



(সপ্তম ভাৰত ঔদ্যোগিক মেলা ২০২২)

22 23 24 25 APRIL 2022

Veterinary Field Khanapara, Guwahati

# SEMINARS

APRIL  
24<sup>th</sup> 2022

GRAB THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR FROM THE BEST MINDS OF THE INDUSTRY

## AGRI WOOD

### SCOPE OF INDUSTRIALISATION OF PALM OIL

**SUBHAS BHATTCHARJEE**

Head North East (Oil Palm), Ruchi Soya Industries Limited, Former Managing Director of NERAMAC, GOI.



### BAMBOO INDUSTRY IN N.E. INDIA

**S. CHOUDHARY**

MD, NECBDC, Bymohat, Assam

## WASTE MANEGMENT

### WASTE TO WEALTH

**DR SANTANU DUTTA**

Member Secretary, Pollution Control Board Assam, Guwahati



## WASTE MANEGMENT

### SCOPE OF RECYCLE UNITS IN NE

**DR SANJAY K GUPTA**

Senior Advisor Swachh Bharat Mission Assam, Consultant Skat Foundation-Switzerland, Expertise in Integrated Solid Waste Management.



## FOOD PROCESSING

### ORGANIC SPECIES FARMING & INDUSTRIAL SCOPE

**SRI DHARMENDRA DAS**

Deputy Director, Spices Board (Ministry Commerce & Industry, GOI), Hatogaon, Guwahati



### MARKETING & ITS CHALLENGES IN FOOD INDUSTRY

**MANOJ DAS**

MD, NERAMAC, Head (A&C, BFC, MOVCDNER, NEDFI).



## EXPORT PROMOTION

### EXPORT POTENTIAL FROM N.E.

**DR ARCHANA NATH**

Consultant, APEDA, Guwahati



### EXPORT MANAGEMENT & ITS BASICS

**VIJAY PRAKASH**

General Manager, NSIC, NER Region, Guwahati, Assam



### EXPORT MANAGEMENT & ITS BASICS

**AMRIT DEORAH**

Founder Aasray Concept Food & Managing Partner Excel Foods.



## EXIBITION TIMINGS

10:00 AM - 6:00 PM



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING



E MARKETING



RUBBER, AGAR & COFFEE



PLASTICS & PACKAGING



RENEWABLE ENERGY & EV



BANKING & FINANCE



EXPORT PROMOTION



MSME



পঞ্চায়ত আৰু গ্রামোন্নয়ন বিভাগ  
অসম চৰকাৰ

“ভাৰতৰ ভৱিষ্যৎ গাঁৱৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰশীল।”

- মহাত্মা গান্ধী

## ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় পঞ্চায়তীৰাজ দিৱস

২৪ এপ্ৰিল, ২০২২

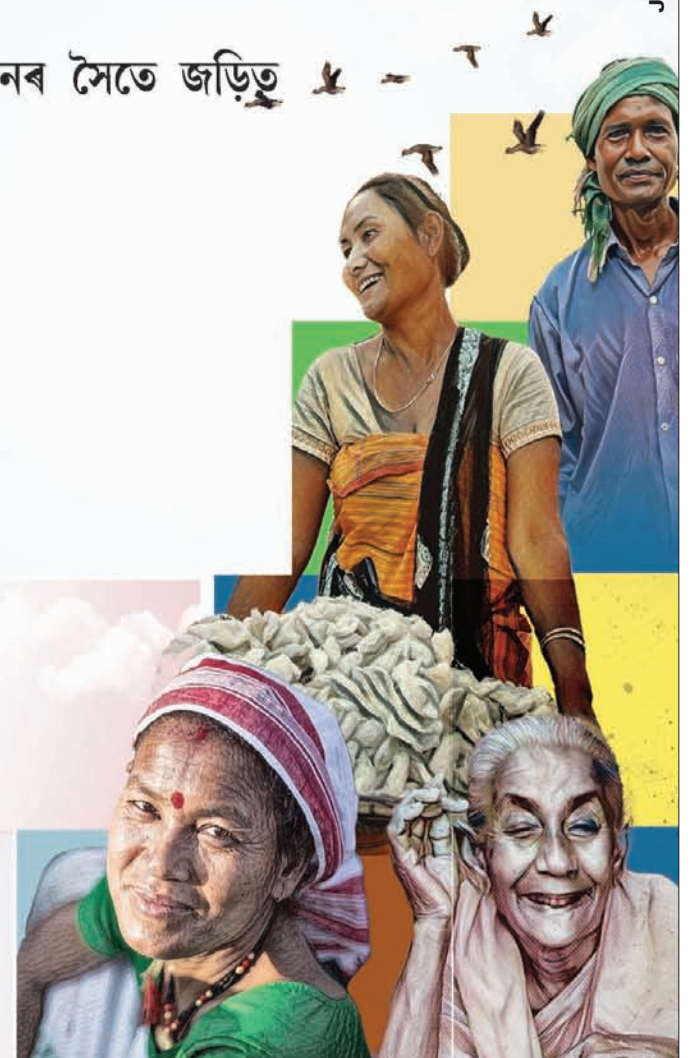
দেশ আৰু ৰাজ্যৰ গ্রামাঞ্চলৰ সৰ্বাংগীণ উন্নয়ন সাধনত আমাৰ পঞ্চায়তীৰাজ অনুষ্ঠান সমূহৰ ভূমিকা অপৰিসীম। মাননীয় প্ৰধানমন্ত্ৰী শ্ৰীযুত নৰেন্দ্ৰ মোদী ডাঙৰীয়াৰ মাৰ্গদৰ্শন আৰু যুগদৰ্শী নেতৃত্বত তথা মাননীয় মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী ড° হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা ডাঙৰীয়াৰ সবল দিগ্‌দৰ্শনেৰে অসমৰ পঞ্চায়তীৰাজ অনুষ্ঠান সমূহে ৰাইজক উন্নয়নী প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ সৈতে একাত্ম কৰি তুলিছে আৰু গ্রামাঞ্চলৰ বিকাশৰ গতিক এক নতুন মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে।

আজি ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় পঞ্চায়তীৰাজ দিৱস উপলক্ষে ৰাজ্যখনৰ পঞ্চায়তীৰাজ অনুষ্ঠানৰ সৈতে জড়িত সকলোৰে লগতে সমূহ জনসাধাৰণলৈ মই আন্তৰিক শুভেচ্ছা জ্ঞাপন কৰিলোঁ।

ৰণজিৎ কুমাৰ দাস

মন্ত্ৰী, পঞ্চায়ত আৰু গ্রামোন্নয়ন বিভাগ, অসম চৰকাৰ

## সেৱাই পঞ্চায়ত



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## Centre's interlocutor AK Mishra meets Muivah

KOIHIMA, April 23 (PTI): The Centre's interlocutor for Naga peace talks, A K Mishra Friday met the principal negotiator of NSCN(IM), Thuingaleng Muivah at Chumoukedima police complex here Friday.

This was the second meeting between Mishra and the octogenarian Muivah, who was accompanied by about 11 senior NSCN(IM) leaders, this week.

No detail about the meeting was shared with the media but a senior functionary of the outfit told PTI that there will be another round of talks between Mishra and a larger number of NSCN(IM) leaders again on Saturday.

Mishra, who arrived in Nagaland on Monday for his second visit to the state since assuming office in September last year, held an interaction with Naga National Political Groups (NNPG), a body of eight Naga organisations on Thursday.

The Centre has been holding separate talks



with the NSCN(IM) since 1997 and the NNPG from 2017. It signed the Framework Agreement with NSCN(IM) on August 3, 2015 and an Agreed Position with NNPG on November 17, 2017.

However, no final solution to the vexed issue has been arrived at with NSCN(IM) sticking to

its demand for a separate flag and constitution for the Nagas.

Mishra had met Muivah on Tuesday at Camp Hebron, the NSCN(IM) headquarters near Dimapur.

Before leaving the state, he will meet the state government's core committee on Naga political issues headed by chief minister Neiphiu Rio and comprising Naga civil societies, officials said.

Meanwhile, the Nagaland Gaon Burah Federation (NGBF), an apex body of village chiefs, have appealed for a solution to the protracted issues before the state election due early next year.

The appeal was made during the 30th general session of NGBF held at Phek Town on Thursday.

The body also resolved that if the situation demanded, the NGBF would take up democratic agitations.

Contd. from Page 3...

## Rajnath talks tough against

it has been withdrawn from 23 districts of Assam and areas under 15 police stations each in Manipur and Nagaland. "Durable peace and stability has ensured that AFSPA gets withdrawn from the northeast and the role of chief ministers in the region has also been commendable, with Assam's Himanta Biswa Sarma taking the leading position," he noted.

Maintaining that there was a "public misconception" that the Army always wanted AFSPA to remain in force, Singh contended the Army's job is not to look after internal security but to guard the borders.

On continued imposition of AFSPA in Jammu and Kashmir, the minister said, "The situation is responsible for it, not the Army." Lauding the role of serving soldiers and veterans in protecting the country, the Defence minister said, "The soldiers are our strength and the veterans and 'veer naris' (widows of martyrs) our inspiration. "Even when a soldier retires and becomes a veteran, the warrior inside him lives on and it can be seen in his 'tevar' (attitude), body language," he added.

He also called on the general people to ensure that brotherhood is maintained within the country while the soldiers keep peace on the borders.

"We don't notice religion when a person dons the uniform and becomes a soldier for the country.

"People of different religions had worked together in the 1971 War...this social harmony of Assam, India should not be broken," he said, felicitating war widows, families of martyrs, prisoners of war and former personnel who had suffered injuries in the 1971 battle.

He also inaugurated an exhibition by the Directorate of Sainik Welfare, showcasing the valour and supreme sacrifice of armed forces in the liberation war.

Speaking on the occasion, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma while paying his tributes to the bravery of the war veterans of the Indo-Pak War of '71 and offering his deep tribute to all the soldiers who laid down their lives in the line of duty, said that the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 was a landmark event in the history of the Indian sub-continent. He said that the valour and sacrifice of the war heroes not only registered the historic victory of India over Pakistan but also played a decisive role in realising the dream of an independent Bangladesh. Later in a tweet, Sarma said that nine war widows were honoured with ₹ 10 lakh each, eight personnel who had suffered injuries with ₹ 5 lakh each and two ex-prisoners of War with ₹ 2.5 lakh each.

An amount of ₹ 2 lakh each was also given to 86 other veterans of the liberation war, he added.

## BSF rescues 57 cattle on

troops of 97 BN BSF signaled the truck driver to stop near to MCP (Mobile Check Post) Sonapur, on seeing BSF party all drivers fled leaving behind the trucks. The seized cattle were handed over to concerned police outpost - Lumshnong for further disposal.

## AAGSU castigates CEM for

KAAC. Ronghang should invite the Gorkhas for a discussion, he said. Dahal said Gorkhas living on the interstate border in West Karbi Anglong have been protecting the border. The AAGSU have been demanding the setting-up of a police station for the safety of the people living there which is yet to be done, he added.

He also claimed that the AAGSU leaders had met chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, when he was Education minister and in presence of CEM Ronghang at Kaziranga where AAGSU-KADC were assured the development of the Gorkhas. The AAGSU-KADC also demanded one MAC seat each from Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong. He said the party that gives a ticket to the Gorkha community will have the support of the AAGSU.

The president of AAGSU-KADC, Suraj Chetri was also present at the press conference.

## Illegal logs seized

used the river as a means of transportation. The logs are floated down the river later to be pick up by those in Nagaon. Sources said that the plundering of forest and natural resources has increased significantly in the recent months in West Karbi Anglong. Along with the illegal felling of trees, sand is also illegally mined from the river banks leading to pollution and loss of revenue for the government.

## Ukraine: Russians try to storm

a small group of people gathered outside a church where a priest prayed and sprinkled them with water on Holy Saturday. While British officials said the Russians hadn't gained significant new ground, Ukrainian officials announced a nationwide curfew ahead of Easter Sunday, a sign of the war's disruption and threat to the entire country. Mariupol, a part of the industrial region in eastern Ukraine known as the Donbas, has been a key Russian objective since the Feb. 24 invasion began and has taken on outside importance in the war. Completing its capture would give Russia its biggest victory yet, after a nearly two-month siege reduced much of the city to a smoking ruin and killed an estimated 20,000 people there.

Occupying Mariupol would deprive the Ukrainians of a vital port, free up Russian troops to fight elsewhere and allow Russia to create a land corridor with the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow seized from Ukraine in 2014.

An advisor to Ukraine's presidential office, Oleksiy Arestovich, said during a Saturday briefing that Russian forces had resumed air strikes on the Azovstal plant and were trying to storm it. A direct attempt to take the plant would represent a reversal from an order Russian President Vladimir Putin gave two days earlier.

Russian Defense minister Sergei Shoigu reported to Putin on Thursday that the whole of Mariupol, with the exception of Azovstal, had been "liberated" by the Russians. At the time, Putin ordered him not to send Russian troops into the plant but instead to block off the facility, an apparent attempt to starve out the Ukrainians and force them to surrender.

Ukrainian officials have estimated that about 2,000 of their troops are inside the plant along with the civilians sheltering in the facility's underground tunnels. Arestovich said the Ukrainian forces were trying to counter the new attacks.

## PM attends Bihu function at Sonowal's

kind presence at the Bihu function and his blessings. In the last eight years, his interests and initiatives for the overall development of Assam and the Northeast is unprecedented," he said.

Among those who attended the event include Union ministers Anurag Singh Thakur, Nagendra Singh Tomar, Rajya Sabha deputy chairman Harivansh.

## Jorhat-Moran stretch of NH37

commissioner Meghanidhi Dahal in January last for failing their commitments to complete the road within the time frame. The haphazard manner, in which the NHIDCL is implementing the 4-lane work in this portion, has irked all taxpaying citizens. The stream of vehicles plying on the road is having a hard time negotiating the huge crater-like potholes and cracks on the sides.

In numerous places, huge pools of rainwater impede traffic movement as the potholes covered with rainwater have resulted in a number of serious accidents.

One Sudarshan Sarma (22) of Demow Raisai died on the way to the hospital as the scooter he was riding on fell into a water-filled pothole near Rajmai TE on the NH37 recently.

Eight passengers of a traveler died on the spot near the Thowra Douli in 2019 due to the bruised patch of the road but there has been no follow up the action even after this accident in improving road condition despite the higher ups' visit to the spot.

The State Transport minister seems to have been too busy with the Municipality and Corporation elections to talk to the Ministry of Road Transport in the Centre.

The portion leading to the Gaurisagar Tinali flyover has long been a quagmire of mud and slough after the NHADL began the expansion work of the NH37 in 2018.

Jitu Dutta, a young entrepreneur of Deogharia, Dikhowmukh, filled the huge pits with 12 truckloads of sand gravel at his own cost on April 20. His work has been appreciated profusely over social media while condemning the indifferent attitude of the authorities to the plight of the commuters.

The existing old bridges over the Desung, Darika, Janjhi, and Mitong river are all in very bad shape and have become a great threat of being collapsed at any time. The approach portions to the bridges are all broken. The patch repairing works undertaken by the department are all done perfunctorily.

## Over 75,000 Indians wave national flag

56,000 Pakistanis who waved their national flag at a function in Lahore in 2004.

Shah, whose role in bringing about "complete national integration by scrapping of Article 370" was hailed by speaker after speaker, himself spoke for less than 30 minutes.

The former BJP chief told the gathering that reminding the younger generation of sacrifices made by freedom fighters was a key component of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He also recalled the role of RSS ideologue V D Savarkar in highlighting the contributions of the likes of Veer Kunwar Singh. Savarkar had called the Revolt of 1857 'India's first war of Independence' and authored an eponymous book. Seen as the party's top strategist, Shah also recalled the role played by the BJP, along with chief minister Nitish Kumar by whom he was received at the Patna airport, in riding Bihar of "jungle raj".

In a veiled dig at RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, Shah remarked, "Merely going about without Lalu Prasad's posters cannot erase the memories of jungle raj."

Shah, who is scheduled to wrap up his Bihar tour by attending the convocation ceremony of a private university set up by BJP leader Gopal Narayan Singh, also touched upon the welfare measures taken by the Narendra Modi government, especially during the coronavirus pandemic. He said that Modi has set a target of making India number one in the world by 2047, when the nation celebrates the centenary of its Independence.

He had words of effusive praise for the people who had come out in large numbers despite "such hot weather".

Notably, this was Shah's first visit to the state in more than two years. His last tour of Bihar was in January, 2020 when he had addressed a rally in Vaishali district, in the aftermath of the CAA-NPR-NRC controversy.

## Meghalaya receives 'large excess'

normal rainfall while Tripura went from deficient to large deficient. For the duration between April 14-20, Tripura received 20.4 mm rainfall against the normal of 55.3 mm normal (minus 63 per cent) while Mizoram received 29.5 mm rainfall against the normal of 31.5 mm (minus six per cent). The IMD has further predicted widespread rainfall and thunderstorms over the region for next few days under the influence of strong south-westerly winds from Bay of Bengal to northeastern states at lower tropospheric levels.

## Lecture organised at NEHU



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, April 23: The Incubation and Enterprise Support System of IIM Shillong in collaboration with the Incubation Centre of NEHU organised 'Impact Lecture and Experience Sharing on Innovation, Communities and Decentralized Future'. The resource persons for the programme were Jonathan Pereira, developer relations at Polygon and Akash Shukla, developer relations at Polygon. Jonathan has been driving developer community centric initiatives for over a decade to help build and scale innovation in the global tech ecosystem. He has been an integral part of early teams of well-known unicorn startups like Postman, Automation Anywhere, and Chef Software, and has helped scale

them. In his address to the students Jonathan Pereira highlighted the students about the decentralized future and the prospects on web techs in the near future. He spoke about crypto currency, block chain, Web 3 and the unexplored infinite potential of the internet.

Akash Shukla in his address touched upon the different aspects of 21st century skills, innovation methodologies which included certain key aspects like empathy, prototyping, testing, etc., along with relevant examples from the local Indian ecosystem. Post that he touched upon the necessity of community in steering up one's learning and the ways to possess the right mindset to learn along with the relevant resources emphasised on the community develop-

ment prospects to solve the day-to-day problems and about a startup is just an idea to begin with. Akash has been a part of global startup communities, skilling, and innovation initiatives. He has personally seen the impact of his programs on 3 lakh plus people across 20+ countries. He is empaneled as a business mentor for Google for Startups Accelerator, Europe & Africa and has been a part of Antler, Amsterdam (a VC firm) as an Entrepreneur in Residence. For his work, he got invited by the President of India & the Director General's Office, United Nations, Geneva. He has coached 100+ startup founders globally. He got trained in various innovation & problem-solving methodologies ranging from MIT's Co-Innovation model, Stanford's Design Thinking framework to Sprint methodology by Google Ventures. He has also led a Healthcare Innovation lab kick-started by MIT. IIM Shillong also enhanced the Centre for Development of North Eastern Region (CeDNER) of IIM Shillong and encouraged the students to aspire to work for the development of the community at the grassroots level and increase the scope of employability in the region.

Prof. Divesh Walia, HoD, Environmental Sciences and head of Incubation Centre, NEHU was present for the occasion among others.

## Nagaland chief secretary calls for digitalisation of government functioning

DIMAPUR, April 23 (NNN): Nagaland chief secretary J Alam has called for digitalisation of government functioning in the state. The Nagaland chief secretary said this while addressing a departmental review meeting with the department of Information Technology and Communication and the department of Power on Friday in Kohima. The meeting discussed at length with officials of both departments about issues related to the day-to-day activities as well as the projects currently being undertaken and problems that are hampering the smooth functioning of the two departments.

One of the most important outcomes of the meeting was the proposal made by the chief secretary and his team to phase out the manual process of issuing Inner Line Permit (ILP) and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe certificates and also to make the whole process digital within a time period of three to four months.

The department of Information Technology and Communication gave a detailed power-point presentation regarding the activities currently being undertaken and shared a few infrastructure and capital shortage issues that the department is facing which in turn is greatly affecting the service output of the department.

The department of IT & C also highlighted the issue of non-availability of real time data and information and regular updates from certain departments as a cause for concern when it comes to maintaining the



official portal of the state government and also in providing regular updates and information to the general public. Apart from these, the department of IT & C also shared some of the important activities currently being undertaken by the department like the State Data Centre which hosts the websites and applications of 70 departments, the online Inner Line Permit, Common Service Centres across the state, etc.

The department of Power also presented a very detailed report of its activities and projects currently being undertaken and also projects that are yet to be approved. The department also expressed that the biggest problem it is facing is the shortage of manpower in carrying out maintenance work which is in fact one of the most vital functions of the department.

## First Student Police Cadet (SPC) launched in Manipur

### Project aims at making student ideal future citizens

IMPHAL, April 23 (NNN): The first ever Student Police Cadet (SPC) Programme in Manipur was launched on Friday at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Lamphel, in Imphal West district.

SPC is a project to train high school students to respect the laws, practice discipline, and to develop civic consciousness and empathy for vulnerable sections of society. The programme aims to build a bridge between the police and the community by inculcating values and ethics in the school going students through indoor and outdoor classes and activities. For the first time in the country, the programme was launched in Kerala in 2010.

In Manipur, the project is being implemented by the Manipur Police department joining hands with the Education department and supported by

departments of Transport, Forest, Excise and local self-government.

The launching function was attended by Manipur DGP, P Doungel, commissioner (Education) M Harekrishna; additional DGP, L Kailun who is also the nodal of the SPC programme; principal of Kendriya Vidyalaya Lamphel, Hari Raj and other top officials of the Police department and stakeholders of the project.

Speaking on the occasion, P Doungel said that for the first time in the country, the Kerala police introduced the project in that state in 2010 and successfully implemented it. The implementation of the project in Manipur was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he also said.

Doungel then said that the project aimed to train high school students to respect the laws,

practice discipline, and to develop civic consciousness and empathy for vulnerable sections of society. "The project will strengthen the students' commitment towards the family, community, and the environment, enabling them to resist negative tendencies such as substance abuse, deviant behavior, intolerance, and other social evils," he added.

In the first phase of the project, the SPC programme will be introduced in 20 different schools and it will be expanded to 50 more schools across the state in the second phase, the police chief said. All the required materials including computer sets will be provided by the Police department. The department will also provide vehicles for outdoor programmes of the project, the DGP further added.

cial said.

The Covid-19 recovery rate is now 99.39 per cent and the death rate is 0.30 per cent.

On Friday the northeastern state had reported 91 new Covid-19 cases.

A total of 19.15 lakh samples have so far been tested for Covid-19.

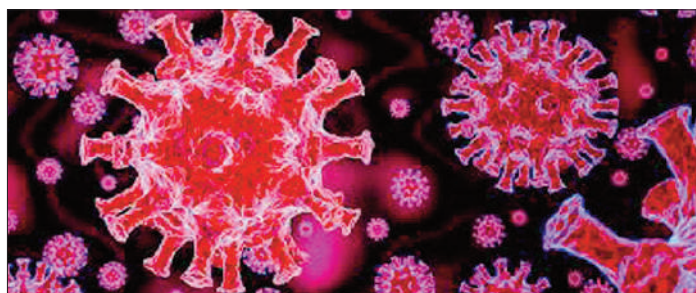
Over 8.43 lakh people have been inoculated with Covid-19 vaccine till Thursday, according to the health department.

## Mizoram logs 112 new Covid-19 cases

AIZAWL, April 23 (PTI): Mizoram reported 112 fresh Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, pushing the tally to 2,26,702, a Health department official said on Saturday.

The state did not report any new Covid-19 deaths for the third consecutive day on Saturday and the toll remained at 694, he said.

The fresh cases were detected out of 858 samples tested with a single-day positivity rate of 13 per cent.



Mizoram currently has 672 active Covid-19 cases, while 2,25,336 people have recovered from the disease so far, the official said.



6  
REGION

7  
NATION

● Health minister Keshab Mahanta visits Kokrajhar Cancer Centre

● NFR to operate two more special trains to clear rush

● Rana Kapoor, Wadhawans laundered money worth ₹ 5,050 crore, says ED

● Govt issues advisory to TV channels on coverage of Ukraine conflict, Delhi riots

# 1971 war landmark event in Indian sub-continent history: Himanta Rajnath talks tough against terrorists targeting India

**GUWAHATI, April 23 (PTI):** Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday asserted that India would not hesitate to act against terrorists who target the country from across the border.

Speaking at a programme, where Assam-based veterans of 1971 India-Pakistan War were felicitated, Singh said the government was working to wipe out terrorism from the country.

"India has been successful in giving out the message that terrorism will be strongly dealt with. We will not hesitate to cross borders if the country is targeted from outside," he maintained.

Praising the valour displayed by Indian soldiers in the recent stand-offs with China, he said, "I am of the firm belief that no power in the world can do anything to bow down the head of 'Bharat Mata' (Mother India)."

Taking a dig at a section of Op-



position leaders who had questioned the Army's role in the matter, Singh said such criticism demoralised soldiers and hurt the sentiments of people.

"I am regularly in contact with chiefs of our armed forces. I told them what I had to and they did what they had to. They have kept Bharat Mata's head held high," he added.

Singh also said that the eastern boundary of the country was currently experiencing more peace and stability compared to the western frontier, with Bangladesh being a friendly neighbour.

"The tension that India experiences on western frontier does not exist along eastern boundary as Bangladesh is a friendly country," he noted.

"The problem of infiltration has almost ended. There is peace and stability at the border (in the eastern frontier) now," the minister said.

The Defence minister praised the Border Road Organisation (BRO) for its efforts in building strong boundary infrastructure, needed for defence preparedness.

"We have stronger border infrastructure now, but more has to be done and we are working on it," he stated.

On the recent withdrawal of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) from different parts of northeast, the Defence minister stated that the government did so whenever the situation in a place improved.

He said, "When I was the Union Home minister, AFSPA was lifted from Arunachal Pradesh (most parts) and Meghalaya. Now under Amit Shah, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Mevani arrest: Cong stages sit-in seeking release

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, April 23:** Opposition leaders from Congress and AIUDF parties are making a beeline in Kokrajhar police station following the arrest of Gujarat Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani on Saturday.

A three-member delegation team of Congress party led by Nowboisha LAC and former minister Bharat Chandra Narah, South Salmara MLA Wajed Ali Choudhury, Youth Congress secretary Ajay Sikra visited at Kokrajhar police station, but police administration obstructed the delegation while entering the police station.

Narah, while condemning the police action, said that the arrest of MLA was unacceptable and unfortunate for the country.

He demanded immediate release of Mevani.

However, Congress party members and supporters have staged a sit-in protest demonstration in front of the Kokrajhar police station demanding immediate release of Mevani.

An APCC release said the state party chief Bhupen Borah, three MLAs and members of its legal cell would leave for Kokrajhar on Sun-

day morning as Mevani would be produced in the court again at the end of his police remand.

The release added that the party had been lending all assistance to Mevani to ensure that he was represented by the best lawyers.

Meanwhile, two AIUDF MLAs Karimuddin Borbhuyan and Ashraf Hussain visited the Kokrajhar police station and took stock of the situation. The duo also demanded early release of Mevani.

Mevani, an Independent MLA supported by the Congress, was apprehended by the Assam Police from Palanpur town in Gujarat on Wednesday night after a First Information Report (FIR) under various sections of the IPC and the IT Act was filed in Kokrajhar over the tweet.

According to the FIR, he had purportedly posted a tweet, claiming Prime Minister Narendra Modi "considered Godse as God".

The legislator was flown to Guwahati from Gujarat on Thursday morning and then taken to Kokrajhar by road, where he was produced at the chief judicial magistrate's court, which remanded him in three days' police custody.

## KYO demands punishments for alleged rapists

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, April 23:** Karbi Youth Organisation (KYO) in a press release demanded the punishment of three alleged rapists Naimuddin Ali, Muklul Islam and Asfagul Amin with rigorous imprisonment. KYO said that a Karbi woman was gang raped in a rented house at Neelkamal Path, Hatigaon on April 21.

KYO said the CEO of the company, Rafid Ali, whom the woman worked for should also be arrested along with the three rapists as he allegedly told the victim that she was employed in the company solely for the purpose of sex. KYO pleaded with Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council to look into the matter.

## BSF rescues 57 cattle on int'l border

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** BSF Meghalaya on Saturday, rescued 57 cattle near to border village Sonapur under PS-Lumshong of district East Jaintia Hills, which were meant to be smuggled to Bangladesh through international border. The cattle, laden in four trucks, were being brought from Khliehriat towards Umking. The alert BSF (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## BJP meet held in WKA

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, April 23:** A BJP meeting was held in Jengkhla under Hamren Member of Autonomous Council (MAC) constituency in West Karbi Anglong. Addressing the meeting, the executive member of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Mongal Sing Timung said that the BJP will win the Hamren seat. The presidents and secretaries of booth committees are asked to strengthen their respective booths and also assigned tasks. In the meeting, party issues, preparation for the coming MAC election and the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's visit to Karbi Anglong on April 28 were discussed.

## KSA holds protest

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, April 23:** Karbi Students Association (KSA) held a protest dharna in West Karbi Anglong against the alleged "Give and Take Policy" of the Government of Assam to settle the border issue with Meghalaya. KSA held a protest at Assam-Meghalaya border village of Mukoilum in West Karbi Anglong. KSA said not an inch of land of West Karbi Anglong should be ceded to the neighbouring state. The boundary fixed on April 13, 1951 should be the boundary. KSA said if the government of Assam does not heed their demand there will be intense agitation.

## Illegal logs seized

**HT Correspondent**

**KHERONI, April 23:** Forest officials have seized more than 40 logs of illegally felled trees under Kheroni Southern Range inside Amrenge Reserve Forest by the bank of Kopili River. There are 32 high value teak logs among the illegal logs. It may be mentioned that timber smugglers (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Ukraine: Russians try to storm Mariupol plant, strike Odesa

**KYIV, April 23 (AP):** Russian forces in Ukraine tried to storm a steel plant housing soldiers and civilians in the southern city of Mariupol on Saturday while attempting to crush the last corner of resistance in a location of high symbolic and strategic value to Moscow, Ukrainian officials said.

The reported assault on the eve of Orthodox Easter came after the Kremlin claimed its military had seized all of Mariupol except for the Azovstal plant and as Russia's military pounded other cities and towns in southern and eastern Ukraine. Officials reported that Russia fired at least six cruise missiles at the Black Sea port city of Odesa, killing five people.

The fate of the Ukrainians holed up in the sprawling seaside steel mill wasn't immediately clear; earlier Saturday, a Ukrainian military unit released a video reportedly taken two days earlier in which women and children holed up under-

ground, some for as long as two months, said they longed to see the sun.

"We want to see peaceful skies, we want to breathe in fresh air," one woman in the video said. "You have simply no idea what it means for us to simply eat, drink some sweetened tea. For us, it is already happiness."

As the battle for shattered Mariupol ground on, Russia claimed it had taken control of several villages elsewhere in the eastern Donbas region and destroyed 11 military Ukrainian military targets overnight, including three artillery warehouses.

Associated Press journalists also observed shelling in residential areas of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, and in Sloviansk, a town in northern Donbas. The AP witnessed two soldiers arriving at the town's hospital, one of them fatally wounded, while (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 2 Ukrainians arrested in Assam part of international gang: Police

**KARIMGANJ, April 23 (PTI):** Two Ukrainian nationals, who were arrested in Assam for travelling without valid documents, are members of an international gang that was convicted by a Bangladeshi court for ATM frauds, police said on Saturday.

Trishchoyanoski Voldimir and Narjari Vojniuk were apprehended on board the Tripura Sundari Express at Badarpur railway station on Thursday night for not being able to produce any valid document, they said.

They were sent to seven days of police custody by a court in Karimganj on Friday, police said.

"The two initially pretended not to know English, and claimed their passports were lost. During interrogation after we got their custody, we found that they can speak Eng-

lish," a police officer said.

"They also revealed that they were part of a six-member gang of international criminals who were convicted in Bangladesh for ATM frauds, and had served two-and-a-half-year jail term in that country," he said.

The information provided by the duo was verified with Bangladeshi officials, the officer said.

The duo sneaked into India through Tripura and were on the way to Delhi, he said.

"We have contacted the Ukraine embassy in Delhi, but they have no information on the passports of these two persons," he said.

A team from Delhi will be coming here for further questioning of the two foreigners to find the details about the other members of their gang, the officer said.

## 'International Earth Day 2022' celebrated at LGBI Airport

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** 'International Earth Day 2022' was observed at the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport on Friday. To create awareness among the passengers and stakeholders, some informative standees highlighting the tagline of the event are "Invest in our planet", "Let's save the world together" etc. were displayed in and around the airport. Employees of the airport and passengers formed part of the awareness campaign by wearing relevant masks. Earth Day tags were also distributed among the employees and passengers. In this regard, Guwahati Airport recently launched a plantation drive. The new airport operator has placed plants in every corner of the terminal to give it a green makeover.

## Over 75,000 Indians wave national flag simultaneously in bid to break Pak record

**JAGDISHPUR (BIHAR), April 23 (PTI):** Nearly 78,000 people simultaneously waved the national flag at a function attended by Home minister Amit Shah here on Sunday, in an attempt to break a previous world record of people waving a national flag set in Pakistan 18 years ago.

The occasion was the 164th death anniversary of Veer Kunwar Singh, the then ruler of Jagdishpur, one of the heroes of the Revolt of 1857 against the British. The event was organised as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the 75th anniversary of India's Independence.

Shah was joined by top BJP leaders from Bihar, including Union ministers R K Singh and Nityanand Rai, deputy chief ministers Tarkishor Prasad and Renu Devi and their predecessor Sushil Kumar



Modi in waving the tricolour for full five minutes, to an instrumental rendition of the national song 'Vande Mataram'.

The attendees wore bands for physical identification and camera trap was installed, with Guinness

Book of World Records supervising the record check. The crowds applauded when the gigantic screen installed at the venue put the headcount of flag wavers at 77,700.

The previous world record was set by (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## PM attends Bihu function at Sonowal's residence

**NEW DELHI, April 23 (PTI):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday attended a Rongali Bihu event organised by Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal at his residence here.

Modi watched a Bihu dance and folk dance fusion performed by artists from Assam and other programmes for over an hour. He also interacted with the artists and other guests.

The Rongali Bihu, which coincides with the Assamese new year, is celebrated from April 14 for a week.

The attendance of Modi in the Bihu function organised by Sonowal at his residence bears significance.

Sonowal appreciated the Prime Minister for attending the function and said it reflected his love for the Assamese people and their culture.

"I am grateful to the Prime Minister for his (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## 'No development of Gorkha community in 71 years' AAGSU castigates CEM for inaction

**HT Bureau**

**DIPHU, April 23:** All Assam Gorkha Students Union, Karbi Anglong District Committee (AAGSU-KADC) criticised the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) stating that despite Gorkhas being one of the Scheduled Tribes in the district are being deprived of benefits and developmental schemes.

In a press conference held at the office of the District Press Club of Karbi Anglong, here on Saturday, the general secretary of AAGSU-KADC, Dipok Dahal said they had been demanding on the State government and KAAC authority to take up steps for the development of the Gorkha community residing in Karbi Anglong.

"A memorandum was given to

the chief executive member of KAAC, Tuliram Ronghang regarding various issues and problems of Gorkha and for their uplift. But regrettably the CEM has not invited the AAGSU leaders for discussion," the general secretary said.

Dahal said, "The Gorkhas have been residing in Karbi Anglong as an indigenous community. They were included as one of the recognised ST communities in the formation of United Mikir Hills and North Cachar Hills District in 1951 under the provision of the Sixth Scheduled."

AAGSU, KADC said that it has been 71 years since the formation of KAAC, but not much change is seen among the Gorkhas living in Karbi Anglong due to the step-motherly treatment by (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Jorhat-Moran stretch of NH37 becomes a death trap

**HT Correspondent**

**SIVASAGAR, April 23:** The 90 km stretch of the NH37 from Jorhat to Moran has turned into a veritable death trap after the first showers of the rainy season leaving the stretch with dangerous potholes all over and broken sides.

The National Highway & Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL), engaged in improving and widening the 4-lane work of the NH37 appears to be totally indifferent to the plight of the commuters.

The traveling time between Jorhat and Dibrugarh has now doubled causing serious problems for the commuters and the hundreds of goods-laden trucks.

Road accidents have become a daily occurrence. On Friday four passengers were seriously injured in an accident that took place at Sukanpukhuri on NH37.

The NHIDCL awarded contracts to various companies for converting



the existing 2-lane NH37 into 4-lane with widening and improving with paved shoulder works, culverts, and construction bridges.

The work began in 2015 but the Highway authority terminated the contract after a year or so following unsatisfactory progress.

After that, the portion between Jorhat to Janjhi (37.8 km) was awarded to one VPSIL company for

₹ 738.15 cr and between Janjhi to Demow (37 km) to Gannon Dunkerley Company Pvt Ltd (GDCL) for ₹ 1369.02 cr.

The projects were to be completed by 30-05-2022 but not even 50 p.c. of the project works have been completed by now. The only completed work as of today is the 3.5 km Moran Town NH37 expansion and drain construction project for ₹ 14.52 cr.

Recently when the company officers came to assess the progress of work on the portion, activists from several political and student organisations created a ruckus at Darikapar protesting the tardy progress of work in which police had to use force to disperse the crowd.

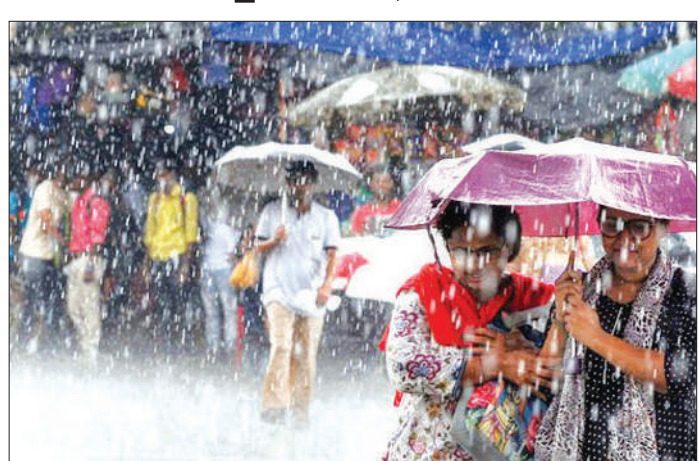
Jorhat MP Topon Kumar Gogoi, Amguri MLA Pradip Hazarika, and Thowra MLA Sushanata Borgohain severely criticised the NHIDCL officials in presence of Sivasagar deputy (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

## Meghalaya receives 'large excess' rainfall as neighbours Tripura, Mizoram deficient

**NEW DELHI, April 23 (IANS):** Even when the entire northeast India has been experiencing heavy to very heavy rainfall for the last few days, the spatial variability due to various reasons has meant that Meghalaya has received 'large excess' rainfall while Tripura has received 'deficient' and Mizoram 'large deficient' rainfall since March 1 till Saturday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) data has shown that for the period between March 1 and April 23, the quantum of rainfall received by Meghalaya is 473.8 mm, which is 99 per cent more than the normal rainfall 237.5 mm for this duration; Tripura received 98.8 mm rainfall, minus 58 per cent of 234.1 mm normal for the duration and Mizoram received 64.4 mm rainfall, minus 66 per cent of 187.3 mm normal for the duration.

In IMD parlance, 60 per cent or more rainfall is termed as large ex-



cess; 20 per cent to 59 per cent is excess; rainfall that is between minus 19 per cent to plus 19 per cent is normal; minus 20 per cent to minus 59 per cent is deficient while minus 60 till minus 99 is termed as large deficient.

Other states in the northeast received normal or excess rainfall.

For the same duration of March 1-April 23, Manipur received 150.4 mm (against the normal of 149.4 mm); Nagaland received 137.8 (against the normal of 148.6 mm) and Arunachal Pradesh received 420.9 mm (against 403.5 mm normal) while two states, Sikkim with 417.4 mm against 276.0 mm nor-

mal (51 per cent more) and Assam with 321.1 mm against 202.3 mm normal (59 per cent more) received excess rainfall.

Explaining the phenomenon, senior scientist from IMD, K.S. Hosalkar, said the orography of the region and wind direction played a major role. "The windward orography of Meghalaya and the hilly terrain further north is a major factor. Plus, this time round, the wind direction is from southwest to northeast direction. Therefore, there was more rain in the northern part of the NE region while Tripura and Mizoram in the southern parts remained dry."

Hosalkar also pointed out the lack of favourable low pressure system in the northern Bay of Bengal in this season for the missing heavy rainfall over Tripura and Mizoram.

Incidentally, Mizoram has recovered lost ground this week and showed (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



# Meaning of life in the Spring season

By: Fr Paul Lelen Haokip

Humans find varieties of meaning in their lifetime. The 'purpose of life' is one of the riding powers making us face the uncertainties of life. The arrival of spring season, Easter season, and lunar New Year celebrations worldwide are but invitations for us to find newer meanings for life. There is not one big cosmic meaning for all; there is only the meaning we each give to our life, an individual meaning, an individual plot, like an individual novel, a book for each person" (Anais Nin).

Logotherapy, developed by Viktor Frankl (a neurologist and psychiatrist) is based on the principle that the primary motivational force for any individual is to find meaning in life. More than power or pleasure, logotherapy drives humans to find purpose in life. Therefore, logotherapy is "healing through meaning", a meaning-centered approach to life. Each person is a unique and irreplaceable human being whose existence is characterized by freedom of choice, personal responsibility, and a human spirit. The core principles of logotherapy are: (1) **Freedom of Will** – We can choose how we respond to life and are personally responsible for our choices. (2) **Will to Meaning** – We are motivated to find meaning, and when this search is upset, we experience existential frustration and feelings of meaninglessness. (3) **Meaning of Life** – We are called moment-to-moment to answer the demands that life places on us. The focus is not on what we feel we deserve from life but on our responsibility to give to life. We have the ability and the ultimate necessity to

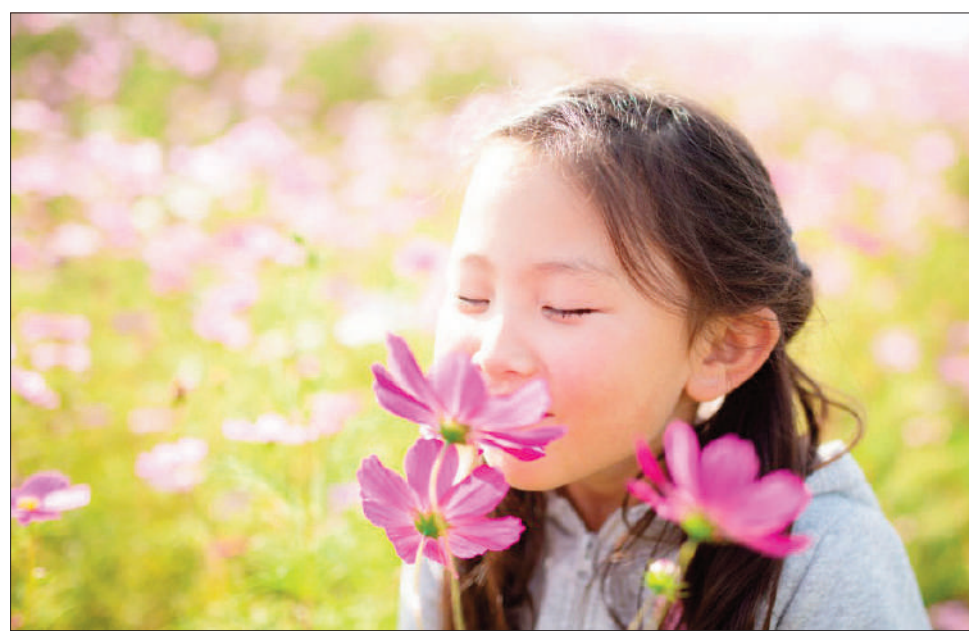
self-transcend to improve humanity.

The Japanese concept "ikigai" which translates roughly as "the happiness of always being busy," is like logotherapy, but it goes a step beyond. It also seems to be one way of explaining the extraordinary longevity of the Japanese, especially on the island of Okinawa, where there are 24.55 people over the age of 100 for every 100,000 inhabitants - far more than the global average.

Ask these questions yourself, "Am I adding meaning to my life? Is life adding meaning to me?" Life is a constant search for meaning. Some find it early, while others don't. Life is a gift from God, and what you do with your life will be a gift to God in return. No one of us deserves life, but God has given us as a gift. We should be grateful for this most beautiful gift on earth. Life is a stage between non-existence and death. Death can become the beginning of our non-existence. Life is a brief period. We need to give meaning to this short life. We don't know when the death knell will call us. It is an unpredictable journey. Therefore, we have to make meaning with this short time.

We constantly daydream. We continuously create a world that doesn't exist. When some external force offers to mean, we become mere slaves to that definition of life. However, life becomes meaningful when we create, re-create, invent, re-invent, find, re-find, define, and re-define our lives through the up and down experiences.

The meaning of life is to give sense to whatever happens to self. This is accepting what comes and dealing with it. If you see life as a problem, then you have only problems. If you see life as a pro-



gram, you have plenty of time to attend all the programs and enjoy the fun. It depends much on how you look at life. On all these ordinary occasions, you need to reaffirm and reassert yourself.

Shad Helmstetter challenges us, "Do you want to live with a bad program? Do you want to go through the rest of your life literally at the mercy of a program you don't want? You don't have to. You can override almost any conditioning you have ever received in any part of your life. It

makes absolutely no difference how, where, what, why, or how you have been in the past. It makes no difference what you believe about yourself or what others have believed about you. It makes no difference what circumstances life may have tossed in your lap. You can put yourself in control. Now it's your turn. You can re-program. You can erase the old negative, counter-productive, work-against-you programming and replace it with a healthy, new positive, productive kind of program-

ming. And it's easy. Erase and replace. All you have to do is learn how to talk to yourself." Now, learn to talk sensible things to yourself. Do not speak negative things to yourself. Consciously try to say positive things to yourself. Feel positive vibes, remember encouraging experiences, and think about the people supporting you.

**Exercise:** You can stop reading now and consciously tell yourself what you should be in the next minute, next hour, next day, next month, a year from now. If you want to grow in life, you need to have a frank and straightforward talk to yourself and open your life's good and not-so-good chapters. Remember, the programming you have received from enemies, rivals, or unsound sources affect you subconsciously. You need to remove them one by one, intentionally and steadily. This is a process. Don't expect to overcome within a day or two. It would be best if you had time. You need to fruitfully use your time and employ your vision to eliminate harmful programming. The most significant wall you ever have to climb is the negative programming you have received. You add more meaning to your life when you un-learn negative programming you have so far received and retained. At this springtime, New Year time, Easter season, let us reflect: What is the meaning I give to my life; Let me not live in the wrong program; I decide to re-program my life; I shall get help if necessary; I shall learn to talk about positive things to myself; I need time to re-program myself. (The author is a Ph.D. research scholar at the Department of Sociology and Social Work, Christ University, Bangalore. He can be reached at paulhowkeep20@gmail.com)

## Feud and Flux of all times



By: Swagata Padmapati

If cliff-hangers in the daily soaps are meant to keep the viewers on the edge of their seats, the patriarchal obstinacy in the traditional family pantheon can keep you in a Hitchcockian consciousness packed with mental hysteria that cough out lozenges of grenades sufficient to set ablaze a healthy family dynamic. Few of these earthlings, being referred to here, belong to an era where women's equality was hardly any talking point of the town and the others are the educated zealots of current times who refuse to sign in for the evolutionary trail in the theory of evolution. These avarice human protagonists are none other than the feudal stooges manufactured under a flagship program of patriarchal anarchy with a constipated societal fixation and a very regressive mindset. They carry the baton of roasting concocted stories of people and places out of thin air that can go on to become a perfect doomsday cover story!

Being an avid reader, a passionate writer, a pedantic observer, and above all a willful person, I take my inspiration for my writing scoop from the quarks that constantly bomb my cranium under the umbrella of the big Indian patriarchal diaspora that I live in. And as my pen hops further to just a few of these antiquated ideas, a platoon of men and a bevy of beauties serving under the patriarchal bubble will fall out of line signalling the rampant blemishes of an agrarian hangover that has jolted the system of "Social Equality" to get into any better track in current times. So, hold your breath as I beat the trumpet ahead with some racy punches which leave some food for thought for the readers.

**Wherever you go, the network follows**  
What travels at a lightning speed in the current times apart from the 5G network of the mobile companies? Of course, it's a trail of gossip appetizers doing their rounds in the haloed circle of aunts and bimbos encircling you! These species are ritual-bound fairies who love to keep abreast of the latest canards going around them and if it happens to be of somebody within their social ambit then they are almost there to fry the gossip in their pan with secret sauces palatable to different audiences. These stewards of virtue know every move of yours - what you do, where you go, how you go, with whom you go. Their prying eyes are always looking out for you and they can even get you out from the darkest nook of the home.

**Of genes and geniuses – The paternal high-performance molecule!**

Blaming the mother or the maternal side of the family for the blemishes of the kids is as natural as the mother's milk. The blame shifter is a character flaw that is celebrated mostly by the patriarchal monarchs of modern times. This is nothing but a blithe evader of the responsibility when the kids don't perform as per the set standards of the family in both academic and social life. However, contrarily if these brats get a rip-roaring success in

fields of their choice and hobbies then you see the paternal affiliations rushing in to take the credit. Of course, it's the paternal high-performance molecules that speak!

**Time-Out with her parents!**

Whether it's a rural backdrop or an urban setting most women who marry in India end up being married to regressive families, where staying with the bride's parents after marriage invites a barrage of questions for both the groom and his family in the social circle surrounding them. This deep humiliation almost hit the Achilles heel and then heaps of loaded jargons are fired at the bride. These patriarchal aficionados then paint a diabolic picture of the women tantamount to stealing the guy from his parents. An abominable lull then looms over the groom's family and a perfect "Storm in a teacup" moment is cooked in the gossip circles until the flames of hate and malice are doused in due course of time. However, the atmosphere in the family from there on stays belligerent, cold, and dry, and each petty feud is snowballed into fights of ballistic proportions.

**The tug of war**

You cannot conquer the world without war and you cannot win a power struggle if you don't malign, maraud, incite, insinuate and instigate your rival! The more weight you throw around, the higher decibel fights you win, the more concocted stories you sell, you elevate your chances of being a family influencer which later on transmutes your role to be the "decision-maker" in the family in no time. This massages your ego and thus it becomes your winning streak every time to keep weaving asinine stories from figments of self-imagination and hatch serpentine plots against people which empowers you then to contest for the game of power hustle in the family. Most of these merry-go-around experiences in the Indian societies are attributed to the female members of the clan and most root causes for such maladies stem from being envious and unsecured of the member of the same species.

**Taming of the shrew**

In the realm of patriarchy, the word "Mother-In-Law" is the metronome of Indian values who is responsible for issuing orders, giving advice, and setting the rhythm of acceptable changes in the family. But what happens if the new daughter-in-law comes with a robust belief system, immaculate confidence, and a balanced head to make way for some new changes under the older family polity? The answer is that the new idea meets a lot of restraining forces as it questions the dictum of the old decorum of the house. The tones change from being straight and direct to being indirect and sarcastic. Invisible borders are drawn in the home and each remains within the fences of their room. Lobbies are made and the whole female clan comes to take on the non-conformist bride. A slew of circumstances is created then to break her confidence levels by devaluing her principles and belief systems thus wreaking havoc in her life like a malevolent tornado!

## Sanskrit and its fading prestige

By: MR Lulu

The Union Government's push for 'more focus' on Hindi in the country has created much uproar as various opposition parties came out with their disapprovals. The linguistic diversity that India is known for was feared to be in danger with the government's move. The push for Hindi to be used as a link language was termed 'Hindi imperialism' by the opposition. This move, according to them, would create an emotional divide between the Hindi region and the non-Hindi-speaking areas. Linguistic Diversity has the beauty and power to essentially strengthen the area of communication and education that people from different backgrounds can conveniently choose from. Languages go back to the origin of civilizations. Existing in various forms, communication came to the collective consciousness of people and languages became the attire of thoughts and flourished across the globe. Traditions and practices are preserved in every society in their originality mostly encrypted in the language or dialect that they used for communication. The existence of ethnic societies was mainly based on the existence of their languages and with the death of the language, any society for that matter, falls into a state of oblivion, totally forgetful of their past. Many languages and dialects became extinct mainly due to their unjustifiably perceived notion of incompatibility in the eye of modern discourse. Colonial onslaughts on cultures were brutal by dominating the spirit of the cultural vitality of societies and dismantling their ethnic essence, invalidating and demonizing their power to fight and survive in a multilingual setup. India's situation was not different. Though the country is witnessing a serious debate on Hindi being moved into a national framework of importance; the merit of the oldest language Sanskrit is almost a lost and forgotten affair. On a multidimensional analysis, Sanskrit is one of the languages that lost its credit and stature beyond

imagination in its birthplace. Diversity being the essence of every society, multilingual and multicultural acceptance among societies strengthened them perceptibly articulative on every difference that came in their way of congenial co-existence. Languages played their role to stitch differences into acceptance while finding common causes for shared interests to flourish.

Sanskrit is known to be the mother of all languages. Despite its being the most communicated language in ancient times, in India, it lost its glow as a language in a post-independent establishment. When languages united people across the globe, Sanskrit for various reasons could not flourish in India. With a large number of people choosing English as their spoken tongue, Indians have as much claim on it as any native speaker in America or England. The reach of Sanskrit as a medium of communication got limited among a handful of elite people in India, probably giving it the recognition of the language of the spiritual elite, the pundits. Away from the reach of the common man, Sanskrit is dying in India. There should not be boundaries in embracing languages as they are meant to break boundaries naturally and bring people closer. Interestingly, many books which are known to be not available in their original Sanskrit manuscripts are now available in Persian and many other European languages. Many vernaculars grew from the linguistic expression of Sanskrit and flourished gaining popularity, while Sanskrit depleted to the level of insignificance. Spirituality in India was defined and propagated in it but subsequently got sidelined as the essence of Bhakti or devotion got disseminated to the populace in local languages too. With its treasure of knowledge remaining heavy and probably inaccessible to the common man, spiritual texts from Sanskrit got translated into vernaculars helping the common man to delve deeper into them without being dependent on Sanskrit.

Research reveals the geographical influence of Sanskrit in various global lan-

guages. Most Asian languages are seen to be impacted by the influence of Sanskrit. Interestingly, countries like Germany have understood the intellectual and linguistic depth that Sanskrit holds and began to popularize the language in their universities. Iranians, Arabs and even the British found merit and power in Sanskrit and translated great classics into their languages. Governments in India kept away from initiatives to strengthen the mother of all languages for the fear that such a decision might topple India's secular social engineering and invite the wrath of some sections. Schools adopting a three-language formula in their curriculum can teach Hindi, English, and an Indian language to the students. Many universities in the US teach Sanskrit as an Indo-European language. Interestingly, no language has a vocabulary as abundant as that of Sanskrit. To present an example, the English word 'sun' has 12 equivalents in Sanskrit. But English does not possess this vocabulary power and to fix this lacuna, it borrows new words from other languages including Sanskrit. An estimate says that of an approximate 6800 languages, about 200 languages in the world enjoy speakers more than a million each. The remaining languages have a meager number of speakers. With a huge number of people speaking it, Tamil enjoys a large acceptance in India and some other Asian countries.

With the National Education Policy coming into force, as part of its trilingual policy, states are authorized to take Sanskrit as a language through primary and secondary education. The policy is expected to bring a revamp in the education sector. India, a cultural diversity, despite its being a geographical unity, remained a single spiritual entity for ages as the language Sanskrit could bind the landscape through the spiritual aphorisms in texts that even today are monumental evidence of references that the world is appreciative about. The laxity with which the post-independent India treated Sanskrit was ruthless. To pursue Macaulay-

ism, the idea of the English education system, we committed the biggest sin by burying the significance of the language of all languages. It was also due to the hypocritical secular track the country constitutionally decided to travel on, finding reasons to give Sanskrit a back seat. The fear of a probable backlash from the minority vote bank, if Sanskrit was favoured, was the main reason for the denial.

Societies with genetic, social, and linguistic diversities survive and flourish to their fullest potential, making intercultural assimilation of humanity, proclaiming the essential Indian Vedic idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", which means the world is one family. Indeed, Sanskrit is the only language in which we can find such thoughts of unparalleled ancient wisdom on universal brotherhood. Hypocrisy is what is the gesture of the Indian conscience these days. We carefully, in a surreptitious manner, killed a language that our ancestors cherished, nourished, and flourished with for generations. All credit as to why it is going to be extinct in this large subcontinent will come to us. Boundless knowledge is confined in books, unable to be perceived in its real sense as translations fail to give the real joy of reading the original texts. Cities like Haridwar and Rishikesh are known to be the seats of Sanskrit learning and research. Aspirants from across the globe flock to these cities to learn about Sanskrit. Mattur village of Shimoga in Karnataka is famous for its Sanskrit-speaking families. About 5000 residents of this village communicate in Sanskrit. More conscious efforts from various corners should be taken in the direction of reviving Sanskrit. The government has reasons to justify its move to lift Hindi to an elevated platform. But does it have reasons to not support a language that housed great cultural treasures for long? India should continue to survive as a multilingual entity with Sanskrit also finding a place to progress. (The author is a freelance journalist/social worker. He can be reached at mr-lulu30@gmail.com)

## National Panchayati Raj Day Special

## Timely elections of Panchayats can enhance its dignity

By: Privanka Saurabh

The 73rd Constitution Amendment Act 1992 is an important milestone in the development of democratic institutions at the grassroots level in the country. It transformed representative democracy into participatory democracy. Building democracy at the grassroots level in the country is a revolutionary concept. However, even after decades of this historic amendment, Panchayati Raj Institutions are lagging in the development process.

Gandhiji's dream of Gram Swaraj was realized through the Panchayati Raj system. These are local self-governing bodies that ensure the opportunity for people participation and participation in the formulation and implementation of rural development programs. The main objective of the Panchayat system in India is to strengthen the base of democracy at the grassroots

level. It was presented as a genuinely democratic political system that brought the masses under active political control from below the vast majority of the weaker, poorer sections of rural India. Panchayats play a catalytic role in integrating the development of tribal people in rural areas.

The planning documents of both the Central and State Governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the state system. Special emphasis has also been laid on the role of Panchayats in rural development in the five-year plans. Rural development includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through Panchayati Raj Institutions. Panchayati Raj Institutions have been used to improve the distribution system related to rural infrastructure, the income of rural households, and education, health, and security systems. These institutions have to be

motivated to be effective means of social and economic change at the local level. Reservations for women (33%) have increased their presence in public life.

Given the failure of democratic decentralization, especially in panchayats, its over-reliance on government financing has weakened it; the Panchayat has its resource base for raising funds and financial resources are tied to certain schemes and initiatives. When panchayats do not mobilize resources and instead rely on external funding, people are less likely to implement social audits and the effectiveness of schemes. In the case of urban local bodies, for example, most municipalities have not raised property taxes for many years and have not benefited from the improvement of the city's infrastructure.

Parallel bodies have occupied the legitimate position of local bodies. For example, the smart city scheme is being implemented in major cities through special purpose vehicles, squeezing the limited space of urban local government in municipalities. The

States have not developed functions, funds, and functionaries to enable local bodies to discharge their constitutionally prescribed functions. In many gram panchayats, sarpanches have to spend extra time approaching block officers for funds and technical approval. This interaction with the Block Staff Office distorts the role of Sarpanches as elected representatives.

It has been found that about 25% of Gram Panchayats do not have basic office buildings. Capacity building of elected representatives is another hurdle in grassroots democracy. In the case of urban local bodies, the position of mayor is only formal. Given all these, measures are needed to strengthen the Panchayats; the Central Government has started the National Gram Swaraj Abhiyan. This campaign is being run under the name of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Gaoon, Sabka Vikas". Its purpose is to prepare Gram Panchayat Vikas Yojanas (GPDVs) in the country and place them on a website where one can

see the status of various major schemes of the government.

Gram Panchayats have been made obligated to prepare GPDV for economic development and social justice using the resources available to them. The Government of India has prepared a Panchayat Mission Mode Project to make the functioning of all Panchayats more efficient and transparent. Transparent, third-party social audits can enable people to hold delegates accountable. In the case of Gram Sabhas, their functions and roles should be clearly defined in PESA Act, so that they can function effectively.

Time demands that overall change in people's lives be brought about by raising the socioeconomic and health status of the people through effective engagement through community, government, and other development agencies. The demands of the people for sustainable decentralization and advocacy should be focused on the agenda of decentralization. The framework needs to be developed to accommodate the demands of decentralization. We see state governments manipulating the election and tenure of panchayats for their political gain; that shouldn't happen. Timely elections of Panchayats can enhance its dignity. (The author is a Research Scholar in Political Science, Poet, independent journalist, and a columnist.)





The best part is one may be easily self-employed in this field or choose to work with companies dealing with digital content services. There is no limit to geographical boundaries when it comes to new clients. Clients and customers may be anywhere on the earth. One must have good communication skills and other employability skills to be successful as a digital media content creator or manager. *(The author is a career mentor and skill trainer. He can be reached at bkranjan@gmail.com)*



# Health minister Keshab Mahanta visits Kokrajhar Cancer Centre

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, April 23:** The Kokrajhar Cancer Centre will be inaugurated on April 28. It will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually from Dibrugarh along with other 7 Cancer Centres.

This was informed by Keshab Mahanta, minister of Health and Family Welfare, etc., Assam while talking to media persons during his visit to the construction site of Kokrajhar Cancer Centre at Besorgaon.

At the time, he was accompanied by Kokrajhar MLA Lawrence Isary, BTC executive member for Health and Family Welfare department Arup Kumar Dey, BTC principal secretary Anurag Goel along with other



dignitaries of BTC and district administration.

He said that the Kokrajhar Cancer Centre would be functional from April 29, 2022, right from the next day of inauguration as the doctors and medical staff, including administrative officials posted in the Centre had already been in position from the last two-three months to start its initial work. Expressing his satisfaction over the progress of construction works of the hospital, he also said that this Centre would have all facilities like Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Linac Machines, Computed Tomography (CT), Mammography, Radiation Therapy, etc., so that no one has to go to other places for better treatment.

# Rongali Bihu celebrated at Rangapara College

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, April 23:** Rangapara College fraternity celebrated the Rongali Bihu, on Thursday. The celebration started with a clearance drive by the students of Rangapara College followed with the flag hosting by the principal of Rangapara College Dr Ranjan Kalita.

The Bihu toli or the open arena arranged in the college field was inaugurated by Baap Dinesh Mahanta, who is the president of Mahapurush Sankardev Naamdharma Samaj, Assam. Students from Mercy Student Home, an orphanage adopted by Rangapara College also joined the occasion as special invitees. Two Bihu teams namely 'Jaajiporiya Bihua Dol' from Sivasagar and 'Bihoguri Kalita Gaon Anchalik Semonia Dol' from Sonitpur performed in front of the



gathering. The Bodo community students of the college also performed the Bagurumba dance. The main celebration started at 1:30 pm where Deba Kumar Mishra, deputy commissioner of Sonitpur district, joined as the chief guest. Commanding officer, Col. Sebastian Jakharia and Col. Nandan, both from the Dogra Regiment, Ranga-

para Sonitpur, joined the celebration as special guests with their family. Nishinath Sharma, block development officer, Rangapara also joined the celebration.

The function ended with the Bihu performance by the college family. All the guests were greeted with a fulam gamusa and served Bihu jalpan.

## NTPC Bongaigaon holds plantation drive on World Earth Day

**HT Correspondent**

**KOKRAJHAR, April 23:** NTPC Bongaigaon committed itself towards a sustainable planet by planting 100 saplings on the occasion of World Earth Day coinciding with the theme 'Invest in Our Planet'. The NTPC Bongaigaon senior management led by Subrata Mandal, ED, NTPC Bongaigaon planted saplings of various types including medicinal plants at its township premises.

Subrata Mandal, ED, NTPC Bongaigaon spoke on how NTPC as a company is focusing on inspiring governments, businesses, and citizens to combat climate change. Mandal also highlighted the efforts of NTPC Bongaigaon towards creating a healthier planet for its stakeholders. T Ravinder, GM (O&M); Umesh Singh, GM (FM); D P Patra, GM (Operations); Induri Reddy, GM (Maintenance); Arunashis Das, GM (Projects) along with E Nyullu, AGM, EMG (Environment Monitoring Group) and heads of departments also participated in the plantation program.

## Lions Club Guwahati Anmol distributes sewing machines



**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** Lions Club Guwahati Anmol on Saturday distributed 100 sewing machines, one to each of a hundred poor women hailing from different parts of the city, showing solidarity towards them by offering a helping hand and helping them to start a new journey of self-empowerment. The machines for distribution were supplied by 'Triveni Foundation', an NGO headed by Lion Vijay Agarwal and Lion Mandeep Maria.

The distribution ceremony held at Kalyani Bhawan in Ganeshguri was chaired by Lion Naveen Poddar, president of Lions Club Guwahati Anmol. Lion Jugul Kishore Pandey, chairperson, State Hindi Language Development Council attended the function as the chief guest. "It is high time to work for the upliftment of the underprivileged of the society," opined Pandey while delivering his speech to the gathering. "Organisations like Lions Club should come forward to cooperate with the government to serve the purpose," he added. Lion Ajay Agarwal and Lioness Ananya Agarwal attended the function as special guests. Lion Vijay Agarwal and Lion Mandeep Maria of Triveni Foundation as well as Lioness Ritu Chowdhary, secretary, Lions Club Guwahati Anmol too graced the occasion.

## Week long 'Fasal Bima Patshala' programme from today

**HT Correspondent**

**NAGAON, April 23:** District administration in association with district agriculture department is going to 'Fasal Bima Patshala' - as well as 'Kishan Bhagdari Parthomikota Hamari', a special programme under Agriculture and Farmers Development department, government of India from April 24 to May 1 across the district like other parts of the country. Deputy commissioner, Nagaon Nisarg Hivare intimated about it while addressing a press conference at his office conference hall here. He said that the officials of the concerned department as well as district administration would organise gram sabha almost all gram panchayats in the district during the week and tried to make aware of Kishan Credit Cards among those farmers who were getting benefits of Prime Minister Krishi Samman. During the week, the officials of the district administration and district agriculture department would also experience how they could avail the Kisan Credit Cards from their respective banks.

## Literary pensioner Ira Bora felicitated at Jamugurihat

**HT Correspondent**

**TEZPUR, April 23:**

Ira Bora, an octogenarian retired headmistress, writer and literary pensioner was felicitated at her Jamugurihat residence by Satya Shandhya Mahila Samitee on Friday for her immense contributions towards the field of literature and women education. She was one of the pioneers in the greater Jamugurihat area who encouraged formal women education during the post-independence era. She also penned several valuable books including poetry. The state government had awarded her literary pension for her contributions in the field of literature. The president of Satyasandhya Mahila Samitee Niru Sarmah, secretary Barsha Bhagawati and several other members felicitated Bora at her residence.



## NFR to operate two more special trains to clear rush

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** The Northeast Frontier Railway has decided to operate three trips of a special train between Howrah - New Jalpaiguri and six trips of another special train between New Jalpaiguri - Kolkata to clear the extra rush of passengers during the ongoing summer season.

Train No. 03013 (Howrah - New Jalpaiguri) special will run for three trips leaving from Howrah at 23:40 hours on Monday & Saturday to reach New Jalpaiguri at 10:10 hours on Tuesday & Sunday. The first trip of the train will leave on April 23 and subsequently the second and third trips will leave Howrah on April 25 and 30. In return direction, Train No. 03014 (New Jalpaiguri - Howrah) special will run for three trips leaving from New Jalpaiguri at 12:45 hours on Tuesday & Sunday to reach Howrah at 23:55 hours on the same day. The train will leave from New Jalpaiguri on April 24 & 26 and May 1. The special train will consist of 13 coaches. There



will be 1 AC Two Tier coach, 10 AC Three Tier coaches, 01 Luggage cum Generator Van and 1 Luggage cum Divyaang Compartment.

Train No. 05754 (New Jalpaiguri - Kolkata) special will run for six trips leaving from New Jalpaiguri at 04:00 hours on all Fridays to reach Kolkata at 15:00 hours on the same day from April 29 till June 3. In return direction, Train No. 05753 (Kolkata - New Jalpaiguri) special will run for six trips leaving from Kolkata at 23:10 hours on all

Fridays to reach New Jalpaiguri at 10:30 hours on Saturday from April 29 till June 3. The special train will consist of 16 coaches. There will be 2 luggage vans, 6 general seating coaches, 5 sleeper coaches and 3 AC three-tier coaches.

The details of stoppages and timings of these trains are available in IRCTC website and are also being notified in various newspapers and social media platforms of NF Railway. Passengers are requested to verify the details before undertaking their journey.

## Assam Nagarik Manch urges Ranoj Pegu to reschedule HS 1<sup>st</sup> year final examination dates

**HT Correspondent**

**HOJAI, April 23:** Assam Nagarik Manch through an application to Ranoj Pegu, minister of Education, government of Assam have urged to exclude May 9 from the scheduled date of final examination of HS 1<sup>st</sup> year as every year May 9 is celebrated as red-letter day. As per the Bijoy Chakraborty, general secretary of Assam Nagarik Manch, "On May 9, the composer of Indian national song 'Jana-Gana-Mana' the icon of Indian literacy Viswa Kabi Rabindranath Tagore was born in Calcutta (now Kolkata)." "He is the first Nobel Prize winner in Asia. Till the day, he is the heart throb in the world of Indian literacy. His birthday is known as the day of Rabindra Jayanti in India and Bangladesh," Chakraborty added. He further said, "This day is largely celebrated in most of the schools and colleges where Bengali speaking students are part and parcel of the Institutions and widely celebrated by various socio-cultural organisations in Assam as well." Chakraborty said through the forwarded application to the minister of Education we have requested him to reschedule the date of final examination of H.S. first year in honour of Viswa Kabi Rabindranath Tagore.

## GU NSS Cell observes World Earth Day

**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** 'World Earth Day' was celebrated by Gauhati University NSS Cell on Friday through a webinar on the topic 'Global Challenges of Climate Change'. Inaugurating the programme, Prof Hari Prasad Sarma, former rector and retired head, department of Environmental Science, GU said that we have to develop new techniques to face the global challenges of climate change and have to protect our environment at any cost.

## Earth Day observed

**HT Correspondent**

**HOJAI, April 23:** Earth Day, 2022 was celebrated among the teachers and students of different classes of Arunoday Senior Secondary School in Hojai on Friday. The objective of the awareness program was to make the participants understand about the origin, importance and significance of Earth Day. A film screening was organised. The film was based on the harmful effect of plastic materials on living beings to make the students realise how they can also put effort into protecting nature; by refusing, reducing, reusing and recycling all sorts of plastic materials through small activities. Speakers of the program Dr Prodip Kumar Sahoo and Hansraj Chaudhan approached the students to spread the messages and to join their hands to make a change in the existing condition of the nature of Hojai district in connection to the theme of the Earth Day 'Investment in our planet'. At the end of the program, participants pledged to protect and make the Earth home not only for them but also for other animals and plants.

## OBITUARY



**K**ushal Kumar Kunch, noted social activist and assistant teacher of Mohkhuli Swahid Anil Bora Memorial High School breathed his last at his Difolu residence on Thursday morning due to prolonged illness. He was 52.

He was admitted at a hospital in Chennai a couple of months ago due to liver complications and thereafter he was brought back to his native village.

He is survived by his mother, wife, two infant daughters and a host of relatives.

His demise was mourned by the teaching staff of Anil Bora Memorial High School, his students and a host of local organisations. His premature death casts a pall of gloom in the entire town.

## CUP&A launches two books For Dibrugarh University



**HT Bureau**

**GUWAHATI, April 23:** Cambridge University Press & Assessment (CUP&A) launched two books titled 'Interact and Writing Skills' to help the students of Dibrugarh University with their English courses and develop competence in the language. The book launch event was held at Dibrugarh University (DU) amidst the presence of more than 70 HoDs and professors from various colleges under DU.

The unveiling of the titles was done by Dr Lakhpriya Gogoi, HoD in-charge, department of English, Dibrugarh University; Dr Anurag Bhattacharya, assistant professor, department of English, Dibrugarh University;

Dr Bhupen Chutia - member of Board of Studies (UG) Dibrugarh University; Dr Dipak Kr Doley - assistant professor, department of English, Dibrugarh University; and Samir Chettri, regional manager - ELT, Cambridge University Press & Assessment, South Asia.

Dr Nasmeem F Akhtar, HoD department of English, Dibrugarh University, said, "We are thrilled to have these books prescribed for our students. Cambridge's Interact (Revised edition), covers all aspects crucial for effective communication not only for students at the undergraduate level but for all those who are desirous of enhancing their communication skills. While the Writing Skills title is a must-have for all

students and everyone keen to hone their skills in written communication."

Regarding the book launch, Cambridge University Press & Assessment, South Asia's business head - ELT, Himanshu Matta, said, "Both the books will immensely help the students at Dibrugarh University in building their English proficiency. These books are authored by eminent ELT practitioners and focus on the hands-on practice of concepts through tasks. At CUP&A, we make sure that the content is designed to develop students' competence in English to equip them for the pursuit of higher education as well as for their career progression."

## Assamese science fiction researcher felicitated

**HT Correspondent**

**DIBRUGARH, April 23:** Dr Nabajyoti Dutta, the pioneer of research work on Assamese science fiction short stories was felicitated by the DHSK Commerce College unit of Assam College Teachers' Association (ACTA) here for achieving a doctoral degree from Gauhati University on August 30, 2021. Dr Dutta, HoD and assistant professor in the department of Assamese in the college carried out his research on the topic 'Uttar-Swadheenata Kaalor Asomeeya Bigyan-Bhittik Kalpa-Chutigalpa: Ek Bishleshanatmak Adhyayan' (Post Independence Assamese Science Fiction Short Stories: An Analytical Study). It would be noteworthy that the research work has dealt with almost every short story of the genre in Assamese including writers Hariprasad Baruah, Nagendra Narayan Choudhury, Saurabh Kumar Chaliha, Bhabendra Nath Saikia, Bijoy Krishna Sarma, Dinesh Chandra Goswami, Kshiradhar Baruah, Santanoo Tamuly, Bandita Phukan, Rathindranath Goswami, Bhaskar Thakuria, etc. The stories are selected based on the plots with futuristic science which deals with possibility as well as plausibility of advancement of science and technology in different spheres in the future.

Dr Satya Ranjan Doley, an assistant professor in the department of Accountancy of the institution was also felicitated in the function for his achievement of doctoral degree from Dibrugarh University on the topic 'Role of Microfinance Service Providers in Women Empowerment with Special Reference to SHGs in Dibrugarh district, Assam' way back in 2018. His felicitation program couldn't be performed timely due to unavoidable reasons including Covid-19 situation.



Both the achievers delivered brief speeches in the function explaining their journey in the field of the research activities.

Dr Mintu Kumar Das, secretary of the unit, in the function, welcomed Pallavi Kashyap, assistant professor in the department of Banking as a new member of the organisation. In response, Kashyap expressed her gratitude to the members of the unit. The function chaired by Dr Satya Ranjan Doley, president of the unit

also discussed the forthcoming international workshop on film-making to be held in the college with co-operation from the ACTA, Central Committee.

Dr Bhupesh Bhagawati, co-ordinator of PG department in Commerce, Dr Tanka Prasad Upadhyaya, co-ordinator as well as Dr Swapna Nath, secretary, women cell, ACTA central committee also delivered speeches during the function.



## Rana couple arrested after they drop plan to recite Hanuman Chalisa outside Uddhav Thackeray's residence

MUMBAI, April 23 (PTI): Mumbai Police on Saturday evening arrested MLA Ravi Rana and his wife, MP Navneet Rana for allegedly "creating enmity between different groups" after escorting them out of their house in suburban Khar here amid high drama.

The development came hours after the couple cancelled their plan to recite the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's private residence 'Matoshree' here.

The Ranases were booked under IPC section 153 (A) (Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), and section 135 of the Mumbai Police Act (violation of prohibitory orders of police), said an official of the Khar police station in western Mumbai.

BJP leader Devendra Fadnis, speaking in Nagpur, said the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra government's way of handling the entire episode was "very childish".

The state government tries to hide its failures by terming the situations it can't handle as BJP-sponsored.



sored, the former chief minister said.

"If allowed, the Rana couple would have gone there (Matoshree), recited Hanuman Chalisa and returned without creating any news. I don't understand why so many people had gathered at several places as if they (Rana couple) were planning some attack. What kind of politics is this?" the BJP leader said.

Earlier, as Shiv Sena workers laid siege to the building where the Ranases, both independent legislators from eastern Maharashtra, were staying and demanded apology from them, police officials persuaded the couple to go to Khar police station with them.

The couple were initially seen

arguing with the police inside the building, saying they would not budge until criminal cases were also registered against Shiv Sena leaders who 'threatened' them. Navneet Rana also demanded that police produce a warrant.

But later they agreed to step out, and left in two police vehicles.

Before climbing into police vehicles, Navneet Rana, the Amravati MP, and Ravi Rana, MLA from Badnera, were seen shouting slogans, looking in the direction of Shiv Sena workers who were outside.

Sena workers, led by Yuva Sena leader Varun Sardesai, were outside the building since morning and had vowed not to allow the Ranases to leave until they apo-

gized. There were several women among them.

An empty water bottle was also thrown in the direction of the Ranases when they came out.

Sardesai told Sena cadres that the police would be escorting the couple to the police station and they should stay calm and not take law into their hands.

Ravi Rana said if a case was being registered against them, cases should be registered against Sena leaders Anil Parab and Sanjay Raut too for 'making threatening statements'.

Earlier, amid stiff resistance by workers of the ruling Shiv Sena, Ravi Rana and Navneet Rana on Saturday morning dropped their plan of reciting the Hanuman Chalisa outside Matoshree in suburban Bandra. They did not want to disturb the law and order situation in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the city on Sunday, Ravi Rana said.

In the morning, Shiv Sena workers broke through the barricades and tried to enter the premises of their Khar residence. But the situation was brought under control by the police.

## Five of family killed in Prayagraj

PRAYAGRAJ (UP), April 23 (PTI): Five members of a family were killed with sharp-edged weapons in Khevarajpur village in the district, police said on Saturday. While the Samajwadi Party attacked the Yogi Adityanath dispensation saying that Uttar Pradesh is "immersed in crime", BSP chief Mayawati demanded a thorough probe into the incident.

Tharwai police station received information around 5.30 am that four-five people have been spotted dead in a house and on reaching there, police found the head of the house, Rajkumar (55), his daughter Manisha (25), his wife Kusum (50), his daughter-in-law Savita (30), and granddaughter Mitakshi (2) dead, senior superintendent of police (SSP) Ajay Kumar said. The incident happened on Friday night when Rajkumar's son Sunil was not in the house. He had gone to attend a wedding.

The SSP said that prime facie it appears that the deceased were hit with a stick or some blunt weapon and there are injury marks also on the head.

How the killings took place and other details will be known only after the post-mortem of the dead bodies, the SSP said, adding it will be videographed so that no

evidence is left out. It was also found that there was a fire in the bedroom of the house which was extinguished by the fire brigade, he said. The family members have reached here and talks are being held with them.

A case has been lodged at Gangapur Tharwai police station area and seven teams have been formed to look into the whole matter, the SSP said.

A dog squad and forensic team have reached the spot and the evidence is being collected after inspecting the spot, police said. Reacting on the incident, SP president Akhilesh Yadav said "Under the BJP 2.0, UP immersed in crime. Today's testimonial" and attached the news report of the killing.

The BSP president Mayawati said, "The news of the brutal murder of five members of a family in Prayagraj is very sad, condemnable and worrying. The government should go to the bottom of the incident and ensure that strict legal action is taken against the culprits."

Earlier, on April 15, in Khagalpur village of Nawabganj police station area of Gangapur area here, four members of a family were murdered with sharp weapons and the head of the family was found hanging.

## PM to inaugurate, lay foundation stone of projects worth ₹ 20k cr during J&K visit

NEW DELHI, April 23 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday inaugurate and lay foundation stone of development projects worth over ₹ 20,000 crore in Jammu and Kashmir, including the opening of the Banihal-Qazigund road tunnel to establish all-weather connectivity between the two regions of the union territory.

Modi is travelling there to participate in the celebration for the National Panchayati Raj Day and address 'Gram Sabhas' across the country, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement. He will also visit Pali Panchayat in Samba district.

Seeking to develop and rejuvenate 75 water bodies in every district of the country, the prime minister will launch a new initiative named 'Amrit Sarovar', it said.

Modi is scheduled to attend the Master Deenanath Mangeshkar Awards Ceremony in Mumbai later in the evening where he will receive the first Lata Deenanath Mangeshkar Award, the statement said.

The award has been instituted in the memory of Lata Mangeshkar and will be given every year to a person for exemplary contribution towards nation building, it noted.



In the statement on Modi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir, the PMO said the government has been focused on bringing about wide ranging reforms to substantially improve governance and enhance ease of living for the people of the region at an unprecedented pace following the "constitutional reforms" of August 2019, a reference to the abrogation of Article 370 and making the erstwhile state into a Union Territory.

The projects being inaugurated or whose foundation stones will be laid in this visit will go a long way in facilitating basic amenities, ensuring ease of mobility and development of infrastructure in the

region, it said. Modi will inaugurate the Banihal-Qazigund road tunnel, built at a cost of over ₹ 3,100 crore. The 8.45-km-long tunnel will reduce the road distance between Banihal and Qazigund by 16 km, and reduce journey time by around one and a half hours.

It is a twin tube tunnel, one for each direction of travel, and the tubes are interconnected by a cross passage every 500 m for maintenance and emergency evacuation. The tunnel will help establish all-weather connection between Jammu and Kashmir, and bring the two regions closer, the PMO said.

He will also lay the foundation stone of three road packages of the

## Rana Kapoor, Wadhawans laundered money worth ₹ 5,050 crore, says ED

### YES BANK-DHFL CASE

MUMBAI, April 23 (PTI): The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has alleged that Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor and Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL) promoters Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan siphoned off funds worth ₹ 5,050 crore through suspicious transactions.

The ED said this in its second supplementary (third overall) charge sheet filed in special court here recently against Rana Kapoor, his family, Wadhawans and others in a money laundering case.

During the investigation, it came to light that a big part of the proceeds of crime (POC) generated in this case has been siphoned off overseas by Rana Kapoor and hence they are not available for attachment directly under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), it said.

"Rana Kapoor, DHFL promoters Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan and others were involved in criminal conspiracy with each other in illegal diversion and siphoning off of funds through suspicious transaction of ₹ 5,050 crore," the central probe agency claimed in its fresh prosecution complaint (charge sheet) filed recently.

The ED said investigation has revealed that Yes Bank had bought debentures worth Rs 3,700 crore between April 2018 and June 2018 from DHFL. Therefore, the amount was transferred to DHFL. Subsequently, DHFL gave a loan of ₹ 600 crore to DOIT Urban Ventures Pvt Ltd (an entity, beneficially owned by Rana Kapoor and his family).

The probe also revealed that Yes Bank had used public money for the purchase of the above-said short-term debentures of DHFL, which has not yet been redeemed by DHFL.

On the other hand, DHFL obliged Rana Kapoor by giving



the so called loan of ₹ 600 crore to his beneficially-owned company, namely DUVPL, without adequate collateral, the agency said.

It claimed that the loans given to the firm owned by Kapoor's family were to camouflage the entire act.

The investigation has revealed that a loan of ₹ 600 crore was given against substandard properties having a meager value of ₹ 39.68 crore and by considering further conversion from agriculture land to residential land and an inflated value of ₹ 735 crore was shown, it added. It has also come to light that just before the sanction of these loans, Yes Bank had invested in DHFL. This indicates a criminal conspiracy between Rana Kapoor and Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan to get loan by pledging highly overvalued assets, the charge-sheet said, adding there was no active or operating business in DUVPL at the time of proposal of loan.

Since DUVPL has no business activity and as such not generating any revenue as of today and it may not be able to repay the loan considering its present business activity and revenue. This clearly indicates a case of quid pro quo, it said.

Besides, Yes Bank had also sanctioned a loan of ₹ 750 crore to one M/s Belief Realtors Private Limited (beneficially owned by Wadhawans) for development of its Bandra Reclamation Project in Mumbai. Investigation has revealed that the entire amount was siphoned off by the Wadhawans

without spending a single penny for the declared purpose, the ED added.

The entire amount of loan disbursed to M/s Belief Realtors was siphoned off by the Wadhawans by way of layering through their shell companies and it was never used for the declared purpose, the charge sheet said.

"There is no doubt about the fact that Rana Kapoor has misused his official position to gain undue financial benefit for him and his family members," it said.

Investigation has revealed that the POC generated in this case has been layered in different forms in properties as well as in liquid form. It has also been revealed during the investigation that a big part of the POC generated in this case has been siphoned off overseas by Rana Kapoor. The proceeds of crime are thus, not available for attachment directly, the ED said.

The ED had started its investigation after recording of ECIR on March 3, 2020 and after the probe began, Rana Kapoor aggressively tried to dispose of his overseas properties to save them from being attached by the ED under PMLA, the charge sheet said.

The POC involved in this case is ₹ 5,050 crore. While Rana Kapoor is the founder of the said company namely DUVPL, his three daughters are 100 per cent shareholders therein.

Rana Kapoor is currently in judicial custody following his arrest in the case in March 2020. Wadhawans too are in jail custody after their arrest in another case.

## 3-year-old raped, killed and thrown into well in Rajasthan



JAIPUR, April 23 (IANS): In a horrific incident, a three-year-old girl, who along with her mother came to attend a marriage function at a village in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan, was allegedly raped and killed by a youth who also came to attend the wedding.

The incident was reported from a village under the Bassi police station in Chittorgarh district on Friday.

The police have arrested the accused after registering a case of rape and murder.

According to the information received, two daughters in a family were getting married in the village. When everybody was busy with the marriage rituals, the accused first picked up a four-year-old boy and took him near a well around a kilometre from the wedding venue. As he started molesting the kid, the child cried loudly which scared the accused who then left the child back at the venue. After that, he picked up the three-year-old girl and took her near the same well. After raping the minor, he reportedly strangled her to death and threw her body into the well.

Thereafter, he went back to the marriage function where he even danced before returning to his village with the wedding procession.

When the girl was not found till late evening, the relatives and villagers informed the police.

During police interrogation, it was found that the girl was last seen with Rameshwar Dhakad, a resident of Kishanpura in Bhillwara. At first, Dhakad kept misleading the police, but when the cops pressed hard, he confessed to the crime.

Meanwhile, the local villagers, including BJP MLA Chandrabhan Singh, have accused the police and the administration of dereliction of duty, besides demanding death penalty for the guilty youth.

## Don't blindly follow rules, conflicts have human face: CJI to judges

CHENNAI, April 23 (PTI): Judges cannot blindly apply rules as conflicts have a human face and before rendering any decision, they have to weigh socio-economic factors and the impact of their decision on the society, chief justice of the Supreme Court, Justice N V Ramana said here on Saturday.

In this era of 'instant noodles', people expect instant justice. But they do not realise that real justice will be a casualty if we strive for instant justice, he said addressing an event at the Madras High Court.

People looked up to the judiciary in times of distress. And they firmly believe that their rights would be protected by the courts.

"It is necessary to contemplate how to improve the functioning of the judiciary, how to reach out to the people and fulfil their justice needs." On the language used in courts, justice Ramana said a common citizen cannot relate to the practices, procedures and language of courts. Hence, efforts should be on making the general pop-



ulation an active part of the justice delivery process.

"The parties must understand the ongoing process and development of their case. It should not be like chanting mantras in a wedding, which most of us do not understand," he said. Pointing out that strengthening the judicial institutions has been his top priority, Justice Ramana said buttressing judiciary is imperative for a democracy, sustained on the rule of law.

During the last one year of his tenure as chief justice, he has been highlighting various issues affecting the country's legal system, he said. "The biggest issue affecting all institutions nowadays, including the judi-

ciary, is ensuring sustained faith in the eyes of the public."

The judiciary is vested with immense constitutional responsibility of maintaining the rule of law and checking executive and legislative excesses. "We have the duty of upholding and enforcing the constitutional values. It is no doubt, a heavy burden. But it is one that we have gladly chosen on the day we took our constitutional oath. This is the reason why strengthening judicial institutions has been my top priority," he added.

Dispensing justice is not only a constitutional duty, but also a social one. Conflicts are inevitable for any society. But constructive resolution of conflict is integral to maintain the social order, he said. "Constructive conflict resolution is not a mere technical job. Particularly in a country like India, judges cannot blindly apply the rules, procedures and statutes. After all, conflicts have a human face. We are constantly aware about our duty to render justice, not merely procedural, but also substantial."

## Delhi's R-value 2.1 this week, every Covid-19 infected person infecting two others: IIT-Madras analysis

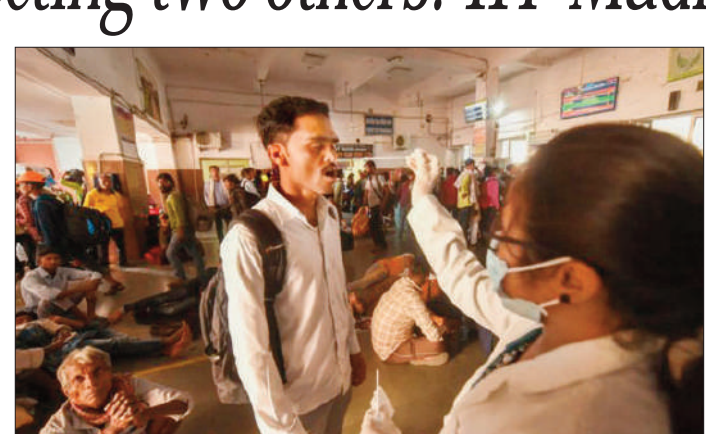
NEW DELHI, April 23 (PTI): Delhi's R-value, which indicates the spread of Covid-19, was recorded at 2.1 this week, implying that every infected person is infecting two others in the national capital, according to an analysis by IIT-Madras.

The 'R' or reproductive value indicates the number of people an infected person can spread the disease to, and a pandemic is considered to end if this value goes below one.

The preliminary analysis by computational modelling was done by IIT-Madras' Department of Mathematics and Centre of Excellence for Computational Mathematics and Data Science headed by Prof Neelesh S Upadhye and Prof S Sundar.

This was shared with PTI and according to it, Delhi's R-value this week was recorded at 2.1. India's R-value, at present, stands at 1.3, the analysis found.

Asked if it can be deduced that



this is the beginning of the fourth wave of Covid-19 in Delhi, Dr Jayant Jha, assistant professor, Department of Mathematics, IIT-Madras, said it would be too early to declare an onset of another wave.

"We can only say right now that every person is affecting two others...but we need to wait a bit to declare onset...we don't know about the immunity status and whether

the people who got affected during the third wave in January are getting affected or not again," he told PTI.

For other metro cities - Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, Jha said the number of cases are too low to ascertain a trend.

Delhi is witnessing an uptick in the number of Covid-19 cases. The city logged 1,042 fresh Covid cases

with a positivity rate of 4.64 per cent on Friday.

The Omicron sub-lineage BA.2.12 has been detected in a majority of the samples sequenced from Delhi in the first fortnight of April and it could be behind the recent surge in Covid-19 cases in the city, sources said on Thursday.

However, an Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) source has claimed that Omicron variant derivative BA.2.12.1 has also been found in a few samples in Delhi which is said to be contributing to the recent rise in cases in the US.

But officials have not confirmed that it indeed was found in some samples in Delhi.

An official source said, "New sub-variants BA.2.12 (52 per cent samples) and BA.2.10 (11 per cent samples) are showing high transmission and have been found in over 60 per cent of the total samples from Delhi sequenced recently."



## SANTOSH TROPHY

## Manipur ease past Karnataka by 3-0



**MALAPPURAM, April 23 (IANS):** Manipur eased past Karnataka 3-0 in a Group B match of the Hero 75th National Football Championship for Santosh Trophy at the Kottapadi Stadium, here on Saturday. With this win, they became the first team from Group B to make the semifinals as they joined hosts Kerala.

Manipur coach Gift Raikhan had said that his instruction to his players was to go all out right from the start and ensure qualification to the last four and his team delivered. Three goals in the first-half itself with Lunminlen Haokip running the show.

The first goal of the game came from a terrible mistake by young Darshan L at left-back. He tried to pass back to his keeper Jayanthkumar Krishnamurthy but his loose pass was intercepted by an alert Somishon Shirak. He looked up and picked out an onrushing Lunminlen Haokip who made no mistake as Manipur took the lead in the 19th minute.

Lunminlen Haokip could have scored another in the space of a few minutes. Darshan L was the culprit again as he lost out to Somishon Shirak who once again found his teammate inside the box. But this time Haokip's shot went straight to the keeper who fumbled the first time but eventually held on. These defensive errors sparked Karnataka into life and they had two quick-fire chances to equalise. Poor goalkeeping from Manipur's Angomjambam Chingkhel Meitei meant a half-chance fell to Bavu Nishad TP but his shot was cleared by Thiyan Chingkhingamba.

Karnataka looked to play on the counter and their best chance fell to Solaimalai N but his powerful shot was saved somehow by the Manipur goalie. As Karnataka pushed more and more forward in search of the equaliser, they left too many gaps in midfield and Manipur soon took advantage.

A chipped through ball from Nguloulal Singsit found Haokip

who broke the off-side trap. He still had a lot to do from there but with some sublime skills, he completely fooled Siju S and then toe-poked it past the onrushing keeper to extend Manipur's lead in the 42nd minute.

Karnataka players seemed deflated after conceding the second and they let their heads drop. And Manipur punished them even further. A through ball found Somishon Shirak in acres of space. His first shot was saved superbly by Jayanthkumar Krishnamurthy but Shirak poked home the rebound to make it three goals without reply right at the stroke of half-time.

Karnataka had a chance to reduce the arrears after a mistimed header from manipur defender Laishram Chingkhingamba completely fooled his own keeper as it looped over his outstretched hands. Luckily for Manipur, the ball hit the crossbar and the rebound was collected by a grateful Angomjambam Chingkhel Meitei.

In the second half, Manipur were content to hold their shape and try to hit Karnataka on the break. The Karnataka players did put up a much improved display in the second forty-five minutes but they had nothing to show for their efforts. Kamallesh P and Solaimalai N both had shots from range but the Manipur keeper saved on both occasions.

Karnataka tried to utilise crosses from the flanks in a bid to come back into the game. One such cross Prashanth Kalinga found Solaimalai N in space inside the box but the midfielder failed to get his header on target.

The win meant Manipur now have nine points after four games and have secured progress to the last four. Karnataka, having played three, have four points to show for their efforts. They are still in with a shout but need to win their final game against Gujarat on Monday and hope for other results to go their way if they are to have a chance of making the semis.

## Rajasthan Utd back to winning ways with clinical performance against NEROCA

**NAIHATI, April 23 (IANS):** Two second-half goals for Rajasthan United against NEROCA FC were enough to end their four-game winless run, here at the Naihathi Stadium. A goal from Biswa Darjee right after half time and a late strike from Pedro Manzi got Rajasthan off to a winning start in Phase II.

Unlike the Phase I encounter between these two sides, the game got off to a very cagey and slow start. Neither goalkeeper was tested as the final third performance of both sides was disappointing. When it looked promising, the attacks were stalled by astute defending at both ends.

Aman Thapa looked menacing down the left and won a corner inside five minutes. The ball from the set piece ended up at the feet of Julian Omar Ramos, who shot it straight into the stands behind the goal. Shortly after that, Rajasthan lost the ball cheaply in their own half but Ricky Shabong was alert and calmly intercepted and nodded a lofted ball back to his keeper.

Shabong's game was cut short after an unfortunate injury forced him to go off just before the half hour mark. Biswa Darjee came on to replace Shabong as Rajasthan United trotted forward with Pritam Singh. Singh shot from distance and kept it on target but failed to get the required power on it as keeper Shubham Dhas collected the ball easily. In first half stoppage time, Anil Chawan came flying in with a strong challenge on Abdul Salam and got his name taken by the referee. NEROCA were unable to

cause any damage from the resulting free-kick after it was hurled in towards Sergio Mendigutxia. The first half-half ended with Rajasthan having only one shot on-target and NEROCA with none.

The second half was nothing like the first. Aman Thapa won a corner after forcing a save out of Shubham Dhas from close range. From the resulting corner, the ball was cleared off the line by Lallenmang Sithou.

The very next attack resulted in the opening goal of the match. Sardor Jakhonov put a delightful cross into the box from the left and substitute Biswa Darjee headed it into the back of the net. The header was quite close to Shubham Dhas and the keeper could have done better with that effort.

NEROCA were trailing and an injury to Ben Nash Quansah added to their concerns. The defender was stretched off but came back on to bring some relief to his side. NEROCA almost equalised when Abdul Salam picked out Sergio Mendigutxia with a long throw into the box. Keeper Bhaskar Roy came forward to collect it but spilled it in the process. Luckily for him, his defence was alert and dealt with the ball well.

Davis Kamanga, who had a quiet first half, sprung to life in the second. Dribbling and passing through the middle and final third, the Zimbabwian caused a lot of problems for the Rajasthan United defence, clicking well with Sweden Fernandes and Sergio Mendigutxia on multiple occasions.

## IPL 2022: THE TITANS SUCCESSFULLY DEFENDED 156

## GUJARAT TITANS DEFEAT KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS BY EIGHT RUNS

**MUMBAI, April 23 (IANS):** Gujarat Titans' bowling attack successfully defended 156 to defeat Kolkata Knight Riders by eight runs at DY Patil Stadium on Saturday.

Despite losing seven wickets in the last five overs after Hardik Pandya's 67 to end at 156/9, Gujarat's bowling attack clicked in unison, taking four wickets in the first seven overs.

They were also aided by fielders taking some stunning catches to restrict Kolkata to 148/8 in 20 overs. The result means that Gujarat are now on top of the points table.

With a new opening combination in Sam Billings and Sunil Narine, Kolkata's hopes of a blistering start began well when the former brought out a glorious straight drive against Mohammed Shami. But Shami had the last laugh as Billings top-edged a pull to wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha. Shami then setup Narine with two short balls on body and then slipped one on hips, which the batter pulled uncomfortably to a diving short fine leg.

Nitish Rana fell cheaply, forced to poke at a Lockie Fer-



guson delivery and took a healthy edge behind to Saha as Gujarat successfully overturned not out decision. Shreyas Iyer had begun to look comfortable at the crease but was undone by over the wicket angle from Yash Dayal and nicked behind to Rinku Singh found the boundary rope five times in his stay of 35 and shared a 45-run stand with Venkatesh Iyer. But

in an attempt to smash Yash Dayal over mid-wicket, Rinku could only manage a bottom edge going behind to Saha. Venkatesh tried to slog-sweep Rashid Khan but Abhinav Manohar took a stunning catch just in front of deep mid-wicket boundary rope.

In between, Andre Russell got his first boundary with a thickish edge off Dayal over Saha's

head. On the next ball, Russell tried to fend a Dayal bouncer with his bat but the ball flew straight off his bat to fine leg. But Dayal's jubilation was cut short as replays showed front foot no ball. Russell rubbed salt on wounds by thumping Dayal on back-to-back sixes to end an eventful 13th over.

Russell then smacked a Ferguson full toss over long-off.

Khan got out Shivam Mavi and almost had Umesh Yadav lbw with the googly but replays showed ball missing the stumps. With 45 needed off 24 balls, Russell upper cut Shami over backward point for six. Umesh cleared his front leg to swat Ferguson over deep mid-wicket for six more.

Russell hit a six down the ground off Dayal but could manage five runs off rest of the over for the equation to read as 18 off the final over. On the first ball, Russell smashed an Alzarri Joseph full toss over long-on for a huge six.

But Joseph had the last laugh as Russell mistimed a pull to fine leg immediately. That turned out to be a decisive blow for Kolkata as Joseph conceded two, one followed by successive dots to seal a close win for Gujarat.

Brief Scores: Gujarat Titans 156/9 in 20 overs (Hardik Pandya 67, David Miller 27; Andre Russell 4/5, Tim Southee 3/24) beat Kolkata Knight Riders 148/8 in 20 overs (Andre Russell 48, Rinku Singh 35; Mohammed Shami 2/20, Rashid Khan 2/22) by eight runs

## Archery World Cup Indian men's compound team clinches Gold

**ANTALYA (TURKEY), April 23 (IANS):** Indian men's compound team of Abhishek Verma, Aman Saini and Rajat Chauhan defeated France 232-230 in the final to win the gold medal at the 2022 Archery World Cup Stage 1, here on Saturday.

The trio of Abhishek, Aman and Rajat were trailing by three points in the second set but produced a perfect score of 60 in the third to close the gap and shot 59 in the final set to snatch the victory. This was India's first medal at the ongoing meet.

Later in the day, India's mixed compound team of Abhishek Verma and Muskan Kirar narrowly missed out on the bronze medal, going down to Croatia 156-157.

Apart from these two events, Indian archers have gone through a challenging campaign at the first stage of the Archery World Cup.

In the men's individual recurve, only London 2012 Olympian Jayanta Talukdar could make the top eight. Tokyo Olympian Tarundeep Rai lost in the round of 32. Sachin Gupta crashed out in the round of 64 while Neeraj Chauhan was eliminated in the opening contest.

Meanwhile, the women's individual recurve saw Ridhi reaching the round of 16. Komalika Bari lost in the round of 32 while Anikta Bhakat and Simranjeet Kaur could not go past the first



round.

The compound archers also struggled, with only Rajat Chauhan and Priya Gurjar making the top eight in the men's and women's individual events, respectively. Asian Games gold medalist Abhishek Verma was ousted in the round of 32.

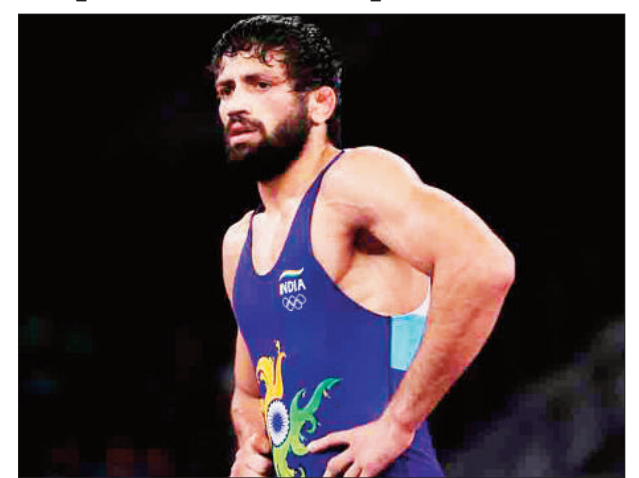
The recurve teams (men and women) and women's compound team could also not reach the medal rounds. However, the recurve mixed team, featuring Tarundeep Rai and Ridhi will play for the gold against Great Britain on Sunday.

## Dominant Ravi grabs Gold, Bajrang settles for Silver, Gourav impressive in 2nd place finish

**ULAANBAATAR (MONGOLIA), April 23 (PTI):** Ravi Dahiya's physical prowess and superior tactical acumen was on show yet again as he became the first Indian wrestler to win three gold medals at the Asian Championship but Bajrang Punia struggled badly on his return to action even as he grabbed a silver, here on Saturday. Tokyo Olympics silver medalist Ravi was his usual dominant self in his three bouts as he outclassed the 57kg field to emerge champion. Gourav Balian (79kg) was impressive in his silver-winning effort while Naveen (70kg), making his senior debut and the seasoned Satywart Kadiyan (97kg), bagged bronze medals as all five Indians in action earned podium finishes.

The 24-year-old Ravi Dahiya conceded early lead in all his bouts, but as is his wont, he bounced back in tremendous fashion to give India its first gold medal of this edition. He won the final against Kazakhstan's Rakhat Kalzhan by technical superiority. It was his second final of the season, having won a silver at the Dan Kolov event in February.

Ravi, who hails from Nahri village in Sonapat, outsmarted Japan's Rikuto Arai (VSU) and pulled off a comprehensive 12-



5 win over Mongolia's Zambazar Zandanbud en route the final.

In the title clash, Kalzhan moved ahead with a take-down and for considerable time did not let the Indian make any move. However, true to his style, Ravi began to dominate the bout with his unmatched class.

He effected six consecutive two-pointers and in-between saved himself from a left-leg attack to finish the bout early in the second period to secure India's first gold medal of the tournament this year.

Before the final, the Japanese was quick with his moves and initially troubled Ravi with his double-leg attacks which

even took the Indian off his feet but once the Haryana wrestler got the measure of his rival, he dictated the terms in the bout.

Ravi not only found away to block Arai's attack but also got himself into position to initiate take-down moves from both sides as the Japanese did not have a plan 'B' to counter the in-form Indian.

Ravi kept consolidating his lead and eventually won by technical superiority.

In the semifinal against Zandanbud, Ravi fell behind 0-4 after the home wrestler effected a take-down move and followed that up with a gut-wrench but Ravi again was quick in finding a way to thwart his rival.

## Lots of speculation around Test captaincy but Rob Key will take the decision: Stokes

**LONDON, April 23 (IANS):** England all-rounder Ben Stokes has said that while there will be "a lot of speculation" that he might be given the responsibility to lead the Test side after Joe Root stepped down as skipper, the decision will be taken by the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) new managing director Rob Key.

Stokes has been heavily linked with the vacant England Test captain's position and has spoken about the role as well following his friend and teammate's decision to step down. The 30-year-old all-rounder thinks that it will be a "huge honour" if he gets the opportunity to captain the side.

"I know there will be lots of speculation around who will take over, and clearly as vice-captain and someone who has stood in on a few occasions my name will be strongly talked about," Stokes wrote in his column for Daily Mirror.

"But all I will say is that it is a huge honour to captain England and whoever does it will get to enjoy that responsibility of trying to take the team forward. The decision will be down to Rob Key as the new managing director of men's cricket and I'm sure we'll



talk soon enough, as he will with other players and support staff.

"It is an exciting time for us all, at the start of a new era for the Test team. I'm back in the nets now and training ahead of my first game for Durham in the next couple of weeks and I can't wait," added Stokes.

Recalling the day when Root broke the news to him that he was stepping down as England Test skipper, Stokes said he was caught a bit off-guard. Root's captaincy over the last year-and-a-half had come in for criticism after his side could manage just

one Test win in 17 outings, with the latest disappointment coming in the form of the 0-4 Ashes thrashing followed by a 0-1 loss in the away Test series in the Caribbean.

"When my phone started ringing and I saw Joe's (Root) name flash up, I didn't know what to expect. But when he said: 'Mate, I just wanted to let you know before it becomes official...' I knew what was coming."

"As you can imagine it was quite an emotional conversation, but it wasn't a long chat, there will be time for that in the future."

This was an emotional few minutes and in return there was nothing but love, respect and support from me because that is what Joe Root has shown me throughout his time as England Test captain.

"When I took my break from the game in 2021 (due to mental health issues and finger injury), Joe was brilliant. The cricket came second; his concern was for my well-being. And going back a few years now to the Bristol incident, that was where my captain really went to bat for me. That is where my total loyalty towards Joe comes from, and he will always have it because he has never been anything but a good man towards me and the rest of his players."

Root captained England more than any other player in Test history, winning more matches as captain (27) but also losing more (26) than any of his predecessors. And having stepped down as skipper, Root can now look to continue his stunning form with the bat, form that saw him score more runs in 2021 than any English men's batter had in any previous calendar year, earning him the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year award.

## Mohd Konain Dad scores five in MP's 13-1 win

**JAMSHEDPUR, April 23 (IANS):** It continued to rain goals at the 2nd Hockey India Junior Men's Academy National Championship 2022 here on Saturday with top teams winning their respective pool matches.

Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy, Raja Karan Hockey Academy, Smart Hockey Academy, Raipur, Markandeshwar Hockey Academy and Cheema Hockey Academy won their respective pool matches on the fourth day of the event at the Naval Tata Hockey Academy here.

In the first match of the day, Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy beat Mumbai Schools Sports Association (MSSA) 13-1 in Pool A.

Mohd Konain Dad (8', 32', 36', 48', 51') starred with five goals, while Kashif Khan (6', 30') and Mohammad Zaid Khan (24', 40') bagged a brace each for Madhya Pradesh Hockey academy. Mudassar Qureshi (14'), Saddam Ahmad (35'), Haider Ali (53') and Ali Ahmad (56') also got on the scoresheet for the winning team. Seraj Ahmed (42') scored the lone goal for MSSA. In the second game of the day, Republican Sports Club beat Raja Karan Hockey Academy 2-0 in Pool B. Het Rajubhai Pawar (6') and Saurabh Mayekar (44') were the goal-scorers for Republican Sports Club.