



The Assam Rising

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Journalist arrested

Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

A video journalist in Tripura has been arrested by the police in Agartala. The video journalist named Nitai Dey was arrested by the Tripura police on Tuesday evening. Dey works for a Guwahati-based satellite news channel. According to sources, Nitai Dey was arrested while he was covering the restrictions imposed by the Tripura government on sale of fuel. Dey got engaged in a heated altercation with some police personnel while he was covering the story at a fuel station in Agartala.

Earthquake jolts

Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

Earthquake shook Assam on Wednesday evening. The earthquake that shook Assam was measured at 4.2 magnitude in richter scale. The epicentre of the earthquake was located at Morigaon district in Assam. No loss of life, injury or damage to property was reported from any part of Assam due to the earthquake.

Man arrested

Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

Assam police on Wednesday arrested a man in North Lakhimpur for allegedly stabbing to death a 20-year-old youth over a game of Ludo on May 15. The accused has been identified as Afzat Ali. According to sources, the incident occurred when the accused and five others including the victim, Issad Ali had been playing Ludo. Afzat reportedly got into a heated argument with Issad, which led to a physical fight between the duo. Issad sustained grievous injuries after he had been allegedly stabbed during the fight. Locals rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. The accused reportedly fled the scene after the incident.

Flood spell disaster for Assam; 8 Dead



Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

Over 4 lakh people are affected by heavy floods in Assam, triggered by pre-monsoon rains that left eight dead, the authorities said today, as they warned the situation could worsen. At least 1,500 villages along the

Brahmaputra, one of the world's largest rivers, are flooded after water level rose in the past three days. Torrential rains lashed most of the state, and the downpour continued today, with more forecast over the next two days. "More than 5 lakh people have been affected, with the flood situation turning critical by the

hour," Assam's Water Resources Minister, Pijush Hazarika. Indian Army personnel have rescued over 2,000 people trapped in Hojai district. The rescue efforts continue. Water levels in the Brahmaputra were expected to rise further, central authorities have said. "The situation remains extremely grave in the

worst-hit Dima Hasao district, with both rail and road links snapped due to flooding and landslides," said Assam's Revenue Minister, Jogen Mohan, who is overseeing relief efforts there. Home Minister Amit Shah telephoned Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and assured all possible help from the central government in the wake of the floods. The Air Force has been asked to air-drop essentials like rice, dal and medicines in Dima Hasao, which remains cut-off for the past three days. The weather office has issued a red alert for extremely heavy rain in Assam and neighbouring Meghalaya, and an orange alert for the rest of the

north-east on Wednesday. In Cachar district, the army and the Assam Rifles sent two columns for flood rescue operations. Officials of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said that two people died in southern Assam's Cachar district during the past 24 hours while five had died earlier in landslides in the Dima Hasao and Lakhimpur districts. Six persons have been reported missing in the Cachar district as a result of floods and landslides, according to officials. According to an unofficial report from the Cachar district, four individuals have been

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Hardik Patel Exits Congress

New Delhi, May 18 :



After days of sulking, Gujarat leader Hardik Patel quit the Congress today with a resignation letter pummeling Rahul Gandhi, who had brought him into the party in 2019. Top leaders, he wrote, "were distracted by their mobile phones" and the Gujarat Congress was more interested in ensuring "chicken sandwiches" for them. Hardik Patel's letter was "dictated by the BJP" and he was pressured to quit, countered Gujarat Congress leaders. The high-profile Patidar leader has been in touch with the BJP

leadership over the past two months and is likely to join the ruling party within a week, sources said. Hardik Patel has, so far, vehemently denied the Congress-to-BJP switch that many young leaders have made in the past two years. For the Congress, which just held a revival strategy meet, it is an ill-timed exit in Gujarat ahead

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Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict AG Perarivalan released



New Delhi, May 18 :

After the Supreme Court order to release A G Perarivalan, who has served over 30 years of the life term in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, political leaders including MDMK founder Vaiko and PMK leader S Ramadoss welcomed his release. An

apex court bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao invoked its extraordinary power under Article 142 to grant relief to Perarivalan, saying "State cabinet had taken its decision based on relevant considerations. In exercise of Article 142, it is appropriate to release the convict." Notably, Article 142 deals with the enforce-

ment of decrees and orders of the Supreme Court and orders as to discovery, etc. "I firmly believe there is no need for capital punishment," PTI quoted AG Perarivalan as saying hours after the Supreme Court ordered for his release. The judgement was received with great jubilation by his family, relatives and several pro-Tamil outfits in Tamil Nadu on Wednesday. Initially handed capital punishment by a special court in Chennai which was later commuted to life term, Perarivalan told PTI that he first wants to "breathe," apparently the air of freedom, before thinking about

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Delhi Lt Governor Anil Bajjal Resigns Citing "Personal Reasons"

New Delhi, May 18 :

The centre's representative to the capital, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal, has submitted his resignation to President Ram Nath Kovind citing "personal reasons" on Wednesday. A retired civil servant, Mr Bajjal had taken over as Lieutenant Governor in December 2016 following the abrupt resignation of his predecessor Najeeb Jung. He has completed his five-



year tenure and an appointment of his successor has been due. The role of Lieutenant Governor had been

at the heart of an all-out power tussle between Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government and the

BJP, which rules at the centre, for years until a landmark Supreme Court judgement in 2018 that spelled out their powers more clearly. The Lieutenant Governor does not have independent decision-making powers and the real power must lie with the elected government, the Supreme Court had ruled in a big win for Mr Kejriwal in the years-long fight for control of

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Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday attended the 27th Triennial Kendriya Adhiveshan of Assam Gorkha Sammelan held at Nikashi in Baksa district.

"The State government has a well-laid-out plan to further empower the Gorkha Development Council for all-round development of the people belonging to the Gorkha community. As part of that plan, let me take the opportunity to announce Rs. 25 crore aimed at the welfare of the Gorkhas. This apart, the government will also take steps to introduce science or commerce stream

at the Nikashi-based Gyanpeeth Graduate College for overall improvement of the educational scenario of the Gorkha youths," the Chief Minister, who attended the congregation as the chief guest, stated. Dr. Sarma, referring to the Gorkhas as an inseparable unit of the greater demography of Assam, declared that the State government is all committed to

work towards socio-economic, academic and literary uplift of the Gorkhas of Assam. Praising the efforts of the Assam Gorkha Sammelan on issues ranging from raising the socio-economic status to restoration of self-pride among members of the community, the Chief Minister lauded the organisation for its never-ending endeavour and enthusiasm to work for overall development of the Gorkha community for the past eight decades. Chief Minister Dr. Sarma also lauded the organisation for its role in building a chord of brotherhood with every other big or small communities in the state, thus further strengthening the concept of greater Assamese community. The Chief Minister, praising the world-renowned bravery and valour of members of the Gorkha community, said Assam and Nepal have been sharing

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APCC Expels Nilamani Sen Deka for violating Party Discipline

Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

The Assam Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) has expelled senior party leader Nilamani Sen Deka for violating the party discipline. The Congress leader was expelled with immediate effect as directed



by party President Bhupen Borah. In a notification is-

sued by the party, it said that earlier also he was asked many times not to make harmful statement against party and in spite of his written assurance, he is doing anti-party activities. He was inducted into the Tarun Gogoi cabinet. He was made

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CBI, ED get SC notice on bail plea of British citizen Christian Michel



New Delhi, May 18 :

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued notices to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) on bail petitions of British Citizen Christian Michel in

connection with the AgustaWestland VVIP chopper scam being probed by the agencies. An apex court bench headed by Justice DY Chandrachud issued notice to the CBI and

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Floods: 40 Highlands Constructed in Kaziranga National Park to Provide Shelter to Animals



Assam Rising

Guwahati, May 18 :

40 highlands Constructed for providing shelter to animals due to the ongoing floods in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) and other National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries of the state. Disclosing this, Minister for Environment and Forest, Parimal Suklabaidya said on Wednesday that his department is in a complete state of preparedness to rescue animals from the onslaught of ongoing floods in

Kaziranga and other national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. "We have successfully completed the construction of around 40 highlands for tackling the prevailing flood situations in Kaziranga and other National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries," he stated. The new highlands have been designed scientifically with provision for adequate grass, and plants yielding fruits such as elephant apple and Indian gooseberry, said Suklabaidya. "These highlands have enabled us reduce the animal

casualty during annual floods", the minister added. Suklabaidya, who is closely monitoring the flood situations in the national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, said that the department is fully geared up to deal with the ongoing flood situation. "Kaziranga bears the brunt of floods every year, be it small or big. We are fully equipped to tackle any sort of exigency along with food arrangements for the officials and

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People celebrate the entry of their candidates to the parliament in downtown Beirut, Lebanon

Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel resigns from all party posts



NEW DELHI, May 18 : Putting all speculations to

rest, Gujarat Congress working president Hardik Patel on Wednesday resigned from all party posts. Patel took to Twitter to inform that he is resigning from all party posts in the Congress party. Hardik Patel's resignation has come as a major blow to Congress just a few months before the state Assembly elections. There were reports about him being sidelined and ignored by the senior Gujarat party leaders. Hardik Patel, the

poster boy of the Patidar agitation movement in Gujarat, was reportedly upset with the treatment being given to him and was mulling quitting the party, sources close to him had indicated earlier. Sources said that "the impasse between Hardik and Congress has shown no

signs of thaw". Hardik Patel also recently removed the name of the party from his Twitter bio, sparking speculation that he was on his way out soon. Patel shot to the limelight in 2015 at the helm of a quota agitation for his community - a movement that pitted him strongly against the BJP-

Sweden and Finland to formally submit Nato bids 'hand in hand'

London, May 18 : Sweden and Finland will formally submit simultaneous requests to join Nato on Wednesday, the Swedish prime minister, Magdalena Andersson, has said, in a seismic shift in Europe's security architecture after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Finland and Sweden have agreed to go through this entire process hand in hand, and we will tomorrow file the application together," Andersson told a joint news conference with the Finnish president, Sauli Niinistö, in Stockholm. "Membership of Nato strengthens security in Sweden but also in the Baltic Sea region," Andersson said. "The fact that we are

applying together with Finland means that we can contribute to security in northern Europe." The announcement came as the White House said Niinistö, and Andersson would meet the US president, Joe Biden, on Thursday to discuss their bids to join the US-led mutual defence alliance and European security more broadly. Finland, which shares an 810-mile (1,300km) border with Russia, has remained neutral or non-aligned since the end of the second world war, while Sweden has stayed out of military alliances for more than two centuries. Both had long seen Nato membership as an unnecessary provocation of Russia. Andersson said the simultaneous applications reflected the brutal impact of "Russia's illegal war" on Ukraine and the Nordic neighbours' common history, traditions, values and culture. "In recent months, it has also become clear that Sweden's and Finland's security are closely linked," she said. Niinistö said Russia's onslaught on Ukraine had "changed everything", adding that Finnish and Swedish Nato membership meant the Nordic region



would now be "a bastion not just of democracy, welfare and human rights - but also of security". The announcements came after the Finnish parliament on Tuesday overwhelmingly backed the government's proposal to join the alliance, and a day after Sweden's government confirmed its intention to do likewise. Finnish MPs voted by 188 votes to eight in favour of joining. Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, has repeatedly said the two countries would be welcomed "with open arms", but their applications must

be approved by all the alliance's 30 members and Turkey seems set to throw a spanner in the works. Ankara has said it will not support the bids, citing Sweden and Finland's history of hosting members of Kurdish militant groups and decisions in 2019 to impose arms export embargos on Ankara over Turkey's military operations in Syria. Niinistö said in an address to Swedish MPs on Tuesday that Turkey's stance had "changed very quickly and become harder during the last few days", but he was sure "constructive discussions" would resolve the situation.

Ukraine farming group calls for urgent end to ports blockade

Moscow, May 18 : One of Ukraine's largest farming groups has called for an urgent solution to unblock the country's Black Sea ports as exports of grain, sunflower and rapeseed are being held up by the Russian naval blockade, driving inflation and shortages around the world. G7 ministers have held urgent talks about trying to open routes through Romanian and Baltic ports, potentially fed with an army of 10,000 trucks making a five-day trip from Ukraine. John Rich, the chairman of MHP, which is listed on the London Stock Exchange, said: "If we had a UN agreement in place it would solve an enormous amount of issues." But he said that without the war ending such a deal was unlikely, piling pressure on prices for grain and seeds used for cooking oil and ethanol around the world into next year. "We are now in a vicious cycle," Rich said. "Normally what happens is that farmers cure high prices as [when prices go up] farmers produce more and prices collapse. This time it could be different," Rich said pointing to a combination of climate change, the Covid pandemic, the war in Ukraine, as well as fertiliser shortages which are hitting production around the world. He said the world could be looking at a "cascade of export bans", following India's block on the export of wheat and Indonesia's block on palm oil exports, raising the prospect that "the whole concept of globalisation in food production is dead". Exports from Ukraine, which produces as much as half the world's sunflower seeds, a tenth of wheat and up to a fifth of barley and rapeseed, have been severely interrupted by the closure of Ukraine's ports following Russia's invasion. Only about 1m tonnes of grain and seed were exported in April compared with more than 5m tonnes of grain and 700,000 tonnes of oilseeds a month in a typical year.

US sues casino mogul Steve Wynn to compel him to register as an agent of China

Washington, May 18 : The US Department of Justice on Tuesday sued Steve Wynn, the billionaire former casino mogul and senior Republican fund raiser, to compel him to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act as an agent of China. The department said Wynn, 80, had contacted then-US president Donald Trump and members of his Republican administration in 2017 to convey China's request to cancel the visa of or otherwise remove a Chinese businessperson who had sought political asylum in the United States. In a statement the Department of Justice said it was seeking to compel Wynn to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) as the agent of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and a senior official of the PRC's Ministry of Public Security (MPS). "The filing of this suit - the first affirmative civil lawsuit under FARA in more than three decades - demonstrates the department's commitment to ensuring transparency in our democratic system," said assistant attorney general Matthew Olsen of the justice department's national security division. "Where a foreign government uses an American as its agent to influence policy decisions in the United States, FARA gives the American people a right to know." According to the complaint, in June and August 2017 Wynn contacted Trump and members of his administration to "convey the PRC's request to cancel the visa or otherwise remove from the United States a Chinese businessperson who left China in 2014, was later charged with corruption by the PRC and sought political asylum in the United States".

China air crash that killed 132 may have been deliberate, says US report

Washington, May 18 : A China Eastern Airlines plane that crashed in March, killing 132 people, appears to have been intentionally flown into the mountainside below by someone at the controls, according to reports. Analysis by US officials of the black box flight recorders found amid the wreckage suggests deliberate input from the cockpit forced



the Boeing 737-800 plane into its catastrophic dive. The Wall Street Journal quoted an unnamed source who said: "The plane did what it was told to do by someone in the cockpit." The China Eastern plane was cruising at a steady altitude and speed before it suddenly descended more than 20,000ft in just over a minute, and crashing near the

city of Wuzhou in Guangxi province. Chinese investigators have led the crash inquiry but US officials are involved as the plane is US-made. While faults in the design of Boeing's later 737-Max model were behind two fatal disasters in 2018 and 2019, leading to the model's grounding worldwide, the 737-800 has long been in everyday service around the world. Aviation experts had noted that the flight pattern shown on tracking sites, and lack of reported mayday call or any loss of data signal, resembled the Germanwings crash in 2015. On that occasion, the Airbus A320 passenger plane was crashed deliberately by the pilot as it crossed the French Alps, killing 150 people.

EU raises spectre of trade war if UK rewrites Northern Ireland protocol

London, May 18 : The European Commission has raised the spectre of an economically damaging trade war with the UK, pledging to respond with "all measures at its disposal" if Liz Truss presses ahead with a plan to rewrite the Northern Ireland protocol. The foreign secretary set out plans on Tuesday to table a bill that would make key changes to the protocol, including waiving all checks on goods flowing from Great Britain to Northern Ireland where they are not destined for the Republic of Ireland. She said the UK government still hoped to agree the changes it believes are necessary, calling these "comprehensive and reasonable". "Our

preference is to reach a negotiated outcome with the EU. We have worked tirelessly to that end and will continue to do so," she said. But she claimed the protocol in its current form jeopardised the stability of the Good Friday agreement, which she said was "under strain", and the government would act unilaterally if necessary. "To respond to the very grave and serious situation in Northern Ireland we are clear that there is a necessity to act to ensure the institutions can be restored as soon as possible," Truss said. Part of the government's motivation is to placate the Democratic Unionist party, which is refusing to enter a power-sharing government with Sinn Féin at Stormont



unless the protocol is altered. The DUP's Westminster leader, Jeffrey Donaldson, said Truss's statement was "a welcome if overdue step that is a significant move towards addressing the problems created by the protocol, and getting power-sharing, based upon a cross-community consensus, up and running again." His party would like to see progress on the legislation

"in days and weeks, not months," he said. On Tuesday night, Germany expressed shock that the UK was tabling laws to disapply a treaty at a time when the west is accusing Vladimir Putin of international crimes. Berlin's representative in Brussels, Sebastian Fischer, tweeted: "Let's just all threaten each other with breaking international law. Makes for really good partnerships".

Tory MP arrested on suspicion of rape and banned from Commons

London, May 18 : Boris Johnson's party has been engulfed in fresh scandal as it emerged a Conservative MP had been arrested on Monday on suspicion of serious sexual offences, including rape. The unnamed man's arrest on Monday followed a two-year investigation,

Metropolitan police said - and related to offences alleged to have been committed between 2002 and 2009. In a statement, the Met said "a man, aged in his 50s, was arrested on suspicion of indecent assault, sexual assault, rape, abuse of position of trust and misconduct in public office. He remains in custody". "The offences are alleged to have occurred in London. An investigation is ongoing, led by officers from Central Specialist Crime." Westminster sources suggested some of the offences are believed to have taken place in parliament. The MP's arrest came as a date was announced for two by-elections triggered by the resignation of Conservative MPs. Imran Ahmad Khan, the former MP for Wakefield, was convicted of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old boy; while former Tiverton MP Neil Parish admitted watching pornography in the House of Commons chamber. Both contests will take place on 23 June, with Labour hoping to win in Wakefield, and the Liberal Democrats positioning



Zhang Aoyu (L) takes photos for Tergel with silver accessory products at their workshop in Xilinhot of Xilingol League, north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

themselves as the challengers in Tiverton. The LibDems pulled off a shock victory in North Shropshire last year, after Owen Paterson resigned over paid lobbying. Another Conservative MP, David Warburton, who represents Somerton and Frome, has had the whip suspended while under investigation for sexual harassment by the House of Commons' Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme. A Conservative Whips' Office

spokesperson said the MP would be asked not to come to parliament. "The chief whip has asked that the MP concerned does not attend the parliamentary estate while an investigation is ongoing. Until the conclusion of the investigation we will not be commenting further." It is understood no decision will be made about whether to remove the whip from the MP until the police investigation is completed, in order to protect the anonymity of the

victims. This latest case will reopen concerns about the culture at Westminster, and whether it is a safe place to work. Garry Graham, deputy general secretary of Prospect union, said: "What will it take for parliament to finally take its responsibility to its staff and visitors seriously and suspend access to the estate for parliamentarians under investigation for sexual offences?" Voluntary agreements to stay away do not work, as demonstrated by Imran Ahmad Khan's attendance at Westminster whilst investigations were ongoing, despite agreeing to stay away. Parliament has the

same responsibilities towards its staff as any other workplace and it must live up to them. "Female Conservative MPs recently met the chief whip to air their concerns about the behaviour of some colleagues - a gathering that led to Parish's resignation, after his behaviour was discussed. The leader of the House of Commons, Mark Spencer, said last week that his party was committed to selecting higher quality candidates at the next general election, claiming the snap contests of 2017 and 2019 had led to mistakes. "I think we'll be in a much better place at the next general election, certainly in the Conservative party as we will have taken much more time to scrutinise people, and to make a longer process," he said.

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Flood hit over 3 lakhs people: destroyed 9742 hectares crops in Nagaon



Assam Rising
Nagaon, May 18: The flood situation in Nagaon district remains grim and critical for the fifth day too and the overflowing water from the Kapili as well as Nichari river have wreaked havoc in Kamrup, Raha and Nagaon revenue circles till the time of filing this report, sources added. The flood water inundated over 100 revenue villages under Kamrup revenue circle and over 50 revenue villages in Raha revenue circle while over

10 revenue villages in Nagaon revenue circle. Besides, due to the flood water, almost all surface routes for transportation towards Kamrup town via Kothiatoli Chariali - Kamrup, West Karbi Anglong - Kamrup, Chapormukh - Kamrup and Nagaon Dakshinpat - Kamrup were being disrupted today for which the entire Kamrup completely remained isolated from all the nearest town or head-quarters of Nagaon, Hojai

and West Karbi Anglong districts. The emergency response teams as well as SDRF personnel being deployed in Kamrup as well as Raha revenue circle rescued over 1200 flood vic-

times and evacuated to safer places. It is however feared that the flood water will submerge more areas in Kamrup as well as Nagaon revenue circles in the next few hours. According to sources from district disaster management authority, Nagaon, during the fresh wave of flood destroyed over 9742.57 hectares of land with various crops and vegetables and hit over three lakhs people in those three revenue circles in the district. Moreover, over 38,523 domestic animals were affected in the fresh wave of flood in Kamrup, Raha and Nagaon revenue circles till date while the district administration set up 31 relief camps among which 23 in Kamrup revenue circle, 5 in Nagaon and 3 in Raha revenue circle where

2853 inmates were being packed for taking shelter. Meanwhile the overflowing water from Haria river breached the DRDA embankment near at Tetelisara Grant and submerged various surface routes built by PWD as well as DRDA roads in and around the Kamrup township, sources claimed. Significantly, although the district administration supplied food and other things to the relief camps yet it was not sufficient for those inmates for which the inmates of the relief camps urged the government to provide more food and other supplements like biscuits, medicine, mosquito net, clothes etc.

USTM signs MoU with Lingnan University

Assam Rising
Guwahati, May 18: A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed today between the University of Science and Technology Meghalaya (USTM) and Lingnan University, Hong Kong, China, which is ranked 3rd worldwide for "Quality Education" in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2021. The agreement was signed in virtual mode by Prof. Leonard K. Cheng, President, Lingnan University, Hong Kong, China and Prof. G.D. Sharma, Vice Chancellor, USTM and the event was attended by academics and officials of both the institutions. The purpose of this MoU is to promote and expand international understanding, development, and friendship as well as stimulate and support educational, professional and intercultural activities and projects among students and staff of the two institutions. The general activity areas under the pact includes: student exchange programmes, faculty/staff exchange, cultural exchange, visiting schol-



ars/tutors, cooperative/ collaborative research projects, cooperative dual degree programmes, short term training, cooperative and exchange lectures, conferences and seminars, cooperative certificate programmes. As per the MoU, each institution will accept full-time students from the other institution on an approximate one-for-one basis for undergraduate or graduate study during the academic year. The faculty/staff of an institution under the terms of the MoU may participate in a variety of activities at the other institution. Such activities may include faculty exchange for instructional and/or research activities for short term or extended periods of time; conducting conferences, seminars and/or lecture series; providing pro-

fessional expertise as consultants on special projects within the institutions; exchange short term for visits for observation purposes including exploration of further development activities between the two institutions; developing activities with the areas of business, industry and education in the community in which the institutions are located; and other activities as may be identified during the term of the MoU. With the motto of "Education for Service", the Lingnan University is rooted in its history from 1888, located at 8 Castle Peak Road, Tuen Mun, Hong Kong. In 2015, it was selected as one of the "Top 10 Asian Liberal Arts Colleges" by Forbes.

Khanamukh beat organised plantation cum awareness drive

Assam Rising, Palasbari, May 18: A plantation cum awareness drive carried out at Assam Engineering College Campus by Guwahati Range Khanamukh Beat in presence of Additional principal Chief Conservator Of Forest, State CAMP, Suman Mahapatra, Divisional Forest Officer, Kamrup East Division, Rohini Ballav Saikia, Range Forest Officer



Guwahati Range, Khanamukh Beat officer Jintu Talukdar and other Range Officers under Kamrup East Division on Wednesday. Around 50 saplings have been planted in and around AEC campus. The species are mainly Mahaneem, Arjun, Krishnasura etc. 3000 saplings are aimed to plant in different parts of Guwahati city and its periphery in order to make the earth more and more greener. Though a little, but a generous contribution towards mother nature through this drive, is a part of an impressive initiative taken by DFO, Kamrup East Division along with Range Officer Guwahati Range. Also they had addressed the students regarding the importance of trees and ended the drive with a slogan "Go Green Stay Healthy".

Assam floods: Around 40 highlands constructed for animal shelter

Assam Rising, Guwahati, May 18: The Assam Forest department has built around 40 highlands for providing shelter to animals due to the ongoing floods in the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) and other National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries of the state. Disclosing this, Minister for Environment and Forest, Parimal Suklabaidya said on Wednesday that his department is in a complete state of preparedness to rescue animals from the onslaught of ongoing floods in Kaziranga and other National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries. "We have successfully completed the construction of around

40 highlands for tackling the prevailing flood situations in Kaziranga and other National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries," he quipped. The new highlands have been designed scientifically with provision for adequate grass, and plants yielding fruits such as elephant apple and Indian gooseberry, said Suklabaidya. "These highlands have enabled us to reduce the animal casualty during annual floods", the Minister added. Suklabaidya, who is closely monitoring the flood situations in the National Parks and wildlife sanctuaries, said that the department is fully geared

up to deal with the ongoing flood situation. "Kaziranga bears the brunt of floods every year, be it small or big. We are fully equipped to tackle any sort of emergency along with food arrangements for the officials and forest personnel deployed for rescue operations of animals in Kaziranga," he added. The Forest Minister said that the forest officials are working round the clock in view of the flood situation and are working in close tandem with officials of Kaziranga National Park for ensuring safety of the animals. "More than 25 boats are kept ready for rescue of animals in

Kaziranga," he said. While claiming that a slew of initiatives have been taken by his department to deal with the deluge in a better and efficient manner, Suklabaidya revealed that a baby elephant was saved from drowning on Tuesday morning. Meanwhile, KNPTR Director, Jatinder Singh said the park has a total of 144 man-made highlands, including 33 big ones for housing animals during floods. In addition to that, we have built an 8.5 km long road cum highland for providing shelter to animals during

floods and for patrolling." Sharma also said that KNPTR is fully prepared to meet any eventuality with country boats and speed boats being kept ready for deployment for rescue of animals. "Forest personnel are also on high alert," he added. He further stated that vaccination of cattle and camp elephants have been carried out near the periphery of the park in the last one and a half months to prevent infection from domestic animals to wild animals.

Paban Kr Kalita selected for Dr. Ambedkar award

Assam Rising, Sipajhar, May 18: Paban Kumar Kalita, has been selected for the prestigious Dr BR Ambedkar International award instituted by Babu Jagjivan Ram Sanskriti-Kala and Sahitya Academy and Bharat-Nepal Madheshi Dalit Moitri Sangha in co operation with Indo-nepal Friendship Organization. Kalita is selected for the award as recognition of his literary and social activities. The award presentation function will be held at Kathmandu, capital of Nepal. If Kalita is unable to attend the function then the award will be presented to him at a function to be held in Assam. It may be mentioned that Kalita has already received the Babasaheb Dr BR Ambedkar National Fellowship Award from Bharatiya Dalit



Sahitya Academy, Kabi Guru Rabindranath Tagore National Fellowship Award from Chinna Rao Welfare Trust, Visakhapatnam, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya Smriti Sanman from Ananda Mukhar Sahitya Patrika, Kolkata and Assam-Bonga Sampriti Sanman from Assam Bonga Moitri Sanmilan.

'Eduvento' concludes: 1300 students across the NE participated

Assam Rising
Guwahati, May 18: The Mega Education Festival, which opened the way for positive direction towards the student's career, concluded successfully today. Around 1300 students participated in the event that was held in three phases. The last phase two-day event held at Dibrugarh ended today. The mega education fair was organized in Guwahati, Shillong and Dibrugarh under the initiative of 'Eduvento'. In this context, Director of The Eduvento, Sahil Zaman said that the mega educational fair was organized to ensure proper career selection to students from the Northeast. Sahil Zaman further said that students from northeast will be able to get proper career guidance through this event. Most students are confused when they have to choose the right career. So, Eduvento has always tried to create career awareness through such an event.



Amit Srivastava, Administration Head of Sandip University said that commercial education is the basis of success recently. Such an education fair will help the students in selecting courses in commercial education. Sandeep University, Chanakya University, Acharya Institute of Technology, SRM University, Educational institutions like Alliance University, Admas

University, Pampat Institute of Engineering and Technology, Alpine Group of Institutes, Parul University, Sukalp Foundation, Tech Mahendra, Alliance University, Adams University, Gateway Institute of Hotel Management, Regional College of Pharmaceutical Science, ITM University, BFIT Group of Institutes etc, had made the event successful by involving their representatives.

Lakhimpur education dept. ready for Gunotsov-III

Assam Rising, North Lakhimpur, May 18: Lakhimpur district education department is ready for the third phase Gunotsov which will be held from June 1. Meanwhile, the training program of resource persons were completed at Panindra High School, North Lakhimpur town today. Similarly, training programs will be held for the liaison officers and nodal teachers in various parts of the district shortly. In today's training program,

forty-two resource persons were trained by Sarbashiksha planning officers Nibharani Saikia and Gunajit Thakuria. Additional Deputy Commissioner (education) and District Mission Co-ordinator Dhrubajyoti Hatibaruah, Sarbashiksha Project Engineer Paritosh Ray, Mid-day manager Barnali Chintey, District Project Officer Gitali Neog and many other officers were present in the program.

BHATTADEV UNIVERSITY
(A State University established under Assam Act No. XXXVI of 2017)
BAJALI, PATHSALA -781325 (ASSAM), INDIA

NOTICE INVITING BIDS

Advt. No. BU/E&A/Advt./NIB/2022/1680 Dated 18/05/2022

Sealed Bids are invited from authorized vendors/ suppliers/dealers for the empanelment to supply of following items at Bhattadev University.

Sl No	NIB Nos.	Particulars	Last date of submission
1	No. BU/E&A/ NIB/2022/1676 date: 18/05/2022	Empanelment of vendors for supply of Computer Accessories and Parts in Bhattadev University for the year 2022-2023.	10/06/2022
2	No. BU/E&A/ NIB/2022/1677 date: 18/05/2022	Empanelment of vendors for supply of Chemicals, Glassware, Plasticware & Small Equipment and other items for the Labs of Bhattadev University for the year 2022-2023.	10/06/2022
3	No. BU/E&A/ NIB/2022/1678 date: 18/05/2022	Empanelment of vendors for supply of Electrical items in Bhattadev University for the year 2022-2023.	10/06/2022
4	No. BU/E&A/ NIB/2022/1679 date: 18/05/2022	Empanelment of vendors for supply of Sanitary, Stationery and other items in Bhattadev University for the year 2022-2023.	10/06/2022

The details of the all NIBs are available in the University website- www.bhattadevuniversity.ac.in.

(Guruprasad Khatanar)
Registrar

Janasanyog/C/2601/22

AUCTION NOTICE

It is hereby notified for general information for all concerned that, the following departmental condemned vehicles of this unit will be sold in public auction on 28.05.2022. The prospective tenderers are requested to submit their tender paper, on or before 11:45 A.M. on 28.05.2022 in the tender box kept at the M.T. Branch of 16th A.P.(IR) Bn. Bormonipur, Morigaon.

The intending bidders will submit seal quotation affixing court fee stamp of Rs 8.25(Rupces eight and twenty five paisa) only. And they shall also have to deposit earnest money of Rs. 8000.00 only for each of the LMV7MMV7 vehicles and Rs. 2000.00 only for the Motor cycle, in the form of the Bank draft in favour of Commandant, 16th A.P.(IR) Bn. Bormonipur, Morigaon. Without earnest money, no tender will be accepted. The earnest money will be returned after disposal of the vehicles.

Tenderers have to submit any of the following as identity proof with their quotations driving license / electricity bill/ voter ID card / PAN card.

The successful bidders shall have to remove the vehicles on the same day at his own risk and cost, after depositing of full bid money. Otherwise the undersigned will not responsible for any damage or loss of the store.

The condemnation board has fixed minimum rate to each of the vehicle. The undersigned reserves the right to reject the highest bidders or any one and may go for open tender if it is felt that responsible price of the condemned vehicle have not been quoted by the bidders.

If the successful bidder fails to pay the full bid money on the spot, the undersigned have reserves the right to dispose of the vehicles to the next higher bidder and the security deposit money of the first higher bidder will be forfeited.

The vehicles may be inspected in the M.T. Garage of this unit, during office hours in any working day, from the date of floated auction notice.

Vehicle No. and Type of Vehicle:-

- | | | | |
|----|-------|------|-------------------------|
| 1. | AS30 | 1427 | (TATA TRUCK) |
| 2. | AS 30 | 1865 | (Ashock Ley-lend Cargo) |
| 3. | AS 30 | 2326 | (Maruti Gypsy) |
| 4. | AS30 | 2828 | (Bolero/Lx/25WD) |
| 5. | AS 30 | 1685 | (Yamaha 135) |
| 6. | AS 30 | 3480 | (Tvs/Victor 125cc) |
| 7. | AS 30 | 3491 | (Tvs/Victor 125cc) |
| 8. | AS 30 | 2883 | Bullet Enfield) |

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16th A.P. (IR) Bn. Bormonipur.
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THE ASSAM RISING

VOL. NO. VII, ISSUE NO. 91 THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022

Food supply and food security

In the next 30 years, food supply and food security will be severely threatened if little or no action is taken to address climate change and the food system's vulnerability to climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the extent of climate change impacts on individual regions will vary over time, and different societal and environmental systems will have varied abilities to mitigate or adapt to change. Negative effects of climate change include the continued rise of global temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, an increased frequency of droughts and heatwaves, sea-level rise, melting of sea ice and a higher risk of more intense natural disasters. The IPCC states, Taken as a whole, the range of published evidence indicates that the net damage costs of climate change are likely to be significant and to increase over time. Future projections in global yield trends of both maize and wheat indicate a significant decline; these declines can be attributed to the negative impacts of climate change arising from increasing greenhouse gas emissions. In many parts of less developed countries in Africa and Central America, maize is a key component in the daily diet and plays a key role in achieving food security in those areas, with nearly 950 million metric tonnes consumed annually. Wheat also plays a central role in diets. With nearly 700 million metric tonnes consumed annually on a global basis, wheat alone provides over 20 per cent of the world's calories and protein. To ensure food security for the predicted population of 9.6 billion people by 2050 the FAO predicts that food production must increase by at least 60 per cent to meet the demand, and a report from Tilman et al. in 2011 projected that food production must increase by 100 per cent to meet the projected food demand. With yields declining, and demand for both the amount and quality of food increasing (due to increased disposable income amongst developing countries) intervention is a must. The negative effects from climate change will cause changes in global weather patterns and cycles that will be both unpredictable and long term. It is foreseen that the fishing industry will also experience significant disruption, with salt water and fresh water fishing at risk. This situation implies a great urgency, as the children who are born in today's world will not have reached graduation age before these problems will have materialized, unless immediate action is taken. We have already seen climate effects on yields in a number of areas, including Europe and southern Asia, since the last IPCC Assessment Report in 2007. Unfortunately, it is the populations in many tropical areas and the southern parts of Europe and North Africa who will pay a great price. These population groups - especially the poor - are the most vulnerable in terms of failing harvests, higher prices and malnutrition in the near future. This multi-faceted crisis will only increase pressure in other areas of the world to increase production, whilst basic living conditions in deprived areas further decrease.

Be a Citizen Journalist

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

Editor,
The Assam Rising
G.N.B. Road, Chandmari Colony,
Guwahati, PIN 781003
E-mail Id : assamrising@gmail.com

Letter to The Editor

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

Editor,
The Assam Rising
Guwahati, Assam

Ukrainians can feel Europe losing interest - Eurovision is our chance to rally support

In 2010, I competed in the Eurovision song contest as Alyosha, representing Ukraine. My song, Sweet People, was about war, ego and finding the political will to save our planet. It feels more relevant now than ever. Since the conflict broke out, I see the world differently and Eurovision has taken on new meaning. It's not just a night of frivolity any more, and fans aren't just music fans - their support means so much more this year. I've been living in New Jersey with my three children and mother-in-law since we fled Kyiv in March. In the blur of the evacuation, I forget exactly when we arrived but my life here is a world away from what my husband, parents, brothers and their families are still experiencing in Ukraine. They are doing everything they can to fight for freedom back home, and I'm doing my best to play my part here: attending charity

events and trying to raise money and awareness any way I can, while I take care of my kids. Being a busy working mother continues even in these abnormal circumstances. Eurovision this year is just another way to spread the message that freedom for Ukraine is freedom for all of us. As a singer, I've always found that music speaks to people's hearts and souls in a way that politicians can't. To see this year's act, Kalush Orchestra, on the world stage flying the flag for Ukraine will be a very powerful moment. The group have said they "represent every Ukrainian", which comforts me. They will stand for all of us when the lights go up. Their song, Stefania, has become an anthem back home. The track was originally written about frontman Oleh Psiuk's mother, but it has since taken on new

meaning for many. The group have been granted special permission to travel to Turin for the contest, but will return to Ukraine after competing "to provide [their] contribution". That's typical of the Ukrainian resolve and fighting spirit in the face of huge adversity. I hope viewers will see that. War might begin in specific countries, but this war affects the whole world. Three months into the conflict, Europe has got complacent. Bombs and destruction have become the new normal. But what Ukrainians are facing is not normal. I can't even fathom the atrocities I'm hearing about. Children as young as mine are losing their lives - and for what? What is happening is evil. It goes against everything it means to be human. I hate Russian soldiers for that, but their lives are sacred too. I don't

Olena Topolia

mean to see human lives sacrificed for a war they don't understand. In that way, I think it was right for Eurovision to ban Russia from participating this year. Putin's war is not compatible with the values of a contest that champions international cooperation and inclusion. Russia must continue to be excluded from international events until it backs down. So as Kalush Orchestra take the stage, I hope the world will hear our rallying cry. We need Europe to be with us in more than just words - thoughts and prayers can get us only so far. If people truly want to help, they need to dig into their pockets, inform themselves, and mobilise. We desperately need money for weapons and medicines, but also for nappies and clothes. We can't win this fight alone. Eurovision has always been a political contest, so in that sense winning isn't really important.



In Pyongyang, Covid is spreading fast, and one capital where the North Korean disaster is surely being watched with rapt attention is Beijing. North Korea, like China, has made a virtue of its authoritarian system being better suited to Covid control than the democracies. Unlike North Korea, China has been rolling out vaccines for more than a year, but like its neighbour, it has millions of older people who have never taken the jab. China's leaders can see in their neighbours a Covid situation that they fear could be their fate if the virus takes hold and they have responded with a lockdown in the mega-city of Shanghai that has lasted seven weeks and shows no immediate signs of ending. As locals stay confined to their homes, drones fly near apartment blocks, intoning the phrase: "Control your soul's

desire for freedom." China can still argue that in absolute terms its "zero-Covid" policy has had remarkable success in preventing deaths. Last week, Joe Biden mourned the grim toll of a million American deaths from the disease, whereas China's official figures suggest only 5,000 deaths in a population four times the size. Even if one assumes that the real figure is several times higher, it is still a remarkable achievement. But it has come at a price; there is no clear policy for how China can reopen its borders to live with a virus that scientists expect to become endemic, or how to deal with it, other than with repeated lockdowns that harm the fragile economy and have led to increased panic as whole households are taken to quarantine because one case has been detected in an apartment block. That reopening is unlikely to happen in 2022. One of the main reasons for keeping China's doors

closed is the need for a smooth ride toward the 20th party congress, which is likely to be in October, where Xi Jinping is set to be chosen for an unprecedented third term as China's leader. The zero-Covid policy, in which the virus is to be eliminated from China, is personally associated with Xi and it would be immensely difficult to change the narrative before the congress. Therefore other ways of explaining the lockdown have taken hold. One is the story that China's system

Rana Mitter

allows a more efficient, if controversial, deployment of mass mobilisation combined with high-quality science. Social media has been filled with discussions of the "dabai", literally "big whites", health enforcement workers, dressed head to toe in white PVC PPE, who spray disinfectant in suspect households and who have the power to compel people into quarantine. For some, they are symbols of a futuristic modernity. Their critics say that they represent the faceless power of the authoritarian state that allows no appeal. However,

the online discussion misses a key point: the dabai are just ordinary officials and workers. By deflecting attention to the harsh tactics of workers on the ground, the public is distracted from discussing the national-level policy (a discussion that censorship mostly prevents). Meanwhile, China continues to search for one possible solution to the long cycle of lockdowns: an effective Chinese mRNA vaccine that mimics the working of the highly effective Pfizer and Moderna jabs. China's national pride means that it won't import the western vaccines but, despite huge amounts of investment from state and private sector, its own labs have not yet come up with a Chinese equivalent. Several private sector pharmaceutical companies are reported to have mRNA vaccines in the test stage, but even when they are approved by the regulators, there still needs to be a national rollout and much more effort to get the elderly to take the vaccine. That points to a programme that could last well into 2023, if not longer. Meanwhile, the lockdowns are grinding down the economy, not just in Shanghai, but nationwide. The prime minister, Li Keqiang, said last week that China's economic

outlook was "complicated" and "grim". Hu Chunhua, a vice-premier who some are tipping to move to a top seat on the elite standing committee of the politburo, has hinted that labour unrest is a real possibility and advocated stronger state support for groups in danger of unemployment. The danger of protest is real: during the privatisations of the 1990s, demonstrations in rustbelt cities such as Shenyang in the north-east showed popular feeling rising high as people realised their old factory jobs were doomed. The new generation of workers don't expect jobs for life, but they do expect a predictable economic playing field, particularly if they work in China's dynamic private sector. Covid has turned that predictability upside down. In the short term, in a year of significant domestic politics and turbulent economics, there are some advantages to keeping the doors shut. China isn't dependent on tourism or foreign student numbers, it has very low immigration levels and it needs relatively few overseas executives to keep even its internationally oriented businesses going. Sectors that a few years ago would have needed significant input from outside, such as technology, are rapidly becoming indigenised.

Can taking vitamins and supplements help you recover from Covid?

Australia's surge in COVID cases this year has seen many people looking for ways to protect themselves or boost their immunity and recovery. An upswing in sales of dietary supplements has followed. In Australia, the Therapeutic Goods Administration includes vitamins, minerals, amino acids, enzymes, plant extracts and microbiome supplements under the term "complementary medicine". The supplement industry's global estimated worth was about US\$170 billion (A\$239 billion) in 2020. Australian complementary medicines revenue was estimated at A\$5.69 billion in 2021 - doubling in size over the past decade. The latest data shows 73% of Australians bought complementary medicines in the previous year, with vitamins featuring in more than half of purchases. Historically, the public has purchased supplements from sources that also provide health-care advice. Lockdowns and blanket health messages about social distancing and personal hygiene have created a new normal. So people are doing more shopping online for supplements and turning to the internet, friends or social media for vitamin

recommendations. For some, this has led to an unhealthy fear of COVID (coronaphobia) and negative impacts on daily life. As with any medicine, consumers should seek information from reliable sources (doctors, pharmacists or evidence-based peer-reviewed articles) about the potential benefits and harms of supplements before purchase. Strong evidence supports vaccination as effective against the acute respiratory symptoms of COVID. Researchers have also looked at whether supplements may prevent or reduce the duration and severity of this viral infection by boosting the immune response. Deficiencies in essential nutrients that support immune function (vitamin C, vitamin D, zinc and selenium) have been shown to increase susceptibility to infection, including COVID. But there is little evidence supplementation in a healthy person prevents respiratory infections such as COVID. An evidence gap exists between a supplement's action in laboratory or animal studies and findings from well designed and conducted clinical trials. Ready access to supplements without a prescription from a myriad of online and shopfront sources and the uncontrolled spread of



Treasure Mcguire

claims that supplements can prevent or treat COVID symptoms, has created an "infodemic". These claims are fuelled by supplement manufacturers being able to "list" their products on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods, with limited evidence of safety or effectiveness. This appearance of official approval tallies with the common misperception that "natural" means "safe". Supplements

can cause harm in the form of adverse effects, drug interactions and expense. They also add to a patient's medication burden, may delay more effective therapy, or give false hope to the vulnerable. It was designed to test the effectiveness of high-dose zinc, vitamin C, and a combination of both, to shorten the duration of COVID-related symptoms compared with usual care in adult outpatients with confirmed infection. Deficiency of zinc, an essential trace element, has been associated with increased susceptibility to viral infections. The authors planned to include 520 patients but the safety monitoring committee recommended the study be stopped early, due to low likelihood of detecting significant outcome differences between the groups. There were also more adverse effects (nausea, diarrhoea, and stomach cramps) reported in

the supplement groups than those receiving usual care. Despite the large variety of complementary medicines marketed, most clinical trials to date have studied the impact of vitamin D, vitamin C or zinc to reduce the risk of contracting COVID, improve rates of hospitalisation or death. Even with high treatment doses, results have been generally disappointing. Vitamin D, zinc and some probiotics may be beneficial to prevent viral infections. Vitamins D, C, A, zinc, calcium and some probiotics may be beneficial to treat viral infections. But other supplements studied (including copper, magnesium, selenium and echinacea) are unlikely to be beneficial or are not supported by sufficient data. However, supplements may be beneficial when individuals are unable to achieve a balanced and varied diet.

Letter to the Editor

Worlds largest Integrated Renewable Energy Storage Project

Dear Editor,

Jagan Mohan Reddy, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh inaugurated the World's largest Integrated Renewable Energy Storage Project in Kurnool District in Andhra Pradesh. The Project of 5230 MegaWatt Renewable Energy Storage Project is set up by M/S Greenko at a cost of 3BN USDollars. This is a Unique Model of Solar Power, Wind Power and Hydro Power. This is an occasion for the whole Nation to be proud of (at a time when several Nations are facing trouble in one way or the other.) I wish all the States compete with each other to develop their states, then ours will be the Nation of Prominence.

Kantamsetti Lakshman Rao
Visakhapatnam

Social forestation for sustainable development



Forest and its diverse biological resources are playing significant role in sustaining livelihood and promoting conservation (Fisher et al. 2007). However, with the growing demand, land use change, and anthropogenic pressures globally these resources are dwindling at an alarming pace (Mukul et al. 2016). Threats to biodiversity have become the critical issue of global concern (Visseren-Hamakers and Glasbergen 2007; Masozera and Ralavalapati 2004). Rapid destruction of biological resources particularly in the developing countries bring into light the necessity of decentralization and devolution of governance process (Rashid et al. 2017). Decentralization has increasingly been advocated in the natural resource management (Rashid et al. 2015; Tacconi 2007; Khan 2001). Under this backdrop, community participation has received extra significance in forest management under various modalities such as social forestry, community forestry, and participatory forestry (Rashid et al. 2013a, b). The basic notion of introducing participatory forestry approaches is to restrict the growing biodiversity loss at the same time creating alternative livelihood options of the forest-dependent communities, and accordingly a noticeable change in the forest governance has taken root through decentralization and devolution of decisionmaking power to the rural community (Rashid and Khan 2014; Khan and Begum 1997). Participation is a situation where two or more social actors with explicit interest and concerns about a set of natural resources are engaged in its management. Participation promotes decentralization of decision-making power (Gilmour 2016). Creating a pro-people governance mechanism is one of the crucial objectives of promoting community participation in forest management (Mukul and Quazi 2009). Conservation interventions are widely influenced by the principles and goals of sustainable development and good governance (Ferguson 1996; Fisher 1995). Natural resource governance focuses on the relationship among structures, processes, traditions, and institutions which determine how participation occurs, who makes key decisions, how authoritative power is transferred and exercised, and how the responsibilities and benefits are distributed among stakeholders (Graham et al. 2003). The interactions among institutions, processes, and traditions determine how power is exercised, how decisions are taken on issues of public and often private concern, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say. Community-based natural resource management is one of the avenues to do so (Tacconi 2007). The concept of participatory forestry varies with

geographic location, context, and the mode of community engagement and partnership with local and national organizations such as forest and nature conservation departments (Dubois and Lowore 2000). However, the basic orientation embraces three major attributes, i.e., (i) people have the fundamental right of descent living, (ii) peoples' attitude toward environment widely influenced by their life standard, and (iii) active community engagement can add significantly toward better environmental management. The basic concepts of social forestry and community forestry are more or less the same. Conceptually, the local community controls a clearly and legally defined area and is supposed to be free from all sorts of immediate state influence on resource utilization. Provision of tenure right over the forest enables the participants to be involved with the forest apart from ensuring sustainable resource management (FAO 2006). Social forestry is now considered as an alternative to traditional forestry management with its ability to provide communities with firewood, fodder, and small timber resources to meet the local biomass needs and relieve pressures on natural forests (Baynes et al. 2015; Poffenberger 2000). The 1988 Forest Policy in India, for example, also emphasized to

Lutfun Nahar Lata

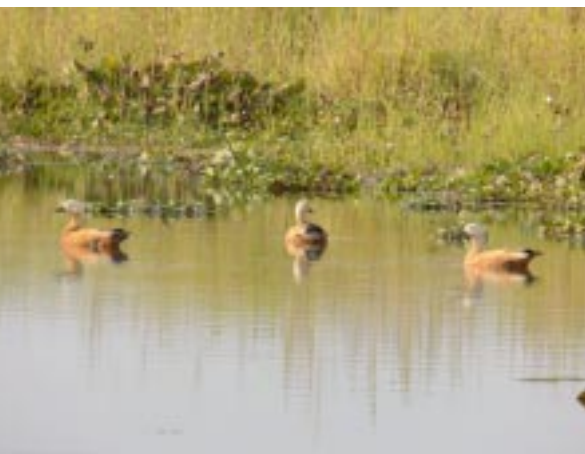
respond to the needs of rural people, giving them priority over commercial requirements: The life of tribal and other poor living within and near forests revolves around forests. The rights and concession enjoyed by them should be fully protected. Their domestic requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce, and construction timber should be the first charge on forest produce...a primary task of all agencies responsible for forest management...should be to associate the tribal people closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests...while safeguarding the customary rights and interests of such people, the ultimate objective of sustainable forest management can be considered as meeting the "forest-related needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own" (Salam and Noguchi 2005). To achieve this objective, it is necessary to engage community participation in forest conservation. Social forestry has emerged and scaled up during last three decades particularly in the tropical developing countries based on the notions of community-based natural resource management arose in the 1970s in response to the failures and limitations of top-down,

expert-driven approaches to managing forest and other natural resources like land, water, fisheries, etc. (German et al. 2008; Gibson et al. 2005; Agrawal 2001). The term social forestry was first coined in 1960s in India under the backdrop of severe land degradation of the natural forest, although there are differences in opinion as some mentioned China as the pioneering country of introducing social forestry (Lacuna-Richman 2012). As discussed already, the term social forestry is used here interchangeably with community forestry, farm and community forestry, and forestry for local community development to cover a broad range of tree- or forest-related activities that rural landowners as well as other users and community group undertake in order to provide products for their own use and to generate local income. Community forestry programs began with a "focus on involving communities in government programs for reforestation and forest protection [and] have gradually evolved [in theory] toward more devolution of decision-making power ... and more active use of forests by the local communities" (Fisher et al. 2007). Social forestry includes the range of activities associated with forest products, the rural environment, and subsistence agricultural communities. Social forestry programs give local people a share in the authority to design and sustain projects that will meet their demands (Rashid et al. 2017). Social forestry can also be linked to external development assistance intended to benefit participating communities and their environments (Mukul et al. 2012). While social forestry has proven to be particularly successful in increasing forest areas, community empowerment, and poverty alleviation in some countries, it has also been criticized due to its failure to promote equity among participating members (Mukul et al. 2014). The subordinate position of poor and disadvantaged community members (particularly women) is systemic and these differences affect representation, participation, and access to

natural resources, which lead to unequal distribution of benefits (Agrawal 2001, 2010; Sunam and McCarthy 2010; Blaikie 2006). In addition, social forestry needs government support in various forms, including providing a legal basis and technical assistance to ensure community members' communal rights on forest produce (Ruiz-Mallén et al. 2014; Hodgdon 2010; Pulhin et al. 2010). Basic human needs in the rural areas of developing countries are generally satisfied through income from market activities and by direct subsistence from natural resources, particularly forest resource. Country-specific forest policy must ensure that the community requirements must be met through social forestry and at the same time a win-win partnership between forest agency and participants needs to be established by popularizing the concept by giving legal and policy support (Lacuna-Richman 2012). Poverty reduction, economic growth, sustainability, and improvement of environmental conditions of earth are the salient manifests of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable development is basically a reconciliation of environment and development resources for the society. Global commitments such as SDGs have created significant scopes at one side and pressing challenges on the other side for all participating nations. Ideal requirement for achieving sustainable development goals as targeted by the global community is important to develop a forest-based production system that respects the obligation to preserve the ecological base considering sustainable development. Therefore, promoting social forestry could be a promising avenue to achieve SDG goals. In particular, the promotion of social forestry is also vital in achieving SDG 15 that emphasizes the protection, restoration, and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. SDG 15 also focuses on sustainability in managing forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. All of these can be achieved through promoting social forestry to a larger extent.

Maguri Motapungbeel: an important bird area

The Maguri Motapung beel is an Important Bird Area (IBA) recommended by Bombay Natural Historical Society, an Ecotourism NGO. Maguri Motapung Beel is situated to the 11 km North of Tinsukia and South-East of Dibrus-Saikhowa National Park under Tinsukia district. The Motapung and Maguri beel is a catchment joining Hapjan, Gujjan, Dibru rivers and several tributaries, which are unified before joining the Brahmaputra river near Gujjan. Earlier there were numerous moors, swamp areas and dead courses of the Dibruriver. But after the immediate engulf



stopped the aquifer with a demolition of white male buffalo. Since then the aquifer did not give a salty taste and it became a barren

Abhijit Chaliha

source of salt or Motapung. Main attractions of the Maguri Motapungbeel are great varieties of resident bird species, migratory bird, general and ornamental fishes, amphibians, reptiles, insects, western hoolock Gibbon etc. The wetland is full of different types of resident and migratory birds like whistling teal, coots, water hen, moor hen, jacanas, bittern heron, cormorants, pelican, mallard, tufted duck, gadwall, falcated duck, Ruddy shelduck, Eurasian wizen, bar headed goose etc. from the month of October to March the whole part of Motapungbeel covered by thousands of migratory and resident birds, which is really a precious sight of birds. At the same time the wet land produces more than 300 metric tons of fish every year. By which the local people can improve their economic conditions as well. Moreover 4 to 6 species of amphibians like great great turtle, roof turtle, python different types of insects are easily

available in the Maguri Motapung Beel. Availability of Western hoolock Gibbon in nearby villages of Motapungbeel also an additional surprise for the tourists. Apart from that wild buffalo, Malayan civet cat, hornbeel, cuckoo, robbin, owl, drongo, dove, pigeon, mongoose flying squirrel also easily visible in Motapungbeel. Neither government nor any other NGO's supports preservation and development of infrastructure for this most hopeful and important tourist place. A few young educated people formed an NGO called Wildlife and Environment Conservation Organisation, in short WECO, they are taking care of the Maguri Motapung beel with their physical, mental and financial contribution. Nowadays almost all the people are busy with their personal work or can say over-selfish, in this scenario these young people are really an example for our society. Though they are not taking any personal benefit from the Maguri Motapung Beel, they are very aggressive, and their mind vision is very clear for conservation of this important tourist place. We should support them at our level end for their continuous involvement toward the beel.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), independent U.S. governmental agency established in 1958 for the research and development of vehicles and activities for the exploration of space within and outside Earth's atmosphere. The organization is composed of four mission directorates: Aeronautics Research, for the development of advanced aviation technologies; Science, dealing with programs for understanding the origin, structure, and evolution of the universe, the solar system, and Earth; Space Technology, for the development of space science and exploration technologies; and Human Exploration and Operations, concerning the management of crewed space missions, including those to the International Space Station, as well as operations related to launch services, space trans-

portation, and space communications for both crewed and robotic exploration programs. A number of additional research centres are affiliated, including the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland; the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California; the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas; and the Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia. Headquarters of NASA are in Washington, D.C. NASA was created largely in response to the Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957. It was organized around the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), which had been created by Congress in 1915. NASA's organization was well under way by the early years of Pres. John F. Kennedy's administration when he proposed that the United States put a man on the Moon by the end of the 1960s.

E-Waste : A Growing Concern

Electronic waste, or e-waste, states to all items of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and its portions that have been waste by its holder as waste without the committed of re-use. E-waste is also referred to as WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment), electronic waste or e-scrap in different regions and under different conditions in the world. It includes an extensive choice of products - almost any household or business item with circuitry or electrical components with power or battery supply. It covers six waste categories:

1. Temperature exchange equipment, more normally referred to as refrigeration and freezing equipment. Typical equipment includes refrigerators,

freezers, air conditioners, heat pumps.

2. Screens, monitors. Typical equipment includes televisions, monitors, laptops, notebooks, and tablets.

3. Lamps Typical equipment includes shining lamps, high strength discharge lamps, and LED lamps.

4. Large equipment Typical equipment includes washing machines, clothes dryers, dish-washing machines, electric stoves, large printing machines, copying equipment, and photovoltaic panels.

5. Small equipment. Typical equipment includes vacuum cleaners, microwaves, ventilation equipment, toasters, electric kettles, electric shavers, scales, calculators, radio sets, video cameras, electrical and electronic toys, small electrical and electronic tools, small medical devices, small monitoring and control



instruments.

6. Small IT and telecommunication equipment. Typical equipment includes mobile phones, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), pocket calculators, routers, personal computers, printers, telephones etc.

Every product of the six e-waste categories has a different lifetime profile, which means that each

category has various waste quantities, commercial values, as well as prospective environmental and health impacts, if recycled improperly. Therefore, the assortment and logistical processes and reprocessing skill differ for each category, in the same way as the users' attitudes when disposing of the electrical and electronic equipment also differ. Disposal of e-wastes is a

particular problem faced in many regions across the world. Computer wastes that are land filled produces polluted leachates which finally pollute the groundwater. Acids and mud obtained from melting computer chips, if disposed on the ground causes acidification of soil. If these electronic items are discarded with additional household garbage, the

toxics posture a risk to both health and vital mechanisms of the ecosystem. In view of the ill-effects of dangerous wastes to both environment and health, several countries encouraged the need for a global agreement to address the problems and challenges posed by dangerous waste. Also, in the late 1980s, a tightening of environmental guidelines in industrialized countries led to a theatrical growth in the cost of dangerous waste disposal. Searching for cheaper ways to get rid of the wastes, "toxic traders" began shipping dangerous waste to developing countries. International outrage following these careless activities led to the drafting and acceptance of strategic plans and regulations at the Basel Agreement. The Convention secretariat, in Geneva, Switzerland, simplifies and execution of the convention and related agreements. It

also offers support and guidelines on permitted and technical issues, gathers statistical data, and conducts training on the appropriate management of dangerous waste. The best available practices from different countries can be adopted to have a standardized E-waste management process in place. The proper E-waste management will relief efficient sourcing and collection right up to extraction and disposal of material, ensure that this huge quantity of E-waste will turn into profitable products and business opportunity. This E-waste management should cover need all round efforts extending from technological development, official plan, operational plan, defensive protocols for workers engaged in such units and at last education of the people at large by introducing it as part of syllabus in higher secondary education.

Contd. From Page 1

Flood spell disaster for Assam; 8 Dead

washed away in different rivers in the district, including a kid and two middle-aged men. An ASDMA bulletin elaborates that at least 2,02,385 persons were affected, with roughly 6,540 buildings partially or completely destroyed in 811 villages throughout 24 districts. While district administrations opened 27 disaster distribution centres, over 33,300 people sought refuge in the 72 relief camps. The worst affected districts include Cachar, Dima Hasao, Hojai, Charaideo, Darrang, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Bajali, Baksa, Biswanath and Lakhimpur. The situation in the hill section under the Dima-Hasao district of the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) remained critical on Tuesday as the rain continued to batter the mountainous region, affecting the Lumding-Badarpur single line railway route. The Lumding-Badarpur section in Assam is the only route to connect Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and the southern part of Assam with the rest of the country. This rail link has been cut off for the past four days causing a price rise in essential items. The ferry service between Majuli-Nimatighat has resumed from Wednesday (May 18). The ferry service has resumed from Kamalabari ghat and Aflamukh ghat to Nimati ghat. The ferry service was suspended since May 15 by the district administration due to the rising water level in the River Brahmaputra. Meanwhile, the ferry services between Guwahati and North Guwahati on the Brahmaputra River have also been suspended on Tuesday amid rising water levels. Water levels in the Brahmaputra are reaching dangerous levels as heavy rains lashed several parts of the state and the Northeast. Officials informed that all ferry services from North Guwahati have been suspended. The ferry piers have been submerged due to rising water levels, they said. Meanwhile, the suspension of services has caused problems for commuters as they use ferries as a mode of transport. It may be noted that the meteorological department has issued a warning of heavy rainfall in Guwahati. It informed that the city will likely to receive two to three centimeters of rainfall every hour over the next few days.

Hardik Patel Exits Congress

of elections later this year. Hardik Patel's resignation letter to Congress president Sonia Gandhi aimed several zingers at Rahul Gandhi, who did not meet with him separately during his recent Gujarat visit. "When I met top leaders, they seemed distracted by their mobile phones and other issues as opposed to listening to issues concerning Gujarat," wrote Hardik Patel. "Senior leaders in Gujarat are more interested in ensuring that visiting leaders get their chicken sandwiches than engaging with people during yatras," he commented. "Our leader was abroad when he was needed in India during critical times," Hardik Patel went on, echoing criticism heaped on Rahul Gandhi by critics including the BJP. Hardik Patel was Working President of the Congress in Gujarat, a post that he said had meant little in his years in the party. The Congress leadership "strongly dislikes Gujarat and has no interest in the state", he said, adding that the party "has been rejected in virtually every state because they have no roadmap to present to the people." The party, Hardik Patel said, "came in the way" of resolving key issues like the Citizenship Amendment Act, the Goods and Services Tax, the Ayodhya temple-mosque case and Article 370 (the scrapped constitutional provision that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir). Gujarat Congress leader Shaktisinh Gohil tore into Hardik Patel, reminding him of his criticism of the BJP in the past. He accused the BJP of using agencies like the CBI, Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax to target Congress leaders and force them to quit. During the Patidar agitation for quota, Hardik Patel had likened Union Home Minister Amit Shah to "General Dyer (the British officer responsible for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919)", Mr Gohil said. He had also blamed the BJP for a sex CD controversy in 2017, just before the Gujarat election. "His tweets and his quotes were always against BJP. Our leaders who have gone to the BJP have told us that they were given a script to write. Hardik's words are BJP's words and there is no truth in them," Mr Gohil alleged. The Patidar activist joined the Congress just before the 2019 Lok Sabha election. He was made the Working President of the Congress in Gujarat, a post he said had meant little during his years in the party as he was never part of decision-making. He had been complaining over the past few weeks about the Gujarat Congress leadership sidelining him and had compared it to the feeling of a "groom forced into nasbandi (vasectomy)". When Rahul Gandhi visited Gujarat earlier this month, a widely anticipated meeting between the two did not take place. "He was in Gujarat recently, but I think he was very busy. He will get back to me once he is free," Hardik Patel had told NDTV last week. Gujarat Congress leaders, however, said that Rahul Gandhi had even skipped any mention of him at a public rally. The writing was on the wall, they said.

Rajiv Gandhi assassination case

his future. "I have just come out. It has been 31 years of legal battle. I have to breathe a bit. Give me some time," he said when reporters asked how did he feel as a "free bird" and what were his future plans. "I clearly believe there is no need for capital punishment. Not just for mercy... Many justices including Supreme Court chief justices have said so and there are many examples. Everybody is human," he was quoted as saying, with his mother Arputhammal and relatives by his side. "Many unknown people have supported us. I don't know many people. I thank all of them," an emotional Arputhammal said while recalling the "31 year battle" her son endured. Perarivalan later played the 'para' an ancient Tamil percussion instrument, in an obvious sign of celebrating his freedom. Just after the judgement was pronounced by the apex court releasing Perarivalan, relatives began arriving at his residence in Jolarpettai. Perarivalan offered sweets to Arputhammal. The mother-son duo thanked all those who stood by them. His sister and her family who hastened to meet and greet Perarivalan turned emotional and expressed great joy over his release. They hugged him and expressed their joy. Perarivalan's father Kuilidasan expressed great happiness over his son's 30-year incarceration coming to an end. When reporters asked about his future plans, including wedding, such matters will be discussed by the family, Kuilidasan said. Presently on bail, Perarivalan had been granted parole earlier on many occasions by the state government. The others undergoing life term in the case are Murugan, Santhan, Jayakumar, Robert Payas, Jayachandran and Nalini. Welcoming the judgement, Chief Minister M K Stalin said it could find a place in the "Justice-law-political-administrative history." Stalin also recalled the state had placed firm arguments in the court on Perarivalan's plea before the Supreme Court. Activists of Pro-Tamil outfits came out on the streets in several parts of the state, raised slogans hailing the SC verdict and condemned the inaction of the Governor on the 2018 cabinet recommendation to release him and six others, the Centre's alleged complacency in the matter. BJP state president K Annamalai reportedly said that the party "accepts" the apex court verdict, adding that the relief to Perarivalan was given by the SC based on its extraordinary power under Article 142. "We also believe the Supreme Court will not allow compromising with our unity, security and integrity," he said in a tweet. CPI General Secretary D Raja said his party welcomed the verdict and pointed out the long incarceration of Perarivalan. He also wanted the Governor to act in accordance with the Constitution and said the verdict raised many questions about the office of the gubernatorial post. Political leaders including MDMK founder Vaiko and PMK leader S Ramadoss welcomed his release. AIADMK MP P Ravindranath also welcomed the SC verdict. The K Palaniswami-led AIADMK cabinet had in 2018 recommended to the then Governor Banwarilal Purohit, the release of all seven convicts in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, who was killed by a suicide bomber of the LTTE at an election meeting in Tamil Nadu's Sriperumbudur in 1991.

APCC Expels Nilamani Sen Deka for

Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture, Food Processing and Parliamentary Affairs. Deka introduced the Assam Protection of Interests of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) (Amendment) Bill, 2014 in the state Assembly. The following day on 16 December the state government brought a resolution in the assembly by requesting the Centre for proper implementation of the Assam Accord. On 13 November 2017 Deka's son Rajarshi Sen Deka was arrested in an Assam Public Service Commission scandal. On 27 January 2017, the CID investigated Deka due to his alleged role in the 700 crore scam in the agriculture department.

Assam CM attends 27th Triennial

brotherly relations since times immemorial, owing to geographical proximity which was led to movement of Gorkhas from the Himalayan country to various parts of India, including Assam since pre-historic period. Dr. Sarma, recalling the prominent roles of the members of the Gorkha community played in India's freedom struggle, the neo-Vaishnavite movement against sectarianism and the madhyam andolan (movement for recognition of Assamese as the medium of instruction in universities), among others, said the community is a symbol of valour not only in India but also at the international stage. The Chief Minister further thanked the community for producing literary stalwarts who have contributed immensely towards growth of Assamese literary tradition. "Let me take this opportunity to announce that the government is sincerely taking every step needed for resolution of the long-standing problems and demands of the (Gorkha) community. Also, let me reiterate today that Gorkhas were never foreigners and will never be considered such. Also, we are taking measures to ensure members of the community are able to live a life of dignity and self-esteem just as other communities," the Chief Minister added. He also released a souvenir on the occasion. Today's event was also attended by senior ministers of the Assam Cabinet UG Brahma and Ashok Singhal, Chief Executive of Bodoland Territorial Council Pramod Boro, Political Secretary to the Chief Minister Jayanta Malla Brauah, legislators of Assam Legislative Assembly Ganesh Limbu, Bhaskar Sarma and Bupen Boro, President of Assam Gorkha Sammelan and former MP RP Sharma, President of All Assam Gorkha Students Union Arjun Chetry, among others.

Delhi Lt Governor Anil Bajjal

Delhi. The top court emphasized that except for anything related to land, police and public order, the Lt Governor has no independent decision-making powers under the constitution. The face-off, however, has continued to smoulder, with the Mr Bajjal occasionally vetoing moves by the Arvind Kejriwal government and the AAP leader hitting back with acerbic remarks. A 1969 batch IAS officer, Mr Bajjal had served as Union Home Secretary under former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and held key positions in other ministries. Under the Congress-led UPA government, he oversaw the ₹ 60,000 crore Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. As Lieutenant Governor, Mr Bajjal was chief of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority that spearheaded the capital's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Floods: 40 Highlands Constructed

forest personnel deployed for rescue operations of animals in Kaziranga," he added. The Forest Minister said that the forest officials are working round the clock in view of the flood situation and are working in close tandem with officials of Kaziranga National Park for ensuring safety of the animals. "More than 25 boats are kept ready for rescue of animals in Kaziranga," he said. While claiming that a slew of initiatives have been taken by his department to deal with the deluge in a better and efficient manner, Suklabaidya revealed that a baby elephant was saved from drowning on Tuesday morning. Meanwhile, KNPTD Director, Jatin Sharma said the park has a total of 144 man-made highlands, including 33 big ones for housing animals during floods. In addition to that, we have built an 8.5 km long road cum highland for providing shelter to animals during floods and for patrolling. "Sharma also said that KNPTD is fully prepared to meet any eventuality with country boats and speed boats being kept ready for deployment for rescue of animals. "Forest personnel are also on high alert," he added. He further stated that vaccination of cattle and camp elephants have been carried out near the periphery of the park in the last one and a half months to prevent infection from domestic animals to wild animals.

CBI, ED get SC notice on bail plea

ED on Michael's bail pleas and sought their responses within four weeks and listed the matter for hearing in July. Advocate appearing for Michel contended before the top court that the investigations are still not completed and he has undergone three years and six months as of now and before extradition, he was in Dubai custody. Michel has challenged in the apex court the March 11 order of the Delhi High Court which had refused to grant him bail. In the High Court, ED and CBI had opposed the bail petition filed by Michel in connection with the VVIP chopper case. CBI had said that he has a flight risk and it fears that because of the way the British government is helping him, he might flee and will never return. Michel had contended before the High Court that all the other accused in the case got bail in 60 days and he is the only one who hasn't been given the bail and suffering incarceration. According to the bail petition, Michel said that as a bail condition he will be available to join the investigation and trial as and when required and has never sought to evade the process of law. Earlier, the trial court had rejected his bail plea and had shown its displeasure with the British High Commission for sending a letter addressed to it stating that his medical condition of Michel and his pre-trial detention of two and half years may be taken into account when his bail application is considered. Christian Michel James was extradited in 2018 after India won the extradition case in Dubai. Christian Michel, the alleged middleman in the deal, was deported from the UAE and is currently in judicial custody. The Dubai-based businessman Rajeev Saxena was extradited to India on January 31, 2019, in connection with the ₹ 3,600-crore alleged scam relating to the purchase of 12 VVIP helicopters from Agusta Westland.

CM Directs Officials to Ensure Adequate Relief Material for the Flood-Affected

■ Directs PWD to clear up all road blockades owing to landslides, flood-water at the earliest., ■ CM Dr. Sarma holds Video-Meet with Meghalaya Counterpart; Appeals for Co-operation in Smooth Supply of Materials to Barak Valley Through Meghalaya

Guwahati, May 18: Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday held a meeting through video-conferencing with his Meghalaya counterpart Conrad Sangma and appealed to the latter to facilitate smooth movement of relief goods and materials being sent by the government of Assam to the flood-hit Barak valley districts through roads passing through the hill state. The Meghalaya Chief Minister is known to have assured the government of Assam of all support and co-operation from his side in the latter's measures to ensure availability of essential commodities for the flood-affected population of Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj districts. It is worth noting that owing to the severance of road connectivity between the Brahmaputra and Barak valley owing to landslides and flood-water inundating the highways within Assam, majority of the relief materials to the Barak Valley are being sent through the roadways passing through the hill state of Meghalaya. The meeting was also attended by Assam Water Resource Minister Pijush Hazarika, along with the Chief Secretaries and senior officials of both states, including all Deputy Commissioners of Meghalaya. In another meeting on the current flood scenario that was chaired by the Chief Minister today, directions were issued to the concerned officials and departments to ensure there was no shortage of essential commodities among the population in the flood-affected districts. The Chief Minister also asked the deputy commissioner of Cachar to stockpile essential food and other commodities for at least 15 days, owing to the grim flood scenario in the district. He also directed officials concerned to set-up "24x7 Control Rooms" for the three districts of Barak valley so as to ensure minute-to-minute monitoring and quickest responses to requests from flood-affected quarters. The Chief Minister also directed the Deputy Commissioner of Jorhat district to urgently dispatch essential relief materials to the worst-affected Cachar district by tomorrow. Concerned at the road blockades owing to landslides and flood-water inundating national and state highways, the Chief Minister also directed the Commissioner of Public Works Department to do the needful for smooth vehicular movements in those roads at the earliest. The senior officials of the Army and Air Force who were present in today's series of meetings also informed the Chief Minister about steps the two forces have taken in order to help the administration deal with the impact of flood. Senior Minister of Assam Cabinet Pijush Hazarika, officials of Army, Air Force, National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force and senior officials of the government were also present in today's meetings.



NGO's come forward to dis-tribute flood relief in Hojai

Assam Rising, Hojai, May 18: Hojai district has witnessed massive flooding due to incessant rainfall. To safeguard themselves, people had to leave their houses and take shelter at relief camps. In order to help those stranded people, the Hojai District team of Assam Chamber of Commerce distributed flood relief among the flood affected people. The team provided essential food items among 350 people at the relief camps at Amtala, Jugijan Station and Siliguri Basti under Hojai District on Tuesday. Talking to this Correspondent, Ashok Kejriwal, General Secretary, Assam Chamber of Commerce, Hojai District Unit said, "We have provided 350 food packets and our mission to help the flood affected will carry on." He said, "We believe in service to mankind as the Supreme service one can do." On the other hand, Sri Sri Krishna Mandir Helping Hands located at a new market in Hojai also provided flood relief to marooned people. "We have distributed 120 food packets among the affected people at singri basti, komrakata areas within Hojai District.", Amit Kumar Gupta, President, Sri Sri Krishna Mandir Helping Hands told. He said volunteers Shyam Gupta, Ranjit Gupta, Ram Gupta and many others have helped during this distribution. Also, Marwari Panchayat and Marwari Mahila Sammelan, Hojai District Unit also distributed flood relief at different relief camps in Hojai District.



One arrested with Opium in Bordumsa

Assam Rising, Margherita May 18: Acting on specific information Bordumsa police today arrested One Youth with Opium in Talpathar Village under Bordumsa PS. Acting on a tip-off regarding selling of illegal drugs, the Bordumsa police conducted a search operation on Tuesday Night and recovered 260 grams of Opium during search in his house. The arrested youth has been identified as Rajen Moran 45, Son of Puneswar Moran. As per reports Police has registered a case of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 against youth at the Bordumsa Police Station.



Drugs peddler arrested in Laharighat

Assam Rising, Laharighat, May 18: Acting on specific information, Laharighat police tonight arrested one drug peddler. Acting on a tip-off regarding selling of illicit drugs, the Laharighat police conducted a search operation on Tuesday night and arrested a drugs peddler and recovered contraband drugs filling containers, wine bottles and a mobile phone from his possession. The arrested drugs peddler has been identified as Abul Kasem of Tengaguri village in Laharighat. As per reports, the items have been seized as per procedure and a case has been registered of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 against them at the Laharighat Police Station.

Awareness programme on Right to Education held at Ledo

Assam Rising, Margherita, May 18: An Awareness programme on "Right to Education" was held at Ledo Colliery Sarbajanin Primary School under Margherita Subdivision on Wednesday which was jointly been organised by Children Friends Club (NGO) Margherita and AIITA Computer Education Centre, Ledo. Palash Rajkumar Ahom ADC(i/c) Margherita, Aditi Neog Margherita Election officer, Pranta Pratim Patra Executive Magistrate Margherita, Tinsukia District Legal Service Authority Secretary A Choudhury, Ledo Sankardev High School Headmistress Nang Sufati Pomung Mili, Ledo Colliery Sarbajanin primary school Headmistress Mina Nath, Ledo Colliery Sarbajanin ME School Headmistress Sadhana Baruah, Roots to fruits Pre primary school, Ledo Director Mitali Roy, Aviraj Coaching institute Baragolai faculty Rajshekhar Ambekar and Avishek Beldar, Margherita Journalist Association Vice President Samiron Borthakur, Treasurer Mithun Baruah, Margherita Press Club members Jitu Gogoi, Hemanta Ghosh, Abhijit Changmai and all the students of Ledo Colliery Sarbajanin primary school were present at Right To Education programme. Palash Rajkumar Ahom ADC(i/c) Margherita in his inaugural speech said that school drop out students has ratio has rampantly increased at Margherita subdivision which many drop out students engaged in workshops, business establishment and other places which is a great threat to their future and through Right to Education awareness and prevention can be brought among the school drop out students of Margherita Subdivision. We will work day and night to reduce School drop out students through letter and spirit all those section of people who involved school drop out students at their workplace shall be punished under the law said Palash Rajkumar Ahom. Aditi Neog Margherita Election officer in his speech said that Right to Education is the fundamental rights of every person of our country and all children must go to schools as without Education a Nation cannot be developed. All the present guests delivered their valuable speech on Right To Education and requested all the students not to leave school without completing their education. Students of Margherita performed a drama on Right to education which was highly applauded by the present guest for which they were felicitated with an Appreciation letter. The whole programme was moderated by Samiron Borthakur Vice president of Margherita Journalists Association.





Jimmy Anderson admits he doubted Test future after West Indies snub

London, May 18 : There was a moment during the winter when Jimmy Anderson considered his commitment to Test cricket. It did not last long but, as England's leading wicket-taker watched from afar while Joe Root's team succumbed to a 1-0 series defeat in the West Indies, he wondered if his 19-year career had reached its end. "I definitely questioned it," he says. "But I think the longer time went on, the more I just, you know ... I was still with the [Lancashire] lads doing pre-season training. I was still doing the gym work and wasn't bored of it. I wanted to be there doing it. Irrelevant of what was going to happen in the summer I wanted to start the season with Lancashire."The [Test squad] has not been picked yet. So we're just waiting to see what happens with that. If I get a Test call-up then brilliant, but at the minute I'm really enjoying playing cricket."I talked it through with my family as well and they saw it as I did, that I've got more to give to the game. Whether it's for Lancashire or for England, I've still got the ability to take wickets and I want to keep doing that."Any residual doubts - along with Root's stumps - were shattered on Sunday after Anderson delivered a reminder that he is still capable of dismissing the world's best batters. It was a wonderful ball, pitched on a good length around a fourth stump line before angling in with a hint of reverse swing. Two splattered poles served as a testament to Anderson's enduring potency."Obviously, the player matters because he was their best player," Anderson says, resisting the temptation to insert greater meaning in bowling the captain who left him out of his final touring squad. "We've not fallen out or anything. I spoke to him before he announced that he was stepping down. There's still a huge amount of respect between the two of us, so there's no animosity."

Rangers and Frankfurt fans hit Seville for once-in-a-lifetime European final

Frankfurt, May 18 : Aman in an orange shirt stumbled down a narrow street in the Alfalfa district of Seville. It was just before 11 am, but the stench of booze preceded him. His eyes were half-closed and he looked as if he hadn't slept for a couple of days. Over his shoulders he wore a placard bearing the message, in English and Spanish, that he was willing to pay *500 for a ticket for the Europa League final on Wednesday.He staggered up to a pair of bemused French tourists. "I give you 500," he said in a Glaswegian slur. "Cash. Dinero." Seville police are anticipating as many as 100,000 fans from Scotland and 50,000 from Germany for the meeting of Rangers and Eintracht Frankfurt.Given how the city went into meltdown in 2003 - a collapsed phone network, a dearth of taxis, streams of fans trudging back along the road from the Estadio Olimpico - when approximately 100,000 arrived for the Uefa Cup final between Celtic and Porto, that represents a daunting challenge. At least this time the final is being played in the Ramón Sánchez Pizjuán Stadium, although the benefits of it being in the centre of town are perhaps slightly offset by the fact that capacity is about 15,000 smaller than the Olimpico."Even if 150,000 fans don't come - if it's half that number or less - we will have substantial issues," said Seville's commissioner for citizen security, Juan Carlos Castro. Underlying his concerns, although he was diplomatic, is the threat of violence.

Police hunt fan who head-butted Billy Sharp on pitch after Forest playoff win

Sheffield, May 18 : Nottinghamshire police have launched an investigation after Sheffield United's Billy Sharp appeared to be head-butted by a fan at the end of the Championship playoff semi-final.Video emerged online of the celebrations following Nottingham Forest's 3-2 penalty shootout win apparently showing a fan running at Sharp, who was on loan at Forest during the 2012-13 season, during the pitch invasion and knocking him to the ground.Nottingham Forest released a statement saying they were "appalled" by the footage of their former player being "assaulted".Brice Samba (left) celebrates with his Nottingham Forest teammates after they defeated Sheffield United on penalties in the playoff semi-final."The club will work with the authorities to locate the individual in order they are held to account for their actions, which will include a life ban from Nottingham Forest," it read. "The club would also like to apologise to Billy

personally and to Sheffield United."As Sharp lay on the floor, the man sprinted away from the scene. The Sheffield United manager Paul Heckingbottom told Sky Sports: "There's a prison sentence there for sure. We're seeing things thrown on the pitch and things that are thrown on putting players' health and safety in danger and nothing's ever done about it. There will be something done about that. We've seen what's happened, we know what's happened."How can you



come to a place of work minding your own business and be assaulted in that fashion? It's just bang out of order and it's everything that's wrong. Too many times we hear people condemn it, but nothing's done about it. We're the

ones that suffered."It's assault. We've seen one of our players attacked. He's shuck up, bleeding, angry. It'll be dealt with."It's upsetting for a lot of reasons - I don't want to say too much more about it. He'll be dealt

with."Nottinghamshire police's assistant chief constable Rob Griffin said: "Enquiries are under way to identify the offender and we will be looking to make an arrest as soon as possible."We have seen the footage, as many others will have who watched the televised match, and we are appealing for anyone who knows who the offender is to please get in contact with us as soon as possible."We have spoken to the player concerned and we are working with both clubs which are supporting us with our investigation which will continue through the night."Our extensive enquiries remain ongoing. Anyone with information on this incident is asked to call Nottinghamshire Police on 101."

Eddie Jones urges Henry Arundell to earn place in England's World Cup squad



London, May 18 : Eddie Jones has challenged Henry Arundell to earn a spot in England's World Cup squad next year, revealing it took him five minutes to decide the 19-year-old full-back warranted a first call-up.Arundell was among the eye-catching inclusions named on Tuesday in a 36-man training squad for a three day camp, capping a breakthrough season at London Irish in which he has scored several remarkable tries, including a length-of-the-field effort against Toulon this month.Jones compared him to Matt Giteau - the former Australia Test centurion who the England head coach unearthed when in charge of

nowhere in 2015 and that is the sort of thing a young guy can do," Jones said."The reason I have compared Arundell [with Giteau] is a similar story. You get reports through on young players, and where there is smoke there is usually some fire. I remember getting a report on Giteau, what he could do, and then you go and watch him play. Within five minutes you can generally work out whether he's got it or not, whether he's got something special."I gave you that example of Arundell [against Wasps]. And Giteau was the same, I went to watch him play half-back for his club, and within five minutes you could tell he had something about him."Then the hard part comes, when they've got to work really hard, they've got to not believe what's being said about them, that they're not kid-wonder, that they've got to apply themselves to the task and that's when the real player comes through.The test of a young player to become a good Test player is their ability to work hard, their ability to take knocks, their ability to keep resilient physically and mentally and to have that mindset to keep improving."From what I know of him, and I have met him once very briefly, he has got good attributes. But we will only see that on the three days of training we have."

Orioles' Matt Harvey suspended 60 games by MLB for drug distribution

London, May 18 : Baltimore Orioles pitcher Matt Harvey was suspended for 60 games by Major League Baseball on Tuesday for distributing a prohibited drug of abuse, a punishment stemming from his admission of providing opioids to a teammate who fatally overdosed.The former New York Mets star also admitted in February during a federal trial in Texas stemming from Los Angeles Angels pitcher Tyler Skaggs' death that he used cocaine while in New York and California.Harvey, a 33-year-old right-hander, agreed last month to a minor league contract with the Orioles that called for a \$150,000 salary while in the minor leagues, a \$1m salary while in the major leagues and a \$500,000 assignment bonus if traded while under a major league contract. He has been working out at Baltimore's extended spring training facility and has not pitched in any games.The suspension is retroactive to 29 April. Under an agreement between MLB and the players' association, minor league games will count toward the suspension, a person familiar with

that provision told the Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because that was not announced.During the trial of former Los Angeles Angels employee Eric Kay, Harvey, pitchers Mike Morin and Cam Bedrosian and first baseman CJ Cron testified and described recreational drug use allegedly going on among and around the Angels when they played for the team.After saying he was subpoenaed and testifying only because he had immunity from prosecution, Harvey acknowledged being a cocaine user before and during his season with the Angels in 2019. He said he tried oxycodone provided by Skaggs during his season with the Angels and also provided drugs to Skaggs.Skaggs was found dead in a suburban Dallas hotel room on 1 July 2019, a day the Angels were supposed to open a four-game series against the Texas Rangers. Kay was convicted on one count each of drug distribution resulting in death and drug conspiracy. He faces at least 20 years and up to life in prison when he is sentenced on 28 June.

Tiger Woods backs PGA Tour and criticises Phil Mickelson comments

London, May 18 : It was far from a full-on attack. Nonetheless, Tiger Woods delivered more than enough veiled criticism of Phil Mickelson for onlookers to be left in little doubt that the 15-time major champion has little sympathy for his old adversary's predicament. Mickelson will miss this week's US PGA Championship, where he was due to appear as the defending champion, as the fallout from comments relating to Saudi Arabia and a breakaway tour continue.Woods admitted he had not contacted Mickelson since the latter stepped away from golf in late February. Comments by Woods in firm defence of golf's existing ecosystem are in stark contrast to the approach of Mickelson, who accused the PGA Tour of "obnoxious greed" and claimed he sought "leverage" via the Saudis."He has his opinion

on where he sees the game of golf going," said Woods of Mickelson. "I have my viewpoint how I see the game of golf. I've supported the Tour and my foundation has run events on the Tour for a number of years. I just think that what Jack [Nicklaus] and Arnold [Palmer] have done in starting the Tour, breaking away from the PGA of America and creating our tour in 1968 ... I just think there's a legacy to that. I've been playing out here for a couple of decades and I think there's a legacy to do. I still think that the Tour has so much to offer, so much opportunity."I understand different viewpoints but I believe in legacies. I believe in major championships. I believe in big events, comparisons to historical figures of the past. There's plenty of money out here. The Tour is growing. But it's just like any other sport. It's like tennis. You have to go out there and earn it. You've got to go out there and play for it. We have opportunity to go ahead and do it. It's

just not guaranteed up front."Mickelson is widely believed to have signed a lucrative deal with the Saudi-backed LIV Golf Investments, which will stage a \$25m event in Hertfordshire next month. That Woods was choosing his words wisely was made clear when he was asked about Mickelson's non-appearance at Southern Hills. "It's always disappointing when the defending champion is not here," he said."Phil has said some things that I think a lot of us who are committed to the Tour and committed to the legacy of the Tour have pushed back against. He has taken some personal time and we all understand that. I think that some of his views on how the Tour could be run, should be run, there has been a lot of disagreement there. But as we all know, as a professional, we miss him being out here."Speaking before Woods, Rory McIlroy was candid about the significance of the Saudi disruption plan.



New balls please: counties receive fresh batch after Dukes cricket balls go soft

London, May 18 : A fresh batch of balls has been delivered to every first-class county before the County Championship fixtures this week after Dukes admitted there have been issues with some of those used so far this season. The Durham captain, Scott Borthwick, said the quality of those balls he has seen had been "shocking".Though some counties have reported no complaints with the batch of balls they received before the start of the season, others have had repeated problems and Borthwick's complaints came after there were seven unscheduled ball changes during Durham's victory against Glamorgan last week, including five on a single day.Beyond going out of shape, the balls are said to have skewed games in the batters' favour: in the entirety of the County Championship last season there were just 12 scores above 500, while this season there have already been 13 in Division One -



including four last week alone - and another seven in Division Two."The balls have been shocking this year," Borthwick said on Sunday. "This batch are just different. They seem to go soft pretty quickly and then when they get soft they swell a bit and go out of shape. It's something to do with Dukes, they have obviously got this batch wrong. I know the seamers want them to go back to last year's batch because I think the seams are actually smaller on them as well, so you get a little bit less sideways movement. I

guess that's why there's so many big scores already this season."Dilip Jajodia, whose company British Cricket Balls Ltd produces the Dukes balls, told the Guardian he believed the problem had been addressed. "There's been a quality issue, on the basis that balls are going out of shape," he said. "It's not a major issue. We've tightened up our process, we're sending balls out all the time, and hopefully the feedback will be better."One experienced bowler told the Guardian the problem has been so widespread that entire boxes of balls were being

rejected and returned.Jajodia said: "We had no idea there was an issue until people started complaining. When the balls leave me I can tell you they all look perfect. When they're played with, if there's anything at all wrong with them it shows up."We do everything exactly the same: the same procedures, the same raw materials. Then if there's a problem you have to react. Unfortunately we've had a batch where there seems to be a problem."

Giro d'Italia: Biniam Girmay makes history as first Eritrean stage winner

London, May 18 : Biniam Girmay became the first black African to win a stage of a Grand Tour with victory in the Giro d'Italia on Tuesday.Girmay, 22, had already made history this season, with his victory at Gent-Wevelgem in March making him the first African to win a Belgian cobbled classic, and added another

landmark moment for the sport on stage 10 of the Giro in Jesi.A lumpy finish to the 196km stage from Pescara had left the peloton in pieces with Girmay and Mathieu van der Poel the only real sprinters left and, after Girmay launched his move, Van der Poel gave up in his bid to come around the Eritrean and offered a salute as he crossed the line."It's unbelievable,"

Girmay said."I thank the team. We started the race well, we controlled it. I don't have any words for my team." After his podium interview was interrupted several times by well-wishers from the peloton, he added: "When I started the Giro we had the possibility to win and make good results - this is also part of the success of our team, my family and

everybody. Every day comes new history so I'm really grateful and happy that I did it."Van der Poel had almost managed to get alongside Girmay in the finale, but once his own face was in the wind he perhaps paid for some of the attacks he had made inside the final 10km as he could not get his wheel in front.

Lyon defender Ellie Carpenter 'I don't think many people understand how cut-throat it is'

London, May 18 : When Ellie Carpenter was 16 she was sledged by an opposition manager. Western Sydney Wanderers were playing away, she was at right-back and the coach was going hell for leather from his technical area. "Who is Ellie Carpenter? She's not fast," he boomed as his own player ran at her with ball at feet. "She's nothing." "He was just giving it to me," says Carpenter, now 22 and playing for Olympique Lyonnais. "Just going at me the entire first half, because I was on his side [of the pitch]. I was just like 'who is this guy, what is he doing? I'm literally like 16 years old, what are you trying to get at?'" Chances are he was calling her nothing because he knew she was something. Something very good indeed. And she was fast, with an overlap worthy of water-cooler chat and a purposeful physicality both on and off the ball. "It kind of just made me play better, to be honest," she says. "It motivated me more - I just



wanted to shut him up. Like 'OK, you want to bad mouth me, try to get in my head?' It worked, but not in the way he had obviously hoped. "In one way or another, Carpenter has been targeted on the football field since she can remember. By the local boys in her small New South Wales home town of Cowra. By Marta and Megan Rapinoe and Lieke Martens. This Saturday it could be Alexia Putellas, when her Lyon side face Barcelona in the Women's Champions League final. If Carpenter was a teenaged world-class full-back in the mak-

ing, she has realised that status as a young adult. These days she is starting for Lyon, the global point of reference for women's club football. To her left is captain Wendie Renard, the first woman to make 100 Women's Champions League appearances. Behind her is Chile's veteran goalkeeper Christiane Endler. In front is the tournament's record goalscorer, Ada Hegerberg, and the United States' brightest young talent in Catarina Macario. Their lists of individual and team decorations are intimidating. Carpenter herself has a

string of them. One of her collection is a Women's Champions League winner's medal - though only through pure circumstance. The 2019-20 final should have already been run and won when she signed with Lyon in June 2020 to replace Lucy Bronze. Except that Covid-19 had forced its postponement, meaning Carpenter watched her new team see off VfL Wolfsburg from the bench. "I wasn't really meant to be there," she says. "But I was, which was a great bonus. It was an amazing experience ... but I obviously didn't play, so I didn't feel like I had won it." But it's so great to be part of the team and to know what it takes to get there. And now, doing the whole season and starting from the first games in the group stage and the qualification rounds and everything, it feels a lot different because you've worked the whole way from the beginning. "Lyon are almost always around at the business end in Europe. They won five years running until 2020-21, when they went out in the quarter-finals to domestic rivals Paris Saint-Germain. Barcelona dismantled Chelsea in the final to claim their first trophy and complete a treble. Now the defending champions, led by Ballon d'Or winner Putellas and spurred on by record crowds at the Camp Nou, stand in the way of Lyon's quest for a record-extending eighth title in Turin. "Those crowds just show how far women's

Tuilagi is most significant name in England squad

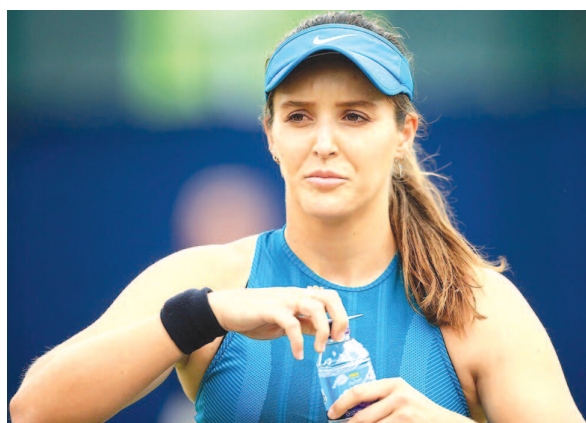
London, May 18 : Welcome to The Breakdown, the Guardian's weekly (and free) rugby union newsletter. Here's an extract from this week's edition. To receive the full version every Tuesday, just pop your email in below: For all that Henry Arundell's first call-up to the England squad commands attention, for all that Eddie Jones has seen fit to cast his eye over another tranche of youngsters just a year before the World Cup campaign begins, the most significant inclusion for Sunday's get-together is Manu Tuilagi. 'Twas ever thus and it is no coincidence that the night before naming his squad, Jones chose to spend it in Manchester visiting Tuilagi, not the returning Owen Farrell or any members of his leadership group. The excitement around Arundell is understandable even beyond the fact that eye-catching young players will always generate hype. At first glance he looks barely out of short trousers - as someone with better insight than most recently explained, he is all bottom half at the moment - but his try-scoring exploits have been explosive and Jones has been clear he



wants to inject pace into his side between now and France 2023. Equally, the selections of Will Joseph, Jack Willis and Jack van Poortvliet, who is among the 10 uncapped faces, add a layer of intrigue; so, too, does the list of names of players missing, including Henry Slade, George Ford and Joe Marler, though it has been made clear that they have been rested as opposed to dropped. But it is important to remember that while the three-day camp marks the start of England's preparations for the three-Test tour of Australia in July and there will be some training on the paddock, it will be largely limited to admin and MOT fitness checks. They call it "alignment"; perhaps it will give Jones the chance to formulate plans for the uncapped Barbarians match

on 19 June, but his plans for the tour will become much clearer in the coming weeks. Tuilagi's presence cannot be ignored. It can never be ignored because it has not happened nearly regularly enough during Jones's tenure, with the 30-year-old most recently missing the Six Nations. Barring the 2019 World Cup campaign, when England's backroom staff worked wonders to keep him fit and firing in the warmups and through the tournament, Tuilagi has made 13 appearances under the Australian. Just two of those came before 2019 and in that time Jones used to make a habit of dismissing questions about him, seemingly attempting to ensure his spectre did not loom large over the squad.

Former junior Wimbledon champion Laura Robson retires at 28



Wimbledon, May 18 : The former junior Wimbledon champion and Olympic silver medalist Laura Robson has announced her retirement from tennis following three hip operations. The 28-year-old was thrust into the spotlight aged 14 when she won the girls' title in SW19 and she peaked in the top 30 while still a teenager but has been hampered by injury for most of the last decade. "I had another hip surgery and probably did the best rehab block of my life - I went to all the best specialists and had some in-

credible people that I was working with just to get me back on court - and then the second time I hit, I just knew. "It feels weird to say out loud, but I'm done, I'm retired. I've sort of known that for a while because of what I was told by the doctors last year, but I think it just took me so long to say it to myself, which is why it took me so long to say it officially. "With her natural ball-striking ability and big-match mentality, Robson was quickly marked out for stardom and rose swiftly through the senior ranks, reaching the fourth round at the US Open in 2012 and winning an Olympic silver

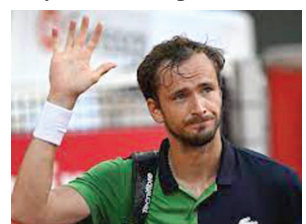
Swiatek and Djokovic win Italian Open titles in timely boost for Roland Garros

Milan, May 18 : If there were any lingering doubts about Novak Djokovic's form as the French Open approaches, he has methodically addressed them with his racket over the course of the past week. In the Italian Open final on Sunday, he first soared and then efficiently dealt with adversity before defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-0, 7-6 (5). After clinching his 1,000th career victory on Saturday, Djokovic has now won a record-extending 38 Masters 1000 titles and six Italian Open titles in 12 finals. It was his first title since the Paris Masters in November after barely playing in the first three months of the year and being de-

ported from Australia because of his decision not to take a Covid vaccination. Djokovic defeated top-10 players in three consecutive matches in Rome and Tsitsipas, ranked fifth, is his biggest scalp of the year. Djokovic came out of the blocks on fire, serving well, relentlessly landing deep returns and controlling the majority of exchanges as he timed his forehand sweetly and refused to offer any free points. Tsitsipas, however, despite having won more matches and points than any other player on clay this year, was dire. After relinquishing the opening set the Greek opened the second with improved serving

Geneva, May 18 : Second-ranked Daniil Medvedev lost his comeback match Tuesday

after a six-week injury layoff, beaten 6-2, 7-6 (5) by Richard Gasquet in the second round at the Geneva Open. Medvedev, who underwent hernia surgery last month, cautioned Sunday he was often a slow starter on clay courts. So it proved in his



first match on the surface this season, in the last tournament before the French Open. Medvedev double-faulted for the seventh time on Gasquet's first match point, as the Frenchman ended a 36-match losing streak against opponents ranked No. 1 or 2 after beating Roger Federer 17 years ago at Monte Carlo. "It's tough. I don't play my best tennis on clay courts," Medvedev said. "I kind of

need to be in the zone, which I was not today." Unlike Medvedev, Gasquet has won titles on clay in his career and the 35-year-old Frenchman frustrated his top-seeded Russian opponent in an assured first set. Medvedev had three double-faults when his serve was broken to open the second set, and he broke a racket on the court in the next game. He leveled at 3-3 and clinched the next game at love with a second-service ace. In the tiebreaker, Medvedev twice recovered from being a mini-break down before his serve faltered again. "I think more days of practice and (I) should be ready for Roland Garros because physically, even right now, my body feels good," he said. Gasquet's will face Kamil Majchrzak in the quarterfinals after the Polish player beat qualifier Marco Cecchinato 6-2, 6-3. Cecchinato had beaten Dominic Thiem, the two-time French Open runner-up, on Monday.

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