out on a second as she left the court and received another violation, which saw Muchova awarded the first point of the second set. Pliskova, who has failed to reach the quarter-finals at the last seven grand slams, stormed into a 5-0 lead in the second set only to lose seven games in a row. Donna Vekic was staring defeat in the face before staging an impressive comeback. Kaia Kanepi, who beat defending champion Sofia Kenin in the second round, had another seed in her sights when she led by a set and 3-0 only for the Croatian to produce her best and claim a 5-7, 7-6 (2), 6-4 victory.

Vekic will take on Jennifer Brady next while Muchova will meet 18th seed Elise Mertens, who raced past 11th seed Belinda Bencic 6-2, 6-1.



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