



The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Special HSLC/AHM Exam

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

The special High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) and Assam High Madrasah examination for the students who are not satisfied with the results will be held from October 1, announced State Education Minister Ranoj Pegu. The Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA) has declared the examination schedule which will start from October 1 and will end on October 11. Earlier this year, the SEBA authority decided to cancel the HSLC/AHM exam due to the COVID-19 pandemic, under the direction of the State Government. The students were assessed based on an alternative evaluation system and the results were declared on July 30.

Night Super Service

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday announced that night super service will be started from Majuli via Lakhimpur Boginadi. The chief minister announced this while visiting Nimatighat to take stock of the situation. "The single engine boats have been suspended and we have tried to improve the situation since September 8. I have also ordered to run Ro-pax ferry for the convenience of the commuters," the CM said. He further stated that the Ro-pax service will be available three-times a day - at 9 AM, 11.30 AM and 3 PM. The chief minister further informed that two ships will reach by tomorrow or day after tomorrow. "Some rules have also been implemented for the boat service and the commuters have to follow the same."

Assam-Mizoram Train Services

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Rail operations between Assam and Mizoram have resumed as the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has resumed the services between Silchar and Bhairabi last week. The resumption of passenger train services between Silchar and Bhairabi will greatly benefit the economy of the region as traders can now transport items of daily consumption to and fro from the states. Moreover, communication problems for the people of Mizoram with nearby regions have also been removed. Services of Train No. 05567/05568 Silchar - Bhairabi - Silchar passenger train have been resumed as bi-weekly service - every Tuesday and Friday at 4.55 PM from Silchar to Bhairabi. From Bhairabi to Silchar - every Wednesday and Saturday at 5.30 AM.

Assam CM visits Nimatighat, takes stock of safety measures

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

In the aftermath of the boat capsizing tragedy off Nimatighat in the Brahmaputra which left three dead, Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today visited Nimatighat for the second time and inspected the safety measures put in place at the ghats to avert the recurrence of such incidents in future. It may be noted that immediately after the boat capsizing incident, the State government announced a set of safety measures as new SOPs for the water vessels to ply between Jorhat and Majuli and elsewhere in the state for the safety of the passengers. In view of this, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma today took stock of the new safety measures



being put in place by Inland Water Transport and district administrations of both Jorhat and Majuli for the ferry passengers. He also inspected the operating protocols of Ro-Pax plying between Jorhat and Majuli.

He said that though IWT has already made the services of two Ro-Pax operational, efforts are on to add more for the convenience of the passengers. He also said that two more vessels MV Raj Lakshmi and MV

Digaru will reach Majuli very soon besides another ship developed by IWT which is on the pipeline. In view of the passenger demands, the IWT informed the Chief Minister that it found two local boats fit for

operation. These two boats having marine engines will be allowed to operate from today. However, it will be made sure that they comply with all safety measures set forth by the government. Dr. Sarma also said that he personally had a talk to Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal and requested him for sending two more Ro-Pax vessels to Assam, out of which one will ply between Jorhat and Majuli. He also made it clear that eight local boats with single engine operating systems, the

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7 Assam teachers detect five new asteroids working with NASA partner IASC

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

A 7-member teachers group of Assam has discovered five new asteroids as part of an International Astronomical Search Collaboration (IASC) Citizen Science Programme, organised by NASA. A 7-member teachers group of Assam has detected five new asteroids as part of an International Astronomical Search Collaboration (IASC) Citizen Science Programme. IASC is a



partner of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). They took part in the asteroid search campaign organised by

IASC under the name of Saptarishi VIPNET (India). The teachers who are working as citizen scientists are Rajib Ranjan Dhar, Raja Sarkar, Kangkan

Kishor Dutta, Kuldeep Sensua, Debasmita Paul, Dakshina Borkotoky Borah, and Deepak Chetry. Rajib Ranjan Dhar, a teacher of Rabindra Vidyapith ME School in Assam's Kamrup (Metro) district, took part in the International Asteroid Search Campaign along with six colleagues, wherein

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Delhi bans firecrackers ahead of Diwali, CM Arvind Kejriwal points at pollution

New Delhi, September 15 : The storage, sale and use of firecrackers banned in Delhi in view of severe pollution situation in city, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has announced. The CM took to social media to write, "Just like last year, there will be a

complete ban on storage, sale, and bursting of all kinds of firecrackers this year too, in wake of the situation of pollution in Delhi during Diwali in the last three years." Earlier this year, in July, the Supreme Court had dismissed the petition

challenging the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) order on the usage of firecrackers in the Delhi-NCR region. The NGT's order had imposed a complete ban on the sale and use of all firecrackers during the COVID-19 pandemic in NCR and other cities in India with poor Air Quality Index (AQI) index. Last year also, there was an official ban on crackers in the capital, but COVID was cited as the main reason. On November 5, 2020, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced the ban on the use of firecrackers in the national capital after reviewing the COVID-19 situation. The Delhi CM said, "Coronavirus cases have increased due to the festival

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Assam CM offers prayers at Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar and Auniati Satra

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today offered prayers for the welfare of people of Assam at Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar in Jorhat on the occasion of the holy month of Bhada. It was first time that Dr. Sarma visited Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar after becoming Chief Minister. Later talking to the newsmen, he said that lots of development works are being implemented at Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar

under Asom Darshan and untied funds. He informed that State Government would provide another amount of Rs 1 crore from untied fund for strengthening infrastructure at the Bornamghar while the road from Dhekiakhowa Bornamghar to Jajimukh and the 3 km stretch of road from the Bornamghar entrance gateway (toran) to Bornamghar would also be built as per the request of the Bornamghar committee. On the other hand, responding

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Assam Govt Issues SOP for Durga Puja 2021

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Assam Government on Wednesday evening issued a fresh set of Standard Operating Procedures ahead of the festival season across the state amid the second wave of Covid-19. Informing about the guidelines, State health minister Keshab Mahanta said that the state government has taken various measures to ensure the smooth celebration of the upcoming festivals including Vishwakarma Puja, Durga Puja, and Kali Puja. The Puja organising committees have to get the re-

quired permission from the districts' offices of the deputy commissioners, the minister noted adding, that all the members of the organising committees will have to be vaccinated. The constructed Puja Pandals will have to be spacious so that visitors can maintain social distancing. There has to be a separate entry and exit in each pandal. Crowds will not be entertained the minister stressed. Volunteers, organisers, worshippers, and visitors should all be vaccinated, the minister asserted. However, citizens below 18 years are

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Assam Records Highest Crimes Against Women for 4th Consecutive Year

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Assam has the highest crime rate against women in India and this has been the fourth consecutive year that the state recorded highest number of crimes against women, this was revealed by National Crime Records Bureau report, 2020. According to the figure revealed by NCRB, Crime in India 2020 report shows that the crimes against women in the state was 154.3 per one lakh population which is way higher than the national rate of 56.5.



While Odisha stands at second position with 112.9 crimes and Delhi recorded 106.4 crimes standing at third position. In 2017, the rate of crime against women

in the state was 143.3 per one lakh population, in 2018, it was 166 and in 2019, the crime recorded against women was 177. According

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Farmers in large numbers heading towards Delhi borders to intensify protest against farm laws



New Delhi, September 15 : A large number associated with various farmer bodies are headed towards the Delhi borders to intensify their on-

going protest against the Centre's farm laws, reports said on Wednesday. It may be noted that farmers have been protesting the central

government's three controversial farm laws since have passed the Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020. Top farmer leaders have said that they will continue their agitation till the Centre meets their demand to repeal the three controversial farm laws. After several rounds of inconclusive talks with the Centre, the

farmer leaders have said that they will intensify their agitation in the days to come to put more pressure on the government and mobilise support from the general public. BKU leader Rakesh Tikait has threatened that the protests will continue till the government does not agree to farmers demands and repeals the laws. "The protests will continue till the government does not agree to our demands and repeals the laws. Till then, we would not

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Meghalaya CM seeks to allay MLAs' fears on Assam cattle Act

AR Staff Reporter
Guwahati, September 15 :

Meghalaya legislators voiced their concern in the assembly over the Assam Preservation of Cattle Act,

which has put restrictions on the movement of cattle to the state, where beef is staple diet and a cheap source of protein. However, chief minister Conrad K Sangma told the House that

the Meghalaya government had taken up the matter relating to transport of cattle to the state through Assam and that his counterpart has assured that all documents required by

traders would be from Meghalaya. Sangma said during his recent meeting with Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma regarding the interstate

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Union Minister of Jal Shakti to Chair Conference of PHED Ministers of NE States

New Delhi, Sept. 15: The Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat will be chairing a one-day Conference of Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) Ministers of North-Eastern States on Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) on September, 16. The conference, scheduled to be held at Assam Admin-

istrative Staff College, Guwahati is to be attended by Ministers-in-charge of Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) from all the eight North-Eastern States along with senior officers from each State. The conference is organized to discuss planning, implementation and progress made so far as well as the way forward so that all re-



maining households in North-Eastern States get tap water connections at the earliest. The conference, following all Covid-19 protocols, will also be live streamed so that all stakeholders, viz. Chief Executive/ Assistant/ Junior Engineers of PHED in these States can benefit from the deliberations. Jal Jeevan Mission is a flagship

programme of the Union Government being implemented by Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti in partnership with States, to make provision of tap water connection to every rural household across the country by 2024. The fund sharing pattern be-

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Gavin Newsom will remain California governor after easily defeating recall attempt

London, September 15 :

The Associated Press has projected the results about 45 minutes after polls closed, signalling that voters have eschewed the choice to replace Newsom with his most popular challenger, the rightwing radio host Larry Elder. While the race was called by the AP on Tuesday night, the vote count is not yet final, and election officials have 30 days to count all the ballots. Newsom, the Democratic governor of the deep-blue state, found himself in a peculiar position after a Republican-led recall gained steam amid the worst of pandemic, fueled by frustrations over school and business closures. Gubernatorial recall petitions are very common in California, but only one other such recall has made it on to the ballot in state history. Newsom initially dismissed the recall election as a costly distraction - indeed, it cost the state about \$276m. But Democrats kicked into high gear in the late summer as polls indicated that apathetic and angry voters could cost



him his position at the helm of the most populous US state. The day before the 14 September deadline to vote, Joe Biden campaigned alongside Newsom, telling voters "the eyes of the nation are on California". Calling Elder "the clone of Donald Trump," Biden asked: "Can you imagine him being governor of this state? You can't let that happen. There is too much at stake." Among early voters, Democrats outnumbered Republicans by two to one - though gap was expected to shrink on election day with a greater proportion of Republicans

expected to cast their ballots day-of. Polls that had initially placed Elder within striking distance of Newsom began to widen ahead of election day. As his chances of victory slimmed, Elder began following in Trump's footsteps by spreading conspiracy theories to falsely suggest that the election was rigged against him. Supporters hold up signs in support of Gavin Newsom at a Stop the Recall rally in Oakland, California, on 11 September. he results will have national reverberations. Although the governor prevailed, the

Republican challenge in Democrat-dominated California is likely to embolden fundraising efforts and appeals ahead of the 2022 midterms. The race has also given Elder, an already popular fixture in rightwing media, a more prominent national stage. "I have now become a political force here in California," he said in a recent radio interview, on KMJ Now radio. "I'm not going to leave the stage." Newsom's other Republican challengers included the former San Diego mayor Kevin Faulkner, the businessman John Cox - who also lost to Newsom in 2018 - and the reality TV star Caitlyn Jenner. he governor, who was elected by historic margins nearly three years ago, worked throughout the recall campaign to live down his pandemic-era missteps. Parents were frustrated when public schools remained closed in California for far longer than they did in other states. Under Newsom, the state's unemployment department struggled with major backlogs, and paid out an estimated \$31bn in

fraudulent claims. The governor also faced harsh criticisms over the state's initially slow vaccine rollout and its ineffectual sign-up site. An ill-timed, lobbyist-laden dinner at the Michelin-starred French Laundry restaurant amid the state's Covid-19 surge last November gave his opponents further ammunition against him. Having survived the recall, Newsom will serve one more year before he is up for re-election.



A bird rests at the Chishan Lake National Wetland Park in Chuzhou, east China's Anhui Province

New Zealand bill to ban LGBTQ conversion practices receives record 100,000 submissions

London, September 15 :

More than 100,000 people have sent in submissions on New Zealand's plan to ban LGBTQ conversion practices - more than have ever been made on a piece of legislation. "We've already made history with this movement and we're not even done," said Shaneel Lal, an activist and

organiser in the movement to ban conversion practices. "People really and truly care about this because in 2021 it is not appropriate to erase queer identities." The government received a total of 106,700 submissions on the bill, which will make it a crime to conduct conversion practices - or attempting to change someone's sexuality

or gender identity. It is more than double the submissions received on other recent controversial legislation, including the End of Life euthanasia bill, which Stuff reported was the previous record-holder at

the public eye. "The select committee process is the more loud and traumatic part of the entire process. This is when people start very aggressively advocating for their side," Lal said. For survivors of conversion practices, "it's



40,000 submissions. It was close to five times the number of submissions received on the bill legalising same-sex marriage in 2013. The submissions have not yet been processed, so it is unknown how many were in favour of a ban - but Lal was optimistic that the majority would be, after a large-scale social media campaign asking people to submit their support. About 160,000 people had signed a petition to ban the practice earlier in the year, and polling by TVNZ in September 2020 found 72% of New Zealanders favoured a ban, and just 14% opposed. Lal said the campaign's template for a submission to ban conversion practices had been opened more than 300,000 times. For New Zealand's rainbow community, Lal said the news had been greeted with a mixture of celebration and trepidation - pleasure at seeing such a groundswell of engagement was tempered by concerns that it could lead to vitriol as the debate became increasingly prominent in

like an emotional tsunami", Lal said. "People are feeling very anxious and nervous, and for me it is important to ensure that our community is safe within the process - while I was excited to see the number of submissions, I was also nervous and anxious, what this may mean for our community." Justice select committee chair Ginny Andersen told TVNZ it would take about two weeks for 41 staff to process the submissions. She said the committee would also hear about 3,000 oral submissions. Simon Bridges, the opposition National party's justice spokesperson, said "the likelihood is that a majority of these are critical" of the bill, and called for more time for the bill to be considered. "Due to the Covid-19 lockdown and the unprecedented numbers who want to be heard, the submission process should be extended to take until at least the end of the year," Bridges said. The legislation would make it an offence to perform conversion practices on anyone under 18, or with impaired decision-making capacity, with a sentence of up to three years' imprisonment.

Abolish Trump-era 'China Initiative', academics urge, amid racial profiling criticism



Washington, September 15 :

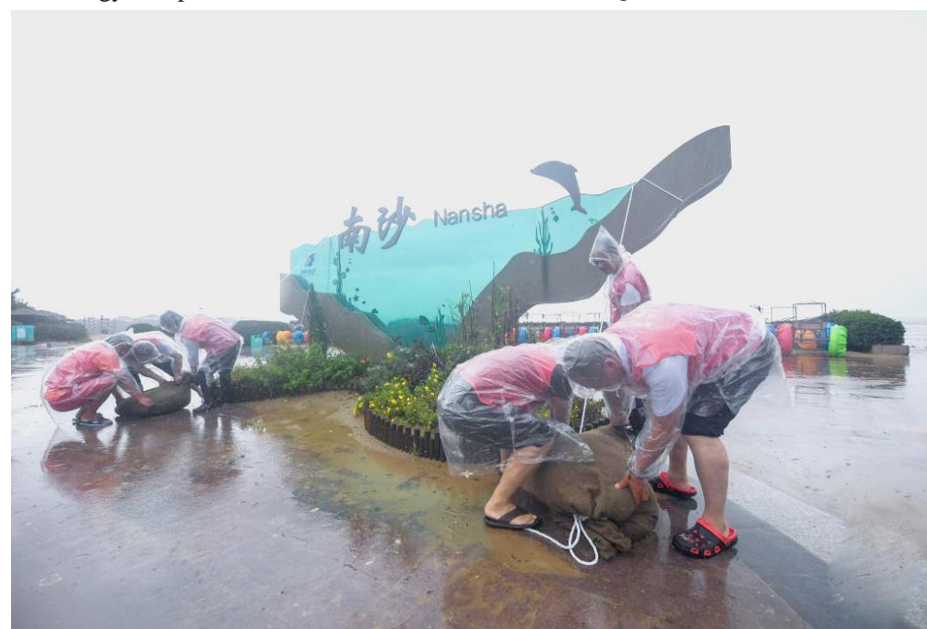
Calls are growing to abolish a controversial Trump-era initiative that looks for Chinese spies at US universities, which critics say has resulted in racial profiling and harmed technological competitiveness. In a letter sent to the Department of Justice, 177 faculty members across 40 departments at Stanford University asked the US government to cease operating the "China Initiative". They argue the programme harms academic freedom by racially profiling and unfairly targeting Chinese academics. The letter follows the acquittal last week by a US federal judge of a researcher accused of concealing ties with China while receiving American taxpayer-funded grants. "We understand that concerns about Chinese government-sanctioned activities including intellectual property theft and economic espionage are important to address," the Stanford academics wrote. "We believe, however, that the China Initiative has deviated significantly from its claimed mission: it is harming the United States' research and technology competitiveness

and it is fuelling biases that, in turn, raise concerns about racial profiling." On Thursday, a federal judge in Tennessee acquitted Anming Hu, an ethnic Chinese nanotechnology expert at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, who had been accused of concealing his ties to Beijing while applying for research funding to work on a Nasa project. The judge said the US government hadn't proven its case. "Given the lack of evidence that defendant was aware of such an expansive interpretation of Nasa's China funding restriction, the court concludes that, even viewing all the evidence in the light most favourable to the government, no rational jury could conclude that defendant acted with a scheme to defraud Nasa," US district judge Thomas Varlan wrote in a 52-page ruling. Anming Hu enters the Howard H. Baker, Jr. United States Courthouse in

downtown Knoxville, Monday, June 7, 2021. Responding to the decision, the Department of Justice said "we respect the court's decision, although we are disappointed with the result", according to US media. Hu's attorney, Phil Lomonaco, said the academic was focused now on recovering his tenured position at the University of Tennessee. "Many universities should have learned from the experience that professor was forced to endure," Lomonaco said. "The Department of Justice needs to take a step back and reassess their approach on investigating Chinese professors in the United States universities. They are not all spies." The high-profile trial came after a series of arrests of US-based researchers who had been accused of not properly disclosing their work in China in recent years. After a jury deadlock, Hu's case ended in mistrial in June.

Taiwan fighter jets practise road landings in drill simulating response to China attack

Beijing, September 15 : President praises 'splendid combat skills' and resolution to defend airspace amid near-daily infringements of its airspace by China. Taiwanese fighter jets landed on a makeshift runway on a road on Wednesday as annual drills reached their peak, practising skills that would be needed in the event of an attack by China. In exercises overseen by President Tsai Ing-wen, three aircraft - an F-16, French-made Mirage and a Ching-kuo Indigenous Defence Fighter plus an E-2 Hawk-Eye early warning aircraft - landed in rural southern Pingtung county on a road specially designed to be straight and flat for rapid conversion into a runway. "Such splendid combat skills and rapid and real actions come from solid everyday training and also demonstrate the confidence of the Republic of China air force in defending its airspace," Tsai wrote on Facebook, referring to Taiwan's formal name.



Volunteers place sandbags at the Nansha beach resort in Zhoushan, east China's Zhejiang Province

Alanis Morissette criticises 'salacious agenda' of HBO film about her life



London, September 15 :

Alanis Morissette has spoken out against a new HBO documentary about her life and its "salacious agenda" as it premieres at the Toronto film festival. The 47-year-old singer had agreed to be interviewed for the film Jagged but has released a statement to express disappointment in how her story has been told. She said she was interviewed "during a very vulnerable time" during her third postpartum depression amid lockdown. "I was lulled into a false sense of security and their salacious agenda became apparent immediately upon my seeing the first cut of the film," she wrote. "This is when I knew our visions were in fact painfully diverged. This was not the

story I agreed to tell. I sit here now experiencing the full impact of having trusted someone who did not warrant being trusted." Morissette has refused to attend any event for the film because of her ongoing tour as well as her belief that there are problematic inaccuracies with the finished product. "Not unlike many 'stories' and unauthorized biographies out there over the years, this one includes implications and facts that are simply not true," she wrote. "While there is beauty and some elements of accuracy in this/my story to be sure - I ultimately won't be supporting someone else's reductive take on a story

Taliban accused of killing 20 civilians in Panjshir valley

Kabul, September 15 : The Taliban have been accused of killing 20 civilians in Afghanistan's Panjshir valley, with the apparent killing of a man in uniform being caught on video. The Panjshir valley was the last area to hold out against the Taliban when it swept to power last month, and was where anti-Taliban opposition forces briefly rallied before being overrun. The BBC described one incident caught on video that showed a man wearing military gear surrounded by Taliban fighters who bystanders insisted was a civilian. Amid the sound of gunfire the man is seen slumping to the ground. According to the report, the BBC said it had heard of 20 similar incidents involving civilians in the area following the Taliban's takeover. One of the victims was a shopkeeper and father-of-two called Abdul Sami, who sources said declined to flee during the Taliban's advance. Arrested and accused of selling sim cards to anti-Taliban opposition fighters his body was later was dumped near his home. The claim emerged as a senior Afghan diplomat from the former government on Tuesday described a deteriorating human rights situation in his country where he said women's rights were disappearing under the Taliban. "The people of Afghanistan need action more than ever," ambassador Nasir Ahmad Andisha told the UN human rights council in Geneva, calling for the council to create a fact-finding mission to monitor Taliban actions in the country. The reports follow well documented instances of other reprisal killings by the hardline Islamist group both during their lightning advance across the country and in the aftermath of seizing power. In August, Amnesty International detailed the massacre of nine ethnic Hazara men after Taliban fighters took control of Afghanistan's Ghazni province in July. Witnesses gave harrowing accounts of the killings, which took place between 4 and 6 July in the village of Mundarakht, Malistan district, including how three were tortured to death, including one man who was strangled with his own scarf.

No. DIPR(LIB)/5/2010/Pt-III/24

Extension Notice

Sealed tender affixing Court Fee of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and twenty five paise) only in two bid system are invited from local and experienced Firms for Pest-Control/ Anti -termite work at the Directorate of Information & Public Relations, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-6 and Library of this Directorate situated at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra premises, Panjabari, Guwahati-37. The Firms should have valid Pest-Control/Anti-Termite) Operation Licence issued by the competent authority. The estimated value of work is Rs. 66,000.00 only. The Firms who had already submitted quotation need not required to submit again.

The tender must reach the undersigned up to **1.00P.M. of 21st September, 2021**. Tenders received thereafter will not be accepted and the undersigned shall not be responsible for any delay in submission of tender. Intending bidder(s) shall submit tenders into the Tender Box kept in the office of DIPR, Assam, Dispur.

The Tender Box will be opened on the same day or on subsequent working day if it falls on Govt. holiday at **1.30 P.M.** in presence of bidders or their authorised representative present at that time only for **Technical Bids. The Financial Bid(s)** will be opened only in respect of those who qualify the Technical Bid(s).

Intending bidder (s) may collect tender paper/Documents on payment of non refundable **Rs. 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred)** only in the form of Bank Draft pledged in favour of DIPR, Assam along with written application in letter head with seal & signature of the concerned firm on any working day during office hours till **20th September, 2021** Tender Papers/ Documents are non transferable.

Janasanyog/C/5563/21

**Director
Information & Public Relations, Assam
Dispur, Guwahati-6**

Minister Ranjeet Kr. Dass inaugurated SHE 2021

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 15: The Inaugural ceremony of Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS), 2021 was held on September, 15 at NEDFi Convention Centre in Guwahati. This event was organized as a part of "Azadi Amrit Mahotsav" celebration which is being celebrated country wide by the Government to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence. The event was graced by the presence of dignitaries- Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Hon'ble Minister PHE and P&RD Dept., Govt. Of Assam; Saeed Abbasi, IAS, Additional CS, PHED, Govt. of Assam; Hiranya Bora, ISS, Deputy Director General, DWSS, Govt. of India; Akash Deep, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary PHED cum MD SBM-G, Govt. of Assam. The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti has decided to organise SHS 2021 from 15th September 2021 to 2nd October 2021 across India and as a part of this undertake various activities and events. Likewise in Assam also the SHS 2021 launch will be followed by a series of activities like 'Satyagraha se Swachhagraha Rath Yatra', 'Shramdaan', 'Swachhata Jagriti Yatra' (Rallies), 'Award and Recognition of Swachhata Cham-



pions', Samvad with Gram Panchayats, etc. The event will finally be culminated on October 2nd, 2021 with the celebration of Swachh Bharat Diwas. The event started with the welcome address by Akash Deep, MD SBM-G, Assam where he elaborated on the objective of Azadi Amrit Mahotsav, SHS, SwachhSurveykshan and Swachh Bharat Diwas. Speaking on the occasion Hiranya Bora, ISS, Deputy Director General, DWSS, Govt. of India, said "The success of any mission depends on sustaining it and ultimately achieving the desired objectives. Swachh Bharat Mission has been able to do that. The mission

transformed into a Jan Andolan as people started to become aware about the importance of sanitation and hygiene. I am looking forward to the Swachh Surveykshan (Grameen) Survey, as I am confident of the good work done and that we will be able to increase our position in the overall state's ranking. I urge the people of Assam to participate and give their honest feedback in the survey and help support the state." Swachhata Hi Seva, an initiative of the Swachh Bharat Mission, aims to generate greater public participation reinforcing the concept of sanitation as everyone's business. This year SHS aims to encourage

people to understand the importance of a clean environment and inculcate the practice of a systematic management of solid and liquid waste. This will require participation from each stakeholder of the mission at every level starting from state to district to Gram Panchayat, villages, community to individual level to involve and work together to make every village ODF Plus. Commenting on the development and initiatives of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), Assam, Ranjeet Kumar Dass, Hon'ble Minister, PHE, Govt. of Assam said "Swachh Bharat Mission has been working for the betterment of the society by raising people's stan-

dard of living through sanitation, hygiene and safe water leading to economic upliftment and better health. In the villages of Assam, Swachhata Hi Seva has been a part of the culture and everyday life. But due to urbanization this practice was seen to be fading away. With the initiation of Swachh Bharat Mission the wave of cleanliness and hygiene has once again come back and has turned into a Jan Andolan. To create massive awareness on ODF plus we have planned for a lot of activities under the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign. I appeal to everyone to come forward and support this." This was followed by flagging off the "Satyagraha se Swachhagraha Rath Yatra" which will travel across all districts of Assam to create awareness about ODF sustainability and proper segregation, collection and disposal of both solid and liquid waste. A Shramdaan activity was also conducted as part of the launch event at Tatimara, by DWSC Kamrup (Metro). The activity included waste collection & transportation and also the foundation of a soak pit for grey water management in nearby locality.

ADG, Eastern command BSF visited Indo-Bangladesh border area

Correspondent

Guwahati, Sept 15: Y B Khurania, IPS, ADG (EC) BSF, alongwith Sanjay Singh Gehlot, IG Frontier HQ Guwahati, JK Rudola DIG(G) and SK Sinha DIG SHQ Coochbehar, visited the border area of Dhubri and Coochbehar districts and reviewed the current security scenario. Y B Khurania, IPS, ADG (EC) was briefed about the operational preparedness and measures to combat various challenges on Indo-BD border by respective DIGs. Further ADG interacted with the ground level troops and commanders, who are performing duty at Indo-BD international Bor-



der and evaluated the real time problems faced by the troops deployed on ground in border domination. During interaction with officials of SHQ Coochbehar, and SHQ Gopalpur, Y B Khurania, IPS, ADG lauded the efforts made by both the sectors on fight against the Covid pandemic and opera-

tional preparedness along the border. He also mentioned that BSF is doing a commendable job and effectively guarding the international border further he has given direction to make domination plan in advance for coming winter season to avoid any untoward incidents.

CM holds VC with DCs on mega COVID vaccination drive to be held on 17th September

Focus on second dose for maximum population: CM

Guwahati, September 15: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma today held a video conference with Deputy Commissioners of all districts at his conference hall at Janata Bhawan regarding mega COVID vaccination drive to be held in the state on September 17. The vaccination drive has a target of vaccinating 8 lakh people. Saying that a total of 9.75 lakh people were inoculated in the first mega vaccination drive held in the state from 21st to 23rd June, he stated that those people are now scheduled for their second doses. He di-

rected to carry out massive awareness programmes for bringing the people to vaccination centres to take their second doses and he stressed on the importance of covering maximum people by vaccination before the forthcoming festive season. The Chief Minister directed the Health Department to engage ASHA Workers, ANMs etc. for administering vaccine doses to maximum people in the same vaccination centres which gave vaccines during the first phase of the drive in June. He issued instruction for sending bulk SMS for informing the people about

their vaccine due dates while directing all guarding ministers and guardian secretaries to monitor the vaccination drive in their respective districts. He also stressed on the importance of covering the areas where rate of vaccination is lower. In today's VC, the Chief Minister took stock of the preparations for the mega drive and availability of vaccines and other items. Health and Family Welfare Minister Keshav Mahanta, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora, Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Ranjit Kumar Dass, Environment and Forest Minister Parimal Shuklabaidya, Irrigation Minister Ashok Singhal, Water Resources Minister Pijush Hazarika, Handloom and Textiles Minister UG Brahma, Tea Tribes Welfare Minister Sanjay Kishan, Chief Secretary Jishnu Baruah, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Sameer Kumar Sinha also attended today's VC alongwith other senior officers.

AAEA on the occasion of Engineer's Day



STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 15: On the auspicious occasion of Engineer's Day, All Assam Engineer's Association (AAEA) greets the engineering fraternity in particular and everyone in general as the northeast India based forum of graduate engineers believes that each individual has an engineering mind irrespective of their adopted professions. It may be mentioned that the Engineer's Day is observed

in several countries on different dates. As the name indicates, the day is dedicated to the engineers and it is celebrated on September 15 in India (also in Lanka and Tanzania). The day marks the birth anniversary of India's finest civil engineer Bharat Ratna Mokshagundam Vishweshwaraya. Born on 15 September 1861 at Muddenahalli village in Karnataka, Vishweshwaraya completed his graduation in

civil engineering from Pune Science College. As an honour to his contributions to the field of engineering and education, the Union government in New Delhi in 1968 declared Vishweshwaraya's birth anniversary to be observed as Engineer's Day. Engineers are considered as the backbone of every nation. India continues to produce more than 1.5 million engineers every year from its over 4000 institutes and it is one of the largest producers of professional engineers across the world. Indian engineers are always recognised in different countries for their meticulous thought process and skills to solve various problems. Need not to mention that millions of aspiring students appear in entrance examinations for getting admissions to favoured

engineering colleges & universities in India, where the students are offered several streams of engineering like civil, mechanical, electrical, aeronautical, chemical, environmental, electronics, computer science, etc. The annual celebration helps the engineers to reorganize their commitment to the nation. "We have taken the opportunity to wish for the Vishwakarma Jayanti (September, 17), a day for worshipping the god of engineering," said AAEA president Er Kailash Sharma, working president Er Nava J. Thakuria and secretary Er Inamul Hye, adding that Lord Vishwakarma, divine architect of the universe, is always adored by numerous engineers, mechanics, smiths, artisans, craftsmen, factory workers, etc.

CORRESPONDENT

Kajalgaon, Sept 15: Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Chief Executive Member (CEM) Pramod Boro has called upon the officials of Public Health Engineering (PHE) department of Chirang district to expedite the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Chirang district. Attending a review meeting along with Principal Secretary of BTC Shantanu P. Gotmare held with the officials of PHE department and contractors involved with JJM in the conference hall of District Center, Kajalgaon, BTC CEM Pramod Boro stressed on timely completion of all the incomplete works for providing tap water connection in every rural household of the district. Addressing the meeting, he said "December is the deadline for all contractors to complete all the ongoing JJM schemes of the second phase in Chirang district. But all contractors have to maintain quality without expecting much more profit for the interest of Public." He warned that any contractors found to be irresponsible and improper in the implementation of the same scheme, they would have to face problems. "But



those who have done properly and timely, they will be helped by the department by awarding them with more schemes", he added. Asking the contractors if they had any problems in timely completion of JJM schemes in the district, he advised them to bring such problems to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner and the officials of the department immediately. Reiterating the JJM, a flagship programme of the union government and necessity of implementing it properly, the CEM Pramod Boro strictly instructed the PHE officials like engineers, sector officers and technical persons present in the meeting to make all out efforts by physically monitoring the progress of every schemes to accom-

plish the goal of the mission in a time-bound manner and to ensure the quality of all works. During the meeting, one Rajib Maiti, Manager of M/s. Rangadao Constructions Pvt. Ltd, Chapaguri, was held by the police and work orders of three contractors were canceled due to anomalies found against them while implementing JJM schemes. The meeting was also attended by Sidi MLA Jayanta Basumatary, MCLA Madhab Chandra Chetri, in-charge Deputy Commissioner, Chirang, ADC Khanindra Das, ADC and in-charge Sub-Divisional Officer, Bijni, Dibakar Nath and SDO (S) Wahidul Islam.

Birth anniversary of Maharshi Dadhichi celebrates

Correspondent

Nagaon, Sept 15: Dadhichi Parishad, Nagaon celebrated the birth anniversary of Maharshi Dadhichi recently at Sree Satyanarayana Thakurbari. The president of Dadhichi Parishad and central executive of the state BJP, Jugal Sarma, and preacher Sivakumar Sarma offered prayers to the great soul who sacrificed his life for welfare of the heavenly bodies and also conducted 'Mangal Path'. Devotees like Asha Sarma, Kiron Sarma, Susma Sarma, Manju Devi, Mamta Devi and others took part in the celebration.

Vehicle owners urged to pay pending taxes within Sept 30

STAFFREPORTER

Guwahati, Sept 15: Assam Transport Department's Betkuchi-based office of the DTO (R&L) Kamrup District (Metro) has, following Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma and Transport Minister Chandramohan Patowary's direction to all District Transport Officers (DTOs) to collect outstanding revenue, requested the private and commercial vehicle owners to clear their pending taxes within 30th September of the current fiscal year 2021-22 through hoardings and banners across the state. Gautam Das, DTO (Reg & Licence) Kamrup District Metro, has urged the vehicle owners who are yet to clear their outstanding taxes to come forward and pay their pending dues within the deadline, i.e. September 30, along with licence renewal. Accordingly, all private and commercial vehicle owners can pay their outstanding taxes through debit card or ATM

counter installed at the premises of the Kamrup Metro DTO office at Betkuchi in the city. Notably, starting from April 1 to August 31 during the current fiscal year 2021-22, the office of the DTO (Reg & Licence) Kamrup District Metro has collected public revenue of more than Rs 77 crores. Incidentally, on the direction of the Chief Minister and the Transport Minister, the transport department took the initiative to create awareness about road safety amongst vehicle drivers and passengers along with rev-



enue collection. To make the state 'accident free', the Transport Department's District Road Safety Committee took steps to dis-

play public hoardings and banners all over the state to prevent reckless driving for the safety of the lives of the common people.

Howly Raas Mahotsav to be held for 3 days

Correspondent
Barpeta Road, Sept 15: Keeping in mind the Covid-19 pandemic, Howly Raas Mahotsav will be held for three days only for religious traditions. In a general meeting called by the residents of Howly yesterday this decision was taken. In the meeting chairman Munindra Das

along with General Secretary Naba Kumar Pathak and Upal Nath for the 94th Howly Raas Mahotsav were nominated. The committee may take a decision on extending the days the Mahotsav runs depending on the Government's Covid guidelines in the upcoming days. Moreover the committee hasn't yet decided

on the lucky draw that is held every year for the construction of multifaceted cultural projects. It has to be kept in mind that for the past many years Howly Raas Mahotsav was held for a period of 15 days. But due to the pandemic, for the last 2 years the organisers had to take this decision.

Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra yet to reopen: Tourists are still in despair

CORRESPONDENT

Palasbari, Sept 15: Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra has been closed for many months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It may be mentioned here that on the day of the 95th birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika, the State Health & Family Welfare Minister Keshab Mahanta announced that the Samadhi khetra will be open from September 8 with maintaining all COVID protocols. But the Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi khetra near Gauhati University in Jalukbari, is still not open for the tourists. Many visi-



tors have come to the Samadhi khetra, although the Samadhi Khetra has been closed and they are still in despair. The Jalukbari Citizens' Association has demanded the departmental authorities to take immediate action in this regard and reopen the Bhupen Hazarika Samadhi Khetra.

SALE NOTICE				
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Assets under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 read with Regulation 33(1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016. Notice is hereby given to the public in general that the below described assets of Amrit Feeds Limited will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" and "NO RECOURSE BASIS" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below under Liquidation. The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties. The sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Web Portal www.auctioneer.com . The general public is invited to bid either personally or by duly authorized agent.				
SCHEDULE OF ASSETS				
Lot No.	Description of Assets	Reserve Price (₹ lacs)	EMD (₹ lacs)	Incremental Amount (₹ lacs)
1	Land measuring 1.50 acre at Plot No. C-48, 49, 50, 57, 58 & 59, Khatlan No. 116, 86 & 58, Khasra No. 157 (part), 158 (part), 159 (part), 156 (part) & 142 (part), 182, Thana Hajpur, 188, Dist. Vaishali, Bihar with building thereon, plant and machinery and other fixed assets on a lump sum basis.	800	80	16
2	Plant & machinery, and movable assets at Mouza: Raghunathpur, Panagah-Morgam Highway P.S: Kanksa, District: Burdwan, West Bengal-713148.	1800	180	36
3	Land measuring (1,360 sqft) + 4,180 sqft at Dag No. 350, 43, Industrial Area, IDIC, Village Kendukdona, Mouza Rangia, Dist. Kamrup, Assam-781354.	450	45	9

Last date of EMD deposit: 06.10.2021 | Last Date / Time of bidding: 08.10.2021, 14:30 hrs
The sale shall be subject to the Terms and Conditions prescribed in the Process Document and to the following conditions:
1. The particulars of the Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best information of the Liquidator, but the Liquidator shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement, or omission in this proclamation.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the asset and specification before submitting the bid. The inspection of assets put on auction will be permitted to interested bidders at sites from the date of publication to the last date of submitting documents & EMD. The Liquidator shall not be responsible for any change, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the Government or anyone else in respect of the assets e-auctioned. The intending bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances on the property including statutory liabilities, arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc.
3. The interested bidders shall deposit the EMD by way of Demand Draft favouring "Amrit Feeds Limited (in Liquidation)" or through bank transfer by the last date as mentioned in the above noted table, to the following account- Amrit Feeds Limited (in Liquidation), Account No. 3183002101723849, IFSC Code PUNB0318300. The draft should not be of a Cooperative-Bank.
4. The bidders are requested to visit: www.intelligentupdates.blogspot.com/sale-notice-insolvency.html for detailed terms and conditions for e-auction process before submitting their bids and taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.
Date: 15.09.2021
Place: Kolkata
Sunil Mohan Acharya
Liquidator, M/s Amrit Feeds Limited
IBBI Reg No: IBBI/PA-003/IP-ND00174/2018-19/12120
Kolkata 700131, sunilmohanacharya58@gmail.com
Communication Address: Intelligent IP Management Solutions Private Limited, YMCA Building, 2nd Floor, 25 Jawaharalal Nehru Road, Kolkata-700007, liquidator.amritfeeds@gmail.com
Registered Address: 24/51 Shastri Nagar, 6 No. Jheel Par Road, Ward No. 15, New Barrackpur, North 24 Parganas, IBBI/PA-003/IP-ND00174/2018-19/12120

THE ASSAM RISING

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Triumph at the US Open

According to the commentators, Emma Raducanu's triumph at the US Open is just the start. She has been hailed as a sporting saviour, a model of resilience, an antidote to xenophobia and a potential money-making powerhouse. Her historic victory has unwittingly entered her into a game that she can never win: the cultural obsession with exceptional teenage girls and young women. Taking teenage girls seriously – beyond their commercial potential – is a shockingly recent phenomenon, a decade old if that. Earlier teen-girl prodigies, from Emily Dickinson to Beyoncé, were accused of being the puppets of powerful men and subject to exploitation. That was until social media gave a generation an unmediated voice to define their own culture, to fight against injustices they cared about and to speak out about the pressures and mistreatment they experienced. The first wave of coverage of these remarkable young women, from Malala Yousafzai to Tavi Gevinson, marvelled at their distance from the airhead stereotype perpetuated by the industrialised pop culture of the 90s and 00s. That quickly metabolised into the idea of these girls as a corrective to the mistakes of prior generations. At its most innocent, the attention is the result of the irresistible lure of youth observed by those who feel their own slipping away (as with the recent millennial obsession with 18-year-old pop breakout star Olivia Rodrigo). At its worst, reducing a girl to her most aspirational attributes is dehumanising – particularly for Black girls, who must be hyperexceptional to be deemed worthy of notice in the first place. In her recent US Vogue cover story, the poet Amanda Gorman, now 23, recounted a collaboration with the toy brand American Girl that came about during her stint as the 18-year-old youth laureate of Los Angeles. The company produced a doll whose biography nakedly borrowed from the most inspiring beats of Gorman's own story. The experience distorted Gorman's reality. "I built up this narrative in my head that, you know, I had to be some type of 'role model'," she said. Petrifying teenage girls, still in the earliest stages of working out who they might become, stymies their potential for growth. Billie Eilish has always expressed her displeasure with being held up as a "good" example for concealing her body in baggy clothing, and how it denied her the possibility of change (and slut-shamed her peers). When she revealed more of her figure earlier this year, she was subject to a backlash and claims of hypocrisy from people who were disappointed that she hadn't lived up to their idea of who she was. The new image prompted more outrage than Your Power, the lead single from her second album, in which Eilish addressed abuses and statutory rape within the entertainment industry. The close focus on any girl who stands for something usually serves only to obscure her cause, the supposed reason we care about her in the first place. You only have to look at the stacks of unofficial books with Greta Thunberg's face on the cover to see how misunderstood and misappropriated her stance has become: anyone who cared about the environment would not be printing cash-in books. She knows that politicians treat her like a mascot and then flake on their promises to enact green policies. The same is true of Malala Yousafzai: in 2015, the writer Ayesha Siddiqi wrote an essay for Vice titled Does America deserve Malala? in response to a film that all but removed its subject from her context as a young Pakistani activist for girls' education, and avoided acknowledging international responsibility for stoking conflict in the region. "The war on terror is not a feelgood tale of triumph over adversity; yet He Named Me Malala is," Siddiqi wrote. "How do we evaluate a movie whose central narrative is activated by a reality the film ignores?" Even those perceived to have social capital and power are often left vulnerable, both to exploitation and bearing the weight of its exposure. In a recent essay for The Cut, Tavi Gevinson, now 25, wrote about being 18 and in a relationship with a much older man who believed, as she did at the time, that her status as an influential editor and actor "cancelled out the power he wielded as an adult man", providing a cover for his eventual abuses. By concealing his identity to protect his family, she wrote, was she enabling further abuse? Was she responsible for the self-appointed vigilantes online speculating as to his identity? Simone Biles spoke out about being sexually abused by the former USA Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar in her teens.

Mehar Singh, the RIAF pilot with heart of a Bengal tiger, who flew like a Himalayan eagle

I learned about 'Baba' Mehar Singh while researching an article about my uncle who flew Hurricanes in Burma. He was my uncle's squadron commander and the only officer in the Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) awarded a Distinguished Service Order. It is usually awarded to honour leadership rather than individual bravery. Air Marshal Asghar Khan, who flew operational sorties in Burma in 1944, confirms that, "With the solitary exception of Squadron Leader Mehar Singh, a pilot of outstanding ability, no one was able to inspire confidence among us." Field Marshal Slim considered Mehar Singh 'an old friend', an association which probably developed during the Waziristan Campaign when Slim was commanding the 2/7th Gurkha Rifles in 1938. As Commander Fourteenth Army in Burma, he was 'very impressed by the conduct of the squadron' led by Mehar Singh. I knew little of him as an individual till I read the autobiography of his friend and contemporary, Wing Commander Aizad Baksh Awan, the brother of Ayub Baksh Awan, the Inspector General of Police. Mehar was born in Lyallpur and was in his final year of B. Sc. at the Punjab University, Lahore when he was selected for the three year course at the RAF College Cranwell in UK. He proved to be a first class pilot and his instructor openly declared that Mehar would have easily won the Groves Memorial Trophy for flying had the British Air Ministry not barred Colonials from competing for this prize after it was awarded to Aspy Engineer in 1933. Aspy was a Parsee who had been educated at the DJ College in Karachi and was a member of Awan's Flight. He earned a DFC during the Second World War and was Chief of the Indian Air Staff from 1960 to 1964. In May 1936, Mehar Singh was also posted to Awan's flight in No 1 Squadron at its Drigh Road Base, Karachi. Mehar Singh was regarded by Awan as a brave flier with supernatural powers. His senses of touch, sound, and smell were superior to others, and his eyesight and reflexes were exceptional, making him an excellent shot. Out on the Malir River in early 1937, except Mehar Singh all the officers missed a partridge that zigzagged across the line of beaters. He would always wait with the clipped muzzle pointing down and drop the bird like a stone when it was nearly out of reach. He had the appetite of an ox. Back from his wedding in Lyallpur in 1938, every night after dinner he would invite Awan to his tent pitched near the mess at Drigh Road because all the rooms were taken. "Zaidy, come and have a few luddoes." They were made by a family of famous halwais in Lyallpur and of an enormous size. While his friends could only consume one, Mehar Singh ate 2-3 dozen as a tonic after a hearty meal that had already been rounded off with half a dozen oranges and an equal number of coffee refills. On a flight to Ambala, with Awan piloting and Mehar sitting on the rear seat of a Hart biplane, they landed at Jodhpur for refueling. Awan was hungry after supervising the refueling, but when he climbed into the rear cockpit for his lunch of omelets and four



Major General Syed Ali Hamid

parathas it had vanished and the tea flask was empty. A guilty Mehar Singh who had forgot to bring his own lunch, had withdrawn to a corner of the apron. He also drank like a fish. He believed that plain water was unhealthy for the stomach, but consumed copious quantities of every other liquid - coffee, tea, coca, and orange squash, all served in a big tumbler that as young officers we dubbed OR (other rank) glasses. Even Scotch and Soda were drunk from an OR glass, and he was able to top it off with beer, rum, and gin without any effect. The pilots of the blossoming RIAF were weaned in the operations on the Northwest Frontier on the eve of the Second World War and it was an escape during his tenure with No. 2 Squadron in Waziristan, that Mehar Singh's legend was probably borne. It's a well documented story in which he was shot down and crashed while bombing a village. He and his gunner evaded capture by a horde of tribesmen by hiding in a cave at night and had to keep at bay a pack of wolves who returned to their den. Every surrounding post sent patrols to retrieve the aviators who were found the next morning were heading towards Razzani Camp - dead tired, bruised and very hungry but alive. Awan had given his friend the name Mehar Baba after a bearded Sindhii saint who enticed young women out of their homes, but Mehar Singh was terrified of the fairer sex and avoided them like poison. In 1946 when Mehar's squadron was based in Bhopal, an Indian pilot told his pretty English wife Evelyn to stand next to the squadron commander at the bar. Eve wore a bedazzling evening gown with plenty of jewelry, powder, lipstick, rouge and mascara and a heavy dab of Parisian perfume. Wherever the bashful Sikh was talking to a group of pilots on sports and flying, Eve would slide up holding a glass of sherry and listen respectfully. When her perfume hit his nostrils, Mehar Singh would bolt to another group. For 45 minutes, Eve pursued Baba Mehar from one group to another and he eventually left. He was a natural sportsman and played hockey for the Punjab University and later for the RIAF. Dara, the reputed Olympian said, "With Mehar

playing fullback for the opposing team, no one can score a goal." Mehar also took up golf at Drigh Road and in 1939 won the Championship in Karachi against the best players in the city. He had never held a golf club and initially swung it like a hockey with a flick of his wrist. He then expanded his swing into a beautiful stroke and while on standby alert, would practice on the aerodrome. After commanding a squadron for six months in Peshawar in 1942, he was posted to No. 6 Fighter Reconnaissance Squadron flying Mk 2B and 2C Hurricanes equipped with cameras. He proved to be a capable but eccentric squadron leader. While some flew in 1930 Pattern Flying Boots or in the 1943 Pattern 'Escape' Boots, or shoes with stockings, or ammunition boots with anklets, 'Baba' Mehar Singh preferred to fly barefoot! In his book, Defeat into Victory, Field Marshal Slim narrates that "I looked in at this squadron just at a time when news had come in that the last patrol had run into a bunch of Zeros and been shot down. The young squadron commander [Mehar Singh was only 29 years old], at once took out the next patrol himself and completed the mission. His methods, rumour has it, were a little unorthodox. It is said that if any of his officers made a bad landing, he would take them behind a basha and beat them. Whatever he did, it was effective. They were a happy, efficient and gallant squadron." This was despite the fact that his squadron had the highest number of casualties and was dubbed the Suicide Squadron. Some incorrectly thought he was a heartless butcher but if one of his 'boys' was killed he shed a tear or two but only in front of his close friends like Zaydi. He was a disciplinarian and never smiled on parade but enjoyed a joke in the officer's mess. The Battle of Arakan seems to have magnified his appetite and thirst. When Awan visited his friend for a few days, during one evening, Mehar Singh " [...] put away four glasses of whiskey and soda before dinner. He then ate four full plates of hot curry and rice and one whole chicken. This was followed by a large serving of bread and egg pudding and a full glass of tea." Soon after he

had two more OR glasses of whiskey and a glass of orange squash in one gulp. At bedtime, his orderly Dhanna Singh served him a glass of hot cocoa. There were two enemies in Burma - the Japanese and malaria. Mehar Singh battled the Japanese in the air in his Hurricane and on his charpai he battled the mosquitoes with whiskey. Awan was sharing the 'Bhasha' with Mehar Singh and was badly bitten by large mosquitoes that had penetrated through his net. On the other hand, in the morning his host was sleeping peacefully; his 'charpai' surrounded by mosquitoes killed by what Mehar referred to as "a lot of explosive material" in his body. Awan credits Mehar Singh with the heart of a Bengal tiger, stamina and guts of a Punjabi bull and flying ability of a Himalayan eagle. On lone sorties he would penetrate hundreds of miles over Japanese territory photographing troop movement and concentrations from 20,000 feet. His qualities were visibly demonstrated in an incident when Shiv Dev Singh, one of his flight commanders was hit by ground fire but luckily landed his Hurricane in a clear patch of elephant grass. His tail-Charlie landed back and showed Mehar exactly where Shiv had force-landed. Mehar lost no time in taking-off in a Harvard with a mechanic, spare parts and tools. Shiv tried to stop him from landing by waving his arms but Mehar Singh touched down and after a few bad bumps came to a stop. Shedding a tear of joy, Shiv frantically warned his squadron commander that a whole Japanese brigade was only two miles away. Both were aware of the horrendous beating that the Japanese inflicted on Indian pilots to break their moral. However, Mehar Singh calmly inspected the Hurricane and after confirming that the only damage was to the propeller, he took off with a great deal of bumps and bounces. Shiv and the mechanic followed in the Harvard. Though the Hurricane vibrated like crazy due to the damaged propeller, it made it back and the whole squadron lined the runway to receive them. For Shiv it was a new lease of life; for Mehar it was just another day's work commanding a fighter recon squadron. Mehar had the best qualities for a combat leader and continued to lead from the front in the First Kashmir War as AOC No. 1 group controlling operations in Kashmir. He was the first to pilot a Dakota into Srinagar and the first to establish an air bridge into Poonch. He was also the first to land on a dirt strip at Leh. His entire service had been spent in war zones and he probably could not adjust to the constraints of peacetime operations and retired in 1948 over differences with some senior officers. Mehar never thought that a he would die in an aircraft. He used to tell Zaidy "Old pilots never die; they just fade away." Unfortunately, he was killed while piloting a 3-seater aircraft through a thunderstorm between Ambala and Delhi. He died at the age of 36 but his legend lives on. Acknowledgement: I am grateful to Jagan Pillarisetti for assisting me with information and photographs and for vetting the draft.

Yogi Adityanath and Himanta Biswa Sarma-two outsiders playing like pros in RSS-dominated BJP

Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma and Uttar Pradesh's Yogi Adityanath are arguably the Bharatiya Janata Party's most prominent, vocal and projected chief ministers today. And incidentally, both don't have what is considered a key requirement for holding any powerful post in the BJP - a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) background. Yet, both leaders have ensured they become as RSS as one can - assimilating fully into the Sangh culture, not allowing their distinct backgrounds to become a hindrance and more than following the umbrella outfit's trope. The tale of these two chief ministers, in a nutshell, tells us the story of the evolving BJP-RSS culture. The success of RSS is no longer necessarily in hoisting more RSS-raised leaders, but in finding new and willing RSS clones. Boasting of a Sangh background is no longer a necessary condition to be suc-



cessful in the BJP and hold powerful positions. But this does not mean that the core of the RSS-BJP is changing, or that the two are moving apart. It merely indicates that as the party expands, particularly into inorganic and new territories, the BJP remains aware of the limitations of relying compulsorily on the RSS-grooming requirement. So now, the tactic is to RSS-ise 'outsiders' and make them its own. It's astonishing how deep-seated not having been Sangh

karyakartas or pracharaks, in both Yogi Adityanath and Himanta Biswa Sarma speak the language and preach the agenda of the RSS. From making the anti-cow slaughter law of 1955 more stringent to bringing in the Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Ordinance, 2020, commonly known as 'love jihad' law, and ushering in a strict population control policy - Yogi Adityanath has led the way for other BJP chief ministers, fulfilling the RSS agenda

to the hilt. In fact, my colleague D.K. Singh had rightly argued how Adityanath has become a "role model" for other BJP CMs, including veterans like Shivraj Singh Chouhan. A star campaigner for the BJP, Adityanath generously throws in 'Ali-Bajrang Bali' kind of divisive rhetoric in his speeches. He is literally a saffron-clad torchbearer of Hindutva politics. A bigger surprise, however, is Himanta Biswa Sarma. A leader who learnt his politics in the Congress, remaining a close aide of Assam's former chief minister Tarun Gogoi for many years, he has now turned into a rabid majoritarian politician. He seems to be proving the proverb 'more loyal than the king' right, with the language - both political and policy wise - that he speaks. Thus, if Adityanath has a cow protection plan, can Himanta be far behind? And if the Uttar

Ruhi Tewari

Pradesh chief minister wants to ensure there is a check on population, effectively to control fertility rate among Muslims, why should his Assam counterpart not follow suit? Himanta has not shied from pushing for RSS-BJP's pet Citizenship (Amendment) Act, never mind if it goes against the very tenets of Assam's ethnicity struggle. From his 'Jinnah legacy' comment to concerns of Hindus in Assam becoming a 'minority' - the chief minister, who recently completed 100 days in office, has done every bit to become a Nagpur favourite. Even Sarma's predecessor in Assam - Sarbananda Sonowal - comes from a non-Sangh background. Other prominent examples that stand out are former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje Scindia and veteran leader Sushma Swaraj, who also did not have an RSS background.

But they were more of an aberration than the norm. Other imports like Jyotiraditya Scindia are also slowly assimilating into the RSS-BJP worldview and culture. This trend in the BJP is a significant shift from the emphasis on Sangh-grooming. There was a belief that even if you did get a place in the BJP, you wouldn't reach the higher echelons if you came from a non-RSS background. My colleagues Shanker Arnimesh and Neelam Pandey did some number crunching in early 2020 to find out that as many as three out of four ministers in the Narendra Modi government were rooted in the Sangh. They also found that one out of five BJP MPs associated with the RSS were appointed ministers in the Narendra Modi cabinet in 2019. This figure is representative of a larger, unwritten but well-established, rule in the BJP. Of course, there are

several names - including Union ministers Smriti Irani, S. Jaishankar and Piyush Goyal - who don't have the Sangh card but have done well for themselves in the BJP. But the stories of Himanta Biswa Sarma and Yogi Adityanath stand out because these two have shown how it's not only possible to reach the top in the BJP minus an RSS background, but also dominate and become the party's poster boys and flag bearers. Inclusion of such leaders is a sign of growing pragmatism in the Sangh-BJP ecosystem. When you expand and become a national party of this nature, you need to allow 'outsiders' to join and grow. I had once argued that Himanta Biswa Sarma has everything that it takes to become the next Amit Shah, except the RSS. But given how things seem to be changing in the BJP, both Yogi Adityanath and Sarma have every chance of springing into the national scene to lead the party.

KL Deemed-to-be University awarded All India 2nd prize by AICTE

Guwahati, Sept 15: KL Deemed-to-be University, one of the leading Universities in the country for graduation and higher education, has been bestowed the prestigious Clean and Smart Campus Award 2020 by AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) under the category of universities that use Indian Knowledge Systems. The University is awarded 2nd prize for the application of Indian Knowledge Systems in maintaining the clean and smart campus. To honor the institutes, students and teachers who have significantly contributed towards the holistic development of technical education, the 3rd edition of the Award ceremony was hosted by AICTE at its Head Quarters in New Delhi. Hon'ble Minister of Education, Govt of India, Shri Dharmendra



Pradhan has presented the award on the occasion to Dr. Garimella Gopalakrishna Rao, Director, KL Deemed-to-be University who have received the award on behalf of the university. The universities were evaluated based on their waste minimization, resource conservation and the adoption of latest technologies like IoT, Cloud and Big Data to achieve sustainability. KL Deemed-to-be University was awarded in recognition of its wide range of initia-

tives allied to sustainable growth. The university was cited for its sustainability, traditional systematized waste management, resource and use of technology to engage the campus in environmental stewardship. It has been recognized for promoting several eco-friendly initiatives like the use of battery powered vehicles, road sweeping machines, sensor-based parking, sensor-based lighting, sensor-based flushing systems, solar and wind power

generation, and the active participation of the university in climate change related activities. "The climate crisis is a globally pressing issue that we, as educational institutions must assume a leading role in tackling. KL Deemed to be University has taken several initiatives to promote conservation and sustainability in campus and around the community. The AICTE Clean and Smart Campus awards reflect the hard work put in by universities in embedding sustainability in education. This award is a testament to our commitment to the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)", said Er. Koneru Satyanarayana, President, KL Deemed-to-be University. While 2000+ Universities have registered for the Clean and Smart Campus Award 2020, KL Deemed to be University is among the very few institutions which

have been awarded for their exemplary work in making their campuses green, clean and smart. Founded in 1980 as KL College of Engineering, KL Deemed to be University brings today an academic legacy of 40 years. It became Deemed University in 2009 and was accredited by NAAC with A++ grade and Category-1 Institution by UGC, MHRD, Govt. of India in 2019. It is ranked 41st in the NIRF 2020 rankings of top Universities of India. KL Deemed University is situated in a spacious 100-acre campus in Vijayawada, and has another world-class campus in Hyderabad. The University boasts of its collaborations with 60+ foreign Universities across 16 countries providing students international exposure through internships and exchange programs.

Amazon Job Seeker Insight Survey indicates 59% of Indian professionals are actively looking for new jobs

Guwahati, September 15: Amazon today shared the findings of a survey commissioned by the company



to gauge the pulse of the impact of COVID-19 on jobs and future career plans among Indian professionals. The study was conducted by Morning Consult, a global data intelligence company, from August 17 to August 23, 2021 and covered 1000 professional adults across India. The study reveals that Indian professionals are looking for new and different types of work, with 59% of them actively searching for a job. Following are the key findings from the survey: COVID-19 is prompting professionals to rethink their career paths * More than 1 in 3 (35%) employed professionals in India saw their pay cut as a result of COVID-19. * More than 2 in 3 (68%) jobseekers in India are looking to switch industries as a result of COVID-19. * 1 in 3 (33%) jobseekers in India are looking for a new job right now where they can do more meaningful work. Job seekers in India have new concerns about

the job search process, * 51% of Indian job-seeking adults are interested in pursuing opportunities in in-

dustries they do not have experience in. * When applying for a job, 55% of Indian professionals claim compensation is a major factor they look for. * Job security is a major priority for 56% of Indian professionals following the pandemic. * For half of Indian professionals (49%), opportunities that will help them learn and develop is a high priority when considering a job. * For 47% of Indian professionals, having a safe workplace environment is a high priority when considering a job. Professionals in India seek training, * 75% of Indian professionals are concerned their current set of skills will become outdated in five years. * 90% of India professionals are interested in learning new and transferrable career skills, 74% of these professionals claimed this interest was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. * 45% of professionals in India believe technical and digital skills

company aims to provide a platform for job seekers to discover what is it like to work at Amazon and how the company is steadfast in its commitment to help India unleash its true potential in the 21st century. Attendees will have the op-

portunity to understand the various job roles and diverse talent that comes together to make Amazon an exciting workplace. Amazon Career Day begins at 10:00 am IST on 16 September. Click here to know more details and register.

Renault launches KIGER RXT(O) & KWID MY21

Guwahati, Sept 15: Renault India is celebrating the 10th Anniversary of its operations in India and as part of the celebrations launched the new RXT (O) variant of Renault KIGER and the KWID MY21 in Guwahati. The Renault KIGER RXT(O) will be available in 1.0L Energy Engine in both MT and AMT transmissions. The RXT(O) variant will get some of the customer favorite, premium features from the RXZ variant such as the Tri-octa LED Pure Vision Headlamps and 40.64 cm Diamond Cut Alloy Wheels at a more affordable price point. The iconic three-LED front look of the new KIGER RXT(O), coupled with 40.64 cm Diamond cut alloy wheels and striking Radiant Red Dual Tone color will further accentuate the Stunning design of the car. To ensure good air quality inside the cabin, RXT(O) will also feature PM2.5 Advanced Atmospheric Filter. Enhancing the overall Smart Cabin experience, the Wireless Smartphone Replication function has been extended to the RXT(O) variant, enabling the passengers to connect their smartphones to the 20.32 cm Display Link Floating Touchscreen. Renault KWID has been an Attractive, Innovative and Affordable vehicle, a true game-changer and volume driver for Renault India. Staying true to its commitment to keep building on



the indomitable success of KWID with breakthrough product innovations, the all new KWID MY21 further strengthens its value proposition in the offering and elevates customer's trust in the product and brand. The Renault KWID MY21 Range will be offered in 0.8L and 1.0L SCe powertrains in both manual and AMT options. Renault KWID range complies with all the safety regulations applicable in India, and will now be equipped with dual front Airbags as a standard feature across all the variants. This development comes ahead of the regulation timelines. Accentuating the attractiveness of the car, the new KWID MY21 Climber Edition will also be available in Dual Tone Exterior in White colour with black roof along with the new features like Electric ORVM and Day and Night IRVM. In addition to various active and passive safety features, it also features Front driver side pyrotech & pretensioner, further increasing the safety quotient of the ve-

hicle. Renault KIGER RXT(O) variant is launched at INR 7.37L (ex-showroom Guwahati) while the new KWID MY 21 range starts at INR 4.06L (ex-showroom Guwahati). As part of the celebrations, Renault has announced special offers for the customers in the month of September 2021 offering maximum benefits of upto INR 80,000 on select variants across its product range. These offers can be availed while purchasing new Renault vehicle during this period. In addition to the above, Renault has also rolled out 10 unique Loyalty Rewards to mark the 10 years celebrations, with maximum loyalty benefits upto INR 110,000 which is over and above the regular consumer offers. Apart from the announced offers in the form of cash offers and loyalty bonus, the company has also announced the Buy Now, Pay in 2022 scheme on the purchase of Renault KWID, TRIBER and KIGER, wherein the buyers can opt for a new Renault vehicle now and start paying EMIs after 6 months.

Xiaomi to rebrand its premium product series from 'Mi' to 'Xiaomi'

The two distinct product sub-brands will now be 'Xiaomi' and 'Redmi' respectively. The corporate brand will continue to be represented by the 'Mi' logo

Delhi, September 15:

Xiaomi India, the country's No. 1 smartphone and smart TV brand, today announced a refreshed visual identity for its premium range of products. With an aim to unify its global brand presence and close the perception gap between the brand, its premium "Mi" series products will now be replaced with the new "Xiaomi" logo. With the new brand identity introduction, there will be two distinct product series under the parent corporate brand. The corporate brand will continue to be represented by the "Mi" logo. Continuing to convey the liveliness and youthfulness of Xiaomi, the company earlier this year had introduced some changes to its corporate logo, adopting a softer, rounder contour on the corners of the previously squared logo, along with a redesigned "Mi" typography. The earlier "Mi" brand representing the pinnacle of technology and offering premium experience across cat-



egories will now be rebranded to the "Xiaomi" series. While "Redmi", known for bringing breakthrough technology at an affordable price point, will continue with the same logo. The naming convention - Xiaomi and Redmi - will also be applied across both brands' TV, Laptop, and IoT offerings. Commenting on the announcement Jaskaran Singh Kapany, Head of Marketing, Xiaomi India, said, "As a consumer-centric brand, our focus has always been on bringing new and innovative technology across segments that cater to the consumers evolving needs. We have been receiving an excellent response for our premium

product range from consumers and Xiaomi fans. According to CounterPoint in May 2021, Xiaomi India captured ~14% market share in the 20K-45K category. This empowered us to push the boundaries of technology and innovation further to elevate the consumer experience." "Being a leading technology

brand with a strong presence across the globe, our aim is to have a unified presence. With this new logo shift, we envision bridging the perception gap between our brand and products. The new Xiaomi logo will be used for our premium products that represent the pinnacle of technology and offer a premium experience. Ushering in the festive season, Xiaomi's premium product series 'Mi' will be re-named to 'Xiaomi'." "With a clear focus on providing innovation for all and expanding the presence to premium users, this new identity will propel Xiaomi forward in the upcoming years.

MG Motor India unveils Astor, with personal AI assistant and Autonomous technology

Guwahati, Sept 15: MG Motor India has unveiled MG Astor, India's first SUV with personal AI assistant and first-in-segment Autonomous (Level 2) technology. Astor is based on the MG's successful global platform, ZS. Based on MG's design philosophy of Emotional Dynamism, Astor's contemporary style will connect with consumers. It has a prominent Bold Celestial Grille that makes a solid on-road impression. The SUV poses an elegant and ready-for-action stance with a classic leopard jump shoulder line. Astor's nine crystal diamond elements in the LED headlamps make for a distinct hawk-eye expression with precise details. The interiors are elegantly crafted with soft-touch and premium material. It will be coming in two engine options - the Brit Dynamic 220TURBO petrol engine with a 6-speed AT delivering a whopping 220Nm of torque and 140ps of power. And the other - VTI Tech petrol engine with a manual transmission & an 8-speed CVT, delivering 144Nm of torque and 110ps of power. The much-awaited mid-size MG Astor will be on display at MG showrooms from 19th September and bookings will start soon thereafter. Talking about the appeal of Astor, Carl Gotham, the Advanced Design Director at the MG's Global Design Centre in London, UK, said, "The concept of Emotional Dynamism brings a premium feel to Astor. The mid-size SUV is a visual delight with an exceptional level of detailing and remarkable features. We have placed design at the centre of creating the car to make it look as good as its technology. It takes forward the MG's brand's legacy with cutting-edge technology and design excellence. India can look forward to immersing into a seamless driving experience with personal AI assistance inside MG Astor." Speaking at the unveiling of Astor, Rajeev Chhaba, President and MD, MG Motor India, said, "We have introduced several industry-firsts with our SUVs to the Indian automotive market. This time we have Autonomous (Level 2), MG Astor, with a personal AI assistant. With its elegant exteriors, luxurious interiors, and futuristic technology, we believe that Astor is a desirable package that will strike a chord with the customers." MG Astor's personal AI assistant depicts human-like emotions and voice. The Paralympic athlete Deepa Malik has lent her voice to the personal AI assistant, thereby humanising the experience.



Press Release from FADA on Ford India's Announcement

New Delhi, Sept 15: The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) released a Press Statement on account of Ford India's shocking announcement. Commenting on Ford India's Announcement, FADA President Mr Vinkesh Gulati said, "The Auto Retail fraternity is really shocked to hear another US Auto Major, Ford India's announcement where it has said that it will shut down production with immediate effect. While trying to handle Dealer anxiety, Ford India President & MD, Mr Anurag Mehrotra called me personally and assured that they will ad-

equately compensate Dealers who continue to offer vehicle service to customers. Though this is a good beginning, it is not enough as there are ~170 Dealers who in-turn have ~391 outlets and have invested ~Rs 2,000 Cr for setting up their dealerships. While Ford India employs 4,000 people, Dealerships employ around 40,000 people without displacing them from their home locations thus being continuously skilled and up-skilled all this while. Ford India Dealers currently hold ~1,000 vehicles which amount to ~Rs 150 Cr via inventory funding from reputed Indian Banks.

AU among 1st to offer M. Tech in Defence technology



Guwahati, Sept 15: Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, a leading multi-campus,

multi-disciplinary teaching and research institution in the country, has become

one of the pioneers in offering M.Tech in Defence Technology, the post-

graduate programme jointly developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the R&D wing of Ministry of Defence, and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), a national-level council for technical education, with the objective of meeting the burgeoning skill needs of India's fast growing defence sector. The university seeks admission for the academic year 2021-22 from engineering students with undergradu-

ate degrees. Since Defence Technology is a multi-disciplinary domain, students from a wide range of engineering streams - from chemical engineering to computer science, can apply. M. Tech. in Defence Technology courses has been designed to produce post graduates who will have the necessary theoretical and experimental knowledge, skills and aptitude in various defence systems and contemporary technologies to carry out

R&D. The program will be based on class lectures and main thesis work. During the program, the students will be given the opportunity to do their main thesis work at DRDO labs, defence PSUs, and private defence industries. India's defence sector is fast expanding with the central government continuing its emphasis on defence-indigenisation to make the country, currently the world's third largest importer of weapons and defence equipment, self-reli-

ant. Hence, the domestic defence market is booming and the defence industry in the public and the private sector are on the hiring spree. A specialised program like the current one is expected to create a large pool of talented workforce for the defence sector, and to give a fillip to the startup ecosystem in the defence sector. Commenting about the launch of M.Tech in Defence Technology, Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Chairman, DRDO, said, "There is an

urgent need to expand the research base for developing advanced technology and for accelerating India's tech self-reliance in defence. Amrita has been working with DRDO on many of the advanced technologies - particularly in the defence R&D. I am sure that the university will be a fountainhead of talent for the robust defence R&D, and manufacturing ecosystem for the defence industry in the country." In his com-

Contd. From Page 1

Assam Govt Issues SOP

exempted from these protocols. Further, priests have to be tested for Covid-19 on the day of Panchami, Nabami, and Dashami. The minister has urged the organisers of the Puja committees to follow the protocols. The minister has urged the organisers of the Puja committees to follow the protocols. The Mandap and Pandals have to be sanitised before and after the Puja. Besides, the minister also said that the statutes should not be too large and no cultural programmes will be allowed. Also, no fairs can be set up on the premises of the pandals or even standalone. Only a few people can be present during the bringing of the idol and immersion of the Goddess. The minister also highlighted that the everybody should be allowed to participate in the rituals, however, following Covid-19 protocols is mandatory. The Deputy Commissioners have been directed to monitor that the SOPs are followed in their respective districts. The district administration will discuss the matter with the committees in advance. The curfew timings will remain in accordance with the latest SOP. Puja rituals must be completed within the issued curfew timings. Guardian ministers will visit their respective districts to ensure that all the festivities are held without any disruptions.

Assam CM visits Nimatighat

services of which have been suspended after the accident, would be fitted with marine engines at the expense of the State government. Moreover, it may be noted that for passengers' conveniences, timing of Ro-Pax vessels and boats with marine engine in operation have been rescheduled and accordingly they will ply three times a day. An App would also be launched for booking of tickets from home by the passengers. Further, two night buses will ply between Jorhat and Majuli via Dibrugarh. Transport Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, Education Minister Ranuj Pegu, MPs Kamakhya Prasad Tasa and Topon Kumar Gogoi, senior officers of the IWT and district administrations were present during the Chief Minister's visit. It may be noted that it was the second visit of the Chief Minister to Nimatighat after the boat capsized incident.

Union Minister of Jal Shakti

tween Centre and State is 90:10 for NE States. With the Union Government's undivided focus on the development of North-Eastern region of the country and to accelerate its all-round development, during the financial year 2021-22, Rs. 9,262 Crore has been allocated as Central grant for NE States under Jal Jeevan Mission. The enhanced allocation as well as release of funds at this challenging time to provide tap water connections to rural homes in NE States, is expected to boost the economy of the region. The focus of the conference will be on the important issues pertaining to implementation of the programme, viz. strategy & planning, progress made so far, ways to enhance the pace of implementation to achieve the goal in a time-bound manner, etc. The Union Minister of Jal Shakti will interact with Ministers of PHED on the implementation of JJM and the way forward so that all remaining households in remote north-eastern villages receive tap water connections at the earliest. At the time of announcement of the mission, out of total 90.14 lakh rural households in NE States, only 2.83 lakh (3.13%) had tap water connection, which has now increased to about 22 lakh households (24.45%). About 20 lakh households have been given tap water connections in the last 24 months despite CoVid-19 pandemic and disruptions/ lockdowns. Meghalaya, Manipur and Sikkim aim to achieve the status of 'Har Ghar Jal by 2022 while Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura aim to provide tap water in every household by 2023 followed by Assam in 2024. To ensure piped water supply in anganwadi centres, ashram shalas and schools, a campaign was launched on 2nd October, 2020, for making provision of safe tap water supply for drinking and cooking of mid-day meals along with piped water supply for hand washing and use in toilets. In NE States, out of total 72 thousand schools, presently in 40 thousand (56%) schools, provision of tap water supply. Similarly, out of 70 thousand AWCs, 27,474 (39%) AWCs provision of tap water supply have been made. In Sikkim, provision for tap water supply in all its schools and AWCs have been made. The soul of the programme is 'community participation' commencing from the planning of the water supply scheme, its implementation and to regular operation and maintenance to achieve assured water supply. Therefore, under JJM, lot of emphasis is given on support activities like empowering Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)/ Pani Samitis', preparation and approval of Village Action Plans (VAPs) which will have the components of drinking water source strengthening/ augmentation, water supply infrastructure, grey water treatment & reuse, and operation & maintenance of in-village water supply systems. The States are organizing intensive training and skilling programmes, especially for 5 persons mostly women in every village on water quality surveillance and local persons as masons, plumbers, electricians, motor mechanics, fitter, pump operators, etc. With the Government's focus on water supply and improved sanitation, 15th Finance Commission allocated Rs. 26,940 Crore tied grants to RLBS/ PRIs in 2021-22 for supply of drinking water, rainwater harvesting and water recycling; and sanitation and maintenance of ODF status. There is an assured fund of Rs. 1.42 lakh Crore for the 5 years from 2021-22 to 2025-26. This will supplement the ongoing efforts under JJM. All out efforts to be made for judicious use of this grant by rural local bodies by focusing on various activities viz. Rain water harvesting, strengthening of drinking water sources, improving water supply, grey water management and regular operation & maintenance. Sensor-based IoT system is being installed to measure quantity, quality, pressure and regularity of water supply in the village. The Jal Jeevan Mission Dashboard provides information upto village-level. The focus under the mission is assured water supply to ensure that remaining rural households as well as every school, AWCs, PHCs, CHCs, Community Centers, etc. are provided with tap water connection through retrofitting/ augmentation so that 'no one is left out'. In these difficult and challenging areas, gravity-based water supply system is the most preferred option as it is cost effective, easy to operate and maintain. To improve the quality of life and enhance ease of living of people in rural areas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced JJM in his Independence Day speech on 15th Aug., 2019. The provision of household tap connection in rural areas will help in removing 'drudgery' of women and girls as fetching water is their responsibility. Since the objective of the mission is universal coverage, every family in the habitation/ village is to get tap water connection and 'no one is left behind'. This will help in bridging the gap in urban and rural areas. Taking forward the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas', Jal Jeevan Mission is marching ahead to realize the vision of reaching every home with tap water supply, thereby ending the drudgery faced by women and girls.

7 Assam teachers detect five new

they discovered five asteroids."We have able to detect five preliminary detection of moving objects (asteroids). IASC is a partner organization of NASA. So we are feeling more proud that we are involved in such activities," Rajib Ranjan Dhar said.He further said that he had studied in a government school and his parents had given minimum support during his study because his family's financial condition was not very good."I wasn't able to use any digital equipment during my school, college period. My father was a railway employee and he wasn't able to give all support to me," Rajib Ranjan Dhar said.Not only Rajib, but his other colleagues too, have been educated in government schools.Rajib said that he and his colleagues had been involved in the asteroid search campaign in May and August this year."Regarding the future of this campaign, we want to involve more people from Assam, especially the student community. We are very hopeful that all five asteroid detections will come in the provisional discovery list of IASC," Rajib Ranjan Dhar said.

Assam Records Highest Crimes

to the report of NCRB, Uttar Pradesh, which registered the most cases of crimes against women at 49,385 against Assam which recorded 26,352 still recorded a crime rate of only 45.1 in 2020.In 2019, 30,025 cases of crime against women were recorded in Assam and 27,687 cases in 2018. In 2020, Assam recorded 26 instances of rape-cum-murder/gang rape-the third highest figure in the country after Uttar Pradesh (31) and Madhya Pradesh (27). It recorded 1,658 cases of rape last year. There were 4,642 cases of assault with intention of outraging modesty."The figures could also indicate that unlike states where such crimes are not registered promptly, in Assam, survivors reach out to police," said a senior police officer requesting anonymity quoted .On the other hand, Assam has also seen an increase in cases of dowry deaths as it recorded 150 deaths in 2020 compared to Uttar Pradesh which also topped in the crime rate for dowry deaths at 2.1. Assam also reported four cases of acid attack on women."The figures are worrying. We never recorded such a high number of dowry deaths earlier. The rate of crime against women in Assam could be very high as sometimes women tend to file false cases of cruelty against their husbands and in-laws. It could also be that more women are reporting crimes than those in other states," said Chikimiki Talukdar, chairperson, Assam State Commission for Women while quoted. Of the total cases of crime against women registered in Assam last year, 11,408 were of cruelty by husband or his relatives. The state also recorded 1,496 cases under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act of which 1,049 were of rape, 322 of sexual assault and 120 of sexual harassment. The report of NCRB also stated that Manipur and Assam also recorded highest cases of sedition while Manipur, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand recorded highest cases of UAPA.Rajasthan recorded the highest number of rape cases in 2020 with 5310 such cases, according to data compiled by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).It was followed by Uttar Pradesh with a total of 2769 rape cases having been registered in the same period. Madhya Pradesh with 2,339 and Maharashtra with 2,061 rape cases accounted for the third and fourth highest number of such cases.Although Rajasthan had the poorest track record among the states in terms of rape cases, the state saw a decline of about 16 per cent in overall crime against women. The state witnessed 34,535 such cases.Uttar Pradesh had the worst figures in terms of overall crimes against women with 49,835 such cases being recorded.Meanwhile, crime was up by 15 per cent in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 2020 as compared to the previous year.J&K and Ladakh combined saw 29,314 crime cases in 2020, as against 25,408 cases in 2019. Ladakh alone recorded 403 crime cases in 2020.According to the NCRB report, crimes against women rose by about 11 per cent from 3,069 cases in 2019 to 3,414 in 2020.

Assam CM offers prayers

to the request of the Bormamghar committee of setting up a Sri Sri Madhabdeb Kalakshetra, the Chief Minister said that Jorhat DC has been directed to identify land for the same. During the visit to Dhekiakhowa Bormamghar, the Chief Minister was accompanied by Education Minister Dr. Ranuj Pegu, MPs Kamakhya Prasad Tasa and Topon Kumar Gogoi along with former MP and Co Vice Chairman of SITA Ramen Deka and wife of the Chief Minister Riniki Bhuyan Sarma. Later, the Chief Minister also visited Sri Sri Auniati Satra at Teok, Jorhat and offered prayers. Satradhikar of Auniati Satra Sr Sri Pitambar Deb Goswami conferred the title of 'Karma Siromani' on the Chief Minister at a low key function organised on the occasion. Receiving the honour, the Chief Minister appreciated the move of setting up a university at the same campus by Sri Sri Auniati Satra and expressed optimism that the university would be able to spread the light of spirituality and education. Education Minister Dr. Ranuj Pegu, Revenue Minister Jogen Mohan, MPs Kamakhya Prasad Tasa and Topon Kumar Gogoi, former MLA Rupjyoti Kurmi, wife of the Chief Minister Riniki Bhuyan Sarma were also present on the occasion.

Delhi bans firecrackers ahead

season and pollution. It was decided to ban crackers in Delhi and ramp up medical infrastructure, among other measures." He had also said then, "We will celebrate Diwali together and won't burst firecrackers in any condition. There will be a wonderful atmosphere and good vibes as two crore people will perform Laxmi Pujan. It will lead to well being in each household."

Meghalaya CM seeks to allay

boundary issue, the matter relating to transport of cattle had also come up and that there was "in principle agreement that all papers will be done from the Meghalaya side, but there is a bit of nonclarity", which, he said was being sorted out.The Assam government has been requested to ensure hassle-free passage for cattle to Meghalaya, he said, adding that the department of animal husbandry and veterinary is in the process of creating an administrative system to ensure legitimate import of cattle from outside the state and also check smuggling.

Farmers in large numbers

leave the Delhi border no matter how long it takes. We will fight till our last breath. They will have to tell us that who is more dear to them, the farmers or the corporates," he added. "Farmers would not get the benefit until laws guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) are introduced," Tikait said and alleged that the Centre was being run by corporates.He also raised concerns over the Centre's new labour laws. "Factory workers can not agitate and form associations anymore. They are selling everything. They are trying to close mandis," the BKU leader has said.

Violence against women: Assam in rank 1

Abhijit Chaliha Guwahati, Sept 15: The Crime in India 2020 report shows that the rate of crime against women in Assam was 154.3, way higher than the national rate of 56.5. Odisha came second with 112.9 and Delhi, considered the most unsafe place for women, came third with 106.4 released on Tuesday. Assam recorded the highest rate of crime against women in the country for the fourth consecutive year, reveal National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) figures for 2020. Released on Tuesday, the Crime in India 2020 report shows that the rate of crime against women in Assam was 154.3, way higher than the national rate of 56.5. Odisha came second with 112.9 and Delhi came third with 106.4. The rate is calculated as the number of crimes recorded per 100,000 population. In 2017, the rate of crime against women in Assam was 143.3, it was 166 for 2018 and in 2019 the figure was 177. So Uttar Pradesh, which registered the most cases of crime against women at 49,385 against Assam's 26,532, still recorded a crime rate of only 45.1. Assam's number of crime cases against women was 30,025 in 2019 and 27,687 in 2018. In 2020, Assam recorded 26 instances of rape-cum-murder/gang rape—the third highest figure in the country after Uttar Pradesh (31) and Madhya Pradesh (27). It recorded 1,658 cases of rape last year. There were 4,642 cases of assault with the intention of outraging modesty. "The figures could also indicate that unlike states where such crimes are not registered promptly, in Assam, survivors reach out to police," said a senior police officer requesting anonymity. While Uttar Pradesh topped in the crime rate for dowry deaths at 2.1, there has been an increase in such cases in Assam as well. The state recorded 150 dowry deaths in 2020 and four cases of acid attack on women. "The figures are worrying. We never recorded such a high number of dowry deaths earlier. The rate of crime against women in Assam could be very high as sometimes women tend to file false cases of cruelty against their husbands and in-laws. It could also be that more women are reporting crimes than those in other states," said Chikimiki Talukdar, chairperson, Assam State Commission for Women. Of the total cases of crime against women registered in Assam last year, 11,408 were of cruelty by husband or his relatives. The state also recorded 1,496 cases under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act of which 1,049 were of rape, 322 of sexual assault and 120 of sexual harassment. "Last year, the rate of crime against women in Assam could have been higher due to the Covid-19 lockdown. People were stuck in their homes for days and they could have attacked their spouses or other women," said Polly Vauqueline, head of department of women's studies in Gauhati University.

EM Sanjit Tanti Inaugurated Paneri Press Club

Correspondent

Udalguri, Sept 15: A press club inaugurated in Paneri for the first time under Udalguri district by Executive Member of BTC Sanjit Tanti. After the inauguration EM Tanti addressed all the reporters and advised them to publish clean news, Tanti promised to make the temporary press club permanent during his tenure. At the inaugural function, eminent persons were presented and given various comments on the responsibilities, duties of a reporter for the society. The inaugural function was presided over by Taranath Kalita, former president of Udalguri district Sahitya Sabha, and led by journalist Phatik Nandan Rabha. Mirajul Hussain was assigned as the president and Chinmoy Sarma was assigned as the secretary of the Paneri Press Club. The inaugural function of the Press Club was attended by BTC nominated member Arpana Medhi, former principal of Paneri Higher Secondary School Niladhar Deka, Officer in charge of Paneri Police Station Sanjib Terang, senior journalist Bapon Sarma, chairman of Paneri VDC, Arbinda Sarma, Paneri AASU, AKRSU, AASAA, ATSSA and incumbents of different organizations as well as local people.



Employment Review committee visited Chirang district

CORRESPONDENT

Kajalgaon, Sept 15: The Employment Review Committee (ERC) of Assam Legislative Assembly consisted of 8 members including its chairman Lawrence Islay, MLA of 30- Kokrajhar Legislative Assembly Constituency (LAC) visited Chirang district on Monday last. As part of their tour programme, as soon as they arrived in the district the committee held discussion with the authorities of Indian Oil Corporations Limited (IOCL), Bongaigaon Refinery to take stock of their overall activities, the steps being taken by them for the employment of local people and employment generation plan at IOCL Guest House, Dhaligaon. The committee asked the IOCL authorities to ensure 90 percent employment to local youths as per the Office Memorandum of Assam Legislative Assembly. On Tuesday, the committee undertook a spot visit at BGR plan of Dhaligaon and assessed the functioning of various units of the plant. Then the committee held a meeting with the in-charge Deputy Commissioner, Chirang, Additional Deputy Commissioner Khanindra Das and other officials of tourism, power, industries, skill development departments and District Lead Bank Manager and reviewed their works, including job opportunities created by them for the local people in the district in the conference hall of Hotel Signet at Chapaguri. While talking to the media Lawrence Islay, Chairman, Employment Review Committee said that the Assam government had taken every possible step for giving employment to all educated unemployed youths. He hoped that all the authorities of the departments and industries would take appropriate steps to recruit local people as per norms of the government, especially while giving employment in the third and fourth grade posts. He lauded Bongaigaon Refinery for absorbing more than 90 percent local people in their set up. The other members of the committee including officials present in the team were Jayanta Basumatary, Rupak Sarmah, Prithiraj Rava, Sibub Misra, Abdul Batin Khandakar, Diganta Barman, Suren Phukan, including Rajib Bhattacharyya, Joint Secretary of Assam Legislative Assembly, Additional Secretary of Industries Prabin Chandra Bora, Joint Secretary of Power FR Laskar, Joint Secretary of Tourism Dipankar Das and Hriday Ranjan Das, Joint Director, Tourism.

Road accidents at Sootea : 2 died

Correspondent

Biswanath Chari, Sept 15: In two separate road accidents that took place in different parts of Sootea, under Biswanath district, claimed two lives in two days. According to information, one Chenimai Saikia, a nurse of Gosain Chapori sub-centre was hit by a bicycle that led her severely head injury at Paspatal under Sootea PS who later on died in a private hospital at Tezpur on Monday evening. Chenimai, 55 was a resident of Karchantala who left behind her husband, two daughters along with a host of relatives. In another road accident that took place near Sootea PS, an unknown vehicle hit a motorcycle bearing registration number AS 12-W-4663 over NH 15 at around 8 PM, Tuesday. The biker identified as Hirakjyoti Mantry died on the spot while the pillion rider Padma Nath, who sustained severe injury was admitted to Biswanath Chari sub-divisional hospital. Notably, deceased Hirakjyoti was a resident of Sapekhati, to the north of Sootea.



DLMC Meeting for West Siang held

STAFFREPORTER

Aalo, Sept 15: The 2nd quarter of District Level Monitoring committee Meeting 2021-22 for West Siang was held under the Chairmanship of West Siang Deputy commissioner was held at DC conference hall DC office today. All heads of offices, ZPMs and Executive agencies took part in the day-long deliberation on various schemes that are being implemented in the district. Predicating in the discussion, the MLA Aalo East cum Advisors Law and Justice Advocate Kento Jini exhorted govt. officers to work in close coordination with PRIs in implementing the policies and program me as they represent the rural masses. Assets created should be of public utility and largely benefited the people and there should not be any disparity in selecting beneficiaries and awarding development schemes. Aalo is a very old town but lagging behind in many fronts today and all must work as a team to rejuvenate, beautify and develop the town. He also spoke on his effort to improve GH Aalo, TAH Works and Stadium Construction at Aalo. Presiding over the function, the DC le stressed on participation of PRIs and Head of offices in such important to know the schemes that are being implemented in the District and share problems and grievances sitting across the table. He also urged the Head of offices to create peoples friendly approach and render services sincerely and dedicatedly. Centers and state Govt. schemes should be carried out as per the government. guidelines and all assets are to be created for beneficial uses and not in the outskirts where peoples have no access to it. Monthly reports and returns should be submitted by Executing Agencies to the DC timely for onward submission to govt. The district planning officer, Marjum Karga outlined the details, aims and objectives of the Meeting. The executive agencies and Head of offices spent out in details on schemes taken up by them through PowerPoint presentation.



Romelu Lukaku gets champions Chelsea off to perfect start against Zenit

London, September 15 : Romelu Lukaku had been the subject of suffocating attention from a well-organised and robust Zenit St Petersburg central defensive three. Everywhere he turned, it felt as though a door was slammed in his face and, as this tie entered its final stretch, the visitors had to be starting to think they had him and Chelsea under control. But it takes only one second for Lukaku to break free. It takes him only one move or moment to mete out the harshest punishment. It is the reason why Chelsea dug so deep to re-sign him over the summer and it was the reason why they were able to make a winning start to their Champions League defence. When the ball was worked from the inside left to the inside right for César Azpilicueta, the Zenit defender Dmitri Chistyakov seemed to have Lukaku within his grasp inside the six-yard box. But then Azpilicueta stood up a lovely cross to the back post and Chistyakov did not. Lukaku had spent the previous 68 minutes waiting, working, lurking.



Now he had the big chance and he rose to head it down and in with trademark ruthlessness. Thomas Tuchel had commented on Monday it was good that Lukaku had hit the ground running on his return because strikers do not like to wait for their goals. Lukaku is simply on fire. He now has four goals in four games and, despite the small sample size, it is easy to think that Chelsea have found the missing piece in the puzzle. Lukaku's header did not mean that it was over because Zenit had a huge opportunity to equalise when Sander Azmoun crossed for the substitute, Artem Dzyuba, only for him to stretch and slice wide with the goal gaping. The concession of the chance was surprising given how

miserly Chelsea had been at the back. But they duly closed out the result to give Tuchel the victory he had called for. It is a long way to the final, which will be played at Zenit's Gazprom Arena but, with Lukaku on board, Chelsea can dream of another triumph. "The performance from Romelu was not easy," Tuchel said. "We didn't create many chances for him but he's the type of guy who doesn't lose confidence. That is why he is a world-class striker. It gives the team a lot of belief that one chance, or a half-chance, might be enough. It's more than talent he brings. He brings belief." It was Tuchel's first night game under the Stamford Bridge lights in front of fans and the first time the stadium had been

packed for a European fixture since February of last year. So much has happened since then, not least Chelsea exploding from nowhere to claim their second Champions League, and it feels crazy to reflect that the home supporters were unable to play any role in it - apart from when 2,000 were allowed in for the final group match against Krasnodar last December. The pre-match presentations were a nod towards the history the team had made. There were Uefa awards for Tuchel, Jorginho, Edouard Mendy and N'Golo Kanté but this was all about putting a sure foot forward, ensuring that the defending Russian Premier League champions could not spring an upset. Chelsea know what they are: the champions of Europe. And their support repeatedly let everyone know. It feels sweet and it helps to create an aura. Zenit, though, were not intimidated. They were compact throughout in their 5-4-1 system and they flickered on the counter, even if it is one thing to enjoy encouragement against this Chelsea

defence, which marries pace, positioning and physicality, and quite another to create anything clear-cut. Chelsea had to be patient and Tuchel battled to suppress the frustration he felt in the first half when his team could not connect in the final third. Jorginho tried to play through the lines, to make something happen, while Mateo Kovacic was busy but Chelsea did not work the Zenit goalkeeper, Stanislav Kritsyuk. Mason Mount missed a few passes and it did not happen for Hakim Ziyech. Chelsea needed a spark and Antonio Rüdiger, a massive presence throughout, provided it on 50 minutes with a storming run from inside his own half that finished with a snatched shot wide. Chelsea's intensity was greater in the second half, as was their intent, and they had a few half-chances although Zenit felt they retained a puncher's chance on the break. There was a sharp intake of breath inside the stadium when Claudinho sent Azmoun away before Rüdiger got back to tackle. And it was not for the first time.



Plan to bid for 2031 Rugby World Cup

London, September 15 : The Rugby Football Union has confirmed its intention to bid to host the 2031 World Cup as part of a long-term vision also designed to ensure England are consistently in the top two in the rankings, as outlined by the new chair, Tom Ilube. World Rugby's council is due to vote on the host nations for the 2027 and 2031 tournaments next May with candidates due to formally submit bids by January. Australia are favourites to be awarded the 2027 World Cup while the USA is also interested in bidding for either edition. As revealed by the Guardian, the RFU previously held discussions with the other home unions over a joint bid but it is believed that stalled due to a failure to reach a consensus over where the final would be staged. The RFU has since struck out on its own and, while World Rugby would require a significant financial guarantee - France's was £150m to secure the 2023 tournament - Ilube has revealed the extent of the union's interest with further talks with the government and other partners required to progress the bid. "We would like to bid for that - the 2031 World Cup," he said. "That would be really exciting to have it here and you could imagine what it would be like and I think that really gives us a focus as well. So we will see what happens, it will be

interesting. It is something that we are really interested in discussing and engaging with the process." Ilube was appointed in March and began the role in August, becoming the first black chair of a national sporting organisation. Hosting the 2031 World Cup would be the culmination of a plan which would see England address what he sees as an inability consistently to produce world-class players, as well as "do a whole lot more" to improve diversity within the sport. "I am not certain that our system at the moment continuously generates those absolutely world-class players and I think that, if we are going to be at our rightful place, England should consistently be ranked one or two in the world," he said. "Year after year after year we should be there and to do that we need that cohort of absolutely world-class players and something about the system needs to generate them." Ilube said he wants England to produce more 'absolutely world-class players' and be consistently ranked in the top two. "There's a lot of conversation about where we are now and where we need to be over the next six months and the next year. I hear slightly less about what I think rugby needs to look like by 2030. We need as clear as possible a sense of that, and then drive towards it. The game can be

a lot bigger than it is now in impact and in money coming into the game. It could be two to three times the scale that it is now." In April the RFU set up a diversity and inclusion board, having already conducted a review into supporters singing Swing Low, Sweet Chariot at England matches. In May the word "Saxons" was removed from the A team's name in a further effort to modernise but, while Eddie Jones's squad has a strong representation of players from BAME backgrounds, the union has struggled to shake its reputation as an organisation overseeing a predominantly white, middle-class, public-school sport. "There's this perception in some people's minds and that doesn't quite marry up with the reality, so there is something about the communication that we need to look at over time," said Ilube, who has held conversations with a number of black players since his appointment. "They really love the game, they love what the game has done for them. Everyone has different views but people feel that the game could do more. I see that across the players that I've spoken to. They are saying that they themselves have enjoyed and loved the game, they've had issues here or there and they've dealt with them, but rugby could be doing a whole lot more."

'The talent of the century': Klopp salutes Emma Raducanu after US Open title



Liverpool, September 15 : Jürgen Klopp has described Emma Raducanu as "the talent of the century" and admitted he was overwhelmed by the 18-year-old's sporting reaction to winning the US Open. The Liverpool manager is a keen tennis player and interrupted his preparations for Sunday's 3-0 win at Leeds to watch the teenager make history on Saturday as the first qualifier to win a grand slam title. While impressed by the performance, Klopp said he was most inspired by the response of Raducanu and the defeated Leylah Fernandez to the result and believes their humility is an example to all elite sportspeople. "It is long ago that I watched

a full tennis game and I was impressed by the power, the speed and the whole game," said Klopp. "Women's tennis is obviously in a brilliant moment. These two girls, 18 and 19, what they showed in the game was massively impressive. But then when they got the trophies during the ceremony, how both girls spoke was really inspiring to be honest. Even more so than the tennis, which was inspiring enough. "I was absolutely overwhelmed by the way they presented themselves. Fernandez was obviously disappointed and Emma showed great respect for her. They knew they will face each other in the future very often and be in many more finals. I wish that for them. It was a great show of sportsmanship and elite sport and how humble you can be while so young and on top of the world." Klopp

added: "When you are 18-year-old and win the US Open it can only come from hard work. She is for sure the talent of the century, but without hard work it is not possible to be there and doing that. Now she is there and you see her smiling during the game, it is the nicest thing I can imagine. I will watch women's tennis much more, for sure, than I did in the last few years." Raducanu attended the Met Gala in New York on Monday night and on Tuesday spoke to Boris Johnson. A No 10 spokesman said the prime minister congratulated her for her "fantastic victory", "praised her determination, skill and mental strength during a series of tough matches, and said the whole of the UK had united behind her success. "Both the prime minister and Emma agreed on the importance of continuing to support grassroots tennis, and in encouraging young people to take up the game."

Francine Niyonsaba becomes first athlete with DSD to break world record

Paris, September 15 : Track and field history was made in Zagreb on Tuesday night as Francine Niyonsaba became the first athlete who has identified herself as having a difference of sex development (DSD) to officially break a world record. The Burundian did it in style, shattering the old 2,000m best by more than two seconds as she crossed the line in 5:21.26. While the 2,000m is not run frequently, Niyonsaba's performance will inevitably reignite the debate over athletes with DSDs, given they are barred from competing internationally between 400m and 1600m unless they take medication to reduce their high testosterone. Niyonsaba, who won the silver medal over 800m at the 2016 Rio Olympics before moving up in distance due to the World Athletics rules, has had an astonishing year - winning the Diamond League title at 5,000m and running the fifth-fastest outdoor 3,000m time ever. But in Croatia she produced the cherry on the cake. Going through halfway in 2:41.37 put Niyonsaba on pace to break the world record of 5:23.75, set indoors by Ethiopia's Genzebe Dibaba in 2017. The 28-year-old then powered to glory with a final lap of 63 seconds to break the record. While Niyonsaba is a popular athlete, others in the sport including the two-times 400m Olympic champion Shaunae Miller-Uibo have questioned why World Athletics does not extend its rules regarding DSDs to other events.

The IPL is back with unfinished business, and it was always going to be



London, September 15 : While the players were trapped in bio-bubbles - Covid-tested every two days, surrounded by healthcare professionals, three ambulances outside every ground - the general public wept outside hospitals, pleading for beds for their desperately ill relatives, and repeated, heartbreaking calls went out on social media for oxygen cylinders. The death toll was horrifying, climbing up to an official count of 4,000 people a day in mid-May - official figures that were widely disputed. By the end of June, the official Covid death count was 400,000, but a study by the Centre for Global Development estimates that the number of

excess deaths in India between January 2020 and June 2021 was between 3m and 4.7m. Not all, but the majority of those deaths are believed to have been from Covid. In April, as the death toll rose, the circus rumbled on, hubris be damned, as badminton's Indian Open and then the Asian Boxing Championships were called off, the Board of Control for Cricket in India shouldering down any charges of insensitivity, as around the world countries started to close their borders to those travelling from India. The journalist Sharda Ugra spoke of the players being "trapped in a golden cage", unable to speak about the crisis because of fear of how the BCCI might react. At the

end of April, Hemang Amin, the interim chief executive of the BCCI, had pinged off an email to the players both reassuring them that they were "totally safe" and urging them onwards with a queasy rallying cry: "While you are professionals and will play to win, this time you are also playing for something much more important... humanity." But it was a tournament living on borrowed time and eventually, on 4 May, as four different bio-bubbles were breached - Delhi Capitals, Kolkata Knight Riders, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Chennai Super Kings - and with one franchise in open revolt, the overseas players desperate to go home, the BCCI had no option. The IPL

was off. Not for long, however. By the end of May, the BCCI had announced that the remainder of the tournament would take place in the UAE in September and October - monsoon season in India. It was all a bit of a squeeze, what with the fifth Test against England at Old Trafford due to finish on 14 September and the IPL due to start on 19 September. An informal request from the BCCI was floated in front of the England and Wales Cricket Board to cancel or reschedule the final Test, a request which was politely knocked back. As we know, events took over. When Covid cases in the Indian support staff started to spread, the Indian players had doubts. By last Friday morning, only two hours before the fifth Test was due to start, the announcement came: there would be no play at Old Trafford. Private jets were chartered that same day and by Saturday morning players were arriving in Abu Dhabi in front of franchise paraphernalia, to sit in yet another bio-bubble before the tournament begins this Sunday with MS Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings taking on the defending champions, Mumbai Indians. Just over half of the competition is still left to play, with 13 matches scheduled for Dubai, 10 in

Sharjah and eight in Abu Dhabi, with the final held on 15 October. There will be time, just, for a scratch and a shave before the T20 World Cup starts two days later, spread around the UAE and Oman. This unsustainable scheduling was the reason behind Dawid Malan, Chris Woakes and Jonny Bairstow all pulling out of the competition last week to prioritise England's T20 World Cup bid and the Ashes, while Jos Buttler withdrew in August because of the birth of his second child. Jofra Archer is unavailable because of his elbow injury, which has ruled him out till next year and Ben Stokes is still recuperating. Chris Woakes bowls for the Delhi Capitals back in May, but the England all-rounder is one of a number of players who will not feature in the rescheduled finish to the IPL. Ten English players are left. Adil Rashid, a late replacement for Jhye Richardson, will play for Punjab Kings in his first stint in the IPL, joining Chris Jordan. Sam Curran and Moeen Ali will turn out for Chennai Super Kings, Eoin Morgan is captain of Kolkata Knight Riders and Jason Roy flies out on Tuesday to join Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Team GB set to lose 4x100m Olympic silver after second positive for Ujah

Tokyo, September 15 : A wretched 24 hours for UK Athletics continued on Tuesday when CJ Ujah's B sample confirmed his positive drug test at the Tokyo Olympics. It now seems increasingly likely the Team GB men's 4x100m team will be stripped of their silver medal. Separately UK Sport has admitted to having "concerns" about the crisis in British athletics, which led to several Team GB stars asking Sebastian Coe to save the sport in this country when they met him last week in Zurich. The World

Athletics president, Sebastian Coe, has previously expressed concerns about Team GB's performance at Tokyo 2020. That news, which was revealed on Monday night, has sent shockwaves through the sport and UK Sport has urged those athletes to come forward to air their grievances. "The suggestion that athletes may be considering leaving the world class programme is a concern and something we will discuss with the UK Athletics leadership team," a UK Sport statement said. "Further more, we are committed to an athlete-first approach within Olympic and Paralympic sport and would urge any athlete who has a grievance to speak up. There are various

channels dedicated to supporting athletes on the World Class Programme, including independent advice through the British Athletics Commission. "That statement did not impress one participant in the meeting, who told the Guardian it was "a load of rubbish". However UK Sport says it will review UKA's performance in Tokyo, where it won six medals, in the coming weeks. It looks increasingly likely that the UKA medal haul will be reduced to five in the coming months after the International Testing Agency confirmed there were two banned substances in Ujah's B sample. The ITA confirmed they were the selective androgen receptor modulators ostarine and S-23, which are used to treat muscle wasting and bone health respectively.



Absent **Lions** give England's ageing stars a Premiership stage

London, September 15 :

If rugby union is increasingly a young person's game there have been some noteworthy exceptions to the rule of late. Morne Steyn and Quade Cooper have a combined age of 70, but both veteran fly-halves have kicked decisive late penalties in the dying stages of Test matches within the past six weeks. Their returns partly speak to the lack of younger talent in South Africa and Australia respectively, but equally Steyn and Cooper were able to provide their sides with an assuredness that only comes with age. Which brings us on to the opening weeks of the Premiership season, which gets under way on Friday only 83 days after the previous one came to an end. For varying reasons there are a limited number of star signings to whet the appetite. Clearly clubs continue to cut their cloth amid the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic while this is also the first season for which the salary cap is reduced. Add in the simple fact that, without the threat of relegation, there is less urgency to spend on recruitment and it becomes obvious why no clubs have broken the bank for overseas stars. Indeed, to briefly revert to the original point, perhaps the most eagerly awaited debuts will be made by Danny Cipriani, aged 33, and Mike Brown (36). Clubs in the Premiership, Championship



and Premier 15s will be permitted to relax Covid-19 protocols if 85% of players and staff are vaccinated. Furthermore, while there is always less fanfare in post-Lions seasons than others, this time - with England's 13 British & Irish Lions entitled to rest until mid-October - the majority are unlikely to be seen in regular action for their clubs until December. It is understood there is a degree of wriggle room to treat each player's case individually - Courtney Lawes, for example, played considerably fewer minutes than Marcus Smith last season - but we will not have a situation similar to four years ago when Lions were thrust straight back into action on the opening weekend. Indeed, it is a point Mark McCall has already made, given Saracens provided Maro Itoje, Owen Farrell, Mako Vunipola,

Jamie George and Elliot Daly to the touring party. That raises the question as to which players will dominate the narrative of the domestic game between now and the autumn internationals? The path would appear to be clear for a host of young thrusters, many of whom spent time in camp with England last summer to establish themselves as the coming men, but there is a tranche of players who, while not quite at the same stage of their careers just yet, will have taken heart from the recent feats of Steyn and Cooper. Billy Vunipola, Jonny May, Henry Slade, Jack Nowell, George Ford, Ben Youngs, Manu Tuilagi, Joe Launchbury and Mark Wilson have all been key players under Eddie Jones but each of them will be in their 30s when the next World Cup starts. Some already are. The vast majority,

if not all, will have been smarting over the summer at being overlooked for the Lions tour but by the same token they are refreshed after a non-stop 12 months and will to some extent be playing for their international futures between now and late October in a rare uninterrupted run of matches for their clubs. Jones has made it clear in the past that he has paid only limited attention to club form and he has demonstrated a loyalty to plenty in recent years, but in the previous World Cup cycle he left it too late to move on senior players who had served a purpose in the early years of his tenure but were always up against it to reach Japan. In some instances - Brown particularly springs to mind - the more Jones was urged to trade in for a younger model the more he stuck by his old guard. You sense, however, he will not make the same mistake again. Take May as an example. Certainly it is premature to write off his international prospects just yet and it would be a surprise if he is not involved against Tonga, Australia and South Africa this autumn. Equally though, he is 31 - 11 years the senior of his Gloucester teammate Louis Rees-Zammit - and has Adam Radwan, who scored a hat-trick on debut against Canada, snapping at his heels. Similarly, during the 2019 World Cup Tuilagi admitted that it was most likely

his last and though his decision to stay in England with Sale may hint at a change of heart, can Jones really gamble on getting him fit for a second tournament in a row? Jonny May, pictured in action for Gloucester at Sale in April, should have a role for England this autumn but for how much longer afterwards? Vunipola is perhaps the most intriguing example and how he performs over the next six weeks, starting with the season's curtain-raiser at Bristol, will be instructive. There are those who believe Jones would pick him regardless but surely Vunipola realises it is now or never to rediscover his best form if he is to remain part of England's plans for France in 2023. Provided he does, he will be worth watching at Ashton Gate on Friday when Saracens will look to announce their return and give a reminder to Pat Lam's pretenders. The following day Ford is set to begin his season as Leicester look to continue their upwards if uninspiring curve under Steve Borthwick. Smith is the incumbent in the England No 10 jersey and he will take some shifting after a miraculous season ended with a Lions call-up and a swashbuckling showing against the Stormers. Ford, however, is not ready to be put out to pasture just yet and has more than a month to steal a march on Smith and the rest of his rivals.

National Open athletics meet Top stars skip but chance for hopefuls to make an impact

New Delhi, September 15 :

The swanky Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Hanamkonda, Warangal in Telangana which will host the National Open Athletics Championships in the next five days starting Wednesday will be bereft of top stars but Athletics Federation of India hopes fresh faces will be launched instead. The first athlete to win that elusive medal in Olympics, Neeraj Chopra who went on to win gold medal in the recent Tokyo Games, will be absent for obvious reasons and so will be the host of others who made it to the finals. Kamalpreet Kaur in women's discus throw or Avinash Sable in men's 3000m steeplechase who competed in Tokyo National Stadium will be conspicuous by their absence. Not to forget the athletes who competed in the 2020 Nairobi World Under-20 Athletics Championship too chose to miss the event like Shaili Singh who won silver medal in long jump and mixed relay team which won bronze medal. However, the season-end and the 11th national-level event in Olympic year has still attracted athletes from institutional teams like Railways, Services, All India Police among 20-odd states too. Railways have come here with record 87 athletes, including 43 women, while Services team - only men - is the second largest with 57 members and



All India Police will field 50, including 24 women athletes. The entries of at least 122 athletes have been rejected for not achieving the qualifying standards set by the AFI or for reaching the venue without a certificate of performance. The 2018 Jakarta Asian Games gold medalists Arpinder Singh in men's triple jump and Swapna Burman in the heptathlon are the biggest draw. VK Elakkidasan of Railways and Shanmuga Srinivas Nalubothu of Andhra Pradesh who clocked fastest 200m sprinter this season will

be extending their rivalry. The battle for supremacy, in the men's long jump event, between Muhammed Anees Yahiya and Yugant Shekhar Singh will be keenly watched. In women's long jump in the absence of World U20 silver medalist Shaili Singh, Priyanka Kerketta of Railways, Mareena George of Kerala, Sherin Abdul Gafoor of Tamil Nadu and hosts Nandini Agasara will try to make it an intense clash. Harayana's Summy Kaliravan, bronze medalist of the 4x400m mixed relay squad in the Nairobi World meet, Tokyo Olympian Revathi Veeramani, Archa Suseendran will appear in women's 400m. Bhawna Jat, who competed in Tokyo Games in women's 20km race walk, discus thrower Navjeet Kaur Dhillon, sprinters Himashree Roy and C Kanimozhi are some familiar names.

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Shri Keshab Mahanta
Health Minister, Government of Assam

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