

# The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

Vol. No. VI ■ Issue No. 279 ■ RNI-ASSEN/2014/58385 | GUWAHATI ■ FRIDAY ■ NOVEMBER 26, 2021 | PAGES 8 ■ PRICE RS. 7.00

leader Judith Collins  
Judith Collins ousted after...

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Majority of counties are failing to meet  
agreed ECB targets on diversity

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### State Youth Congress President

Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

Angkita Dutta, daughter of late Congress veteran Anjan Dutta, was appointed as the new Assam Pradesh Youth Congress Committee president, revealed the state Congress' youth wing via Twitter. Congratulating her, the tweet read, "Hearty Congratulations to the Newly appointed @IYCAssam President @angkitadutta ji. working President @PatowaryRatul ji. We wish you good luck for future endeavours".

### MLA Musafir Paswan Dies at 66

New Delhi, November 25 :

Bihar MLA Musafir Paswan passed away on Wednesday night at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi. The MLA from the Bochahan assembly seat of Muzaffarpur district was undergoing treatment and died yesterday night. He was 66. The death of the Bihar MLA has been confirmed by the Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) national president Mukesh Sahni. "VIP party MLA Musafir Paswan from Bochahan Assembly is no longer with us. Musafir ji was not well for a long time and his treatment was going on in Delhi's Ganga Ram Hospital, we all tried our best to save him."

### Fresh COVID-19 cases

Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

A total of 214 fresh COVID-19 cases and two deaths were recorded in Assam in the last 24 hours, informed the state's health department. With this, the COVID-19 case tally in Assam reached 6,15,995, of which, 1,596 are active cases. The daily positivity rate stands at 0.66 per cent. With 245 new recoveries reported in the last 24 hours, the total recoveries mounted to 6,06,971. The recovery rate in the state is at 98.54 per cent. As per the health bulletin, the death toll is at 6,081 and the case fatality rate is 0.99 per cent. The two deaths reported in the state today were from Darrang and Sivasagar districts.

### Adani Surpasses Mukesh Ambani, Becomes Asia's Richest Person



New Delhi, November 25 :

worth increased drastically since April 2020. On 18 March 2020, his net worth was USD 4.91 billion. Also Read - Massive Jump! India's GDP Likely to Grow 8.1 Per Cent in Q2 FY22, Says SBI Report. In last 20 months, the net worth of Gautam Adani saw a spike of over 1808 per cent i.e., whopping USD 83.89 billion. In the same period, Mukesh Ambani's net worth

## Various organisations planned to resume the anti-CAA agitation in the state soon

Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

Many organisations, including political parties, have planned to resume the anti-CAA agitation in the state soon. Several outfits of the state which had been at the forefront in the anti-CAA stir, which started in December 2019, from Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS), All Assam Students' Union (AASU), Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) to Rajior Dal, Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP), have expressed their intentions to restart the anti-CAA agitation in the state by demanding to scrap the new citizenship act. Akhil Gogoi



Independent MLA and president of Rajior Dal and advisor of KMSS, said that they are ready to restart the agitation against the CAA. "We have seen that

the nation is now going on the way of autocratic fascism. I think that the farmers' movement was started to protect our constitution, our democracy and it is a

historic movement of the country. I spent 1 year 7 months in jail for participating in anti-CAA movement. The NIA had arrested me and my colleagues also.

## 12 Congress MLAs Join Trinamool Congress In Meghalaya



Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

Former Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma, along with 11 of the 17 Congress MLAs in the state, joined the Trinamool Congress in a huge coup for West Bengal's ruling party in the northeast. The Meghalaya MLAs submitted a letter to assembly Speaker Metbah Lyngdoh

around 10 pm on Wednesday, informing him of their change of status, sources said. The development, which makes the Trinamool Congress the principal opposition party in the state, came a day after Congress leaders Kirti Azad and Ashok Tanwar as well as Pawan Varma, formerly of Janata Dal (United), joined the Trinamool Congress in Delhi in the presence of

party chief Mamata Banerjee currently visiting the national capital. Hours earlier, Ms Banerjee said her party would welcome political leaders from other parties who wished to join the Trinamool Congress's battle against the BJP. Meghalaya is the latest state where the Trinamool Congress, in expansion mode over the last couple of months, has made an inroad. In Assam, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Haryana, its inroad has been at the cost of the Congress. Ms Banerjee, known to share a cordial relationship with Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, has not met her this time, although there was a buzz about a meeting. Asked about the matter, the Trinamool Congress chief flared up. She

had sought no appointment with Sonia Gandhi, as "they are busy with Punjab polls", Ms Banerjee said. Then she pointedly added, "Why should we meet Sonia every time? It is not constitutionally mandated." The dozen Congress MLAs who have jumped ship will address a press meet in Meghalaya's capital Shillong this afternoon. The Trinamool Congress has been trying to expand its footprint in Tripura and Goa with an eye to the next round of assembly elections in these states. In Tripura, the party has been at loggerheads with the state's ruling BJP ahead of civic elections. In Goa, it is banking on Luizinho Faleiro, the state's

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## PM Modi lays foundation stone for Noida International Airport at Jewar

New Delhi, November 25 :

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the foundation stone laying ceremony of Noida International Airport in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh on November 25, 2021. | Photo Credit: Shiv Kumar Pushpakar. Noida International Airport at Jewar will serve as the logistics gateway for northern India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday at its groundbreaking ceremony. "Noida International Airport will be a great model from the point of view of connectivity. Pas-



sengers will be able to use taxis, metro, rail to access Yamuna Expressway, Noida, Greater Noida, UP, Delhi and Haryana," the PM said while addressing

a massive gathering here. "The airport will also have direct connectivity to Delhi freight corridor. It will be a logistics gateway for northern India and an im-

age of the National Gati Shakti Master Plan," he said. The first phase of development of Noida International Airport is expected to be completed by September 2024 when it will have one runway, one terminal building with a capacity to handle 1.2 crore passengers per annum. The airport will be developed in four phases till 2040 by when it will have the capacity to handle 7 crore passengers. The airport will also have a maintenance, repair, and overhaul facility

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## Govt has identified 101 projects under PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan: Sonowal

New Delhi, November 25 :

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has identified 101 projects under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan to enhance port connectivity with consumption and production centres, union minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Thursday. Addressing an event organised by industry body CII virtually, the Ports, Shipping and Waterways minister further said as many as 111 waterways, spread over 24 states in the country, have been declared as national waterways. "Lowering logistic costs is critical for India. Our government is taking several steps to strengthen



the logistic ecosystem across the country". "The Ports, Shipping and Waterways ministry has identified 101 projects under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan to enhance port connectivity with consumption and production centres," he said. Sonowal said, the government's infrastructure plans like Sagarmala, Bharatmala project (that aims to lay a grid of highways

pan-India), Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), are at various stages of implementation. Under the Sagarmala project, the ministry provides financial support to state governments for port infrastructure development and skill development programmes. He said Modi last month launched the PM Gati Shakti national master plan for multi-modal connectivity to reduce logistic costs. The minister said, the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) is ready to connect with other Indian ports. Modi, on October 13, had launched the Rs 100 lakh crore national master plan for multi-modal

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## Nagaland Hornbill Festival date Announced

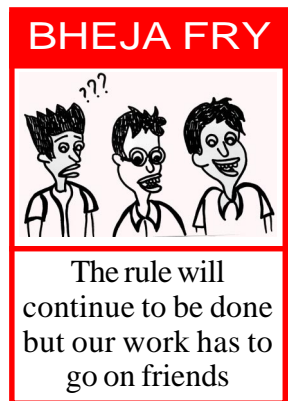
Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

The much awaited Hornbill Festival will kick start from December 1 after a gap of one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Nagaland art and culture department and the organizers of the festival announced the events for the 10-day festival. The department said daily cultural performances will be held at the main arena of the Hornbill Festival. Cultural

troupes from all 17 tribes within the state will showcase their lively songs and dances in their colourful traditional attires in hornbill festival. The Artists' Corner at the World War-II Museum premises at Kisama will have display and sale of art works, demonstrative arts etc. The Archives' Exhibition will showcase collection of selected historical documents from public and private records with reading facilities for interested students, scholars and

researchers and Sale of

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The rule will continue to be done but our work has to go on friends

## 108 Gir Cows Brought from Gujarat for Garukhuti Project

Assam Rising, Reporter  
Guwahati, November 25 :

In a bid to boost the dairy industry in the state, 108 Gir cows have been brought from Gujarat to Assam on Thursday. According to reports, the Gir cows have reached Rangia by train and taken to Garukhuti by truck. In connection to it, 15 youths have been trained for the mega project. According to official reports, the Gir cows have been brought

from Bhavnagar, which claims to produce 14-15 litres of milk per day. Further, the official claimed that it would solve the demand for milk in the state, further solving the unemployment issue. Earlier, a team under the leadership of MLA of Sootea constituency Padma Hazarika met Gujarat Minister of Agriculture and Veterinary Raghavji Patel. Moreover, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also spoke to Gujarat chief minister Bhupendrabhai Patel

in connection to it. As per the government statement for the Garukhuti project, 2,000 Gir cows will be brought to the state, out of which 500 will be brought by March 2022. Notably, the Assam budget allocated Rs. 9.60 crore for the Garukhuti project. The project aims to promote afforestation and agriculture activities. The Gir cows have reached Rangia by train and it has been taken to Garukhuti by truck. 15 youths have been trained in Gujarat to look after the

cows including 6 from Gujarat. A team under the leadership of MLA of Sootea constituency Padma Hazarika met Gujarat Minister of Agriculture and Veterinary Raghavji Patel. Reportedly, it was confirmed that around 500 out of 2,000 Gir cows will be inducted into the state by March 2022. Moreover, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also spoke to Gujarat chief minister Bhupendrabhai Patel in connection to it. The Assam budget allo-



cated Rs. 9.60 crore for the Garukhuti project. The project aims to promote afforestation and agriculture activities. The Gir or Gyr is

one of the principal Zebu breeds originating in India. It has been

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## leader Judith Collins ousted after move to demote rival backfires



**Wellington, November 25 :** Judith Collins, leader of New Zealand's opposition National party, has been toppled after months of poor polling and a shock move to strip a political rival of his portfolios. MPs voted to end Collins' leadership at a crisis caucus meeting on Thursday. The meeting was prompted after Collins demoted Simon Bridges, a former party leader and one of her rivals. Late on Wednesday night, she stripped Bridges of all of his portfolios, citing an

inappropriate comment made by Bridges in 2017 in front of a female colleague- where Bridges says he discussed "old wives tales" about how he and his wife might produce a female child. Collins described the comment as "serious misconduct". Collins confirmed her resignation via social media. "It's been a privilege to take over the leadership of [the National party] during the worst of times and to do so for 16 months. It has taken huge

stamina and resolve, & has been particularly difficult because of a variety of factors," she said in a statement. MP Dr Shane Reti will take the helm of the party as interim leader, with a replacement to be chosen next week. While the conflict with Bridges sparked Thursday's vote, Collins' leadership has been troubled for some time, and the last few months have brought a series of disastrous leadership polls. Known as the "Crusher" for both her tough style of politics and for her responsibility for a historic policy which saw the cars of boy racers physically crushed, Collins struggled to win over New Zealand voters. Support for the Jacinda Ardern-led Labour party has been dropping over several months, as the

country grapples with a Covid outbreak - but Collins failed to capitalise on that, with many votes instead redistributing to the libertarian Act party. While support for Labour has slipped in recent months to around 41-47%, support for National has languished at 21-28%. In a News Colmar Brunton poll released in November, Judith Collins was sitting at just 5% in the preferred prime minister stakes, compared to Ardern's 39%. The difficulty for the party has been a lack of viable alternatives: no other National MPs surpassed Collins' popularity, and Simon Bridges was sitting at just 1% in that poll. National's stiffest competition has come from its right flank: David Seymour, leader of the

right-wing libertarian party, typically a small player in New Zealand's parliament, was at 11%. Chris Luxon, a former chief executive of Air New Zealand, will be in the mix as a possible Collins replacement, polling at 4%. But he has spent only one year as an MP and has not yet built a high public profile. Another possible candidate is Whangaparua MP Mark Mitchell. On Thursday afternoon, Bridges expanded on the nature of his comments. He said they had occurred at a function where a group were discussing their wives and children. "I have two boys and I wanted a girl and I engaged in some old wives tales about that and how to have a girl," he said. He would not expand further on the phrasing he used.



## Channel drownings: UK and France trade accusations after tragedy at sea

**London, November 25 :** British and French leaders have traded accusations after at least 27 people died trying to cross the Channel in the deadliest incident since the current migration crisis began. In a phone call with Boris Johnson on Wednesday night, French president Emmanuel Macron stressed "the shared responsibility" of France and the UK, and told Johnson he expected full cooperation and that the situation would not be used "for political purposes", the Elysée said. Thirty-four people were believed to be on the boat when it sank on Wednesday, leading to what the International Organisation for Migration said was the biggest single loss of life in the Channel since it began collecting data in 2014. Two survivors are in intensive care. The British prime minister renewed calls for France to agree to joint police patrols along the Channel coast, and said Wednesday's incident highlighted how efforts by French authorities to patrol their beaches "haven't been enough". "We've had

difficulties persuading some of our partners, particularly the French, to do things in a way that we think the situation deserves," he said on Wednesday. "I understand the difficulties that all countries face, but what we want now is to do more together - and that's the offer we are making." The French have previously resisted UK offers to send police and Border Force agents to mount joint patrols amid concerns about the implications for national sovereignty. Macron also called for an emergency meeting of European government ministers and an immediate funding boost for the EU's border agency, Frontex. France's government is holding an emergency meeting on Thursday morning to discuss next steps. "France will not let the Channel become a cemetery," Macron said. The French interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, called for coordination with the UK, saying "the response must

also come from Great Britain". The House of Commons is set to hold a debate on "the numbers of migrants arriving in the United Kingdom illegally by boat" just before midday on Thursday, according to a recently released parliamentary schedule. Speaking on Newsnight, immigration compliance minister Tom Pursglove confirmed Johnson had renewed a previous offer for UK police and Border Force officers to take part in joint patrols with the French, and said the last incident showed the two countries needed to deepen their cooperation. "The prime minister and President Macron have had exactly that discussion this evening. That is something that I am very keen to see happen," he said. "It is the case that in the past we have offered to host and to help with joint patrols. I think that could be invaluable in helping to address this issue. I really do hope that the French will reconsider that offer."

## Bosnia and surrounding region still heading for crisis, says top official

**Washington, November 25 :** The top international official in Bosnia has said that the Serb separatist threat to re-establish their own army had receded for now, but the country and surrounding region were still heading for crisis without substantial diplomatic engagement from the US and Europe. Christian Schmidt, a German former minister serving as the international community's high representative to Bosnia-Herzegovina, said the Serb separatist leader, Milorad Dodik, had been persuaded by regional leaders to suspend his plans to pull Serb soldiers out of the Bosnian national army and reconstitute a Bosnian Serb force. "We see after a lot of talks, including those in the neighbourhood, he got the message that nobody would accept a way which leads to an increasing potential of political and - hopefully not - military conflict," Schmidt told the Guardian in an interview in Washington. "I do not actually see a danger of war," Schmidt added, saying there were fewer heavy weapons

in the country compared with in 1992 when the Bosnian war broke out. "Fortunately, there are too few military assets available," he said. However, Schmidt argued that Dodik's separatist rhetoric and his vows to sever the legal and tax system in the Serb-run half of the country were driving the country towards a severe crisis. "These self-fulfilling tactics have come to a point where he [Dodik] cannot go back without losing face," he said. "My impression is we are very, very close to this point, and this needs a very clear answer from the international community." Schmidt was in Washington for talks with the Biden foreign policy team about the threat of the collapse of the Dayton peace agreement which ended the war in 1995. His aides were encouraged that the national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, made an unexpected appearance at their meeting with White House officials, which they saw as a signal the Biden administration would pay closer, higher-level attention to developments in Bosnia.

## Noida International Airport to get temple inspired terminal design, focus on India's heritage

**New Delhi, November 25 :** The upcoming Noida International Airport in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh and the Delhi-NCR's second international airport will be ready by September 2024, as India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi is all set to lay the foundation stone of the airport today (November 25). The first phase of the Noida International Airport (NIA) would be completed by the end of 2024 with one runway and capacity to handle 12 million passengers annually, YIAPL CEO Christoph Schnellmann said. The airport is being developed in public-private partnership (PPP) mode by the UP government with YIAPL. The work for the first phase of the greenfield project is underway and would cost over Rs 5,700 crore to complete, the official said and noted that the impact of inflation in the project cost was already factored in by Yamuna International Airport Private Limited (YIAPL), a 100 per cent subsidiary of Zurich International Airport AG, the Swiss concessionaire. "We



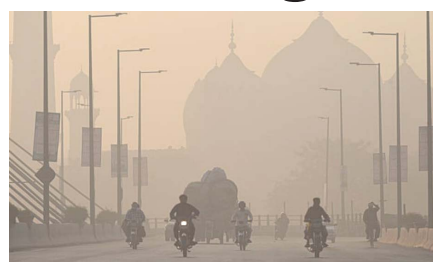
are all aware of the impact the pandemic has had on all of us in the past two years. One thing I would like to highlight is the fact the teams have embraced digital technologies in coming to terms with the impact of the pandemic. I am proud of this," Schnellmann said. Another report citing Schnellmann states that the design of the terminals of Noida Airport will be inspired by the heritage of

Uttar Pradesh and will comprise multiple elements from temples and havelis to give it a local touch. Once the airport reaches 80 percent of the 1.2 crore passenger mark, the NIA will start the phase two of the project with a similar terminal building capable to handle 18 million passengers. "We estimate that the first phase of the airport would cost Rs 5,730 crore.

## Pakistan orders Monday closure of schools and offices in Lahore to cut smog

**Islamabad, November 25 :** Pakistan has ordered private offices and schools to remain closed on Mondays in Lahore in the hope that a three-day weekend will help reduce toxic levels of smog in the country's second-largest city. The directive, issued by Punjab relief commissioner Babar Hayat Tarar, aimed to act "as a preventive and speedy remedy" during the winter smog season and will last until 15 January. Lahore was temporarily declared the most polluted city in the world by an air quality monitor earlier on Wednesday, as residents complain of shortness of breath, stinging eyes and nausea from thick, acrid

pollution. Last week, the air quality index in the city of about 12 million people was ranked at 348, much above the hazardous level of 300, according to IQAir, the Swiss technology company that operates the AirVisual monitoring platform. Since then, Lahore has been overtaken by Delhi, India, which ranked at 422. The number is a calculation based on the level of several pollutants in the air. Pakistan has witnessed the worst air pollution in recent years from Karachi to Lahore, as a mixture of low-grade diesel fumes, smoke from seasonal crop burn off, and colder winter temperatures coalesce into stagnant clouds of smog. As air pollution got worse and the city felt unliveable, the desperate residents filed petitions in the courts in Lahore against the government to take action against the smog, which is a mix of smoke and fog. Abubaker Umer, a communication specialist and a resident in Lahore, said he stopped going for morning walks and sent his elderly parents to another town as they were very sensitive to air pollution. Umer says his skin allergy and throat irritation has gotten worse over a few weeks since the city has been engulfed in the



smog. "When you open the window or step outside you see no sky. Smog is everywhere," he said. "We are inhaling smog and toxic air pollution has become part of our lives and bodies. The government has to do more than closing educational institutes as Lahore has become an unlivable city." He said that he is able to work from home but over a million people do not have this privilege. He added: "People don't even wear masks and they don't know how deadly the weather is. They lack awareness but this is the responsibility of the government to share awareness and find solutions." Dr Aamir Iqbal, a private doctor who practises pulmonary medicine in Lahore has seen the symptoms of his patients getting worse. "The smog is making it very hard for the people to breathe and having issues in the throat, irritation in eyes and the weather is very dangerous for people who have lung issues and some other diseases. I have instructed some of my patients not to go out."



Little swans are seen at the Donggu Lake wetland of the Qinyuan administration area in Yueyang City, central China's Hunan Province

No.KMB-27/Tender/2017-18/3823

Dated Kokrajhar the 22/11/21

**SHORT TENDER NOTICE**

The Executive Officer / Chairperson Kokrajhar Municipal Board, Kokrajhar invite sealed tenders in the prescribed form eventually to be drawn in PWD F-2 form / departmental form for the work in the given below with validity period of 180 days affixing court fee Rs. 8.25 (Rupees Eight and Paise twenty five) only are invited from the Registered contractor from PWD class -1 & 2 / Municipal Registered contractor / firm for the year 2021-22as applicable having past experience of executing work of similar nature and will be received by the undersigned up to 2.00 PM on 29/11/21 and will be opened on same day sat 3.00PM in presence of intending tenders or authorizes agent. If the office happens at the closed on the date of receipt of this tender, the tender will be. The tender will be received and opened at same place and hours on the next working day of the office. Earnest money at the rate 2% for general and 1% for ST & SC OBC, unemployed/call deposit will have to deposited along with each tender duly pledged to the Executive Officer KMB. Tender submit without earnest money shall be summarily rejected

The detailed tender papers from the office of the undersigned by the intending tenders on payment fees 0.30 % of the tender value which is non refundable. No tender papers will be issued after date and time mentioned

Detailed of work, term and condition as may be seen in the office of the KMB during office hours 22/11/21 to 29/11/21 which are included in detailed NIT documents.

Sl. No	Name of works	EMD (in Rs.)	Cost. of construction	Completion period	Cost of tender
1	Const Pacca drain with drain road crossing culvert alongwith earth filling at Jahmparnai ward no-8	6319.00	Rs. 631938.00	60 days	Rs.210.00/=
2	Constn. of ICBP road at Hathimatha Link road ward no-8	17153/-	Es. 1715307.00	60 days	Rs.510.00/-

Sd/-

Chairperson Kokrajhar  
Municipal Board Kokrajhar

IPR(BTC)-443/2021

## Guest House

A/C Non A/C Rooms with  
Car Parking At POGL  
Brahmaputra,  
Chandmari, Guwahati-21  
Ph. WA : 9678009493  
9707183470



## Protest against price hike



**Correspondent**  
**Dhakuakhana Nov 25 :** In protest of the BJP government's failure to curb the rise in prices of essential

commodities, all the Congress workers implemented the Block Congress Committee's Jana Jagran Abhiyan program in

Dhakuakhana on November 25. About two hundred Congress workers from Dhakuakhana Block marched about 15 km from Rajiv Bhawan carrying banners and posters in their hands. Controlling the rise in prices of essential commodities like Petrol and Diesel with slogans like 'Murdabad' and 'BJP go back' etc'. The protesters called on the government to stop the price hike and repeal the cow protection law.

## Farewell to retired teacher

**Correspondent**  
**North Lakhimpur, November 25:** The retired assistant teacher (science) of Angerkhova 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 Bhpendra 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 Angerkhova 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.

## Tobacco products seized



**Staff Reporter**  
**Aalo Nov 25:** Action against sale of Tobacco products within 100 yards of Educational Institutions to safeguard our children from the menace of tobacco was initiated by Aalo Police led by OC PS Aalo Insp. Y. Riram by conducting surprise raids against sellers of tobacco products on November 24 last. Under Sec 6 of Control of Tobacco & Other Product Act (COTPA), sale of Tobacco products within

100 yards of educational institutions is strictly prohibited and police, administration and medical department jointly launched such operations in the past but sale continued by erring shopkeepers to invite such action by the police. Operations were carried out in the shops in the vicinity of Government Higher Secondary School, Govt. Nehru Memorial School, Puak Gumin and Government Secondary School, New Market. Eleven shops

were found to be selling Tobacco products including cigarettes, bidis, gutka, etc. and Police seized 93 pkts cigarettes, 478 pkts bidis, 1014 pkts Chewing Tobacco and 705 pkts Gutka. The SP West Siang District Shri Raja Banthia disclosed that Police will continue to take action against drugs and such violations of Tobacco regulations in future also and along with punitive action, awareness will also be imparted to aware the public and shopkeepers.

## Bodies of a couple found near Mahongbasti TE

**Correspondent**  
**Nagaon, Nov 24:** Sensation prevailed at Samaguri Mahongbasti tea estate this afternoon after police recovered bodies of a fourth grade employee of a tea estate and his wife from two separate spots. Sources said that being informed by some locals, police from Samaguri PS found first the body of the fourth grade employee of a tea estate - Dilip Timung (50) laying abandoned inside the tea estate and thereafter the body of his wife inside his house. The deceased

couple was the resident of Chapanala Banbahoni Karbigaon, sources claimed. People suspected it as pre-planned murder by some miscreants. But why were they killed or who exactly killed were yet behind the screen, sources added. Meanwhile, Superintendent of Police, Nagaon Anand Mishra and other senior officials from Nagaon, rushed to the spot and took stock of the gruesome incident. Police subsequently sent the bodies of the couple to Nagaon BP Civil Hospital for postmortem.

## BRO motor cycles rally flagged off

**STAFFREPORTER**  
**Guwahati, Nov 25 :** PKH Singh, VSM, Addl Director General Border Roads, of HQ Addl DGBR (East) based at Guwahati flagged off the Leg.4 stretch of Guwahati to Kolkata of India @75 BRO Motorcycle expedition conducted by Border Roads Organisation at a Gala function organised for the purpose on November 24 at Guwahati. Earlier the twenty five team members of the Motorcycle expedition consisting of Officers, Supervisors and Other Ranks were accorded a rousing welcome by the Addl DGBR Shri PKH Singh, Officers, Supervisors and JCOs and Other ranks at HQ Addl DGBR (East) location at Lankeshwar, Guwahati. As the nation celebrates 75 years of its Independence, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi has envisioned the celebration of this year as "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav". Commemorating the momen-

tous occasion BRO is conducting a Pan India Motorcycle Expedition which will cover approximately 20000 km over 75 days and see participation of 75 Karamyogis from all BRO projects, the Expedition is planned in seven different legs. The Hero MotoCorp has provided 10 Adventure Motorcycles, Protective Gears, kits and Fast-Moving Spares and accessories for the Expedition members. The consumption of Fuel and Lubes is borne by Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited. Earlier at New Delhi the expedition was flagged off by Union Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh in presence of Lt. Gen. Rajeev Chaudhary, VSM, Director General Border Roads on October 14 at National War Memorial at India Gate. PKH Singh, during his address wished the team members of the expedition a safe journey enroute to Kolkata. He elaborated that the expedition is spreading the message of Peace, National Integration and Harmony during its journey



and with its outreach programmes have made local populace and masses aware about BRO achievements and contribution to nation-building in the last six decades. The Addl DGBR emphasized the need to adhere to the Road Safety Awareness by the team and also local populace. The expedition, after covering approximately 20,000 Kms over 75 days with more than 75 riders of all ranks of BRO, will culminate at New Delhi on 27th of December, BRO of-

ficial sources informed. PKH Singh, during the interaction also intimated that the Projects and Units/ formations are working to the best of their capabilities to fulfil the aspirations of the Country and all the assigned task, works will be completed in a time bound manner for which all the Projects and gallant team of BRO men are working round the clock. He also added that All North-eastern Projects of BRO have geared up to meet the challenges put forth by the adversaries.

# Minister Patowary interacts with beneficiaries of schemes in Chirang

**Correspondent**

**Kajalgaon, Nov 25:** As per direction of the chief minister of Assam, I have come to visit Chirang district on my return journey to Dispur after attending cabinet meeting at Bongaigaon to interact with the beneficiaries of various state and centrally sponsored schemes, minister for Commerce and Industry, Transport, etc. Chandra Mohan Patowary said. Minister Patowary made this remarks on Thursday while talking to media persons after visiting the houses of beneficiaries of Covid-19 Widow Support Scheme (CWSS) at Monglagaon, Atul Amrit Yojana (AAA) at Kashikotra, Orunodoi, Indira Miri Univer-

sal Widow Pension Scheme (IMUWPS) and Shahid Kushal Kanwar Sarbajanin Bridha Pension Achoni (SKKSBA) at Sidli Nomalpur. He said, "I have talked to some of the beneficiaries of Covid-19 Widow Support Scheme, Atal Amrit Yojana, Orunodoi, Widow Pension Scheme and Old age Pension Scheme by visiting their houses to meet them personally as well as to ascertain whether they have really got benefited or not under these government schemes". Expressing his satisfaction, he said that Chirang district had so far done a good job in imple-



menting all these schemes properly in the district, but urged the officers present to put in more concerted efforts towards ensuring welfare of needy people. During his visit to various

places of the district, the minister was accompanied by Sidli MLA Jayanta Basumatary, Chirang Deputy Commissioner Narendra Kumar Shah, Chirang Superintendent of Police Pranjit

Borah, Additional Deputy Commissioners Khanindra Das and Ajit Kumar Sarmah, other officials of district administration and district heads of department concerned.

## Registration granted to industrial units under NEIDS

**News Desk**  
**Delhi, Nov 25:** Under the Chairmanship of Secretary, DPIIT, the Empowered Committee of North East Industrial Development Scheme (NEIDS) 2017, in its 9th meeting granted registration to 105 new industrial units in the North East. Till date, a total of 391 new industrial units with a proposed total investment of INR 2631.19 crore have been granted registration under NEIDS, 2017. With this all applications recommended for registration by the concerned state governments upto October 31 this year has been considered by the Empowered committee. The total incentives envisaged by these 391 industrial units amounts to INR 1740.06 crore with projected employment generation of 15,987. To promote industrialization in

NE States and to boost employment and income generation, Government notified NEIDS, 2017 on April 12, 2018. The Scheme was formulated on the basis of suggestions received from State Governments, Industrial Associations and other stakeholders. The Scheme covers both manufacturing and service sector. This could be achieved through key initiatives taken including developing an online application portal which allows submission of application and claim forms online besides online processing of the cases with each stage being intimated to the applicant. The Government of India has also delegated the powers for processing and approval of the claims to the State Governments with a view to expedite the release of incentives to the industrial units. All the stake-

holders are being periodically engaged through symposiums and workshops and one such mega engagement was held on November, 30 of 2019 with the theme of "Accelerating Investment & Industrial Development in North-Eastern Region" by DPIIT with team members from Invest India and Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Division, Departments heads in industries Departments of all the 8 State Governments, National bodies like APEDA and NER representatives from Industry Associations such as CII, FINER, Laghu Udyog Bharati, ASSOCHAM and FICCI etc besides manufacturing and service sector units located in North East Region and other Stakeholders. Hand on training the processing on NEIDS portal were also provided.

## Workshop held on drugs menace and drugs de-addiction

**Correspondent**  
**Nagaon, Nov 25:** Gram Vikas Parishad, a leading volunteer organization of the district organized a special workshop on drugs menace and also an drugs de-addiction camp at Nagaon Elfinstan Bibah Bhawan today. Superintendent of police Anand Mishra, ex district social welfare officer Pramila Kandali, advocate Sehnaj Sultana, retired Income tax officer Abdul Majeed Faruki graced the occasion as the resource persons. During the workshop, the volunteer organization felicitated a slew of individuals of the district who were being involved in the mission to alert people in the district to make a drug free state. Chief adviser to Gram Vikas Parishad, Siraj Uddin Ahmed anchored and chaired the entire

programme while over three hundred participants including senior police officers, guardians, youngsters of the district were present in the workshop. It is noteworthy to mention that Gram Vikas Parishad set up a Drugs De-addiction Abhiyan Help Center in June last and also opened three toll free helpline numbers to trace as well as to help the drugs victims in the district and abroad. This Drugs De-addiction Abhiyan Help Center have rescued a total of 234 drugs victims till date and out of which 173 victims have been cured by the center after prolonged treatment in a rehabilitation center initiated by Gram Vikas Parishad at its Rangolu based Lifeline Rehabilitation center, a release added.

## BSF seized liquor from Indo-Bangladesh border

**Staff Reporter**  
**Guwahati, Nov 25:** In yet another success in its crusade against border crimes, the troops under the aegis of Guwahati Frontier of Border Security Force apprehended 01 Bangladeshi National and seized 252 bottle Liquor and 14 kg Cannabis from Indo-Bangladesh border. On November, at about 0340 hrs the troops of 169 Bn managed to apprehend 01 Bangladeshi miscreant from the bordering area of village Satgachi of PS-Mathabanga district - Coochbehar (WB) and rescued 03 Cattle heads from the miscreant, while trying to cross In-

ternational boundary illegally. The details of apprehended BD national namely Sahin Islam (28) S/o-Rafikul Islam, of Panbari village, under police station Patgram of Bangladesh. Besides above, on November 24, the Special Boat Patrolling Party of BOP Salapara of 41 Bn managed to seized 252 bottle Liquor from the Brahmaputra river channel from the bordering area of village Kalaikhawa PS- Sukchar district Southsalmar (Assam), in another operation the alert troops of BOP Narayanganj managed to



seized 14 Kgs Cannabis in the bordering area of PS - Dinhat, district - Coochbehar (WB), while trying to cross to

Bangladesh. Keeping in view of the vulnerability of border, heightened activities of the smugglers and anti-national elements on the border, BSF

troops are always alert towards the issues of trans-border crimes and are making all out efforts to prevent commission of such crimes.

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## THE ASSAM RISING

VOL. NO. VI, ISSUE NO. 279 FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2021

# Death and destruction

The entire Afghan banking system has shut down, leaving Afghans with little access to money beyond importing suitcases full of cash. Britain has a moral duty to support vulnerable Afghans, and it's in the national interest, too. British servicemen and women should be proud of how their dedicated work helped to provide women and girls in Afghanistan with freedom and opportunities that had previously appeared out of reach, while preventing terror attacks against the west. But political failures mean that Afghans now face Taliban oppression and starvation while Europe faces another refugee crisis. We need a solution. As winter sets in, Afghanistan is on the brink of disaster. The executive director of the UN World Food Programme, David Beasley, warned earlier this month that "23 million people are marching towards starvation ... The next six months are going to be catastrophic. It is going to be hell on Earth." Heartbreaking reports of parents selling their children are starting to emerge. The UN has confirmed that 55% of the population face acute food insecurity. Labour supports the international community's reluctance to channel financial support through the Taliban. It would be wrong and naive to reward or legitimise the Taliban's brutal 20-year campaign of terror, death and destruction. But fortunately there are alternative means by which to provide the Afghan people with humanitarian and financial support. Today Labour is urging the UK government to deliver decisive leadership and proactive diplomacy by taking the following three steps. First, the foreign secretary must convene partner countries that are willing and able to mobilise Afghanistan's major western donors, to deliver aid off-budget. The two multi-donor trust funds are the World Bank's now suspended Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) and the UN Development Programme's Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan (STFA). Both can operate independently of the Taliban by channelling funds and paying salaries directly to the Afghan public sector and NGOs via a model that is both controlled and auditable. Such operations have been undertaken in other countries. Yet the World Bank and UNDP officials can only act if they are instructed to do so by their political masters – the governments of the donor countries. The UK government must therefore organise a meeting of fellow donors immediately. Second, our government must take the lead in re-enabling some form of cashflow in Afghanistan. The banking sector is on the verge of collapse, but international banks fear US sanctions for being seen to support the Taliban. The result is that there is virtually no domestic currency circulating in Afghanistan. The UK government must therefore urge partner countries to amend their respective sanctions regimes – on which the US have already taken some initial steps – to facilitate the re-establishment of focused banking services that can help deliver humanitarian assistance. Third, in the longer term it is going to be essential for aid organisations and NGOs to have some clarity on what donor governments will or will not accept in terms of the Taliban's behaviour and *modus operandi*.

## Be a Citizen Journalist

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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

# Charmness of Assamese wedding

Sir,

Being an Axomia the word 'Biya' gives me a different kind of pleasure. We use to visit our relatives marriages and that's gives me a unlimited joy. Since childhood I have been witnessing a rich rituals of Assamese weddings. In my childhood I went to my paternal, and maternal grandparents house and visited many marriages. Where I saw some unique and pure rituals of Assamese wedding. Juron Diya, Pani Tula, etc are some ignorable rituals of Assamese wedding which have increased charming of a marriage. But now a days many people of our society are slowly forgetting our rich tradition. Some North Indian rituals of weddings like mehendi, sangeet and many more are taking places of our own culture. If that type of practice will continue in our society then, our future generations can't able to figure out our rich Assamese traditions. It will create a great threat to our whole Assamese culture. Yours etc.

Aditya Ankur Nath  
Cotton University

# There's a silent pandemic going on. And Indian govt and states are racing to curb it



The Covid pandemic has shown us that the delicate interconnections between animal, environmental and human ecosystems will continue to be tested by climate change. SARS-CoV-2 - the virus responsible for this pandemic originates from animals. While this zoonotic virus had pandemic potential, zoonoses like severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), and Ebola, among others, have had a significant bearing on public health in the past. Further, the degradation of the health of the three ecosystems will contribute to the spread and emergence of new pandemics. But there is another health crisis we should be aware of. Dubbed as the silent pandemic, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) can induce up to 10 million global deaths every year by 2050 and force 28 million people into poverty. Further, our health systems will be overburdened because drugs will lose their efficacy due to the buildup of AMR. The mitigation of AMR is underpinned by protecting the health of the animal, environment, and human ecosystems. Seizing the importance of the issue, global and national action plans on AMR have been

drawn out. **Nirmal Kumar Ganguly**

Nestled in the One-Health approach, the action plans provide a framework to arrest AMR across ecosystems. The overuse of antimicrobials like antibiotics in human medicine and the improper usage of antibiotics in agriculture, aquaculture, livestock, and poultry have been addressed through multi-sectoral approaches. In India, there has been an emphasis on improving antimicrobial stewardship practices (AMSP) in hospitals, expanding the coverage of healthcare sites reporting data on AMR, bettering the capacity of healthcare professionals, and focusing on R&D for the discovery of new therapeutics. To address the misuse of antibiotics in aquaculture, livestock, and poultry, stringent measures like the ban on colistin, an antibiotic medication, and regulating the maximum permissible limit of antibiotics and veterinary drugs have been taken. However, strategies to tackle environmental antimicrobial resistance have been limited. This is worrying because the progress in animal and human verticals of AMR can be eroded due to the interlinkages between the three ecosystems. It is critical to have regulations lim-

iting antibiotic concentration in hospital wastewater and effluents from pharmaceutical manufacturing units. Central wastewater treatment for hospital effluents in India is uncommon and reportedly less than 45 per cent of hospitals have treatment facilities. Additionally, poor hygiene standards and lack of access to clean drinking water and sanitation further facilitate the spread and emergence of AMR. In the absence of standards, the high concentration of antibiotics in pharmaceutical effluents discharged into water bodies poses a grave health threat to animals and humans. Of late, several instances of phar-

maceutical pollution across states have been reported, the recent one being of the Baddi pharma hub in Himachal Pradesh and antibiotic pollution of the Sirsa river. The heavy traces of antibiotics ultimately infiltrate the animal and human ecosystems through the food chain and silently drive up AMR. Given the Indian pharmaceutical industry's spread across the corners of India and its expansionary outlook, the industry and the government must deliberate and formulate standards that limit the discharge of antibiotic residue into the environment. In the ongoing Baddi pharmaceutical pollution case, the Himachal Pradesh Pollution Control Board (HPPCB) has requested support from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to formulate standards governing antibiotic concentrations in pharmaceutical effluents. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and the MoEFCC must work with the state pollution control boards as the central bodies have better capacities and resources. Untreated hospital wastewater is a heady cocktail of antibiotics and other drugs and, if untreated, can be a hotspot for drug-resis-

tant pathogens known as superbugs. The blaNDM-1 superbug, more commonly known as the New Delhi superbug, was found in the wastewater outfalls of hospitals and sewer drains of the country's capital. As expected, the concentration of the superbug was much higher in the wastewater outfalls of clinical settings. Subsequently, the superbug has spread to over 70 countries, including the pristine Arctic Circle. Such instances call for pronounced wastewater surveillance along with AMSP to prevent hospitals from turning into hotbeds of AMR. Improved WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) standards are the third area of concern for environmental AMR. Poor sanitation and hygiene coupled with unclear drinking water expedite the natural mutation process in microbes, thereby speeding AMR. A recent study by the University of Birmingham has revealed that poor WASH standards contribute to the uptick of AMR in countries like Bangladesh. While the sanitation and hygiene parameters have drastically improved due to the Swachh Bharat Mission in India, the coverage of the ambitious Har Ghar Nal Se Jal scheme can play a pivotal role in arresting environmental AMR. For the One-Health approach to dampen AMR, it is pertinent that the policy framework is detached from a siloed approach, and implementation of these policies is emphasised. To facilitate the convergence and implementation of multi-sectoral policies, an AMR regulatory authority must be instituted. Further, separation of veterinary drugs from human medicine, regulation of animal food by a competent authority, and discouraging the sale of over-the-counter medication will ultimately protect against AMR in all three ecosystems. However, the administrative efforts will fall short unless supported by industry, civil society organisations, and the public.

# Not Modi, but Mamata and Kejriwal is the David-vs-David fight to watch before 2024

The next battle in India isn't an electoral one but one of political positioning. It will be fought between West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Both want to be the mobilising force against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At this point, what is more politically instructive than the 2024 Lok Sabha election is such fights ahead of 2024. The question isn't whether Kejriwal and Banerjee can take on Modi. It's how their armoury is stocked up. Instead of the clichéd David-vs-Goliath war, imagine if there were two audacious, over-confident Davids who face-off first. The national scramble for a political alternative to Modi has gained both traction and desperation since 2014, but the race now appears to be narrowing. The 1990s were all about the post-poll arithmetic of a stitched-up anti-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) front. But arithmetic alone doesn't work, you need a politician who can rule the algorithms in today's attention economy. And CM Banerjee and CM Kejriwal know the art of 'attention-based politics', just the way Modi does. They are also aggressive enough to aspire for a second state - Punjab and Goa (or Tripura, whichever comes first for TMC). You see, Modi's rise has given an arc of ambition to India's chief ministers. After Deve Gowda, it took

nearly two decades for a chief minister to come to Lutyens' Delhi as PM. But 2014 was the first time a chief minister was fuelled by audacity and winner-takes-all politics. It's only natural that other CMs probably see this as a template to follow. Arvind Kejriwal and Mamata Banerjee have the same four traits that Modi displayed ahead of 2014 - ambition, audacity, early-mover advantage and hustle. Of course, none of these add up to a neat total of a 'PM chair'. For that you need the support of a party with a wide base. Neither has it. And Kejriwal is less likely than

**Rama Lakshmi**

Mamata to have the 'glue factor' for an opposition alliance. But the key similarities and differences between the two Davids make their self-propelled engines fascinating to watch. Both Kejriwal and Banerjee have supported the biggest and longest-running mass movement against the Modi government, the farmers' agitation in three states. They have tried to be anti-Modi without being seen as being anti-Hindu - from free Ayodhya pilgrimages, Diwali aarti, Chandipath to temple hopping. While Mamata Banerjee is a Left-slayer in West Bengal, Kejriwal has scrupulously stayed away from Left politics in Delhi. Both are called 'mini-Modis' by critics for their style of functioning. But there are

many differences. Kejriwal's advantage in crafting a national image is that he is not seen as a boxed-in regional leader like Mamata or Akhilesh Yadav, Uddhav Thackeray, K. Chandrashekar Rao, or M.K. Stalin are. Delhi's mixed cosmopolitanism prevents Kejriwal's image from being restricted to any particular community. Mamata, however, is largely viewed as a daughter-of-the-soil, Bangla-speaking CM. But here's a corollary. Mamata's biggest edge is that there are Bangla-speaking pockets in at least six states. If she picks Lok

Sabha seats from most of them, she can flex. Mamata's secret weapon is strategist Prashant Kishor and she's already ruling the optics in terms of engineering defections, claiming billboards and generating public chatter. Just a year ago, most political observers would have given this attention to Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party because of his participation in the last Goa polls. While Mamata's Muslim politics is in your face, Kejriwal's is more ambivalent. On sensitive issues of national security, Kejriwal plays it closer to the BJP. He supported the revocation of Article 370 in Kashmir. Mamata, on the other hand, claimed the decision had tarnished India's name globally. We also need to dissect the processes the two CMs follow to gar-

ner national spotlight - while Mamata Banerjee bites back against any major move or comment by Modi, Kejriwal uses strategic silence when it comes to the Prime Minister. However, there is one thing that Kejriwal has that Mamata doesn't. He is already the main opposition in Punjab assembly, and he just won impressively in the Surat municipal polls in Gujarat this summer. His national ambitions are a tad older than Mamata's. Of course, a lot depends on who captures the bigger chunk of the national imagination and conversation. As Yashwant Deshmukh of C-Voter said in a recent TV show, after Modi and Rahul Gandhi, the state leader who gets the highest ratings is Kejriwal, not Mamata. How they create a new image of a national leader now will give us a clue on how the anti-Modi ecosystem works ahead of 2024. It is a difficult race - as seen in Rahul Gandhi's failing experiment - even though there are opportunities for leaders to rise. The new buzz around Mamata is only because she is still basking in the post-Bengal election win afterglow. Not unlike the one Kejriwal enjoyed after the 2015 Delhi win. Let us forget, Kejriwal lost Goa and Punjab, even though he was also catapulted to the high stakes game the same way Mamata is today. But as we learned in US politics, the 'audacity of hope' is a good starting point.

# The revised HS2 plan may be viable-but don't expect Boris Johnson to deliver it

It is easy to characterise the scrap ping of part of HS2 as yet another great Tory betrayal, and for the government's opponents to make hay of a decision that appears to run precisely counter to the Tories' key manifesto commitment of "levelling up" the north. Indeed, one can certainly add it to Boris Johnson's long list of U-turns and obfuscations. And it would be fanciful to think that this new plan was the outcome of a careful assessment of transport needs in the region. Rather, it has emerged because of pressure from two key players: the Treasury, with its innate hatred of big-ticket items, and the Tory backbenchers, whose affection for Jaguars and BMWs is far greater than for newfangled high-speed trains. The result will certainly be a strange hybrid of a railway. On one side of the country, we are to have a high-speed line that almost reaches the great cities of the north-west, and which will be presented as a fantastic boon to the region.

Over to the east, on the other hand, there will be a mishmash of new and refurbished tracks that will allow some improvements to train services but will not have the same cachet as the line in the west. Of course, all this has been dictated by expediency. Building on the first section of the line to Birmingham is well under way, with contracts worth well over £10bn already let and legislation for the line up to Crewe passed. There-

fore it was the **Christian Wolmar**

eastern section, up to Sheffield and Leeds, that could still be cut, much to the fury of some local council leaders and MPs in the "red wall". But hold on a minute. Support for HS2 is not universal in the north. For every laudatory article in the Yorkshire Post, opponents worried about local environmental issues or the massive concentration of resources in one line are quick to come up with an alternative view. The whole concept of HS2 was flawed from

the start. It was first characterised as a quicker way of travelling between London and the north and the Midlands, but actually there are already excellent, frequent and fast rail services between London and cities that it is intended to serve, such as Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. Faced with criticism about the cost not justifying the reduction in journey times, the project then morphed into promises of providing a huge increase in capacity on a railway system that was becoming chronically overcrowded. But HS2 was designed to have very few stations and limited links to the existing network, leading to concern that some towns would end up with an even worse service than at present. And then came the pandemic, which has seen what appears to be a significant shift to home-working and video conferencing, thereby undermining any remaining business case. Prof Paul

Salveson of the University of Huddersfield, a former Labour councillor and railway manager and a strong advocate for northern investment, encapsulated the region's doubts about a project that is often seen as yet another example of the dominance of southern interests when he wrote earlier this week in his blog that: "HS2 was an ill-conceived project that should never have been given such credibility in the first place". What local "folk" wanted instead, he argued, was "investment in local and regional rail projects, better east-west rail links, and improved bus services". Salveson also echoed a key point made by Grant Shapps in the Commons: these smaller, simpler projects can be delivered in a time frame that is meaningful to local people (and which may be a factor at the ballot box, as they can materialise before 2030 rather than in 2040 or beyond). It would be a mistake to suggest that there is any strategic thinking behind this revised plan.



## Priyanka shuts down split rumours, shares 'Jonas Brothers Family Roast' clip



Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas took a dig at the rumours of her split with popstar-husband Nick Jonas by sharing a clip from their Netflix comedy special "Jonas Brothers Family Roast". On Monday, Priyanka dropped her surname, along with her husband's last name, from all social media handles. Her move led to speculation that the 39-year-old actor was splitting with the American singer-songwriter, who she married in 2018. Taking to Instagram late Tuesday evening, Priyanka shared a

clip from the show, where she was seen roasting Nick (29). "Brought my husband and his brothers a nice roast for dinner. Perks of being a Jonas," she wrote with a cheeky, tongue-out emoticon. In the clip, the "Dil Dhadakne Do" star is seen poking fun at the duo's 10-year age gap. Priyanka said the couple teach each other a lot of things: while Nick showed her how to use the social networking service TikTok, she quipped, "I showed him what a successful acting career looks

like." She also joked about being the most famous Jonas in the family. "Also, have you guys noticed how much content the Jonas Brothers post online? Like, they're forever on Instagram, always on their phone. It's so cute. I'll tell you why. Because all of them combined still have less followers than me." So I guess the most popular Jonas is @PriyankaChopra on Instagram." The actor is currently awaiting the release of her much-anticipated Hollywood film "The Matrix Resurrections", scheduled to open in cinemas worldwide on December 22. Hollywood star Keanu Reeves plays the lead role of Neo in the Warner Bros Pictures-backed movie series, which also stars Carrie-Anne Moss, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Jessica Henwick, and Neil Patrick Harris.

## I was not scared that audience won't step in cinema halls due to COVID-19: John



Actor John Abraham on Wednesday said he looked at the shutdown of cinema halls during the pandemic as a time to "recalibrate" as he knew that eventually audiences would gather faith and start going to theatres when they reopen. Cinema halls remained shut for the most of 2020 and later, saw a phased reopening across the country. Maharashtra, a key centre for Hindi films, allowed theatres to reopen last month, leading to back-to-back film release announcements from the industry. There was, however, a concern that a closed space like a cinema hall would not be safe for the audience, with critics observing that this would deter them from stepping into theatres. When asked if he ever felt scared that the audience won't turn up to watch films, Abraham said the pandemic had to be looked at with an opportunity to reset. "I was not scared, I was practical. I knew it would take time. It is still in the pro-

cess. If you ask me, if we are 100 per cent there, the answer is no. People are still in the process of putting their heads together and coming in. "There was a practical recalibration in your head, as to how you want to produce a certain film, when are you going to go on floors... There was just recalibration, no fear. You have to deal with the present situation you are in," Abraham told reporters here. The actor was speaking at a special event of PVR, where the multiplex chain introduced an antiviral cinema air purification system. PVR, in partnership with UFO Moviez, announced the installation of a cinema-specific air sterilization device called UFO-Wolf AirMask'. According to the multiplex chain, it will offer "real-time

air sterilization, providing protection against all kinds of harmful bacteria, viruses and microbes in the air and surfaces". Abraham, who is gearing up for the release of his latest actioner "Satyameva Jayate 2" on Thursday, said the move will make the theatrical experience safe for audiences. "The biggest fear we have when we enter a cinema hall is that it is dark, air conditioned and when you cough, everyone turns around. With this technology, you can dispel all those fears. To put it simply, this is extremely safe for people. "The fun of watching a film happens at a cinema hall when you come out with your friends, family or by yourself. With this technology, you would know that if there is one place in the entire city you are safe, it is in a cinema hall now. Earlier you were scared here, but now you are safe here. So please dispel your fears," he added. The event was attended by Gautam Dutta, CEO, PVR; Kapil Agarwal, Joint Managing Director, UFO Moviez; and Sujesh Sugunan, Chairman & CEO, Allabout Innovations. UFO Moviez is associated with Allabout Innovations Pvt Ltd, a technology fostering firm based out of Kochi, for distributing their product to theatres in India on an exclusive basis. 'UFO-Wolf AirMask' units will be installed across the country in all PVR screens and its upcoming properties. Dutta

## TaFMA and Raymond Apparel Ltd ink agreement for Hornbill Music Festival



Task Force for Music & Arts (TaFMA), Nagaland and Raymond Apparel Ltd (RAL) inked the agreement for Hornbill Music Festival 2021 on November 22. Parx will be the presenting sponsor for the Hornbill Music Festival this year and SL Pokharna, President & Board Member of Raymond Ltd, said that the brand looks forward to a long term association with the event. He said, Hornbill Music festival is a great platform for engaging with the fashionable and music loving youth of Nagaland and the neighbouring states. Parx is a brand for the youth, and music is one of the key en-

gagement platforms for the brand which has been established through the very successful execution of Parx Hunt, a music IP of the brand. Speaking at the event, Theja Meru, Advisor, TaFMA thanked Parx for extending support to the event and for reaching out to Nagaland. He said Hornbill festival is a great cultural extravaganza which has established itself in this part of the world and continues to grow year after year. He is very excited that a brand like Parx has decided to join hands to create new exciting engagement opportunities for the visitors at the Hornbill Music Festival. Theja Meru and S L Pokharna discussed about many other future areas of partnership for the Raymond Apparel and TaFMA when they met at the Raymond headquarters in Mumbai.



Rapper-producer Jay-Z has become the most-nominated artiste in Grammy Awards history, with his three 2022 nominations pushing him to 83. He had previously been tied with

## Jay-Z becomes most Grammy-nominated artiste in history

legendary producer/composer Quincy Jones at 80, reports variety.com. Jay-Z, who last released an album in 2017, is nominated for guest appearances with rapper Kanye West and the late DMX. He currently has 23 wins. Paul

McCartney, previously tied for second place with Beyonce, gains two nods in the rock category and passes her and Jones for sole possession of the No. 2 spot with 81. Neither Jones nor Beyonce are nominated for 2022 awards, although Q did write the liner notes for top nominee Jon Batiste's 'We Are' album. Jay-Z made his Grammy bow in 1999 with three nods, two from his classic "Vol. 2 Hard Knock Life" album and one for his tag-team with Jermaine Dupri, 'Money Ain't a Thang'. He won but did not attend the awards, later saying he "boycotted" them because fellow New Yorker DMX had not been nominated despite racking up two No. 1 albums in a year. Jay, who turns 52 next month, has been nominated in 18 of the 22 Grammy years since then, even though his release schedule has slowed considerably over the past decade. The Brooklyn native's biggest Grammy-winning years were 2009, 2010 and 2012, when he took home three each. Ironically, he won no trophies in his most-nominated year, 2017, when his '4:44' album and related singles and video received eight total nods. This did not improve his complicated relationship with the Grammys, and Jay-Z stated his opinion on the matter unequivocally in 'Apeesh\*', released the following year on his duet album with wife Beyonce, 'Everything Is Love'. The first of McCartney's 18 wins came in 1964 with two as a member of the Beatles, who took Best New Artist as well as one for the song 'A Hard Day's Night'. Next in line after Jones and Beyonce are Stevie Wonder and late classical conductor Georg Solti, tied with 74; and film-music maestros Henry Mancini and John Williams, tied with 72, none of whom have 2022 nominations.

## Nora Fatehi is amazed by kids nailing dance steps to her track 'Kusu Kusu'

Dilbar girl Nora Fatehi has created a new record with her latest song from the upcoming film 'Satyameva Jayate 2' titled 'Kusu Kusu' and it has become the new craze among netizens. On Thursday (November 11), the actress took to Instagram to share a mind-blowing video of kids flawlessly dancing to her song and nailing all the dance steps. In the video, three young girls were energetically grooving to her song and enjoying the funky beats. An impressed Nora wrote in the caption of the video post, "this is so cute! U guys are soooo amazing!!!" Nora Fatehi earned name and fame after featuring in the 'Dilbar' track for John Abraham starrer Satyameva Jayate. The track got her 'Dilbar girl' tag as well. The Moroccan beauty was first seen in the reality show Bigg Boss season 9. She made her Bollywood debut with Roar: Tigers of the Sundarbans. Her popularity in Telugu cinema began with hit songs in

films such as Temper, Baahubali: The Beginning and Kick 2. She also starred in two Malayalam films, Double Barrel and Kayamkulam Kochunni. Recently, she was summoned and interrogated by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with Rs 200 crore money extortion case. The actress' spokesperson issued a fresh statement on the matter, urging media not to slander her name and make any statements before any official information is released. Satyameva Jayate 2 is a 2021 Indian Hindi-language vigilante action thriller film written and directed by Milap Zaveri with production by T-Series and Emmay Entertainment.[3] Based on the fight against injustice and misuse of power, it is an official spiritual sequel of the 2018 film Satyameva Jayate and stars John Abraham in a triple role alongside Divya Khosla Kumar, Rajeev Pillai and Anup Soni in important characters.

## There are no walls in music today: Shaan

Shaan, who has belted out hits after hits such as 'Tanha dil', 'Deewangi deewangi' and 'Kuch to hua hai among many others, is happy that there are no walls in music today and that everything is accepted by listeners. Shaan, who has been featured as the 'Artiste Of The Week' at BIG FM's 'The Blue Mic', gained spotlight in 1999 with the number 'Bhool Ja' and the game changed completely for him in 2000, when he sang a superhit song 'Tanha dil tanha safar'. Talking about how he feels

about new age musicians, Shaan in a conversation said: "We have very exciting new talent and also new genres of music that were not as popular in our times like Desi Rap, Folk Fusion etc. Having said that, there are no walls in music today and everything is accepted." Be it 'My dil goes goes mmm' or 'Chup chupke' among many others, Shaan has been associated with romantic songs throughout his career. Is there any specific reason? "I may have been labelled as a romantic singer but I have sung many party

songs and other genres too. But yes romance is my forte I guess," he added. The Blue Mic, an initiative by BIG FM and Hungama Artist Aloud. It is a platform to explore new music. How does a platform like this help singers reach out to the masses? Shaan said: "Radio and digital platforms have a massive reach and platforms like 'The Blue Mic' that cater to young musicians, music hobbyists and music lovers, there couldn't be a better place to showcase young emerging talent."



So, what is coming up next for Shaan? "More songs, more music, will also explore other avenues like acting, curating shows," the singer concluded.

## 'Women are inherent multi-taskers; they can balance both the professional world and take care of a home,' Disha Parmar



Sony Entertainment Television's much loved show 'Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2' has seen the union of Ram (Nakuul Mehta) and Priya (Disha Parmar). During the course of the show, the viewers witnessed how two drastically different personalities, who came from different back-

grounds tied the knot, fulfilling their respective families wishes. Since the show's inception, Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2 has managed to engage the viewers with its engaging storyline. In the show, Disha Parmar's character is of a self-sufficient woman who is of the belief that women don't need

to depend on men to fulfil their needs. While she got married at a later stage in life, she is fiercely independent and at the same time caring, thoughtful and goes an extra mile to take care of her loved ones. Actor Disha Parmar who connects with her character 'Priya' on a personal level and is of the opinion that women are inherent multi-taskers, can balance their professional and personal lives and even make it look effortless. Sharing more on the same, Disha Pamar said, "I personally believe that women are inherently more patient and organized. They multi-task with ease. Women usually have a natural habit of going above and beyond to ensure that everything is taken care of - be it her work space or responsibilities at home. Moreover, the way we juggle between work life and home life by making it look so effortless, says a lot about how good we are at it." Tune in to Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2, every Monday to Friday at 8:00 pm only on Sony Entertainment Television.

## Garfield has had enough of questions about 'Spider-Man: No Way Home'



There have been non-stop speculations about what the new narrative 'Spider-Man: No Way Home' will be and whether or not Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield's versions of the iconic character will be present. Tom Holland's Spider-Man will have many enemies to face, and many believe that he will have some help from some very familiar faces as villains such as Doctor Octopus, Green Goblin and what appears to be a new and updated version of Electro are confirmed to return. 'No Way Home' tells the tale of Peter Parker/Spider-Man played by Holland as he seeks the help of Doctor Strange to make the world forget that his superhero identity was unveiled. However, the spell goes awry and opens the door to the multiverse, reports femalefirst.co.uk. Maguire and Garfield's appearance in the movie are still unconfirmed and this hasn't stopped fans from believing

it, however. Maguire doesn't seem to have spoken much about his role in the movie, but Garfield has discussed potentially returning and, it seems that he has had enough. Garfield played the iconic superhero from 2012 to 2014 in 'The Amazing Spider-Man' and 'The Amazing Spider-Man 2'. Despite some supposed leaks, in the form of both images and videos being released, the actor still denies his involvement in the film. In a recent Q&A segment, Garfield went undercover to dispel rumours about himself. In this video, he replied to a fan comment on a video of his recent interview with talk show host Jimmy Fallon, typing out: "Listen, at this point... I'm done. We'll all find out when the movie comes out and we'll either be very disappointed, or we'll be very happy. Or someone will say, 'I told you so', and another person will say, 'I told you so'. We'll all find out. I'm sorry in advance."



Contd. From Page 1

## Renowned Poet Sananta Tanty

his poems. According to the website Asymptote, Tanty is "a chronicler of the times and an advocate for the downtrodden" and "a poet of change and of unbridled optimism". Tanty received several awards and recognitions, including the Sahitya Akademi in 2016 for 'Kailoir Dinto Amar Hobo' (Tomorrow Will Be Ours), a collection of his poems in Assamese. He started his professional career as an employee of the Assam Tea Employees' Provident Fund Organisation in Jorhat in 1971 and retired as Deputy Provident Fund Commissioner in 2012. Union Minister of Shipping, Ports and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal mourned the death of Tanty and said 'Kailoir Dinto Amar Hobo' with its unique poems enriched Assamese literature. 'His poems reflected realistic scenes of life and society. He played the role of a conscious citizen through his writings. A bright star has fallen with his demise,' he said in a statement. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma offered his condolences and said his contributions will always be remembered by the people of the state. Assam Congress president Bhupen Kumar Borah too paid his homage to Tanty and said it is an irreparable loss to the Assamese literary world.

## Various organisations planned

to withdraw the three farm laws, the relevancy of anti-CAA movement is coming back very strongly in Assam, because the new citizenship act is threat to the Assam and entire North East India. "The people who entered into Assam post 1971, they should be deported and it was the commitment of the Centre to the people of Assam. We have accepted the load of illegal foreigners upto March 25, 1971 and there is no question of accepting any illegal foreigner in the name of religion in Assam and North East India. The common people of Assam will continue their fight against the central government's draconian mindset, unconstitutional mindset of the central government and the new citizenship act," Lurinjoyti Gogoi said. Chief Advisor of AASU Samujjal Bhattacharya said that the people of Assam and North East are determined to continue their fight till the CAA is repealed. Many organisations in Assam have planned to restart the anti-CAA agitation in the state from December 10 on Swahid Diwas (martyr's day) which is observed every year in the state to commemorate people who died during the six-year long Assam agitation between 1979 and 1985. Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma said that, after the Covid-19 pandemic, the people of Assam are now struggling to live and they are not interested in going out on the street again. "After Covid-19, the people are now fighting for their lives. People want a livelihood and they are searching for a way to live. Those who are talking about agitation actually do not understand the fight of the poor people who are still struggling post-Covid. I am confident that the people of Assam will not take part in any agitation at this moment," Himanta Biswa Sarma said. The new citizenship act allows for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan to seek Indian citizenship.

## 12 Congress MLAs Join Trinamool

former Chief Minister. On Tuesday, Ms Banerjee's party made three key acquisitions that gave her a toehold in at least two more states - Haryana and Bihar. Besides Team India batsman Kirti Azad, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's aide Ashok Tanwar, and Rajya Sabha MP Pawan Verma of the Janata Dal (United), who fell out with his boss Nitish Kumar, also joined Ms Banerjee's party. The earlier Congress entrants in the party included late President Pranab Mukherjee's son Abhijit Mukherjee; Sushmita Dev, the former Congress MP from Silchar and daughter of late Congress stalwart Santosh Mohan Dev. In Delhi today, Ms Banerjee, whose massive victory in the April-May assembly elections in West Bengal had set off a buzz about her spearheading the opposition challenge to the BJP in the 2024 general elections, said she was willing to help oust the BJP in Uttar Pradesh. She said she would visit Varanasi - Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha constituency - and the big opposition hub of Mumbai to meet Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on December 1. The Meghalaya Trinamool Congress was formally launched in 2012 with an intention to contest from 35 of the state's 60 seats. Team members of election strategist Prashant Kishor are in Shillong to weigh in on the Trinamool Congress's options in the state for the 2023 assembly election.

## Nagaland Hornbill Festival date

departmental publications at World War-II Complex. "A must visit place to see, understand and experience the historic event is the World War - II Museum, Kisama, where outstanding relics and artifacts are on display," the department said. The museum will be open for the public from 10 am to 4 pm from December 1. Considered as one of the most renowned celebrations of Nagas, during this festival, every year people of Nagaland gather in huge numbers for merry-making and frolic in the form of drinking, singing, dancing and relishing traditional cuisines of the state. The Hornbill Festival is a celebration held every year from 1 to 10 December, in Nagaland, Northeast India. It is also called the 'Festival of Festivals'. The state of Nagaland is home to several tribes, which have their own distinct festivals. More than 60% of the population of Nagaland depends on agriculture and therefore most of their festivals revolve around agriculture. The Nagas consider their festivals sacred, so participation in these festivals is essential. To encourage inter-tribal interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland, the Government of Nagaland organizes the Hornbill Festival every year in the first week of December. The first festival was held in 2000. The festival is named after the Indian hornbill, the large and colourful forest bird which is displayed in the folklore of most of the state's tribes. Organized by the State Tourism and Art & Culture Departments, the Hornbill Festival showcases a mélange of cultural displays under one roof. This festival usually takes place between 1 and 10 December every year in Kohima. The Hornbill Festival is held at Naga Heritage Village, Kisama which is about 12 km from Kohima. All the tribes of Nagaland take part in this festival. The aim of the festival is to revive and protect the rich culture of Nagaland and display its extravaganza and traditions. For visitors it means a closer understanding of the people and culture of Nagaland, and an opportunity to experience the food, songs, dances and customs of Nagaland. On 1 December 2017 at the Naga Heritage Village of Kisama, President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 18th Hornbill Festival and State Formation Day celebrations of Nagaland. The week-long festival unites one and all in Nagaland and people enjoy the colourful performances, crafts, sports, food fairs, games and ceremonies. Traditional arts which include paintings, wood carvings, and sculptures are also on display. Festival highlights include the traditional Naga Morungs exhibition and the sale of arts and crafts, food stalls, herbal medicine stalls, flower shows and sales, cultural medley - songs and dances, fashion shows, the Miss Nagaland beauty contest, traditional archery, Naga wrestling, indigenous games, and musical concert. The Hornbill Festival provides a colourful mixture of dances, performances, crafts, parades, games, sports, food fairs and religious ceremonies. The festival both exposes the culture and tradition of tribal peoples, and reinforces Nagaland's identity as a unique state in India's federal union. Experts have commented that A lot of older folk in the villages travel to Kohima to attend this festival and meet people from other villages from Nagaland because they haven't met before, hence leading to cultural assimilation. Traditional arts are also featured, with paintings, wood carvings, and sculptures by modern Naga artists on display. Naga troupes sing folk songs, perform traditional dances and play indigenous games and sports. In the evenings a programme of music concerts, catering for all tastes, ensures that the festive spirit continues through the night. One of the major highlights of this festival is the Hornbill International Rock Festival, which is held at Indira Gandhi Stadium; local and international rock bands perform.

## Govt has identified 101 projects

connectivity to develop infrastructure to reduce logistic costs and boost the economy. Sonowal said, the country's maritime sector plays a crucial role in its overall trade and growth. "Our efforts in the past couple of years have started bringing results... the investment in ports have increased over the last five years," he said.

## Adani Surpasses Mukesh Ambani

increased by 250 percent i.e., USD 54.7 billion. Earlier, the Bloomberg Billionaire Index had suggested that Adani's current net worth is USD 88.8 billion which is just USD 2.2 billion less than the net worth of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) chairman Mukesh Ambani. Also Read - How Fuel Prices Can Be Slashed Further? Nitin Gadkari Suggests This Idea, Says 'Petrol, Diesel Taxes Can Go Down If...'. According to an ET report, after the recent scrapping of O2C deal, the shares of Reliance Industries stayed under pressure and were quoting 1.07 per cent lower at Rs 2,360.70. Whereas the Adani group stocks were trading higher. Also Read - Mukesh Ambani New Home In London, UK Buckinghamshire, Stoke Park Home Tour. Adani Enterprises was up 2.94 per cent higher at Rs 1757.70. Adani Ports rose 4.87 per cent to Rs 764.75. Adani Transmission gained 0.50 per cent to Rs 1,950.75 while Adani Power shares also added 0.33 per cent to Rs 106.25.

## PM Modi lays foundation stone

for domestic and international carriers. "Today 85% of aircraft go foreign countries for maintenance on which Rs 15,000 crore is spent. A large chunk of this goes to foreign countries. This MRO facility will transform the city."

## 108 Gir Cows Brought from Gujarat

used locally in the improvement of other breeds including the Red Sindhi and the Sahiwal. It was also one of the breeds used in the development of the Brahman breed in North America. In Brazil and other South American countries the Gir is used frequently because, as a Bos indicus breed, it is resistant to hot temperatures and tropical diseases. It is well known for its milk producing qualities and is often bred with Friesian cows to make the Girolando breed. The Gir is distinctive in appearance, typically having a rounded and domed forehead (being the only ultraconvex breed in the world), long pendulous ears and horns which spiral out and back. Girs are generally mottled with the colour ranging from red through yellow to white, black being the only unacceptable colour. They originated in west India in the state of Gujarat and have since spread to neighbouring Maharashtra and Rajasthan. Cows average 385 kg in weight and 130 cm in height; bulls weigh 545 kg on average, with a height of 140 cm. [3] At birth, calves weigh about 20 kg. [3] The average milk yield for the Gir is 1590 kg per lactation, with a record production of 3182 kg at 4.5% fat in India. In Brazil they average 3500 kg per lactation, with a world record production of 17 120 kg by the cow Profana de Brasília. In 2003 the Gir numbered about 915 000, or 37% of the 2.5 million cattle population of the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. [4] In 2010 the population in Brazil was estimated at approximately five million.

## Minister Bimal Borah visited Bilasipara to review Govt schemes



**STAFF REPORTER, Bilasipara, Nov 25:** Today the Minister of Sports, Youth Welfare, Cultural Affairs and Power Minister Bimal Boral visited the Bilasipara Sub-Division to check on the implementation of various Govt. schemes. He was given a warm welcome at the Community Hall of Bilasipara Municipal Board by the Bilasipara Sub-Divisional Administration and the SDO (Civil). Bilasipara Jay Shivani was present with him. He at first attended a meeting at the Community Hall of the Bilasipara Town Committee and interacted with beneficiaries on the Orunodoi scheme. Indira Miri Sabajanin widow pension scheme, Old Age Pension Scheme, pension receiving benefits under COVID-19, Atal Amrit Abhiyan and PM-JAN AROGYA Yojana. He said that according to the needs and requirement of the people. State Govt. has introduced a number of schemes and the Govt. at the same time is also confirming whether the schemes are being properly implemented and whether the beneficiaries are benefited with these schemes. He further stated that the Central Govt. along with the State Govt. is moving heaven and earth so that all the beneficiaries can be benefited with all the schemes. The Minister then interacted with all the scheme holders. Firstly he had a spot verbal conversation with the beneficiaries of Indira Miri Sabajanin Widow Pension Scheme, Orunodoi Pension Scheme, Kushal Konwar Old Age Pension Scheme and some of the beneficiaries reported that for the last three months they have not receive the stipulated amount and account was blocked to which the Minister reiterated that this probably happens because of the non-submission of necessary documents at time. He further explained that the help of all these schemes like Widow Pension and Orunodoi Scheme Rs.300 and Rs. 830 is directly debited to his accounts for which they will receive some support for their family. He further asked whether the card issued through Atal Amrit Abhiyan Yojana has benefited anyone or not and further stated that with the help of the card any Beneficiary can claim immediate cashless treatment for any kind of critical illness of himself or any member of his family and the scheme is opened to all the BPL and APL families whose annual income is about 5 lakh. These families who himself or any member of his family suffering from serious illness don't have to panic, this card will help to get immediate medical help. He further stated that the Govt. is striving hard to improve the conditions of the people and said that we should stop thinking that we are cursed to be born in a poor family. He further exclaimed that we have to strive hard to get out of our pathetic conditions and the Govt. is very keen for the right implementation of schemes so that the beneficiaries can be uplifted with the help of these schemes. After attending the meeting at Bilasipara Municipal Board, he visited Majorgaon L.P. School and Anganwadi Centre where he was given a warm welcome by the students and interacted with all the students. He then visited Barkandat people's Academy and matter completion of a small session with the Principal and the Teachers, he offered a short visit to the beneficiaries.

## Workshop held on drugs menace and drugs de-addiction

**Correspondent, Nagaon, Nov 25:** Gram Vikas Parishad, a leading volunteer organization of the district organized a special workshop on drugs menace and also an drugs de-addiction camp at Nagaon Elfinstan Bibah Bhawan on November 25. Superintendent of police Anand Mishra, ex district social welfare officer Pramila Kandali, advocate Sehnaj Sultana, retired Income tax officer Abdul Majeed Faruki graced the occasion as the resource persons. During the workshop, the volunteer organization felicitated a slew of individuals of the district who were being involved in the mission to alert people in the district to make a drug free state. Chief adviser to Gram Vikas Parishad, Siraj Uddin Ahmed anchored and chaired the entire programme while over three hundred participants including senior police officers, guardians, youngsters of the district were present in the workshop. It is noteworthy to mention that Gram Vikas Parishad set up a Drugs De-addiction Abhiyan Help Center in June last and also opened three toll free helpline numbers to trace as well as to help the drugs victims in the district and abroad. This Drugs De-addiction Abhiyan Help Center have rescued a total of 234 drugs victims till date and out of which 173 victims have been cured by the center after prolonged treatment in a rehabilitation center initiated by Gram Vikas Parishad at its Rangolu based Lifeline Rehabilitation center, a release added.

## Hojai District Admin conducts awareness drive among voters

**Correspondent, Hojai, Nov 25:** To create mass awareness among voters on Voting rights and its significance, Hojai District Administration is continuously organising various awareness drives and competitions. Meanwhile, on the direction of deputy commissioner Anupam Choudhury this awareness drive is being conducted in all the three LACs of the district viz., 90 no. Jamunamukh, 91 no. Hojai, 92 no. Lumding under the supervision of election officer Jangmir Rongpharpi. During the awareness drive through innovative dance, interaction with public, street play (drama), the administration is providing every information to the public on Voting like how to register their names in voter list within stipulated time, it's process, transfer process, importance of Voting; etc. On Wednesday, the drive was carried at Jamunamukh, Doboka, Nilbagan thinali, in two places of Hojai near LIC office and newmarket Panchali, Juraphukhuri under Lumding constituency and Kaki. Notably

## Road safety discussion held

**CORRESPONDENT, North Lakhimpur, Nov 25:** A meeting of the District Road Safety Committee, Lakhimpur was held in the conference hall of the Deputy Commissioner's office on Tuesday last. Chaired by Lakhimpur Deputy Commissioner Sumit Sattawan, the meeting was attended by Lakhimpur District Transport Officer Sanjib Borah, District Road Safety Committee members and District Transport Office employees among others. Several important issues relating to road safety including road accidents and their prevention, solving traffic jam problems etc., were discussed at the meeting. A resolution was accepted in the meeting to organise online license camps in the colleges of the district for the students and employees of the colleges

## Shots on Assam forest officers : Arunachal government orders probe

**Guwahati, Nov 25 :** The Arunachal Pradesh government ordered an inquiry into the exchange of fire between forest officers of Assam and illegal tree fellers at the inter-state boundary on Tuesday, officials said. Illegal tree fellers from Arunachal Pradesh and forest officers of Assam exchanged fire at No 1 Belbasti inside the Ranga Reserve Forest, but no one was injured, according to officials in Assam's Lakhimpur. Inspector-general of police (Law and Order) Chuku Apa said that he has directed Papum Pare's superintendent of police (SP) to conduct an inquiry into the incident. "We are not sure who fired from our side. Presumably, miscreants did it to create misunderstanding between the two neighbouring states," Apa said. The exchange of fire took place less than 24 hours after senior officials from Lakhimpur and Papum Pare districts met at Upia in Arunachal Pradesh on Monday afternoon to discuss inter-state boundary issues. The meeting adopted several resolutions such as jointly handling inter-state boundary issues, involving local administration during visits to locations near the boundary and maintaining the status quo. Last week, the Assam forest department served a 15-day eviction notice to three villages in the Kimin circle, evoking resentment among various organisations in Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh home minister Bamang Felix told said on Monday that both states are undertaking a massive exercise to resolve the long-pending boundary dispute. "The matter of serving eviction notice has been seriously taken by the state government and various levels of talks are already underway. The chief secretary and the inspector-general of police (law and order) have also taken up the matter with their Assam counterparts," he told a press conference. Arunachal Pradesh, which was carved out of Assam, was initially a Union territory before becoming a state in 1987. Arunachal Pradesh and Assam share an 804.1-km-long border. During re-organisation of North-eastern states, several forested tracts in the plains that had traditionally belonged to hill tribal chiefs and communities were unilaterally transferred to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh contends. After Arunachal Pradesh achieved statehood, a tripartite committee was appointed which recommended that certain territories be transferred from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh. Assam contested this and the matter is now pending in the Supreme Court.

## Covaxin 50% Effective Against Covid, Less Than Initially Thought: Lancet

**New Delhi, Nov 25 :** Covaxin, one of the main vaccines used in India's coronavirus immunization drive, provides only 50% protection against symptomatic COVID-19, according to a real-world study that suggests the shot is less effective than initially thought. As India was slammed by its second major Covid wave earlier this year, researchers at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi analyzed data from 2,714 of the hospital's health workers who were showing signs of infection and underwent RT-PCR testing between April 15 and May 15, according to a study published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal. At the start of the country's vaccination campaign in January, staff at AIIMS had exclusively been offered Covaxin, a shot co-developed by India's state-funded health research agency and local company Bharat Biotech International Ltd. The authors found that two weeks or more after completing a two-dose regime the vaccine's adjusted effectiveness against symptomatic Covid was lower than the 77.8% that interim results established during final stage tests, a study of which was published in The Lancet earlier this month. High infection rates and virus exposure among the hospital's employees may have contributed to Covaxin's weaker real-world efficacy, along with the possibility that the then recently emerged delta variant blunted the shot's protection, the researchers said. "Our study offers a more complete picture of how BBV152 performs in the field and should be considered in the context of Covid-19 surge conditions in India, combined with the possible immune evasive potential of the delta variant," Manish Soneja, an additional professor of medicine at AIIMS in New Delhi, said in a statement referring to the vaccine's scientific name. While various studies indicate almost all Covid vaccines show reduced effectiveness against the highly infectious delta variant, which began its rampant spread across India in early 2021, the new research on Covaxin may dent the inoculation's appeal at a time when Bharat Biotech is scaling up manufacturing and as India restarts overseas vaccine shipments. So far more than 130 million doses of Covaxin have been administered in India. Bharat Biotech and the government, which has widely promoted the shot, have sought to close the door on controversies involving the vaccine's early authorization in January before it had completed phase 3 human trials, prompting widespread hesitancy in the country at the time. The World Health Organization's independent technical panel also took months before granting emergency approval to Covaxin in early November, repeatedly asking Bharat Biotech for further data. Krishna Ella, chairman of the Hyderabad-based vaccine maker, said the WHO green light took as long as it did because of criticism surrounding the shot, which was developed using traditional inactivated-virus technology. The researchers said the AIIMS study didn't estimate the vaccine's effectiveness against hospitalization, severe disease and death, while acknowledging that it wasn't designed to estimate protection over different time intervals. Patients weren't tested to find if they were symptomatic due to a specific variant and the authors also pointed to the lack of data on comorbidities and prior infections.

## Democratic Taiwan in, Communist China out in Biden's virtual summit

**Washington, Nov 25:** China, the United States' principal rival, is not invited, while Taiwan is -- a move that risks angering Beijing. Turkey, which like America is a member of NATO, is also missing from the list of participants. President Joe Biden has invited around 110 countries to a virtual summit on democracy in December, including major Western allies but also Iraq, India and Pakistan, according to a list posted on the State Department website on Tuesday. China, the United States' principal rival, is not invited, while Taiwan is -- a move that risks angering Beijing. Turkey, which like America is a member of NATO, is also missing from the list of participants. Among the countries of the Middle East, only Israel and Iraq will take place in the online conference, scheduled for December 9-10.



# RFU announces revenue shortfall of £120m due to impact of pandemic

**London, November 25:** The Rugby Football Union has laid bare the full financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic, announcing a revenue shortfall of £120m compared to previous forecasts. The union also revealed an underlying loss to reserves of £21.3m - around £30m worse than pre-pandemic forecasts - in its latest accounts published on Wednesday. The report states that revenue was £97m, down from £167m the previous year, as the pandemic took hold. The union generates 85% of its revenue from England men's internationals at Twickenham but this year's Six Nations championship was played in empty stadiums. Despite the dismal fifth-place finish, the report combines the results of Eddie Jones's side with the women's team to claim the guiding principle of a "winning England" was complete. The report goes



on to say that financial stability has been secured via cost-cutting measures including 119 redundancies, a debenture donation programme and emergency financial schemes made available by the government. Nonetheless, total remuneration for the RFU's full senior management team was £2.63m with the chief executive Bill Sweeney earning £540,000, which included the consolidation of a pension

payment. "This 150th year of the RFU has been an immensely challenging one for the union and our sport," said Sweeney. "We have worked harder than ever before to support the professional and

community game though the pandemic, with a clearly focused strategic plan to ensure we deliver real benefit and support to the game. As we emerge out of Covid, the RFU will continue to take a leadership role in reshaping and improving the game for the benefit of all involved. "Significantly, professional rugby investment in the year was £40.3m compared to £66.4m in the prior year with the Premiership clubs bearing the brunt. A clause in the professional game agreement between the RFU and the Premiership became active in 2020 and dictated that the clubs' funding would be

determined by the union's revenues. Accordingly, funding for the men's and women's Premierhips, as well as the Championship, was £12.2m compared to £33m the previous year. "We are in a stable position but we have also made a very sizeable underlying loss over the course of the last year," writes the RFU's chief financial officer Sue Day. "It will take a number of years to recover from that loss and for the next few years our cost base will need to remain at current levels, or thereabouts, while we rebuild our lost reserves, right size our debt and regain certainty over future revenues as the impact of the pandemic subsides.

## World Rugby amends rule and allows players to switch national teams

**New York, November 25:** World Rugby has approved a landmark change to its eligibility laws which will allow players to switch Test nations and significantly bolster developing countries in time for the 2023 World Cup. In a game-changing move for the sport, players who meet the criteria will be able to change nations from January with the Pacific Islands among the teams poised to most reap the rewards. The change means Charles Piutau, who has 17 All Blacks caps, will be free to represent Tonga, as will Israel Folau, George Moala and Vaea Fifita. England's 2023 World Cup pool stage opponents Samoa could be bolstered by the former New Zealand fly-half Lima Sopoaga, the Bristol captain Steven Luatua, Julian Savea and Denny Solomona, who has won five caps under Eddie Jones. The move also frees



Billy and Mako Vunipola to play for Tonga in 2024 should they wish, and likewise Manu Tuilagi for Samoa. Players are eligible to switch nations if they have been stood down for three years - in other words, not been selected for 36 months - and if they, or a parent or grandparent, were born in the country they wish to represent. A switch can only be made

once and the change comes into effect from the start of next year. In England's case, Alex Lozowski would be eligible to now switch to Italy but Jake Pollard would, in theory, be available to move the other way in 2023. The motion was voted on by World Rugby's council and required a 75% majority. It is understood that the threshold was only just met

# Majority of counties are failing to meet agreed ECB targets on diversity

**London, November 25:** A survey of county board membership undertaken by the Guardian has found the majority have failed to meet the target of 30% representation of each gender, to which they committed more than two years ago, and exposes the hard deadline of April 2022 that the England and Wales Cricket Board is attempting to impose on them as far-fetched. On Wednesday the ECB was forced to postpone publication of its plan to improve inclusivity in cricket while it negotiated with counties over the wording of this commitment. The board hopes to be able to publish a revised plan on



Thursday, but it is clear that no agreement is likely to be reached without watering down this clause. The Guardian found that of 158 current board members at the 18 first-class counties, according to the counties' own websites or their most recently published reports or accounts, only 28 are women - less than 18%. Only Derbyshire, who have three women on a nine-person board, have unequivocally met the target, with Lancashire closest to joining them - six of the 16 attendees at their board meetings are women, but

only two of eight are full members of the board. As part of an agreement struck with the ECB in June 2019 over the distribution of broadcasting revenues, counties all signed up to the County Partnership Agreement that committed them to working towards appointing more diverse and inclusive boards. Specifically, they agreed to "adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender and a minimum of one board member from a BAME background".

## Government's fan-led review calls for Premier League clubs to pay transfer tax

**London, November 25:** Premier League clubs should pay a stamp duty-style tax on every transfer fee to help support the English football pyramid, the government's fan-led review has said, in one of 47 recommendations to safeguard the future of the game. The highly anticipated report, led by the Conservative MP Tracey Crouch, was commissioned this year in response to ongoing crises of governance. Its proposals, according to Crouch, set out "a long-term sustainable position for English football". The government will make a statement on the report in parliament on Thursday, with the possibility of legislation being announced next spring in the Queen's speech. Confirmed in the review is the recommendation that an independent regulator should oversee the English game. Able to grant licences to compete in league football, the regulator would have oversight of a club's finances and decide whether owners and directors were fit to hold their role, including the application of a new integrity test. Rules around owners' responsibilities and financial commitments would be beefed up under the report's recommendations, coming into line with practices more commonly applied to banks or media companies. The transfer levy, meanwhile, could see a tax of as much as 10% put on Premier League deals, with the money redistributed.

## Jürgen Klopp thrilled by Thiago 'thunderball' as Liverpool see off Porto



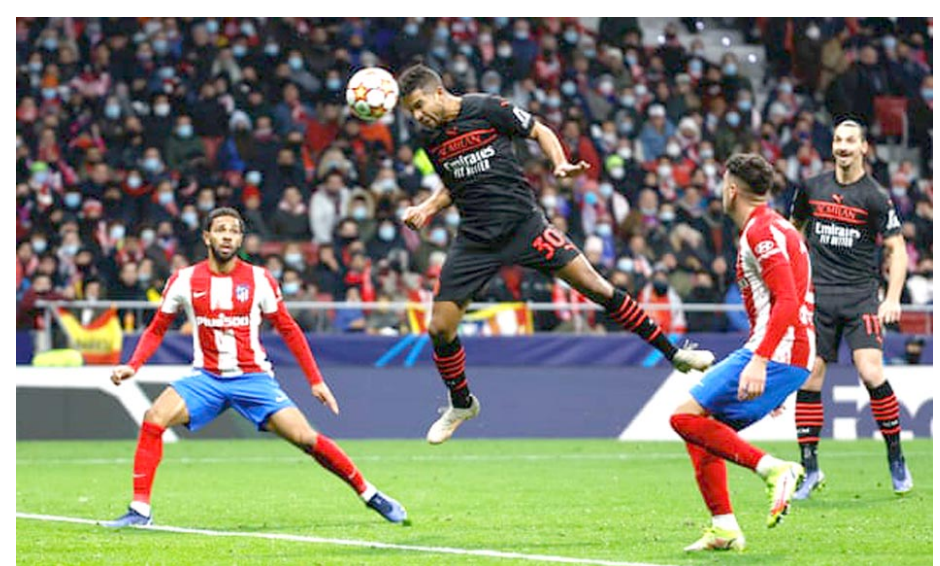
**Liverpool, November 25:** Nothing can disrupt Liverpool's procession through a group of European heavyweights. Jürgen Klopp rested, re-energised and recuperated players against Porto and was rewarded with a fifth successive victory that yielded the club's highest ever points tally in the Champions League group phase. He could not have wished for more. Tyler Morton, at 19, started for the first time at Anfield and was

the embodiment of composure in central midfield. Thiago Alcántara illuminated the night with a stunning opening goal while Mohamed Salah produced another moment of individual brilliance to score his 17th goal in 17 games this season. Those are the bullet points, but there was plenty for Klopp to savour. Thiago, Takumi Minamino, Ibrahima Konaté and Neco Williams all gained valuable game

time ahead of an intense winter schedule. Jordan Henderson, Andy Robertson and James Milner all appeared from the bench following injury. Virgil van Dijk, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Diogo Jota all got the night off. The Liverpool lineup looked different to Porto but they were left with a familiar sense of deflation in the company of Klopp's players. "We have moments when we are not cool to play against," the Liverpool manager said. "I didn't expect that tonight to be honest because we changed decisive things and had to grow into the game. We had a lot of things to think about: who was coming back from injury, who has played a lot of games, who needs resting. It worked out really well." The luxury of

managing resources was not available to Sérgio Conceição. With one point separating his Porto team from Atlético Madrid at kick-off, and the Spanish champions visiting Estádio do Dragão for the final game, their incentive exceeded avenging September's 5-1 home thumping by Liverpool. The visitors started brightly with the pace of Luis Díaz on the left and creativity of Otávio on the right, allied to the aerial strength of Mehdi Taremi, unsettling a makeshift home defence. Their good work was constantly undermined by a poor finish, final ball or decision, however, and Porto will finish their campaign in a three-way fight for second place with Atlético and Milan. Diego Simone may be sweating on Liverpool's outcome at the San Siro.

**London, November 25:** When they needed him most, Milan's Junior Messias appeared. With three minutes remaining at the Wanda Metropolitano and their elimination drawing ever closer, the Brazilian rose above everyone to head in the goal that gives them life, sending staff and teammates streaming from their bench and this group into a final day when almost anything can happen. By the other bench, Diego Simone stood looking into space. This had been coming, and it is not over yet, but that didn't make it hurt any less. "It's hard to lose like this," Jan Oblak said. Liverpool are through of course - they already were - but this result means Porto, Milan and Atlético can all join them, drop into the Europa League or be knocked out entirely. Atlético are bottom and must beat Porto to have



any chance, their fate not in their own hands even then. Milan must play Liverpool and theirs is not either. Only Porto control their own destiny. Stefano Pioli's side had been so close to falling but deserved to live to fight another day. Not just here, and not only in the final 20

minutes when they threw everything at Atlético, but in previous games too. Milan were entitled to wonder how they came into this penultimate round of games bottom. That feeling deepened in a first half in which they again dominated Atlético, as they had done in their defeat at San Siro. Theo Hernández's return began by being dumped on the turf but before long he was up and running at his former club. It was Brahim Díaz, on loan from Atlético's rivals Real Madrid, who most impressed though, a superb slalom and shot setting the tone after six minutes. Playing off the front, Brahim moved with a speed, intelligence and intent that Atlético struggled to control, while behind him Sandro Tonali hit diagonal passes that pulled the hosts out of position. Rodrigo De Paul and Marcos Llorente began to combine, giving Atlético a foothold - giving Antoine Griezmann a chance that he swiped at, too - but still it was

Milan that most moved this game. Not that either keeper really moved much by half-time on a cold night at the Metropolitano. Within two minutes of the restart, both had. The more notable stop was Ciprian Tatarusanu's from Thomas Lemar, and then Griezmann escaped up the left and crossed for Yannick Carrasco to turn past the post. This was better now, the game opening up. Olivier Giroud tried a Zidane volley, only from further out, and sent it well over the bar. Frank Kessié then hit a shot even higher, about the time that news reached of Porto now trailing - a little light for both sides coming from Liverpool. Simon Kjær headed over next, the shift Milan's way soon becoming definitive. There were 20 minutes remaining and six changes followed at once: two for Atlético and four for Milan, including the introduction of Zlatan Ibrahimović, the impressive Tiémoué Bakayoko, and the man who would ultimately win this game.

## 'It is not fair': Murphy rails at amateurs in pro snooker ... after defeat by amateur

**London, November 25:** Shaun Murphy reacted angrily after crashing out of the first round of the UK Championship, saying his 6-5 defeat by Si Jiahui was "not fair" and that amateurs should not be allowed to play in professional tournaments. World Snooker chiefs later issued a robust response, saying they "strongly disagreed" with Murphy's claims and insisting the opportunity for young amateur players to compete

on the biggest stage formed a "crucial part" of their development. Murphy - winner of the tournament in 2008 and runner-up at the world championship earlier this year - had fought back from 5-1 down to force a decider against the 19-year-old Si, who fell off the main tour at the end of last season, but then spurned an opportunity to finally seal the match. The loss sparked a rancorous reaction rarely seen at the elite levels of

professional sport. "I am going to sound like a grumpy old man but that young man shouldn't be in the tournament," Murphy told BBC Radio 5 live following his early exit at the hands of



the Chinese teenager. "It is not fair, it is not right." He continued: "I feel extremely hard done by that I have lost to someone who shouldn't even be in the building. I don't know why we as a sport allow amateurs to compete in professional tournaments. This is our livelihood. This is our living. We are self-employed individuals and not contracted sportsmen. We don't play for a team." The other 127 runners and riders in the tournament,

it is their livelihood, too. It is wrong, in my opinion, to walk into somebody who is not playing with the same pressures and concerns I am. He played like a man who does not have a care in the world, because he does not have a care in the world. It is not fair, it is not right. "I am not picking on him as a young man, he deserved his victory. Amateurs should not be allowed in professional tournaments, the end. This is our livelihood. This is how

I put food on the table. This is how I earn money. Since turning professional at 15, I have earned the right to call myself a professional snooker player. He hasn't done that. He shouldn't be on the table." Si had earlier missed a golden chance himself to wrap up what would have been a comfortable 6-1 win after clawing back three snookers required only to then miss the blue with victory seemingly in sight.



# UEFA Champions League: Manchester City, PSG, Real Madrid joined by Sporting in last-16

Manchester City,  
November 25 :

The parade of European powers advancing to the Champions League knockout stage Wednesday was disrupted by Sporting Lisbon completing a stunning turnaround to join them. Manchester City and Real Madrid are back in the round of 16 after beating teams they lost to in September. Paris Saint-Germain also goes through despite its 2-1 loss at City after leading when Kylian Mbappé scored early in the second half. Madrid's 3-0 win at Sheriff - avenging a 2-1 home defeat to the champion of Moldova two months ago - included a goal for Karim Benzema on a day of legal trouble for the forward and ensured Inter Milan also advanced from Group D by beating Shakhtar Donetsk 2-0. Three-time European champion Inter returns to the round of 16 after a 10-



year absence, though Sporting ended a 13-year wait by beating Borussia Dortmund 3-1. Pedro Gonçalves scored twice. Sporting seemed overmatched in September when routed at home by Ajax then beaten in Dortmund, but three straight wins lifted the surprise Portuguese title-winner to advance with a game to spare. "Teams grow," Sporting coach Rúben Amorim said. "It's great,

good for the project, but we still have a lot to do." Ajax and Liverpool extended their dominating group-stage campaigns with fifth straight wins. Ajax's 2-1 win at Besiktas came thanks to two goals from record-setting forward Sébastien Haller, who came on as a substitute. Haller has now scored in his first five career Champions League games and is the fastest player to get to nine goals

in the competition. Liverpool cruised to a 2-0 win over Porto and moved an astonishing 10 points clear of the Portuguese team in second place in Group B that promises a tense final round on Dec. 7. AC Milan is still in contention after finding an 87th-minute goal from a 30-year-old Champions League debutant to win 1-0 at Atlético Madrid. Junior Messias's goal left both

teams on four points with Milan next hosting Liverpool and last-place Atlético going to Porto. Leipzig was missing American coach Jesse Marsch, who tested positive for COVID-19, yet overwhelmed Club Brugge 5-0 in Belgium in their battle to finish third in Group A behind Man City and PSG. Third-place teams in Champions League groups earn a ticket to the second-tier Europa League knockout playoffs in February. Dortmund and Sheriff will be among them. Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé, Neymar. PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino was able to pick his superstar forward line to face Pep Guardiola's Man City without a typical center forward or Kevin De Bruyne because of a COVID-19 infection. City still had enough despite failing to turn first-half dominance into goals and falling behind to Mbappé's goal in the 50th. Raheem Sterling struck with a classic City tap-in goal in the 63rd and, after Neymar wasted a clear chance, Gabriel Jesus won it in the 77th with a scuffed shot that beat PSG goalkeeper Kélor Navas. Pochettino eliminated City from the Champions League in the same stadium as Tottenham coach three seasons ago, and there is speculation he could be back in Manchester soon as United coach. Both Manchester teams have won their groups and

will be seeded in the Round of 16 draw. AC Milan can still join its city rival by extending its first Champions League campaign in eight years. Milan went to Atlético with only one point from four Group B games and would have been eliminated with a loss. The late goal from on-loan Brazilian journeyman Junior Messias was "the biggest success of my life," he said. Inter had an easier time at San Siro against Shakhtar, with veteran forward Edin Džeko scoring twice in a six-minute spell midway through the second half. The top scorers in the Champions League this season are three superstars, a newcomer and an uncapped striker. Sébastien Haller, in his first season in the elite competition at age 27, joined Robert Lewandowski on nine by scoring both Ajax goals at Besiktas. The former Eintracht Frankfurt and West Ham forward is now the fastest ever to score nine goals at the start of his Champions League career. Haller has taken just five games, two fewer than Erling Haaland needed across two seasons for Salzburg and Borussia Dortmund. Christopher Nkunku also scored twice Wednesday and now has seven this season for Leipzig, one more than Cristiano Ronaldo's tally for Manchester United and Mohamed Salah for Liverpool.

## NFR observed Communal Harmony Campaign Week



**Staff Reporter**  
**Guwahati, Nov 25:** The Northeast Frontier Railway observed Communal Harmony Campaign Week (National Integration Week) from November, 19 to 25 to foster and reinforce the strength of public harmony and national integration as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebration. The birth anniversary of Bir Lachit Borphukan (November 24) was also celebrated. As part celebration, a pledge taking ceremony was held at the Maligaon Railway Headquarters complex. Shri Anshul Gupta, General Manager of N. F. Railway administered the pledge to all the official present for settlement of all differences and disputes relating to religion, language, region or other political or economic grievances by peaceful and constitutional means. Floral tributes were paid to the portrait of Bir Lachit Borphukan by the General Manager. Additional General Manager of N. F. Railway and other dignitaries present on the occasion. The Principal Chief Personnel Officer of N. F. Railway Chandrajit Saikia gave introductory speech

of the celebration. In his speech, the PCPO explained about the role of Bir Lachit Borphukan in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat who was a commander in the Ahom Kingdom. In his address, the General Manager briefed about the significance of celebration of this Communal Harmony Week. He said that Bir Lachit Borphukan is a source of great inspiration for us who awakens the sense of patriotism in the heart of everyone; he was victorious in the Battle of Saraighat and the Mughals were forced to retreat; thus the civilisation and culture of Assam and the Northeast were protected. Everyone should inspire and adopt the ideals shown by our heroes across the country so that along with the railways, we could contribute to noble cause of nation building, the General Manager stated. The celebrations aim to reaffirm the old traditions, culture and faith in worth of tolerance and brotherhood. It also assists in highlighting the inherent strength and flexibility of the country to maintain communal harmony.

## Australia named 'preferred candidate' to host 2027 Rugby World Cup



Melbourne,  
November 25 :

Australia has been given an effective green light to stage the 2027 men's Rugby World Cup after being listed by the governing body as the "preferred candidate" to host the global tournament. In a new approach to the hosting selection process, the World Rugby council has created a 'preferred candidate' phase, effectively giving Australia the go-ahead to work with the governing body to host the event for the first time since 2003. England was given similar backing on Wednesday to host the 2025 women's Rugby World Cup. Australia had been in a contest with the United States to stage the 2027 men's event but the council has effectively ruled out any duel by now indicating that the 2031 event is likely to go to the US. The final hosting rights will be awarded by the council in May next year, World Rugby added, but Wednesday's decision effectively means Australia can forge ahead with its plans for

one of the world's biggest sports events. Rugby Australia Chairman Hamish McLennan declared: "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity and we're now closer than ever before to making that dream a reality. Game On for Australia 2027." The announcement comes six months after Australia formally launched its bid, which sparked a series of community events across the country, with current Wallabies being involved. The 2027 event is projected to attract more than two million people across seven weeks of competition, including 200,000 international visitors, and generate a \$2.5bn boost for the economy. Organisers say it will create 13,300 jobs and stimulate \$500m in new trade and investment. McLennan added: "This is an exciting opportunity to shape a tournament which will continue the growth of our great game across Australia, the Pacific and globally and showcase our country to the world. Federal Minister for Sport Richard Colbeck said Australia had

another opportunity to "showcase our strength as an international host" and added that the tournament would "provide enormous economic benefits to our nation". World Rugby chairman, Sir Bill Beaumont, said in a statement: "The new approach to electing Rugby World Cup hosts is more flexible and collaborative."

World Rugby, he said, would be "working with potential hosts to optimise ... proposals and align them with long-term social and economic development plans for the benefit of their communities and the future expansion of the sport." The next women's Rugby World Cup was postponed until next year in New Zealand due to Covid-19.

## Serbia motivated by 2019 Davis Cup heartbreak: Novak Djokovic

London, November 24 :

World number one Novak Djokovic says Serbia will use the bitter memory of their Davis Cup Finals defeat in 2019 as motivation to lift the trophy for a second time this year. At the inaugural Davis Cup Finals in Madrid two years ago, Serbia were knocked out in the quarter-finals after Viktor Troicki and Djokovic lost a deciding doubles rubber to Russia. They actually had three match points and on the last one Troicki poked a routine volley out as he succumbed to nerves and in the post-

match news conference he broke down. Serbia are drawn in Group F with Austria and Germany - both of whom are missing their top players - and will be fancied to reach the knockout phase. "It's great to be back with the Davis Cup team," Djokovic told a news conference ahead of Friday's opening round-robin tie against Austria in Innsbruck, one of three host venues for the 18-nation Finals being staged over 11 days. "The last memory was a sad one, we were all very emotional, but nevertheless we were motivated to come back together and give it another go so here we are once again together again. "We are all friends



and the chemistry in the team is very good. That's an essential ingredient for success. "Troicki, who won the point to secure a Djokovic-inspired Serbia victory over France in the 2010 final in Belgrade, is now the captain while Djokovic's team mates are Filip Krajinovic, Dusan Lajovic, Laslo

Djere and Miomir Kecmanovic. In normal circumstances they would have received vocal backing from Austria's large Serb population but the OlympiaHalle will be silent after Austria declared a national lockdown to stem rising COVID-19 infections. It means all the ties in Group F and Group

C will be played without any fans present - a bitter blow to the event which was cancelled last year because of the pandemic. While sad that the energy of the fans will be missing, Djokovic supports the multi-city staging of the Davis Cup Finals, with main hosts Madrid also being joined by Turin. In 2019 the whole event was staged in Madrid after the International Tennis Federation's (ITF) controversial revamp of the team competition which had traditionally involved home and away ties played across several rounds through the year. "The Davis Cup should be experienced by more people. So I'm in favour of this

year's format and that there are more countries that can host group ties," Djokovic said. "I didn't think the format worked very well two years ago." Britain's captain Leon Smith, whose side will play their Group C ties in Innsbruck, said he wanted more open dialogue with the ITF and partners Kosmos Tennis, about the format of the Davis Cup going forward. "I'm hearing that some things might be happening next year, but only hearing it second hand," he said. "It would be good to talk about it before decisions are made."

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