



# The Assam Rising

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Congress leaders join Trinamool

New Delhi, November 23 :

In a phillip to the Trinamool Congress ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Congress leaders Kirti Azad and Ashok Tanwar on Tuesday joined the Mamata Banerjee-led party in New Delhi. The development comes amid the West Bengal chief minister's visit to the national capital ahead of Parliament's Winter Session on November 29.

### First Assamese

Assam Rising, Reporter Guwahati, November 23 :

Elvis Ali Hazarika has become the first Assamese to successfully swim from Dharamtar Jetty to the Gateway Of India, Arabian Sea, the total length of which is around 38 kms. The swim started at 1 am on November 23 and took 10 hours to complete the course. Earlier, Hazarika had said that the event was part of his preparation for the proposed North

### BJP leader Debadatta Barkataki died

Assam Rising, Reporter Guwahati, November 23 :

Senior leader of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Assam, Debadatta Barkataki passed away on Tuesday. He also served as the Secretary of the magazine 'BJP Barta'. State BJP President Bhabesh Kalita, former President Ranjit Kumar Dass and other leaders of the party condoled the death of Barkataki. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also mourned the death of the senior party leader and expressed grief towards the bereaved family.

### Governor removed Dibrugarh University VC Ranjit Tamuli



Bijoy Shankar Dutta

**Dhemaji, Nov. 23:** Dr Tamuli, who misused power by creating multi-crore scam and misusing power by lifting all rules and regulations, finally withdrew immediately from the prestigious Vice Chancellor seat after 11 long months. Taking a tough stand against corruption, the Governor and higher education Professor Jagdish Mukhi, the principal of the institute, today removed Dr Ranjit

## Neighbouring state Mizoram again constructing road on its land, tension erupt

**Assam forest officials shot on Assam-Arunachal border**

Assam Rising, Reporter Guwahati, November 23 :

Mizoram has constructed a stretch of a 3.5km road inside a reserve forest in Assam despite a central government advisory against constructions in disputed areas along the inter-state border, officials have said citing a drone survey conducted in Assam's Hailakandi. Assam and Mizoram share a 164.6km disputed border. The two states have held talks over the border since the Centre intervened after six people were killed in firing between their police forces in July. Hailakandi divisional forest officer Jayanta Deka said the stretch was being constructed inside Assam and that the construction work was going in violation of the advisory. He added over 100 people with arms



were working for the construction almost one kilometre inside from the inter-state border. "Our team of five members visited the area but we could not protest because they were large in number." Deka cited the difficult terrain and added it took the team over five hours to reach there. "It is a complete re-

serve forest area near the inter-state border. Our officials... reached the spot after travelling on boats for hours. They came back at night with pictures and videos which can prove that the construction is happening." He added Assam has kept the forest untouched and Mizoram has destroyed it and cut trees

on their side. "They have constructed a 3.5km-long road. We are going to send a report to the state government based on our drone and physical survey." Hailakandi police superintendent Gaurav Upadhyay said he discussed the matter with his Mizoram counterpart and he agreed to discontinue

the construction works. "We found on last Saturday some movement of machineries... at Haticherra reserve forest area. As the area is near Assam-Mizoram border, we took up the matter with Mizoram's Kolashib administration. They immediately responded and assured to stop the construction activities." Mizoram's Kolashib district police superintendent Vanlalafaka Ralte echoed Upadhyay. "A road repair work was being carried out... near the border. After getting the information we immediately ordered them to stop the work and they have assured to follow the

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## Bharat Gaurav: Railways To Roll Out 180 Theme-Based Trains Showcasing India's Heritage



New Delhi, November 23 :

Union Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday announced the introduction of theme-based tourist circuit trains Bharat Gaurav Trains. Speaking to the media in a press conference, he said that these trains will help realise the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to showcase India's rich cultural heritage and magnificent historical places to the people of India and the

world. He further added that the core strength of the professionals of the tourism sector would be leveraged to develop/identify tourist circuits and run theme-based trains to tap the vast tourism potential of India. Ministry of Railways, in its official release, stated, Service Provider would be free to decide themes like Guru Kripa trains for cover-

ing important places of Sikh culture, Ramayana trains for places connected with Lord Shri Ram etc. Further, this Service Provider will offer all-inclusive package to tourist including rail travel, hotel accommodation, sightseeing arrangement, visit to historical/heritage sites, tour guides etc. Full flexibility to decide package cost based on level of services are being offered. Choice of coaches suiting the clientele, different segments like luxury, budget etc. Free to design/furnish interior of the coaches based on the theme. Branding and advertisement are permitted both inside and outside of the train. Train composition will be of 14 to 20 coaches including 2

SLRs (Guard Vans). Customer Support Units to be made functional in the field for hand holding the service provider and for smooth implementation of

CONTINUED TO PAGE 6

## Union minister of state Danve Inspects Dimapur- Kohima new BG line project sites

Assam Rising, Reporter Guwahati, November 23 :

Raosaheb Patil Danve, Hon'ble Minister of State of Railways, Coal & Mines on November 23 inspected various project sites of the ongoing Dimapur-Kohima new BG railway line project that will connect the state capital of Nagaland. The line starts from Dhansiri station, which is about 18 km before Dimapur on main line in between Lumding and Dimapur. The new line will end at Zubza adjacent to Kohima. He inspected one station, two tunnels and a bridge along the route. During his visits to projects sites, the MoSR was given presentation of the entire project through



replica of the proposed railway line under construction from Dimapur to Kohima. He inspected the newly built Shokhuvi railway station. He inspected under construction tunnels (Tunnel No. 1 & 2) of the project and interacted with the workers engaged in tunnel construction in remote hill areas. It may be mentioned here that, there is more than 29 Km of tun-

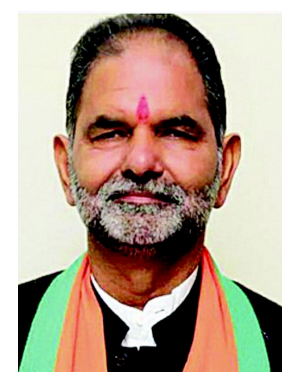
nelling works in the entire project that is being constructed. Similarly, some bridges that are being constructed in this project are located at very remote sites. The MoSR inspected Bridge No. 86, one of the major bridges of the project. Northeast Frontier Railway (Construction) Organization is executing the

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## Former Rajya Sabha MP Kripal Parmar resigns as Himachal BJP vice president

New Delhi, November 23 :

A day before the crucial core group and state executive meeting, Himachal BJP vice president and former Rajya Sabha MP Kripal Parmar on Tuesday resigned from the party post, terming the party leadership dictatorial. Parmar, considered close to national BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda, who was denied the ticket for the assembly bypoll from Fatehpur in Kangra, last month had said that senior party leaders like him were feeling humiliated in the present set up. He also said that he tried raising these issues at party forum but there was no say as people at the helm of affairs were not willing



to listen. The resignation comes at a very inopportune time, just a day before the significant core group and state BJP executive meeting to be held here on November 24-25. The BJP legislature party meeting has been scheduled for November 26. The resignation could trigger a crisis in the

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## Power Minister Bimal Bora visits Tamulpur

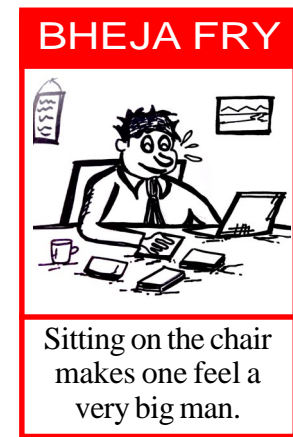
Assam Rising, Reporter Tamulpur, November 23 :

Power, Sports and Youth Welfare, Culture and Tourism Minister of Assam Bimal Bora visits Tamulpur Sub-Division of Baksa District today on the way to Bongaigaon to attend Cabinet Meeting which will be held tomorrow. The Minister attended a review Meeting at the office of the SDO Civil. Where he reviewed various projects under various departments



namely Jal Jiwan Mission under PHE department, Anganwari Kendra under Child Development Project, activities of Health, Education, Veterinary, PWD, Food & Civil Supply and

Consumer Affairs department, APDCL etc. In the meeting along with the Minister MLA Tamulpur constituency Jalen Doimary, MCLA Hemanta Rabha and officers of several departments were present. The Minister asked officials to complete their project in stipulated time. After the meeting the Minister visited an Anganwari center and Sub-Divisional office near Borkhopa. Visited an ongoing Jal jeevan Mission project Devinagar near Kumarikata where he interacts with some of beneficiaries, there after he went to CHC Tamulpur and Gopal and Bagheswari than Dimilapar and interacts with the devotees.



## 50% CCTVs in Guwahati city remain non-functional : crimes increase

Assam Rising, Reporter Guwahati, November 23 :

Insufficient CCTV surveillance has led to rise in crimes like daylight robbery in Guwahati. The city, having a population around 13 lakh, has nearly 200 CCTV cameras of which 50% are non-functional. In 2019, Assam Police and Guwahati Smart City Lim-

ited (GSCL) had taken up a project called "city surveillance project" to install a total of 4,000 CCTV cameras across the city. The project cost was Rs 2,296 crore. Without citing a reason, GSCL managing director Ghanshyam Dass told TOI that the project was dropped. "The police department looks after the matter of CCTV surveillance in the city," he

said. Meanwhile, a police source said there are few CCTV cameras in the prominent locations of the city. "The present functioning of CCTV cameras is insufficient in a city having a huge population," the source added. At least eight daylight robbery incidents have taken place in the city since September where miscreants robbed money either by breaking

vehicle windows or by snatching bags from owners. The latest incident took place in the Chandmari area of the city last week when miscreants looted Rs 25,000 in cash from a vehicle parked alongside the main road by breaking the window of the vehicle. Earlier on November 1, two miscreants looted Rs 3.5 lakh

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# Johnson 'losing the confidence' of Tory party after rambling CBI speech



**London, November 23 :** Conservative MPs are increasingly worried about Boris Johnson's competence and drive after he gave a rambling speech to business leaders and was accused of losing his grip over a series of key policies from social care to rail. Senior members of his own party said they needed Johnson to get the government back on track after a disastrous two weeks amid dismay about his performance at the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) conference, where he lost his place in his speech for about 20 seconds and diverted into a lengthy tangent about Peppa Pig. The prime minister was also facing a substantial rebellion over his social care proposals, anger at the decision to scale back rail improvements for the north and frustration over the government's failure to

keep its promises on small boats crossing the Channel. It caps a difficult fortnight for the prime minister after he admitted he "crashed the car into a ditch" in his handling of the Owen Paterson lobbying scandal. Nervousness among Tory MPs about No 10 intensified after one Downing Street source told the BBC there was "a lot of concern inside the building about the PM... it's just not working", adding that the "cabinet needs to wake up and demand serious changes otherwise it'll keep getting worse". A former cabinet minister also told the Guardian that there was "an accumulation of things building up, really relating to his competence and that is beginning to look very shaky" after a "pretty bad bloody fortnight". He said it was unlikely to result in a leadership challenge while the polls were still fairly even between the Tories

and Labour, but it could be "problematic for him" if that changes when an election is looming. Another senior backbencher said Johnson's CBI speech had been a "mess" while a third Tory MP said: "I thought today's performance was the most embarrassing by a Conservative prime minister since last week's PMQs. Someone needs to get a grip. He is losing the confidence of the party." Another Tory MP referenced the process by which MPs can submit letters of no confidence to the chair of the 1922 Committee, Graham Brady, saying: "It might not only be Father Christmas' postbag filling up towards the end of the year - Sir Graham Brady could find he needs a bigger one too." The prime minister's speech on Monday met a frosty reception among business leaders over its lack of substantial policy. In a sprawling address, Johnson lost his place and spent 20 seconds uttering "forgive me" three times as he shuffled the printed pages on his podium. He then revealed he had spent Sunday on a trip to

Hampshire's Peppa Pig World - an amusement park dedicated to a children's cartoon character - using it for a series of digs at the BBC and civil servants. He said the TV show, worth £6bn, "was rejected by the BBC and has now been exported to 180 countries". He added: "I think that is pure genius, don't you? No government in the world, no Whitehall civil servant, would conceivably have come up with Peppa." Johnson also imitated the sound of an accelerating car with grunts that the official Downing Street release transcribed as "arum arum aaaaaaaag". At another point, he compared himself to Moses over his plan to help business invest in tackling climate change. The prime minister said: "I said to my officials the new Ten Commandments were that 'thou shalt develop industries like offshore wind, hydrogen, nuclear power and carbon capture'." After the speech, business leaders questioned the prime minister's focus. Mike Cherry, national chair at the Federation of Small

Businesses, said: "Last week's HS2 announcement has left a lot of small business owners wondering if the government is already losing its way, not just in speeches but with regards to levelling-up in the round." After the speech, Johnson was asked if he was OK by a journalist. The prime minister defended his performance, saying: "I think that people got the vast majority of the points I wanted to make, and I thought it went over well." On Monday evening around a dozen Tory MPs from the 2019 intake glumly gathered in one of their parliamentary offices to share a bottle of whisky. They were said to be disappointed and disillusioned, and shared discontent that Johnson wasn't listening to feedback. Like business leaders, the main concern of Conservative politicians was Johnson's failure to live up to expectations on policies such as levelling up, rail and social care. Up to 20 Tory MPs were expected to rebel on changes to the social care cap on Monday night.



Rescuers evacuate residents from inundated areas after heavy rainfall in Bangalore

## Priceless Roman mosaic spent 50 years as a coffee table in New York apartment

**New York, November 23 :** A priceless Roman mosaic that once decorated a ship used by the emperor Caligula was used for almost 50 years as a coffee table in an apartment in New York City. Dario Del Bufalo, an Italian expert on ancient stone and marble, described how he found the mosaic in an interview with CBS's 60 Minutes on Sunday. In New York in 2013, Del Bufalo gave a lecture and signed copies of his book, Porphyry, about the reddish-purple rock much used by Roman emperors. The book included a picture of the long-lost mosaic, which once formed part of a floor on one of two vast "party ships" commissioned by Caligula to float on a lake near Rome and sunk when the emperor was killed. The mosaic and other antiquities were recovered from the lake in the 1930s and housed in a lakeside museum. In 1944, as the Nazis retreated from

Italy, the ships and many other treasures were burned. Nearly 70 years after that, as he signed copies of his book, Del Bufalo overheard a man and a woman say the woman had the mosaic they were looking at on the page. "There was a lady with a young guy with a strange hat that came to the table," Del Bufalo told CBS. "And he told her, 'What a beautiful book. Oh, Helen, look, that's your mosaic.' And she said, 'Yeah, that's my mosaic.'" Del Bufalo tracked down the young man, who confirmed that "Helen" had the mosaic in her apartment in Manhattan. She was Helen Fioratti, an art dealer and gallery owner. According to an interview she gave the New York Times in 2017, she and her husband, an Italian journalist, bought the mosaic from an Italian noble family in the 1960s. When it arrived in New York, the couple turned it

into a coffee table. "It was an innocent purchase," Fioratti told the Times. "It was our favorite thing and we had it for 45 years." The office of the Manhattan district attorney says evidence suggests the mosaic was stolen, possibly during the second world war. Returned to Italy, it went on display at the Museum of the Roman Ships in Nemi in March this year. "I felt very sorry for her," Del Bufalo said of Fioratti, "but I couldn't do anything different, knowing that my museum in Nemi is missing the best part that went through the centuries, through the war, through a fire, and then through an Italian art dealer, and finally could go back to the museum." That's the only thing I felt I should have done," Del Bufalo said he wanted to make a copy of the mosaic for Fioratti to keep in her apartment. "I think my soul would feel a little better," he said.

## Roger Stone and Alex Jones among five to receive Capitol attack subpoenas

**Washington, November 23 :** The House select committee investigating the Capitol attack on Monday issued new subpoenas to five political operatives associated with Donald Trump, including Roger Stone and the far-right media star Alex Jones, as the panel deepens its inquiry into the "Save America" rally that preceded the 6 January insurrection. The subpoenas demanding documents and testimony expand the select committee's inquiry focused on the planning and financing of the rally at the Ellipse, by targeting operatives who appear to have had contacts with the Trump White House. House investigators issued subpoenas to the veteran operatives Stone and Jones, Trump's spokesperson Taylor Budowich, and the pro-Trump activists Dustin Stockton and his wife, Jennifer Lawrence. The chairman of the select committee, Bennie Thompson, said the subpoenas aimed to uncover "who organized, planned, paid for, and received funds related to those events, as well as what communications organizers had with officials in the White House and Congress". Thompson said in the subpoena letter to Stone that he was being subpoenaed to explain why he had been invited to lead the march to the Capitol on 6 January from the rally at the Ellipse, but curiously did not ultimately attend the rally or go near the Capitol. The chairman also suggested that House investigators were interested in Stone's connection to the Oath Keepers, the militia group he used as his private security detail before several members stormed the Capitol to stop the certification of Joe Biden's election win. Stone was also at a "command center" at the Willard hotel in Washington DC on 5 January, where Trump lieutenants strategized late into the night about how to subvert the results of the 2020 election at the joint session of Congress. In the subpoena letter for Jones, the host of the far-right network InfoWars, Thompson raised the fact that he too did not lead the march from the rally from the Ellipse despite being invited to do so, in a potential indication he knew in advance about the Capitol attack.

## Germany and Netherlands face tightening Covid rules as Austria enters lockdown

**Berlin, November 23 :** Germany and the Netherlands have been told they should face still tougher Covid restrictions as the German health minister, Jens Spahn, made the startling prediction that most of his compatriots would be "vaccinated, cured or dead" by the end of winter. With Europe again the centre of the pandemic, ushering in tighter controls mainly on the unvaccinated across the continent, on Monday Austria became the first west European country to re-enter lockdown since vaccination began earlier this year. Stricter rules have already sparked clashes in Belgium and the Netherlands, with the Dutch prime minister, Mark Rutte, describing the rioters as "idiots" and his Belgian counterpart, Alexander de Croo, calling the violence "absolutely unacceptable". Probably by the end of winter, more or less everyone in Germany will be vaccinated, cured or dead," Spahn said. "That sounds cynical, but it's the reality." The outgoing chancellor, Angela Merkel, said tighter restrictions were needed. "We are in a highly dramatic situation. What is in place now is not sufficient," Merkel told leaders of her centre-right CDU party. About 68% of Germans and 66% of Austrians are fully vaccinated, among the lowest in western Europe. Eastern European countries, where vaccination rates are even



lower, have been experiencing some of the highest death tolls in the world, with hospitals overrun in Bulgaria and Romania. More than 38,000 new cases were confirmed in Germany over the past 24 hours, and a sharp rise in the last few weeks has left intensive care units near capacity. The worst-hit regions have ordered new shutdowns, including Christmas markets. In Austria, the seven-day Covid incidence rate hit a record 1,110 per 100,000 people, prompting the government to tell people to work from home if they can and to shut cafes, restaurants, bars, theatres and non-essential shops for at least 10 days. People may leave home for a limited number of reasons, such as going to workplaces if they cannot avoid it, buying essentials or taking a walk. The country has also announced that vaccines will be mandatory from 1 February, one of very few in the world to do so.

## Delhi's air quality remains in 'very poor' category despite slight improvement, AQI at 315

**New Delhi, November 23 :** The Delhi Air Quality Index (AQI) on Tuesday (November 23, 2021) morning was reported to be at 315 (overall) in the 'very poor' category, as per System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR)-India. The national capital witnessed a slight improvement in the air quality today but continued to gasp for breath as the AQI remained in the 'very poor' category. It may be noted that the overall AQI reduced from 352 from Monday to 315 today. Meanwhile, according to a PTI report, strong surface winds

barrelled through Delhi and neighbouring areas on Monday, improving the air quality. The city recorded its 24-hour average air quality index at 311, down from 349 on Sunday. It was 374 on Saturday. Neighbouring Faridabad (330), Ghaziabad (254), Greater Noida (202), Gurgaon (310) and Noida (270) also recorded a slight improvement in the air quality. R K Jenamani, a senior scientist at the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said westerly winds gusting up to 25 kmph improved visibility to 3,200 metres. So far, Monday has been the only day in November when the Palam

buying the blocks entirely. "Blardy [sic] disgusting. Have resorted to buying grated cheese," one commenter wrote. Another speculated that consumers could create their own "Tasty" cheese - referring to the sharp aged cheddar that costs more - by simply keeping it longer. "Just wondering in view of the fact that Tasty becomes Tasty by ageing, would mild or Colby become Tasty if I just stored it for 18 months?" they asked. On one community social media page, users alerted one other to cheese discounts at the local supermarkets. Others called for a brief boycott to try to force prices down. One Maungaturoto business used the headlines to tout their own cheesemaking classes: "What better time now to come and



learn to make your own cheddar - this is just getting completely ridiculous." A block at the high end of the cheddar range - the much-beloved "Tasty" brand of aged cheddar - had been selling in recent months for more than \$20 a kilogram. At the lower end, a kilogram of mild - the cheapest and least flavoursome of the cheddars - was selling for an average of over \$11, its highest point in a decade, according to Stats NZ data published by the Herald. "We're not talking about fine imported French brie here - we're talking about stock standard kiwi edam, colby and tasty. If that's been priced out of the reach of a significant sector of society, then we have a real problem," says Jon Duffy, chief executive of Consumer NZ, an independent nonprofit which

researches and advocates for consumers. "Supermarkets bear some responsibility for that," Duffy says, "but the general cost of living and the income gap between not even wealthy, but middle class New Zealanders and those in precarity or hardship is something we should be really concerned about at a societal level - it's really visible through the lens of what used to be a common staple, a block of cheese." Just why cheese prices have risen so high is a complex question, Duffy says. Inflation has helped drive up food prices across the board. Most of New Zealand's milk is exported, and the international milk price is now high - that means prices also go up domestically.



Rescuers evacuate residents from inundated areas after heavy rainfall in Bangalore

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Cabinet minister Patowari attended various programmes at Barpeta on November 23

## DC Convenes Coordination Meeting

STAFFREPORTER

**Aalo, Nov 23:** In a bid to check the growing menace of drug abuse in the district, a meeting with All stakeholders of the district were held under the chairmanship of Panga Tato, West Siang Deputy Commissioner at the Conference Hall of the DC Office today. The DC disclosed that govt. has already given instruction to locate all govt. officials who are too involved in drug addiction to give them one chance of rehabilitation and urged all departments to locate such addicts in their respective departments. The fight against drug menace should be a coordinated effort and drug peddlers in the district need to be dealt with iron to squeeze the source and ask police to register cases against drug related cases instantly. The ADC Liyi Bagra stressed on exemplary punishment as

per NDPS Act to abusers and traffickers, awareness camps with fund drives, parental roles and societal efforts to control the menace. Today the cases of crimes have gone down due to convictions of offenders by the courts and the trend needs intensification. Participating in the discussion, the SP Shri Raja Banthia said that administration and police alone cannot solve the issue unless civil society as a whole come forward to fight this menace and informed the police on growing abuses stating that the informants name will be kept secret while filing the FIR also. He also stressed identifying the time and locations where such nuisances take place to step up the surveillance in such vulnerable locations. The DMO Dr. Dubom Bagra, the Principal Govt H.S.S school, Mrbom Riba Bagra, senior APWWS member and others

too gave useful suggestions to tackle this menace. The Chairperson of Mothers' Vision and Yomcha ZPM Jumde Yomgam Gamlin and Director De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centre, Kennedy spoke at length on their 12 long years of association with drug problem in the district highlighting on approaches with addicts, proper parenting, social awareness, statistic of derailed boys and girls. They disclosed that more than 50 chronic drug addicts from Rehabilitation centres have recovered to lead normal social lives.

## Freshmen Social held at Gyan Jyoti Jr. College

**A.R Correspondent, Biswanath Chariali, Nov 23:** Gyan Jyoti Junior College, Sootea had organized fresher's day with a day-long programme on Tuesday with Maheswar Pathak, principal of the educational institution in the chair. The programme began with hoisting of flag by Maheswar Pathak in the morning followed by welcome of the new year students by the college teachers and seniors. The main session was inaugurated by Trinayan Bora; veteran teacher of Sootea. Sahitya Akademi awardee Anjan Baskota graced the freshmen social as an appointed speaker who appealed the students to be optimistic regarding life and to live a social life. Biswanath MLA Pramod Borthakur graced the occasion as a chief guest who addressed the gathering and appealed to the students to become a good human being. MLA Borthakur promised to build a road connecting the junior college with the main road immediately. Biraj Gogoi, secretary of the junior college read out the proceedings while Manashi Devi, assistant teacher of Chatia HSS released a handwritten magazine. In between the main session Nischita Saikia and Chayanika Bora recited poems. Pabitra Bhuyan spoke on behalf of the teaching community. Nischita Saikia, Chayanika Bora and Chinmoy Harijan addressed the gathering on behalf of the freshmen while Pares Borkakaty and Pranjal Saikia addressed the gathering on behalf of the public. The meeting was also attended by Rajen Sahu, Jagadish Talukdar, Bichitra Bora, Bhaba Saikia, Jivan Sarma, Nurul Hussain among others. Biraj Gogoi offered a vote of thanks

## Elvis Ali Hazarika set record

**STAFFREPORTER, Guwahati, Nov 23:** Assam's Elvis Ali Hazarika has set another record by becoming the first Assamese to successfully swim from Dharamtar Jetty to the Gateway of India, Mumbai, Arabian Sea. Hazarika who hails from Guwahati is known for his swimming records and this time he has made another record making the people of Assam proud. He started the swim at 1 AM on November 23 and completed it by 11 AM. It took him nearly 10 hours. The entire stretch was 38 kilometres long. Hazarika after completing the swim said that this was a preparation run for his proposed North Channel challenge. He intends to swim the North Channel next year. It may be mentioned that Hazarika had created several records earlier and one of the most recent ones was the Catalina Channel in the United States. He was the first-ever swimmer from the North East to complete it. Hazarika covered a distance of around 40 km from the US to the shores of Mexico in 10 hours 59 minutes back in 2019.

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# Lieutenant general Received Ani Vishisht Seva Medal from President of India

Staff Reporter

**Guwahati, Nov 23:** Lieutenant General Pradeep Chandran Nair, Yudh Seva Medal (YSM), the 21st Director General of the Assam Rifles received the prestigious Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) from the President of India Ram Nath Kovind at an investiture ceremony held at New Delhi on November 22. The General Officer has been bestowed with this prestigious award for his successful Command as the Inspector General of Assam Rifles (North)

in Nagaland. He has also been decorated with the Yudh Seva Medal during his Command of a Brigade in Manipur and has also been commended with the Chief of Army Staff Commendation Card on three occasions. Lieutenant General Pradeep Chandran Nair, AVSM, YSM holds vast combat experience in the North East. He commanded his Battalion (18 SIKH) in Assam, has been a Brigade Com-

mander in Manipur and in the recent past was the Inspector General of Assam Rifles in Nagaland. His vast experience in the North East especially as the Inspector General of Assam Rifles (North) has brought in peace and tranquillity in the region as well as controlled the insurgency. In his present appointment as the Director General of Assam Rifles, the North East region is to benefit tremendously.



## Nowgong College IQAC organized lecture

Correspondent

**Nagaon, Nov 23:** On occasion of 'Ajadi ki Amrit Mahotsav', the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the historic Nowgong College in association with Vivekananda Study Kendra today organized a special lecture on 'Sri Arabinda Alok Kola, Kabya aru Sahityar Mul Totha Tatparya' at the college auditorium. The Sahitya Akademi awardee Diganta Biswa Sarma graced the occasion as the key orator. The programme was initiated with lightning by Dr Pramesh Kr Sarma, noted physician and the son of the founder principal of

Nowgong College. Dr Sarat Borkatoki, principal of the college chaired the programme and also delivered the welcome address while Dr Bhuvan Chandra Chutia, coordinator of IQAC anchored the entire programme. In his speech, Diganta Biswa Sarma, the key orator of the lecture said those who have no sense of art, culture and literature are just equivalent to beasts. The feelings from the core of heart is the first and prime encouragement towards art, culture and literature. It is the vi-

bration of the inner soul and expression of esthetic sensibility, truth and beauty, Sarma said adding further that when the waves of all those three elements hit on the heart, then it enhances one to create art, culture and literature. Encouragement, beauty and inner pleasure as well as contentment are the sole strength of art, culture, literature and poetry, he added further. The current teaching staff, retired teachers, students and other staff of the college were present in the programme, a release added.

## Shots fired at Assam forest officials

STAFFREPORTER

**Guwahati, Nov 23:** Smugglers involved in illegal felling of trees in a reserve forest on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh interstate border allegedly fired at a team of Assam forest officials on Tuesday morning, officials said, adding that no one was hurt in the incident. A joint investigation by the two states has begun to nab the miscreants. The firing took place when the forest team went to stop the illegal activity at Ronga reserve forest in Lakhimpur district of Assam. "We got information about the incident around 8:30 am. Smugglers allegedly fired at the Assam forest team. In return, the forest officials also fired shots at the smugglers, following which, they fled," said BM Rajkhowa, superintendent of police, Lakhimpur. He said there was no certainty yet on whether the miscreants were from Assam or from the neighbouring state. Rajkhowa also ruled out the possibility of the incident being related to any border dispute between the two states. "The situation is normal at the site at present and teams of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh forest and police departments are conducting investigations in the area to nab the miscreants. Local villagers have also joined in," he said. On Saturday, a team of Assam forest officials were detained by illegal settlers in Ronga reserve forest on the border between the two states. The settlers were allegedly building a road inside the forest. The forest officials were later rescued by a team from Assam police.



the Commission are implemented uniformly in all States /UTs across the country. CEC also emphasised that new initiatives and best practices by the CEOs for election related activities should be regularly disseminated through media for enhanced outreach. Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar while interacting with the Chief Electoral Officers said that the legal and regulatory framework of the elections is quite robust, however the implementation of various instructions of the Commission at the field is very critical. He stressed that CEOs need to be innovative, more active and should learn from each other's best practices and challenges. He urged CEOs to regularly interact with DEOs for coordination and monitoring and visit the field for critical feedback to ensure necessary course corrections. Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey stressed upon Training & Capacity Building of BLOs as effectiveness of ECI's activities depends upon the effective implementation by field level election officials. He also emphasized on the involvement of different stakeholders and officials in the field for outreach & SVEEP activities at the ground level throughout the year even in non-election period. He emphasized that CEOs need to ensure that correct information and facts are regularly shared with local media for enhanced outreach. Secretary General Umesh Sinha in his welcome address stated that this conference is being organized to understand the field level functioning, coordination with different stakeholders and implementation of instructions of the Commission. He stressed that CEOs need to be active throughout the year and ensure regular engagement with election officials for assessment and necessary

course corrections. During the conference the Commission yesterday released 'Compendium of Cases on Election Law'. The Commission also released a Coffee Table Book 'Conduct of General Elections to the Assam Legislative Assembly 2021', and a short video titled 'Call of Duty' developed by CEO Assam. The video highlights various challenges faced by election officials in setting up polling stations in remote & difficult terrains. A voter anthem titled 'Power of 18' prepared by CEO Manipur for the new voters was also released during the Conference. A multimedia exhibition of SVEEP activities for Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Roll 2022 (SSR2022) by States /UTs was also displayed during the conference. Various audio visual creatives, print advertisements and messages from State Icons for SSR 2022 received from States /UTs were showcased. The conference was attended by Chief Electoral Officers from all States/UTs, Senior DECs, DECs, DG and other senior officers from

the Commission. A separate one day review meeting with all the poll going states is also scheduled at ECI today to discuss various matters related to election management.

## AKRSU organized special felicitation program at Nachansali

Correspondent

**Udaluri, Nov 23:** On Tuesday, an executive meeting and special felicitation program of All Koch Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRSU) Udaluri district (west) was held at Nachansali under Bhergaon subdivision of Udaluri district. In the felicitation program, general secretary of central AKRSU Dibyajyoti Kumar Deka, chief broadcast secretary of central AKRSU Hemanta Bora Koch, assistant secretary of central AKRSU Hemanta Deka, president of Udaluri District AKRSU west Mintu Baruah, advisor of Udaluri District AKRSU west Narayan

Deka were specially felicitated by Udaluri District AKRSU west. General secretary of central AKRSU Dibyajyoti Kumar Deka interacted with the reporters and appealed that Assam's Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sharma promised to solve the problems of Koch Rajbongshi within 3 months including tribes problem and Historical Kamatapur State

problem to solve, otherwise the new executive committee of AKRSU are already gearing up for a democratic movement in near future. Joint general secretary of Udaluri District AKRSU west Mukunda Deka and Pankaj Deka and a large number of members of Udaluri District AKRSU west were present at the felicitation program.



Memo No.CHR/PWD/(R&amp;B)/N-14/Pt/2017-18/

Dated. 23/11/2021

### Short Notice Inviting Tender

Sealed tenders affixing a non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & paise twenty five) only with a validity period of 180 days, which will subsequently be converted and drawn up in the printed F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors under PWD of Class-III (Three), Class-II (Two) & Class-I (A, B & C) (R&B) category according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the work stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 12.00 Noon on 09/12/2021 and will be opened on the same date & place at 2.15 P.M.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Amount	Category of Contractor	Demand draft /Bank Draft Amount	Time of Completion
1	"Repairing /Renovation of SDO(C) Office Building Including low site development by earth filling at Office Complex SDO Civil Bijnai In Chirang District, BTC"	Rs. 21.16.250.00	Class-I (A, B & C), Class-II & Class-III	Rs 500.00	6 (Six) Months

Detail N.I.T. may be seen in all working days in the office of the undersigned. Tender paper will be issued to the contractor or their authorized agent up-to 12.00 Noon on all working days from 25/11/2021 to 09/12/2021 in the office of the undersigned on payment in the form of Bank Draft/ Demand Draft, duly pledged to the Executive Engineer. PWD Chirang (R&B) Division, Kajalgaon. The contractor should submit attested copy of Registration Certificate for the year 2020-2021/2021-22, GST, Labour Licence. PAN along with the tenders. In case the office remain closed on the tender receiving/ opening the same will be received/opened on the next working day.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD,  
Chirang (R&B) Division, Kajalgaon

IPR(BTC)-434/2021



## THE ASSAM RISING

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## Low vaccination rate and lashings of anti-vax and Covid-sceptic sentiment

Austria has hit many new Covid-19 records - none of them good. On 18 November there were 15,145 new cases recorded, the largest number seen since the pandemic began. And the seven-day average for new confirmed cases per million people is at 1,395, more than double the rates in countries such as Germany, France and the UK. On Friday the Austrian chancellor, Alexander Schallenberg, announced the country's fourth national lockdown, beginning today and lasting between 10 and 20 days. This makes Austria only the second European country, after Latvia, to impose lockdown measures since vaccines became widely available earlier this year. Going even further, Schallenberg announced that Austria would also be the first in Europe to bring in compulsory vaccination beginning on 1 February 2022. Schallenberg and his health minister, Wolfgang Mückstein, had previously said that lockdown measures would return only for the unvaccinated. They hoped this might be enough to bring the vaccination rate up and case numbers down. While the percentage of Austrians in receipt of first doses has crept up to 69%, from below 60% at the beginning of August, once intensive care units in the states of Upper Austria and Salzburg became full, another nationwide lockdown became inevitable. And a vaccine mandate - once an unthinkable option - has been broached. Public discussion about a vaccine mandate began over the summer. But the former chancellor Sebastian Kurz resisted the idea, preferring to rely on appeals to responsibility and individual choice. By the summer's end, however, the country seemed to have stalled at "max vax", and its share of the population fully vaccinated against Covid-19 had fallen behind the EU average. How a broad vaccine mandate could be enforced remains unclear - though non-compliance could mean a fine of as much as £3,000, cabinet minister Karoline Edtstadler has said - and it may be liable to challenge on constitutional grounds either at the domestic or European level. Recent opinion polling indicates a slim majority in Austria in support of a vaccine mandate. When asked to choose between a potpourri of possible Covid-19 countermeasures, 41% of Austrians plumped for compulsory vaccination - the most popular measure ahead of a lockdown, nightly curfew and vaccine mandate for particular professions. And 53% of viewers of the news channel Puls24 said they favoured a vaccine mandate, with 44% against. But while a majority of citizens may actually support a mandate, Austrian society is deeply divided between those who have accepted vaccination measures thus far, and a hardened, unvaccinated residuum caught up in conspiracy theories and false information, and attracted to far-right politics. On Saturday, demonstrations in Vienna against the new lockdown and mandate announcements attracted 40,000 people, according to police estimates. Convicted neo-Nazi Gottfried Küssel and identitarian leader Martin Sellner were among those taking part. Several demonstrators wore yellow Stars of David or carried placards that compared the mandate to the Holocaust. Austria's low vaccination rate and lashings of anti-vax and Covid-sceptic sentiment are reflected in its party politics. Austria has not one but two openly Covid-sceptic parties: the Freedom party (FPÖ) and a new movement, the People-Freedom-Fundamental Rights (MFG) party, which won representation in the Upper Austrian state parliament in regional elections in September. The FPÖ leader Herbert Kickl - prone to throwing about terms such as "vaccine apartheid" and "two-class society" - has promoted the horse deworming drug ivermectin as a treatment. Kickl makes a point of his unvaccinated status, and last week revealed that he had tested positive for Covid-19. But there are also particular political, geographical and cultural differences that account for Austria's relatively low rate of Covid-19 vaccination. The government encouraged but never at any point attempted to force the hand of the unvaccinated. This was particularly evident during the September elections in Upper Austria, where the unvaccinated formed a large pool of potential voters and a vaccine mandate was perceived to be a vote-losing issue, a hill on which no party wished to die. There are particularly low rates of jab uptake in more isolated and disconnected rural areas and less affluent, outer districts of Vienna in which the proportion of residents born outside Austria is larger. It is also worth noting that Austrians use alternative medicines, from homeopathy to home remedies, much more than in Britain. The health minister, for one, is a GP and a qualified practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine.

## Be a Citizen Journalist

Are you against of violence or corruption? Do you really want revolution in the social, educational, political or economical system? Do you have any questions for the Government, political or non political parties? Don't worry, be a part of The Assam Rising family. Be a citizen journalist and write to us about your problem and we will take the responsibility to publish your voice. We will give you a platform to raise your voice, because your simple voice can change society.

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## Letter to The Editor

You can send us your self-composed article, story, poem, letter to the editor or any other creative work done by you. We are responsible for publishing it in The Assam Rising. We will also find out one best contributor/writer every week and an attractive prize will be given to encourage him/her. So, without any further delay mail us your own work with full name and address to [assamrising@gmail.com](mailto:assamrising@gmail.com).

Editor,  
The Assam Rising  
Guwahati, Assam

# Bollywood has miles to go before it can produce Kaala, Asuran, Karnan or even a Jai Bhim



The Tamil film industry is making international headlines. The BBC, Yahoo News, Khaleej Times and The Independent reported that Suriyastarrer Jai Bhim is leading the global rating chart on IMDb. As far as the site's popularity matrix is concerned, Jai Bhim is currently the most popular movie, surpassing the long-time favourite The Shawshank Redemption and The Godfather. Jai Bhim is the latest crowning jewel of the Tamil cinema, which has produced a new genre of film in the last decade. This school of cinema comes from the French La Nouvelle Vague. These movies have caught the imagination of the audience not only in Tamil Nadu but around the country and even abroad. These movies have depicted the harsh realities of Indian social life and haven't shied from showing the truth, especially those pertaining to the horrors of caste system and the resistance to it by the Dalit, Bahujan and Adivasi communities. Films such as Attakathi (2012), Madras (2014), Kabali (2016), Kaala (2018), Sarpatta Parambarai (2021) - all directed by Pa Ranjith; Asuran (2019) by Vetrimaaran; Pariyerum Perumal (2018) and Karnan (2021) by Mari Selvaraj; and now Jai Bhim have given birth to a new genre, which is different from Hindi or Bangla new wave. The main differentiators are: All filmmakers in Hindi and Bengali new wave cinema were from dominant

caste background, whereas Tamil new wave movies are made by Dalit and OBC directors. Tamil new wave movies have a different standpoint and the section or aspect of society under the lens here is also poles apart. Hindi and Bengali new wave films like Aakrosh (1980) by Govind Nihalani, Sadgati (1981) by Satyajit Ray, Paar (1984) by Goutam Ghose, Damul (1985) by Prakash Jha had Dalit and subaltern characters but almost all of them were poor, wretched and uneducated. Even Satyajit Ray, who is regarded as one of the greatest filmmakers, mostly had lead protagonists from dominant castes or they were Even in Sadgati, the Dalit character Dukhi remained voiceless. Tamil new wave cinema has produced powerful Dalit and subaltern characters in films like Kaala, Asuran, Pariyerum Perumal and Karnan. Hindi and Bengali new wave cinema had a 'saviour syndrome', in the sense that the characters who saved those oppressed almost always belonged to the elite social groups. We saw this in Sujata (1959) in which the dominant caste hero becomes the saviour of an untouchable girl, and recently in Article 15. In Tamil new wave movies, barring Jai Bhim, lead characters are from subaltern groups. Even in Jai Bhim, tribal protagonists were not mute and meek. The character of Senggeni,

the pregnant Irula woman, was especially Hindi and Bengali new wave films had Gandhian socialism and Marxist ideological framework. Tamil new wave movies have very strong Ambedkarite, Periyarism and Buddhist iconography. Especially in movies of Pa Ranjith and Mari Selvaraj, these images are quite clear. The name of the film Jai Bhim itself is an Ambedkarite slogan. The movie uses pictures, quotes and idols of Ambedkar and Buddha. Pa Ranjith's movie Sarpatta Parambarai even reflected the Dravidian movement of the 1970s. There is a popular rhetoric that cinema mirrors contemporary society and politics, and impacts that society at the same time. Hindi cinema cannot claim that title - of mirroring Indian socio-political reality. Hindi cinema failed to capture some of the watershed moments of contemporary history like JP movement (1974-77), implementation of the Mandal Commission report and related upheaval (early 1990s), and the emergence of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and OBC politics in north India among others. Someone not aware of Indian history

would learn nothing about the epoch events that shaped the country if they watched all major movies of the last 50 years. So, it is hardly a surprise that Hindi cinema completely missed or overlooked the phenomenon of newly emerged Dalit middle class and its aspirations. Tamil cinema, on the other hand, with films like Kaala and Pariyerum Perumal, show how it captured that phenomenon well. In Tamil cinema, all this change happened in a span of a decade. The industry used to be like any other Indian film industry and followed almost similar trajectories. As Dr Harish Wankhede, professor at the Centre for Political Studies, JNU, puts it, "The Indian movie industries began their journey by making mythological movies and later worked in a broad Nehruvian framework. These films followed the

journey of the Indian nation. It was a trans temporal journey from hope to disenchantment to ultra-nationalism. "This grand narrative, through its normative ideas and also because it valued sectional interests, skipped many uncomfortable issues and topics, most prominently, caste. Tribal issues were also very conveniently sidestepped as if they didn't exist, and when tribals were shown, they were extras who danced in the background. It's not that all movies fit in this meta narrative. There were notable exceptions like Giddha (1984) and Marathi movie Umbartha (1982) but they were few and never became mainstream. The Indian 'new wave' or 'parallel' or 'art' cinema movement tried to break the mould, but it could never reach the masses. This movement had its footprints mainly on West Bengal from the 1940s to mid-1960s and on Mumbai during the 1970s. It waned thereafter. Parallel cinema in Mumbai got some of its inspiration and plots from the Naxalite movement and depicted the horrors of caste from Marxist standpoints. But because parallel cinema itself always remained in the periphery, it occupied almost negligible space and remained a sideshow because mass audiences never watched these films. Made by the rich for the rich, elite class who saw the poor on big screens, these films just won national and international awards, rarely a mass audience. New wave Hindi cinema was just a blip in the entire Indian movie history. It came and went without making any lasting impact on film-making. When these movies were winning awards, audiences in theatres were cheering 'angry young man' Amitabh Bachchan. This angry man was mostly poor but didn't have a caste. Castelessness of the poor hero is a phenomenon that Hindi movies always carried with them and still do faithfully. Thus, Raj Kapoor became Awaara and Shree 420 without any caste. This Nehruvian socialist framework has remained the Masonic stone of Hindi movies even today.

# The India that Vir Das and liberals want - and the one they won't talk about



Indian standup comedian Vir Das recently read a monologue at The Kennedy Center theatre in Washington D.C., which at first appears to be a WhatsApp forward of Defence Colony groups, where he talked about binaries of good India and evil India. This short video has expectedly offended the chronically offended Right-wingers, who get a kick out of the very idea of being in the list of offended people. I don't have any problem with the video, but there are certain questions that came to my mind when I watched it. While discussing the 'evils of Indian society', why did Vir Das not mention the word 'caste' even once? I am not expecting much if I say I was at least hoping that he would say "I come from an India which is brutally divided on the lines of caste and Dalits are even killed for spouting a moustache or sitting cross-legged or riding a horse." Caste should be the obvious issue to come to your mind when you discuss Indian society. Can you expect an American standup comedian or commentator deliver a long monologue about the problems with American culture and not mention racism, even once? Indian Savarna liberals and our current intellectual discourse are plagued by a problem, which emanates from a deliberately devious decision - the decision to not mention caste altogether. It explains everything that is wrong with the Indian society and Vir Das is the perfect archetype to study this. Every conversation in the Savarna liberal discourse mourns the 'end of epoch'. Needless to say, it is clearly an end for only them. This forced funeral procession is turned into a mandatory event for all those who deemed themselves as liberals. Vir's monologue is

based on the same imagination. Since 2014 Indian liberals have developed a hobby. It involves brooding over and imagining themselves as Guru Dutt who internally voice 'Jinhe naaz hai Hind par woh kahan hain'. The more befitting question to ask here is: "Jis Hind pe naaz hai woh kahan hai." Their demand seems to be "this is not the India we knew and now want our pre-2014 India back". Sadly, their versions of an ideal India do not include the marginalised sections par-

the evils of corruption. Revisiting this memory only adds coherence to an observation of our current reality. Many have their heart in the right place, but their head clearly isn't there. Activism then becomes an activity, standup-films-poetry seek revolution but only end up revolting the sensibilities (or the lack thereof) of the perpetually offended Right-winger. Towards the end of his seven-minute monologue, Vir Das sort of shifts the responsibility off

do. The Savarna ecosystem hails the act as revolutionary. This helps the audience to not directly confront the issues that could challenge their privilege. Ultimately, this makes the audience nostalgic for the memories of an abstract India, which only existed in their fantasy. Gandhi's India. Nehru's India. An India which was as calm as the flowing water of Ganges near Rishikesh's luxury spa resort, but not as turbulent as the one that floods the country's villages every year. If satire is the means to mock the power and establishment, then Vir Das should fire shots at his own network and power of belonging to the highly privileged dominant caste in a caste-ridden society. It is relatively easier to build the image of resistance when stakes are low and you have no skin in the game. In fact, this whole projected image of a dissenting satirist who is challenging the status quo has additional power in the global arena in the anti-establishment satire market. The question should be asked if Vir is at all making fun of 'establishment'. What is 'establishment' and 'status quo' in the Indian context? In India all major institutions of power are the castles of oppressor caste hegemony and they form multiple arenas of establishment and power. In his own monologue, Vir Das mentions that he comes from an India which is proud of vegetarianism. In India, 30 per cent of the country's population can afford or claim to be "pure vegetarian" and majority of it would belong to dominant caste groups. This itself shows which India Vir represents. The whole idea about vegetarianism is, in fact, deeply associated with the purity of caste, which ultimately is a Brahminical idea in Indian context. The recent order passed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation against banning non-vegetarian stalls on the streets of the city isn't because Narendra Modi felt adventurous in his dislike for chicken tandoori but because a Brahminical idea of morality runs deeper in the veins of this society. This Brahminical establishment and dominant caste hegemony will continue to rule India with or without the BJP in power. Unless one challenges this particular idea of India, one cannot be termed as anti-establishment, radical or even hard-hitting comic. In fact, most of the hard-hitting satire in India should be renamed as 'hardly hitting anywhere'.

● ● ● *In a nation obsessed with films based on the reincarnation theme, the biggest appeal of the movement was Anna Hazare, who often appeared to many as a reincarnation of M.K. Gandhi or the ageing version of Aamir Khan's DJ from Rang De Basanti. The whole premise was a purification ritual, which would make the utopia even more utopic. The corrupt, dirty politician would take a holy dip in the Lokpal and emerge 'pure' and free from the evils of corruption. Revisiting this memory only adds coherence to an observation of our current reality* ● ● ●

taking in the glory of their assumed utopia. Never in history was there a time when marginalised sections saw a 'livable' or normal time and any nostalgia for any glorious past. Once upon a time, most of the Savarna liberals believed that the main villains in their story were corruption and reservation - the two usual suspects that held their nation back from becoming a superpower. (They still do - it's just that they are vocal only about the latter now.) Films like Rang De Basanti emerged, which led to the whole movement of 'India against corruption'. In a nation obsessed with films based on the reincarnation theme, the biggest appeal of the movement was Anna Hazare, who often appeared to many as a reincarnation of M.K. Gandhi or the ageing version of Aamir Khan's DJ from Rang De Basanti. The whole premise was a purification ritual, which would make the utopia even more utopic. The corrupt, dirty politician would take a holy dip in the Lokpal and emerge 'pure' and free from

himself onto the audience when he says he is 'turning the camera towards them'. Reminiscent of MAGA campaigns that pit nostalgia as a place of utopia on which the future is based, he 'demands' of the audience to believe in his 'India' and to not let its memory die. This is where the classic Savarna liberal trait to withdraw oneself from the problem surfaces. This is exactly how the Shashi Tharoors of India demand reparation from England (he also knows he is getting none) and then return home to do what the Internet terms as 'soft Sanghi behaviour'. He flirts with those he deems as fascist only to edge them and leave them wanting more while simultaneously showing how he is above them and has a 'purer' idea of India which ultimately birthed the book, Why I Am A Hindu. Later on, the same debate in the liberal circle has shifted to the useless binaries of 'Hinduism vs Hindutva'. Vir Das' standup makes the viewer sit down, which is exactly what the act intends to



# 'Launch aggressive COVID vaccination campaign'

**Dimapur, Nov 23:** Union Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, on November 22, urged the States of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Manipur as well as the Union Territory of Puducherry to launch an aggressive campaign to increase the pace and ensure full COVID-19 inoculation of the adult population. Mandaviya batted for the same during a virtual review meeting on vaccination progress with health secretaries and senior officials of the Health Department in the three States and the UT, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) informed in a statement. "We are in the last lap of COVID-19 Vaccination. Let us launch aggressive campaign to ensure full COVID-19 vaccination by increasing the pace of vaccination and expanding the coverage," he stated, reiterating that vaccination is the most potent weapon in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the MoHFW, the 3 states and the UT have been reporting low vaccination coverage. "While India's first dose coverage is at 82% and second dose coverage at 43%, Puducherry (66%,39%), Nagaland (49%,36%),



Meghalaya (57%,38%) and Manipur (54%,36%) lag behind from national average in their first and second dose coverage," it pointed out. To increase the vaccination, the Minister also urged the States/UT to innovatively rope in all stakeholders including NGOs, faith-based organisations, religious leaders, community influencers and other partners to motivate and mobilise all eligible populations towards full COVID vaccination. "Let us ensure collectively

that no eligible citizen is left without the 'Suraksha Kawachh' of COVID-19 vaccine in the country, and to address issues of hesitancy, misinformation, superstition etc," he added. 'Deploy all Government officials': Meanwhile, Dr Mandaviya also advised the States to deploy all State Government officials, one day each week, to visit each eligible household to motivate and mobilise them towards full vaccination, the MoHFW said. He reiterated the Prime

Minister's mop-up strategies for strengthening the 'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign. These include deploying 'Prachar Toli' in advance to villages to ensure mobilisation and counselling of the eligible population along with awareness campaigns, followed by the 'Vaccination Toli' to ensure that all eligible citizens are vaccinated with the first and second dose. Further sharing that he noticed during his recent Arunachal Pradesh that stickers saying 'Fully Vaccinated Home' were being used, Dr Mandaviya also called for adopting similar innovative strategies. He also urged States to make children and students as COVID-19 Vaccination Ambassadors to urge and motivate the elders and eligible members in their families and communities to take both doses of the vaccine. Preparation of district-wise micro plans: As per the MoHFW's statement, Dr Mandaviya also exhorted the States to prepare detailed district-wise micro plans, deploy adequate

number of teams and to regularly review the daily progress of the low performing districts. "States were urged to make innovative short videos to address target groups for hesitancy, along with effective use of various social media platforms and traditional media," it said. The Union Health Minister engaged with the States/UT to know the specific reasons holding back the wide scaling up of vaccination drive under the ongoing 'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign. He was apprised of the ongoing efforts by the State/UT administration to address issues of hesitancy, it added. Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary; Dr Manohar Agnani, Addl. Secretary (Health); Dr Sunil Kumar, Director General of Health Services; Indrani Kaushal, Jt. Secretary (Health); Ashok Babu, Jt. Secretary (Health); and other senior officials of the Ministry were present in the meeting.

**Itanagar, Nov 23:** Governor BD Mishra met a team of Idu Mishmi youths from Dibang Valley district, which is promoting tourism and visits to the Emudu Seven Lakes in Dibang Valley, at the Raj Bhavan here. The governor commended the youths, led by Jimu Mele, for their spirit of entrepreneurship, and said that the tourism sector in Arunachal Pradesh has huge scope for startup projects. "If properly taken up, such enterprises have great potential for public employment and work," he said. Im-



pressed by the "self-employment and job providing spirit of the team," the governor said that other youths of the state should emulate the young team. Mishra advised the youths to "identify attractive destinations to further develop the amenities and logistic arrangements for tourists." He also suggested creating publicity around the venture through various platforms to attract adventure

seekers and trekkers from different parts of the world. "As service providers, the entrepreneurs must take full care of the necessities of the clients," he said. Mele, along with senior journalist and trekking enthusiast Taba Ajum briefed the governor on the Emudu Seven Lakes Trekkers' activities, and informed that their trekking season starts in July and ends in October.

## BSF hands over to two Bangladeshi nationals

**Shillong, Nov 23:** Two Bangladeshi nationals, who had inadvertently crossed over into Indian Territory and were apprehended in Meghalaya by the Border Security Force (BSF) were handed over to their counterparts, the Bangladeshi Border Guards (BGB) as a gesture of goodwill, according to BSF sources. The handover of the two persons took place this morning. The two

Bangla nationals have been identified as Md Akhter Ujjaman (43) and Md Amirul Islam, (18). As per BSF sources, the two had come towards the border in South Garo Hills and inadvertently entered into the Indian territory on November 20. They were apprehended immediately. "BSF always adopts a humanitarian approach in cases of inadvertent crossing and minors.

## Police's failure to file chargesheets under POCSO Act leads to release of several accused

**Itanagar, Nov 23:** Delay in filing of chargesheets by the state's police department in Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act cases has led to the release of several accused persons on bail. It has been witnessed in several recent POCSO Act-related cases that the investigating officers (IO) often fail to arrest the accused or the co-accused person(s) under appropriate sections of the law and most of the time fail to file the chargesheet in the court within the mandatory period of 90 days. This failure indirectly favours the accused or the co-accused and delays the whole justice

delivery system. There are several instances of such failures on the part of the state's police department. On 2 November, the Khonsa (Tirap district) special court (POCSO) judge had to grant bail to an accused in the Diyun PS Case No 09/21 u/s 376/307/325/201 IPC, r/w Section 4 of the POCSO Act under Section 162 (2). In this particular case, the IO failed to file the chargesheet within the mandated period and therefore the accused was granted bail by default. Similarly, on 25 October, the Yupia west

sessions division special judge (POCSO) had to grant default bail to the accused in the Itanagar WPS Case No 143/2021, u/s 376 IPC, read with Section 6 of the POCSO Act after the police failed to file a chargesheet within 90 days. Further, on 3 November, the same court had to grant bail to the co-accused in the Itanagar WPS Case No 120/2021, u/s 376 (2) (f)/323/506/34 IPC, r/w Section 6 of the POCSO Act. In the petition, the special public prosecutor pointed out that the investigating officer of the case had failed to book

the co-accused under appropriate sections of the law. Also, on 5 November, the same court had to grant default bail to the accused in the Itanagar women police station case under Section 376 (3)/34 of the IPC and Section 6 of the POCSO Act, following the IO's failure to file the chargesheet within the mandatory period. While hearing the bail petition filed in the case, Yupia West Sessions Division Special Judge (POCSO) Nani Grayu in his order made these remarks: "After having seen a number of cases wherein accused persons were allowed to

go on default bail in many cases like present one. This court is compelled to make some observations that under Section 173 of CrPC, it is mandatory to complete the investigation of the case within a period of two months and file the chargesheet in court. However, the capital police are failing to comply with this mandatory period of law in many cases. Therefore, the SP of the capital complex shall guide and instruct his officers for compliance with provisions of law to investigate the cases, especially the cases under POCSO Act and 376 of IPC."

## Cong in Manipur seeks disqualification of two of its MLAs who joined BJP recently

**Imphal, Nov 23:** Congress party in Manipur sought the disqualification of two of its sitting legislators on Monday who left the party and joined BJP. The Congress party submitted a petition in this regard to the Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly. The two sitting MLAs--RK Imo Singh and Yamthong Haokip--had joined BJP in New Delhi on October 8 last, leaving Congress. A delegation of Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) members led by its general secretary (election and media) Soibam Jeeten filed the petition to the tribunal of Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly today, in the afternoon. In the petition, the MPCC sought disqualification of the two MLAs under 10th schedule of Indian Constitution and Article 191 of the Constitution. The Congress delegation submitted the petition to the Speaker through its private secretary. Talking to reporters after the submission of the petition, MPCC general secretary Soibam Jeeten said that the two sitting MLAs should be disqualified under para 2(1) of the 10th schedule of Indian Constitution and Article 191 of the Constitution. While asserting the MPCC always respects the Constitution of the country, he hoped that the Speaker will do the needful to disqualify the MLAs as per law in the interest of justice.

## KLSU annual session and seminar held

**Kohima, Nov 23:** The Kohima Lotha Students Union (KLSU) held its 46th annual session and seminar under the theme 'Building an Informed Generation'. Section officer of the Nagaland Home Department E Longphyo Kikon was the theme speaker while Educator and Climate Reality Leader Dr N Janbemo Humtsoe and Senior English News Reader, AIR Kohima Jonas Yanthan were seminar speakers, a press release from the Union's Media Cell stated. The programme commenced with an invocation from Renthungo Kikon, Pastor of Kohima Lotha Baptist Church (KLBC) followed by welcome address from Lirhonthung E Kithan, President KLSU. This was followed by speeches from the speakers and also short speeches by the Kohima Lotha Hoho and Kohima Lotha Elo Ekhung (KLEE). The programme also witnessed special numbers from Echungbeni Shitiri and Mhabeini Ezang. The programme was chaired by Thungchibeni T Erui, the release stated.



## JSTD celebrates golden jubilee



**Dimapur, Nov 23:** The Jangpetkong Senso Telongjem Dimapur (JSTD) celebrated its golden jubilee on November 19 with the release of a jubilee souvenir and a programme at Saku's Mission College, Dimapur. According to a press release received on Monday, I Bendangliba, (Retd) Director, Industries & Commerce, Government of Nagaland, exhorted the gathering and the jubilee souvenir was released by KT Wapang, Chief Electrical Inspector (Retd). The main speaker of the programme,

Dr Walunir spoke on the topic 'Twangwang' (Prime Time), and said that Jangpetkong has had its time of glory in the past, but that it cannot live on past glories alone. Stating that it is time for the people of Jangpetkong to broaden their scope and horizon so that they can accommodate not only themselves but also shelter others, he said that collaborative works need to be initiated by the union. Leaders should also identify people with potentials and task them to do better. The jubilee planning

## IJU expresses concern over militant's intimidation to Guwahati editor

**NEWS DESK**  
**Hyderabad, Nov 23:** Indian Journalists Union (IJU) expresses serious concern over the intimidation of banned separatist outfit United Liberation Front of Assam (Independent) to a Guwahati-based news channel editor for his views on three youths' departure to join the militant group. In a statement on November 22 last, the UIfa (I) targeted ND24 (News Daily 24) editor Rajdeep Bailing Baruah following his comments that three detained Assamese youths, who seemingly went to join the outfit, if interrogated it would be clear who instigated them to take the path. Assam Rifles detained them from Mon district of Nagaland bordering Myanmar. Questioning the editor's rights to make such kind of comments, the UIfa (I) warned him for the last time. Crossing all limits, the outfit dictated the editor not to make such 'mistake' in future, otherwise the statement asserted, the outfit would take any kind of

steps against the editor. Speaking to an IJU representative in Assam, Bailing Baruah reiterated that he believes in journalism of credibility and authenticity. A seasoned television journalist for decades, Bailing Baruah also clarified that neither he nor ND24 is accountable to UIfa(I), but their millions of viewers and well-wishers. "Journalists have nothing to learn from a banned militant outfit, especially about their own profession. They will perform their duties according to their commitment to the medium as well as the nation," said IJU president K. Sreenivas Reddy and secretary general Balwinder Singh Jammu. The national union of scribes urged State chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, also in charge of home portfolio, to look into the matter and take necessary actions. IJU leaders also appealed to all media persons based in the region to stand with the editor and denounce the militant's threat to the media.

report was delivered by Intiakum Pongen, Convenor, of the Jubilee Planning Committee. Under Convener L Ningsangwaba Pongen, a Jubilee Resolution was adopted to organise an for Academic Excellence Trust under the aegis of JSTD, the release stated.

## Swachh Survekshan 2021: Nagaland 'cleanest' state in NE

**Dimapur, Nov 23:** Nagaland was ranked sixth among the States with less than 100 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), while its two major cities showed an improvement over last year, according to the latest Swachh Survekshan 2021, an annual sanitation survey among cities and towns of India since 2016. The 2021 survey was released during the felicitation of top performers by the President of India Ram Nath Kovind in New Delhi on November 20 at the 'Swachh Amrit Mahotsav' hosted as part of Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA). As per the survey, a total of 19 ULBs were considered in the survey and with a total score of 1000, Nagaland was ranked 6th out of 14 States with less than 100 ULBs. The State's ranking was best among the North East States, followed by Assam (80), Mizoram (9) and Sikkim (10). Meghalaya was placed last among the 14 states with less than 100 ULBs. Nagaland's position in the overall ranking also improved marginally from 19 in 2020 to 17 in 2021, out of 28 States. Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh retained the top position among states, followed by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. West Bengal was bottom of the list, followed by Meghalaya and Kerala. Cities and Zonal Ranking: Meanwhile Indore has now been voted as the cleanest in India for 5th time



in a row while Surat (Gujarat) and Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh) were conferred as being the country's second and third cleanest respectively in the National Ranking of cities with populations greater than 10 lakh. Out of 48 cities under the category, Kota North was ranked at the bottom, followed by Madurai and Coimbatore. In the ranking of 1-10 Lakh cities, Dimapur was placed in 322 out of 372 cities with a score of 1530 points. As per the survey, the ranking is an improvement over 422 in 2020 and 399 in 2020. In the category, New Delhi, Ambikapur and Tirupati were ranked first, second and third

respectively, while Sasaram, Shillong and Palakkad were at the bottom-three. Nagaland capital Kohima, slotted in the survey under cities with 50,000 - 1 lakh population, also improved its ranking and was placed at 5th out of 14 such cities in the North East Zone. In the category, Tezpur was ranked first, followed by Tinsukia and Jorhat while Karimganj was at the bottom, followed by Tura and Lunglei. In cities under the 25,000 - 50,000 category, Mokokchung was placed at 8th position out of 31 in the North East. Wokha was placed at 12th, followed by Chümoukedima (13),

Tuensang (15) and Mon (28). Assam's Golaghat, Kokrajhar and Haflong took the top-three positions respectively in the category. In cities below, 25,000 population category, Jiribam in Manipur retained the top position, while Sapatgram and Lakhimpur in Assam were placed second and third respectively. The performances of town councils from Nagaland in the category, however, was below average, with even the 'best' ranked Kiphire placed at 103rd out of 171 such ULBs in the North East.



## Contd. From Page 1

## Neighbouring state Mizoram

orders."Union home ministry on November 5 issued an advisory to Mizoram and Assam to maintain the status quo in the disputed areas along the border and refrain from undertaking any construction activities. The home departments of the two states accordingly instructed the deputy commissioners of border districts to comply. Mizoram home minister Lalchamlana last week ordered the deputy commissioners of Kolasib and Mamit, which share borders with Assam, not to halt construction activities after a meeting of the State Boundary Committee. He alleged Assam is not following the status quo. Assam denied the allegation and asked Mizoram to refrain from spreading wrong information. felling of trees in a reserve forest on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh interstate border allegedly fired at a team of Assam forest officials on Tuesday morning, officials said, adding that no one was hurt in the incident. A joint investigation by the two states has begun to nab the miscreants. The firing took place when the forest team went to stop the illegal activity at Ronga reserve forest in Lakhimpur district of Assam."We got information about the incident around 8:30 am. Smugglers allegedly fired at the Assam forest team. In return, the forest officials also fired shots at the smugglers, following which, they fled," said BM Rajkhowa, superintendent of police, Lakhimpur. He said there was no certainty yet on whether the miscreants were from Assam or from the neighbouring state. Rajkhowa also ruled out the possibility of the incident being related to any border dispute between the two states."The situation is normal at the site at present and teams of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh forest and police departments are conducting investigations in the area to nab the miscreants. Local villagers have also joined in," he said. On Saturday, a team of Assam forest officials were detained by illegal settlers in Ronga reserve forest on the border between the two states. The settlers were allegedly building a road inside the forest. The forest officials were later rescued by a team from Assam police.

## Bharat Gaurav: Railways To Roll

this scheme. Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday that after the freight and passenger sectors, the railways will start a third segment dedicated to the tourism industry. Union Railway Minister announced that the government will launch a set of more than 180 theme-based trains dubbed "Bharat Gaurav" trains. The railway minister told a news conference that these trains might be managed by both the private sector and the IRCTC. "We've allocated over 180 trains for 'Bharat Gaurav' trains & 3033 coaches identified. We'll start taking applications from today. We've received a good response. Stakeholders will modify & run the train & Railways will help in maintenance, parking & other facilities," Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said. To showcase India's rich cultural heritage, Hon'ble MR Shri @AshwiniVaishnaw announces introduction of theme based tourist circuit trains, "Bharat Gaurav Trains". The concept came from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who recommended theme-based trains so that everyone in the country may comprehend, respect, and carry forth India's legacy, according to the minister. He also stated that the fares for these trains would be mostly determined by tour operators, but that the railroads would verify that there were no pricing discrepancies. State governments like Odisha, Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, according to the minister, have expressed interest in these trains.

## Governor removed Dibrugarh

cordoned off in a strong agitation at the university seeking a proper inquiry into the corruption rules. On the other hand, the post-graduate floor student unity meeting as well as various party organisations welcomed such a decision. Notably, on January 25, Dr Ranjit Tamuli tried to indirectly involve university officials and employees in the face of financial scams in front of the teaching community and the media. The embezzlement of university cell money with his power and power was all proved. So Professor Jagdish Mukhi, Acharya and Governor, Dibrugarh University removed Dr Ranjit Tamuli for the larger public interest while looking at all aspects. The important thing is that Dr Ranjit Tamuli fled in fear by giving Dr RMS Yadav the responsibility of vice chancellor in charge while the protest continued at the university.

## Former Rajya Sabha MP Kripal

party as there is fear that some more resignations could follow. The core group and state executive meeting had been called to dissect the bypoll defeat and take corrective measures so that the party is fully geared for the 2022 Assembly polls, due later next year. The resignation could further aggravate the simmering discontent among a section of the senior party leaders who feel they have no say in party decisions as the senior leadership behaves in a very autocratic manner. Earlier, former minister and sitting MLA from Jwalamukhi Ramesh Dhawala too had aired his grouse against dictatorial style of functioning of senior leaders and interfering in his constituency. Parmar, however, added that he had only resigned from the party post and not the party. The BJP suffered debacle at the hands of the Congress as it lost the Mandi Lok Sabha seat as well as three assembly bypolls, held last month. The BJP candidate in the bypoll from Jubbal-Kotkhai Neelam Sarek, who lost her security deposit too, has registered her displeasure at the appointment of office bearers to the Mandal unit without consulting her.

## 50% CCTVs in Guwahati city

from a person's vehicle who had just withdrawn the money from a bank in the Noonmati area of the city. Unhappy at the lackadaisical attitude of the government and the departments concerned, denizens unequivocally urged the government to ensure safety and security in an urgent manner. Niranjana Deka, a septuagenarian from the Chandmari area, said, "Without increasing CCTV surveillance, it is not possible to prevent the rising trend of crimes in the city. Sufficient CCTVs must be installed in every area of the city along with the prominent places. Police cannot be deployed in every nook and corner. But surveillance can be increased by using technology."

## Union minister of state Danve

82.50 Km long new railway line project at an anticipated cost of Rs. 6,648 crore. Project includes eight new stations (including Kohima), 24 major bridges, 166 minor bridges, 4 Road Over Bridges, 18 Road Under Bridges and 14 Limited Height Subways. Various technical challenges are being encountered due to the hilly terrain between Dimapur and Kohima. Team of railway engineers and construction agencies are on with the job round the clock to hasten the pace of work. Out of total stretch, 2.75 Km are with in Assam area and the rest 79.75 Km within Nagaland. Works of the entire project is executing in three phases - Phase-I: Dhansiri – Shokhuvi (16.5 Km), Phase-II: Shokhuvi – Pherima (28.00 Km) and Phase-III: Pherima – Zubza (38.00 Km) in terms of target of completion. CRS inspection of Phase 1 has been done and authorization received in October, 21. Works on the project is going on in full swing and expected to ready by March, 2026. Once the project is completed, it will build a new mode of connection with the capital of Nagaland to the rest of the country. The new connectivity will make goods transportation easier and will largely help in boosting the economy of Nagaland.

## Groom Party met Accident

**Guwahati, Nov 23:** The marriage was held at Jhanji's Food Villa in the Sivasagar district in Assam. The groom's party was returning from the marriage to Golaghat when the accident happened. Two people were killed on the spot and five others were injured in an accident in Golaghat district in Assam on Sunday night. The accident reportedly happened when a vehicle carrying the groom's party heading to Golaghat from Sivasagar hit a tree near Dhekali. The marriage was held at Jhanji's Food Villa in the Sivasagar district in Assam. The groom's party was returning from the marriage to Golaghat when the accident happened. The two deceased have been identified as Bipul Sharma and Mahendra Kalita.

## Farewell to retired teacher



**Correspondent, North Lakhimpur, Nov 23:** The retired assistant teacher (science) of Angerkhowa Higher Secondary School, North Lakhimpur, Md. Ali Ajgor Bhuyan was given warm farewell today in the school by the students, teachers, employees and school managing and development committee of the school. The farewell meeting began with the Guru Vandana by the students as well as the teachers. A chorus was also sung in the meeting by the students of class 10. The objective of the meeting was explained by the assistant teacher Hemaprabha Dutta. Khirod Gogoi, the Principal of the school presided over the meeting where retired teacher of the school Champa Borah, school managing and development committee vice-president Bhuban Gogoi and assistant teacher of North Lakhimpur town high school Mufti Abdul Hasib highlighted on the contributions of retired teacher Md. Ali Ajgor Bhuyan in the field of education. The retired teacher was felicitated with a felicitation letter, sarai, bouquet of flowers, the holy Koran, gamosha, chelleng and packet of books in the event. Two students of class 11 Luchia Topno and Jasmin Topno performed Bhupendra Sangeet in duet in the meeting. The retired teacher too spoke in the meeting. Assistant teacher Premakrishna Sharma offered vote of thanks. Notably, Md. Ali Ajgor Bhuyan, a resident of ward no. 1, Nakari, North Lakhimpur town, joined in Angerkhowa Chariali Higher Secondary School on March 24, 1992 and retired from it on September 30, 2021. He got master teacher award in 2021 from the Lakhimpur district administration. He is associated with many educational and social institutions of Lakhimpur.

## Thousands Gather For Farmers Rally In Lucknow To Keep Pressure On PM Modi

**New Delhi, Nov 23:** Flushed with victory after Prime Minister Narendra Modi caved into demands for the three farm laws to be repealed, Indian farmers held a mass rally today to demand that minimum support prices be extended to all produce, not just rice and wheat. The protest movement launched by farmers more than a year ago, becoming one of the most serious political challenges to the BJP government, resulted in PM Modi making a surprise commitment on Friday to roll back the three agricultural reform laws. Thousands gathered for the latest rally in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow, where the BJP seeks to hold onto power in the state elections due early next year. Since late 2020, thousands of farmers have camped on the outskirts of New Delhi as part of a mass agitation to pressurise PM Modi into rolling back the reforms. His climbdown sparked celebrations among farmers, but leaders of the movement immediately warned that the protests would continue until the government promised to introduce a law that would guarantee minimum prices for all crops. Currently, the government mainly buys rice and wheat at guaranteed Minimum Support Prices, but the safety net benefits barely 6 per cent of India's millions of farmers. In a letter addressed to PM Modi on Sunday, the main farmers' body Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) said: "Minimum Support Price, based on the comprehensive cost of production, should be made a legal entitlement of all farmers (and) for all agricultural produce..." Farmers also asked for the federal government to withdraw a draft electricity bill, that they fear would lead to state governments withdrawing their right to free or subsidised power, used mainly for irrigation. The northern state of Punjab, part of India's grain belt, gives free electricity to the agriculture sector, while some states subsidise power to farmers. Growers have also asked the government to drop fines and other penalties for burning their fields after harvesting to remove stalk and chaff. The smoke has become a major source of air pollution in Delhi and satellite towns bordering the crop growing northern states.

## Yogi Adityanath warns Owaisi against CAA-NRC pitch in Uttar Pradesh

**Kanpur, Nov 23:** Adityanath said that the BJP govt doesn't protect rioters but runs bulldozers on their chest. AIMIM has announced that it would contest 100 seats in the UP Assembly polls. Uttar Pradesh and four other states will go to polls early next year. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday slammed AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi over his CAA and NRC remarks. Addressing a rally in Kanpur, Adityanath warned Owaisi against trying to disrupt peace and communal harmony in the state, saying the BJP government knows 'how to handle'. "I want to warn that person who is invoking feelings in the name of CAA, I want to say to these preachers of 'Abba Jaan' and 'Chacha Jaan' that if they try to do it then the state government knows how to handle it strictly," Adityanath said. Adityanath then went on to say that Owaisi is hand-in-glove with Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party. "Today, every person knows that Owaisi is working as a Samajwadi Party agent who wants to incite feelings in the state. Today's government doesn't protect rioters but runs bulldozers on their chest," Adityanath said. Owaisi while addressing a public meeting in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki on Sunday demanded the repeal of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and warned that protestors will 'turn streets into Shaheen Bagh' if the two laws are not scrapped. "CAA is against the Constitution. If the BJP government does not take back this law, we will come out on the streets and another Shaheen Bagh will come up here," the AIMIM chief had said. Shaheen Bagh in Delhi was the epicentre of protests against the CAA and NRC. The protest site, where hundreds of women camped for several months for the agitation against CAA, was cleared by the Delhi Police after the lockdown was imposed due to COVID-19 last year. Notably, the AIMIM has announced that it will contest elections on 100 seats out of the 403 assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh. The state is slated to go to the polls early next year.

## SC-appointed panel member writes to CJI urging early release of report on farm laws

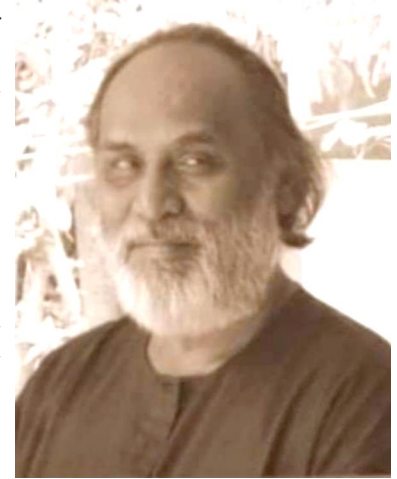
**New Delhi, Nov 23:** The Supreme Court in a landmark judgment in the case of Newtech Promoters & Developers versus State of UP and others has Constitutionally validated the challenged provisions of RERA. The Supreme Court on November 11, 2021, in a landmark judgment in the case of Newtech Promoters & Developers versus State of UP and others has Constitutionally validated the challenged provisions of RERA. Anil Ghanwat, one of the members of the Supreme Court-appointed panel on farm laws, on Tuesday wrote to Chief Justice of India, urging him to consider releasing the report on the three agri laws in the public domain at the earliest or authorise the committee to do so. Ghanwat, also a senior leader of Shetkari Sangathan, said he will mobilise one lakh farmers and bring them to Delhi in the next couple of months demanding farm reforms. In the letter dated November 23 written to Chief Justice of India, Ghanwat said after the government's decision to repeal the three farm laws in the coming Winter Session of Parliament, the panel's report is "no longer relevant" but the recommendations are of great public interest. "The report can also play an educational role and ease the misappropriations of many farmers who have, in my opinion, been misguided by some leaders....," he said. The three-member panel had submitted the report to the apex court on March 19. Since then, the report has not been made public.

## Drunken woman creates ruckus on Guwahati streets

**STAFF REPORTER, Guwahati, Nov 23:** In yet another incident, an allegedly drunken lady driver created ruckus in a busy road in Guwahati on Monday night. The incident took place in Hatigaon, where the lady also rebuked the people who gathered at the spot. In a video that has gone viral on social media, it can be seen that a lady is hurling abuse at people on a road in incomprehensible language and also arguing with the traffic police and a few other people. Reportedly, some people have also alleged that the lady who was in an inebriated state, was driving her car carelessly creating fear among the commuters and passerby, following which, the people demanded strict action against the drunk lady. Notably, earlier in this month, another drunken woman had created ruckus in the Garchuk police station. The video which had gone viral on social media platforms showed that a woman who was detained by the police shouted aloud in the police station premises. A wine bottle was seen on her hands while creating the nuisance. An Uber driver who took the woman to the police station said that a boy sent her from a restaurant in his car. "She was in an inebriated state. I did not wish to give a lift to her as our company does not permit this. But the boy who booked my car compelled me to give a lift to her," the driver added. Notably is such a similar instance, Guwahati Police have filed a charge sheet against Rajkanya Baruah, the model who injured nine PWD labourers after she rammed her car into them on the night of October 1.

## Obituary Dr Partha Sarathi Boruah

**Correspondent, Nagaon, Nov 23:** Noted physician, nature activist, conservator of old and historic structures as well as books, films of the state and abroad, a perfect resourceful individual, photographer and the resident of Nagaon Amulapatty - Dr Partha Sarathi Boruah breathed his last at a private hospital here this afternoon due to illness for quite sometime. He was 76. Born in 1947, Boruah completed his medical education and joined state health department as a physician. He rendered his service as a doctor in Nagaon BP Civil Hospital and thereafter he served the patients in Nagaon Police hospital for over two decades. Significantly, Dr Boruah willed his earthly remains for the students of medical science instead of cremation before his death. Various organizations and other dignitaries of the district including local MLA Rupak Sarma, former AGP minister Girindra Kr Boruah condoled his demise and also paid tribute to him.



## A.P. Cabinet decides to revoke 'three capitals' Acts

**New Delhi, Nov 23:** Andhra Pradesh government on Monday decided to revoke the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions and CRDA Repeal Acts of 2020. A resolution to that effect was passed in the Cabinet that was urgently convened shortly after the third day's proceedings began in the Legislative Assembly. The same was then informed to the High Court by Advocate General S. Sriram, who said the Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy himself would lend clarity on the issue by making a statement in the Assembly. The government's about-turn triggered intense speculation that it might give an altogether new shape to the impugned legislations and bring them back to the table. If one were to go by Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy's comment to the media, the withdrawal of the said Acts is only due to some technical glitches.

## India to release 5 million barrels of crude oil from strategic reserves

**New Delhi, Nov 23:** India has agreed to release about five million barrels of crude oil from its Strategic Petroleum Reserves (emergency stockpile) in tandem with the United States, Japan, People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and other major economies to cool prices, the government said in a statement on November 23. India stores about 38 million barrels of crude oil in underground caverns at three locations on the east and west coast. Of this, about 5 million barrels will be released, starting as early as 7-10 days, the official, who wished not to be named said. The stocks will be sold to Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) which are connected by pipeline to the strategic reserves. Though the release of 5 million barrels of crude is almost equivalent to less than half of India's daily domestic consumption, it is seen as a symbolic move as oil consumers are willing to band together against OPEC's reign over markets. "India strongly believes that the pricing of liquid hydrocarbons should be reasonable, responsible and be determined by market forces," the government release said. Apart from this, the government said that it has repeatedly expressed concern at supply of oil being artificially adjusted below demand levels by oil producing countries, leading to rising prices and negative attendant consequences. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been consistently reviewing the high petroleum/diesel prices domestically. In a bid to control inflationary pressures, the central government on November 3 reduced the central excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 5 and Rs 10, respectively. It was followed by a reduction in VAT on fuel by many state governments. These difficult steps, despite the high fiscal burden on the government, were taken in order to provide relief to citizens, the statement added.

## Indian Journalists Union (IJU) has expressed serious concern over the intimidation of banned separatist outfit ULFA

**Guwahati, Nov 23:** Indian Journalists Union (IJU) has expressed serious concern over the intimidation of banned separatist outfit United Liberation Front of Assam (Independent) to a Guwahati-based news channel editor for his views on three youths' departure to join the militant group. In a statement, IJU said ULFA-(I) targeted a senior journalist of a local news channel following his comments that three detained Assamese youths, who seemingly went to join the outfit, if interrogated it would be clear who instigated them to take the path. Assam Rifles detained them from Mon district of Nagaland bordering Myanmar. Questioning the journalist's rights to make such kind of comments, ULFA (I) warned him for the last time. The outfit further asked the journalist not to make such 'mistake' in future, otherwise the statement asserted, "the outfit would take any kind of steps" against him. Speaking to an IJU representative in Assam, the journalist reiterated that he believes in journalism of credibility and authenticity. He also clarified that he is not accountable to ULFA (I), but the viewers and well-wishers. "Journalists have nothing to learn from a banned militant outfit, especially about their own profession. They will perform their duties according to their commitment to the medium as well as the nation," said IJU president K. Sreenivas Reddy and secretary general Balwinder Singh Jammu. In view of the same, the national union of scribes urged Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, also in charge of home portfolio, to look into the matter and take necessary actions.



# Jones turns England's focus towards Six Nations after autumn progress

**London, November 23 :** Eddie Jones believes mental fatigue caused by Covid restrictions was a significant reason why the major southern hemisphere nations failed to stay the distance in the autumn series in Europe. Jones, though, has made clear his England side can still improve further and is seeking a fast start to the Six Nations at Scotland's expense in early February.Despite New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and Argentina all losing their concluding Tests of the year, Jones insists it is premature to start talking up northern hemisphere prospects ahead of the 2023 Rugby World Cup because of the "problematic" amount of time all the touring teams have recently had to spend away from home adhering to strict Covid protocols.England suffered a similar dip themselves in this year's Six Nations and the head coach says he has some sympathy for sides like the Springboks who have played 13 Tests in just over four months. "We are so lucky to play a high-level sport in such a difficult time but given the restrictions of the team environment sometimes it gets difficult for the players," said Jones."You think about South Africa, they have been on the road away from home for at least 18 weeks.



That presents challenges. There may be some mental fatigue that gets exacerbated by those conditions. We certainly found the Six Nations as a team very difficult with the restrictions we had in the team environment. That puts another layer on that equation."As he prepares to head for France to scout potential 2023 World Cup bases, however, Jones is less bothered about Test rugby's potentially shifting balance between north and south than ensuring England kick on from their Twickenham wins over Tonga, Australia and the world champions."I'm not too concerned about the northern hemisphere," stressed Jones, whose side's next fixture is at Murrayfield on 5 February. "The only thing I'm concerned about is

England and I know we're going to be in a better position after the Six Nations because we'll keep improving. When the coaches have had a bit of a break we'll start having a look at Scotland and see how we're going to beat them. It's the only thing we're worried about."England, who now have the former Edinburgh coach Richard Cockerill on their staff, are also looking to pursue the more proactive attacking game that Jones believes is now possible under the slightly tweaked laws. "World Rugby have got three things they are emphasising: speed, space and safety. All those three are coming out ... we are getting faster games, more space and a safer game. So it's all moving in the right direction and the domestic

competitions are following, albeit with their own national flavour."I think the speed of the ball is creating much more decision making for players and the more practice they get at doing that the better it is for the players. If you look at the Premiership I think the speed of the ruck ball has gone down by approximately a second, and that means defences are less organised. That creates more decision-making because you have got the opportunity to play quicker and flatter on the line."Having also picked 23 new players this year, Jones is hopeful the emergence of some quality youngsters will continue to energise their seniors but admits that team building remains an imprecise science. "I was talking four or five weeks ago to a coach who won a major, major trophy. I said 'What did you do?' He said: 'I really don't know, every team I get I do the same thing. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.'"We got those young guys together in summer ... for some reason there was this chemistry in that group and it just took off. Then you put them back with a few of the established players and again you don't really know what's going to happen. But they seem to have gelled really well, they have a nice feel about them. And when you have that nice feel they tend to fight a bit harder. They were able to find a lot of extra petrol in the tank on Saturday and a lot of it we don't know why."

## Peng Shuai backlash leaves IOC facing familiar criticism over human rights



**Beijing, November 23 :** As human rights organisations and the world's media questioned the whereabouts of the Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai, the International Olympic Committee opted for a "quiet diplomacy" approach, arguing that was the most effective way to deal with such a case."Experience shows that quiet diplomacy offers the best opportunity to find a solution for questions of such nature. This explains why the IOC will not comment any further at this stage," the Lausanne-based organisation said in an emailed statement on Thursday about the case of Peng, who disappeared from public view after she made an accusation of sexual assault against a former senior Chinese official. Yet the IOC's approach to the Peng saga, which resulted in a half-hour-long video call between its president, Thomas Bach, and the player on Sunday, appeared to have failed to ease concerns. Instead, the committee was accused by rights activists of engaging in a "publicity stunt" for

Beijing. Such a backlash is a familiar recurrence for the IOC throughout its history since the late 19th century. Last month, in response to rights organisations' calls to relocate the Winter Games, the IOC vice-president, John Coates, responded: "We are not a world government. We have to respect the sovereignty of the countries who are hosting the Games." This pragmatism from the IOC is not a new phenomenon, nor a feature unique to its dealings with China. Critics often cite the organisation's response to the 1968 Olympics in Mexico. Ten days before that year's Games, government forces shot dead hundreds of protesters in the Tlatelolco massacre. "Olympic Games to go ahead in spite of Mexico rioting," reported the Guardian in a front-page story on 3 October that year. But Susan Brownell, a former nationally ranked US track and field athlete who is an academic at the University of Missouri-St Louis, said the IOC's response to the Peng case marked a change to its previous practices. "In the past, the IOC's sole mission

# Mark Cavendish suffers collapsed lung and two broken ribs in Ghent crash



**London, November 23 :** Mark Cavendish suffered a collapsed lung and two broken ribs in a crash during the Ghent Six Day track event on Sunday night, his Deceuninck-Quick-Step team announced. Cavendish spent the night in the intensive care unit of a Belgian hospital after leaving the velodrome on a stretcher, but is expected to be discharged soon. A statement said: "Following his crash at the Ghent Six Day, Mark Cavendish was taken to the Ghent University Hospital where he was kept overnight. Examinations showed that Mark has suffered two broken ribs on his left side and has a small pneumothorax, both of which have been treated with medication and he has been kept in the hospital for observation."It is expected that Mark will be discharged either later today or tomorrow morning, and will then undergo a period of recuperation.

Everybody at Deceuninck-QuickStep wishes Mark a speedy recovery."In a tweet posted on Monday evening, Cavendish wrote: "Just want to say how overwhelmed & thankful I am for all the support and well-wishes. I think it's fair to say Smiling face with open mouth and cold sweat Some water on the track, a high speed crash and a few barrel rolls later, I'm being treated for some broken ribs & a pneumothorax. In a bit of pain, but a couple of nights with the incredible staff here at Ghent University Hospital should sort me out."Cavendish, who was racing alongside his teammate Iljo Keisse, was one of several riders to crash in the final race. The 36-year-old stood and waved to spectators following the incident, but was then put on a stretcher and taken to hospital. His wife, Peta Todd, posted on Twitter: "Thank you for all the messages. Mark is spending the night in ICU following today's crash. Thank you to all the medical

staff that helped us today and also to the staff that sprung into action to help me and the kids."In an interview with the Times prior to the crash, Cavendish had described racing on Ghent's 166-metre velodrome, shorter and steeper than the Olympic standard 250m, as like being on a "wall of death", admitting he was "petrified of it" following a crash two years ago. However, the three-times madison world champion remains keen on track racing, and was using the event to bring down the curtain on a year which he has described as a "fairytale". Having feared his career was over last year, Cavendish signed a minimum-wage contract with Deceuninck-QuickStep and then used an unexpected late call-up to the Tour de France to win four stages, his first since 2016 as he matched Eddy Merckx's all-time record of 34 victories in the race. Cavendish is expected to sign a new one-year deal with the Belgian team, with talks continuing.

## Robbie Dunne to face hearing over Bryony Frost bullying allegations



**New York, November 23 :** The British Horseracing Authority said on Monday that the long-awaited hearing of a disciplinary case against the jockey Robbie Dunne, who is the subject of a complaint of bullying by his fellow rider Bryony Frost, will begin on 30 November, with five more days set aside for the case if necessary. Dunne will face a series of charges at next week's hearing, several of which fall within the scope of Rule (J)19, covering conduct prejudicial to horse racing. In addition to an overall charge that he engaged in "bullying and harassing a fellow licensed jockey between 13 February 2020 and 3 September 2020", further charges relate to alleged incidents at Stratford on 8 July 2020, Uttoxeter on 17 August 2020 and Southwell on 3 September 2020. The BHA's case is that Dunne's behaviour on the days in question involved "verbally abusing and threatening a fellow jockey", and was a breach of both Rule (J)19 and (J)20, which covers "acting in a violent or improper

manner". The existence of a possible disciplinary case involving Frost first became apparent after her success on Frodon in the Grade One King George VI Chase at Kempton on 26 December 2020, the highlight of the Christmas programme. It was then reported in February that the complaint was against Dunne, and involved a race at Southwell last September in which Dunne's mount, Cillian's Well, suffered a fatal fall. Extensive details of the case were then revealed when a 120-page report, compiled by BHA investigators looking into Frost's complaint, was leaked to the Sunday Times last month. This included an alleged threat by Dunne to "hurt" Frost during a race, which followed an earlier threat to "put [Frost] through a wing [of a fence]".

# Carrick relishes short-term task at United with ideas on how to turn tide



**London, November 23 :** To discover how brave and new Michael Carrick's Manchester United world will be, tune in on Tuesday for their penultimate Champions League group game against Villarreal. How will the interim manager instruct the team to operate at the Estadio de la Cerámica and can it really be vastly tactically different to the one-dimensional proposition witnessed in recent weeks under Ole Gunnar Solskjær? Carrick finds himself in charge of United after the Norwegian was sacked on Sunday, with the dire 4-1 defeat by Watford on Saturday following similar embarrassments against Liverpool and Manchester City in a run of form of only one win in seven league outings. As a football

strategist Carrick - perhaps the last high-calibre midfielder signed by United, back in 2006 - would hardly bill himself alongside Jürgen Klopp and Pep Guardiola or even Unai Emery, whose Villarreal qualified for the Champions League when beating United to the Europa League title in May. Yet this is the arena the 40 year old now enters. As one of Solskjær's former assistants, he was already being scrutinised regarding the lack of structured play that has so badly cost United. The charges against Solskjær's side included a lack of concerted pressing, vague forward patterns, a defence and midfield that were strangers to each other and predictable counterattack ploys. Carrick's experience runs to half a season under José

Mourinho and almost three years alongside Solskjær. He offered what might be viewed as a concerning answer to the question of whether United will be transformed under him. "We'll have to see, really," Carrick said. "Obviously I've worked closely with Ole for a long time now and we do have very similar beliefs. We did as players and we certainly do as coaches and manager. Of course I've got my own personality, but it's very similar, that's why we worked together for so long and it went so well for a period of time. I'm not giving too much away of what my plans are but I'm very clear in my own mind what we want to do. I have my own ideas about how we want to play, how we want to go about it and I'm looking forward to seeing that on the pitch." Pessimistic fans will note the "similar beliefs" and wonder if United will be as aimless as under Solskjær, while those drinking from a half-full glass might centre on "my own ideas" and hope for the team to start appearing as it should: a highly drilled unit that knows precisely what it should be doing at any moment and in any scenario.

## ATP calls time on toilet breaks in new guidelines for men's tennis

**London, November 23 :** Strict new guidelines on toilet breaks during matches have been sent to players by the ATP after growing calls to make lengthy visits to the bathroom a thing of the past. The guidelines for the men's game will limit bathroom breaks to one per match, lasting no longer than three minutes from the time the player enters the facility. Players on the ATP and women's WTA tours have regularly been accused of

using bathroom breaks as tactical weapons at crucial junctures in matches. Stefanos Tsitsipas was accused of cheating at this year's US Open by Andy Murray after the Greek disappeared off court at various times during their marathon first-round match. The third seed had a lengthy toilet break at the end of the second set, a medical time-out after the third and a near eight-

minute break at the conclusion of the fourth set. In his next match, Tsitsipas went to the locker room for more than seven minutes after losing the third set, and was jeered by the Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd on his return. Tsitsipas argued that he was not breaking any rules, which is why the ATP has decided to act, although some may feel the new guidelines still do not go far enough.

**London, November 23:** Mavys Álvarez, a Cuban woman who had a relationship with the late footballer Diego Maradona two decades ago, has alleged the Argentine player raped her when she was a teenager and "stolen her childhood". Álvarez, now 37, gave testimony last week to an Argentine Ministry of Justice court that is investigating her allegations of trafficking against Maradona's former entourage, linked to events when she was 16. Maradona, widely considered one of the game's greatest ever players, died in November last year. The complaint relates to a journey

Álvarez took to Argentina with Maradona in 2001, when he was around 40 and she was 16. Álvarez said that she first met the football star shortly before the trip, when he was in Cuba to undergo drug addiction treatment. At a news conference in Buenos Aires, Álvarez alleged Maradona had raped her in the clinic in Havana where he was staying, while her mother was in the next room. "He covers my mouth, he rapes me, I don't want to think about it too much," Álvarez said. "I stopped being a girl, all my innocence was stolen from me. It's hard. You stop living the



innocent things that a girl of that age has to experience." Matias Morla, Maradona's lawyer before his death, did not respond to a request for

comment. Reuters could not identify other legal representatives for Maradona in the case. Álvarez has previously described the relationship in media interviews as consensual, but also said that Maradona had at least on one occasion forced himself upon her. She said that her family had only allowed a relationship with the star to happen, despite the large age gap, because of Maradona's friendship with the late Cuban president Fidel Castro. "My family would never have accepted it if the Cuban government had not been involved," she said. "They were forced in another way to accept a relationship that was not good for them, or for anyone." Cuba's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

# Diego Maradona: Cuban woman alleges footballer raped her when she was 16



# China must answer serious questions about tennis star Peng Shuai, Australia says

Melbourn, November 23:

Chinese authorities must answer serious concerns about the tennis star Peng Shuai's welfare, the Australian government has said. The intervention comes as human rights activists and an independent senator step up calls for Australia to join a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics over broader allegations of rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. Chinese state media have published photos and videos of Peng at a tennis tournament in Beijing and at a restaurant in an attempt to dampen global concerns about her wellbeing, following a nearly three-week public absence after she alleged that a former senior Chinese official sexually assaulted her. The Australian government added its voice to those concerns while urging the Chinese government to be transparent and accountable. "It is understandable that many people, including in the international sporting community, have raised serious concerns about Ms Peng's welfare," an Australian government spokesperson said late on Monday night. "This is a matter that needs to be responded to with transparency and accountability." The International Olympic Committee said its president had held a 30-minute video call with the former doubles world No 1 on Sunday, and quoted her as saying she was "safe and well, living at her home in Beijing, but would like to have her privacy respected at this time". But the Women's Tennis Association said it remained worried about Peng's "wellbeing and ability to communicate without censorship or coercion". Elaine Pearson, the Australia director of Human Rights Watch, said what was happening to Peng "would send a chill down the spine of anyone heading to Beijing for the Olympics". "For a long time, the IOC has been prepared to accept the Chinese government's assurances at face value and tried to separate sport from politics," Pearson said. "Frankly, it is shameful to see the IOC participating in this Chinese government's charade that everything is fine and normal for Peng Shuai. Clearly it is not, otherwise why would the Chinese government be censoring Peng Shuai from the internet in



China and not letting her speak freely to media or the public?" Pearson said Australia and other governments should consider a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics - to be hosted by China in February - because of the "incredibly repressive crack-down on human rights in China". She said China was "actively committing crimes against humanity against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang". The Olympics, she said, "should not be used as a tool to legitimise a government committing crimes against humanity and other serious human rights abuses". Australia understands the Australian government is watching closely the actions of the US, whose president, Joe Biden, confirmed last week it was considering a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics. Under the model being discussed in the US, athletes would be free to take part but they would not be accompanied by a political delegation of officials and politicians. The idea of Australia joining a boycott has been raised from within Coalition ranks - but the government is believed to have conveyed the message it is watching what its allies are doing and would coordinate any action rather than taking unilateral steps. The diplomatic relationship between Australia and China is strained. A full Australian boycott involving athletes is considered highly unlikely. Even if senior officials shunned the event, it is unclear if and when this would openly be announced. When asked about a potential diplomatic boycott, the government spokesperson said: "A decision on commonwealth representation at the Beijing Winter Olympics is yet to be made." The South Australian senator Rex Patrick said Australia

"should be working with our allies, especially the United States, to encourage the widest possible official boycott of the Beijing Winter Games". He said Australian ministers and senior officials should not attend. "Major

corporate sponsors of the Olympics should also be considering their position, and whether they want to be supporting what will be a huge propaganda event for the CCP," Patrick said. China's acting ambassador to Australia, Wang

Xining, told the Guardian last week a boycott would hurt "the image of Australia as a very sporty nation", adding: "To politicise a sport is a dumb move." Chinese officials flatly deny crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, blaming "anti-China entities" for the allegations. But the UN high commissioner for human rights, Michelle Bachelet, has complained of a lack of progress in seeking "meaningful" access to the region so she can investigate the situation. Concerns about forced labour in Xinjiang have also driven calls for Australia to toughen its import laws so products are subjected to tighter screening. The South Australian MP Rebekha Sharkie introduced a bill to the lower house on Monday "to ban the importation of goods

that are produced in whole or part by forced labour". The proposal, which does not specify any particular country or region, mirrors a bill proposed by Patrick that passed the Senate three months ago. Carolyn Kitto, the co-director of anti-slavery group Be Slavery Free, called on the government to back the bill to "give consumers the confidence they are not supporting slavery and slavery-like conditions in the imported products they purchase". Freya Dinshaw, a senior lawyer at the Human Rights Law Centre, added: "No business should profit from slavery. Australians would be horrified to know there is no law in place to stop goods made with forced labour ending up on our shelves."



## ISL first impressions: Defensive blues, attackers on point and Jamil's forgettable opener

New Delhi, November 23:

Goalkeepers picked the ball out of their own net more times than any other in the first two games of the Indian Super League. ATK Mohun Bagan beat Kerala Blasters 4-2 while Bengaluru FC began their own campaign this season with a similar scoreline against NorthEast United FC. A couple of talking points before the start of the season was the new foreign player rule as well as the introduction of Khalid Jamil, the first Indian head coach of an ISL club. Both those points got their moments in the first couple of games of the season. One marker of how the lack of a foreign player manifested itself was the ability to hold onto the ball. Teams were a lot less efficient in their passing. In the season opener, Bagan's passing accuracy stood at a measly 63% and their opponents Kerala Blasters were not much better at 75%. In the next game, Bengaluru managed to make 81% of their passes - a stat which should be taken with a pinch of salt purely due to NorthEast United FC's excellent high press in the first

half of their game. The ability to not hold onto the ball for long periods of time was one of the major reasons for the goal rush this weekend experienced. In the first two games, three of the four teams had at least one foreign centre-back. In the third ISL game of the season between East Bengal and Jamshedpur FC, centre-backs for both teams were foreign players and the result ended 1-1. After Bagan's game, coach Antonio Habas talked about the foreign player rule and said, "It's good for ISL (to have an extra Indian player). But more important is foreign players coming in have good quality," Habas said. Two beautiful goals were scored by fringe players in the Indian national team. Kerala Blasters' Sahal Abdul Samad and Bagan's new signing Liston Colaco both had their moments of brilliance in the opener. Samad was handed a lofted chip in the Bagan box to control in the 22nd minute. The attacking midfielder controlled the ball with his chest and let the ball touch the grass once before unleashing a half volley amid a sea of Bagan defenders.

## German sport facing disruption as 4th coronavirus wave hits

Berlin, November 23:

Sports in Germany are facing a winter of discontent and disruption as the country endures a fourth wave of spiraling coronavirus infections. Canceled games, players in quarantine and arguments over vaccine mandates. Sports in Germany are facing a winter of disruption as the country endures a fourth wave of rising coronavirus infections. Bundesliga powerhouse Bayern Munich on Monday had five players in quarantine because they are unvaccinated and two more in isolation after contracting COVID-19. A

spat is reportedly brewing behind the scenes with the club planning to dock pay from the unvaccinated players - Joshua Kimmich, Serge Gnabry, Jamal Musiala, Eric-Maxim Choupo-Moting and Michael Cuisance - because their reluctance to get the shot puts them at greater risk of missing games. "It's obvious," said Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann, who himself missed four of the team's games after contracting COVID-19 despite being vaccinated. Bayern surprisingly lost at Augsburg in Kimmich's absence on Friday, and there are

fears at the club that unvaccinated players could also miss the potentially decisive clash with Borussia Dortmund on Dec. 4. Dortmund is only a point behind Bayern in the Bundesliga and its team is fully vaccinated or recovered. Dortmund gave its players' vaccination status on Monday following Thorsten Haas's positive test result for COVID-19. No other players are affected. Already down players, Bayern will be down fans for home games, too. Bavarian state officials are capping spectator numbers at 25% of capacity for all sporting events



in a bid to get rising infections under control. Bavaria's seven-day rate of infections per 100,000 people was at 640 on Monday, almost two times worse than the national rate of 386.5 - which is the highest it's ever been for Germany so far in the pandemic.



অসম চৰকাৰ

# লাচিত দিৱস

২৪ নৱেম্বৰ, ২০২১



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