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Himanta addresses FICCI National Executive Committee Meeting Assam witnessing all-round progress: CM

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: Chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma delivered a keynote address to the delegates attending the National Executive Committee Meeting of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industries (FICCI) in Guwahati. This marks the first time that FICCI, established in 1927, has chosen Assam as the venue for its National Executive Committee Meeting.

Expressing his gratitude to FICCI for selecting Guwahati, chief minister Sarma expressed confidence that the event would contribute to the state's ongoing economic growth trajectory. He emphasised that such gatherings align with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for Assam and the entire Northeast region. The choice of Guwahati as the meeting location also highlights the city's emergence as the focal point of growth in the region.

Highlighting the transformation Assam has undergone, chief minister Sarma noted that turmoil, strife, and instability are now things of the past. The state has witnessed



unprecedented peace, progress, and prosperity across all sectors since 2014. Statistical data supports Assam's rapid advancement, and within two years, it is expected to sur-

pass Punjab and become the 16th largest state in terms of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The chief minister highlighted the substantial increase in public and capital

expenditures, as well as the remarkable growth of the tourism sector.

The chief minister outlined the government's efforts to establish an industry-friendly ecosystem in Assam, including the development of a customized industrial policy that caters to the specific needs of industries on a case-by-case basis. This departure from the current one-size-fits-all approach aims to attract investment and support industrial growth. Chief minister Sarma also emphasised the government's commitment to transparency in governance, which has benefited the industrial sector as well.

Looking ahead, the chief minister expressed optimism that leading industrialists and businesses would leverage the opportunities presented by a resurgent Assam. He projected that Assam will soon be counted among the top 15 states across various sectors. FICCI president Subhrakant Panda, vice president Harsh V Agarwal, secretary general Shailesh Pathak, and FICCI Northeast Advisory Council chairman Ranjit Borthakur were also present at the event.

Assam floods scene sees no change

Over 58,000 people affected

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: The flood situation in Assam remains critical as more than 58,000 people continue to bear the brunt of the calamity across seven districts and sub-divisions.

According to the latest bulletin released by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), Biswanath, Chirang, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Kokrajhar, Lakhimpur, and Tamulpur are facing the impact of the floods.

Lakhimpur district is the most severely affected, with around 25,752 people grappling with the floodwaters. Additionally, 15,870 people in Halem, Biswanath, and 13,247 people in Chirang are also reeling from the floods. The deluge has submerged 715.06 hectares of agricultural land in the affected areas.

The floodwaters have led to the inundation of 133 villages, exacerbating the challenges faced by the affected population. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy rains to continue for at least another day, indicating that the situation may worsen in some areas.

The Disang river in Nanglamuraghat is flowing above the danger level and is expected to rise further during the night, as per the ASDMA's evening bulletin. Several other Central Water Commission (CWC) stations have reported water levels in rivers exceeding warning levels.

Reports of damages to embankments and other infrastructure have emerged from Dhemaji, Dhubri, Goalpara, Lakhimpur, Bajali, Tamulpur. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Leopard creates panic in Jorhat

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, July 12: Upor Gorumora village has been gripped with fear for the past 15 days as a leopard has been wreaking havoc in the area, attacking villagers and killing several cattle. The latest incident occurred on Tuesday afternoon when Jatin Bora, a young man who went to retrieve his buffaloes from grazing, was attacked by the elusive big cat hiding in the nearby bushes.

Jatin's screams alerted his father, Nandeswar Bora, and other villagers who rushed to his aid. They managed to drive away the leopard and rescue Jatin, who sustained injuries on his back, neck, and head. He was immediately admitted to JMCH (Jorhat Medical College and Hospital) for treatment.

In response to the ongoing incidents, a team from the forest department visited the location and installed a cage on Wednesday in an attempt to capture the stray leopard. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Move to set up mega solar power plant at Lahorijan opposed

HT Bureau

DIPHU, July 12: The Joint Action Committee for Protection of Autonomy (JCCPA) has opposed the setting of the proposed installation of the mega solar power plant in 18,000 bighas of land in Lahorijan area in Karbi Anglong district by APDCL.

In a press conference convened here at the District Press Club of Karbi Anglong office, the convener, JCCPA, Khorsing Teron said they had submitted a memorandum to chief executive member (CEM), KAAC, Tuliram Ronghang on Tuesday to reconsider the KAAC decision for the proposed installation of mega solar power plant by APDCL.



It may be mentioned that on June 30 the CEM had said that the KAAC has allotted 18,000 bighas of land in Lahorijan, Karbi Anglong district to APDCL for installation of solar power plant. The CEM had also mentioned that initial work had begun. Going by the memorandum, Teron said the allotment of land to APDCL will go down in the history of Karbi Anglong as the worst decision ever taken by KAAC.

Teron said, "Under paragraph 3 (1) (a) of the Sixth Schedule to the constitution of India which clearly stated that 'allotment, occupation or use or setting apart of land... for the purposes or for any other purposes likely to promote the

Govt spearheads efforts to safeguard Deepor Beel's ecological balance

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: In an ambitious initiative to preserve the ecological balance surrounding Guwahati, the state government led by chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has taken decisive steps to safeguard Deepor Beel. Recognised as Assam's only Ramsar site, Deepor Beel holds immense significance in maintaining the region's environmental integrity. On Wednesday, state water resources minister Pijush Hazarika visited Khanamukh to inspect the implementation of arrangements facilitating water entry into the lake through a sluice gate. The primary objective of this initiative is to raise the water level of Deepor Beel to 1.5 meters. However, the conservation measures also emphasize the importance of preserving the lake's heritage, beauty, and distinctiveness.

Chief minister Sarma expressed his commitment to the restoration



and preservation of Deepor Beel, stating, "Deepor Beel is Assam's only Ramsar site, and its holistic rejuvenation is one of our top priorities. Apart from ensuring perennial water flow, we are also building elevated rail and road corridors to protect wildlife and promote water sports." The Ramsar Convention, an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of

wetlands, has acknowledged Deepor Beel's ecological significance. By raising the water level, the Assam government aims to create a conducive environment for a diverse range of flora and fauna, thereby preserving the region's biodiversity and maintaining the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Furthermore, the conservation efforts extend (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Sexagenarian killed in road accident

HT Correspondent

HOWRAGHAT, July 12: A tragic road accident on NH 36 in Karbi Anglong under the Uttar Borbil police outpost claimed the life of a senior citizen who was hit by a speeding car while riding his motorcycle.

The incident occurred when a Baleno car, traveling from Nagaon, was moving at high speed and collided with the motorcycle. The impact of the collision knocked the senior citizen off his bike, causing severe injuries that proved fatal. The victim has been identified as Sing Rongphar, a 60-year-old resident of Phuloni Desoi Teron village. Upon receiving information about the accident, the police promptly arrived at the scene. They took possession of the deceased's body and subsequently sent it to Diphu for a post-mortem examination. Authorities continue to emphasize the need for responsible driving to ensure the safety of all road users.

Police issues warning for misusing Manipur Commando uniform by rioters



IMPHAL, July 12 (PTI): In a stern warning, Manipur Police has asked people to stop misusing its black commando uniform after reports suggested that armed rioters were wearing the outfit to create mistrust, officials said here.

They said information has been circulated throughout all formations to ensure that the Manipur Police Commando uniform, black in colour, is not misused and they have been instructed to intensify the vigil.

This comes after videos were found doing the rounds in which some of the armed assailants were seen wearing the black uniform, which seems to have been stolen during the uprising witnessed in the state from May 3 onwards.

The two groups -- Meitei and Kuki -- have engaged in armed conflicts with each other and the violence has claimed over 150 lives so far.

The police have been asked even to check any vehicle carrying security personnel, especially the India Reserve Battalion and Manipur Police, and their identity cards, the officials said.

There have been occasions

where police uniforms have also been misused but such cases are less in number, they said, adding there is a need to put an end to this practice as otherwise the other community feels that the law enforcing agency is biased.

The 45,000-strong Manipur Police was vertically split after the ethnic clashes, with Meitei personnel in the force moving to Imphal valley for safety and the Kuki personnel escaping to the hills.

While an assessment was being made about the stolen weapons by the police, efforts were also intensified for their recovery. In this connection, two people were arrested by the police with stolen police weapons which they had purchased from the Imphal valley.

In a related development on better policing, director general of police Rajiv Singh, immediately after taking over, had identified that nearly 1,200 personnel were missing from duty, officials said. His first task was identifying these people and completing the formalities of their "joining back duty" wherever they were comfortable. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Rio flags off helicopter service for Nagaland

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, July 12: Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio flagged off the Thumbay Aviation Pvt Ltd's helicopter service for the state at Dimapur airport on Wednesday after the aviation company inked a four-year contract to provide chopper service in the state.

The aviation company, under the ministry of home affairs, signed an MoU with the Nagaland government to provide chopper service with effect from June 26, 2023 to June 26, 2027. The company has been operating in Nagaland since 2010 on a two-year term contract basis initially with one helicopter. However, two choppers have been operated since 2010 with the increase in demand.

In his brief address at the flagging-off ceremony, Rio underscored the need for two choppers. He said one of the choppers should regularly cater to the needs of the people, especially the sick and the elderly.

Noting that traveling by chopper is much cheaper, he urged the aviation company to provide good services and for regular distribution of schedules.

"We also need chopper service during VVIP visits and for VIP or official visits to far-flung areas," Rio said. He stressed that chopper services should be available, especially during the Hornbill Festival, so that tourists get the opportunity to visit the famed and beautiful Dzukou valley.

With the signing of a four-year contract, Rio was optimistic that Thumbay Aviation Pvt Ltd would provide better services to the people of the state.

Shikaho P Yephthomi, GM, Nagaland State Transport, said the chopper service was introduced in the state way back in 1988 but was discontinued due to the unfortunate crash in February 1989. Yephthomi said the helicopter services were reintroduced in Nagaland in 2007 under the personal initiative of Rio. Due to (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Govt to introduce Bill to ban polygamy

Measures to contain price hike initiated: Himanta

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, July 12: The state government will come out with a Bill to ban polygamy in the state.

Informing this here on Wednesday, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma while responding to a question about the alarming increase in the state's population admitted that it is difficult to enforce population control measures and imprison those who do not comply with. He made it clear that the state government would introduce a specific bill soon with an aim to address certain population-related challenges.

The chief minister said this after visiting Sri Saibaba temple in Puranigudam Bhimorag and Mahamrityunjay temple in Barhampur Bherbheri.

Additionally, Sarma unveiled the statue of Baba Bhrihu Maharaj, who played a pivotal role in the establishment of the largest Asian temple dedicated to Lord Shiva in Barhampur Bherbheri several decades ago.

During interactions with local media representatives, Sarma acknowledged the au-

tonomy of the Election Commission and clarified that the agency is not bound by the instructions of the state government.

In reference to the proposal to change the names of certain constituencies in Barak Valley, the chief minister explained that the state government submitted an official request to the autonomous agency, but it is ultimately their decision to accept or reject it.

Addressing concerns over the rising prices of essential commodities, Sarma acknowledged that the steep price hikes have caused panic among the common people of the state. However, he assured that the government is taking steps to mitigate the impact by placing restrictions on the prices of petroleum products such as petrol and diesel, which are comparatively lower than in most Congress-ruled states.

Furthermore, the government plans to issue 40 lakh new ration cards to provide relief to the people affected by the price hikes. During his visit, chief minister Sarma was accompanied by BJP MLA Rupak Sarma, former Union minister (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Swachhta campaign

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: As part of the ongoing Swachhta Pakhwada (1st July - 15th July 2023) initiated by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the officers and staff members of NSSO (National Sample Survey Office), Regional Office Guwahati, conducted an awareness campaign in Kochapara market, Mirza. The campaign focused on promoting hand hygiene, discouraging plastic usage, preventing littering, and discouraging spitting, in order to foster a cleaner and healthier environment.

Kochapara market holds special significance for NSSO, as it is one of the Consumer Price Index (Urban) markets from which monthly price data on various commodities are collected by NSSO. Regional Office Guwahati. Originally introduced to measure changes in the living costs of workers, the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) has evolved to become an important macroeconomic indicator for monitoring inflation, price stability, and deflators in the National Accounts.

However, gathering accurate and reliable data from the shopkeepers in these markets can sometimes be challenging. In an effort to foster cooperation and highlight the genuine purpose of data collection, the NSSO team organised the swachhta campaign in Kochapara market. The campaign aimed to raise awareness among shopkeepers and bystanders about the importance of maintaining cleanliness and hygiene. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Post Bengal panchayat election scenario TMC 'fear' forces BJP winning candidates to flee to Assam

DHUBRI, July 12 (PTI): Nine candidates who have won in West Bengal panchayat elections and a CPI(M) contestant have fled to neighbouring Assam on Wednesday following alleged attacks by workers of the Trinamool Congress, saffron party leaders in the northeastern state claimed.

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had on Tuesday said 133 people from West Bengal have taken shelter in the state, fearing for their lives because of the panchayat election violence back home.

Five BJP candidates who won from Chilakhana-II gram panchayat under Tufanganj assembly constituency in Coochbehar district reached here, Dhubri district BJP president Prosenjit Dutta told media persons here.



The other four BJP candidates who have fled their homes came from Balarampur-II gram panchayat under the Natabari assembly constituency of the same district.

A CPI(M) candidate Noor Mohammad also fled along with his family from his home in Coochbehar district to Dhubri alleging that Trinamool Congress workers had

attacked him and his supporters.

Dutta said that all arrangements regarding food, water, medical and security facilities have been made for these people.

Assam BJP president Bhabesh Kalita told reporters: "Democracy has been murdered in West Bengal and there is goonda Raj in the neighbouring state."

"West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee should take lessons from how polls are conducted in Assam. Panchayat, assembly and parliamentary elections have been conducted under the BJP rule since 2016 and there have been no incidents of violence," Kalita said.

He alleged that there was no governance in West Bengal and the Trinamool Congress won elections by resorting to violence and rigging.

Equity markets settle lower after three days of rally



MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): Benchmark equity indices ended lower on Wednesday after three days of gain amid profit-taking ahead of key macroeconomic data announcements due later in the day along with the first quarter earnings from TCS and HCL Technologies.

Fag-end selling pulled down the 30-share BSE Sensex lower, which declined 223.94 points or 0.34 per cent to settle at 65,393.90. During the day, it hit a low of 65,320.25 and a high of 65,811.64.

The NSE Nifty fell by 55.10 points or 0.28 per cent to end at 19,384.30.

Industrial production data for May and inflation for the month of June will be announced later in the day.

From the Sensex pack, Infosys, Tata Motors, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank, NTPC, IndusInd Bank, Larsen & Toubro, HCL Technologies, Power Grid, Maruti, HDFC and Tata Steel were the major laggards.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, Asian

Paints, Nestle, Titan, State Bank of India and Reliance Industries were the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued their buying momentum as they bought equities worth ₹ 1,197.38 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Hong Kong settled in the green while Tokyo and Shanghai ended lower. Equity markets in Europe were trading in the green. The US markets ended in the positive territory on Tuesday.

"The range-bound movement in the Indian indices was influenced by the likelihood of subdued IT earnings," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.23 per cent to USD 79.58 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark had advanced 273.67 points or 0.42 per cent to settle at 65,617.84 on Tuesday. The Nifty climbed 83.50 points or 0.43 per cent to end at 19,439.40.

Industrial production grows 5.2 pc in May

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): India's industrial production rose to 5.2 per cent in May from 4.5 per cent in April 2023, mainly due to good performance by the manufacturing and mining sectors, according to the official data released on Wednesday.

The factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) stood at 19.7 per cent in May 2022, mainly due to a lower base effect.

"The growth rates over corresponding period of previous year are to be interpreted, considering the unusual circumstances on account of COVID 19 pandemic since March 2020," an official statement explained.

As per the IIP data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector's output grew 5.7 per cent in May



2023 against a 20.7 per cent expansion a year ago.

Power generation rose 0.9 per cent in May 2023 compared to a growth of 23.5 per cent a year ago.

Mining output rose by 6.4 per cent during the month under review against an 11.2 per cent ex-

pansion in the year-ago period.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment grew 8.2 per cent in May this year compared to 53.3 per cent a year ago.

Consumer durables output during the month rose 1.1 per cent

against a 59.1 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

Consumer non-durable goods output increased by 7.6 per cent compared to a growth of 1.4 per cent a year earlier.

Infrastructure/construction goods posted a growth of 14 per cent over an 18.4 per cent expansion in the same period a year ago.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 3.5 per cent growth in the month against 17.8 per cent in the year-ago period.

The intermediate goods output in May rose 1.6 per cent compared to a 17.5 per cent growth during the corresponding month last year.

During the April-May period of fiscal 2023-24, the growth in IIP works out to be 4.8 per cent, down from 12.9 per cent in the corresponding period a year ago.

Gold rises ₹ 195; silver climbs ₹ 200

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Gold prices edged up ₹ 195 to ₹ 59,700 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid strong cues globally, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had ended at ₹ 59,505 per 10 grams.

Silver also climbed ₹ 200 to ₹ 72,700 per kilogramme.

In the overseas market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,935 per ounce while silver was flat at USD 23.15 per ounce. Gold prices traded higher on Wednesday, following weakness in the dollar against major currencies and a fall in US treasury yields which helped comex gold rise to its highest level in three weeks, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

TCS Q1 net profit rises 17 pc to ₹ 11,074 cr

MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): The country's largest software exporter TCS on Wednesday reported a 16.83 per cent jump in its June quarter consolidated net profit to ₹ 11,074 crore.

The Tata Group company had reported a net profit of ₹ 9,478 crore in the year-ago period and ₹ 11,392 crore in the preceding quarter.

Its revenue from operations increased 12.55 per cent on a year-on-year basis to ₹ 59,381 crore and was marginally up from the preceding March quarter's ₹ 59,162 crore. TCS is the first major company to report its June quarter results.

It can be noted that with headwinds in its key markets, the USD 250 billion Indian IT sector is widely expected to report volatility in the near term.

In a statement, the company said its order book now stands at USD 10.2 billion and termed it a "robust"

one. Its newly appointed chief executive and managing director K Krithivasan said, "We remain confident in the longer-term demand for our services, driven by the emergence of newer technologies".

The company's operating profit margin increased marginally to 23.2 per cent from 23.1 per cent a year ago.

Its chief financial officer Samir Seksaria said operating profit margin at 23.2 per cent number includes a 2 percentage points impact of the annual wage hike for employees.

TCS added 523 employees on a net basis to take its overall headcount to over 6.15 lakh as of June 30, 2023. The attrition rate was 17.8 per cent.

Its chief of human resources Milind Lakkad said it has given a wage hike of 12-15 per cent to exceptional performers.

Anil Agarwal says partners lined up for semiconductor plans

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Days after Vedanta group's Taiwanese partner pulled out of a USD 19.5 billion semiconductor-making project, company chairman Anil Agarwal on Wednesday said partners have been lined up for the venture and Vedanta will begin foray into chip making this year. Agarwal however did not identify the partner.

Hon Hai Technology Group, also known as Foxconn, earlier this week pulled out of the chipmaking joint venture with Vedanta and said it intends to apply for incentives under the government's semiconductor production plan.

Just last week, Vedanta had said it will acquire semiconductor and display glass units from a group company.

Most of the world's chips are manufactured in a handful of countries and India, which expects its semiconductor market to be worth USD 63 billion by

2026, is a late entrant. Semiconductors find wide applications and are used in devices such as mobile phones to refrigerators and in cars.

Speaking at Vedanta's annual shareholder meeting, Agarwal said there was a huge opportunity in the electronics sector as India imports USD 100 billion worth of electronics every year. This includes USD 30 billion worth of semiconductor and display glass.

"We have lined up partners for our semiconductor venture," he said without mentioning of the Foxconn pullout.

"This year, subject to government approvals, your company will begin a historic foray into semiconductor fab and display fab." Soon after Foxconn announced pulling out of the venture on Monday, Vedanta had said it was fully committed to its semiconductor project and has lined up other partners to set up India's first foundry.

Rupee rises 19 paise to close at 82.22 against US dollar

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Rising for the third straight session, the rupee gained 19 paise to 82.22 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, as weakness in the American currency overseas and steady foreign fund inflows boosted investor sentiment.

However, a surge in crude oil prices capped the gains in the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 82.29 against the US dollar and settled 19 paise lower at 82.22 (provisional) against the previous close.

During the day, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 82.23 and a low of 82.32.

This is the third straight day of rise for the rupee, during which it has gained 44 paise.

On Tuesday, the rupee had closed at 82.41 against the dollar.

The US dollar declined on expectations that a slowdown in inflation may

lead to a slower pace of rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Though the US central bank may hike rates in July, a further rate rise in September may be data dependent, Choudhary said.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias, weakness in the US dollar and improved global risk sentiments. Sustained foreign inflows may also support the rupee while a rise in crude oil prices may cap a sharp upside," Choudhary said.

Market participants may remain cautious ahead of India's inflation and IIP data and US inflation data. "We expect USD/INR spot to trade in between 81.80 to 82.80 in the near-term," Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.26 per cent to 101.47.

Soybean sown in 90.5 lakh hectares this kharif season: SOPA

INDORE, July 12 (PTI): A leading association of soybean processors on Tuesday estimated that the crop has been sown in about 90.50 lakh hectares in the country during the current kharif season.

The organisation - Indore-based Soybean Processors' Association of India (SOPA) - believes soybean sowing this season might be slightly less than the last time due to the delay in the arrival of monsoon and the preference of farmers for other crops.

SOPA said of the total 90.50 lakh hectares where soybean was sown till July 10, 42.66 lakh hectares were in Madhya Pradesh, the country's largest soybean producer, where the crop is popularly known as "yellow gold" among farmers.

According to the latest data of the organisation, soybean has been sown in 30.8 lakh hectares in Maharashtra, 10.28 lakh hectares in Rajasthan, 2 lakh hectares in Karnataka, 1.85 lakh hectares in Gujarat, 1.65 lakh hectares in Telangana, 35,000 hectares in Chhattisgarh and 85,000 hectares in other states.

SOPA Executive Director DN Pathak told PTI, "Monsoon has been delayed this time in soybean-growing areas, and a section of farmers shifted to rice, arhar and other pulse crops."

He said the sowing of soybean in the country will end within a week and the sowing area might be slightly less than the last time.

During the 2022 kharif season, soybean was sown in 114.50 lakh hectares across the country and the production was around 124 lakh tonnes, as per the data.

RED FM, Eastern Command to celebrate Vijay Divas together

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, July 12: 93.5 RED FM, India's leading private radio and entertainment network, has announced its collaboration with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to commemorate Vijay Divas with a spectacular celebration called "Guts and Glory - Salute 71". This event aims to pay homage to the historic victory of the 1971 war and honour the brave soldiers who played a vital role in achieving it. As part of this unique initiative, Red FM will captivate its audience on-air by narrating gripping war stories that depict the courageous efforts of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war. Listeners will have the opportunity to learn about the heroic deeds of our soldiers, their unwavering spirit, and the sacrifices they made to secure our nation's victory. Red FM will also compile all these stories as podcast episodes, which will be available on various audio streaming platforms.

Furthermore, "Guts and Glory - Salute 71" will recognize and present awards to the courageous soldiers and citizens of North East India who displayed exceptional bravery and dedication during the triumphant war. Expressing his thoughts on the announcement, Lieutenant General Rana Pratap Kalita said, "I am delighted to learn that Red FM has taken the initiative to narrate stories of valour and courage of our soldiers who fought in the 1971 war. Through Guts & Glory - Salute 71, as part of this year's Vijay Divas Celebration, we aim to provide a deeper insight into this momentous chapter of Indian history."

Nisha Narayanan, Director & COO of RED FM and Magic FM, shared her thoughts on the announcement, stating, "On the occasion of Vijay Divas, we are thrilled to partner with the Eastern Command of the Indian Army to honour the lives of the 1971 war veterans. Our soldiers go through unimaginable experiences that are beyond our comprehension. The sacrifices made by our veterans are truly unfathomable, and as a brand, we are committed to recognizing the valour of the defend-

ers of our nation. The Guts & Glory - Salute 71 initiative will also acknowledge the unsung heroes among us, ordinary citizens who have displayed extraordinary bravery. We hope that these stories will enrich us with empathy and appreciation for the gallant troops who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom."

This initiative will be rolled out in 12 stations across East India, including Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Asansol, Siliguri, Agartala, Patna, Muzaffarpur, Jamshedpur, Guwahati, Shillong, Aizawl, and Gangtok.



Pradesh also has continued arrivals in reasonable quantities. The arrivals in Delhi-NCR are mainly from Himachal Pradesh and some quantity comes from Kolar in Karnataka, it added.

The ministry said the new crop

arrivals are expected soon from Nashik district.

Furthermore, in August, additional supply is expected to come from the Narayangaon and Aurangabad belt. Madhya Pradesh arrivals are also expected to start.

Retail inflation in June rises to three-month high of 4.81 pc

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Retail inflation rose to a three-month high of 4.81 per cent in June, mainly on account of hardening prices of food, according to the government data.

Inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 4.31 per cent (revised upward from 4.25 per cent) in May and 7 per cent in June 2022.

The inflation, however, remains within the RBI's comfort level of below 6 per cent.

The previous high CPI was in March at 5.66 per cent.

The government has tasked the central bank to ensure retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. The central bank mainly factors in the CPI to arrive at its bi-monthly monetary policy decision. The next policy review is scheduled early next month.

CONSTRUCTION OF OFFICE BUILDING

Tender Notice No. CON/2023/JUL/07 Dated: 04-07-2023. Open tender through e-Tendering system is invited from experienced and reputed contractor (s)/firm (s) for the following works: **E-Tender No. CE/CON/KIR/BLD/2023/07. Name of Work:** Construction of Office Building and Two units of Type-V quarters at Kathar. **Approx. Value: ₹ 5,38,32,685.57/-**. **Date & Time of closing of tender:** 14.30 hrs. of 07-08-2023 & opening at 15.30 hrs. of 07-08-2023. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in. **Chief Engineer/Con/5**

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ENGINEERING WORKS IN TINSUKIA DIVISION

Tender Notice No. : TSK/Engg/87 of 2023. Dated: 10-07-2023. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Item No. 1, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/1, At Dibrugarh Town-Amulapatty, Chiring Gaon, Bansbari, Chowkinghee, Dibru, Kalibari Rly colony, ORH, SRH, Con Office building, Station & yard and quarters, service building of road side stations from Dibrugarh Town upto outer signal at CHB (km 0/0 to 26/9). (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 4,76,19,506/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,88,100/-**. **Item No. 2, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/2, (a) At Dibrugarh Town- Staff quarters, Bunglow's road, drain of Barbari & Nalgaon Rly Colony. (b) At Dibrugarh Town-Staff quarters, Bunglow's road, drain of Gahnapur & Kadamoni Rly Colony including N/SP House (Dibrugarh Town). (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 4,18,92,237/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,59,500/-**. **Item No. 3, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/3, At Dibrugarh Town- Railway Workshop including DCOS/Dibrugarh Town, Power house, WAO & Audit office, Apprentice Hostel, Auto Exchange, Rly Institute, Badminton court, Co-operative, scout hut, CWM's bungalow & quarters of all officer's. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 2,39,79,147/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,69,900/-**. **Item No. 4, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/4, At Dibrugarh - Service buildings and colonies from Dibrugarh to Khowang upto outer Moranhat, Dhamalgaoon to New Sisiborgaon. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 4,50,22,994/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,75,100/-**. **Item No. 5, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/5, TSKG Officer's Bungalows, DRM colony/Accounts colony, Goods yard, New Tinsukia station building, Heritage park and other service building at New Tinsukia station yard. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 1,88,61,876/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,44,300/-**. **Item No. 6, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/6, from Tinsukia Goods to Sripraggaon yard by pass line all service building Tinsukia Goods & from outer signal of Tinsukia Goods upto outer signal of Tinsukia including Tinsukia Goods colony quarters and service building upto Chabua station outer. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 2,50,22,706/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,75,100/-**. **Item No. 7, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/7, (i) From ROB 2 (excluding ROB) to Dn outer signal of Makum Jn. (ii) From outer signal of Tinsukia to Sripraggaon station. (iii) Colonies-165 camp colony, Tinsukia colony including all service buildings. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 1,90,91,467/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,45,500/-**. **Item No. 8, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/8, From Dn outer signal of Makum Jn. to Lekhapani line & from outer signal Makum Jn. to Dangari. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 1,72,04,039/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,36,000/-**. **Item No. 9, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/9, From outer signal of Sripraggaon to outer signal of Bhojo (Tinsukia end) inclusive of Sripraggaon & Bhojo station yard and colonies. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 2,10,50,181/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 2,55,300/-**. **Item No. 10, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/10, From outer signal of Bhojo (Tinsukia end) to outer signal of Amguri, Tinsukia end mainline inclusive of Simalguri Jn.-NOM, Simalguri Jn.-Moranhat branches and Simalguri Jn. station & Colonies etc. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 3,60,46,684/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,30,200/-**. **Item No. 11, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/11, (a) From outer signal of Amguri-Tinsukia end (ML) including Amguri station to Mariani station. East cabin (Excluding Mariani Jn station and yard) including Forest colony, Signal colony, loco running room and Railway institute. (b) From Mariani Jn. East cabin to Titabar (Excluding) including Mariani Station and yard, General colony, Harijan colony, Yard colony and Kutcha colony. (c) From Mariani to NEA Branch Line (Excluding Mariani Jn.) including Loco shed colony, A/Colony, PH colony and Bazar Colony including Bye-Pass Line to Jorhat Town (Excluding Jorhat Town station). (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 4,05,35,020/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,62,700/-**. **Item No. 12, Brief Description of Item :** Zone no-TSK/12, (a) From Titabar to Km 332.32 main line and Furkating Jn.-Jorhat Town branch line (Jorhat Town) inclusive. (For Two Years). **Tender Value: ₹ 3,12,85,140/-**. **Earnest Money: ₹ 3,06,400/-**. **Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 16:00 hrs. on 03-08-2023.** The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 03-08-2023 in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

Divisional Railway Manager (W), Tinsukia
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E-AUCTION FOR CATERING UNITS AT LUMDING DIVISION

E-Auction for various 'Catering Assets' at A, B, D & E category stations over Lumding Division. **Rate Unit: Annual Licensing Fee, Trips/Days, 1827.**

Auction Catalogue No. CATER-LMG-08-23		
Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Location
AA/1	Catg-LMG-LKA-GMU-2-23-1	Lanka Railway Station
AA/2	Catg-LMG-DMR-GMU-19-23-1	Dharmanagar Railway Station
AA/3	Catg-LMG-NHLG-GMU-12-23-1	New Haffong Railway Station
AA/4	Catg-LMG-DSR-GMU-122-23-1	Dhansiri Railway Station
AA/5	Catg-LMG-KWM-GMU-21-23-1	Kampur Railway Station
AA/6	Catg-LMG-NHLG-GMU-10-23-1	New Haffong Railway Station
AA/7	Catg-LMG-ABSA-GMU-20-23-1	Ambassa Railway Station
AA/8	Catg-LMG-KXJ-GMU-17-23-1	Karimganj Railway Station
AA/9	Catg-LMG-NHLG-GMU-11-23-1	New Haffong Railway Station
AA/10	Catg-LMG-JID-GMU-9-23-1	Jagiroad Railway Station
AB/1	Catg-LMG-CPK-SMU-63-23-1	Chaparmukh Railway Station
AB/2	Catg-LMG-CPK-SMU-66-23-1	Chaparmukh Railway Station
AB/3	Catg-LMG-KWM-SMU-62-23-1	Kampur Railway Station
AB/4	Catg-LMG-BPB-SMU-88-23-1	Badarpur Railway Station
AB/5	Catg-LMG-NHLG-SMU-82-23-1	New Haffong Railway Station
AB/6	Catg-LMG-ABSA-SMU-101-23-1	Ambassa Railway Station
AB/7	Catg-LMG-LMG-SMU-41-23-1	Lumding Railway Station
AB/8	Catg-LMG-AGTL-SMU-39-23-1	Agartala Railway Station
AB/9	Catg-LMG-SZR-SMU-42-23-1	Sarupathar Railway Station
AB/10	Catg-LMG-DMR-SMU-93-23-1	Dharmanagar Railway Station
AB/11	Catg-LMG-DMR-SMU-95-23-1	Dharmanagar Railway Station
AB/12	Catg-LMG-JID-SMU-78-23-1	Jagiroad Railway Station
AB/13	Catg-LMG-JID-SMU-80-23-1	Jagiroad Railway Station
AB/14	Catg-LMG-CPK-SMU-65-23-1	Chaparmukh Railway Station
AB/15	Catg-LMG-LKA-SMU-60-23-1	Lanka Railway Station
AB/16	Catg-LMG-AGTL-SMU-40-23-2	Agartala Railway Station
AB/17	Catg-LMG-JID-SMU-68-23-1	Jagiroad Railway Station
AB/18	Catg-LMG-JID-SMU-75-23-1	Jagiroad Railway Station
AB/19	Catg-LMG-LKA-SMU-59-23-1	Lanka Railway Station

Auction Start Date & Time: 10:00 hrs. of 24-07-2023. Auction Close Date & Time: 15:10 hrs. of 24-07-2023. Prospective bidders are requested to visit E-Auction Leasing Module on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager (C), Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
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DISTRIBUTION IN KEY CONSUMING CENTRES

Centre directs NAFED, NCCF to procure tomato from AP, Karnataka, Maha

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): The Centre on Wednesday directed co-operatives NAFED and NCCF to procure tomatoes from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra for distribution in major consumption centres, where retail prices have recorded maximum increase in the last one month.

The stocks of tomato will be distributed through retail outlets at discounted prices to the consumers in Delhi-NCR region from July 14, the Consumer Affairs Ministry said in a statement. Retail prices of tomatoes have soared up to ₹ 200 per kg in several parts of the country due to supply disruption caused by heavy rains in the country.

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) and National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) will undertake the procurement of tomatoes.

According to the Ministry, the targeted centres for release of tomatoes

have been identified on the basis of absolute increase in retail prices over the past one month in centres where prevailing prices are above the all-India average.

Key consumption centres in states having higher concentration of the identified centres will be further selected for the intervention, it said.

The ministry mentioned that the periods during July-August and October-November are generally the lean production months for tomatoes.

"July coinciding with the monsoon season, adds to challenges related to distribution and increased transit losses adding to price rise," it said.

Currently, the supplies coming to markets in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and some other states are mostly from Maharashtra especially Satara, Narayangaon, and Nashik, which is expected to last till this month-end, it said.

Madanapalle (Chittoor) in Andhra

Assamese scientist Chayan Dutta to oversee launch control operations of Chandrayaan-3 Mission

HT Correspondent

TEZPUR, July 12: In a momentous occasion for both the nation and the scientific community of Assam, Chayan Dutta, a highly accomplished Assamese scientist, has been entrusted with overseeing the launch control operations of the eagerly awaited Chandrayaan-3 mission. As an alumnus of the department of Electronics & Communication Engineering at Tezpur University, scientist Dutta, currently serving as scientist/engineer-G at UR Rao Satellite Centre, department of Space, holds the position of deputy project director for the 'On Board Command Telemetry, Data Handling & Storage System, Lander, Chandrayaan-3'. This subsystem plays a critical role in controlling all spacecraft functions, acting as the 'brains' of the orbiter.

Chandrayaan-3, India's third



lunar mission, is scheduled for launch by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) aboard the Launch Vehicle Mark-III from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on July 14.

Expressing his gratitude and excitement, Scientist Dutta stated, "I am deeply honoured and humbled to have been entrusted with this responsibility. This mission represents a significant milestone for our nation and the global scientific community."

Prof Shambhu Nath Singh, vice chancellor of Tezpur University, extended his best wishes to scientist Dutta and the entire team, saying, "This remarkable development not only demonstrates India's dedication to space exploration but also showcases the exceptional talent and expertise within our country. It is a proud moment for the nation, Assam, and Tezpur University."

ASSAM-MIZORAM BORDER CLASH Commission closes case after Assam govt pays compensation

HT Correspondent

MORIGAOON, July 12: In a gesture of support and condolence, the Assam government has approved ex-gratia payments for the families of deceased police personnel and financial aid for injured personnel of the border clash which happened between Assam Police and Mizoram Police. The families of the deceased will receive ₹ 50 lakh, while ₹ 1 lakh has been allocated for each of the 41 injured personnel.

Notably, in a tragic incident that unfolded on July 26, 2021, a border clash between Assam Police and Mizoram Police resulted in the deaths of six Assam policemen. The incident occurred along the inter-district border of Cachar, Assam, where tensions have been simmering for years.

The clash, which involved gunfire and a subsequent confrontation, took place at the Vairengte Auto Stand in the Cachar district. Assam Police personnel, armed and accompanied by civilians, allegedly crossed the border to take control of the Border Outpost manned by Mizoram Police. The Assam Police claimed the area

was encroaching on a forest reserve, leading to a scuffle with the residents of Vairengte.

According to reports submitted by the inspector general of police (IGP) of Mizoram, tensions along the Assam-Mizoram border have been ongoing since 1994. Incidents of Assam government officials, including Assam Police personnel, crossing over into Mizoram and harassing villagers have been reported. Meetings between the chief ministers of Mizoram and Assam, as well as discussions at the state and central levels, have failed to resolve the border dispute.

The clash on July 26 escalated rapidly, with Assam Police resorting to firing stun grenades and tear gas shells. The Mizoram Police retaliated, leading to a crossfire that lasted for about 45 minutes. Both sides reported injuries, including a head constable and a civilian from Mizoram who sustained bullet wounds.

Following the incident, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) took control of the site, and two additional training companies were deployed. The Ministry of

Home Affairs directed the Assam Police to retreat from the area. A case was registered under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Arms Act.

In response to the incident, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) took up the case after receiving a complaint from Raju Mahanta, a resident of Morigaon Town, Assam. The NHRC also received two more complaints related to the incident. After examining the reports and considering the compensation paid by the Assam government, the Commission closed the case and urged the state government to take preventive measures to avoid such incidents in the future.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, through a letter, highlighted the need for mutual cooperation and understanding between the governments of Assam and Mizoram to resolve inter-state border disputes. The ministry has consistently acted as a facilitator in resolving such issues.

Financial assistance of ₹ 1 lakh for 11 remaining injured police personnel is still pending.

Sur Deul Sangeet Mahavidyalaya Celebrates four decades with special event

HT Correspondent

JAGIROAD, July 12: Sur Deul Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, the prestigious artistic institute of Middle Assam, is celebrating its completion of four decades this year. To mark this significant milestone, a special event featuring a range of cultural programs will be organised on July 22 and 23.

The concluding function on July 23 will be graced by Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria, who will be present as the chief guest. The event aims to showcase the achievements and contributions of Sur Deul Sangeet Mahavidyalaya over the past forty years and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Assam.

A dedicated reception committee has been formed to oversee the arrangements for the event. The committee is led by Kumud Borua as the president, with Dr PC Gogoi, the principal of Sur Deul Mahavidyalaya, serving as the secretary. Manoram Deka and Stuti Prashad Bora have been appointed as joint secretaries.

Chhaygaon College organises alumni meet

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: The department of Political Science at Chhaygaon College organised an alumni meet on Tuesday, bringing together former students to reconnect and celebrate their shared experiences.

The event, held in the college classroom, commenced with the lighting of a ceremonial lamp and an inaugural speech by Dr Naba Kalita, the principal of Chhaygaon College. The alumni were treated to a diverse range of cultural performances by current students, adding a vibrant touch to the gathering.

Distinguished individuals in attendance included Dr Mrinal Kumar Bora, registrar of Srimanta Sankardev University, vice president Kamal Thakuriya, departmental head Dr Phanindra Kalita, vice president Dharmeshwar Rava, and executive member Gagan Kalita, among others. Their presence added prestige to the event and further encouraged alumni engagement. Additionally, a new committee was formed for the alumni association of the department. The committee consists of a nine-member executive team, with Kalpajoti Kalita serving as president and Nabaneel Kalita taking on the role of secretary.

Lack of sports infrastructure in Tinsukia Stadium raises concerns for youth development

HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARIALI, July 12: The younger generation of athletes in Tinsukia district is being hindered in their sporting endeavours due to a lack of sports infrastructure in the local stadium, according to a recent letter addressed to the chief minister of Assam by the National Human Rights and Crime Control Bureau chairman, Nishant Thard. In a statement provided to this newspaper, Mrinmay Kumar Nath, state media officer of the organisation, highlighted the need to address the issue in order to secure a bright future for talented youths in the district.

The letter to the chief minister expressed disappointment over the poor condition of the stadium, particularly the absence of volleyball courts, basketball courts, and a table tennis board. It was also revealed that the players have no access to clean drinking water, with the only water source being a tube well inside the stadium. This situation is concerning, especially when initiatives like the 'Har Ghar Shuddh Pani' under the Jal Jeevan Mission aim to provide clean water to the people.

The inadequate sports infrastructure not only compromises the health and safety of the players but also hampers the development of a conducive sporting environment.

Furthermore, the present condition of the football field was criticised for negatively impacting the overall sports environment in the area. The organisation alleged that this state of affairs reflects the failure of responsible officials involved in sports. They urged the Assam government to allocate funds for the stadium and ensure their proper utilisation by qualified personnel to create a healthy and robust sports environment.

Training program on mechanisation for agriculture held in Nagaon

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, July 12: A two-day training of trainers' program focusing on mechanisation, covering aspects from seed to seed, drying, storage, and processing, was successfully conducted under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Nagaon. The program, which commenced on Tuesday, concluded on Wednesday.

The inaugural address was delivered by Dr Niranjan Deka, principal scientist and head of KVK Nagaon, setting the tone for the training program. Dr Deka highlighted the objectives of the program and highlighted the benefits of utilising machinery in agricultural practices. He emphasised how adopting mechanisation can reduce labour costs and save time, urging farmers to embrace the opportunities offered by modern farm machinery.

The event witnessed the participation of scientists from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), along with the entire KVK fraternity, including the APART team of KVK Nagaon. The training program was attended by over 25 participants representing five Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), three Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs), and progressive farmers from various blocks of Nagaon district.

On the first day of the program, Dr Vivek Kumar, associate scientist, and Dr Hrishikesh Phukan, junior researcher from IRRI, shared valuable insights on quality seed production, Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) techniques, and various machines

utilised for harvesting, threshing, drying, and storage.

The second day of the program featured practical demonstrations of various farm machinery available at KVK Nagaon. Hrishikesh Phukan and Priyanka Deka, project associates from APART, KVK Nagaon, showcased and operated the machinery, including mini combine harvesters, reapers, seed cum fertiliser drills, portable rice mills, dry grinding machines, paddy transplanters, laser land levelers, drum seeders, rice puffing machines, and more. The demonstrations were carried out in the presence of the participants, providing them with firsthand experience and understanding of the machines.

The training program aimed to equip trainers with the knowledge and skills necessary for implementing mechanisation techniques in agriculture. By promoting the use of modern farm machinery, the program seeks to enhance agricultural efficiency and productivity, ultimately benefiting farmers in the Nagaon district and contributing to the overall growth of the agricultural sector.

The successful completion of the training program signifies a step forward in embracing mechanisation as a means to revolutionise agricultural practices in the region. The participants left the program with valuable insights and practical knowledge that will enable them to share their learnings with fellow farmers, thereby promoting the adoption of mechanisation in the farming community.

CM Sarma encourages graduates to contribute to society at Kaziranga University Convocation

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: Chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma addressed the 9th convocation of Kaziranga University in Mohandha, Jorhat district, accentuating the importance of graduates giving back to society. He commended the students on their achievements and urged them to utilise their education for the betterment of the state and the country.

In his convocation speech, Dr Sarma highlighted the significance of the occasion as a recognition of the students' years of hard work and experience. He encouraged them to seize the opportunities their success has opened up and apply their knowledge for the benefit of society.

The chief minister praised Assam Kaziranga University for its focus on research since its establishment in 2012. The university has been actively engaged in research activities in various fields such as renewable energy, nano technology, artificial intelligence, pharmaceuticals, urban waste management, smart agriculture, plasma physics, and more. CM Sarma said that these research initiatives hold great promise for the development of the North East region.

The CM also highlighted India's rich tradition of profound knowledge and scientific inquiry, which has made significant contributions to various fields throughout his



tory. He stated the importance of India's unique approach to life and its integral perspective, which goes beyond politics, philosophy, science, or religion. The chief minister encouraged the graduates to embrace their responsibility in advancing India's intellectual prowess globally.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for the next 25 years leading up to 2047, the CM urged the youth to dream, plan, and believe in themselves to create a roadmap for structural transformation. He spoke about the growing importance of digital transformation and the dominance of technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, quantum computing, nanotechnology, and more. The chief minister urged students to seize the ample scope for work and opportunities

in these areas.

He also expressed his belief that the 21st century belongs to India, as the country has marked a revival at a civilisation level under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. India's strength in military, economic, and cultural power positions it as a major presence on the world stage and a dominant world power in the coming century.

In conclusion, the chief minister urged Assam Kaziranga University to continue focusing on priority areas and encouraged the graduating students to contribute their fullest to the nation's growth. The convocation ceremony saw 665 students receiving their degrees and was attended by university officials, including the chancellor and vice chancellor, as well as the adviser to Education, government of Assam.

LGBIA launches walk-through campaign to promote aircraft safety



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (LGBIA) has initiated a vital walk-through campaign aimed at raising safety awareness and educating individuals about the risks posed by Foreign Object Debris (FOD) and its impact on aircraft operations.

FOD refers to any form of stray object, debris, or material that can pose a threat to airplanes during landing. Even seemingly insignificant items such as nut bolts, tissues, and other small objects can jeopardise the safety of passengers, crew, and aircraft operations.

LGBIA has taken the responsibility of informing and involving all stakeholders, including CISF, air traffic control, ground handling agencies, fuelling

agencies, and the staff at Guwahati Airport. The comprehensive FOD walk-through campaign involves meticulous inspections and debris collection across the airside areas. Trained personnel have conducted thorough walkthroughs around the airport's runways, aprons, and other critical areas of concern. LGBIA is committed to developing and implementing policies that mitigate potential threats to air travel.

Today's walkthrough witnessed significant participation from airport staff, airlines personnel, and other relevant authorities. Passengers, airlines staff, and ground handling personnel are also urged to remain vigilant and report any discovered FODs to the appropriate department. The event took place in the airside apron area, reinforcing the airport's dedication to enhancing safety measures.

Elephant attack claims life of minor girl

HT Correspondent

DONGKAMUKAM, July 12: A heart-breaking incident unfolded in Tumprang Reserve Forest in West Karbi Anglong when a minor girl lost her life in an elephant attack. The incident occurred when a family of four, comprising Suren Terang, his wife Merinda Teronpi, and their two minor children, was traveling along a road that passed through the reserve forest. Suddenly, a wild elephant attacked them around 4 pm, causing injuries to all family members.

While Suren Terang sustained minor injuries and was promptly taken to Dongkamukam Community Health Centre for medical treatment, his wife and children were rushed to HAMM Hospital in Hojai for more extensive care. Tragically, the younger daughter, Rengli Terangpi, was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital. The family, devastated by the incident, received immediate medical attention to address their injuries and emotional trauma.

Authorities and local communities continue to work towards finding a balance between human activities and wildlife conservation to ensure the safety and well-being of both.

Demow residents protest non-payment of land compensation by NHIDCL

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, July 12: The residents of Demow Chariali area in Sivasagar staged a protest in front of the NHIDCL (National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited) office in Jorhat on Wednesday. The demonstration was held to express their discontent over the non-payment of compensation for the land acquired by the central government-owned company for the construction of a four-lane road on National Highway 715 (formerly 37). Carrying placards and raising slogans, the residents of Demow voiced their frustration with NHIDCL for the delay in receiving the compensation owed to them for the land acquisition, which occurred over seven years ago for the highway project.

Many of the protesters highlighted the financial hardships they have endured as a result of relinquishing their land, which included shops that supported their livelihoods. They alleged that despite several years of assurance from the Sivasagar district administration that bills were sent to NHIDCL for payment, the compensation money has not been released. The affected individuals stated that at the time of land acquisition, both the Sivasagar district administration and NHIDCL authorities had promised to provide compensation within a period of three to four months. However, they lamented that the prolonged delay has caused significant difficulties in supporting their families due to the loss of their land and business activities.

NHIDCL officials in the area have requested additional time to address the issue, but the protesters have issued a warning. They have given a one-month ultimatum, stating that if the compensation is not received within this period, hundreds of affected families will stage a protest in front of the NHIDCL office.

Assam-based primatologist presents conservation status of hoolock gibbons at global conference

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: Dr Dilip Chetry, a senior primatologist based in Assam, recently participated in the inaugural meeting of the Global Gibbon Network (GGN) held in Haikou, Hainan, China. This significant international conference focused on the conservation of threatened Gibbons.

As a keynote speaker at the event, Dr Chetry, who leads the Primate Research and Conservation Division in Aaranyak, a renowned conservation organisation in India, presented an overview of the conservation status of hoolock gibbons in India, particularly in North East India, to a gathering of scientists and primatologists from across Asia.

Organised by the Hainan Institute of National Parks and Eco Foundation Global, the conference took place from July 7 to 9 and centered around discussions on the challenges, opportunities, and achievements in



gibbon conservation.

"GGN was established with the vision of safeguarding and conserving a crucial component of Asia's unique natural heritage—the singing Gibbons and their habitats—through the promotion of partici-

patory conservation policies, legislation, and actions. Aaranyak, a research-driven conservation non-profit organisation, is one of the founding partner organisations of GGN, alongside 15 partners from seven countries," stated Dr Chetry.

Gibbons, known as the smallest and fastest of all apes, inhabit tropical and subtropical forests in Southeast Asia. These apes display remarkable intelligence, distinct personalities, and strong family bonds. Unfortunately, the current conservation status of gibbon species is alarming, with all 20 species at high risk of extinction. Since 1900, gibbon populations and distribution have significantly declined, leaving only small populations in tropical rainforests, according to the official website of the Global Gibbon Network.

Hoolock gibbons, a unique primate species, are exclusively found in the seven sister states of North East India. The western hoolock gibbon is categorised as endangered by the IUCN Red List, while the eastern hoolock gibbon is listed as vulnerable. Both species are included in Schedule 1 of the Indian (Wildlife) Protection Act 1972, providing them with legal protection.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Either war is obsolete, or men are.
- R. Buckminster Fuller

TMC victory in WB local polls

The recent West Bengal panchayat polls witnessed Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee once again display her political supremacy and electoral prowess, securing a decisive victory despite a stiff challenge from the opposition. The TMC's success in bagging 73% of the gram panchayat seats, although slightly lower than the 2018 election, reflects the popular sentiment in the state. The BJP, with its promise to dismantle the TMC, failed to make significant inroads. The primary reason for their underwhelming performance is attributed to turncoat Subhendu Adhikari, who led the BJP's campaign but failed to effectively convey the party's message of change and development. Instead, personal animosity between Subhendu and Mamata overshadowed the BJP's agenda, resulting in a resounding "Vote for Mamata" response from the voters. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the hostility of a major section of BJP and RSS leaders and cadres towards Subhendu played a pivotal role in favor of the TMC. While the people expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of TMC cadres, they were opposed to Subhendu being projected as Mamata's successor. Even some BJP and RSS leaders acknowledge that the neglect of Subhendu's activities by Modi and Amit Shah contributed to this outcome.

Furthermore, the results demonstrated a certain degree of disillusionment with Mamata as evidenced by the improved performance of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Congress, and the Islamic Front. While these gains may seem isolated, they underscore the fact that the TMC was unable to replicate its 2021 Assembly poll performance in certain districts such as Murshidabad and Malda, where the Left and Congress made modest gains. Even in the TMC's strong bastion of south Bengal, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) secured a few seats. The emergence of the Indian Secular Front (ISF) as a force in Muslim-dominated areas, particularly in Bhanga, also demands attention. The ISF's success in winning seats with the support of its allies indicates that a section of the population seeks an alternative. While the TMC retained its hold in other minority-dominated districts where viable alternatives were lacking, it cannot afford to be complacent. Amidst the growing perception that the TMC is plagued by corruption and greed, the party's performance in the panchayat polls serves as an admirable achievement and morale booster for its leadership. Abhishek Banerjee, TMC general secretary, played a significant role in energizing party cadres with his "Nobo Jowar" campaign, which focused on the Central government's neglect of Bengal and the support of unproductive elements within the party ranks.

The poll results send a clear message that Mamata Banerjee continues to be a formidable force in West Bengal politics. Despite the grievances against some TMC workers, Mamata's political acumen and ability to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi make her a significant contender. As opposition parties convene in Bengaluru, her strength and determination remain crucial in the face of a formidable opponent. Mamata Banerjee's victory in the West Bengal panchayat polls showcases her resilience and political astuteness. While the TMC's dominance faced some challenges and displayed areas of dissatisfaction, Mamata's ability to rally support and counter the BJP's advances solidified her position as a key political figure. The TMC's performance not only inspires the party cadres but also sets the stage for an intriguing battle in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

NCP split in Maha is a part of wider BJP plan for LS polls

By: Kalyani Shankar

The Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar claims he is neither "tired nor retired" at 82. Undeterred by the recent political crisis in his party, the Grand old man has begun to rebuild his shrinking party after the BJP engineered the division in the NCP. Pawar founded the party in 1999, rebelling against Congress. He is currently facing the very tough challenge of keeping his flock together. Senior Pawar is much older and has health problems. To add to his woes, almost all his loyalists, including his nephew Ajit Pawar, Praful Patel and Chhagan Bhujbal, whom he had groomed for years, have ditched him to join the BJP coalition. The present Sena-BJP government had the numbers and didn't need an NCP faction for survival. The question is why the party lured the NCP rebels when the Shinde government is comfortably placed.

The political drama runs at two levels- one at the regional and the other at the national level. The larger story is not the Maharashtra crisis but its impact on the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and the Opposition unity. With just 9 months before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the electoral future of all parties is at stake. Modi is running for his third term in office.

As for Maharashtra, the elections are due next year. The state accounts for Parliament's second highest Lok Sabha Seats (48), after UP(80). The BJP wants to improve its position. Pawar is a wily politician who has seen many ups and downs in his more than five decades of political life. He has been chief minister four times also, defence minister and agriculture minister at the Centre. The only thing he could not achieve was his ambition to become Prime Minister. He threw his hat in the ring after Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in 1991 but lost the opportunity.

The BJP has hit multiple targets in one go successfully. The party took its "revenge" against Sharad Pawar, for in 2019, Sharad had weaned away the Shiv Sena. He persuaded the Congress and put together a Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition government. As part of the revenge, the BJP split the Sena and installed Sena rebel Eknath Shinde as chief minister last year. Now it was the turn of the NCP to face a split.

Ajit, nursing chief ministerial ambition, will have to work alongside BJP leader Devendra Fadnis, who also holds the same position. Chief Minister Eknath Shinde apprehends that Ajit Pawar might be made the chief minister. Shinde and the other Sena rebels are facing a disqualification case, and the verdict is expected in August.

After the NCP split, the political dynamics in Maharashtra shifted in favour of the BJP. Broadly, Sharad Pawar was weakened, and Congress got an advantage. The BJP looks to consolidate power and regain Maratha and OBC support base before the polls. The party enjoyed the Marathas' strong support while keeping its traditional vote base of OBCs from 2014 to 2019. At the national level, the BJP is yet to recover from the recent defeat in the Karnataka state polls. It depends on the potential for improvement in the other poll-bound states of Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. Congress is ruling in Rajasthan and Chattisgarh, while BJP holds Madhya Pradesh. At another level, the NCP split has sent shock waves to the Opposition camp. It hinders the Opposition's efforts to unite anti-BJP forces ahead of Lok Sabha polls. Sharad Pawar is one of the key players in the unity move.

Recently, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar convened a meeting of non-BJP leaders in Patna, where 16 opposition parties participated. They presented a united front and promised to cooperate to achieve their common objective of defeating the BJP. Another meeting is scheduled for July 17 and 18 at Bengaluru. Bihar could be the next to face instability. The JD(U) had been a long-time BJP ally. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar dumped the BJP last year and formed a government with the RJD, Congress, the Left, and other parties. If enough JD (U) MLAs defect, the BJP could form a government in Bihar, significantly weakening the Opposition unity move. Bihar has 40 seats in Lok Sabha.

West Bengal could be another target as the BJP has tried hard to penetrate, only in vain. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is one of the active members of the proposed non-BJP coalition. BJP has been trying to weaken Mamata in Bengal but so far, the saffron have not succeeded.

The ongoing political uncertainty in Maharashtra may prolong due to legal battles in courts and the Election Commission. The decision of Speaker Narvekar could also be delayed. Despite his numerous challenges, Pawar has proven to be a resilient and formidable figure. Pawar may have lost the battle against his nephew and a conniving BJP, but will he eventually win the war to reclaim his party and reputation? Is the fight over? Of course not. It is a no holds barred, winner takes it all war that would be fought in the 2024 polls. (IPA Service)

From marginalization to empowerment: A vision for equity and prosperity in the Frontier Naga territory

As I gaze upon the unfolding reality of the Frontier Naga Territory, I find myself captivated by the profound potential it holds. In this vast expanse of land, where history and tradition intertwine with the promise of a new dawn, I feel an inexplicable sense of connectedness. It is as if the very fabric of existence whispers its secrets to me, inviting me to delve into the depths of my own intuition and imagination. In this moment, I embrace the role of a visionary, a philosopher, a dreamer and also a role of a 'Realist' and 'Analyst'.

The Frontier Naga Territory, with its diverse landscapes and vibrant cultures, serves as a canvas upon which the future unfolds. I see a future where the wounds of the past are gradually healed, where the marginalized communities that have suffered for far too long rise up, empowered and emboldened. It is a future built upon the pillars of social justice and equity, where the principles of fairness and equality permeate every aspect of society. I envision a society where every individual, regardless of their background or circumstances, is given the opportunity to thrive and contribute meaningfully.

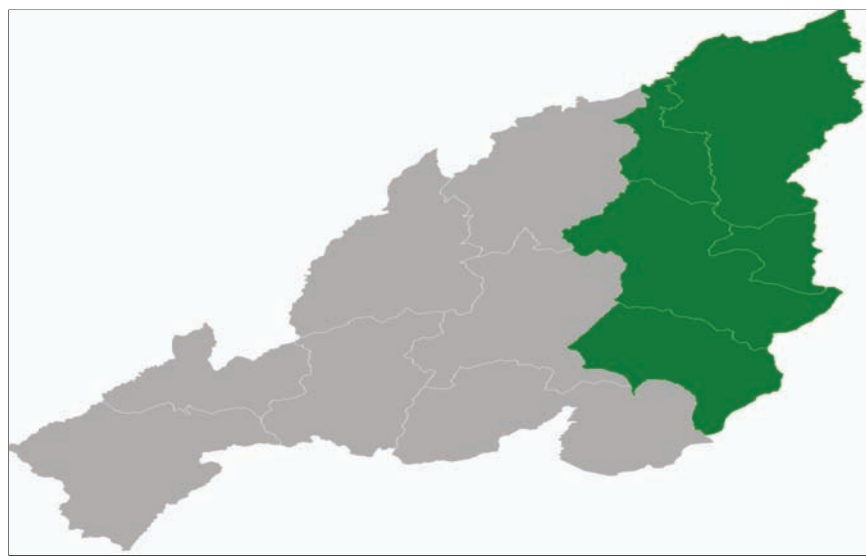
As I peer into the future of the Frontier Naga Territory, I witness the emergence of a model for sustainable development, one that harmonizes with the natural environment rather than exploiting it. It is a future where the abundant resources of the region are harnessed responsibly, guided by a deep respect for Mother Nature. In this vision, eco-friendly practices flourish, renewable energy sources power vibrant communities, and sustainable agriculture nurtures both the land and its inhabitants. The Frontier Naga Territory becomes a shining example to the world, demonstrating that progress need not come at the expense of our planet.

In the tapestry of my imagination, I see a society where education is not merely a privilege, but a fundamental right bestowed upon every individual. The future of the Frontier Naga Territory is one where knowledge flows freely, where educational institutions become fertile grounds for curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. As the youth of the region embrace learning, they become the catalysts for transformation, shaping a future that transcends boundaries and embraces innovation. Through education, they become the architects of a society that cherishes wisdom, embraces diversity, and thrives on the power of collective intelligence.

Yet, as I peer into the depths of this envisioned future, I recognize that its realization is not without challenges. The road ahead is marked by obstacles and uncertainties, requiring resilience, determination, and unwavering belief. It calls upon the leaders of today and tomorrow to rise above personal interests, individualistic nature, and tribal mentality and embrace a vision that encompasses the greater good. It demands a collective effort, where collaboration and cooperation replace division and conflict. The journey to the future of the Frontier Naga Territory is not a solitary one but a shared endeavor, where the dreams of each individual intertwine to weave a tapestry of progress.

In this moment of contemplation and foresight, I am filled with a profound sense of hope. The Frontier Naga Territory stands at the cusp of its destiny, a future awaiting its realization. It beckons us to become the custodians of change, to shape a reality that is inclusive, sustainable, and bright. It is a future that relies on the power of imagination, fueled by the belief that our dreams have the ability to transcend the boundaries of the present and shape the course of history. As I delve into the realm of the possible, I am reminded that the future is not preordained, but a tapestry waiting to be woven, guided by our collective vision, determination, and unwavering faith in the potential of the Frontier Naga Territory- a soon to be born child of 'Mother India'.

The development of an upcoming Frontier Naga territory requires careful consideration of economic models that can effectively stimulate growth and address



the unique challenges faced by the region. In the case of the Frontier Naga Territory, a comprehensive analysis suggests that a hybrid economic model combining elements of both market-oriented capitalism and inclusive development policies to ensure sustainable development, social growth and social justice would be the most suitable approach.

However, it is essential to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed inclusively among all segments of society, considering the unique socio-cultural context of the Frontier Naga Territory. Inclusive development policies should be implemented to address the historical marginalization and socio-economic disparities faced by certain communities within the region. This requires a focus on poverty reduction, social welfare programs, and targeted interventions to uplift marginalized groups.

The Frontier Naga Territory, a region with immense potential for economic development and social progress, requires a carefully designed economic model to drive its growth and ensure social justice. As this territory prepares to emerge as a key player in the global economy, it is essential to adopt an economic model that balances economic growth with equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. In this article, we will analyze the best economic model for the Frontier Naga Territory, taking into account its unique characteristics and the goal of achieving sustainable development, constitutional equity and social justice.

One of the most promising economic models for the Frontier Naga Territory is the inclusive growth model. This model emphasizes broad-based development that benefits all segments of society, particularly marginalized groups and regions. Inclusivity is crucial for the Frontier Naga Territory, which has historically faced socio-economic disparities and imbalances due to apathy exhibited by the state government of Nagaland and its fractured governance. By prioritizing inclusivity, the economic model can address these disparities and ensure that economic growth is not concentrated in a few hands, but rather shared by all-respecting the Constitutional mandate.

To achieve inclusive growth, the economic model for the Frontier Naga Territory should focus on creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and innovation. This involves facilitating access to capital, promoting skills development, and providing business support services. By empowering individuals and communities to participate in economic activities, the model can foster economic diversification and reduce dependency on a few industries or sectors. This approach will help create a more resilient and sustainable economy that can withstand external shocks and promote long-term growth.

Furthermore, the economic model for the Frontier Naga Territory should prioritize investments in infrastructure development. Adequate infrastructure is a prerequisite for economic growth and social development. Improved transportation

networks, reliable energy supply, and modern telecommunications systems are essential for attracting investments, facilitating trade, and connecting remote areas to urban centers. By investing in infrastructure, the economic model can bridge the geographical divide and ensure that all regions within the Frontier Naga Territory have access to opportunities for economic development.

In addition to inclusive growth and infrastructure development, the economic model should also consider environmental sustainability. The Frontier Naga Territory is known for its rich biodiversity and natural resources. Therefore, it is crucial to adopt a model that promotes sustainable practices and ensures the protection of the environment. This can be achieved by integrating environmental considerations into economic decision-making processes, promoting renewable energy sources, and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices. By balancing economic development with environmental conservation, the economic model can ensure long-term prosperity for the Frontier Naga Territory without compromising the well-being of future generations. To implement and monitor the economic model effectively, strong governance and institutions are paramount. The Frontier Naga Territory should focus on strengthening its institutional capacity, improving transparency, and promoting good governance practices. This includes creating an environment conducive to investment, ensuring the rule of law, and combating corruption. By establishing robust institutions, the economic model can provide a level playing field for all stakeholders, protect the rights of individuals and businesses, and build trust among investors.

Furthermore, collaboration and partnerships are essential for the success of the economic model. The Frontier Naga Territory should actively engage with regional and international organizations, private sector entities, expert individuals who have deep knowledge of the region, its culture, traditions, politics as well as core issues and civil society to leverage their expertise, resources, and networks. Collaborative efforts can facilitate knowledge transfer, attract investments, and provide technical assistance in areas such as infrastructure development, capacity building, and market access. By fostering partnerships, the economic model can tap into external resources and expertise while promoting a sense of shared responsibility for the region's development.

In conclusion, the development of the Frontier Naga Territory necessitates a robust and technically sound economic model that not only prioritizes economic growth but also upholds the principles of social justice, equity, and a brighter future for all its inhabitants. The proposed hybrid economic model, combining market-oriented capitalism with inclusive development policies, provides a comprehensive framework to address the unique challenges faced by the region and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. By emphasizing social justice, the eco-

nomic model aims to rectify historical marginalization and socio-economic disparities within the Frontier Naga Territory. The implementation of inclusive development policies becomes imperative in order to uplift marginalized communities and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed equitably. This entails targeted interventions, poverty reduction programs, and social welfare initiatives that empower vulnerable groups and promote inclusivity. By addressing the root causes of inequality, the economic model lays the foundation for a society that thrives on fairness and equal opportunities.

Equity is a fundamental aspect of the economic model for the Frontier Naga Territory. Recognizing the diverse needs and aspirations of different communities within the region, the model seeks to provide equal access to resources, opportunities, and services. The development of infrastructure, including transportation networks, electricity, and basic amenities, is crucial to bridge existing gaps and ensure that all inhabitants can participate fully in the economic growth process. Additionally, investments in education and skills development play a pivotal role in creating a level playing field, equipping individuals with the necessary tools to contribute meaningfully to the economy and participate in decision-making processes.

A bright future for the Frontier Naga Territory is contingent upon the sustainable development practices integrated into the economic model. As the region boasts rich biodiversity and natural resources, it is essential to safeguard the environment for future generations. Sustainable agriculture practices, renewable energy sources, and eco-tourism/adventure-tourism initiatives can foster economic growth while preserving the natural heritage of the territory. This forward-thinking approach ensures that economic development remains compatible with environmental conservation, setting the stage for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Moreover, the economic model's success hinges upon effective governance and institutional frameworks. Transparent and accountable governance mechanisms create an enabling environment for businesses, investors, and the public alike, instilling confidence in the economic system. Efficient regulatory systems and well-functioning institutions ensure that the economic model remains adaptable to changing circumstances and fosters an environment of innovation and entrepreneurship. By promoting good governance, the model builds the necessary foundations for long-term growth and stability.

The economic model's potential for success is further amplified through collaboration with international organizations and neighboring regions. Engaging in regional trade agreements, sharing best practices, and accessing technical expertise and financial resources from international partners can accelerate the development process and promote regional integration. The Frontier Naga Territory can leverage these collaborations to enhance its connectivity, expand market opportunities, and attract investments that contribute to the realization of its economic potential.

Finally, the development of the Frontier Naga Territory demands an economic model that encapsulates the principles of social justice, equity, and a brighter future. The hybrid approach combining market-oriented capitalism and inclusive development policies offers a comprehensive framework to address the region's unique challenges. By focusing on social justice, equity, sustainable practices, and effective governance, the economic model ensures that the benefits of growth are shared by all, regardless of their background or circumstances. With a commitment to inclusivity and sustainability, the Frontier Naga Territory can unlock its full potential, ushering in an era of prosperity, opportunity, and a future that is bright and promising for all its inhabitants. (The author is an academician in the Dept of Political Science, Teiso College, Nagaland)

Forging new paths: Unleashing Northeast India's potential through enhanced connectivity

By: Dipak Kurmi

The Northeast region of India, despite its abundant natural resources, has long been hampered by limited connectivity and inadequate infrastructure. Trade barriers, congested roads, and delayed border clearances have hindered economic growth and development in the region. However, recent initiatives and projects aim to address these challenges and unlock the tremendous potential of Northeast India. By improving transport integration, infrastructure, and trade facilitation, the region can benefit from enhanced connectivity, reduced costs, increased competitiveness, and greater economic opportunities. One such transformative step is the implementation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) between Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, which holds significant promise for the Northeast.

Enhancing Connectivity: The

Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA)

The MVA, signed in 2015, aims to facilitate unrestricted cross-border movement of cargo, passenger, and personal vehicles between Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. If implemented, it will substantially reduce transport costs and distances for the Northeast region. Currently, trucks loaded with limestone and crushed stone destined for Bangladesh must travel a lengthy route due to restrictions on plying each other's roads. Allowing trucks to transit through Bangladesh would reduce the distance by almost 65% and transport costs by 68%. For instance, the journey from Agartala to Kolkata would be reduced from 1,600 km to just 450 km via road through Bangladesh. Furthermore, direct access to the Chattogram port in Bangladesh would shorten the journey to a mere 200 km.

Economic impact and real income gains: Shorter journeys and lower transport costs will have sig-

nificant economic effects, including increased competition, production, and lower consumer prices. As per a World Bank report, the implementation of the MVA would result in an average wage increase of 4.5% to 11% for Indian states bordering Bangladesh and a 24% wage increase for Bangladeshi states. Northeastern states like Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura would benefit the most in terms of real income gains. Additionally, states like West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra would witness positive impacts, leading to higher wages and improved trade opportunities.

Trade expansion and value chains:

The Northeast region possesses immense potential for trade expansion, particularly in sectors like agriculture. Initiatives like the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project, supported by the World Bank, have aided the development of value chains and

the growth of small and medium entrepreneurs. By leveraging improved connectivity, Northeastern states can tap into larger markets within India, neighboring countries like Bangladesh, and even Southeast Asia. The region's unique cultural heritage, sustainable practices, and pristine natural beauty also position it as a hub for eco and wellness tourism, further enhancing economic growth.

Tapping into the Northeast's potential:

Despite its vast resources and cultural richness, the Northeast contributes only 2.8% to India's GDP, highlighting the untapped potential of the region. Projects supported by the World Bank, such as the construction of the Integrated Check Post (ICP) in Dawki and initiatives to expand railway connectivity and tap inland waterways, are underway. These endeavors aim to improve border trade and travel, facilitating integrated development in the sub region.

The Northeast region of India is on the cusp of a transformative journey towards greater development and economic growth. The implementation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement, along with improved connectivity and infrastructure, holds the key to unlocking the region's immense potential. Through reduced transport costs, increased competitiveness, and enhanced trade opportunities, the Northeast can experience a substantial boost to its economy. Moreover, the preservation of cultural heritage, sustainable practices, and the promotion of eco-tourism can further augment the region's growth trajectory. As projects like the Dawki ICP progress and initiatives to expand connectivity gain momentum, the wheels are in motion to unleash the true potential of Northeast India and pave the way for lasting prosperity. (The writer is a journalist and commentator based in Guwahati, can be reached at dipaknewsline@gmail.com)

Why climate change is making it harder to forecast the monsoon accurately



By: Vaishnavi Rathore

In April, the India Meteorological Department made two important forecasts for the upcoming monsoon. One, that El Niño conditions – the unusual warming of ocean surface water that can cause reduced rainfall – were likely to develop during the monsoon. Two, despite these conditions, the monsoon will be “normal”, with the south peninsula expecting normal to above normal amounts of rain, and north-west India expecting normal or below normal rainfall.

However, by the end of June, the situation on the ground looked very different from these forecasts. The geographical distribution of rainfall was the opposite of what had been forecast: north-west India saw 42% excess rainfall in June, while the southern peninsula experienced 45% below normal rainfall, along with a 6% deficiency in central India, and an 18% deficiency in east and north-east India.

The April forecast of the IMD followed the template of long-range forecasting, which can be done as many as two years in advance. For the monsoon – a crucial season during which India gets 70% of its annual rainfall – the IMD issues forecasts up to three months in advance. Predicting rainfall between June to September, it presents a general trend of expected monsoonal conditions. But closer to the onset of the monsoon, smaller variations can mould how the monsoon acts, which is what happened this year. The long-range forecast went awry because of the formation of Cyclone Biparjoy in the Arabian Sea.

As the cyclone intensified in the Arabian Sea

in early June, it took with it the moisture that could have strengthened the monsoon. As a result, the monsoon could not develop over Mumbai on June 11, its usual arrival date in the city.

By the time the cyclone dissipated on June 19, its remnants hovered around as a low-pressure system over Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. To fill this depression, monsoon winds rushed in from the Bay of Bengal arm of the monsoon, advancing the rains in Delhi. The result was a once-in-a-six-decade coincidence when Delhi and Mumbai welcomed the monsoon on the same day.

Scientists attribute the cyclone’s unusual duration to climate change. “It lasted for a very long time of almost ten days because the Arabian Sea was warming since January,” said Raghu Murtugudde, an earth scientist and professor at University of Maryland.

Weather events like Biparjoy, channelled by climate change, have been on the rise. These are interacting with the monsoon, leading to more unpredictability and making it harder to produce accurate long-term forecasts.

“This is why you will see that all scientists agree that the El Niño is coming, but [they] do not necessarily agree on the impact of it on the monsoon,” Murtugudde said.

Anjal Prakash, clinical associate professor (research) and research director of the Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business, said, “Traditional monsoon patterns have been thrown off by climate change, which has led to changes in temperature, air moisture, and wind patterns.”

These changes have made it challenging to precisely forecast monsoon patterns over a few

months, said Prakash, who is also an author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. “This can make it more difficult to respond to and mitigate these catastrophes.”

Short-term variations
Rising ocean temperatures have a direct impact on the monsoon pattern.

As ocean temperatures rise, a lower pressure over their surface is created. To fill this low pressure, winds rush over. For normal monsoon conditions to prevail, the flow of the wind is opposite – the landmass heats up to create a low pressure, which then pulls monsoon winds over from the oceans.

But with the oceans warming, the winds – which should have fed the monsoon over land – end up feeding the spaces over oceans, and might cause favourable conditions for cyclones.

However, other than the likelihood and potential of how these temperatures may spin off into cyclones, long-term forecasting cannot predict the intensity of such events and their capability to shape the upcoming monsoon.

This is exactly what happened this monsoon. Murtugudde explained that just as the monsoon trough, which is the low pressure area that attracts monsoon clouds, reached the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on time on May 15, within days, its growth paused since Cyclone Mawar started developing in the Pacific Ocean. As the strong cyclone developed, it pulled winds from the Bay of Bengal into the South China Sea to feed the cyclone.

Then, as Cyclone Mawar slowly weakened, the prevailing monsoon conditions, albeit weak, acted as the spark for Biparjoy to form. “Cyclones need some type of connective activity to initiate,” Murtugudde said. “Think of this as seeds. The beginning of the monsoon became one such seed that formed into Biparjoy.”

As it developed, it shaped the monsoon pattern. “Cyclones in the Arabian Sea rotate anticlockwise. Depending on where its location is, cyclones can pull the monsoon trough,” Murtugudde said. This can lead to the monsoon arriving early.

However, in the case of Biparjoy, while it was developing in the Arabian sea, it first moved further westward from India’s landmass, before turning towards Gujarat to make the landfall. In feeding itself away from the landmass, it took up the available moisture that could have instead strengthened the monsoon.

“It was this rather unique combination of cyclones and monsoon that the rains were delayed this year,” he added. Apart from the duration of Biparjoy, Murtugudde also attributed Cyclone Mawar’s intensity to climate change, a direct consequence of rising ocean temperatures.

Cyclones such as Biparjoy might be on the rise with the ocean heating, further challenging accurate monsoon forecasting in the future. A 2022 study showed that between 1982 and 2018, the instances of marine heatwaves – extreme oceanic warm water events – have increased in the Indian Ocean. At the rate of 1.2

to 1.4 events per decade, the western Indian Ocean saw the largest increase, compared to the Bay of Bengal.

Dr DS Pai, Head of the Environment Monitoring And Research Center at the IMD, New Delhi, explained why the frequency and intensity of rain events have increased recently: “Now, because of certain drivers of climate change like increased ocean temperatures, there is a lot of moisture in the atmosphere, which then leads to precipitation in large quantities.”

Pai said that the IMD’s skill of forecasting rainfall distribution and rainfall intensity has improved in recent years significantly. “But, it is still challenging to forecast rainfall amounts accurately as there is a lot of randomness and short-term variations in the atmosphere,” said Pai.

Such inaccuracies, Prakash explained, can risk underestimating the geographical spatial extent and intensity of severe occurrences, like heavy rainfall days.

Murtugudde offers a helpful metaphor to understand the role of short-term variabilities in climate that impact the monsoon, especially in cases of extreme weather events.

“Think of India as a popcorn kettle,” he said. In the kettle, the heating happens uniformly, but some kernels of corn will pop randomly. Similarly, Murtugudde explained that whether at the city or country level, at a large scale, the temperature experienced is usually the same. But rainfall is often “spotty”.

Now, the conditions that cause extreme rain, for example, are also changing in intensity and frequency. “Those are difficult to forecast in the long term,” said Murtugudde.

Current fluctuations

It is not just the short-term variations that are impacting the monsoon and the ability of forecasters to predict the patterns. Even longer-term seasonal shifting is now being detected.

Some of these shifts have been mentioned in a May 2023 report, co-authored by researchers from government institutions including the Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru, the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi, and the Ministry of Earth Sciences. In the report titled “India’s Climate Research Agenda: 2030 and beyond”, the researchers found that in recent years, there has been significant rainfall in the first half of October as well, which goes beyond the traditional season of monsoon between June to September.

The study goes on to highlight the need to fill this gap in research to understand how the monsoon may be changing between decades.

For a long time, India used statistical models where the current monsoon was being predicted based on previous years’ correlations between global trends like that of El Niño and rainfall. But with seasonal shifting occurring along with outlying extremes like cyclones, the previous averages and historical data might not accurately reflect the current climatic fluctuations. “The time and length of the monsoon season

have changed due to disturbed conventional monsoon patterns caused by shifting climatic trends,” said Prakash. “Forecasting models must take current climate fluctuations and trends into account to effectively handle this task. This may be accomplished by merging current data, observations, and climate change forecasts.”

The IMD has been using climate projection models that Prakash refers to. These are complex models that simulate the atmosphere, ocean temperature and ice among other factors for the entire planet, or even smaller geographical regions. Such models help analyse climatic changes over decades to understand how human activity is impacting the Earth.

“The models that we now use allow us to input factors that are changing over a long period of time, like humidity, or ocean temperatures,” said Pai. “This is where the role of scientists comes in, for them to be aware of what changes are happening, and analyse what is driving climate change, and deciding which variables should be input in the system. It becomes a challenge if we do not know how climate change is impacting the weather.”

Since 2012, the National Monsoon Mission of the ministry of earth sciences, which aimed to develop a state-of-the-art dynamical prediction system for the monsoon, has been using a suite of new, high-resolution models to predict rainfall at different time scales from nowcasts – forecasts for under 24 hours – to as much as two months in advance. They are also able to access more sophisticated models used by other countries and there-by generate multi-model ensemble forecasts.

Murtugudde added that this data can also be made more coherent with what he calls “earth system feedbacks”.

He explained this with an example of the Western Ghats, where, during the rains, the vegetation absorbs a lot of water. During dry days, the vegetation releases water. Through this natural system, about 30% of the rain in Tamil Nadu depends upon the moisture released in the Western Ghats, Murtugudde said. “Feedbacks like these are not included in the forecast models, and going forward, these will have to be eventually built in the models,” for accurate regional forecasting, he said.

For better and accurate cyclone forecasting, Murtugudde pointed out that major buoys, like Rama, co-managed by India and other countries, need to function well. Since the Covid-19 lockdown, the buoy has not been serviced since ships could not travel, and crucial information like that of ocean temperatures and humidity has not been collected.

“There are many different players affecting the monsoon, like El Niño, or arctic warming, the ocean temperatures,” said Murtugudde, adding that the long-term variations of these need to be constantly monitored. “But, in the end, the monsoon has its own mind as well.” (Courtesy: Scroll.in)

Drop in air pollution in India during 2020 nationwide lockdown slowed snow melting in Himalayas, finds study

By: Zumbish

A decrease in air pollution in India during the Covid-19 pandemic slowed the melting of snow in the Himalayas, according to a new study.

As business came to a halt, particulate pollution reduced and, as a result, more than 27 million tonnes of snow and ice were saved from melting compared to 2019, the report published in the journal PNAS Nexus showed.

The researchers used satellite data to track the impact on snowmelt during the two-month nationwide lockdown in India in the spring of 2020.

The study assessed that changes in Himalayan RFSLAPs (influence of human activities on radiative forcing on snow) is linked to Indian lockdown. Differences between the RFSLAPs in 2020 and the average from 2017-2019 over the Tibetan Plateau was calculated.

The differences during the lockdown period (from April to May) and differences during the pre-lockdown period (from January to March) were kept in consideration.

As an important emitter of light absorbing particles (LAP), human activity largely controls the variation of LAP concentrations in ice and snow, the report noted. “Dust aerosols from the Indian Peninsula have been reported to have a strong physical connection with the darkening of snow and ice on the Tibetan Plateau.”

Assessing RFSLAPs is essential for providing valuable guidance for effective mitigation strategies. However, LAP variations reflect a complex mixture of anthropogenic emissions and natural environmental factors and are very sensitive to meteorological conditions, the researchers wrote in the report.

For example, changes in winds can affect LAP transport and deposition, and temperature and snowfall are closely related to the accumulation of LAPs in the snow, the scientists explained.

How did the impact take place? The Covid-19 pandemic has created a unique natural experiment for revealing and answering the long-standing question of how reductions in human activities can affect air pollution.

To cope with the Covid-19 pandemic, the Indian government implemented a national lockdown from March 25-May 31, 2020. This led to an unprecedented reduction in economic and transportation activities and pollution levels.

Aerosol optical depth values dropped

sharply and air quality improved across the country. LAP concentrations over the Indus Basin have also decreased greatly. Such a reduction in LAPs over India might have meant a substantial drop in pollution transported to the Tibetan Plateau.

This study provides evidence that reductions in anthropogenic emissions are helpful to decrease snow and glacial melt. It also offers evidence that the reduction in transboundary LAPs has a remarkable beneficial effect on the reduction of the Himalayan snow and ice melt. It provides an opportunity for targeted emission mitigation to constrain the timing and magnitude of future glacier retreat.

Mineral dust transported from the Thar Desert by westerly winds deeply influences RFSLAPs and the rate of ice and snow melting in the western and central Himalayas.

Thus, reduction in deforestation and over-exploitation of the Indus River Basin may help improve the ecological environments around the Thar Desert, and further decrease mineral dust transport to melt ice and snow on the Tibetan Plateau.

Furthermore, continued use of fossil fuels in the future would increase ice and snow melt by increasing the LAPs, in addition to leading to sustained global warming.

With rising temperatures, ice and snow over the Himalayas have been melting at an accelerating, alarming rate in recent decades, the researchers wrote. “At the current pace of warming, up to 70 per cent of Himalayan glaciers could be lost this century.”

Reducing particulate pollution in South Asia, they said, could help preserve what snow and ice remain.

Overall, these results suggest that the anomalies in Tibetan Plateau RFSLAPs were tied to absorbing aerosol optical depth (AAOD) over the Indian Peninsula. “Notably, India is a major emitter of anthropogenic LAPs over the Indian Peninsula, but the reduction in AAOD and RFSLAPs during the lockdown cannot be entirely explained by a decrease in human activities in India as the meteorological conditions and the nonanthropogenic LAPs coming from multiple countries are also important factors for the changes in AAOD and RFSLAPs.”

Over a billion people in South Asia depend on the steady melt of snow and ice in the Himalayas through the spring and summer for fresh water. But particulate pollution from cars, trucks, factories and power plants in South Asia disperse over the mountain range, disrupting this process.

Soot darkens snow and ice, causing it to absorb more of the sun’s energy and melt faster. Experts on air pollution in India provided further explanation in the wake of the study observations.

“It is known that black carbon falls onto snow and ice and changes the overall reflectivity of those surfaces, making them melt faster. Therefore, any reduction in its concentration through augmenting clean fuel supply, better combustion system and overall air pollution control measures is bound to help,” said Vivek Chattopadhyay, senior programme manager, Clean Air Programme, Centre for Science and Environment.

However, at the same time, scientists need to highlight the effects of both overall impacts of rising temperatures due to global warming as well as localised effects of black carbon to emphasise the fact that air quality improvement and greenhouse gas emissions reduction must become a two pronged strategy, he added. Also, black carbon reduction measures will have positive health benefits on populations too, according to the expert. “Lockdown was perhaps a once-in-a-century opportunity to observe what clean skies look like and, therefore, its positive messages should continue to drive us towards continuing clean air measures which can have many benefits.” (Courtesy: Down To Earth)



Why ‘climate change’ is a threat to a happy life

By: Md Zamir Hasan

These days there is a lot of talk about climate change.

Why it shouldn’t be. It is our matter of life and death. There has been a gradual change in our climate over the past few centuries. Now the question is what is climate change? Climate change means that what has been the average weather for hundreds of years over countries and large regions is now changing.

For example, in India, we have three major seasons namely winter, summer, and rain, and four seasons. Similarly, Europe has four seasons in a year – spring, summer, autumn, and winter. These seasons have their own time and their special characteristics. But in the last few decades, we have seen that the rainfall pattern is changing, the summer season is getting longer and the winter season is getting shorter. And most importantly, it is happening all over the world simultaneously. We know all these events by the name of climate change.

Why is climate change happening?

There are two ways of climate change. Natural activities and Man-made activities. Natural activities include the following reasons. Continental drift, Tilt of the earth, Ocean waves. Changes from the natural activities are negligible. Most of the climate change is happening due to human activities. For example, urbanization, industrialization, deforestation, use of chemical fertilizers. All these things are continuously causing climate change. People exploit natural resources to make their progress and advance lifestyle. Coal is a major resource in this. People have been using coal for centuries to meet their energy needs. Coal provides 35% to 40% of the energy required by humans. Carbon is released by burning coal, this carbon is the main reason for the increase in the temperature of the earth. Earth receives some energy from the sun and sends some energy back to the solar system, carbon and some other gases together do not allow that heat to escape from the Earth. Due to this, the temperature of the earth is increasing.

Effects of climate change

Climate change is a threat to the whole world and it is threatening the existence of mankind, the life of human beings has started getting disturbed. This climate change will have the following effects on human life.

1. Continuous rise in sea level:- Glaciers are melting due to climate change. Whose water is reaching the sea through rivers, due to which the sea level is rising. Due to the rise in the sea level, the coastal parts of the countries will be submerged, and the organisms living there will have to move to other places. According to an estimate, if the sea level rises by one meter, it will render 7.5 million people in India and 35 percent of Bangladesh homeless. The land will be submerged.

2. Risk of Natural Disasters:- Increase in the occurrence of extreme events due to climate change will have the biggest impact on humans. Events like cyclones, landslides etc. will affect human life.

3. Higher than normal increase in temperature:- During climate change the temperature of the earth is increasing more than normal. Which is having adverse effect on human life and physical environment. Due to the increase in temperature above normal on the earth, the snow frozen on the peaks of the mountains of the world has started melting continuously. It is adversely affecting the crops of many countries. There has been an imbalance in seasonal changes. Due to which humans and animals and birds are getting badly affected.

This clearly shows that we humans are continuously harming the environment in the name of progress. Deforestation should be stopped for industrialization, urbanization etc. This should be our first priority as a human being. It can play an important role in preventing climate change. So that in future climate change does not become a hindrance in our happy prosperous life. (Courtesy: Youth Ki Awaaz)

Nepal Prime Minister Prachanda's wife Sita passes away



KATHMANDU, July 12 (PTI): Sita Dahal, wife of Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', died on Wednesday after suffering from a rare neurological condition. She was 69.

Sita, who had been ill for a long time, was undergoing treatment at Norvic International Hospital in Kathmandu, where the doctors confirmed her death at 8:33 am, according to Prime Minister's press coordinator Surya Kiran Sharma.

Sita, who was also an adviser to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), was suffering from Progressive Supranuclear Palsy along with Parkinsonism, Diabetes Mellitus-II and Hypertension for a long time.

Progressive supranuclear palsy is a rare neurological condition that can cause problems with balance, movement, vision, speech and swallowing.

She was rushed to the hospital on Wednesday morning following complications in her health condition.

According to Prime Minister Prachanda's personal physician Professor Dr Yuvraj Sharma, Sita suffered cardiac arrest at 8 am on Wednesday.

"Despite resuscitation, she could not be revived and [was] declared dead at 8:33 am," read a statement signed by Sharma. Sita had undergone treatment in India in 2021. She also received treatment at the Baltimore-based Johns Hopkins Hospital in the United States of America in 2020 and prior to that she was also taken to Singapore for treatment in June 2018.

Sita's body was kept at the party central office in Paris Danda, Koteshwar from 11 am to 1 pm to pay the final tributes. According to the prime minister's secretariat, the funeral rites will be held at Pashupati Aryaghat.

Prime Minister Prachanda and Sita had three daughters and one son. Their eldest daughter Gyanu Dahal and son Prakash Dahal have already passed away. She is survived by Prime Minister Prachanda and two daughters, Renu and Ganga. Renu Dahal is currently serving as Mayor of Bharatpur Metropolitan City.

Tributes poured in from various quarters on Wednesday on the death of Sita. Leaders of political parties and diplomats paid their tributes to the wife of Prime Minister Prachanda. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish at the death of Prachanda's wife.

"Extremely saddened to learn about the demise of Mrs. Sita Dahal. I express my sincere condolences to @cmprachanda and pray that the departed soul finds eternal peace. Om Shanti," Modi tweeted. Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel has said that he is deeply saddened by the news.

President Paudel telephoned Prime Minister Dahal on Wednesday to express his grief and also expressed his deep condolences, wishing that God would give strength to the bereaved family including the Prime Minister.

Leader of the main opposition party and CPN-UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli reached Norvic Hospital in Thapathali to express his condolences to the family along with Prime Minister Dahal.

"I am deeply saddened by the news of the death of Sita Dahal, the life partner of honourable Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Paying heartfelt tributes to the late Sita Dahal, I express my deepest condolences to the bereaved family including Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal," Oli tweeted. Nepal Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba paid tributes to Sita and expressed condolences to the prime minister.

Similarly, the Rashtriya Swatantra Party issued a statement and expressed grief over the demise of Sita. Heads of various diplomatic missions also expressed their condolences on the passing of Sita.

Thai diplomat meets with Suu Kyi in detention in Myanmar

JAKARTA, July 12 (AP): Thailand's top diplomat said on Wednesday that he met with ousted Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi in detention over the weekend and she conveyed her openness to engage in talks to resolve the crisis gripping her strife-torn nation.

Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai is the only government official outside of Myanmar known so far to have met with Suu Kyi since she was detained with other officials when the army seized power from her elected government on Feb. 1, 2021. He told his counterparts in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, who are meeting in Indonesia's capital, that Suu Kyi was in good health when he met with her for more than an hour on Sunday. "She encourages dialogue," Don told reporters in Jakarta when asked what message Suu Kyi conveyed to him. "Obviously we're trying to find a way to settle with Myanmar."

The military takeover and the crackdown on the armed resistance to it plunged the country into deadly

chaos. Western and European governments, including the United States, have imposed sanctions on Myanmar's military government and demanded the immediate release of Suu Kyi and other political detainees.

Nay Phone Latt, a spokesperson for the National Unity Government — Myanmar's main opposition organization, which views itself as the country's legitimate government — told The Associated Press that the information about the meeting between the Thai foreign minister and Suu Kyi raised questions, and Myanmar's people are uncertain that it actually took place. He added that the military junta's attempt to try to use the influence of Suu Kyi at this time is indirectly admitting that they are no longer in a good situation concerning the country's political crisis.

Suu Kyi, 78, is serving a total of 33 years imprisonment after being convicted on a raft of charges that her supporters and rights groups say were politically motivated in an attempt to discredit her and legitimize the military's takeover while preventing her from returning to politics.



Symbols of support for Ukraine are common around Vilnius, where the country's blue-and-yellow flags hang from buildings and are pasted inside windows

NATO prepared to back Ukraine in its fight against Russia

VILNIUS (LITHUANIA), July 12 (AP): NATO leaders gathered on Wednesday to launch a highly symbolic new forum for ties with Ukraine, after committing to provide the country with more military assistance for fighting Russia but only vague assurances of future membership.

US President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts will sit down with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in the new NATO-Ukraine Council, a permanent body where the 31 allies and Ukraine can hold consultations and call for meetings in emergency situations.

The setting is part of NATO's effort to bring Ukraine as close as possible to the military alliance without actually joining it.

On Tuesday, the leaders said in their communique summarising the summit's conclusions that Ukraine can join "when allies agree and conditions are met."

The ambiguous outcome reflects the challenges of reaching consensus among the alliance's current members while the war continues, and has left Zelenskyy disap-

pointed even as he expressed appreciation for military hardware being promised by Group of Seven industrial nations.

Zelenskyy said on Wednesday that he's pushing to ensure Ukraine "will have this invitation when security measures will allow."

"We want to be on the same page with everybody," he told reporters at the summit.

Ukraine's future membership was the most divisive and emotionally charged issue at this year's summit.

"We have to stay outside of this war but be able to support Ukraine. We managed that very delicate balancing act for the last 17 months. It's to the benefit of everyone that we maintain that balancing act," Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said Wednesday.

Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins, whose country lies on NATO's eastern flank and has a long, troubled history with Russia, said he would have preferred more for Ukraine.

"There will always be a difference of flavor of how fast you would want to go," he said.



However, Karins added, "at the end of it, what everyone gets, including Ukraine, and what Moscow sees is we are all very united." Although Zelenskyy was attending the final day of the summit in Vilnius, he has been sharply critical of what he described as NATO's "unprecedented and absurd" reluctance to set a timeline for his country's acceptance into the alliance.

In essence, Western countries

are willing to keep sending weapons to help Ukraine do the job that NATO was designed to do — hold the line against a Russian invasion — but not allow Ukraine to join its ranks and benefit from its security during the war.

Zelenskyy said in a Tuesday speech in a town square in Vilnius that he had faith in NATO, but that he would "like this faith to become confidence, confidence in the decisions that we deserve, all of us,

every soldier, every citizen, every mother, every child."

"Is that too much to ask?" he added.

Amanda Sloat, senior director of European affairs for the U.S. National Security Council, defended the summit's decisions.

"I would agree that the communique is unprecedented, but I see that in a positive way," she told reporters on Wednesday.

Sloat noted that Ukraine will not need to submit a "membership action plan" as it seeks to join NATO, although she said "there are still governance and security sector reforms that are going to be required."

The action plan is a key step in the process that involves advice and assistance for countries seeking to join.

Symbols of support for Ukraine are common around Vilnius, where the country's blue-and-yellow flags hang from buildings and are pasted inside windows.

One sign cursed Russian President Vladimir Putin. Another urged NATO leaders to "hurry up" their assistance for Ukraine.

N Korea fires its first ICBM in 3 months after making threat over alleged US spy flights

SEOUL, July 12 (AP): North Korea fired its first intercontinental ballistic missile in three months on Wednesday, two days after it threatened "shocking" consequences to protest what it called provocative U.S. reconnaissance activity near its territory.

Some experts say North Korea likely launched its developmental, road-mobile Hwasong-18 ICBM, a type of solid-fuel weapon that is harder to detect and intercept than its liquid-fuel ICBMs. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un previously called the Hwasong-18 his most powerful nuclear weapon.

The missile fired from North Korea's capital region around 10 a.m. flew about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) at a maximum altitude of 6,000 kilometers (3,730 miles) before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, according to South Korean and Japanese assessments. They said the missile was launched on a high angle, in an apparent attempt to avoid neighboring countries.

South Korea's military called the launch "a grave provocation" and urged North Korea to refrain from



additional launches. Chief Japanese Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno denounced North Korea's repeated missile launches as "threats to the peace and safety of Japan, the region and international society."

In a trilateral phone call, the chief nuclear envoys of South Korea, Japan and the U.S. agreed to sternly deal with North Korean provocations and boost their coordination to promote a stronger in-

ternational response to the North's nuclear and missile programs, according to Seoul's Foreign Ministry.

The launch came while South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida are attending the NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania. In an emergency meeting of South Korea's security council convened by video in Lithuania, Yoon warned North Korea would

face more powerful international sanctions due to its illicit weapons programs.

North Korea's ICBM program targets the mainland U.S., while its shorter-range missiles are designed to hit South Korea and Japan, both key American allies in northeast Asia.

Since 2017, North Korea has performed a slew of ICBM tests, but some experts say the North still has some technologies to master to possess functioning nuclear-armed missiles capable of reaching major U.S. cities.

The North's most recent previous ICBM test was the first launch of the Hwasong-18 in April. After that launch, Kim said the missile would enhance the North's counterattack capabilities and ordered the expansion of his country's nuclear arsenal to "constantly strike extreme uneasiness and horror" in its rivals.

Missiles with built-in solid propellants would be easier to move and hide, making it difficult for opponents to detect their launches in advance. All of North Korea's previous ICBM tests used liquid fuel.

Former Sri Lanka Prez Sirisena pays ₹ 15 mn in compensation to victims

COLOMBO, July 12 (PTI): Ahead of a deadline set by Sri Lanka's Supreme Court, former President Maithripala Sirisena has paid the first instalment of 15 million Sri Lankan Rupees as compensation to the victims of the Easter terror attacks in 2019, according to media reports on Wednesday.

In January, Sirisena, 71, was ordered by the apex court to pay SL₹ 100 million as compensation to the victims for his negligence in preventing one of the country's worst terror strikes despite having credible information of an imminent attack. Sirisena was Sri Lanka's President and Defence Minister at the time of the attacks when nine suicide bombers belonging to the local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jamaat (NTJ) linked to ISIS carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three Catholic churches and three luxury hotels on April 21, 2019, killing nearly 270 people, including 11 Indians, and injuring over 500.

The court ordered Sirisena to pay a compensation of SL₹ 100 million, former police chief Pujith Jayasun-

dara and former state intelligence services chief Nilantha Jayawardene to pay a compensation of SL₹ 75 million each, former defence secretary Hemasiri Fernando to pay a compensation of SL₹ 50 million.

Ahead of the July 12 July set by the Supreme Court, Sirisena paid SL₹ 15 million as compensation on June 28 and filed a motion requesting that he be allowed to pay the remaining sum in 10 instalments of SL₹ 8.5 million from June 30, 2024, to June 20, 2033, Colombo Gazette news portal reported. In a motion filed through his lawyers, the former President explained that he receives a pension of SL₹ 97,500 as the former President, alongside a sum of SL₹ 54,285 for his services as a Member of Parliament, thus, he requested that he be granted more time to pay the remainder of the ordered sum of SL₹ 100 million, adaderana.lk reported.

Accordingly, it has been reported that former defence secretary Fernando, former police chief Jayasundara and Sisira Mendis have paid SL₹ 1 million, SL₹ 1,725,588 and SL₹ 5 million thus far, respectively, it added.

Easter terror attacks 2019

More than 62,000 people fled to Ethiopia, more than 16,700 to the Central African Republic & around 3,000 to Libya Raging conflict in Sudan displaces over 3.1 million people, UN says

CAIRO, July 12 (AP): A raging conflict in Sudan has driven more than 3.1 million people from their homes, including over 700,000 who fled to neighbouring countries, the United Nations said on Wednesday, amid growing concerns that the country is sliding into a "full-scale civil war." Sudan has plunged into chaos since mid-April when monthslong tensions between the military and its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere across the northeastern African nation.

The conflict derailed Sudanese hopes of restoring the country's fragile transition to democracy, which had begun after a popular uprising forced the military's removal of longtime dictator Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. A coup, led by the military and RSF, disrupted the democratic transition in October 2021.

More than 2.4 million people have fled their homes to safer areas inside the country, according to the International Organization for Migration. Around 738,000 others crossed into neighbouring countries, the agency said.

Egypt is hosting the largest number of



those who fled — more than 255,500 people — followed by Chad with over 238,000 and South Sudan with around 160,800, the IOM said. More than 62,000 people fled to Ethiopia, more than 16,700 to the Central African Republic and

around 3,000 to Libya, it added. More than 72% of those displaced were from Khartoum and around 9% from West Darfur province, both places where the clashes have largely centered, the IOM said. The IOM said 65% of those who fled

into neighbouring countries were Sudanese nationals and the rest were foreigners and refugees who were forced to return to their home countries.

The conflict has turned Khartoum and other urban areas into battlefields. Members of the paramilitary force have occupied people's houses and other civilian properties since the conflict broke out, according to residents and activists. There have also been reports of widespread destruction and looting across Khartoum and Omdurman.

The clashes have killed more than 3,000 people and wounded over 6,000 others, Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim said in televised comments last month. The casualty tally is likely much higher, according to doctors and activists.

International and regional efforts have so far failed to establish a negotiated cease-fire and allow humanitarian agencies to provide support to civilians still trapped in the conflict. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned over the weekend that the country was on the brink of a "full-scale civil war."

Earlier this week, a regional meeting floated the idea of deploying troops to

Sudan to protect civilians. The Quartet Group, which met Monday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, called for a summit of the Eastern Africa Standby Force, a 10-member regional bloc, to consider the proposal.

The Quartet Group is a sub-committee of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, an eight-member East African bloc. It is headed by Kenya's President William Ruto, who called for an unconditional ceasefire in Sudan and the establishment of a humanitarian zone to help deliver humanitarian aid.

Sudan's military delegate, who was in Addis Ababa, didn't attend Monday's meeting, accusing Ruto of "impartiality." The Sudanese government has accused the Kenyan government of siding with the paramilitary force in the conflict.

Sudan's government, which is controlled by the military, denounced the proposal to deploy troops. It said in a statement on Tuesday that any foreign forces in Sudanese territory would be considered as "aggressors."

The statement also decried comments by Ethiopia's prime minister who called for imposing a no-fly zone over Sudan.

10 family members killed in house fire in Pakistan

LAHORE, July 12 (PTI): As many as 10 members of a family, including six children, were burnt to death on Wednesday after a massive fire broke out in a house here, rescue officials said. The incident took place in Lahore's Bhati Gate area in the early hours of the day when a refrigerator's compressor exploded, the Geo News channel reported. The house had no ventilation to let the smoke out, the rescue officials said. Ten members of a family — a man, his wife, two other women, five children and a seven-month-old infant — were killed in the blaze, while a single family member managed to escape the fire by jumping off the building, they said. The rescue team said the cooling process of the burnt building was underway. Interim Chief Minister of Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi, ordered a comprehensive investigation into the incident, the report said.

Two police personnel escape from attack in Manipur



IMPHAL, July 12 (NNN): Two personnel of the Manipur police commandos escaped an attack by suspected militants in the border town of Moreh that is severely affected by the ongoing violence, according to police.

The incident happened in broad-daylight, around 9.30 am on Wednesday when the two police commandos in civvies posted in the border town went out to buy medicines from a pharmacy.

Upon seeing them, the suspected armed militants asked them to stop. But, they left the place sensing danger to their lives hurriedly.

Then, the suspected militants opened some gunshots toward them. They did not suffer any injury in the firing but one of them sustained minor injuries on his head after he banked on a parked auto-rickshaw while escaping from the attackers, the police added.

Thirteen institutions in Shillong declared no-honking zone

SHILLONG, July 12 (NNN): Areas, where as many as 13 institutions are located in Shillong, have been declared as no-honking zones.

Informing this on Wednesday, Meghalaya tourism minister Paul Lyngdoh said, "I am happy that with the cooperation of the Transport department, we have been succeeded in notifying certain areas as no honking zones which will include major hospitals, high court, Raj Bhavan, CM's Bungalow, the main secretariat and additional secretariat. Altogether, a list of 13 institutions has been declared as 'no honking zones'."

He also informed that the process is on to pedestrianise the Khyndailad area.

"I had conducted an inspection to Khyndailad for the pedestrianisation from the entry point of Khyndailad up to the exit point which is Umsohsun and as you go down and Jailroad as you go to the right. The process is on. Now we are working in tandem with the SMB and spots have been identified for relocation of street vendors but this might take about couple of months more," Lyngdoh said while adding that once this is finalised the department will then be in a position to declare and give effect to pedestrianised Khyndailad.

Manipur MLAs to meet Amit Shah for peace in state

IMPHAL, July 12 (NNN): A group of 31 MLAs of Manipur unanimously resolved to urge union home minister Amit Shah to reach a conclusive resolution that will bring lasting peace in the state, an official report said on Wednesday.

The MLAs resolved to propose the union home minister to replace the 9th Assam Rifles, the 22nd Assam Rifles, and the 37th Assam Rifles with other central security forces that are more inclined towards promoting the unity of the state. They further said that there are concerns regarding the roles played by certain units of the Assam Rifles, "which currently pose a threat to the cause of unity within the state", the report also said.

The representation to the union home minister also mentioned that a comprehensive investigation must be conducted into the "public display of firearms and ammunition" during the Peace March held on July 5, 2023 in Churachandpur. "It raises significant questions regarding the source of these arms and ammunition, as well as their continuous availability which play a crucial role in this violence", and the MLAs expressed their concern for the need to address this issue and prevent further replenishment of these illegal weapons.



The MLAs also resolved to urge the

union home minister to take stronger and effective actions against armed insurgent/cross border armed insurgent

groups operating in the state in order to restore peace and normalcy. The MLAs also reiterated their commitment to initiating decisive measures against these armed groups that have violated the established ground rules of engagement. It is inconceivable for any conflict to persist for such an extended period without the support of such armed factions, the report added.

The MLAs also affirmed that violence in peripheral areas must be halted. "The central security forces must adopt a more proactive approach to ensure lasting peace in the region, which has been elusive over the past two months. Once all forms of violence and aggression cease in these areas, we can work towards achieving a peaceful solution through extensive consultations with all stakeholders involved," they stated.

The MLAs also resolved to tell the home minister that enhanced security measures, such as increased highway patrolling along the NH2 are required to facilitate the safe transportation of goods for the people of the state. The completion of the border fencing along the Manipur section of the Indo-Myanmar border should be expedited, the report further added.

M'laya minister's home attacked, 1 arrested

SHILLONG, July 12 (PTI): A man was arrested after he allegedly threw stones at the residence of Meghalaya minister Ampareen Lyngdoh on Tuesday evening, police said.

The incident happened around 7.30 pm, superintendent of police of East Khasi Hills Sylvester Nongtynger said.

The man, identified as Teibor Lyting -- a resident of Malki, is being interrogated to know if he acted alone or with a group, and also to find the motive of the attack, the officer said.

According to the minister's family, they heard noises of glass shattering.

"The attacker pelted stones twice following which we alerted the police," a family member said.

The incident happened days after the nearby police station at Laitumkhrah was attacked, and four vehicles parked on its campus were torched. The incident happened after a drunken brawl inside the police station escalated.

Dimapur-Kohima NH not constructed properly, says Rio

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, July 12: In what appeared to be an indictment of National Highway Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL) for the July 4 rockslide incident at Chimumkedima, chief minister Neiphiu Rio lamented that the construction of Dimapur-Kohima 4-lane national highway was not done properly.

Rio said this while interacting with media persons on the sideline of the inaugural programme of the First Summer Badminton Coaching Camp at Kuda village here Tuesday. He termed such incidents as unfortunate as there has been some "slackness" in four-lane road construction work.

Rio said that the state government had been telling NHIDCL right from the beginning from the technical and administrative angles but the firm did not take heed. He pointed out that earlier there had been such incidents along the stretch within 'Pagla Pahar' especially with regard to the danger due to vertical cutting of the cliffs.

According to Rio, there may have been some slackness with regard to earth cutting on cliffs. He said there should have been 'step cutting' (bench cutting) instead of vertical cutting of cliffs to prevent rockslides. He said use of dynamites to blast rocks only caused cracks on the hill, which made the entire range shake and rainfall only loosened the soil, leading to rock falls.

Asked whether the Dimapur-Kohima route would be closed till July 21, Rio said he had spoken with deputy chief minister TR



Zeliang and the chief secretary, and highlighted sufferings of the public. He mentioned that he had asked them to immediately find out alternative measures.

Asked why the Nuland-Zhadima road was not prioritised, Rio said National Highway was handled by the Union Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH). He said though the road was pliable, yet it was not economically viable since it was not feasible for heavy vehicles to ply on it. With regard to construction of alternative roads, he said the State did not have the desired fund.

Landslide kills man in Sikkim

GANGTOK, July 12 (PTI): A 40-year-old man was killed in a landslide in North Sikkim on Wednesday, police said.

The landslide triggered by heavy rains took place Lingya village under Sakyong Pentong Gram Panchayat Unit (GPU), they added. The body has been recovered and handed over to his family after post-mortem, they said.

Proposal to exempt Meghalaya from UCC comes to fore

SHILLONG, July 12 (NNN): Advocate Erwin K Syiem Sutnga has urged the Law Commission to recommend an exemption for Meghalaya from the application of the proposed Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

In a letter to the chairman and members of the 22nd Law Commission of India on Tuesday, Sutnga said, "Under the premises stated above I request that any proposal to the government of India for enactment of a Uniform Civil Code should also recommend an exception to the state of Meghalaya to exempt the application of the proposed Uniform Civil Code to the tribal areas of the state in the body of the draft bill itself."

He also referred to two judgments of the Supreme Court in Regional Provident Fund Commissioner v. Shillong City Bus Syndicate, (1996) 8 SCC 741 (748): AIR 1996 SCC SC 1546:1996 AIR SCW 1641 and in J. Thansiam v. State of Mizoram, (2015) 9 Sc ALE 618, Parliament cannot make laws on the subjects enumerated in Para 3 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

These include: the appointment or succession of chiefs (known in Meghalaya as Syiems, Lyngdoh and Sirdar) or Headmen (known in Meghalaya as Rangbah Shnong, Sordar or Waheh Chnong), the inheritance of property; mission, marriage and divorce and social customs.

"This implies that no law made by Parliament relating to the tribal areas of the State of Meghalaya can infringe on the law making powers of the Autonomous District Councils in Para 3 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. For all practical purposes the proposed Uniform Civil Code is already ipso facto ousted from Meghalaya by virtue of these constitutional provisions and the interpretation of the Supreme Court of India," Sutnga stated.

KARBI ANGLONG AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR OF SERICULTURE, DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG

No.Addl.DSDE.213/2013-2014/53,

Dated Diphu the 10th July, 2023.

ADVERTISEMENT

In pursuance of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Diphu approval vide letter No.KAAC/Esstt.610/P(8)/Prior Approval of post/Seri./2022-23/48, dtd. 05/06/2023 applications in prescribed Standard Forms with all testimonials and KAAC Cash Receipt of Rs. 10/- in case of ST/SC and Rs.20/- for General Category are invited from eligible candidates who are citizen of India as defined in the Article 5 & 8 of Constitution of India for filling up of the following vacant sanctioned Grade-III (Sericulture Demonstrator) post in the Scale of **Pay Band- 14000-70000 + Grade Pay of Rs. 6200/- and Grade-IV (Peon & Chowkidar) post in the Scale of Pay Band-12000-52000 + Grade Pay of Rs. 3900 Plus** other allowances as admissible under rule as per Slate Govt. norms RoP, 2017 in Sericulture Department, Karbi Anglong, Diphu as per details given below:

Sl. No.	Name & No. of Post	Educational Qualification	Last date of receipt of application	Verification of documents & Time	Venue
1	Sericulture Demonstrator (7 Nos.)	HSSLC (Science) passed with 1 (One) Year Certificate Training Course from Sericulture Training Institute, Titabor, Jorhat	21-07-2023	28-07-2023 from 10AM to 12 Noon	RESHOM BHAWAN Sericulture Complex, Diphu
2	Peon (3 Nos.) Chowkidar (6 Nos.)	Peon-Class X Passed Chowkidar - Class VIII Passed			

Terms & Conditions:

- The candidates must be a permanent resident of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council areas comprising of Karbi Anglong & West Karbi Anglong district.
- Age of the candidate must not be less than 21 years and more than 43 years as on 01.01.2023. Relaxation of upper age limit for the reserved category will be as per Govt. Rules in force.
- The last date of receipt of applications is on 21-07-2023 (during office hour). No applications will be accepted/entertained after the last date.
- Incomplete and late received applications shall be summarily rejected by the undersigned without assigning any reason thereof.
- Copies of all testimonials regarding Qualification, Age, Caste, Employment Exchange Registration Card etc. along with 2 copies of recent colored Passport size photograph duly signed by the candidate should be submitted along with Standard Form.
- The envelope containing the application should be superscribed as "Application for the Post of Sericulture Demonstrator" for Sericulture Demonstrator and "Application for the post of Peon or Chowkidar for Peon and Chowkidar and to be submitted by self only.
- Reservation of posts will be as per prescribed Govt. Rules.
- The Date & Venue of interview will be announced later through local daily News Papers, Notice board of KAAC, Diphu, & Additional Director of Sericulture, Diphu.
- No TA/DA will be provided for attending the written test.
- Canvassing directly or indirectly by any means will be treated as a disqualification to the candidature of concerned candidate.
- The competent authority reserves all the rights to enhance or reduce the posts and also cancel/postpone the interview at any time without assigning any reason thereof and intimation to the candidate.

Sd/-

i/c Additional Director of Sericulture,
Karbi Anglong, Diphu

No: SMED/DMC&H/TENDER/2019-20/023/

NOTICE INVITATION FOR BIDS

Sealed tender affixing Court Fee Stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Eight rupees & twenty five paise only) and IPO of Rs. 10 for bidder of outside Assam are invited from the experienced manufacturer/firms/parties/supplier/dealer/distributor for supply and installation of furniture item at Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu, 782460.

Prospective Bidders may submit tender document with specification as stated to the office of the Principal cum Chief Superintendent, Diphu Medical College and Hospital, Diphu, 782460 during office hours from 13th July 2023 to 2nd Aug. 2023 against non refundable payment of Rs. 3000 (Three thousand) through DD drawn in favour of Principal cum Chief Superintendent, Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu, payable at Bank of India, Diphu Branch. Tender will be received by the office of undersigned on 2nd Aug. 2023 till 1.00 PM and will be opened on the same day at 2:00 PM.

Tender document can be downloaded through the DMC&H website: www.dmcassam.in from 13th July 2023 by 1:00 PM.

Janasanyog /C/6739/23

Sd/-
i/c, Principal cum Chief Superintendent
Diphu Medical College & Hospital, Diphu

No.SSUHS/316/2023/Ex/6753

EDUCATIONAL NOTICE

(Eligibility criteria for admission into D.Pharm and B.Pharm courses in the Institutes of Assam including Private Institutes)

In continuation of SSUHS Notice regarding eligibility for admission into D.Pharm and B.Pharm courses in Assam in both Govt. and Private Institutes vide No.Janasanyog/D/3501/23 dated 25/05/2023, the University is pleased to notify the minimum eligibility criteria/ cut off score in the Entrance Examination for admission into D.Pharm and B.Pharm courses for academic session 2023-24.

Category	Minimum Percentile	Minimum Marks in CEE 2023 for D.Pharm	Minimum Marks in CEE 2023 for B.Pharm
General (UR/EWS)	50 th Percentile	38 (thirty eight)	40 (forty)
SC/ST/OBC	40 th Percentile	35 (thirty five)	37 (thirty seven)
Divyang/ PWD	45 th Percentile	37 (thirty seven)	38 (thirty eight)

The authorities of institutes running D.Pharm/ B.Pharm courses are requested to admit only those students who fulfil the above minimum eligibility criteria and other criteria as laid down by Pharmacy Council of India in this regard. The Pharmacy Institutes shall submit list of students admitted in academic session 2023-24 to SSUHS along with authenticated copies of score card of CEE-2023 and HS (Science) Marksheet on or before 10th November, 2023. The SSUHS will only issue University Registration to the students who fulfil all the above criteria.

Janasanyog /D/6651/23

Sd/-
Registrar
Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health
Sciences

TMC poised to sweep nearly 35,000 gram panchayat seats Cong loathes a confident, self-reliant India: BJP

Murder of democracy in West Bengal under the TMC govt: CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury

KOLKATA, July 12 (PTI): The ruling Trinamool Congress on Wednesday was poised to sweep Bengal's violence-scarred rural polls, as the count of ballots gave it an unassailable lead in results declared till now by the State Election Commission.

The TMC has won 34,901 gram panchayat seats, besides leading in 613 seats, according to the SEC as of 4.30pm on Wednesday. In all elections are being held for 63,229 gram panchayat seats.

The ruling party's nearest rival BJP has won 9,719 seats and is leading in 151 seats. The CPI(M) has won 2,938 and is leading in 67 seats. The Congress won 2,542 seats and is leading in 66.

The ruling TMC won 6,430 panchayat samiti seats while leading 193 seats. BJP has won 982 and is leading in 53 seats, while CPI(M) has won 176 seats and is leading in 14 others and Congress has won in 266 seats and is leading in 6 seats. Elections were held for 9,728 panchayat samiti seats.

TMC has also won 674 zila parishad seats so far and is leading in 149 others, with this it seems set to repeat its 2018 performance of controlling all the zila parishads, despite marginally better showing by the BJP and CPI(M)-Congress alliance in some districts.

The BJP has in contrast won 21 and is leading in 5 seats. The CPI(M) has won 2 seats, while Congress has won 6 and is leading



BENGAL PANCHAYAT POLLS

in 5. In all, there are 928 zila parishad seats.

In Bhargore in South 24 Parganas, three persons including two activists of the Indian Secular Front (ISF) were killed and several others injured in a clash which took place outside a counting booth late Tuesday night, police said on Wednesday.

A 24-year-old Congress worker was beaten to death while several others were injured allegedly by TMC workers in Rampur village in Malda district, police said.

It is claimed that after winning the gram panchayat election in the locality, TMC workers were bursting fire crackers in front of the Congress worker's house leading to a clash.

The elections are being seen by

dents since the announcement of elections mount to 36, with the ruling party suffering nearly 60 per cent of the deaths.

Allegations of vote tampering and violence by various parties forced the SEC to order re-polling in 696 seats on Monday, which passed more or less peacefully. Intervention by the Calcutta High Court had seen the deployment of central police forces on both election and counting days. Though Bengal has a long history of violent rural polls with 40 people killed in one single day of polling during the 2003 panchayat elections, this year's violence which was covered extensively by the media focused national attention on it.

Governor CV Ananda Bose who had rushed to Delhi to give a report on the violence told newspersons Tuesday "Political parties should realise elections are not grounds to examine one's physical strength".

"Now, after the verdict of the people, Governor Bose should resign and get out of Bengal. He has acted as agent of BJP, provoked opposition by unethical ways, insulted Bengal. He has no right to continue as Governor," tweeted TMC leader Kunal Ghosh. State Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the election has already been reduced to a farce.

"According to our apprehension, in violence, nexus between the ruling party, police, and the state election commission and unprecedented vi-

olence has led to the death of more than 40 persons. After the counting, post-poll violence will be unleashed," he said.

"Murder of democracy in West Bengal under the TMC govt. Over 60 dead & 100s injured in the local body elections. Strongly condemn. Strengthen popular resistance to save democracy in Bengal & in India," tweeted CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury.

BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad who arrived on Wednesday here leading a fact-finding team, said, "Violence and killings during rural polls are unacceptable. So many people have been killed; why have so many people had to die in this election? We will visit the violence-hit areas of north and south Bengal. Later, we will submit our report to our national president JP Nadda". Counting of votes for the three-tier panchayat polls to nearly 74,000 seats which besides the gram panchayat seats, also includes 9,730 panchayat samiti seats and 928 zila parishad seats, began at 8 am on Tuesday largely peacefully amid tight security, officials said. Vote counting is on at 339 venues spread across 22 districts and is likely to carry over to Wednesday.

The maximum number of counting centres is in South 24 Parganas at 28, while the minimum is in Kalimpong at four. Some northern districts are also facing inclement weather.



NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI):

The BJP on Wednesday hit out at the Congress over its jibe on Foxconn's withdrawal from a semiconductor joint venture with Indian conglomerate Vedanta, saying the opposition party "loathes" a confident and self-reliant India.

BJP IT department head Amit Malviya said the "split" between the two companies will not affect India's semiconductor programme and alleged that the Congress is "celebrating" as it actively attempts to scuttle any new initiative India takes and wants India's ambitious foray into semiconductor manufacturing to be delayed.

The ruling party's reaction came after the Congress tweeted: "Whether Gujarat Model or 'New India' never trust the manufactured headlines", following the Taiwanese electronics manufacturer on Monday announcing withdrawal from the \$ 19.5 billion semiconductor joint venture with mining baron Anil Agarwal's Vedanta Ltd.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh had said on Twitter, "Remember the publicity at the time of announcing the project? The Gujarat CM even claimed 1 lakh jobs will be created! This has been the fate of many MOUs signed in Vibrant Gujarat summits year after year, and will be the fate in other such copycat summits like Global Investor Summits in UP".

However, Malviya said the development does not mean Vedanta and Foxconn are moving away from their commitment to participate in India's semiconductor mission. In fact, both Foxconn and Vedanta have independently declared their commitment to India's semiconductor program, he added.

"Foxconn has announced that they are preparing to apply for silicon fab and display fab. Similarly, Vedanta has also committed to reapply with new partners," Malviya said. Besides, other "major semiconductor companies" are "seriously" evaluating India as a semiconductor design and manufacturing hub, he added. "This is bad news for the Congress, which actively attempts to scuttle any new initiative India takes. It is now worried that India's rise as a semiconductor manufacturing hub will further consolidate its position in the world as a credible player in the technology domain," the BJP leader charged. "The Congress loathes a confident and self-reliant India," he added.

Leaders of 24 parties invited, Sonia to attend

Opposition meet in Bengaluru



NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): The opposition grouping to take on the BJP in the next Lok Sabha polls is set to expand with more parties joining in at the second unity meeting being convened by the Congress next week in Bengaluru. Leaders of 14 non-BJP parties have been invited for the meet on June 17 and 18, the first edition of which saw the participation of 15 parties. Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi is also expected to attend a dinner meeting on July 17 where leaders of these parties will be present.

There will be a more structured formal meeting the next day, where the opposition front would further strategise its plans to take on the BJP in the next Lok Sabha polls.

Sources said the MDMK, KDMK, VCK, RSP, Forward Bloc, IUML, Kerala Congress (Joseph) and Kerala Congress (Mani) are among the political parties that will join the second opposition meeting. A senior opposition leader said he has received the invite from the Congress president to attend the dinner meeting followed by a formal meeting the next day.

The 24 opposition parties have together around 150 Lok Sabha members currently and are seeking to expand their base.

Opposition parties are likely to deliberate on a broad plan for their unity efforts, where they intend to put up one common candidate against the BJP across the country, sources said. The first such meeting of opposition parties was held

in Bihar's Patna on June 23. Sixteen parties were invited for the meeting of which 15 had attended. RLD's Jayant Chaudhary could not attend due to a family function.

The Aam Aadmi Party has also been invited for the Bengaluru meeting. The Kejriwal-led outfit had asked the Congress to make its stand clear on the Delhi ordinance before the next meeting.

The AAP had said that if the Congress did not publicly support it on the Ordinance issue, it would not attend the next meeting.

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar had said on Monday, "A meeting of leaders of all opposition parties (in the country) will be held on July 17 and 18, as already announced. All the leaders are going to come. (M) Mallikarjun Kharge (AICC President) has requested Sonia Gandhi to participate in this meeting. We have got a message that she will be participating in this meeting."

While announcing the dates of the opposition meeting, Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal had said, "We are steadfast in our unwavering resolve to defeat the fascist and undemocratic forces". "After a hugely successful all-opposition meeting in Patna, we will be holding the next meeting in Bengaluru on 17 and 18 July, 2023. We are steadfast in our unwavering resolve to defeat the fascist and undemocratic forces and present a bold vision to take the country forward," Venugopal had said.

Cal HC says Bengal panchayat poll results will be subject to its final orders

KOLKATA, July 12 (PTI): The Calcutta High Court on Wednesday said that the panchayat elections in West Bengal and the declaration of results will be subject to its final orders in connection with matters which it is hearing over allegations of electoral malpractices on the day of polling.

The court directed the State Election Commission (SEC), the state government and the central government to file affidavits dealing with all the allegations made in three petitions alleging malpractices.

"When the court is seized of the matter, it goes without saying that whatever has been done thus far, i.e., the conduct of the elections and the declaration of results, will be subject to the ultimate orders that may be passed in this writ petition," he said.

The court directed that the SEC should inform this aspect to all the candidates who have been declared elected.

Alleging large-scale violence and electoral malpractice during the panchayat election on July 8, the petitioners prayed for a direction to the SEC to conduct repolling in around 50,000 booths.

Repolling was done in 696 booths and count-



ing of ballots began on July 11.

One petitioner who displayed videos showing alleged rampant malpractices on the day of the election was directed to furnish a copy of the videos to the lawyers of the SEC, the state and the central governments by Wednesday.

The court directed that the matter will be taken up for hearing on July 19.

Taking a dim view of the SEC, the bench said it is of prima facie view that the response from the Commission is not adequate and that even on Wednesday, none of its officers was present

in the court to give necessary instructions to its counsel. "It is not clear why the commission is not proactive especially when the court had been monitoring the entire process and the first judgement was delivered on June 13," the court said. The court had passed a series of orders for the conduct of the three-tier rural elections in West Bengal in a free and fair manner.

The court said that it is surprised to note that even after the declaration of results, the state is not able to control the violence which has erupted in several places.

"The responsibility to ensure that there is no breach of peace lies with the state government. If the state government is not in a position to safeguard its citizens, then it is a very serious matter to be taken note of," the court said.

The petitioner also sought direction to the CBI to register an FIR and conduct investigation into the violence and electoral malpractice and a forensic audit of the video footage of the polling booths and a forensic audit of the ballot papers by an independent agency.

It was also prayed that the state government be directed to forward a report to the central government on the bomb blasts on the day of the election.

AIADMK chief EPS slams Stalin

CHENNAI, July 12 (PTI):

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami on Wednesday slammed Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin for assuming the role of a 'judge' and referring to his party leaders as if they were 'convicts' while the cases were yet to be even heard. Palaniswami said Stalin's recent letter to President Droupadi Murmu against state Governor R N Ravi spewed venom against his party leaders while the CM made claims on 'unnecessary delay' by the Raj Bhavan to provide sanction to prosecute AIADMK leaders. EPS accused Stalin of indulging in crafty politics by directing his 'servile' Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) to file 'false' cases against AIADMK leaders, M R Vijayabhaskar and K C Veeramani, both former ministers. "We have faith in judiciary," he said in a statement and underlined the 'foisted' cases have not even come up for hearing in court. While this was the fact, Stalin had dubbed the accused as convicts in that letter, Palaniswami said.

Muslim World League secretary-general hails PM's 'passionate perspective' on inclusive growth

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): A day after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Muslim World League Secretary-General Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa on Wednesday hailed his "passionate perspective" towards inclusive growth and said they agreed on the importance of working together to confront all aspects of extremism and hatred, regardless of their source.

Al-Issa, who is on an India visit, met Modi on Tuesday and discussed furthering inter-faith dialogue, countering extremist ideologies, promoting global peace, and deepening partnership between India and Saudi Arabia.

In a tweet on Wednesday, Al-Issa said he had an insightful discussion with the Indian Prime Minister on a variety of issues, including ways to further human-centric development and the importance of promoting understanding and harmony among the followers of faith and culture. "I appreciate His Excellency's passionate perspective towards inclusive growth," the Muslim World League (MWL) secretary-general said.

There was also agreement on the importance of working together on confronting all aspects of extremism and hatred, regardless of their source and reason, as peace and prosperity in our diverse world can only be achieved with aware and comprehensive citizen-

ship, he said. "Also, I elaborated upon the details of this important meeting in my lecture at the India Islamic Cultural Centre, which was delivered after the meeting with His Excellency the PM; it was attended by senior scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim, along with thinkers and politicians-coming from different states of India-who valued and appreciated the lecture," Al-Issa said.

Tagging a tweet by Al-Issa on their meeting, Modi said, "Pleased to have met H.E. Sheikh @MhmdAlissa, Secretary General of @MWLOrg and Chairman of the Organisation of Muslim Scholars. We had a great exchange of views on furthering inter-faith dialogue, countering extremist ideologies, promoting global peace, and deepening partnership between India and Saudi Arabia."

Earlier, in a tweet, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had said, "PM @narendramodi met H.E. Sheikh @MhmdAlissa, Secretary General of Muslim World League @MWLOrg and Chairman of the Organisation of Muslim Scholars. They had insightful discussions on various aspects of furthering inter-faith harmony, peace and working towards human progress." MWL is an international NGO headquartered in Mecca, with members from all Islamic countries and sects.

CrPC section 144 imposed in Delhi's flood-prone areas



NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): The Delhi Police imposed prohibitory measures under CrPC section 144 in flood-prone areas of the city on Wednesday as the Yamuna river swelled to 207.55 metres, breaching its record of 207.49 metres set in 1978.

The CrPC's section 144 prevents unlawful assembly of four or more persons and public movement in groups.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority issued an advisory asking people to move to safer places and cautioning them against passing through low-lying areas.

As the flood situation persisted in the Yamuna river, people should stay away from power lines and reach out to the helpline 1077 in case of any need, it said.

Delhi Cabinet Minister Atishi is visiting relief camps to take stock of the flood situation and the preventive measures taken. She said the Delhi government is strengthening river embankments and evacuating people out of the flood-plains.

According to officials, Garhi Mandu village near the Signature Bridge in Wazirabad has been submerged. A majority of the people have been taken to safety and the rest are being rescued using boats, they said.

According to the Central Water Commission's flood-monitoring portal, the Yamuna's water level at the Old Railway Bridge crossed the 207-metre mark at 4 am on Wednesday, the first time since 2013. It rose to 207.55 metres by 1 pm.

The water level is likely to rise further, an official of the irrigation and flood control department said.

Global members underline the importance of fostering creative economy

G20 culture working group meet in Hampi concludes

HAMPI (KARNATAKA), July 12 (PTI): The third Culture Working Group meeting under India's G20 presidency, which ended on Wednesday, focussed on the promotion of cultural and creative industries, and on reaching a consensus on the recommendations deliberated in the previous two meetings, officials said.

The working group meetings held here in the last two days of the summit focussed on key priorities aimed at protecting cultural heritage and fostering a creative economy.

The delegates from G20 member countries, guest countries, and international organisations actively participated in discussions and showcased the importance of cultural diversity and collaboration, officials said.

During the meeting, artisans from Hampi's nomadic Lambanis created history by setting a Guinness World Record

for producing the highest number of embroidery patches.

Around 450 Lambani artisans showcased their skills and craftsmanship, weaving together over 1,755 unique patches, highlighting the creative economy of Karnataka and India.

The artisans expressed their joy and hope that this recognition will open doors to more opportunities and improve their standard of living. On Monday, union minister Pralhad Joshi had emphasised on the significance of culture as a unifying factor among nations.

"Culture allows us to acknowledge and respect our differences while celebrating our shared humanity. It is the unique expression of our shared human experience," he said.

Joshi highlighted the progress made in identifying and deliberating on four priority areas: Protection and Restitution of



Cultural Property, Harnessing Living Heritage for a Sustainable Future, Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy, and Leveraging Digital Technologies for the Protection and Promotion of Culture.

In addition to the meetings, G20 delegates were given a tour of the cultural splendours of Hampi.

They embarked on a coracle ride across the picturesque Tungabhadra river, immersing themselves in the vibrant colours and natural beauty of the surroundings.

The delegates then visited the Vijaya Vittala Temple, witnessing its architectural brilliance and intricate carvings which depict mythological tales and historical events. The temple visit and coracle ride symbolised the shared values of art, history, and craftsmanship that unite diverse nations.

The summit also highlighted the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Against the backdrop of the captivating ruins of the Royal Enclosure of Hampi, the delegates held discussions around strategies for safeguarding

cultural treasures and fostering cultural exchange.

The dignitaries also visited the Lotus Mahal and Elephant Stables, which served as poignant reminders of the passage of time and the need to preserve the vibrancy of heritage sites.

The convergence of the G20 Summit with Hampi's cultural wonders demonstrated the power of cultural heritage in fostering international understanding and collaboration, a senior official said.

"It emphasised the transformative potential of cultural tourism and the economic benefits it brings while safeguarding the authenticity and integrity of these sites," the official said.

As the delegates concluded their deliberations amidst the grandeur of Hampi, they forged connections, exchanged ideas, and laid the foundation for a global commitment to cultural preservation.

Expansion of India-France defence cooperation to be focus of PM Modi's 2-day visit to Paris

On defence cooperation both sides are looking at expanding it further: Sources

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to France beginning July 13 would be both rich in "substance" and set "new benchmark" for strategic partnership between the two countries in years ahead, foreign secretary Vinay Kwatra said on Wednesday.

Boosting defence ties is expected to be a key focus of the talks between Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron with ground work being laid to announce New Delhi's procurement of 26 Naval variant of Rafale jets from France besides a big-ticket deal to jointly develop an aircraft engine in India. Modi will be guest of honour at the annual Bastille Day Parade and hold talks with Macron to take forward cooperation in a range of key areas including defence, space, trade and investment. After concluding his visit to France, Modi will travel to Abu Dhabi. A 269-member Indian tri-services contingent will participate in the parade. Three Rafale fighter jets of the Indian Air Force (IAF) will also join the flypast on the occasion along with French jets. Kwatra described the recent riots in several French cities as an "internal matter" and said that had no impact on the visit.

While declining to comment on specific outcomes in the spheres of defence in the Modi-Macron talks, he said ways to move the engagement towards "co-production, co-development and co-design" of military hardware and linking it to India's priorities for self-reliance is expected to be part of the discussions. On the 1650 MW nuclear power reactors in Jaitapur in Ma-



harashtra, he said both sides are engaged in intense discussions to resolve all issues including those relating civil nuclear liability, cost and techno commercial matters.

"The visit of the Prime Minister to France would be both rich in substance and in form and we would believe that it would set a new benchmark for our strategic partnership in years ahead," Kwatra said addressing a press conference. The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by defence minister Rajnath Singh is expected to give a go ahead to the major defence deals that are expected to be announced during Modi's visit to Paris.

Besides the Rafale and aircraft engine project, the DAC is also expected to clear procurement of three additional Scorpene submarines. Sources said the "frame of reference" of India's defence cooperation with various countries have transformed significantly with a focus on the country's Make-in-India initiative and the

engagement with France will also follow that approach. On Thursday, Modi will meet President of the French senate Gérard Larcher, Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne and address an Indian community event at La Seine Musicale.

In the evening, Macron will host a private dinner for Modi. On Friday, Modi will grace the Bastille Day Parade, meet the president of French National Assembly Yaël Braun-Pivet and will attend a series of interactions with thought leaders and business people.

There will be a ceremonial reception for Modi at the Élysée Palace on Friday and it will be followed by delegation-level talks between Modi and Macron.

The two leaders will also participate in the India-France CEO Forum. Later in the evening, Macron will host a banquet for Modi at the iconic Louvre museum complex in Paris.

Kwatra said the two leaders will review cooperation under key pil-

lars of the strategic partnership including security, civil nuclear technology, counter-terrorism, cyber security, space, climate change and integration of supply chains of the two countries.

He said the two leaders are expected to explore new areas of co-operation in the space sector.

Replying to a question on riots in several French cities, Kwatra said: "It is a matter internal to France and from our perspective; we do not see any impact on the visit whatsoever."

In a press statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said Modi's visit to France will provide an opportunity to chart the course of the partnership for the future across diverse sectors such as strategic, cultural, scientific, academic and economic cooperation.

On defence cooperation, the sources said both sides are looking at expanding it further.

India has already procured 36 Rafale jets from France for the IAF. Another important project with France is likely to be a follow-on order of three Scorpene submarines which are set to be manufactured in India. Under Project 75, six Scorpene submarines have already been made in India.

The French side and its partner Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) are now looking at the additional order of three more Scorpene submarines. The defence ministry is in talks with French defence major Safran for joint development of a fighter jet engine in India to power the country's next generation aircraft including the futuristic Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA).

Karnataka govt failed in maintaining law & order: BJP

BENGALURU, July 12 (PTI): Opposition BJP legislators on Wednesday staged a sit-in demonstration near Gandhi statue outside Vidhana Soudha, the seat of the Karnataka legislature here, in protest against the brutal murder of a Jain monk and demanding a CBI probe into it. Led by former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai, the legislators sat near the statue and raised slogans against the Congress government over "deteriorating" law and order situation in the state.

Later, they took out a march towards Raj Bhavan and submitted a representation to Governor Thawarchand Gehlot and requested him to issue appropriate directions to the government to maintain law and order in the State and keep peace and tranquility. The BJP said the body of the Digambar Jain seer, Kamkumar Nandi Maharaj, was found in a defunct borewell at Hirekodi in Chikkodi taluk of Belagavi district on July 8, chopped into pieces and wrapped in a plastic bag. In another incident on July 9, a 32-year-old man, who is associated with 'Yuva Brigade', related to 'Namo Brigade', was hacked to death during Hanuman Jayanti celebrations on the outskirts of T Narasipura in Mysuru district, it said.

Cong lacks 'clear stand' on UCC issue, alleges ruling CPI(M) in Kerala

KOZHIKODE (KER), July 12 (PTI): The ruling CPI(M) in Kerala on Wednesday accused the Congress for not having a "clear stand" on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) issue and said the grand old party was adopting different stance on the matter in various states. The Congress was not invited to the Marxist party-organised seminar on UCC, to be held in Kozhikode on July 15, as it does not have a united stand on the matter, CPI(M) state secretary M V Govindan said.

He asked whether the Congress had made any "effective move" so far against the BJP's attempt to implement the UCC in the country and whether the party's national leadership was ready for that.

"We have not invited the Congress to our seminar as the party has no clear stand on the matter...They are adopting different stance on the matter in various states," he told reporters here. Alleging that the saffron party was actually trying to implement the Hindutva agenda through the UCC, Govindan said the upcoming seminar was part of the CPI(M)'s campaigns to check fascism. The Modi government's reported move to introduce a bill on the implementation of the UCC was the "deliberate intervention" to implement the Hindutva agenda. It is nothing but the implementation of "communal agenda" and India's diversity cannot withstand that, he said.

The Left leader alleged that BJP had in the past announced that a Ram temple would come up in the place of the demolished Babri Masjid. They also scrapped Article 370 of the Constitution which accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir and now



have taken up the Uniform Civil Code issue.

The implementation of the UCC was an agenda similar to that of the demolition of the Babri Masjid, Govindan claimed.

Rejecting media reports that the CPI, the second largest coalition partner in the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF), had a different opinion on the seminar issue, he said the CPI leaders would also take part in the programme. On the IUML's rejection of the Marxist party's invitation to take part in the seminar, Govindan said it was not possible for them to accept it as they were part of the Congress-led UDF. "The participation of one party or the other is not the issue...Whether our slogan (against fascism and UCC) is correct or not...That's the issue," he explained.

Ruling BRS protests against Congress over free power to farmers in Telangana

HYDERABAD, July 12 (PTI): Ruling BRS MLC K Kavitha and other party leaders in Telangana held protests on Wednesday against state Congress president A Revanth Reddy's alleged comments that three hours of free power supply is enough for farmers and that 24x7 free power is not required. Reddy, who is currently on a visit to the United States, denied making any such remarks. Kavitha, other party leaders and activists held a protest at Vidut Soudha here, the headquarters of power utilities, against the Congress. Speaking on the occasion, Kavitha said Telangana is the first

state to provide investment support to farmers that has been appreciated by several economists.

Telangana is the only state in the country to supply free and unconditional power to farmers, she said.

Referring to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi releasing a "farmers' declaration" in Telangana, she alleged that "Congress exposed its real self" by saying that only three hours of free power is enough for farmers. "I am questioning Rahul Gandhi ji today. Is it really enough? Is that Congress' policy? Do you want to cancel 24 hours free power to farmers and give only three hours of power? This is

our question to you, Mr Rahul Gandhi," she said.

"Kindly answer. If you (Gandhi) do not have an answer, you do not have a right to come to Telangana and talk to our farmers. We will protect our farmers at any cost," the BRS leader said. The ruling party held protests at other places in Telangana as well after BRS working president K T Rama Rao called for protests against the alleged 'anti-farmer' thinking of Congress.

Meanwhile, AICC in-charge of party affairs in Telangana Manikrao Thakre said the BRS distorted Reddy's comments in the US.

Contd. from Page 1...

Assam floods scene

and Udalguri. Erosion has also been observed in Charaideo, Kokrajhar, Lakhimpur, Nalbari, Sivasagar, Tamulpur, and a landslide was reported in Karimganj.

The IMD has issued a warning of very heavy rainfall over Sikkim and districts including Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Udalguri, and Darrang for at least another day. Consequently, a rise in water levels is expected in the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries such as Puthimari, Aie, Beki, Manas, Pagladia, Kopili, and other smaller tributaries situated in these districts. The death toll in the first wave of floods this year stands at seven, with no new fatalities reported. The authorities are working tirelessly to provide relief and support to the affected population, but the challenging weather conditions continue to pose significant difficulties.

Leopard creates panic in Jorhat

It is worth mentioning that instances of leopards straying into human settlements in North West Jorhat have occurred sporadically, leading to such alarming incidents.

The presence of a wild leopard in close proximity to residential areas poses a significant threat to the safety of the villagers and their livestock. Residents in the affected village have been advised to remain cautious and take necessary precautions until the situation is resolved.

Move to set up mega solar

interests of the inhabitants of any village or town'. But the solar power plant is not going to promote the interests of the inhabitants of the village or town that fall within the 18000 bighas of land." Teron further said it is in the constitutional, legal and administrative responsibility of the KAAC to promote tribal interests and protect their land in Karbi Anglong. "But it appears that the interest of APDCL is given more priority," he added.

The general secretary, JCCPA, Rabindra Rongpi said, "We won't oppose it if it was on wasteland or uncultivable land. But the land where the solar power plant is going to be installed is fertile and it is cultivable land."

The Ministry of Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy's press release encourages the installation of solar power plants on wasteland. But the site of the proposed solar power plant is not on waste land, there is greenery and installation of a solar power plant will definitely be an environmental issue as trees and plants would be cleared for the purpose. The KAAC authority should take the installation of the proposed solar power plant into serious reconsideration, Rongpi said.

Govt spearheads efforts to

beyond ensuring water flow into the lake. Plans are underway to construct elevated rail and road corridors, which will serve a dual purpose: Safeguarding wildlife and promoting water sports. These infrastructural developments will minimise disturbances to the natural habitat of the area's wildlife, ensuring their continued protection. Simultaneously, the provision of facilities for water sports enthusiasts will facilitate responsible and sustainable recreational activities in the region. Under the determined leadership of CM Sarma, comprehensive efforts are now underway to ensure the holistic rejuvenation of this vital ecosystem. With a comprehensive approach encompassing ecological balance, heritage preservation, and wildlife protection, Assam aims to secure the future of this remarkable natural treasure for generations to come.

Police issues warning for

The officials privy to the developments said nearly 1,150 personnel have reported back to duty and fresh instructions had been issued to withhold pays of those personnel who are not back.

Recently, the police chief had visited the Khangabok area of Thoubal district where jawans of 3rd India Reserve Battalion had foiled an attempt by hundreds of rioters to loot the armoury. This district is known for Khongjom, where the last battle of the independence of Manipur was fought in April 1891 against the British army. 'Nakas' (checkpoints) are being erected by Manipur Police during which people are detained for violating rules, including movement during curfew, besides providing security to farmers from both the communities at the foothills.

Rio flags off helicopter

heavy demand, now the flying hours have been increased from 480 hours to 600 hours per annum, he added. CMD of the aviation company Capt KNG Nair said the company will be operating 2 Bell 412 helicopters while another chopper A 109 will be on standby. The chopper has a sitting capacity of 13 passengers plus two pilots while the baggage compartment can carry around 400 pounds of cargo, Nair said.

Govt to introduce Bill to

for railways (State), and senior BJP leader Rajen Gohain, as well as Barhampur BJP MLA Jitu Goswami and other senior party workers from the district.

Swachhta campaign

as well as the significance of their contributions to economic analysis through the provision of accurate price data. During the campaign, sanitisers, soaps, and pens adorned with the NSO (National Sample Survey Office) logo were distributed to the shopkeepers and bystanders who inquired about the purpose of the campaign. Additionally, placards displaying the theme of the campaign were strategically placed in various locations within the market. Some proactive shopkeepers even requested the placement of such placards inside their shops, demonstrating their commitment to the cause.

The NSSO team hopes that by engaging with the community and emphasising the importance of cleanliness and data collection, a stronger bond can be forged between the shopkeepers and data collectors. The campaign not only serves as a means to promote hand hygiene and environmental awareness but also strives to ensure that the economic analysis carried out by NSSO accurately reflects the reality of price dynamics and inflation.

Cybercrimes pose a major threat to security of citizens globally: Shah



NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Union home minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said cybercrimes pose a major threat to the security of citizens across the globe in a rapidly advancing borderless digital arena.

He also said that a reliable global partnership is the key to effectively combatting this menace.

Shah will inaugurate the two-day G20 conference on 'Crime and Security in the Age of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Metaverse' beginning in Gurugram on Thursday. The conference will bring together over 900 participants from G20 countries, nine special invitee countries, international bodies, technology leaders and domain experts from India and across the world.

"In a rapidly advancing borderless digital arena, cybercrimes, especially cyber frauds, pose a major threat to the security of citizens across the globe. A reliable global partnership is the key to effectively combatting this menace," Shah said in a tweet.

The home minister said the G20 conference on cybersecurity will witness rigorous brainstorming among G20 countries, nine special invitee countries,

and domain experts.

"The conference will emphasise global partnerships to counter cybercrimes and pave the way for safer cyberspace by addressing a wide range of cybersecurity concerns," he said.

Shah will also flag off cyber volunteer squads from seven premier educational institutions of the country, an official statement said, adding that these specially identified volunteers will work to generate cyber awareness in the society, identify and report harmful content, and render technical assistance for making the society cyber safe. Shah will also inaugurate an exhibition and release conference medallion.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and guidance of the home minister, building a 'cyber safe India' is one of the top priorities of the Ministry of Home Affairs," the statement said.

The conference is envisaged as an opportunity to forge a global partnership to build a safe cyberspace and prioritise cybersecurity concerns. The proceedings will focus around cyber security and measures to counter cybercrime in the context of new and emerging technologies like NFT, AI and Metaverse.

The cybersecurity has become an essential aspect of security-related affairs internationally, which requires adequate focus owing to its economic and geopolitical implications.

Enhanced focus on cybersecurity at the G20 forum can positively contribute in ensuring the security and integrity of critical information infrastructure and digital public platforms, the statement said.

The deliberations on cybersecurity and cybercrime prevention at the G20 forum will also help in the development of an information sharing framework.

The conference will provide a platform for cutting-edge ideas, knowledge exchange and networking with visionaries around the globe, it added.

The lander module will begin its descent for a soft landing on the South Pole region of the moon ISRO gears up for 3rd lunar mission as India eyes to achieve rare feat

SRIHARIKOTA, (AP), July 12 (PTI): Four years after it broke many hearts, ISRO's Chandrayaan-1 is all set to soar towards the moon in its third expedition on Friday in an attempt to put the country in an elite club of nations that accomplished lunar missions with a soft landing.

'Fat boy' LVM3-M4 rocket will carry Chandrayaan-3 as part of the country's ambitious moon mission as the Indian Space Research Organisation is gearing up for the hugely anticipated launch from this spaceport on July 14. The soft landing on moon's surface is planned for late August.

Chandrayaan-2 failed to achieve the desired soft landing on the moon surface in 2019, leaving the ISRO team dejected. Images of an emotional then ISRO chief K Sivan being consoled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was here to achieve the rare feat, remains vivid in the memory of many.

Scientists at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre here, after investing many hours of hardwork, now aim at mastering the technology of soft-landing on the surface of the moon. A success would make India only the fourth country to achieve the feat after the United States, China and the former Soviet Union.

Chandrayaan-3, is the third



lunar exploration mission ready for takeoff in the fourth operational mission (M4) of LVM3 launcher. ISRO is crossing new frontiers by demonstrating soft-landing on the lunar surface by its lunar module and demonstrating roving on the lunar terrain, the space agency said.

The mission is expected to be supportive to future interplanetary missions.

Chandrayaan-3 mission consists of an indigenous propulsion module, lander module and a rover with an objective of developing and demonstrating new technologies required for inter-planetary missions.

With the 43.5 metre tall rocket, scheduled for the lift off from the

second launch pad at pre-fixed time at 2.35 pm on July 14, the countdown for the launch is expected to begin on Thursday.

The largest and heaviest LVM3 rocket (formerly GSLV MkIII), fondly called as 'fat boy' by ISRO scientists for its heavy-lift capability, has completed six consecutive successful missions.

The LVM3 rocket is a composite of three modules -- propulsion, lander and rover (which is housed inside the lander).

Friday's mission is the fourth operational flight of LVM3 which aims to launch the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft into a Geo Transfer Orbit.

The LVM3 vehicle has proved its versatility to undertake most

complex missions including injecting multi-satellites, interplanetary missions among others. It is also the largest and heaviest launch vehicle ferrying Indian and International customer satellites, ISRO said.

The reason to fix the launch window during the month of July similar to Chandrayaan-2 mission (July 22, 2019) is because the earth and moon would be closer to each other during this part of the year.

Friday's mission follows Chandrayaan-2 where scientists aim to demonstrate various capabilities including reaching the orbit of the moon, making a soft-landing on the lunar surface using a lander, and a rover coming out of the lander to study the surface of the moon.

In the Chandrayaan-2 mission, the lander instead of making a soft landing crashed on the surface leading to an unsuccessful attempt by ISRO.

However, this time scientists have left no stone unturned in an effort to ensure smiles in August when the landing is planned.

As the days neared for the launch, the Satish Dhawan Space Centre was bustling with activity as the launch vehicle was integrated into the launch mission complex at the second launch pad recently.



Remake of three classic films 'Mili', 'Bawarchi' and 'Koshish' in the works

MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): Three classic movies from 1970s - Hrishikesh Mukherjee's classics "Mili", "Bawarchi" and Gulzar-directed "Koshish" - are set for remakes. The retellings will be produced by Anushree Mehta and Abir Sengupta of Jaadugar Films along with Sameer Raj Sippy, the grandson of late producer NC Sippy, who had backed the original movies under his banner SRS Productions.

Mukherjee had directed 1972's "Bawarchi", starring Rajesh Khanna and Jaya Bachchan, and "Mili" (1975), featuring Amitabh Bachchan and Jaya Bachchan.

"Koshish" (1972) was helmed by noted lyricist-director Gulzar and also featured Jaya Bachchan, along

with Sanjeev Kumar.

In a media statement, Mehta and Sengupta said they are thrilled to embark on the journey of remaking three all-time favourite movies for the new generation.

"It is a huge responsibility as 'Koshish', 'Bawarchi' and 'Mili' are celebrated in India and across the globe which have been made by the legendary Gulzar Saab and Hrishi da who have set the standards of filmmaking for generations to come.

"These are the films we have grown up on and they are the stories that the new generation should also witness; to know our rich cinematic legacy. We endeavour to put our best to live up to the expectations, the responsibility and most importantly

remake these films which will touch the audience hearts far and wide," the duo said in a statement.

Sameer Raj Sippy said it is about time to revisit these classic stories for contemporary times. "Movies are about defining moments, interesting enough to share with people, and that's why it's time we take classic stories and bring them in today's scenario, with a newer and modern outlook. "That's the intention behind revisiting 'Bawarchi', 'Mili' and 'Koshish'. Coming from a legendary family of film makers, and being inspired by the family business, I now want to continue this legacy that has been handed down by my grandfather, NC Sippy, my uncle Romu Sippy and my father Raj Sippy," he said.

James Gunn's 'Superman: Legacy' adds Nathan Fillion, Isabela Merced and Edi Gathegi



LOS ANGELES, July 12 (PTI): Actors Nathan Fillion, Isabela Merced and Edi Gathegi have joined the cast of filmmaker James Gunn's "Superman: Legacy".

The three actors join David Corenswet and Rachel Brosnahan, who are set to essay the roles of Clark Kent aka Superman and Lois Lane, respectively, in the much-anticipated title, which marks the start of a new chapter in DC Universe (DCU). According to entertainment outlet Deadline, DC Studios' co-chief Peter Safran shared the news in a new piece with Vanity Fair.

Fillion, who most recently starred in Gunn's "Guardians of the Galaxy Vol 3", will portray Guy Gardner, one iteration of the superhero Green Lantern.

Merced, known for movies "Transformers: The

Last Knight", "Sicario: Day of the Soldado" and "Dora and the Lost City of Gold", will play Hawkgirl.

Gathegi, who earlier featured in "X-Men: First Class", will star as Mister Terrific.

"Superhero: Legacy", which Gunn and Safran announced in March, deals with the superhero's journey to make sense of both his aristocratic Kryptonian heritage and his small town, midwestern upbringing as Clark Kent.

Gunn has also written the script of the film, which has a release date of July 11, 2025. The project will mark the first phase of the revamped slate for the DCU, which also includes upcoming titles "Batman: The Brave and the Bold" with Andy Muschietti the director, and "The Authority".

Will sure see 'Jawan' first day: Salman praises 'prevue' of new SRK movie

MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): Shah Rukh Khan's "Jawan" has received a thumbs up from close friend and contemporary Salman Khan, who "absolutely loved" the high-octane action thriller's 'prevue' and promised to see the movie on the first day of its release.

Taking to Twitter on Tuesday evening, Salman shared the clip from the movie and said a movie like "Jawan" should be watched only in theatres. "Pathan jawan ban gaya (Pathaan has transformed into Jawan), outstanding trailer, absolutely loved it. Now this is the kind of a movie we should see in theatres only. I toh for sure seeing it 1st day ko hi. Mazaa ahh gaya wahhhhh... @iamsrk (sic)" the actor wrote.

Salman had made an appearance in SRK's blockbuster movie "Pathaan", which released in January and earned over Rs 1,000 at the global box office. The first glimpse of "Jawan" showcases Shah Rukh featuring in several death-defying stunts, songs and mouthing dialogues in his quintessential style. Directed by Atlee of "Theri" and "Mersal" fame, the upcoming pan-India movie also features Nayanthara and Vijay Sethupathi. It is produced by Gaurav Gupta under the production banner Red Chillies Entertainment.



TOM HOLLAND SAYS HE WAS 'ENSLAVED' TO ALCOHOL: IT REALLY SCARED ME

MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): "Spider-Man" star Tom Holland says he decided to give up drinking after he became worried that he might have "an alcohol problem". The British actor, who is a year-and-a-half sober from alcohol, addressed his struggle with alcoholism in an appearance on the On Purpose with Jay Shetty podcast.

Holland, who most recently starred in Apple TV+'s psychological thriller series "The Crowded Room", said he chose to go dry last January after indulging over the holiday season but found it tough.

"I didn't one day wake up and say, 'I'm giving up drinking'. I just, like many Brits, had had a very, very boozy December. (It was) Christmas time, I was on vacation, I was drinking a lot and I've always been able to drink a lot.

"All I could think about was having a drink. That's all I could think about. I was waking up thinking about it. I was checking the clock. 'When's it 12pm?' the 27-year-old said, as quoted by British website The Independent.

dent.

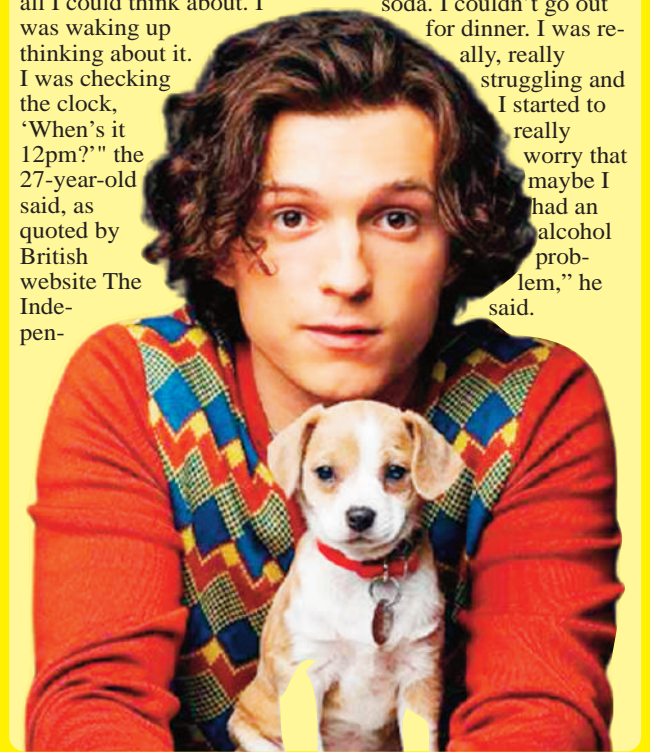
He was compelled to ask himself some questions after he realised he was "obsessed" with drinking, he added.

"I just sort of said to myself, like, 'Why? Why am I enslaved to this drink? Why am I so obsessed by the idea of having this drink?' It just really scared me. I just was like, 'Wow, maybe. Maybe I have a little bit of an alcohol thing'.

"So I sort of decided to punish myself and say, 'I'll do two months off. If I can do two months off, then I can prove to myself that I don't have a problem'," he recalled.

Holland, however, said he found he was still "really struggling" two months off alcohol and felt that not drinking impacted his ability to socialise.

"I felt like I couldn't go to the pub and have a lime soda. I couldn't go out for dinner. I was really, really struggling and I started to really worry that maybe I had an alcohol problem," he said.



Hope my journey inspires young producers to join showbiz Guneet Monga Kapoor



MUMBAI, July 12 (PTI): As a 20-something, producer Guneet Monga Kapoor used to dye her hair grey and dress up in saris for meetings to appear old enough so that potential clients trust her with "a lot of money".

With two Oscars, the most recent for Kartiki Gonsalves' heartwarming documentary short "The Elephant Whispers", to her credit, she now hopes her career inspires more young producers to enter the Indian film industry. Asked if there was any prejudice attached to being a woman producer in India, Guneet said it has more to do with age than gender. "I don't think it is (about) women, but also as a producer, it is more challenging. It's also age. Being young has been against me rather than being a woman.

"Being a young producer has raised a lot of questions that I had to fight in my 20s... I'm working now and (I hope) that my journey and my role here inspires more young producers to join the business," she told PTI in an interview here. The Delhi-born producer moved to Mumbai in 2006 in order to pursue her dream of making movies. She worked as a line producer "Say Salaam India", "Rang Rasiya", and "Dasvidaniya", before launching her production banner Sikhya Entertainment in 2008. Recalling the time she boarded Anurag Kashyap's two-part cult film "Gangs of Wasseypur" 2012 as a producer, Guneet -- now 39 -- said people were unsure about her credibility due to her age. "... I used to colour my hair white, I used to wear saris, prayed (to have) specs, which now I have.... But being young, how you internalise, how you show up because at the end of the day, you just need your work to be done. "You are handling a lot of money, so there's definitely that kind of lens that I had to face that 'She's young, how will she handle? I was 26-years-old when I produced 'Gangs of Wasseypur', so, there's definitely those kinds of questions," Guneet said.

Aditya on 'The Night Manager' success: It will always be something I can be proud of



NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): Fresh from the success of "The Night Manager", actor Aditya Roy Kapur says he will always be proud of the series that helped him showcase a different side of his personality to filmmakers and audiences. Released in two parts, the Disney+ Hotstar series has been adapted from author John Le Carre's 1993 novel. The book was also the inspiration for the critically-acclaimed British show, starring Tom Hiddleston, Olivia Colman and Hugh Laurie.

Kapur, 37, said the series has given him a lot. "It has given filmmakers and people in general an insight into another part of my personality. And it's something maybe they had not seen before. Of course, I always

knew it was there. I always knew it existed. But sometimes you need a certain role and a certain part to connect for everyone else to see it," the actor told PTI in an interview.

"Looking back at this, I believe it is a project that will always be something I can be proud of," he added.

In the series, Kapur played a hotel night manager who goes undercover to bring down the empire of an arms dealer, essayed by Anil Kapoor. "The Night Manager" has received praise from the critics for its faithful adaptation as well as the performance of lead actors, including Sobhita Dhulipala and Tilotama Shome. The Indian version has been created by Sandeep Modi with a screen-

play by Shridhar Raghavan. Modi also directed the seven-part series with Priyanka Ghose. Kapur credited the writing and directing team for making the show appealing across the board. "That was very important to me, that the show must be adapted well, which is what everyone is also observing. It feels right for the Indian subcontinent and completely organic to this place... It's rare that everything in a project seems to line up, and it feels like it has connected across the board." According to Disney+ Hotstar, "The Night Manager" has emerged as the "most watched series ever across all Hotstar Specials" on its platform. What made the show's success even sweeter for him was the appre-

ciation that came from the fans of the 2016 British series, which featured Hiddleston as Jonathan Pine. "There are so many people who love the original. Some people have said that 'The Night Manager' original is my favourite show. But even those people have actually turned around and said that they liked us as much. "That is a great compliment to receive... It is a kind of vindication for feeling like it was a good thing that we went ahead and did this." The actor even got a call from Hiddleston, his British counterpart. British show writer David Farr and Hiddleston attended a special screening of the Indian version in London and then the "Loki" star rang up Kapur.

Gyaneshwari dreams of not just following Mirabai's footsteps but leave her behind

GREATER NOIDA, July 12 (PTI): Mirabai Chanu is an inspiration to many athletes but to Gyaneshwari Yadav she is also a competitor and the promising weightlifter dreams of not just scaling great heights like the Tokyo Olympic medalist but leaving her behind in competition. Gyaneshwari competes in the same weight class as Mirabai -- 49kg. In fact, the 20-year-old finished second to the former world champion during a ranking series last year.

"Mira didi is my inspiration and she is also a fighter (in the 49kg). So I always believe that one day I will leave her behind."

"Watching her is very motivating. She has created a world

record in 49kg and I want to do the same," Gyaneshwari told PTI. Trying to narrate the first time she met her idol, the 2022 junior world championship silver medalist struggled to put her feelings into words.

"I met her in 2021 in NIS Patiala during a camp. It was after the Olympics. I just felt so happy seeing her. I hugged her and then spoke to her. That experience was just unbelievable. I can't put it into words."

Gyaneshwari trains at NIS Patiala along with Mirabai, who is currently undergoing a 65-day training camp in St Louis, USA.

"Now, I meet her every day and she always meets me so nicely. I have learned a lot from seeing her



train, her professionalism, and dedication while training gives me a lot of motivation."

"She has taken Indian weightlifting to the Olympic level and it's a huge thing. I also want to create history for my country at the Olympics."

While Gyaneshwari will be seen at the junior Asian Championships later this month, she missed out on the Asian Games, where Mirabai will represent India in the 49kg weight class.

"This time Asian Games Mira didi is there but next edition I will be there for sure," she said oozing confidence.

Gyaneshwari, who hails from Bhandiya village in Chhattisgarh, won the 49kg gold at the ongoing

Commonwealth Championships with a total effort of 178kg (78kg+98kg), here on Wednesday. Gyaneshwari's father Deepak Yadav was into bodybuilding but due to financial constraints, he gave up his passion. However, when his daughter decided to pursue weightlifting he was super supportive.

"My father used to do bodybuilding but due to our poor financial condition, he had left it. We moved from the village to the city." Initially, Gyaneshwari started out as a powerlifter but when she saw weightlifting she was enamoured by the sport.

In weightlifting, the lifter performs two lifts -- snatch and the clean & jerk. However, power-

lifters perform three lifts -- a back squat, a bench press and a deadlift. "Earlier I used to do powerlifting but then when I saw that the weight goes up in weightlifting I was very interested. So, I told my father I want to do weightlifting and he was supportive of it."

The family struggled with their finances during the pandemic with supplements costing a fortune. But Deepak, who now works as an electrician, continued supporting his daughter's dream.

"Papa works as an electrician so it was a bit difficult, supplements are expensive and it was really difficult during COVID. But my dad never gave up and here I am."

FOCUS ON BATTING

INDIAN WOMEN EYE 3-0 SWEEP OF BANGLADESH

MIRPUR, July 12 (PTI): With focus firmly on batting, the Indian women's cricket team will be eyeing a 3-0 sweep of Bangladesh, when the fancied visitors take on the beleaguered hosts in the final T20 International here on Thursday.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led outfit won the first two matches without much fuss and will be looking to do an encore when it takes to the field in the third game.

However, it is easier said than done given India's mediocre outing with the bat in the second match, which they scraped through by eight runs despite being stopped at 95 in their allotted 20 overs.

The hosts were bowled out for 87 thanks to some excellent bowling by the Indians, giving them an unassailable lead in the three-match series.

Big-hitting opener Shafali Verma will, once again, be under the lens of the selectors after her twin failures in the series. While her 14-ball 19 eventually turned out to be the team's highest score in the forgettable collapse, the young batter is well aware of her capabilities and expectations from her, and has another chance to get back among big runs before the ODI leg of the tour starting July 16. Senior pro and vice-



captain Smriti Mandhana too will be keen to get going after getting dismissed for a run-a-ball 13 on Tuesday. The Indian openers have failed to fire together in the series so far and will be gunning to make use of another opportunity that awaits them on Thursday. So is the case of Jemimah Rodrigues, who also could not get going and struggled a lot in the middle while consuming as many as 21 balls for her eight runs.

Out for a first-ball duck two days after her match-winning knock in the series opener, skipper Harmanpreet would not look to read too much into her failure on Tuesday and would rather see it as an exception.

Even as the batters endured the kind of outing they would like to forget in a hurry, the Indian bowlers will enter the final T20I high on morale. Defending 96, the likes of Deepti Sharma, Minnu Mani and Shafali delivered with the ball to bundle out the opponents in exactly 20 overs, with Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana (38 off 55 balls) playing a lone hand. As far as the home team is concerned, there batters too would look to give a much better account of themselves to raise hopes of a consolation win, which looks unlikely at the moment given the Indian team's all-round strength even though the Bangladesh bowlers did extremely well to restrict the visitors in their last outing.

Teams (from):

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Harleen Deol, Devika Vaidya, Uma Chhetri (wk), Amanjot Kaur, S Meghna, Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Anjali Sarwani, Monika Patel, Rashi Kanojia, Anusha Baredi, Minnu Mani.

Bangladesh: Nigar Sultana (c/w), Shamima Sultana, Murshida Khatun, Sobhana Mostary, Shorna Akter, Ritu Moni, Nahida Akter, Fahima Khatun, Rabeya Khan, Shanjida Akter, Salma Khatun, Marufa Akter, Dilara Akter, Disha Biswas, Sultana Khatun, Shathi Rani.

Match Starts: 1:30 pm IST.

UTT will give us quality match practice ahead of Asian Games: Kamal

PUNE, July 12 (PTI): Veteran Indian table tennis player Sharath Kamal on Wednesday that the fourth edition of the Ultimate Table Tennis beginning Thursday would help the players get quality match practice ahead of the Hangzhou Asian Games in September. The league returns after a gap of four years with the previous winner Chennai Lions taking on Purneri Paltan in the season-opener. "UTT is back after a break of four years. We had some good seasons and experiences. This year we hope to see some really good table tennis," Sharath said here at the pre-tournament media conference on Wednesday.

"A lot of young players get a chance to be a part of this journey. UTT has helped us gain the confidence and exposure which we require at the international level," he said. Sharath said while the preparations for the Asian Games has already started, the UTT will bring about quality build-up to the continental event. "The league is

a part of the whole program that goes on in every players' run-up to, let's say, the Asian Games and Olympics. What keeps you motivated... is that I am able to compete at the highest level and I am able to keep my fitness and mental conditioning at that level, which requires a certain number of processes, which I still enjoy."

"I enjoy getting back to the table and preparing and playing those matches," said Sharath, who also turned 41 on Wednesday. Indian player G Sathiyar recalled playing in the league as an 'upcoming player', adding that the league helps the players bridge the gap between them and their peers on the international stage. "When I played my first season, I was that 'upcoming player' and now people call me a seasoned player. That kind of growth that I got, UTT helped me to gain the confidence that you can take on world-class players and then take it on the international stage," said Sathiyar.

Happy to overcome odds and finally appear for Asian Games trials: Dipa Karmakar

BHUBANESWAR, July 12 (PTI): Top Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar is happy that she has overcome the hardships that have plagued her for the last few years and finally appeared for the trials of the upcoming Hangzhou Asian Games.

The Tripura gymnast, who narrowly missed out on a bronze in 2016 Rio Olympics, was making a comeback after 21 months of suspension due to a doping violation. On Tuesday, the 29-year-old Dipa earned the maximum points to emerge on top in the all-around event during the trials to select the squad for the Asian Games at the Kalinga Stadium here. "I am very happy that I could give the trials after the hardships I went through in the last few years," said Dipa after successfully competing in the trials. "I think it was a big comeback for me. The performance was OK, though not 100 per cent. But moving forward, I will do my best to give more than 100 per cent," she said.

Dipa was a part of the 2018



Jakarta Asian Games gymnastics contingent but despite the high expectations, she could not finish on the podium, failing to qualify in her pet event, vault, and ending at fifth in women's balance beam. Dipa had also pulled out of the women's artistic gymnastics final after injuring her right knee.

She then suffered injuries to her back and knees and was also suspended for a 21-month period, effective until July 10 this year after testing positive for a prohibited substance.

On Tuesday Dipa, one of the

best exponents of the 'Prodnova vault', commonly called the vault of death, said, "I was in Agartala doing training for 1 to 1-1/2 months. Over the years, I have overcome problems in my back and knees. Now, if everything goes well, I hope I get selected for Asian Games... then I will try to give more than 100 per cent."

Elaborating on her struggles, she said, "I had two ACL surgeries in 2017 and 2019. Then there was Covid. But all that is past and I want to focus on the future."



DOMINICA, July 12 (PTI): Virat Kohli was only taking his first strides in Test cricket when India played here last in 2011, but Rahul Dravid, then a towering figure in the squad, knew he was a 'special talent' set for a long and successful career.

In a video shared by the BCCI ahead of the opening Test of the two-match series, both Dravid, now the team's head coach, and senior batter Kohli reminisced about the game that took place more than two decades ago.

"When I came here in 2011, that was a very special occasion for this Island and for the ground here. To come back in a different capacity, to come here as a coach and bring a team here, Virat was the only one who was there when we came here in 2011," Dravid said.

"I remember it was Virat's first Test series with the Indian team, he was this young kid who had done really well in One Day cricket and he was just finding his feet a little bit in Test cricket."

"But you could see there was a special talent out there and you could see that he was going to be around for a while. How long you can never say so you can be very proud of his journey," Dravid added.

Kohli recently took to Twitter to share a picture of himself with Dravid and expressed his gratitude for the reunion after 12 years. Dravid said, "I certainly never thought that I would coach and come here 10 years later, but it is nice to have seen his journey, see him grow from being a young player on that trip to now being a senior veteran."

"I shouldn't call him a veteran,

but a senior player on the trip. It is great to see his journey and I think of myself as someone who is a young coach starting a journey as well. So, the tables have turned a little bit (laughs)."

Kohli said he is blessed to be one of the two survivors from that squad of 2011 and said he could never imagine that he would be back where it all started form him in the game's traditional format. "When we went to the dressing room and when we went to practice, I kind of remembered my first series here as a Test player and this is the country where it all started, the Caribbean."

"It is just amazing to be able to come back here 12 years later having played more than 100 Test matches, I would never have imagined anything like this."

"I think his (Dravid's) comment about being a youngster in his coaching career is quite a humble one because he has been coaching for a long period of time now. I was his teammate and he was a senior, established Test player who we all looked up to."

The batting maestro said life has come a full circle for both.

"It is quite amazing actually I told Rahul bhai as well. I said I am sure you would have never imagined that 12 years later we will come back to the same venue and you would be head coach and I would have played more than 100 games."

"No one could have guessed that one. We are blessed that we are the only two members from the last trip, still here in different capacities but it is like life has come a full circle and the journeys have been quite amazing," Kohli said.

MCC recommends extra funding for Test cricket and women's game, significant reduction in ODIs after 2027

LONDON, July 12 (PTI): The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the custodians of the laws of the game, has pushed for extra funding to protect Test cricket and the women's game, and suggested a significant reduction in ODIs after the 2027 World Cup.

In a recent meeting at the Lord's, the MCC's 13-member World Cricket Committee (WCC) proposed "removing bilateral ODIs, other than in the one year preceding each World Cup".

The panel made the suggestion keeping in mind the crowded calendar, which features T20 domestic franchise leagues around the world.

"The committee questioned the

role men's One Day International (ODI) cricket now plays outside of ICC World Cups, and recommended it be significantly reduced following the completion of the 2027 ICC Men's World Cup," the MCC said in a statement posted on its website.

"The suggestion is that a scarcity of ODI cricket would increase the quality, achieved by removing bilateral ODIs, other than in the one-year preceding each World Cup. This would, as a consequence, also create much-needed space in the global cricketing calendar."

The MCC committee proposed extra funding to keep the five-day format significant and alive.

"The committee continues to hear of the growing unaffordability to host men's Test match cricket in many nations and concluded that the game currently lacks quantifiable data on the costs of hosting a Test match across its member nations," the release read.

"To address this lack of insight, it proposed a recommendation for the ICC to undertake a Test match financial audit to provide a clearer picture. This audit of operational costs versus commercial return would help the ICC identify nations in need of support in order to sustain a Test match programme."

"This need could be subsequently addressed via a separate

Test fund, established to protect the sanctity of Test match cricket."

It also asked the ICC member boards to provide funding to strengthen the women's game globally.

"The committee discussed how to protect, grow and strengthen women's cricket globally."

"It believes that the optimum solution to support this objective would be to create a substantial and ringfenced ICC Strategic Fund that can be allocated on a required basis to full member and associate nations who, amongst other key initiatives, fully commit to their women's pathway and national team."

"The WCC also believes that in

order to qualify as a full ICC member, each nation must be required to commit to investing in both men's and women's cricket and field a national women's team," the MCC said.

The committee, headed by former England captain Mike Gatting and has Sourav Ganguly and Jhulan Goswami from India, has asked the ICC to create a balanced and equitable Future Tours Programme for men's cricket after 2027. "Ahead of the next iteration of the ICC men's Future Tours Programme (FTP) in 2028, it calls on the ICC to ensure the men's FTP beyond 2027 has an equitable schedule of matches for all full member countries, rewarding

hosts and touring nations alike.

"The goal must be to secure a balanced, meaningful, and commercially viable FTP for all, which prioritises bilateral cricket, finds suitable space for franchise cricket yet, in particular, supports the full potential of the ICC World Test Championship to be recognised." Following the conclusion of the meeting held on the sidelines of the recent Ashes Test at Lord's, outgoing chair Gatting said it's time for the game to hit the reset button.

"In many ways, cricket is growing and, on the surface, seems financially strong. However, we are increasingly seeing a game which focuses on a powerful few, as op-

posed to a democratic and inclusive approach for the benefit of the whole sport," he said.

"It's time for the global game to reset. Too often, member nations are finding themselves living hand to mouth with their cricketing operations, versus having a long-term, viable strategy in place that future-proofs the game in their country, both financially and in terms of participation."

"We are currently at the commencement of a new ICC Future Tours Programme and financing cycle, and we would recommend further evidence of the requisite funding being directly apportioned to the strategic needs of cricket."

Gill will bat at No. 3, Jaiswal to open against West Indies: Rohit



ROSEAU, July 12 (PTI): India skipper Rohit Sharma on Tuesday said that young batter Yashasvi Jaiswal will open the Indian innings in the Test series against the West Indies since Shubman Gill has expressed his desire to bat at number three on a long term basis.

Shubman has opened the innings with his skipper since making his Test debut in 2021 against Australia.

Not one to give away his team combination, the Indian skipper for a change spoke about his batting order and how Jaiswal's presence helped them to have a left-right combination to begin with.

"As far as batting order is concerned, Gill will bat at No. 3 as he himself wants to play at that slot. He himself went up to Rahul bhai

(coach Dravid) and requested that since he has played all his cricket at No. 3 and 4, he feels he could contribute more for team in that slot," Rohit said during a media conference on the eve of the opening Test.

"For us, it's a good thing that we will have a left-right combination at the top. Hopefully, this will be a long term solution as we were desperate for left hander at the top. Hope he (Jaiswal) can make that spot his own," said Rohit.

The PTI had reported last week after India's two-day warm-up game that Jaiswal had a fair chance of opening as he came out to face the new ball with his skipper and Gill came in at No. 3.

In fact, in 2019, Gill toured West Indies

with India A team and batted at number 3, 4 and 5 in three Test matches.

Rohit also said that both Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin will play alongside three pacers.

In 2017 when the last Test was played at Windsor Park, Pakistan's leg-spinner Yasir Shah had a match haul of eight wickets in his team's 101 run win.

"We will play with three seamers and two spinners after having a look at the wicket. In 2017 in Pakistan vs West Indies game, lot of wickets were taken by spinners and last few days when we trained, we also found that there is some bounce on offer," Rohit said.

While Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur pick themselves, the fight for the third

seamer's slot will be between Jaydev Unadkat, Mukesh Kumar and Navdeep Saini. Rohit understands that seniors, including Virat Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane and he himself, need to perform but he also reminded that once someone wears the India shirt, everyone has a responsibility to win matches.

"All eleven will have responsibility to win the match. If you play for a long period, yes, you have some extra responsibility but once you wear that India jersey, both me and a new player will have same opportunities and same conditions to counter.

"Obviously, I will have more knowledge but every one wants to perform. Just not seniors but everyone needs to step up," Rohit said.

Shah, Ashraf finalise Asia Cup schedule; Indo-Pak matches in Dambulla

NEW DELHI, July 12 (PTI): The much-anticipated Asia Cup games between India and Pakistan will be held in Sri Lanka as agreed upon by the previous dispensation of host PCB, IPL chairman Arun Dhumal confirmed on Wednesday.

Dhumal, who is in Durban for the ICC Chief Executives Meet (CEC), informed that BCCI secretary Jay Shah and new PCB management committee chairman Zaka Ashraf met ahead of ICC Board meeting on Thursday to finalise the Asia Cup schedule.

Ashraf, who took charge earlier this month, had expressed his displeasure over the hybrid model accepted by the previous regime under Najam Sethi. PCB has the hosting rights for the tournament to be held in Pakistan and Sri Lanka from August 31-September 17.

"Our secretary met PCB head Zaka Ashraf and the Asia Cup schedule was finalised and it is on course as it was discussed earlier. There will be four games of league stage in Pakistan, followed by 9 games in Sri Lanka including both India versus Pakistan game and a third game if both teams reach the final," Dhumal told PTI.

Dhumal rubbished reports emerging from Pakistan media that India will travel to the neighbour-

ing country as its sports minister Ehsan Mazari had been claiming.

"There was no such discussion held. Neither India is travelling to Pakistan nor our secretary will be travelling contrary to reports that have surfaced. Only the schedule was finalised," Dhumal added.

India, in all likelihood, will play Pakistan in Dambulla just like 2010 edition.

Pakistan's only home match in their country will be against minnows Nepal.

The other three games are Afghanistan versus Bangladesh, Bangladesh versus Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka versus Afghanistan.

Recently, Pakistan sports minister Mazari was quoted as saying that unless India come to Pakistan for the Asia Cup, Pakistan will not travel to India for the ODI World Cup.

A senior BCCI official said perhaps the Pakistan sports minister was "blissfully unaware" about the earlier meetings of Asian Cricket Council (ACC) where the all powerful executive committee had passed the hybrid model suggested by former chairman Najam Sethi.

"We aren't concerned about the internal happenings of PCB. All that we know is that PCB is a signatory to the Hybrid Model which was proposed by their representa-



tive and passed at ACC's highest body," a senior ACC board member present during that meeting told PTI.

"And just to refresh Pakistan's honourable sports minister's memory, it was PCB that had issued an official press release accepting that 4 games will be held in Pakistan and rest of the games in Sri Lanka," he added.

As far as the World Cup is concerned, the PCB is bound by ICC's Members' Participation Agreement (MPA) which was signed by the full members in 2015 for an eight

year period ending 2023.

"Once you have signed an MPA, you are contractually bound to play an ICC event at a venue decided by the global body. Obviously security measures and other determining factors are always taken into account. But if a country pulls off even if security is not an issue, there could be legal and financial implications," the ICC member said.

However, the same MPA doesn't hold for the 2025 Champions Trophy which is scheduled to be held in Pakistan.

Mayank Agarwal eyes heaps of runs, stays positive about India comeback

BENGALURU, July 12 (PTI): From a team perspective it made sense when Rohit Sharma emphasised the need for India to have a left-hander in their top-order, while welcoming Yashasvi Jaiswal to the opener's slot for the Test series against West Indies.

But the statement might just have come as a jolt to a few other aspiring openers. Mayank Agarwal is one of them.

Now, the Karnataka right-hander will have to play the waiting game to make his return. Mayank last played for India against Sri Lanka in the Day-Night Test in March 2022 at Bengaluru.

However, positivity has not ebbed out of the 32-year-old.

"See, I am somebody who does not think too much about it. I have been dealt a hand and I don't have much control on what hand I have been dealt with. But I really want to put in everything from my side.

"On every given opportunity, I want to go out there, score runs and win games. Whatever has to come its way, it will come," said Mayank.

When a player is aiming to make a comeback to the national side, he will have to amass a mountain of runs. Failure, even in one innings, is hardly an option.

Mayank was aware of the task ahead, but remained unfazed.

"I don't look at it as pressure, as



I look at it as opportunity. Like I said, wherever I play, whichever tournament I play I want to go and get runs. I am somebody who I can ask myself some tough questions over the years.

"I play with a lot of intensity. I am a very intense character. But off the field I am relaxed. I know how to switch off with the Vipasana (a breathing exercise) and as you said being a father also adds a bit to it," he said.

Runs have rarely dried up for Mayank in domestic circuit either.

The opener had scored 990 runs in the 2022-23 Ranji Trophy season, and he started the current term with two fifties for South Zone against North Zone in the Duleep Trophy semifinals.

Mayank was pretty chuffed about it too.

"I am very happy with the way I am batting through the last domestic season. I am glad that I am able to pile on runs on tough tracks.

"It is something that I am proud of. Even in the semifinals (Duleep Trophy) we were in a spot of bother and getting those runs was nice as the wicket was not the easiest. It definitely feels very good to put in a match winning contribution," he said.

Mayank could not start the Duleep Trophy final on a bright note, getting out for 28 off 47 balls.

But for him, winning the Duleep Trophy is as important as achieving his personal targets.

"It is of utmost importance. For me, as a player I play to win and that is the intensity I play with and all of us are putting in the hard yards.





Swasthya Sewa Abhiyan - 10, Special Health Camp

An initiative by National Health Mission, Assam to facilitate comprehensive health services especially for Mother and Child Health including specialities like Ophthalmic, Dental among others, all in one location at identified Health Blocks in Assam.



National Health Mission, Assam



भारत 2023 INDIA

Location wise list of Health Camps for the month of July, 2023

Sl.	District	Camp-1	Camp-2	Camp-3	Sl.	District	Camp-1	Camp-2	Camp-3
1	Baksa	24/07/2023 - DTBM Nabajagaran High School, Jalab BPHC	25/07/2023 - Chapra LP School, Digheli SD, Barama BPHC	27/07/2023 - Chemthiapaara LPS, Mushalpur BPHC	18	Jorhat	18/07/2023 - Kawoimari HS School, Kokojan BPHC	20/07/2023 - Jagduar ME School, Bhogamukh BPHC	25/07/2023 - Lahing Grant High School, Nakachari BPHC
2	Bajali	20/07/2023 - H. J. & Navasakti H.S. School, Majgoan, Bhawanipur BPHC	28/07/2023 - Bhalaguri HS, Balaguri, Nityananda BPHC		19	Kamrup	20/07/2023 - Krishna Nagar LP School, Bikarampur, Capital Zone	21/07/2023 - Durga Sarobar LP School, West Zone	28/07/2023 - Lalsingh Academy High School, Kharghuli, East Zone
3	Barpeta	20/07/2023 - Bagodi High School, Bagori, Nagaon BPHC	27/07/2023 - Kamargaon High School, Jamerkur, Kalgachia BPHC	28/07/2023 - Bhairarpam ME School, Mandia BPHC	20	Kamrup	18/07/2023 - Muduki Anchalic Janjatiya High School, Azara BPHC	27/07/2023 - Ramdia, Hajo BPHC	27/07/2023 - Tekelituka Baihata Sankar Sangha, Kamalpur BPHC
4	Biswanath	17/07/2023 - Dipora Bhim Bahadoor High School	20/07/2023 - Bharalijuli LP School, Gingia	21/07/2023 - Balijuri High School	21	Karbi Anglong	18/07/2023 - Inglongkiri Model Village, Inglongkiri SC, Manja	21/07/2023 - Adai Hanse LP School, Dengaon, Howraghat BPHC	28/07/2023 - Shotiana ME School, Bogijan, Chowkihola BPHC
5	Bongaigaon	21/07/2023 - Bagpara Nigamholla, Bongaigaon BPHC	22/07/2023 - Kacharibeti HS School, Srijangram BPHC	28/07/2023 - 2 no. Bashbari LP School, Manikpur BPHC	22	Karimganj	15/07/2023 - Malua High School	18/07/2023 - 100 No. Katabari LP School	20/07/2023 - 168 No. Dosnoli Moktab LP School
6	Cachar	18/07/2023 - Baikuntha Roy ME School, Chamarkuna, Cachar	27/07/2023 - Taranipur High School, Fulbari	31/07/2023 - Dervy TE Hospital	23	Kokrajhar	18/07/2023 - Alokjhar ME School, Gossaigaon BPHC	19/07/2023 - Saralpara HWC, Dotma BPHC	25/07/2023 - Maynaguri LP School, Kachugaon BPHC
7	Charaideo	20/07/2023 - Hilloni Noga LP School, Sapekhati BPHC	21/07/2023 - Bishrampur High School, Patsaku BPHC		24	Lakhimpur	21/07/2023 - Kadam, Boginodi BPHC	25/07/2023 - Kolakhowa Puja Mandir, Nawboicha BPHC	27/07/2023 - Kehutali HS School, Bihpuria BPHC
8	Chirang	27/07/2023 - Mozabari ME School, Champabati MPH	28/07/2023 - Choudhuripara LP School, Koilamoila SHC		25	Majuli	28/07/2023 - Gosaibari LP School playground		
9	Darrang	24/07/2023 - Hetemtolia LP School	27/07/2023 - Athiabari LP School	27/07/2023 - Arimari RPHC	26	Morigaon	17/07/2023 - Niz Gerua HS School, Laharighat Block	21/07/2023 - Batabari LP School, Bhurbandha Block	25/07/2023 - Makaria LP School, Jhargaoon Block
10	Dhemaji	27/07/2023 - Bera Chapori L.P. School, Jonai BPHC	27/07/2023 - Sonapur LP School, Gogamukh BPHC	28/07/2023 - Jorkata HS School, Bengenagarah BPHC	27	Nagaon	21/07/2023 - Singimari High School, Kathiatoli BPHC	25/07/2023 - Doomdumia, Dhing BPHC	28/07/2023 - Goroimari, Jakhalabandha BPHC
11	Dhubri	30/07/2023 - 397 No. 75 Chalakura Mondal LP, South Salmara Dhubri Part	31/07/2023 - Chaibari Tea Estate Hospital, Chapor BPHC	31/07/2023 - Mailkani Devi ME School Bhamundanga, Halakura BPHC	28	Nalbari	17/07/2023 - Naparapam LP School	27/07/2023 - Haribhanga Piplibari LP School	29/07/2023 - Tarmatha Balika LP School
12	Dibrugarh	18/07/2023 - Kenduguri TE, Naharani BPHC	21/07/2023 - Karam Bhawan, Boughpara TE, Barbaruah BPHC	27/07/2023 - Chabua TE, Panitola BPHC	29	Sivasagar	11/07/2023 - Moupuriya Natya Mandir, Kaloogaon BPHC	24/07/2023 - 98 No. BAM Gohain Gaon Primary School, Demow BPHC	24/07/2023 - Mackeypore Tea Garden, Galekey BPHC
13	Dima Hasao	21/07/2023 - Chotolabong Village, Langting BPHC	24/07/2023 - Chotohaffong LP School, Mahur BPHC	25/07/2023 - Sontila LP School, Gunjung BPHC	30	Sonitpur	14/07/2023 - Harchura Tea Garden, Balipara	18/07/2023 - Surjodoy High School, Phultola, Bihaguri	28/07/2023 - Nehru LP School, Sutiam, North Jamuguri
14	Goalpara	18/07/2023 - Gopalpur RC ME School, Matia BPHC	25/07/2023 - Rakhaldubi Ramdhenu Academy, Agia BPHC	27/07/2023 - Dhanbori ME School, Rangjuli BPHC	31	South Salmara	18/07/2023 - Daspara Community Hall, Dhenarkuti	25/07/2023 - Bamuner Alga GP Office	
15	Golaghat	20/07/2023 - Betioni TE Club Ghar, Charingia BPHC	21/07/2023 - Jamuguri TE, Kamarbondha Ali BPHC	28/07/2023 - Methonee TE, Bokakhat BPHC	32	Tinsukia	18/07/2023 - Govindapur Yuva Sangha, Hapjan BPHC	21/07/2023 - Philobari Tea Estate	25/07/2023 - Ratanpur High School, Sadiya
16	Hailakandi	25/07/2023 - Ramchandi TE Office Shade, Lala BPHC	27/07/2023 - Dholai Tea Garden Hospital, Katlicherra BPHC	29/07/2023 - Kanchanpur TE Nachghar, Algapur BPHC	33	Udalguri	18/07/2023 - Jagannathjhar Girls LP School, Khoirabari	21/07/2023 - Ramgarh LP School, Orang	28/07/2023 - No. 3 Amjuli LP School, Udalguri
17	Hojai	24/07/2023 - Dhanuwarbasti Janakalyan LP School, Amtola HWC	27/07/2023 - Moinapur Bazar ME School, Lanka BPHC		34	West Karbi Anglong	20/07/2023 - Thepli Aram, Kheroni	25/07/2023 - Charchim Community Hall, Zirikindeng BPHC	27/07/2023 - Hatigarh LP School, Baithalangso BPHC