



# The Assam Rising

Projecting the best of Northeast India everyday

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'Overvalued shares, expensive ads, false growth ...

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Sam Underhill pulls out of England's Six Nations squad with hip injury

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## NEWS

### IN BRIEF

#### Sanitary napkins to students

**Guwahati, January 27 :** On the occasion of India's 72nd Republic Day, JCB Industries from Guwahati celebrated womanhood and distributed 'Aadya' sanitary pads in various locations in and around Guwahati. The drive was carried out by two teams of JCB. The first team distributed Aadya sanitary napkins to students of different colleges and institutes in Guwahati. The second team distributed the pads to residents of paying guest houses and hostels across Guwahati. Places where the free pads were distributed include: Gauhati Medical College and Hospital - Girls hostel etc.

#### Heroin, Foreign Cigarettes Seized

**Guwahati, January 27 :** Assam Rifles and Excise and Narcotics department, during a joint operation on Wednesday morning, seized 107 grams of heroin worth Rs 42 lakh, 500 packets foreign cigarettes worth Rs 12 lakh 50 thousand and 72 cans of beer worth Rs 36 thousand from 2 smugglers in Mizoram's Zembawak Aizawl. The two smugglers have been arrested and interrogation is underway. The Assam Rifles in a statement said that drug smuggling is a major cause of concern for the state of Mizoram.

#### Sankardeva Mahotsav

**Guwahati, January 27 :** The three-day Sankardeva Mahotsav will be held from January 29 at Batadrawa under the aegis of Madhav Sanskriti Trust in association with Shri Shri Batadrawa Than Managing Committee. Thousands of visitors from across the state and outside are expecting to visit the Mahotsav including artists, litterateur and researchers to be held on January 29, 30 and 31. The opening ceremony will be held at Khagen Mahanta auditorium at Batadrawa and simultaneously at the same time at Aaiyeti Salguri Satra, Vetiyani Noruwa Satra, Noruwa Kuji Satra, Noruwa Bali Satra, Auniati Satra and Aailakhi Than. The festival is seen as an attempt to build, promote and propagate the works of Shrimanta Sankardeva. The cultural program will be performed by group of artists who have participated in the online workshops representing each of the 33 districts of the state.

### Sourav Ganguly admitted to Apollo Hospital after chest pain complaints

**Kolkata, January 27 :** This is the second time this month that the BCCI president Sourav Ganguly was admitted to the hospital. Earlier this month, the former cricketer was admitted in Kolkata's Woodlands Hospital after he was diagnosed with three blocked coronary arteries. BCCI President and former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly on



Wednesday was admitted to Apollo Hospital in Kolkata. According to reports, the 48-year-old was rushed to the hospital after complaints of chest pain on Tuesday night. This is the second time this month that the BCCI president was admitted to the hospital. Earlier this month, the former cricketer was admitted **Contd...Page 6**

## ULFA sets deadline : Threatens to kill oil company employee Ram Kumar

**Guwahati, January 27 :** The United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) on Wednesday set February 16 as the deadline for the release of Ram Kumar, a worker from Bihar who was abducted by them on December 22. A statement issued by Rumel Asom, a member of the banned militant group's publicity wing, asked Quippo Oil and Gas Infrastructure Limited, the drilling company for which Kumar works, to "sort out the issues" by February 16. "The deadline will not be extended beyond February 17," it said. The statement further said the company had initiated no step for the release of the two abducted persons,



Pranab Kumar Gogoi and Ram Kumar. "Instead, the security forces have stepped up operation against us," it added. The two employees of the drilling company were abducted at gunpoint by ULFA (I) and NSCN mem-

bers on December 22 from their work site under the Dyung police station in the militancy-affected Changlang district in Arunachal Pradesh. While Gogoi is a drilling superintendent, Kumar, a resident of Bahadurpur in Bihar's Khagaria district, is a radio operator in the company. Police officials had said that the outfits had demanded Rs 20 crore from the company for the workers' release. Ram Kumar, a radio operator of Quippo Oil and Gas Infrastructure Limited, who has been kept hostage by the ULFA-I will be executed after 16 February if the company does not take any action for the employee's release, in-

formed the militant group through a statement on Wednesday. The NSCN (IM) and United Liberation Front of Asom—Independent (ULFA-I) kidnapped Quippo's radio operator Ram Kumar who hails from Bihar and drilling superintendent Pranab Kumar Gogoi, of Sivasagar in Assam. The duo was kidnapped by armed militants on December 21 from a drilling location in Diyun under the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh. ULFA-I has set a huge price in exchange for the release of the two employees. Earlier, the United Liberation Front of Asom—Independent (ULFA-I) also **Contd...Page 6**

## CM inaugurates Ankia Bhaona Samaroh at Letekupukhuri

Gurujona's teachings must be followed to inculcate human values: CM



**Guwahati, January 27 :** Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today inaugurated the state level ankia bhaona samaroh organised by Sri Sri Bodola Padma Ata Sewa Samiti Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra Samiti at Sri Sri Madhabdev's birthplace at Letekupukhuri in Lakhimpur. Inaugurating the event, the Chief Minister said that the creations of Srimanta Sankardev and Sri Sri Madhabdev and cultural and spiritual awakening propagated by them have enabled the Assamese society to move forward in today's age of science and technology.

The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone of Monikut Griha at Sri Sri Madhabdev's birthplace and released the souvenir magazine of the Bhaona Samaroh. Saying that Srimanta Sankardev endeavoured to create a society on the basis of equality unity through the namghars while removing malice from the people's mind, Sonowal stressed on the need to inculcate the gurujona's teachings and ideals among the young generation to encourage human values. He also called for strong social movement to eliminate **Contd...Page 6**

## Union Budget 2021 Finance Ministry May Give Relief Up to Rs 80,000 in Total Tax Liability to Encourage Spending

**New Delhi, January 27 :** In order to put more money in the hands of the tax payer, the Finance Ministry is likely to provide tax relief of up to Rs 80,000 per annum in total tax liability. Sources informed CNBC-TV18 that on the basis of discussion during budget exercise there is strong

chooses the new regime, income tax would be applicable at a lower rate, but the person will have to forgo certain permissible exemptions and deductions available under old income tax regime. However, tax experts suggest there is not much enthusiasm among taxpayers for new system. So, to make it more popular, the coming budget may introduce certain changes in the slab rate of the new regime, which will give more headroom for payers to save taxes. At present, for an income of up to 2.5 lakh there is no tax, between 2.5 lakh to 5 Lakh there is 5 per cent tax, for 5 to 7.5 lakh it is 10 per cent, for 7.5 to 10 lakh it is 15 per cent, for 10 lakh to 12.5 lakh it is 20 per cent, for 12.5 to 15 lakh it is 25 per cent and for 15 lakh and above 30 per cent tax **Contd...Page 6**



possibility income tax payers may get relief between Rs 50,000 to Rs 80,000 in the total tax liability. CNBC reported that the government may change slabs for the new tax regime launched during the last budget. If one

## Sasikala, expelled AIADMK leader and Jayalalithaa's close aide, released after 4 years in prison

**New Delhi, January 27 :** Expelled AIADMK leader VK Sasikala has been released after serving four years imprisonment in a corruption case at a prison in Bengaluru. Sasikala was on Wednesday released after the formalities for her release were completed at the state-run Victoria Hospital, where she is undergoing treatment for Covid-19 infection, which she had contracted a week ago, along with her sister-in-law J Ilavarasi. "Yes, she has

been formally released," Parappana Agrahara Jail Superintendent V Sheshamurthy was quoted Independent legislator T T V Dhinakaran, Sasikala's nephew and founder of Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK) visited the hospital after she was released by jail officials. Sasikala would remain at the Victoria hospital for another three days as mandated under the Covid-19 protocol, though she is now asymptomatic



and her symptoms have reduced. "As per protocol, she will be discharged on 10th day (January 30) if she

is asymptomatic and free for oxygen support for at least three days," the hospital said in **Contd...Page 6**

## Soldier martyred, 3 others injured in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam as terrorists attack Indian Army's ROP

**New Delhi, January 27 :** The first terrorist attack of 2021 in Jammu and Kashmir took place on Wednesday. In a statement, the Indian Army said that one of the soldiers has been critically injured in the attack that took place in Shamshipura area of Khanabal in the district. All the in-



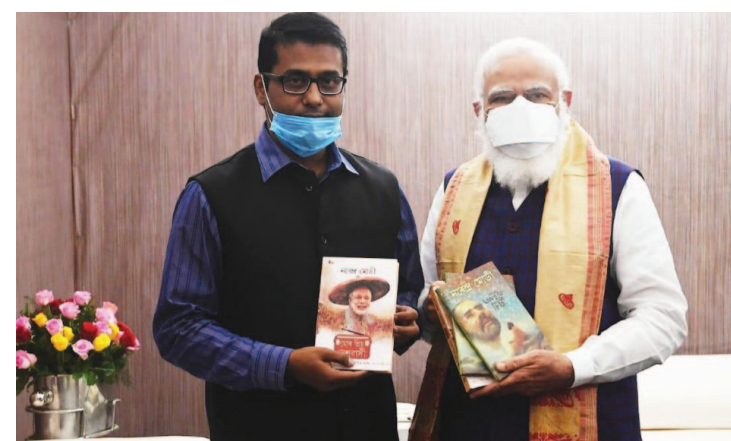
jured soldiers have been admitted to Srinagar's 92 Base Hospital for treatment. The first terrorist attack of 2021 in Jammu and Kashmir took place on Wednesday. In a statement, the Indian Army said that one of the soldiers has been critically injured in the attack that took **Contd...Page 6**

## PM Modi expresses happiness, Receives Translated Version Of His Books In Assamese

**Guwahati, January 27 :** Creating a benchmark in the history of book publication of the country, Assam Publishing Company, a city-based Book Publication House has published the translated and assembled version of two books by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister also received the books from the hand of the publisher, Sanjay Kumar Sanyal at Sivasagar. The books are the Assamese translation of his 'Let-

ter to Mother' (as 'Aailoi Cithi' in Assamese language, translated by Utpal Datta, former Assistant Director of All India Radio, Ranchi), and the other is the compilation of some selected portions from the programme "Mann Ki Baat, (titled as Mor Priya Deshbashi in Assamese) done by Namrata Datta. One of the leading artists of the country, Saurish Mitra has created the cover pages and developed the inside illustrations. Publisher

Sanjay Kumar Sanyal was specially invited for a one to one meet with the PM, regarding the books. Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma were also present at that short event. Honorable Prime Minister praises the organisation and inspires Mr Sanyal by saying - "carry on with your work despite all obstacles, we are with you". Twitter Suspends **Contd...Page 6**



## Assam's educationist Dr Ramesh Pathak passes away

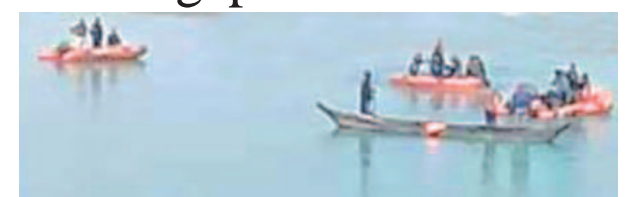
**Guwahati, January 27 :** Assam's renowned linguist, educationist and litterateur, Sahityacharya Dr. Ramesh Pathak passed away on Tuesday. Dr. Pathak, who was suffering from some ailments for the last several months, died in the evening on Tuesday evening at his

residence in the Hatigaon area in Guwahati. He was 79. The eminent linguist was a former professor in the Department of Assamese at Cotton College (now university). Dr. Pathak has a lot of contributions to the Assamese language and literature. He **Contd...Page 6**



Chief Minister's Media Advisor Hrishikesh Goswami paying rich tributes to the mortal remains of the eminent litterateur and linguist Dr. Ramesh Pathak at Nabagraha Crematorium in Guwahati

## NDRF recovers bodies of four Missing IES of four missing persons in Jorhat



**Guwahati, January 27 :** Dead bodies of the two children and two adults who drowned after their boat capsized in the Baghmora picnic spot in the Jorhat dis-

trict of Assam were recovered by a team of NDRF on Wednesday morning. The tragic incident took place after a small boat carrying 13 members of two families capsized on Tuesday. The families were enjoying a boat ride in the Winter Carnival when the overloaded boat capsized. Following the incident, all the 13 people in the boat **Contd...Page 6**

## PMAY(U) Cup 2021 held under Fit India Movement in Hailakandi

**Hailakandi, January 27 :** Under Fit India Movement, a PMAY-U Cup 2021 cricket tournament was organised at the District Sports Association Ground here on Wednesday. Sponsored by Project Director PMAY (U), the tournament saw two teams namely Hailakandi Municipal Board and Lala Municipal Board vying for the top spot with the former clinching the match by 7 wickets. District Development Commissioner, Ranadeep Kumar Laskar gave away the trophies to the champion and the runner-up in the presence of Project Director, PMAY (U), Jyotirmoy Daimary, Executive Officer, **Contd...Page 6**

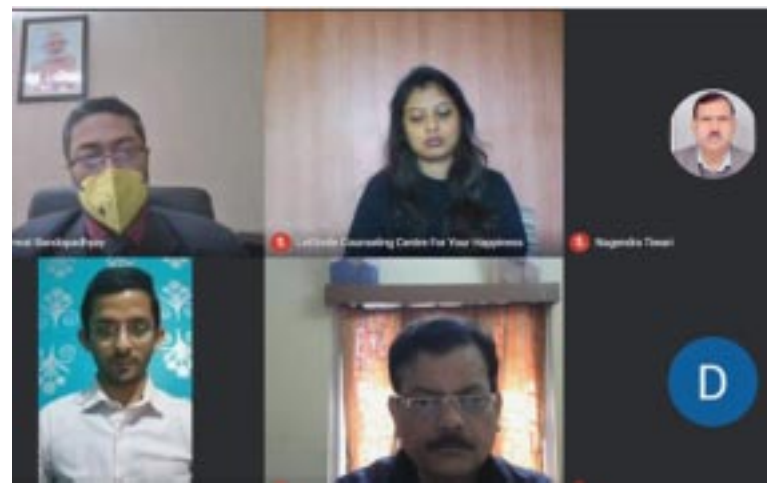


## An Effective Covid-19 Vaccination involves meticulous planning and strategic decisions, opine experts

**Guwahati, Jan 27 :** An Effective Covid-19 Vaccination involves meticulous planning and strategic decisions, experts opined in a Webinar organised by Press Information Bureau, Guwahati on the topic 'Meticulous Planning and Strategic decisions for Covid-19 Vaccination Process in North Eastern Region of the country' here today. Experts from Medical along with academicians deliberated and discussed about Covid-19 Vaccination process and its awareness from medical, psychological, academic, societal and policy perspective. Talking about awareness initiatives and latest activities on Covid-19 vaccine by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Nagendra Nath Tiwari, Deputy Technical Adviser, Food and Nutrition Board, Eastern Region, Kolkata said these are safe and immunogenic vaccines on which various trials have been done by scientific community. He said that Government has planned to provide vaccine to healthcare workers in Government health facility or at vaccination centres. He said all the citizens of the country should be optimistic with the vaccination as many tests have been done before it is administered. Dr Manzoor Ahmad, MS(Surgery), ZVM Unani Medical College and Hospital, Pune said that safety measures and efficacy tests have been done on these vaccines. Dr Ahmad

further said that all vaccinators have been trained. He said that Government is doing phased vaccination process. He said that this vaccination is first provided to people who are at higher risk of getting infected with Covid-19. He

serious and hospitalised patients because of any illness might defer the vaccination too. Ms PrachiRathi, Psychologist emphasised that Covid vaccination exemplifies the achievements of science and technology in this era



said that for equitable distribution of vaccine, Government is working tirelessly. He said that India has the advantage of running one of the largest immunisation programme every year and this is largest Vaccination endeavour. He said that people should defer vaccination if persons have active symptoms of Covid-19 infection. Dr Ahmad further said that it should defer also for those Covid-19 patients who have been provided anti-Covid-19 monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma. He said that acutely

for betterment of humanity. She said that Technology is the primary factor which would bring prosperity and achievements, be it on Covid awareness or the Covid vaccine and the vaccination process. She further said that effective monitoring of the vaccination process, planning and deployment of vaccination teams, preparation at the vaccination centres, technological planning, training to the vaccinators would be vital aspects for the success of the vaccination process. AbdurRahmanMallick, Advocate

Delhi High Court said that technology planning and public awareness are vital value-adding process in this vaccination endeavour. He said that Human Resources training including training of vaccinators about vaccine and how to administer the vaccine are also vital. Lauding PIB Guwahati for this doing this discussion, he said that awareness to people and talking about the frequently asked Questions of common people are always welcome so that awareness and proper knowledge reach all the citizens of the country. The informative and knowledge webinar was planned and coordinated by ShriSamratBandyopadhyay, Joint Director (M & C), PIB, Guwahati. Senior officers of PIB were present in webinar. Ms Hiramani Das, Field Exhibition Officer, Regional Outreach Bureau, Guwahati welcomed the experts as the webinar delved into details on the various aspects of the topic such as Covid information management including in the arena of health, efficacy of communication, among others. The interactive Webinar has enthusiastic participation of students, academicians and medical fraternity as they said that this information cum knowledge Webinar would help them in informed decision making and to be aware about the Covid precaution and about Vaccination process.

## Republic Day celebrated with fanfare

**Aalo, Jan 27 :** The 72nd Republic Day was celebrated along with rest of the country in district headquarter and all administrative headquarters of the district with gaiety on 26th Jan Last. The West Siang Deputy Commissioner Shri Moki Loyi unfurled the ceremonial flag as Chief Guest of the function. Addressing a mammoth gathering, recalled the names of martyrs and architects of the Indian constitution who won freedom for us and established a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic for the people of India and appealed people of all walks of life to strive hard to contribute our best for the growth and development of the nation. He disclosed that many of the development schemes have been hampered by Covid-19 pandemic and though many projects could not be completed in time, he appealed all departments to take them up in letter and spirit. The Covid-19 vaccine has been launched and it is being administered to 1458 Health care workers first and then to police, army and people above 50 years



phase wise. The DC also gave away Commendation Drug Recovery Addicts Shri Kirge Raksap, Atur Rongphar and Dulo Poyom those who have reintegrated themselves with mainstream of lifeto associate with Mothersâ€™ Vision by playing active role in mentoring 100 days rehabilitation centre to drug addicts/alcoholic persons in the centre. All other meritorious govt official from various departments was also given Commendation Certificates on the occasion. The Kumao Regiment from Aalo Military Station displayed weapons, band and put up all tents to help the district administration. Horticulture, Agriculture bagged the first and second prizes for Exhibition Stalls put up on the occasion.

## Republic Day observed peacefully in North Lakhimpur

**Panigaon, January 27 :** Along with the rest of the country, the 72nd Republic Day was celebrated peacefully in North Lakhimpur yesterday. At the central function held under the aegis of Lakhimpur District Administration, Assam Government Minister Ranjit Dutta unfurled the National Flag at North Lakhimpur Govt. Higher Secondary School field at 9 a.m. In his speech after unfurling the Tricolour, the Minister Ranjit Dutta told the gathering, "The BJP-led Government is fully determined to make a corruption-free India." Though Corona virus is controlled to a far extent, but we should not think it is vanished," he added. "A lot

of developmental works have been done for the people of Lakhimpur district by the BJP-led Government and Lakhimpur District Administration in last four and half years," he further added. The Minister also dwelt on the developmental activities and schemes of the Government, highlighting the nature of development to the state that has further accelerated growth and development. Besides the Minister Ranjit Dutta, Lakhimpur MLA Utpal Dutta, Lakhimpur DC Dr. Jivan B. and Lakhimpur dist. SP Lungnit Terung were also attended in the function. During the function, a magnificent cultural programme was held.

## 72th Republic Day Celebration : Health and Finance Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma unfurls tri colour at Nagaon

**NAGAON, Jan 27:** Along with rest of the country, Nagaon district administration also celebrated centrally the 72th Republic Day at Nagaon Nurul Amin Stadium on Tuesday last. Attending the occasion as chief guest, the State Health and Finance Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma unfurled the Tri colours and received the guard of honour from Assam Police, Home Guards as well as other para - military forces and NCC cadets. Paying tribute to the freedom fighters and martyrs of freedom movement, Dr Sarma elaborated the developmental and other flagship welfare schemes generated for the people of the state by the state as well as Union government. During the celebration, students from several educational institutions participated in march past. Besides, yoga and several sports related to yoga and Bihu dance were also displayed by two special teams of experts and artistes. Local MLA Rupak Sarma, Raha MLA Dimbeswar Das, senior BJP leader and ex railway union minister for state,

Rajen Gohain, Deputy Commissioner Kavitha Padmanabhan, Superintendent of Police, Gaurab Abhijit Dilip and officials from Nagaon district administration were present in the celebration programme.

Meanwhile, Nagaon Lions club also celebrated the 72th Republic Day in befitted way at its office in the town. The president of the club Pralay Shaha hoisted the tri colour at its office premise. On occasion of it, the club members distributed aluminium rooftop among six poor families in the town. Besides, a sawing machine, donated by club member Sapna Neogi was also handed over to a poor helpless woman. Moreover, the lions of the club also distributed various fruits and sweet among the patients in Shankar Mission Eye Hospital in the town. Club secretary Ajoy Mittal, PRO Biswajit Mahanta, Binud Khetawat, Sanjay Garudia, Ranjit Tamuli Phukan, Deben Singh, Jugal Agarwal, Gouri Sengupta and other were present in celebration programme, a release added.

## 50 Blankets distributed among the needy in Hojai



**Hojai, January 27 :** Fifty blankets were distributed among the needy by Marwari Sammelan, Hojai Unit on the auspicious occasion of 72th Republic Day at Ramsadan in Laxminarayan Temple on Tuesday afternoon. A Meeting was organised, which was presided over by Unit's President Pradeep Kumar Sureka. Marwari Panchayat President Dindayal Pansari, noted Physician Dr. Mohan Agarwal graced as Chief Guest on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion Dr. Agarwal lauded the efforts of the newly formed Committee, he said this is an exem-

plary step taken by the unit for helping the needy, such programs encourages others to come forward and contribute in the noble deeds. Erstwhile President Kamkha Prasad Agarwal and present Vice President Niranjan Sarawagi also spoke on the occasion. The entire programs was anchored by General Secretary Ramesh Mundra. After this, blankets were serially distributed among the needy people. On this occasion, Sitaram Daima, Krishna Pansari, Mahesh Channani, Rajesh Kejriwal, Binod Sarawagi, Manish Beriwal, Sunil Chawcharia, Praveen Sarwagi, Mohan Chaudhary, Pramod Agarwala, Mohan More, Ramgopal Sarawagi, Kaluram Saini, Ramawatar Saini, Nikhil Kr Mundra, Abhinash Sarawagi, Dinesh Dixit, Sanjay Murarka, Chainrup Sarma, Manoj Tolawat, Deepak Chanani marked their attendance and appreciated the working of the unit

## Hojai Zila Sahitya Sabha mourns on the death of Founder Member and Present Vice-President Padma Kanta Nath

**Hojai, January 27 :** Hojai Zila Sahitya Sabha mourns on the death of their present Vice-President namely Padma Kanta Nath. Notably, Hojai Zila Sahitya Sabha's Vice-President Padma Kanta Nath (77) breathed his last at a Private Hospital in Guwahati on Monday night. He was sick from last few days and while undergoing treatment he passed away. His deceased body was brought at his native place viz., Mainapathar in Hojai on Tuesday morning. After that along with his family members the body was brought at Satyarthi Bezbarua Bhawan in Hojai i.e. at the office of Hojai Zila Sahitya Sabha, where the President Dr. Guneshwar Saika, General Secretary Anup Kumar Barthakur along with members and people from each community paid him homage. They said, "Nath Sir will be remembered forever for his enormous contribution and soft nature". "He was a devoted social worker and a beloved educationist with charismatic teachings skills". They added, Nath, a resident of Mainapathar Village in Hojai was associated with many social organisations. Along with Social activities, He served as a Teacher at Jugijaan Madhya Angrajee Vidyalaya and retired as Head Master in the year 2002. He was very popular among his Students

and within each community, because of his gentle and cordial nature. He was the founder member of Hojai Zila Sahitya Sabha, former President of Hojai Zila Karamchari Parishad, ex-President of Jugijaan Madhya Angrajee Vidyalaya's governing body. His demise was widely mourned among his family members, relatives and well-wishers. After Sabha, his deceased body was brought at Ajmal Boys College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Ajmal Law College, then at Ajmal Foundation, Maarkazul Ma'ariff and Maryam College of Science and Technology. And, at each venue he was given homage with utmost respect. On the otherhand, Hojai Zila Karamchari Parishad, Hojai Press Club, All the Units of Zila Sahitya Sabha, Marwari Samellan Hojai Unit, Playboy Sports Club, Ankur Sangha, Jatiya Vidyalaya, Hojai, Akhil Bang Sahitya Samellan, Hojai Unit; many other organisations and many individuals have condoled on his demise and prayed almighty for the eternal peace of his departed soul. A pall of gloom has descended in the District on his death. His last rites were performed at Mainapathar in a gloomy environment. He has left behind his wife, a son, three daughters and a host of relatives.

## Yoga diploma course at Shivananda Yoga studio, Chowkidingee, Dibrugarh



**Dibrugarh, January 27 :** Swami Shivananda Yogajyoti Seva Kendra, promoted by Indian Yoga Culture and Yoga Therapy Centre, Guwahati and affiliated to Srimanta Sankardeva University of Health Sciences has formally started their one-year job-oriented yoga diploma course at Shivananda Yoga studio at Chowkidingee, Dibrugarh. The centre also offering PGDY, One year diploma course (DYK), Six months certificate course, Three month yoga course, One month foundation course and many classes like Yoga championship, yoga class for all age bar, acro yoga, corporate yoga etc. The institution is being run by Utpal Baruah National Yoga Referee & Yoga Teacher along with yoga experts like Mantu Sonowal, Pranab Kumar Nath under noble guidance of Dr. Minu Buragohain Principal of Swami Shivananda Yogijyoti Mahavidyalaya and Rekha Sarma Boruah, the of Secretary of the institution. Interested candidates may contact Shivananda Yoga Studio, Near Srimanta Sankardeva Hospital & Research Institute (SSHRI), Mancotta, Road, Dibrugarh, mobile no. 9957617391/9706003634, Email Id: ssyjskdib2010@gmail.com for further details and assistance.

## All Assam 'Kalita (Alpine) Janagosthi Sanmilon' will be held from 29 January

**Sarupeta, 27 January:** A common non-political forum of the Kalita (Alpine) Janagosthi, All Assam 'Kalita (Alpine) Janagosthi Sanmilon' is going to be held on 29th and 30th January, 2021 at Milan Mandir premises in Saupata under Bajali district. According to the organizing committee the preparations for the conference were almost complete. The first day programme will commence at 6.30am with the setting up of Guru Asana and Banit prajwalan followed by flag hoisting, Smriti tarpan, name registration of the delegates, cleanliness programme, painting competition etc. From 11 am onwards a seminar will be held on the topic "Kalita Janagosthi Aru Janajatkoronor Prasongikota". A souvenir also be inaugurate along with this programme. Delegates meet-up and a cultural programme will be held in the evening. Similarly, on the second day a multicultural rally will start at 9.30 am, followed by an open meet-

ing from 1 pm. Onwards. The meeting will be attended by Minister of Health, Education, PwD, Himanta Biswa Sharma, Where Chandra Mohan Patuway, Minister of Industry, Transport, Atul Bora, Minister of Agriculture, Bhadesh Kalita, Irrigation Minister, Phonibhushan Choudhury, Minister of Food and Civil Aviation, MP Ripun Bora, MP Naba Kumar Sornia, MP Abdul Khalek are expected to be present. Special arrangements for the dining hall have been made at Sarupeta Boys Higher Secondary School playground for the invitees and officials coming from different parts of the state. The fourteenth Biennial Sarupeta convention will be conducted by Bajali District Committee. President of the organizing Committee, Sompurnananda Talukdar and General Secretary Mridul Kumar Talukdar have cordially invited and sought the support from public and well-wishers.

## Rhino Electricals opened NE 1st 'Electrical Experience Centre' in Guwahati



**Guwahati, January 27 :** Rhino Electricals is a 35 year old franchise in the Electrical space. On the aus-

picious occasion of Nation's 72nd Republic Day Rhino Electricals opened Northeast's first ever Electrical Experience Centre in Guwahati. The first ever North East's Electrical Experience Centre is located in

extra edge of accessibility to its customers. The experience centre was inaugurated by Mr. Rakesh Agarwal, Managing Director, APDCL. The inauguration was also attended by other esteemed guests including Shri B.D. Pasari (Founder, Rhino Electircals), Mr. Sashi Biyani (CMD of Kolors), Mr. Biswajeet Mallick (Zonal Manager, OPPLE) and Mr. Maninder Bhattacharjee (Crompton) alongwith Mr. Gopal Pasari and Mr. Ravi Pasari (Co-Founders of Rhino Electricals).

Speaking on the occasion Chief Guest Mr. Rakesh Agarwal said Rhino Electricals has set a benchmark in the electrical arena not only in Assam but entire North-East India thereby symbolising the trust of its customers and serving them throughout. He further added that the Experience Centre would serve as a One Stop Solution for all the Electrical needs under the same roof. Mr. Pasari added that the centre spreads over an area of 2500 sq. ft. The newly launched space will ca-

ter to the electrical needs of corporates, offices, large complexes, individual houses and alike at affordable and cost efficient rates giving it a whole new experience for the buyers. One can grab their hand on electrical products ranging from exclusive range of switches, LED lights, wires, smart fans, geysers and other electrical accessories from multiple brands like KOLORS, OPPLE, CROMPTON, RR KABEL, USHA, ATOMBERG and many more.

## Qmamu is becoming the most liked search engine by users surpassing the other search engines with a big ratio

**Qmamu- the winning example of Vocal for Local initiative**

**January 2021:** Vocal for Local, under India's ongoing initiative, Atmanirbhar Abhiyan is reaching new heights every day. Up until now, we have been using foreign search engines. India did not have any search engine of its own, which has been recognized not only in India but abroad as well. Keeping this in mind, Nishith Rajeshbhai Dhanani, a young man from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, has launched a new private search engine on 26 January, completely based on the security of user data. Data is saved in encrypted form in the fast operating Qmamu search engine and has the power to provide search results five times faster than the other search engines. Thus, it has become the world's fastest powered search engine. Not only this but now, the user will also not have to face data loss because Qmamu will focus directly on the user searched data without performing unnecessary loading while performing the search. According to Nishith, "Everyone has the right to access and search the internet. This belief inspired us to create India's own private search engine in India. Qmamu is a home ground search engine made to dedicate to the country and the countrymen. That's why it was launched on the auspicious occasion of Republic Day. Qmamu is a search engine designed to benefit local and small businesses, who does not maintain any search history nor track user search." So, what are we waiting for? Let us take another step towards Atmanirbhar India by adopting the Qmamu search engine, which is dedicated entirely to India and its people.



## NCP president Sharad Pawar blames Centre for violence in Delhi; check what other leaders said

**New Delhi, January 27 :** NCP president Sharad Pawar on Tuesday (January 26) condemned the incidents of violence in Delhi as some farmers entered into the city and clashed with the police, saying nobody will support whatever happened today but the reason behind it cannot be ignored either. The NCP chief said, "those (farmers) sitting calmly grew angry, the Centre didn't fulfill its responsibility. Govt should act maturely and take the right decision." On the tractor rally in Delhi, Pawar further said "Farmers from Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh held a protest in a disciplined manner but the government didn't take them seriously. As restraint ended, the tractor march was taken out. Centre's responsibility was to keep law and order in control but they failed." "The way the agitation handled today is regrettable. We all sitting in Opposition support the farmers' cause and I appeal-- now you (farmers) should go back to your respective villages peacefully and should not give any opportunity to the govt to blame you," the NCP chief added. Interacting with media persons in Mumbai, Pawar said Punjab may head towards restlessness if the Centre uses force against protesters and asked the Modi government to not commit that sin. He said a way out should have been found over the farmers demands without hurting the protesters who have been agitating for two months. Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said that whatever happened in Delhi is a matter of national shame as it

does not suit either the protestors or the government. He also questioned the Centre as to why the chaos was allowed to spread, and why did the government wait for this incident? Did the government know that agitating farmers will lose their patience, he asked. The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Tuesday condemned the incidents of violence in Delhi as some farmers entered into the city and clashed with the police, saying the party stands for peace and communal harmony and believes in democratic values. The party also appealed to the people to maintain peace and calm at all costs, a statement said. An emergency meeting of the SAD core committee will be convened on Wednesday to consider the situation arising out of the incidents in the national capital. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that the Centre's "insensitive attitude" and indifference towards farmers are to be blamed for the violent protests in Delhi, maintaining that she was deeply disturbed by the situation. She, however, urged the Centre to engage with the farmers and repeal the new farm laws, which she termed draconian. In a tweet, she said, "Deeply disturbed by worrying and painful developments that have unfolded on the streets of Delhi. Centre's insensitive attitude and indifference towards our farmer brothers and sisters have to be blamed for this situation." Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said the violence during the farmers' tractor parade against the new agriculture laws in Delhi is unacceptable even as he ordered a high alert in his state. Condemning the incidents that took place at the historic Red Fort, he urged the farmers to immediately vacate the national capital and return to the borders, where they had been protesting peacefully for the past two months.

# 'Overvalued shares, expensive ads, false growth projection' - allegations against Republic TV

**Mumbai/New Delhi, January 27 :** Projecting a revenue growth that is more than double the market growth rate, charging advertising rates 126 per cent higher than the closest peer, valuing shares at an exponentially high rate and artificially increasing share value - these are some of the alleged reasons why ARG Outlier Media Private Limited, which owns Republic TV, is under the Mumbai Police's scanner. The Mumbai Police is probing ARG Outlier for suspected financial irregularities in connection with its investigation into alleged manipulation of Television Rating Points (TRPs). An interim forensic audit report of the probe, which is part of the Mumbai Police's supplementary chargesheet in the case filed on 11 January, has detailed how ARG Outlier allegedly valued its shares at an exorbitant rate by projecting ambitious advertising income in future years even before the launch of its channel. The report, a copy of which is with ThePrint, also stated how Republic TV had the highest viewership right since the first month of its launch, and that the "charging of such a high advertising rate by the Republic Media network and the fluctuations in viewership as compared to others creates suspicion that it is involved in manipulating TRPs". "The alleged manipulation of TRPs by ARG had resulted in increasing the advertising revenues, increasing the valuation of shares and attracting investors," the interim forensic report said. The 56-page report, prepared by auditing firm Sarath & Associates, also said a detailed financial analysis is still in progress and more such financial irregularities, if any, are required to be further scrutinised. ThePrint reached Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime) Milind Bharambe and Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime Branch) Shashank Sandbhor, who is probing the TRP case, for comment via calls and texts but there was no response until the time of publishing this report. Republic TV founder and editor-in-chief Amab Goswami also did not respond to ThePrint's calls and texts. According to the interim forensic audit report, ARG Outlier had allegedly valued its Compulsory Convertible Non-Cumulative Participatory Preference Shares (CCPPS) at an "exponentially high premium" even before it launched its channel, Republic TV, in May 2017, based on projected higher revenue for future years. CCPPS are those that have to be converted to ordinary shares after a pre-determined date. ARG considered a 29 per cent jump in

revenue year-on-year even as the industry growth according to the valuation report was pegged at just 13.1 per cent, the audit report said. The CCPPS were first valued in November 2016 and then again in November 2018 - before the launch of ARG Outlier's Hindi channel - at 150 per cent of the value two years ago. ARG Outlier issued these CCPPS to four private investors and raised Rs 27.5 crore. Existing investors exited at 300 per cent rise in their investments in August 2019 based on these valuations, though the expected market return from the investments, the valuation report showed, was 15.6 per cent, according to the audit report. "ARG



Outlier had valued its shares at these prices based on the higher projections of revenues and profit margins year over year. However, till 2018-19, the company was making a cash loss as per their audited balance sheets. TRP manipulations had helped ARG Outlier to charge increased advertisement rates from advertising agencies and increase its revenue in a short period of three years of its channel launch," the forensic audit said. The audit analysed advertising rates for India TV, Zee News, CNN-IBN and Republic TV for 2017 and 2018 to show that Republic has consistently had one of the highest rates in the industry since its launch. Similarly, a proposal of a private firm on the Republic Media Network in October 2019 said the net rate charged for the channel's prime time 9 pm to 11 pm was Rs 27,200. The closest competitor was India Today at Rs 12,000. The report didn't clarify if these rates were calculated on a 10-second basis, as is the standard practice. ARG Outlier allegedly also artificially increased its share value by routing funds to repurchase its own shares at a higher value, the audit said. In November 2016, ARG Outlier allotted CCPPS to its holding company, SARG Media Holding Pvt. Ltd and Asianet News Media and Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. In November 2019 and January 2020, SARG Media purchased 5,658

CCPPS issued by its own subsidiary from Asianet News paying a price 300 per cent higher. Republic TV editor-in-chief Amab Goswami and his wife Samyabrata Goswami are co-founders and promoters in SARG Media, and own 93 per cent of the shares. "These transactions raises suspicious over the genuineness of such value of the CCPS, its valuations which are based on the very high growth levels of ARG Outlier require to be further investigated (sic)," the audit report said. The audit also flagged possible round tripping of shares, which refers to a series of transactions between companies to boost the revenue of the firm

of Republic TV and Times Now was three times more than that of other channels. "The viewership of all the channels was ranging in decimals, while the viewership of Republic TV and Times Now was ranging within 1 to 4.50. Such a huge fluctuation in the viewership creates suspicious on the existence of TRP manipulations... (sic)," the audit report said. As part of the investigation, the Mumbai Police in a letter dated 21 December 2020 requested the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) to provide data for Times Now as well as Republic TV from 2016 to 2018, saying "there are reasons to believe that the data published was different from data received specifically with respect to television channels Times Now and Republic". The notice also said there are also reasons to believe that manipulation of data and internal process would have resulted in financial implications - direct or indirect. While the raw outlier data shows Times Now has higher impressions, Republic TV had higher impressions after "data cleaning". In a statement on 22 January, the Times Network, which runs Times Now, said it had suspected large scale manipulation after the launch of Republic TV in 2017 and had observed "significant abnormalities" in the market-wise ratings of that channel indicating "ground level tampering or deliberate intervention at the raw data level to favour them". The company said it complained to BARC repeatedly for two years, without any resolution. "As per BARC's Forensic Audit of July 2020, as well as the multiple email and WhatsApp chats of that period, which has been accessed by Mumbai Police, it is now clear that Times Now's TRPs were indeed manually reduced by BARC officials headed by Partho Dasgupta and Romil Ramgarhia before publishing, with the intention to give undue advantage to Republic TV in the English News Genre and thereby fraudulently declare Republic TV as No.1, even when Times Now was consistently higher by a large margin and was the undisputed leader of the Genre," the company said in its statement. It added that the Times Network has suffered losses due to BARC's "unacceptable and unpardonable act", and is contemplating all possible legal actions against the organisation. ThePrint reached BARC spokesperson seeking to know what is data cleaning and if BARC had indulged in a "data cleaning" practice in the past before publishing data. A BARC spokesperson declined to comment and said: "As the matter is a

subject of an ongoing investigation by the various law enforcement agencies, we are constrained to respond to your enquiries." An industry source said, "Removal of outliers' is a process for sure, but there was no clarity over whether it was done manually or was automated in this case of Republic TV and Times Now.

**IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT JUDGE, (MACT) KRISHNAGIRI**  
**I.A. NO. 1/2019 IN M.C.O.P. NO. 903/2018**  
National Insurance Co. Ltd.  
.....Petitioner/2nd Respondent  
Rajapalayam  
-Vs-  
1. Sumathi Bai  
2. Krishna Bai  
3. Puspapalathi Bai  
5. Munnu Bai  
.....Respondents/Respondents  
-Vs-  
1. Angaiyarkanni  
2. Gangadhara  
3. Reliance General Insurance Co. Ltd. Mumbai  
.....Respondents/Petitioners  
-Vs-  
1. Carrier India Pvt Ltd. Guwahati  
2. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd, Guwahati  
3. Mustafa  
4. Ifco Tokio General Insurance Co. Ltd, Bangalore  
.....Proposed Parties / Respondents  
**COURT NOTICE**  
In the above mentioned I.A. No and MCOP No. the case is posted on 15.02.2021, for the appearance of No. 1, proposed party/Respondent either in person or through counsel at 10.30 A.M. before the court. Failing which exparte orders will be passed. By the order of this Hon'ble court.  
R. Charan Singh M.A., L.L.B., L.L.M. Advocate, Krishnagiri

**IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT JUDGE, (MACT) KRISHNAGIRI**  
**I.A. NO. 1/2019 IN M.C.O.P. NO. 200/2016**  
National Insurance Co. Ltd.  
Rajapalayam  
.....Petitioner/ Respondent  
-Vs-  
1. Krishnappa  
2. Muthalamma  
3. Minor Chandrasekar  
4. Minor Baba Minors Rep by N.F. Grand Father 1st Petitioner  
.....Respondents/Petitioners  
-Vs-  
1. Angaiyarkanni  
2. Gangadhara  
3. Reliance General Insurance Co. Ltd. Mumbai  
.....Respondents/Respondents  
-Vs-  
1. Carrier India Pvt Ltd. Guwahati  
2. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd, Guwahati  
3. Mustafa  
4. Ifco Tokio General Insurance Co. Ltd, Bangalore  
.....Proposed Parties / Respondents  
**COURT NOTICE**  
In the above mentioned I.A. No and MCOP No. the case is posted on 15.02.2021, for the appearance of No. 1, proposed party/Respondent either in person or through counsel at 10.30 A.M. before the court. Failing which exparte orders will be passed. By the order of this Hon'ble court.  
R. Charan Singh M.A., L.L.B., L.L.M. Advocate, Krishnagiri

**New Delhi, January 27 :** The violence that erupted during Tuesday's tractor rally by farmers could result in hardening of the Centre's stand on the three controversial farm laws, even though no decision has been taken yet on continuation or cancellation of talks with the farmers, top government sources told. "The government is unlikely to make fresh offers for talks or make any new offer," a Union minister, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told. Another senior BJP leader said the incident was "unprecedented" and "will change the course of the protest". But irrespective of what happened Tuesday, BJP will continue to reach out to farmers across the country and inform them about the three laws, especially the way the government has been



accommodating the protesting farmers, the leader added. A tractor rally by farmers Tuesday, against the three farm laws announced by the Modi government, turned violent after protesters deviated from the route approved by the Delhi Police. Thousands of farmers entered the national capital and reached ITO and the Red Fort in central Delhi, clashing with the police who resorted to lathi charge and lobbed teargas shells. Top government sources also said no decision has been taken yet on whether the proposal to suspend the laws for 18 months should be withdrawn. In a climbdown of sorts from its earlier stand, the Centre had on 20 January proposed to suspend the three new farm laws for up to 18 months until the standoff is resolved. The farmer unions had, however, rejected the offer and said they won't accept anything other than total repeal. "Our main focus right now is to ensure that law and order is maintained. Home Minister Amit

Shah is closely monitoring the situation. It's too early to take any policy decision related to the farm law. But today's incident will force us to rethink our earlier stand," the source quoted a b o v e added. Shah held a high-level meeting Tuesday evening with home secretary Ajay Bhalla and Delhi police commissioner S.N. Srivastava to review the law and order situation in the national capital in the wake of the violence. However, no formal meeting was held on the issue at the level of Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who is closely involved in the government's strategy to resolve the farmers' agitation. Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar also did not hold any meeting. Sources also said the government's future course of action will be decided by the PM in consultation with his senior ministers. The government could rethink its strategy following the violence, but there is not going to be any repeal of the three farm laws, a senior Union minister, who is involved in backroom strategy to end the standoff with farmers, told. "We are clear that the three farm laws are not going to be repealed,"

said the Union minister, who did not want to be named. The violence at the tractor rally has almost ended the sanctity of peaceful farmers' protest, the second Union minister told. "The farmers had given an undertaking that they will deploy volunteers and obey the police route and the march will be peaceful. But no volunteer was seen managing the unruly protesters. Today's incident is an indication that the farmers' protest is not in the hands of union leaders any more," the minister said. The minister also said that this is the reason that when the government proposed to suspend the three farm laws for 18 months, some 15 farm organisations were in favour of accepting the offer. BJP spokesperson R.P. Singh told ThePrint: "Today, farmers' unions have breached the government's trust. We are saying from Day One that funding for the agitation is coming from outside. Unions said volunteers will manage the protest, no weapon will be there but all promises were broken." Singh said the government had been very conciliatory in its approach with the farmers. "The government made an offer to suspend law, the Supreme Court also suspended the implementation of law but some forces don't want to end the agitation, which was established today." Farmer Union leaders, meanwhile, said Tuesday's violence was a deliberate conspiracy to discredit the farmers' movement. "There was no violence since the

protest started over two months now. Suddenly, why would we do something like this to discredit our own movement? It does not make any sense," said Hannan Mollah, general secretary, All India Kisan Sabha. Mollah said the Sanyukta Kisan Morcha will be holding a meeting Wednesday or Thursday to discuss and find out if any outside elements were behind Tuesday's violence.

**IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT JUDGE, (MACT) KRISHNAGIRI**  
**I.A. NO. 1/2019 IN M.C.O.P. NO. 172/2018**  
National Insurance Co. Ltd.  
Rajapalayam  
.....Petitioner/ Respondent  
-Vs-  
Vimalabai ..Respondent/Petitioner  
-Vs-  
1. Angaiyarkanni  
2. Gangadhara  
3. Reliance General Insurance Co. Ltd. Mumbai  
.....Respondents/Respondents  
-Vs-  
1. Carrier India Pvt Ltd. Guwahati  
2. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd, Guwahati  
3. Mustafa  
4. Ifco Tokio General Insurance Co. Ltd, Bangalore  
.....Proposed Parties / Respondents  
**COURT NOTICE**  
In the above mentioned I.A. No and MCOP No. the case is posted on 06.02.2021, for the appearance of No. 1, proposed party/Respondent either in person or through counsel at 10.30 A.M. before the court and file counter if any. Failing which exparte orders will be passed. By the order of this Hon'ble court.  
R. Charan Singh M.A., L.L.B., L.L.M. Advocate, Krishnagiri

**IN THE COURT OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT JUDGE, (MACT) KRISHNAGIRI**  
**I.A. NO. 5/2019 IN M.C.O.P. NO. 205/2016**  
National Insurance Co. Ltd.  
.....Petitioner/2nd Respondent  
-Vs-  
Manohar .....Respondent/Petitioner  
-Vs-  
1. Angaiyarkanni  
2. Gangadhara  
3. Reliance General Insurance Co. Ltd. Mumbai  
.....Respondents/Respondents  
-Vs-  
1. Carrier India Pvt Ltd. Guwahati  
2. Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd, Guwahati  
3. Mustafa  
4. Ifco Tokio General Insurance Co. Ltd, Bangalore  
.....Proposed Parties / Respondents  
**COURT NOTICE**  
In the above mentioned I.A. No and MCOP No. the case is posted on 15.02.2021, for the appearance of No. 1, proposed party/Respondent either in person or through counsel at 10.30 A.M. before the court. Failing which exparte orders will be passed. By the order of this Hon'ble court.  
R. Charan Singh M.A., L.L.B., L.L.M. Advocate, Krishnagiri

**Canara Bank**  
**Premises Section, Guwahati Circle Office Dee Bee Grande, Panjabari Road, Six Miles, Guwahati-781022**  
**SALE NOTICE**  
Canara Bank invites single bid offer for **Sale of Maruti SX4** (2013 Petrol model) Car on "As Is Where Is" basis in Guwahati. Application forms can be downloaded from our Bank's Website: <https://canarabank.com>. Last date of application is 10.02.2021 up to 04.00 pm.  
Place : Guwahati  
Date : 27.01.2021  
**Assistant General Manager**  
Tel: 0361-2334020



## THE ASSAM RISING

VOL. NO. V, ISSUE NO. 351 THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021

# Protests across Russia

Supporters of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny have called for more rallies across the country this weekend to demand his release after he was put in pre-trial detention over parole violations he denies. One of Navalny's leading allies, lawyer and politician Lyubov Sobol, told reporters on Tuesday that his anti-corruption movement would continue to operate despite many people being detained after protests swept through Russian cities at the weekend. As a wave of criminal cases were launched against those detained by police, a woman who was kicked to the ground by a baton-wielding policeman in St Petersburg has emerged as a symbol of the heavy-handed way the authorities cracked down on the protesters. The case of Margarita Yudina, 54, has become a national scandal after footage of her being kicked her in the stomach by a policeman for asking why the officer and his colleagues had detained went viral online. In the video, Yudina is seen falling back on the pavement after being kicked, banging her head hard. Hospital documents show she suffered concussion and needed stitches to the back of her head. Although the officer visited her in hospital and apologised, Yudina told Novaya Gazeta newspaper on Tuesday that she wanted justice. "This case needs to run its legal course," she said. "So I intend to appeal to the Investigative Committee and to find out who attacked me. I want the person who kicked me to be found, named and punished according to the law." The Kremlin said that the "violence" by some protesters was unprecedented and aggressive. Incidences of police violence were far fewer and being investigated, it said. But Navalny's supporters were undeterred, Sobol said, and would continue with demonstrations calling for his release despite "arrests of our followers and allies, open criminal probes (and) criminal probes that are yet to come. She said they planned protests on 31 January and 2 February, when a court is scheduled to consider motions to convert his suspended sentence into a real prison term. She added that one of their goals was to stop president Vladimir Putin's party, United Russia, in the upcoming parliamentary balloting. "There are lots of plans and tasks for the nearest future, [as well as] midterm and longterm [ones], and everyone understands what needs to be done both tomorrow, and a month from now, and half a year from now," Sobol said. "One of the main goals is to ... destroy the monopoly of United Russia in the parliamentary election that will take place this September." The crackdown on the protesters continued to bring international outrage. The top diplomats of the United States, Britain, Canada, France Germany, Italy and Japan, as well as the high representative of the European Union, condemned the "politically motivated arrest and detention" of Navalny and said they were "deeply concerned by the detention of thousands of peaceful protesters and journalists." Joe Biden raised concerns about the case when he spoke to Putin for the first time as US president on Tuesday. Police have broken up demonstrations in the eastern Khabarovsk region, amid stern warnings for people to stay home. Mr Navalny's supporters flooded social media with calls to rally at protests expected in dozens of cities later. He is Russian leader Vladimir Putin's most high-profile critic. He was arrested last Sunday after he flew back to Moscow from Berlin, where he had been recovering from a near-fatal nerve agent attack in Russia last August. On his return, he was immediately taken into custody and found guilty of violating parole conditions. He says it is a trumped-up case designed to silence him. media caption Alexei Navalny was filmed by the BBC saying goodbye to his wife and then being led away by authorities. More than 60m people have watched his new video about President Vladimir Putin's alleged luxury Black Sea palace. The Kremlin denies the property belongs to the president. Among those detained in Moscow on Thursday were his spokeswoman, Kira Yarmysh, and one of his lawyers, Lyubov Sobol. They face fines or short jail terms. Ms Sobol, who has a young child, was later released. But Ms Yarmysh has now been jailed for nine days. Prominent Navalny activists are also being held in the cities of Vladivostok, Novosibirsk and Krasnodar. Unauthorised rallies are being planned in more than 60 cities across Russia for Saturday. Moscow police say any unauthorised demonstrations and provocations will be "immediately suppressed". A thousand people were reported to have come onto the streets in the Khabarovsk region, with some of them already detained. Mr Navalny's wife Yulia, who travelled back to Russia with him from Germany, said she would demonstrate in Moscow "for myself, for him, for our children, for the values and the ideals that we share". Alexei Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) has drawn millions of followers on social media, through slickly produced videos alleging large-scale official corruption. He has long denounced Mr Putin's administration as "feudal" and full of "crooks and thieves". Recent events suggest the opposite. First Mr Navalny was targeted with a nerve agent, allegedly by a secret group of FSB state security hitmen. Instead of investigating the poisoning, Russia is investigating him: on his return from Germany the Kremlin critic was arrested. Having put Mr Navalny behind bars, the authorities are putting pressure on his supporters. The Kremlin's greatest fear is of a Ukraine-style revolution in Russia that would sweep away those in power. There's no indication that such a scenario is imminent. But with economic problems growing, the Kremlin will worry that Mr Navalny could act as a lightning rod for protest sentiment. That explains the police crackdown on Navalny allies ahead of Saturday's potential protests. Plus, this is getting personal. Mr Navalny's video about "Putin's Palace" on the Black Sea was designed to cause maximum embarrassment to the Russian president. In the "Putin's palace" video Mr Navalny alleges that rich businessmen close to Mr Putin paid for a sumptuous 17,691 sq m (190,424 sq ft) palace for him at Gelendzhik, by the Black Sea. It is alleged to have a casino, a theatre and many other comforts, including a vineyard and tea house in the sprawling grounds. The Kremlin dismissed the YouTube video as a "pseudo-investigation" aimed at earning money for Mr Navalny. Prosecutors have warned people against protesting in support of Mr Navalny on Saturday. Russia's education ministry has told parents not to allow their children to attend. Former world chess champion Garry Kasparov - now a leading anti-Putin activist based in the US - tweeted that pro-Navalny posts were being widely blocked in Russia.

# It is India's journey that will decide the future of democracy, not US

A sigh of relief manifested across the world as Joe Biden succeeded to the US presidency, presaging a more predictable and 'normal' conduct of domestic and external affairs, under an experienced and professional administration. Biden has promised to heal a deeply divided country, to promote reconciliation and unity and to restore the democratic and liberal credentials of the US as the world's oldest democracy. However, this promises to be a long haul and unlikely to be achieved during one four-year stint. He would be deemed a success if he at least manages to, as he said, "lower the temperature". The social and political polarisation on display in the US is increasingly manifest in other democracies, including our own. A key causal factor is the rising inequalities of wealth and income that undermines the most powerful appeal of democracy, which is egalitarianism - the equality of opportunity it promises and the fairness with which the State will treat all its citizens. As economies develop, and technology advances, there will inevitably be winners and losers. A democratic State will have to continually ensure that it is able to redistribute rising incomes and wealth in a manner that helps those left behind to retain hope in a better future, if not for themselves then, at least, for their children. It is not that globalisation in itself has spawned huge inequalities, nor that inequality is inherent in increasingly arcane and specialised technological advancement. The failure lies with public policy that has failed to distribute the benefits of globalisation more evenly. When the number of losers far outstrips the winners and this state of affairs persists and even worsens, democracy is challenged. This is what we witness in the US and in democracies across the world, India included. There is an intriguing



question how- ever. It is the political Left (in which I broadly include the liberal constituency) that has historically mobilised support among those who are at the lower end of the economic and social scale. In the present case, it is the Right and nativist forces who have captured the imagination of the exploited and deprived. The Left targets the rich and corporate sector; the Right does not pay a price for associating with this privileged minority and profiting from its generous funding. What explains this oddity? That there is an alliance between the populist and the powerful elements within the corporate sector is more than apparent. But the liberal and the Left have been unable to leverage this to mobilise support among those who are, in fact, at the receiving end of this powerful nexus. The Right has been remarkably successful in co-opting the ranks of the dejected and deprived to buttress its own power. How is this possible? The Right has been able to exploit the existing social, communal and sectarian fault-lines to deflect attention from its complicity in the disempowerment and the immiseration of the majority. In the US, it is by deliberately sharpening the racial divide, stoking the fear of immigrants and loss of cultural identity that a figure like Donald Trump was able to continue rewarding the corporate class with large tax cuts at the cost of the very services that could ameliorate the worsening economic status of the less educated White minority. Recently, historian Rana Dasgupta has drawn attention to a very cynical insight offered by Lyndon B. Johnson, former US President - "If you can convince the lowest White man he's better than the best coloured man, he won't notice you're picking his pocket. He'll give him somebody to look down upon and he'll empty his pockets for you." Dasgupta points to an ugly truth: Sometimes people can be persuaded to "prize the removal of others' rights above the preservation of their own." And this is what is happening in the US. Can Biden change this? Why is the Left unable to build its constituency in the ranks of the deprived? Precisely because ideologically, it sees its role as transcending the societal fault-lines and uniting around a more inclusive concept of egalitarianism. We see echoes of what

Johnson was alluding to in our own country. Those most affected by demonetisation were the already poor and those eking out a constantly threatened existence as small and medium enterprises and their unorganised workers. But millions were ready to stand in unending queues to get their paltry sums exchanged, their pain dulled by the belief that fat cats and money bags had been deprived of their ill-gotten gains. Except that they had not, and many in fact profited by turning their black money into white. Or if the lowliest Hindu is made to feel superior to the best among the Muslims in the country, perhaps they will be ready to accept their dire economic situation and forget who may be really responsible for their own deprivation. There was only one brief occasion when the current political dispensation was threatened and that was when the label of "suit-boot ki Sarkar" struck home. But then it was never built up into an alternative political narrative. The Left in India has failed precisely because it has become defensive about its core beliefs and started flirting with the narrow inclinations of the Right, for example, by doing its own religious rituals and spouting nationalist slogans. Nor is there stomach to shine the spotlight on the politician-bureaucracy nexus and big businesses that have come to dominate governments in democracies across the world. There are parallels between the oldest and the largest democracies in the world. Both are at critical junctures in their evolution as enlightened democracies envisaged by their respective Constitutions. But I believe that the future of democracy as a political ideal may likely be determined by the trajectory that India takes in the coming years rather than the US, especially when the Chinese model of authoritarian capitalism seems to be winning admirers across the world.

# When will Boris Johnson stop giving Covid variants a sporting chance?



It's been encouraging to hear for yonks now that this idea of quarantining overseas arrivals in hotels will finally get around to being discussed at today's meeting of the government's Covid-O committee. The O stands for "Oh my God, I hate Mondays, let's sack it off till Tuesday instead". I know none of us wishes to come off as impatient, but what are we actually doing here - trying to give the new variants a sporting chance? Intriguing that even at this stage the UK should regard itself as the scratch golfer of pandemic-handling, happy to allow the virus 32 shots, endless mulligans and several weeks of frictionless travel. Then again, maybe you have to take your wins where you can. For the past month, the virus has been the only thing able to cross our borders without getting tied up in red tape. Either way, Boris Johnson's government continues to make pandemic decisions with all the speed of the Supreme Soviet Secretariat. Don't ask for agile turnarounds. It would honestly be quicker to get Brezhnev to greenlight a clean energy programme. This is great for people who really enjoy lockdowns, who ideally want to wear four masks at once, who enjoy unnecessarily deep economic collapse, and who believe that a generation of children getting thrown under the bus is the price you have to pay for whatever version of purity they prioritise. For everyone else, it's the most giant, toxic, damaging, endlessly mishandled arseache. Right back last spring, pandemic lesson 101 was that once lockdown is rationally inevitable, the time to do it is now. The later you man up and actually push the button, the longer you will have to lock down for, the more economically and socially punishing it will consequently be, and the more deaths there will be. We learned this - or should have - many, many long months ago. Even if you are

the type of politician or individual who is - how to phrase this? - more relaxed about high death rates, you presumably care about the economy and social freedoms. So in short: what the gibbering shit are you doing? Why, more than nine months after we made this mistake first, do you still call for the same stripe of mistake to be made and expect a different outcome? As for the parliamentary restriction sceptics, who are partly responsible for the length of our current lockdown, where do they get off now shrieking about its extended harms? As it goes, I hope schools do start going

## Marina Hyde

back in mid-February, and am thrilled to read Public Health England declaring primary schools safe to open after half-term. But spare me the giving-of-a-toss about children by the likes of Mark Harper and Steve Baker from the so-called Covid Recovery Group (CRG). Has there ever been a misnomer like it? You might as well call the Luftwaffe the East End Recovery Group. These guys are the cowboy builders of the pandemic. They turn your leaking pipe into a collapsed central heating system, then tell you only they can fix it. In case they've forgotten, Mark and Steve & Co spent most of late autumn and early winter raging noisy public war against any form of lockdown or restrictions - and Boris Johnson listened to them. So when are such people going to take some responsibility for the fact that the schools have ended up having to close because in the end infection was so out of control there was nothing else for it? When are the "Covid Recovery Group" going to take some responsibility for the fact their science-free objections to taking action in timely fashion means we all have to pay a heftier and lengthier price at the back end of the lockdown instead? The answer, of course, is never. Because what they wield is power without responsibility. They can seemingly make

the prime minister do what they want, at least until things have gone so tits up that he has no choice but to U-turn. Yet despite being exactly the type who always bang on about people taking personal responsibility, they never take any themselves. Taking personal responsibility is for the likes of the poor and the obese. And so it is that we have to listen to people such as Steve Baker posturing that they don't like the predictable and predicted effects of precisely the things they spent October, November and December demanding. Come to that, what is Steve Baker even doing on a Zoom feed? He should be standing in the freezing cold on docks offering to fill in forms for fishermen about to lose their businesses thanks to another one of his brainwaves. Which brings us to the conclusion that the new awkward squad is largely the same as the old awkward squad. Many of the personnel from the Brextemist European Research Group (ERG) have simply migrated to the CRG, and the rest of us are once more dragged along for the ride. The UK's decades-long subservience to this relatively small number of Conservative wingnuts recalls nothing so much as Kingsley Amis's relationship to his own libido. "For 50 years," he reflected, "it was like being chained to an idiot."

# Six of the 10 unprovoked shark attack deaths last year were in Australia

Unprovoked shark bites killed 10 people around the world in 2020 with six of the deaths in Australian waters, according to international figures. The number of unprovoked shark bites and encounters in Australia was only slightly above average, with 18 incidents recorded by the University of Florida's International Shark Attack File (Isaf). The average over the last five years is 16. The 10 deaths from shark bites globally was higher than the average of four but the 57 confirmed unprovoked shark encounters was well below the five-year average of 80. Dr Gavin Naylor, director of the Florida Program for Shark Research at the university, told the Guardian: "Is it a rotten year for fatalities? Absolutely. It's terrible, but I'm not calling this a trend." The fall in reported bites could be due to Covid-19 lockdowns, a drop in coastal tourism or a delay in work to report them to the file, the report said. There were eight bites in New South Wales, three in Queensland, five in Western Australia, one in Victoria and one

in South Australia. Australia's spike of six deaths was "likely the product of chance", the report said, as the number of bites was only slightly above average. For comparison, data from Royal Life Saving Australia shows between July 2019 and June 2020 there were 125 drowning deaths along Australia's coastline. Naylor said Australia's concentrated population and tourism along the coast coupled with com-

## Graham Readfearn

parably higher numbers of large great white sharks meant Australia always had higher numbers of serious incidents. He said: "You have this higher density of white sharks in western and south-eastern Australia and they can be 13 or 14 feet (four metres) and if they bite someone then it's often a serious injury." The higher the number of people in the water and the larger the animal, the higher the chances [of a serious bite]. But there's nothing intrinsically nasty about white sharks. "Four of Australia's six deaths in the file were from great white



shark bites, the data showed. Of the 18 unprovoked bites where the species could be confirmed, 10 came from great whites, one from a lemon shark and one from a wobbegong. Naylor said the attack file focused on unprovoked bites. A provoked bite is when humans have interfered with the natural behaviour of the shark, for example through fishing or baiting close by. Three additional deaths came from provoked bites globally in 2020, the Isaf data says. The report says: "Annual fluctuations in shark-human interactions are common. Despite 2020's spike in fatalities, long-term trends show a decreasing number of annual fatalities."



# Luxury housing in south India largely resilient to pandemic-induced downturn

**New Delhi, January 27 :** The luxury housing market in south India not only remained largely insulated from Covid-induced disruptions, but the pandemic spurred demand for larger, ready-to-move-in (RTMI) homes. As governments and businesses recalibrate their moves, the market is witnessing a growing interest from high net worth individuals (HNIs) and NRIs looking for a stable asset class and service-rich and managed residences. The momentum in luxury real estate in south India in the last few months is expected to continue in 2021, especially in the IT-ITeS and manufacturing-driven cities of Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai. Besides a healthy concentration of HNIs and NRIs, the need for homes with multi-purpose usable areas within an integrated township offering connectivity, state-of-art amenities, exclusivity and large open spaces is also sustaining the demand. Dhanlaxmi Bank, new MD, CEO of Dhanlaxmi Bank, JK Shivan Dhanlaxmi Bank appoints JK Shivan as MD & CEO. The holding company faces debt maturities of about \$1.2 billion till March 2022. S&P revises Vedanta Resources outlook from 'negative' to 'stable'. Embassy Group's president (residential business) Reeza Sebastian said south India has always been an attractive real estate market for NRIs due to the right pricing, higher rental yields, on-time completion of projects and trusted

developers. Bangalore-based Puravankara's managing director Ashish Puravankara said, "We have observed a significant rise in demand for 3 BHK, 4 BHK and villa projects. From our internal anecdotal data, we understand that buyers are not looking at the size of houses in terms of square feet per



se, but are rather looking forward to having more rooms in order to use them for home office, workouts or home schooling. "While Brigade Enterprises' CEO (residential) Rajendra Joshi said the segment improved significantly in Q4 2020. Top players continued to generate strong sales due to market consolidation. Bookings by NRIs are expected to increase as demand for large size units and finished inventory is gaining momentum. Anarock Property Consultants chairman Anuj Puri said

buyers in luxury housing are out in the market for various reasons. Discounts and multiple offers doled out by developers have made such properties far more lucrative and attractive for several buyers. It also scores high with NRIs as a depreciating rupee translates into greater buying power. "Additionally, real estate has



always been an important diversifier in HNI investment portfolios - now, amid a pandemic that has shaken up the financial and stock markets, it remains a reliably stable asset," he said. Square Yards principal partner & head (India sales) Rahul Purohit emphasised that southern cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai have historically been relatively more resilient to market dynamics. Southern cities have always been less speculative than their northern counterparts. This has stood

them in good stead at times of unexpected market exigencies, he said. "Also, the inclination towards larger homes and villa development in the south has only grown in the post-Covid era, which has in turn resulted in a spike in demand for luxury segment in these cities. Hyderabad and Bangalore have seen an uptick in sales of properties priced above ₹1 crore and also for uber-luxury properties pegged at ₹5 crore and above," he said. Going ahead, luxury residences promise to sustain the current momentum. "We witnessed a nearly 140% jump in sales and enquiries in Q4 2020 and strongly believe that this trend will continue in the upcoming quarters where we see increased interest from NRIs and end-users looking for service rich and managed residences," said Embassy's Sebastian. Brigade's Joshi agreed. "We do not anticipate much of a change, in fact, we saw sales going back to pre-Covid levels in the last couple of quarters in the luxury segment and that will remain consistent going forward," he said. Puravankara said, "We are buoyant about the luxury sector, given the traction in last few quarters. We can expect this momentum to continue over the next quarters in 2021. Our ultra-luxury line World Home Collections' first offering in Bangalore was a runaway success, and this prompts us to replicate this in Chennai and Mumbai in the next few quarters."

## Govt weighing proposal to infuse more capital into state-run general insurers

**Mumbai, January 27 :** Typically, the solvency ratio is the size of an insurer's capital in relation to the risk it takes - assets minus liabilities. It reflects its ability to settle claims. As much as Rs 3,475 crore was released after the Cabinet approval, while the rest (Rs 6,475 crore) was to be infused later this fiscal in one or more tranches. As much as Rs 3,475 crore was released after the Cabinet approval, while the rest (Rs 6,475 crore) was to be infused later this fiscal in one or more tranches. After banks, the government is weighing a proposal to infuse more capital into state-run general insurers - National, Oriental and United in FY22 to shore up their precarious solvency levels and enable them to meet regulatory norms in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, sources told FE. Since the government has already approved an infusion of Rs 9,950 crore in FY21, the requirement for FY22, however, will likely be lower than this fiscal, one of the sources said. "It's (more infusion) not a matter of 'if' but 'when'. The three insurance companies may require at least Rs 5,000 crore more next fiscal to achieve the solvency ratio of 1.5 times and meet the regulatory norms. The pandemic has weighed on their already-high stress levels," the source said. The Trai had recommended that both E and V band should be opened with 'light touch regulation' and allotment should be on a 'link to link basis'. High-speed broadband services: Telcos and technology majors spar over spectrum band. For this, Amazon uses artificial intelligence to create a 6 feet radius around every employee. Looking for new solutions: Pairing traditional gadgets with new algorithms. An announcement to this effect is expected in the coming Budget, said a senior official with one of these insurers. However, any capital infusion will be tied to strict performance goals-for growth, claim settlements and curtailment of expenses. Typically, the solvency ratio is the size of an insurer's capital in relation to the risk it takes - assets minus liabilities. It reflects its ability to settle claims. Against the minimum regulatory requirement of 1.5

times, National Insurance's solvency ratio languished at just 0.02 at the end of FY20, while United India's hit 0.3 and Oriental Insurance's 0.92. Thanks to initial infusion this fiscal, National's solvency improved to 0.2 time at the end of September 2020 - still way below the requirement. United's solvency rose a tad to 0.7 as of June 2020. Sensing the insurers' urgent need, the Cabinet in July 2020 approved higher capital (Rs 9,950 crore) for this fiscal than the budgetary allocation of Rs 6,950 crore. The idea was to enable them to use the improved solvency to march towards profitability. It also formally called off a proposed merger of these firms in the wake of the pandemic. FE had earlier reported that apart from the department of financial services, even IRDAI chairman Subhash Khuntia had flagged the issue of low solvency levels of these insurance companies. As much as Rs 3,475 crore was released after the Cabinet approval, while the rest (Rs 6,475 crore) was to be infused later this fiscal in one or more tranches. The Cabinet also approved a hike in the authorised share capital of National Insurance Company to Rs 7,500 crore and that of United India Insurance Company and Oriental Insurance Company to Rs 5,000 crore each, to "give effect to the capital infusion". The insurers were provided Rs 2,500 crore in capital in FY20. Unlike the infusion into public-sector banks in recent years through recapitalisation bonds, which are off-Budget items, funds for the insurers are being provided from the Budget. Even before the pandemic spread its tentacles, the insurers were bleeding. Stress in certain segments, especially in crop insurance, apart from tough competition from private players, weighed on their revenue streams. With a high combined ratio of 160.8%, National's losses zoomed to Rs 4,108 crore in FY20 from Rs 1,696 crore in the previous fiscal. A combined ratio of over 100% essentially means the company's total outgo is higher than its earnings. United's combined ratio stood at 132% and its losses widened to Rs 1,486 crore in FY20 from Rs 1,271 crore a year

before. Similarly, Oriental saw a combined ratio of 141% and losses, too, rose to Rs 1,524 crore last fiscal from Rs 1,136 crore in FY19. Already, the government has asked them to cut expenses and rationalise branches to improve their financial health.

## VMware Appoints Guru Venkatachalam as Chief Technology Officer, Asia Pacific and Japan

**India, January, 27 :** VMware, Inc. (NYSE: VMW), a leading innovator in enterprise software, has appointed Guru Venkatachalam as Vice President and Chief Technology Officer for Asia Pacific and Japan. Prior to this role, he was CTO of Cloud Architecture at VMware. Guru leads VMware's efforts in Asia Pacific and Japan to build trusted partnerships with customers and partners and deliver solutions aligned to their strategic priorities. He will also play an integral role in the further developing the company's cloud, app modernization, networking, security, and digital workspace platforms. With over 28 years of experience in IT, Guru has deep expertise in financial services sector, where he led several large enterprise transformations, as well as global engineering teams supporting their transformation of end-user computing. Speaking on his appointment, Greg Lavender, CTO, VMware said, "Guru is a seasoned industry leader who has driven large scale innovation and expanded our CXO engagement in Asia Pacific and Japan. I am delighted to have him in the role of CTO for APJ as we drive customer and partner engagement in the region and help enterprises transform with modern applications, cloud, digital workspace and security." "Companies have quickly adapted to new ways of working, innovating, and delivering digital transformation. Now, they are increasingly expected to do these things at



speed and at scale, while still managing investment risk. I'm looking forward to collaborating with our customers and partners in this new role, to help them fully execute their technology roadmaps," said Guru Venkatachalam. Guru's appointment follows the retirement of Bruce Davie, former Vice President and Chief Technology Officer for Asia Pacific and Japan from VMware.

About VMware  
VMware software powers the world's complex digital infrastructure. The company's cloud, networking and security, and digital workspace offerings provide a dynamic and efficient digital foundation to customers globally, aided by an extensive ecosystem of partners. Headquartered in Palo Alto, California, VMware is committed to being a force for good, from its breakthrough innovations to its global impact. For more information, please visit <https://www.vmware.com/company.html>

## Indian startups attract \$10.14 billion in funding in 2020: Report

**Mumbai, January 27 :** The report said Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR and Mumbai accounted for 90% of the startup investments in the country, signalling concentration of angel investors and appetite in these regions. Indian startups are estimated to have received USD 10.14 billion in funding across more than 1,200 deals in 2020 despite the COVID crisis, a report by consulting firm HexGn said. Even though the total investment received in 2020 is lower than that of 2019 (USD 14.5 billion), the number of deals was higher by 20 per cent, the report said. President Ram Nath Kovind address to the nation on the eve of India 72nd Republic Day Full Text. President Kovind hails Modi gov't's 'easy loans' for small businesses to 'unleash entrepreneurial spirit'. Gautam Adani India on cusp of start-up explosion boom, dozens of unicorns in offing: Gautam Adani. Weathering negative sentiment, seed-stage investment deals grew by 50 per cent from USD

353 million over 420 deals in 2019 to USD 372 million over 672 deals in 2020. This is a good sign for people looking to plunge into startups, as early-stage investors are now keen to back risk-takers early on," the report noted. This can be attributed to the work done by Invest India, Startup India, AgNii and other agencies of the Indian government to boost investor confidence and entrepreneurial culture, it added. This is the third year in a row that India has kept its number four position globally after the US, China and the UK. Globally, startups raised over USD 308 billion in funding, with the US garnering USD 165 billion. The report said Bengaluru, Delhi NCR and Mumbai accounted for 90 per cent of the startup investments in the country, signalling concentration of angel investors and appetite in these regions. Bengaluru led with USD 4.3 billion in startup investments, followed by Delhi NCR (USD 3 billion) and Mumbai (USD 2 billion).

## KFC India delights chicken-lovers with its 'Big Treat Week'

*With saving upto 42% on all your KFC favourites-it's bound to be a super-duper week*

**India, January 27 :** KFC India presents The Big Treat Week - a week of jaw-dropping discounts and irresistible combos of your KFC favourites! Yes, you heard that right. With savings of up to 42%, up to 100% cashback on Paytm and unmatched value and variety, this Big Treat Week is everything that a KFC-lover wished for. From January 23rd to February 01st, get ready to be spoilt for choice - choose from a Bucket-ful of crispy Chicken, Chicken Popcorn, Rice Bowl, Zinger burger and more. Starting at INR 149, it doesn't get any Big-ger and Treat-ful than this! Offered at all KFC restaurants across the country; you can also place an online order for your favourites during the week (or better still, pick one favourite every day!). Oh, and did we mention something 'App-solutely' amazing? Celebrate Big Treat Week, along with the drool-worthy discounts, exclusively on the KFC App and Website. So get closer to that Bucket of Chicken Popcorn or Chicken Strips - download the KFC App from the Playstore or visit [online.kfc.co.in](https://online.kfc.co.in).

Still need a reason to join festivities of the Big Treat Week? Well, it comes with the added assurance of KFC's 4X Safety Promise of Sanitization, Screening, Social Distancing and ContactLess service. We've upped our existing stringent hygiene measures with intensified sanitization every 30 minutes of all surface areas like tables, counters, door handles, etc. Our delivery teams wash & sanitize their hands & bags after every order - great taste delivered safe you see. All team members, including delivery riders, get screened regularly with temperature checks; wear masks and gloves at all times. Social distancing is followed at the restaurants with floor stickers guiding customers and delivery riders maintain



proper distance as they queue up for orders. We are making sure you get your KFC in a completely contactless & safe manner - through delivery, takeaway, KFC to your Car/Bike and during dine-in as well. KFC you soon then, at your nearest KFC restaurant or on the KFC App or Website ([online.kfc.co.in](https://online.kfc.co.in)). And here's wishing you an awesome week ahead...!

About KFC  
KFC, a subsidiary of Yum! Brands, Inc. (NYSE: YUM.), is a global chicken restaurant brand with a rich, decades-long history of success and innovation. It all started with one cook, Colonel Harland Sanders, who created a finger lickin' good recipe more than 75 years ago, a list of secret herbs and spices scratched out on the back of the door to his kitchen. Today we still follow his formula for success, with real cooks breeding and freshly preparing our delicious chicken by hand in more than 23,000 restaurants in over 140 countries and territories around the world.

For more information, visit <https://online.kfc.co.in/>

## Govt plans to provide incentive for early commencement of production from auctioned mines

**New Delhi, January, 27 :** The government plans to provide incentive to mineral block allocates for early commencement of production from the auctioned mines, a move aimed at increasing mineral output of the country and reducing imports. commencement of production from the auctioned mines, a move aimed at increasing mineral output of the country and reducing imports. The mines ministry plans to do the same through amendment of the mining rules and has sought comments and suggestions from stakeholders on the same. "The Ministry of Mines has prepared the Mineral (Auction) Amendment Rules, 2021 seeking to amend Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015. As part of the pre-legislative consultation policy, the draft Amendment Rules is made available... Comments / suggestions are invited from the general public, governments of states and union territories, mining industry, stakeholders, industry associations, and other persons and entities concerned, on the draft Amendment Rules," the mines ministry said in a notice. A high level committee (HLC) headed by Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, on mines, minerals and coal sectors was constituted by the government to give recommendations for enhancing exploration and domestic production, reducing imports and achieving rapid growth in exports. The holding company faces debt maturities of about \$1.2 billion till March 2022. S&P revises Vedanta Resources outlook from 'negative' to 'stable'. Still, several successful bidders of those working mines failed to start production even after the lapse of 7-8 months of auction and execution of mining leases in their favour. Mines ministry proposes policy changes to spur iron ore production. The panel in its report on the coal sector has recommended that the Ministry of Mines may also adopt the methodology for commercial auction as per the recommendation of the coal sector.

## FAU-G 'made in India' PUBG Mobile rival now available



**New Delhi, January 27 :** FAU-G, short for Fearless and United Guards, is finally available for download. The game was first announced in September last year, around the same time when the Indian government had put a ban on PUBG Mobile over privacy concerns. FAU-G, developed by Bengaluru-based nCore Games, has been under pre-registrations since November, and is finally

available to play for Android users now. The launch coincides with India's Republic Day celebrations. Those wishing to play the game can now download it from the Google Play Store. The game is available for Android users to download for free. In order to download, users can go to Google Play Store on their Android smartphones/tablets and search for FAU-G. Once the game appears, all they have to do is click the 'Install' button. The game is available for all devices running Android 8 and above. Though it is not kicking off the proceedings with a full-fledged Battle Royale mode (like PUBG Mobile), it is expected to arrive in the future-when exactly, we can't say for sure yet.

### MISSING INFORMATION



The above is photograph of Sri Atul Borah, S/o Late Dimbeswar Borah of Baghar Kack Gaon, P.S. & Dist. Jorhat has been missing from his home since- 07/01/2021.

This refers to Bhogdoi OP GDE No- 137 Dtd; 09/01/2021

#### Descriptive Roll of the Missing Person :

1. Name	-	Sri Atul Borah
2. Age	-	35 Years
3. Complexion	-	Fair
4. Wearing	-	Long Pant & Red-Whit Jacket
5. Height	-	About 5'5"

All out efforts may be made to trace out/recover the above noted missing man and result there of may be intimated to this office at the following helpline numbers for further necessary action.

1. Superintendent of Police, Jorhat,
2. Office-in-Charge, Jorhat Police Station
3. Helpline No. : 0376-2320018 (Police Control Jorhat)

Sd/-  
Superintendent of Police,  
Jorhat, Assam

Janasanyog/D/10110/20



Contd. From Page 1

## Assam’s educationist Dr Ramesh

has immense contributions towards taking the thoughts of Assam’s great Vaisnavite saint Srimanta Sankardeva to foreign countries.In recognition of his contributions towards the Assamese language and literature, Asam Sahitya Sabha, the largest literary body of Assam, honoured him with the title of ‘Sahityacharya’.The Publication Board Assam recently conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award 2020 on Dr Pathak.Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal and finance & education minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma have condoled the demise of Dr Pathak.In his condolence message, Sonowal said, “I express my deep condolence at the demise of distinguished linguist and educationist Dr Ramesh Pathak. I express my sympathy towards the bereaved family and wish eternal peace for the departed soul.”Assam’s renowned linguist, educationist Dr Ramesh Pathak passes away 1In his condolence message, finance & education minister Dr Sarma said, “I am saddened at the demise of distinguished litterateur, researcher and scholar Dr Ramesh Pathak.”The demise of Dr Pathak is a huge loss for Assam as he made valuable contributions with his research on language and literature, he added.

## ULFA sets deadline : Threatens

released a video of the two kidnapped employees of the Quippo Oil and Gas Infrastructure Limited showing the employees appealing to the Chief Ministers of Assam and Bihar to secure their early release.But in a statement released today ULFA-I threatened the company and authorities of Assam and Bihar saying that the concerned parties have not taken any special measures for the release of the two oil officers.

## CM inaugurates Ankia Bhaona

superstitious beliefs and practices through both the gurujona’s teachings and said that programmes like ankia bhaona samaroh would be able to inculcate moral values among the youths. Sonowal also said that both the gurujonas left behind a rich bouquet of social and cultural resources and he underlined the importance of shaping the younger generation with those resources to instil discipline and peace in the society. Guru’s teachings are equally important for the growth of humane values in the society as the teachings of science and technology, he remarked. Satradhikar of Uttar Kamalabari Satra Janardan Deb Goswami gave the welcome address in the programme where Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra’s secretary Sudarshan Thakur was awarded Sewak Siromani title. Several satradhikars, MLAs and many other dignaries were present on the occasion.

## NDRF recovers bodies of four

fell into the river. Locals and boatmen acted promptly and managed to rescue 9 of them. The rescuers could not trace the other four victims.The NDRF team arrived at the spot immediately but could not carry on their search operation due to poor visibility and they had to wait for the dawn.Later, on Wednesday morning the NDRF team recovered the bodies of the four victims. The four have been identified as Rajiya Tikala(24), Sufiyan Chauhan(9), Sahil Chauhan(15), Pranab Ray(30).It is to be mentioned that, the family went to Baghmora for a picnic party from Jorhat.Other people present in the spot accused the boatmen of running the boats with no safety measures. Also, they said that the boats are always overloaded with visitors and that is one of the major reasons for the accident.“These are local boats. They should not ride with more than 5-6 people at a time but as you have seen, 13 people were being carried when the accident took place,” said a local resident.

## Union Budget 2021 Finance Ministry

is applicable for individual tax payers up to 60 years of age.The Centre may increase standard deduction under old income tax regime. The standard deduction is an amount that is deducted from an individual’s salaried taxable income, thus reducing the taxable income. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in Budget 2020, had added three income tax slabs in the tax structure to incentivise more savings. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) was quoted as saying in a Livemint report that the standard deduction for salaried employees should be increased to Rs 1 lakh. Citing the expenses incurred by employees in setting up home offices, FICCI said that the Centre should consider such a raise in the limit. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has also said that the limit of standard deduction should be hiked substantially due to rising inflation.The report quoted Aditya Chopra, Managing Partner of Victoriam Legalis, as saying that for taxpayers awaiting a pleasant surprise at a time when the economy is battered by the pandemic, the announcement could be a "rabbit in the hat moment".

## Sasikala, expelled AIADMK

an official bulletin. A large number of supporters of the 66-year-old close aide of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister late J Jayalalithaa lined up outside the Victoria Hospital, raised slogans in her favour and distributed sweets in celebration.Sasikala was in prison since February 2017 along with Ilavarasi and late Jayalalithaa’s foster son VN Sudhakaran in connection with the Rs 66 crore disproportionate assets case.Sasikala was charged with hatching a criminal conspiracy with Jayalalithaa, with whom she was closely associated, and amassing wealth disproportionate to the known source of her income.The September 27, 2014, order of the Special Court awarding imprisonment and fine of Rs 10 crore each, was upheld by the Supreme Court on February 14, 2017. Sasikala, Ilavarasi and Sudhakaran had held huge properties in their names to the tune of crores of rupees from July 1991 to April 1996, though they did not have such a source of income. While Sudhakaran was freed a month ago, Ilavarasi will be released in the first week of February.Sasikala’s release from prison comes close to Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, due in April-May this year.

## PMAY(U) Cup 2021 held under

Hailakandi Municipal Board, Deepmala Goala and City Project Manager, NULM, Mahbubur Rahman Parvez Laskar. Speaking on the occasion as chief guest, DDC, Laskar said games and sports play a pivotal role in building camaraderie and bonhomie and keep oneself fit and healthy. Laskar said he would take up the matter with the directorate of sports and youth affairs to hold more games and sports in the district as ‘it is a great unifying force and a stress buster’. Project Director, PMAY (U), Daimary, who presided over the prize distribution function, underscored the importance of games and sports for both mental and physical well being. Executive Officer, Hailakandi Municipal Board, Goala said just like games and sports help to instill sportsmanship spirit, different branches of an establishment must also work in tandem for better work culture and results. City Project Manager, NULM, Laskar, in his address, requested the district administration to organise sporting activities with all the line departments to combat stress for better performance.

## Soldier martyred, 3 others

place in Shamshipura area of Khanabal in the district.An Indian Army soldier was martyred and three others injured on Wednesday in a terrorist attack in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir. This is the first terrorist attack of 2021 in Jammu and Kashmir.In a statement, the Indian Army said that one of them is critically injured in the attack that took place in Shamshipura area of Khanabal in the district. All the injured soldiers have been admitted to Srinagar’s 92 Base Hospital for treatment."Terrorists lobbed a grenade on Army’s Road Opening Party (ROP) during the sanitisation drill at 1015 hours today in general area Shamshipura, Khanabal, Kulgam. Four soldiers sustained splinter injuries. Provided first aid and have been evacuated to 92 Base Hospital. Details follow," read the statement.At first, four soldiers were injured and later police official confirmed that one among the four injured soldiers succumbed to his injuries. "Yes, it’s very sad one soldier have succumbed to his injuries on the way to the hospital. The area is under cordon and we are conducting searches jointly in the area," said the police official.

## Sourav Ganguly admitted to Apollo

in Kolkata’s Woodlands Hospital after he was diagnosed with three blocked coronary arteries. Ganguly was admitted after suffering a mild heart attack, where he also underwent angioplasty. He was later released from the hospital on January 7. Speaking to reporters outside the hospital then, Ganguly confirmed that he has recovered completely and also expressed his gratitude towards the medical staff. "I thank the doctors at the hospital for the treatment. I am absolutely fine," says BCCI President Sourav Ganguly had said.

## PM Modi expresses happiness

Over 550 Accounts After Delhi ViolenceSeveral books on the honourable PM have already been published in several regional languages, but this is the first time when two different books have been simultaneously published in the same language. Sanyal said, “This is the golden jubilee year of our Publication House and these two books are the major publications as a part of this year-long celebration.” He moreover spoke out his feelings that these two books will be regarded as a proud and meaningful event in the history of Assamese Book Publication.

## Distribution of gift items of the Chief Minister among the Govt. Recognised journalists of Barpeta

Barpeta, Jan 27:

All the recognised journalists of the Government of Assam in Barpeta district have received due honors. Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today distributed gifts to journalists through Barpeta district administration in a bid to give them dignity and inspire them in their field. In Courtesy of Barpeta District Administration and initiative of the District Information and Public Relations Office, the gift items of the Chief Minister were officially distributed among the journalists in the meeting room of the District commissioner Office today. The program includes District Deputy Commissioner Munindra Sharma, District Development Commissioner Diganta Das, Additional Deputy Commissioner Navajit Pathak, District Information and Public Relations Officer Bikash Sharma and some officials of health department. This gifts are distributed among about 45 journalists from the district who are recognized by the Government of Assam. In addition to the gift items, each Journalists is greeted by a Gamosha. The Barpeta District Committee of the Indian Journalists Association (IJA) thanks to the steps taken by the Chief Minister’s gift items distribution among the journalists of the Government of Assam.

## During the tenure of BJP Government, the poor people become poorer while rich become richer: MP Gaurab Gogoi

NAGAON, January 27 : As part of the ensuing Assembly Election, the opposition Congress clarified the trumpet of electoral war at historical Ambagan Jagadhatri Pujabari field in Samaguri constituency on Sunday last. Youth Congress of Samaguri constituency organized a 'Youths Unity Samaruh' at Ambagan Jagadhatri Pujabari field where several national as well as state's heavyweight party leaders from all wings of Congress participated. Inaugurating the Samaruh, the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) and Rajya Sabha MP, Ripun Bora said the Samaruh ironically ensured as none can make a bar against Congress in Samaguri constituency and it will encourage the party workers to enrich its enthusiasm in other constituencies of the state. Slamming the recent tour of PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to the state, the state Congress president Bora said that both the saffron leaders could remember the people of Assam just ahead of an election, not during the crucial time of flood, erosion and the period of COVID 19 pandemic situation. Criticizing PM Modi, Bora claimed that the richest state of 'Asta Lakshmi' in the country as termed earlier by PM Modi now had turned into the poorest state. Mentioning Modi and his party as a deceiver and cheater, Bora further said the ruling BJP and its leaders are not on the ground rather flapping in the air. Gracing the occasion, MP Gaurab Gogoi said the BJP led coalition governments at the center and in the state have never thought about the poor people for which during the tenure of its government, the poor people in the state as well as in the country become poorer while rich people become richer. Criticizing the attitude as well as fascist activities of the ruling alliance against the democratic movements initiated by a slew of students' organizations, Gogoi said the ruling BJP is afraid of those democratic movements for which the ruling BJP wanted to retain all forms of agitations across the state. Gogoi however urged the president of Asom Jatiya Parishad, Lurinjyoti Gogoi and KMSS leader and the president of Rajior Dal, Akhil Gogoi to be merged with the great alliance of Congress so that the alliance can ousted the saffron party from the state's power. On the other hand, attending the event as the chief guest, president of All India Youth Congress Committee, Srinivas BV said that Modi led Union Government deceived the youth community of the entire country. Referring his promises towards the youths before election, Srinivas said Modi promised to provide around 25 lacks jobs to the youth of the country per annum. But in reality, how many jobs have been provided till date in the country by Modi? Srinivas questioned adding that if any one raises his word, he or she would be awarded as traitor. He however claimed that instead of the people of the country, Modi Government is working only for Adani, Ambani and Amit Shah's son, Joy Shah. He also alleged that many ministers of Modi government held fake educational certificates and because of which they were not able to assume the hardships of those educated youths of the country. Apart from that, Srinivas said BJP's flagship slogan - 'Beti basao, Beti parhao' is being termed as 'Beti parhao, BJP Netase Beti Basao'. In the Samaruh, former MP and the president of All India Mahila Congress, Susmita Deb, MLA and former minister Rokibul Hussain, Ex MLA Dr Durlav Chamua, Mira Borthakur and other party leaders were present and spoke about party agendas for ensuing Assembly Election.

## Congress Leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Passes Away

Guwahati, January 27 : Congress leader and Badarpur MLA, Jamal Uddin Ahmed, has passed away in the wee hours of Wednesday at Karimganj Civil Hospital. He was 66.As per reports, Ahmed was suffering from diabetes and had not been keeping well in recent times. He was referred to the Silchar Medical College Hospital (SMCH) but died before he could be shifted.Leaders cutting across party lines condoled the Congress leader’s demise.Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal was one of the first to express grief on his death. “Saddened to learn about the demise of veteran Congress leader and Badarpur MLA Jamal Uddin Ahmed. Praying for the departed soul, I offer my sincere condolences to his family and well-wishers,” he tweeted.Assam cabinet minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also tweeted in Assamese – “Mourning the demise of Badarpur MLA and veteran Congress leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed. He will be remembered for his selfless contributions for the development to the State. I offer my sincere condolences to his family and well-wishers.

## Retired teacher and social activist Kanchan Saikia died

SIPAJHAR, Jan 27 : Death occurred of prominent retired teacher and social activist Kanchan Saikia of Duni in Darrang district. She was 86 and left behind his three son and five daughters. She was born in 1934 at Bhuktabari village as daughter of late Podo Ram Barua and late Maniki Barua. She had started her teacher life as teacher of Maroi Balika Bidyalaya in 1952 and later serving as teacher at Sipajhar BJ Girls LP School, Maharipara Lower Primary School, Borbori Primary School, Gabhara-Dalongghat Primary School and Duni MV School with reputation. She was retired from Duni MV School in 1997.Since her younger life she had earned reputation as one of the singer with her melodious voice. As cultural and literary activists she also wrote poetry and composed songs. She was the founder president of Duni Mahila Samitee. She was the mother of MLA, Sipajhar LAC Binanda kumar Saikia. Her death is widely mourns in the entire Sipajhar area. Various organizations and individuals have expressed their deep sorrow over the her death and send condolences to the bereaved family members.



## Covaxin "Effectively Neutralises" UK Covid Strain, Claims Bharat Biotech

New Delhi, Jan 27 : Vaccine maker Bharat Biotech said today that its coronavirus vaccine Covaxin has been found effective against the UK variant of the virus, which is considered 70 per cent more infectious than the Wuhan variety and is more lethal. In a tweet today, Bharat Biotech said "Covaxin effectively neutralises UK variants of SARS-CoV-2 reducing the possibility of mutant virus escape".In the tweet, the firm also enclosed a link to the findings of it is research, which was conducted by scientists of the National Institute of Virology. The report, however, is yet to be peer reviewed..A vaccine developed by US company Pfizer Inc and its German partner BioNTech is also likely to protect against the more infectious variant, a study posted on online archive bioRxiv.org said last week.Covaxin, which is still in trial stage, was approved for use by the country's drugs regulatory authority earlier this month. The regulator, however, said the vaccine's use will be in the clinical trial mode, meaning all its recipients will be tracked and monitored as if they are in trial. In Delhi, the vaccine is being administered in the six centrally run hospitals. So far, more than 2 million people have been vaccinated across the country.The UK variant of the virus, which Covaxin was tested against, could be more deadly, British doctors have found.Last week, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the strain which is sweeping Britain and beyond in could be more deadly as well as more transmissible."In addition to spreading more quickly, it also now appears that there is some evidence that the new variant... may be associated with a higher degree of mortality," Mr Johnson told reporters on Friday.British government's chief scientist Patrick Vallance said the strain could be 30 to 40 per cent more deadly for some age groups, though there is not enough data on this yet.Over the past week, Covid-linked deaths in the UK have gone up by 16 per cent. The number of people hospitalised is nearly double the number of April, when the country was battling the first wave of the pandemic.

## SOS Children's Village observed National Girl Child Day in Hojai

Hojai, January 27 :

SOS Children’s Villages Family Strengthening Program, Hojai had observed the National Girl Child Day at Kumrokata and Dhanuhar Basti Community of Hojai on Monday. The objective of the Program was to spread consiousness and awareness regarding the different developmental Rights and issues related to Girl Children. Four Balpanchayat members of the program including SHG leaders and village stakeholders participated in the program.Notably, Family Strengthening Program is an outreach Program of SOS Children’s Villages working with families and preventing child abandonment. Currently under the Family Strengthening Program 800 direct beneficiaries from 228 deprived families of five communities are availing benefits.On the day a Painting competition on the theme of Girl Child was depicted in the art paper by the children. A debate competition on the topic of Girl Child on the eye of Present Day Society was organized. Children shared there views very nicely . In the end awareness Program related to issues on girl children in society and Interactive and informative sessions on girls nutrition, education, menstrual hygiene, child marriage, legal rights of girls were delivered. Mr. Somnath Dey, Mr. Niranjan Das,Mr. Chitta Ranjan Mohanty shared their views on the occasion. All the COVID 19 directives of Govt. were followed during the program.



## Voters' Day celebrated with great enthusiasm in Barpeta

Barpeta, Jan 27: National Voters' Day is being celebrated in Barpeta district along with other parts of the country today with great enthusiasm. On this occasion, Munindra Sharma, District Deputy Commissioner, led a bicycle team from District library at 10 am. The group is comprised of Superintendent of Police Dr. Rabin Kumar Singh, ADC Navjit Pathak and a large number of staff, students, locals and members of Barpeta Press Club. A public meeting was held at the premises of district library . At the meeting chaired by District Information and Public Relations Officer Bikash Sharma, Munindra Sharma greeted 10 new voters with Fulam Gamosha . Speaking on the occasion, District Deputy Commissioner Munindra Sharma said that the door is still open for all eligible adult Indian citizens to apply for inclusion in the voter list. At the beginning of the meeting, he administered the oath of allegiance to the people in an impartial manner, free from temptation and influence, while upholding the dignity of the country’s democratic tradition.

## Amitabh Bora elected as vice president of Assam Bodybuilders and Fitness Association

NAGAON, January 27: Noted social activist, sportsman and businessman of the town, Amitabh Bora was elected as vice president of Assam Bodybuilders and Fitness Association on Saturday last. The election of association was held in presence of observer from Assam Olympic Association at Hotel Landmark in Guwahati on January 23. His inclusion to the premiere state sports body will have a boost to the sports scenario in the district so far, a release added.



# Manchester City go top after Gündogan turns on style in 5-0 rout of West Brom

**Manchester, January 27 :** Manchester City became the ninth team to top the Premier League this season but while Pep Guardiola claimed the table is the last thing he will look at, his team appear set to stay significantly involved in this title race. The numbers behind this victory are staggering but barely do justice to how superior Guardiola's team were to humbled West Brom. İlkay Gündogan continued his hot streak by scoring twice as his manager paid tribute to his neighbour. "He's an exceptional human being to start with," Guardiola said, "and an exceptional player." City made light of the absence of Kevin De Bruyne to record an 11th successive wins in all competitions for the first time since 2017. It seems hard to conceive West Brom managed to draw 1-1 at the Etihad Stadium last month, especially as that was the game in which they traded Slaven Bilic for Sam Allardyce as manager. They have now conceded 29 goals in their 10 Premier League games at The Hawthorns this season and sit six points adrift of safety, with the worst goal difference in the division. They are the first team since Chelsea in 1978 to concede at least three goals in five successive top flight home games. That derby win at Wolves a fortnight ago seems a mirage. City have the best goal difference and, while they will be overtaken if Manchester United beat Sheffield United on Wednesday, they are

seven points clear of the ailing champions Liverpool. With Sheffield United and Burnley next for City before a visit to Anfield, Guardiola's third title at the Etihad looks within his hands. "The last thing I'm thinking about is the league table," he said. "Now I want to get home safely, have a few days off, then Sheffield United. What's important is to be calm, like when we were 12th." This City certainly are, even if they were aided by



Albion's meekness. Never mind assistant referee Sian Massey-Ellis raising a misguided flag for City's second goal, the home team appeared to be waving a white flag as they were four down by half-time. The loss of De Bruyne to a hamstring injury last week could have been a glimmer of vulnerability but Gündogan is finding the form of his life in a more advanced role. He has now scored seven times in eight league games

as City adapt to life without a regulation centre forward by getting the midfielders to score instead. Yet City had looked rattled inside two minutes when Ederson saved from Semi Ajayi at close range as Darnell Furlong hurled in a succession of long throw-ins. City responded and, after Sam Johnstone tipped Phil Foden's shot on to a post, Gündogan took a neat touch to his right on the D before lofting a neat shot into the

far corner in the sixth minute. In a tight match, Massey's indecisive flag for the second goal might have been controversial. Only after Riyad Mahrez had received João Cancelo's pass out wide and started dribbling back did she signal for offside. When the ball came back for Cancelo to take control and shoot into the far top corner, left-footed, it was unclear whether the West Brom defence had stopped for the flag or not. At

the moment, it is difficult to tell the difference. VAR showed Mahrez had been played onside by Furlong and the offside decision was overturned. "You can't tell me about all that play to the whistle stuff," Allardyce said. "That's nonsense. The assistant referee made a mistake but that was just one mistake. We made lots more than that." Callum Robinson shot just wide from a good chance for West Brom before Gündogan made it 3-0. Karlan Grant nodded the ball back towards Romaine Sawyers but Gündogan picked it off his opponent and shot home left-footed from 20 yards. Mahrez scored just before half-time in trademark style as he cut inside after collecting Raheem Sterling's crossfield pass and swerved home a left-footed shot. West Brom signalled their bid for damage limitation at half-time by replacing their centre-forward Callum Robinson with a third centre-half in Kyle Bartley; City replaced Foden and Gündogan. It was like a tacit agreement to go easy for more realistic challenges ahead. Rodri shot against the top of the crossbar as City remained so encamped deep in West Brom territory their holding midfielder fancied his chances of a goal. Then he sand-wedged a delightfully angled ball for Mahrez to run on to and, delicate as you like, half-volley a square pass across goal for Sterling to tap in his ninth goal in all competitions this season. Who needs strikers?

# Sam Underhill pulls out of England's Six Nations squad with hip injury

**London, January 27 :** England have been dealt yet another blow before their Six Nations title defence with Sam Underhill the latest frontline forward to withdraw from Eddie Jones's squad on Tuesday. Underhill has a hip injury and after being assessed by England's medical staff he pulled out with Wasps' Jack Willis taking his place. Jones was already without Joe Marler, Mako Vunipola, Joe Launchbury and Kyle Sinckler for England's Six Nations opener against Scotland on Saturday week and Underhill's absence means he will be without half his first-choice pack. The Bath director of rugby, Stuart Hooper, is hopeful Underhill will be out of action for weeks rather than months, suggesting he may be fit before the end of the championship, but conceded England go into their Calcutta Cup clash without "one of the best flankers in the world". "It is disappointing news first up for him," said Hooper, who confirmed Underhill sustained the injury against Wasps this month. "The outlook is generally pretty positive. We are talking weeks rather than anything else. We know from Sam the destructive nature of his game and the ability he has got on both sides of the ball with carrying and defence." Underhill's injury means England's formidable back-row trio, also featuring Billy Vunipola and Tom Curry, will be broken up for the foreseeable future with Willis, Ben Earl, Mark Wilson and Courtney Lawes among the options to step in. Wilson and Earl were included in the initial 28-man squad but the former has not played for England since last



March and the latter has won all eight of his caps from the replacements bench. Lawes is fit again while Willis made a try-scoring debut against Georgia last November and has been promoted from the shadow squad. Jones, who will miss the first day of the training camp at St George's Park on Wednesday because he is self-isolating, has also added Alec Hepburn - last seen in an England jersey in November - Dave Ribbans and Lewis Ludlam to those players effectively on standby. Meanwhile, Jones's former assistant Paul Gustard has been appointed as Benetton's defence coach, less than a week after his shock departure from Harlequins. Writing on his LinkedIn page, Gustard said: "I decided in December that I wanted a new experience and challenge, and was pleased to have so many different opportunities domestically, internationally and abroad available. I wanted to join a group where there was a clear vision, deep level of trust and a dynamic environment which was driven towards high performance."

# Nadal takes veiled swipe at Djokovic over Australian Open quarantine



**London, January 27 :** Rafael Nadal has responded to criticism of his silence on the ongoing imbroglio over Australian Open quarantine conditions with a veiled swipe at Novak Djokovic. Djokovic has courted controversy over the past week for publicly lobbying Tennis Australia and the Victorian state government to loosen restrictions for the 72 overseas players forced into hard quarantine after traveling on flights with confirmed positive coronavirus cases. But it was Nadal who became the target of criticism from Argentinian player Guido Pella, who described his silence as "strange" last week. "Djokovic's balcony is bigger than my room but at least he said something," Pella said. "I'm surprised with Nadal and Thiem's silence." Nadal, the 20-times grand slam champion who is keeping his own quarantine in Adelaide, hit back at those criticisms in

an interview with ESPN on Monday and appeared to reference Djokovic. "Some need to make public all these things they do for others, some of us do it in a more private way without having to publicize everything," Nadal told. "The calls we make to help the most disadvantaged players, some of us don't need or want to advertise it." Nadal went on to address the alleged favoritism shown to the top players who have been placed in the separate Adelaide bubble. "There has been talk that Adelaide people have better conditions, but I have not heard from any Melbourne player that some have much better rooms than others," he explained. "I have not seen some of those who have complained so much about the conditions in Adelaide complaining about the conditions of the more than 20 players who have not practiced." Complaints always come from a disadvantaged position. At the time of talking about fair play or equal conditions, people don't tend to complain about the position of those who are worse off than them. "In the end we all try to get the most out of our possibilities and help each other."

**London, January 27 :** Chris Silverwood has asked England supporters to understand the need for key players to miss Tests as the head coach and his fellow selectors grapple with a uniquely congested winter that is bookended by two Indian Premier League tournaments. Jonny Bairstow, Mark Wood and Sam Curran are due to head home to rest following the 2-0 win in Sri Lanka, while Ben Stokes and Jofra Archer, already quarantining in Chennai ahead of the first Test starting next week, missed that initial series to take their allotted break. With Bairstow considered one of the better players of spin but not back until the third of the four Tests in India, and the wicketkeeper Jos Buttler flying home after the first and not returning until the white-ball leg of the tour, England will be under strength against a side who have lost just once in their past 35 home Tests. Asked about the much-debated rotation policy, Silverwood replied: "I stand by it. We've got to look after our people. We're spending a lot of time locked in hotel rooms inside bio-secure bubbles and it's not easy. It's good that we're being proactive and looking after people. I'm perfectly happy with the system." This is a winter like no other, it must be said.



The pandemic has both packed the schedule - the Sri Lanka tour was meant to be last March - and thrown up additional challenges to player welfare through its restrictive bubble lifestyle, as highlighted by England's issues in South Africa before Christmas. Other than Wood, however, all of the players listed above featured in the seven-week IPL in October and November, and have been retained by their teams for the next edition of the tournament in April. There is cricketing merit to the IPL, no question, but also life-changing money that leaves the England management now feeling incapable of ordering anyone to skip it. Asked to explain this to England fans, Silverwood replied: "What can you

say? We've decided to rest and rotate, we've decided we need to look after the players. And I do believe we have to be proactive in looking after them, rather than wait until there's a problem. The players can't be with us all the time because it's not the world we live in. "That the Test team suffers this winter is also due to a desire to field a full strength Twenty20 side during the white-ball leg of the India tour in preparation for the World T20 in the same conditions later this year. Eoin Morgan, the white-ball captain, is perhaps a more powerful voice at the table than his Test equivalent, Joe Root, although the longer format will take precedence this summer. With Archer's return covering the loss of Wood, and Ollie Stone another 90mph option

here, Buttler's departure after one Test in India is perhaps the most significant loss for Root. In Sri Lanka Buttler demonstrated his wicketkeeping can stand up to the additional pressure of spinning pitches and his batting - averaging 65 - did not suffer as a result. While Bairstow also impressed, forging two century partnerships alongside Root, the Yorkshireman was less certain to keep his place in the first-choice XI; Rory Burns is back to open after paternity leave, the vice-captain Stokes returns to the middle order and Ollie Pope is now deemed a chance to be fit for the first Test. Speaking to the Evening Standard about his break, Bairstow said: "If they hadn't given me the break now, then when? It's the way of the world at the moment and there's no one who plays all three formats doing the whole tour." Asked to assess Bairstow's performance in Sri Lanka, Silverwood replied: "Jonny asked me the same question and I said he'd done very well. He went into bat during some difficult periods and applied himself well on testing wickets. I was pleased with him." He'll come back into the group then the rest is down to selection. We don't make any guarantees to anybody - I don't think you can. I do think it's right he has a rest. Jonny is very busy, a multi-format player and we've got to give him a bit of time at home to chill out." For the players flying to Chennai on Wednesday a six-day hotel-room quarantine awaits before three days of training leading into the first Test. As well as the encouraging news about Pope, who underwent surgery on a dislocated shoulder last September, Silverwood said that Moeen Ali would be in contention after recovering from Covid-19. The two-spinner strategy is likely to remain in place, however, meaning the incumbents Jack Leach and Dom Bess will surely get the first opportunity. Silverwood also admitted the performances of Stuart Broad and Jimmy Anderson - "it's a privilege to have both of them" - could yet see the experienced duo paired at some stage, despite the main plan being to rotate them in one berth. On the challenge of facing India, fresh from their famous victory in Australia, Silverwood said: "Do I think we can beat them? Yes. I always take the positive side of things. If we come out on top of this one, confidence will go through the roof for us."

# No players inducted to baseball's Hall of Fame as Schilling and Bonds miss cut

**London, January 27 :** The baseball Hall of Fame won't have any new players in the class of 2021 after voters decided no one had the merits on-the-field or off for enshrinement in Cooperstown on this year's ballot. Curt Schilling, Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens were among the closest in voting by members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America released Tuesday, and the trio will have one more chance at election next year. It's the first time the BBWAA didn't choose anyone since 2013. Schilling, a right-handed ace who won three World Series, finished 16 votes short of the 75% threshold necessary for enshrinement after coming up 20 votes shy last year. His on-field accomplishments face little dispute, but Schilling has ostracized himself in retirement by directing hateful remarks toward Muslims, transgender people, journalists and others. "It's all right, the game doesn't owe me anything," Schilling said during a live



video stream on his Twitter account. Bonds (61.8%) and Clemens (61.6%) joined Schilling in falling short on their ninth tries on the ballot. Both face strong PED suspicions, but Bonds has also been accused of domestic violence and Clemens of maintaining a decade-long relationship with a singer who was 15 when they met. Schilling, Clemens and Bonds will be joined on next year's ballot by sluggers Alex Rodriguez and David Ortiz. Rodriguez was suspended for all of the 2014 season for violating MLB's PED policy and collective bargaining agreement, and Ortiz's name allegedly appeared on a list

of players who tested positive in 2003. Omar Vizquel, an 11-time Gold Glove winner, dropped from 52.6% last year to 49.1% after his wife accused him of repeated domestic abuses in December. Braves star Andruw Jones, arrested in 2012 on a domestic violence charge, got 33.9% in his fourth year. Rockies slugger Todd Helton, who pleaded guilty to driving under the influence and was sentenced to two days in jail last year, got 44.9% in his third time on the ballot. Some players missed out over old-fashioned baseball disagreements, too. Slick-fielding third baseman Scott Rolen moved from 35.3% to 52.9% and hard-throwing closer Billy Wagner from 31.7% to 46.4%. With the Hall of Fame's Era Committees postponing their scheduled elections until next offseason because of the pandemic, there won't be a 2021 Hall class. Cooperstown won't be without celebration next summer, though. After the 2020 ceremony in the upstate New

York village was canceled due to the pandemic, Yankees great Derek Jeter and five-tool star Larry Walker will take center stage on 25 July, a year later than planned. They'll be honored alongside catcher Ted Simmons and late players' association chief Marvin Miller. BBWAA members are instructed to elect Hall members "based upon the player's record, playing ability, integrity, sportsmanship, character, and contributions to the team(s) on which the player played." At a time when social justice movements are pushing for a broader reckoning on sexual misconduct and racial inequality, character evaluation took on an outsized role in this election cycle. While the Hall's inductees already include racists, cheaters, philanderers and criminals, the current voting bloc has narrowly, in many cases taken a stand against candidates they think have insufficient integrity. Schilling's six-time All-Star over 20 seasons with

Baltimore, Houston, Philadelphia, Arizona and Boston has been embroiled in controversy throughout his retirement. He launched a video game company, 38 Studios, that went bankrupt shortly after receiving a \$75m loan guarantee from Rhode Island, then was fired as an ESPN analyst after he sent tweets comparing Muslim extremists to Nazi-era Germans and posted derogatory Facebook comments about transgender people. Months later, Schilling was again criticized after using social media to applaud a T-shirt calling for journalists to be lynched. On 6 January the day of the attack on the US Capitol, he said the following in a message on his Twitter account: "You cowards sat on your hands, did nothing while liberal trash looted rioted and burned for air Jordan's and big screens, sit back .... and watch folks start a confrontation for (expletive) that matters like rights, democracy and the end of govt corruption."



## 'I've got to make the most of it while I can'

**London, January 27 :** Alistair Brownlee wants to become the first athlete to complete an ironman race in less than seven hours. Photograph: World Triathlon I've just been out training for three and a half hours and it has rained for every single second," says Alistair

2.4-mile swim, 112 mile cycle and 26.2-mile run - is 7hr 35min, by the German Jan Frodeno. However, in echoes of Eliud Kipchoge's sub two-hour marathon project, Brownlee's idea is to use technology to create history. "It would be impossible under normal condi-

40km bike and 10km run]," says Brownlee. "You've got to fuel yourself correctly for seven hours, which is hard given we all get sick of gels. You have to get your fluids right. On the bike things like aerodynamics and helmet position are so important because if you save yourself five watts or 10 watts, that's a significant difference. And there is also that fear - have I gone five minutes too hard, and is that going to cost me?" Brownlee knows just how painful it can get when things go wrong. The first time he raced an ironman, at the world championships in Kona in 2019, he blew up in the heat on the run and dropped from third place to 21st. "At one point there was nothing on this planet that would have made me run at even a five-minutes-a-kilometre pace. There's no way I wasn't finishing but those final 10 miles were the worst of my life." Alistair (right) and Jonny Brownlee hold a union flag with their gold and silver medals around their neck after the men's triathlon at the Rio Olympics. Six weeks later, though, Brownlee competed in another ironman race in Australia and won by more than 10 minutes and smashed the course record, finishing in 7hr 45min. While Brownlee will attempt to go under seven hours in a yet-to-be-decided venue, another Briton, Lucy Charles-Barclay, will aim to become the first woman to dip under eight hours. Their attempt will be backed by the Phoxnix Foundation, a Polish not-for-profit organisation that supports sporting participation among young people. "They are all about inspiring activity and health and education in young people and I'm keen to use the vessel of triathlon to do that - as well as seeing how we can maximise human performance in

terms of physiology," says Brownlee. What does his brother Jonny, who won Olympic bronze and silver in 2012 and 2016 respectively, make of it? "He thinks it's mental," replies Alistair. "He doesn't know it yet but he's going to be helping me out on the swim and the run. Isn't Brownlee a bit of a sadist to keep torturing himself, given all the injuries he has endured?" "Yeah, I definitely am to an extent," he replies, laughing. Before then, however, Brownlee is focusing on qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics. And, having finished second behind the Frenchman Vincent Luis in a World Cup sprint triathlon in Valencia in November, he is confident his best form is looming into view. "I came the closest that anyone's come to beating him last year. If I can race like that obviously I'll qualify easily and be in with a shot at Tokyo." That, of course, is assuming the Games take place. "As an athlete, I have to 100% believe it will go ahead. And I am sure the IOC will move heaven and earth to get it on. As we have seen, Covid is a movable beast. We're on the curve of things going badly, but by the summer things could look much more hopeful." But should they go ahead if it means athletes flying in and out of Tokyo and competing in front of no crowds? "Any Olympics is better than no Olympics. And as long as the sport and the competition is on, stripping everything else out isn't too much of a problem." As we finish I ask Brownlee his response to those who fear, as great as he has been, his most glorious days are behind him. "You might be right," he says, as a flicker of defiance comes across his face. "But I'm doing everything I can to prove them wrong - and myself wrong."



Brownlee, in a tone that almost veers into relish. "The weather is horrendous. Everywhere's flooded. You can hardly run anywhere because it's so muddy and wet." And yet the double Olympic triathlon champion still splashes and splashes on towards further glories, even in this bleakest of midwinters, having set his sights on an extraordinary double crescendo to cap his career. The first part? Winning a third triathlon gold medal in Tokyo this summer. But then, Brownlee says, he intends to follow it up with something even more audacious: becoming the first man to complete an ironman sequence in less than seven hours. "I am not getting any younger," says Brownlee, who turns 33 in April. "So I've got to make the most of it while I can." "The best time for a full ironman distance - a

tions," says Brownlee, who will make the attempt in the spring of 2022. "But like with the sub two-hour marathon, we are choosing the boundaries. We will have special HUUB wetsuits that will be thicker than permitted under ironman rules, and provide more buoyancy and make us faster. While on the bike, we will draft off pacers like in the Tour de France. As the bike is over 112 miles, that's the obvious place to find the time. It will be an almighty challenge, with organisers claiming Brownlee will need to swim at the pace of an Olympic open-water medallist, cycle at an average speed of more than 30mph and run a sub 2hr 30min marathon. "What makes it so hard is that there are so many moving parts to an ironman, even when compared to an Olympic distance triathlon [1500m swim,

## 'It feels amazing': Tuchel takes Chelsea manager's job on 18-month contract

**London, January 27 :** Thomas Tuchel will sit in the dugout rather than watch from the stands when he takes charge of his first Chelsea game on Wednesday, signalling the German's desire to make an immediate impact after his appointment as manager. Tuchel got straight to work after signing an 18-month deal with an option for another year, holding his first training session on Tuesday night after replacing Frank Lampard. The former Paris Saint-Germain manager wants to be on the bench when Chelsea, who are six points behind fourth-placed West Ham in the Premier League, host Wolves. He told allies he wants to take responsibility for his new side's performance. It has been a whirlwind start to the week for Chelsea, who fired Lampard less than 24 hours after beating Luton in the FA Cup on Sunday. Tuchel, who was sacked by PSG last month, was soon installed as the 11th permanent manager of the Roman Abramovich era. Negotiations with Marina Granovskaia, the influential director, were said to be tough but Tuchel is excited by the challenge after arriving in London on Tuesday. "I would

like to thank Chelsea for their confidence in me and my staff," Tuchel said. "We all have the greatest respect for Frank Lampard's work and the legacy he created at Chelsea. At the same time, I cannot wait to meet my new team and compete in the most exciting league in football. I am grateful to now be part of the Chelsea family - it feels amazing. "Many



sources expected Lampard to be sacked after last week's defeat at Leicester. It is believed Covid-19 protocols delayed Tuchel's arrival, which led to Lampard remaining in charge. However Tuchel can enter Chelsea's secure bubble, in accordance with Covid rules, after testing

negative. Tuchel, who is expected to install Arno Michels as his assistant, inherits a struggling side. Chelsea's slump under Lampard has left them at risk of missing out on Champions League qualification after spending £220m last summer. The board began succession planning earlier this month. RB Leipzig's Julian Nagelsmann was out of reach until the summer and Chelsea also considered Ralf Rangnick, another German, on an interim basis. The Ukraine manager and former Chelsea striker, Andriy Shevchenko, was another option but was seen as too inexperienced. Tuchel, who led PSG to the Champions League final last season and won two league titles with the club, emerged as the preferred candidate. Chelsea looked at the former Borussia Dortmund manager in 2018, only to hire Maurizio Sarri. The hierarchy were aware of his interest in the job by the time Lampard's side lost 3-1 to Manchester City at the start of January. Tuchel, who is regarded as a fine tactician and began his managerial career at Mainz in 2009, spoke to Chelsea's struggling German attackers, Kai Havertz and

Timo Werner, before training. He sees vast potential in attack - he managed Christian Pulisic at Borussia Dortmund and is a fan of Callum Hudson-Odoi - and believes he can work with Mateo Kovacic, Jorginho and N'Golo Kanté in central midfield. He has a close relationship with Thiago Silva after managing the centre-back at PSG. Chelsea insiders insist the change is not because of Havertz and Werner. They point to the entire team's loss of confidence. Some senior players had awkward relationships with Lampard. Jorginho and Antonio Rudiger could earn fresh starts given that Tuchel wanted them at PSG. Yet Tuchel does not come without risks. He clashed with other figures at Dortmund after replacing Jürgen Klopp in 2015 and experienced similar problems after joining PSG in 2018. The first German to manage Chelsea will need to keep his new bosses happy. Although Tuchel's first task will be lifting the side back into the top-four race, he must challenge for the title in the long run. "It is never easy to change head coach in the middle of the season but we are very happy to secure one of Europe's best coaches in Thomas Tuchel," Granovskaia said."

## The music stopped Kobe Bryant remembered on anniversary of death

**London, January 27 :** Kobe Bryant wasn't in the bubble with the Los Angeles Lakers last October when they won the NBA championship. He wasn't at the All-Star weekend in Chicago where half the players wore his number on their uniforms, the other half wearing his daughter's jersey number. He wasn't there to hear the Basketball Hall of Fame announced that his career was worthy of enshrinement. Yet his presence was so clearly felt in each of those moments. "Everything stopped," Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr told reporters last week. "The music stopped. The players stopped. Nobody said a word. A lot of guys dropped to the floor and started crying. Nothing happened for 10 minutes. We all just sat there in silence. It was one of the worst moments of all our lives." Jarron Collins came over to me and whispered the news

the cameras. He then spit the drink out. "Out of respect to my brother," Butler said. Butler and Bryant were brothers in the teammate sense. Tony Altobelli lost his actual brother, John Altobelli, in the crash. Alyssa Altobelli was a teammate of Gianna Bryant; she was on the helicopter along with John, her father, and mother Keri. Anthony Calderon and Dontate Matthews leave flowers to pay their respects at a makeshift memorial on Tuesday at the site of the helicopter crash a year ago that killed nine people including Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gianna. Photograph: Patrick T Fallon/AFP/Getty Images John Altobelli was the baseball coach at Orange Coast College in southern California. Tony Altobelli is the sports information director at that school; sports information directors are tasked with promoting their teams, in



in my ear. I think it was the same thing where a couple people on our staff whispered it to a couple players on our team. We were all like a deer in the headlights, you know? We just froze and all tried to absorb the news and everything stopped. "Bryant, his daughter Gianna and the other seven people who climbed aboard that helicopter on a Sunday morning in southern California have been gone for exactly one year now - Tuesday marks the grim anniversary of the crash that took their lives. Tears have been shed. Stories have been told. Tributes have been made. And if there was any doubt about what kind of legacy Bryant - a five-time NBA champion, still the No 4 scorer in NBA history, a 20-year veteran of the league - left behind, it has been erased now. He still resonates, maybe more than ever. "God rest his soul, God rest the soul of Gigi and the seven others that perished," said Miami assistant coach and former NBA player Caron Butler, who was close with Bryant for years. "The legacy that he left, man, he did it all. He inspired. When you think about being better, embracing the storm, having the right mentality and perspective about life and always trying to be better, he embodied it all and that's why his legacy will live forever. "Bryant is gone, but that doesn't mean Butler is wavering on a promise he made. Butler famously had a longtime affinity for Mountain Dew, even drinking it during games when others thought he was having Gatorade. When Butler played for the Lakers, Bryant strongly urged him to kick the habit. Butler was taping an ad last year for Mountain Dew. He took a sip for

good times and bad, always trying to find a positive way to tell a story. And somehow, even for a story this painful, Tony Altobelli has managed to do that. His brother died with Kobe Bryant. That's how the world got to know who his brother was. "It's nice to see his memory, and just his way of his life being celebrated by people far beyond our area," Tony Altobelli said. "It takes a little bit of the sting off what happened. I've kind of jokingly said if it had to happen, I'm glad a global figure was with him when it happened because now the whole world knows about my brother, my sister-in-law and my niece. And I think that's pretty cool." Christina Mauser died in the crash as well; she was one of the coaches at Bryant's academy. Tony Altobelli and Mauser's husband, Matt, have become friends in the last year; they didn't know each other before 26 January 2020. Matt Mauser has organized a concert to honor those who died in the crash and to serve as a benefit for the foundation he started in his wife's memory; it streams Tuesday night. Sarah Chester and her 13-year-old daughter Payton, another of the players along with Gianna and Alyssa, also were on board. Also killed was the pilot, Ara Zobayan. The Lakers were in the air when the news broke, flying home from a game in Bryant's hometown of Philadelphia. The Lakers are not planning any formal marking of the day, nor is the NBA. It is not a day for celebration. It is a day for remembrance, not that it's needed. Bryant's legacy lives on. He won't be forgotten. Nor will 26 January 2020. "I don't think any of us will ever forget that day," Kerr said.





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