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GUWAHATI, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2020

NEWS

Ramadan greetings

GUWAHATI, April 24: Governor Prof Jagdish Mukhi greeted the Muslim people of Assam on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan. In a message today, Prof Mukhi stressed that as the entire nation is in the grip of COVID-19, confining oneself inside and following the tenets of Ramadan should constitute the core of the celebrations. - Staff Reporter

Assistance

GUWAHATI, April 24: Around 1.5 lakh people stranded outside have been provided a subsistence allowance of Rs 2,000 by the State government. Forty nine people stranded abroad have been given \$ 1,000, while 829 stranded patients outside have been sent Rs 25,000 each. - Staff Reporter

RT-PCR test

GUWAHATI, April 24: Altogether 91 rapid antibody tests were conducted at Spanish Garden in the city. All the persons tested negative. The health department has now decided to conduct 25 RT-PCR tests there and match the result. - Staff Reporter

Body arrives

GUWAHATI, April 24: At the request of Assam, the Gujarat government has provided an ambulance to carry the body of one Rahul Barman of Baksa who died in Ahmedabad and it reached here in 40 hours. The death is not related to COVID-19. -Staff Reporter

2 ultras killed

DIPHU, April 24: Two Dimasa National Liberation Army cadres – Gadayeng Dimasa @ Rupson Thousan and Elwin Jigdung – were killed in an encounter this morning at Dugoidisa village under Diphu police station. An M-16 and an AK 47 rifles were recovered from them. - Corre-



It seems now helicopter is the best mode of travel!

p2 COVID-19 not manipulated

COVID-19

HS final year exam results likely in June

Sonowal visits storm-ravaged villages in Dibrugarh dist

Govt to conduct random tests in Dhubri district

p5

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: Noting that COVID-19 positive cases are being reported intermittently from Dhubri which also borders West Bengal where the situation is more serious, the State government has decided to conduct random testing at three locations of the district on Sunday.

"Around 150 random tests will be conducted at Bilasipara, Chapar and Dhubri town. This will not be rapid tests, but normal swab sample test through RT-PCR. However, the tests will be done through pooling of the swabs in groups of five," Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

In pool testing, throat

NEW DELHI, April 24:

The coronavirus pandemic

has taught the country "to be

self-reliant and self-suffi-

cient" and not look for solu-

tions abroad, Prime Minister

Narendra Modi told grass-

roots leaders on Friday as he

stressed that every village,

district and State should be

able to provide for its basic

Applauding people for their

grit in fighting the COVID-

19 outbreak, Modi said the

collective power of the vil-

lages is helping the country

move forward and compli-

mented the rural India for its

NEW DELHI, April 24:

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

Kejriwal on Friday said the

plasma therapy trial conduct-

ed on four COVID-19 pa-

tients here has yielded very

encouraging initial results,

giving a ray of hope to seri-

ously-ill coronavirus pa-

Addressing an online me-

dia briefing, Kejriwal said

more clinical trials of plasma

therapy will take place over

the next two-three days, and

his government will seek the

Centre's nod next week for

using the technique on all

seriously-ill COVID-19 pa-

needs.

swabs from two to five people are mixed together and tested in a single unit. All in-

Self-reliance biggest lesson

from pandemic: PM

simple and motivating man-

tra of Do Gaz Ki Doori to

popularise social distancing.

rural India showed the wis-

dom of the people, he said.

skills and knowledge of peo-

ple are put to test during the

time of a crisis, but India's

villages have displayed the

best of their efforts to fight

Notwithstanding the lim-

ited resources at its dispos-

al. India has taken the chal-

lenge proactively and showed

its resolve to move forward

with new energy and new

encouraging: Kejriwal

The Chief Minister ex-

pressed the hope that the

Union government will give

a go-ahead to the treatment

permission from the Central

government to conduct clin-

ical trial of plasma therapy

only on four serious COVID-

19 patients admitted at the

Lok Nayak Jai Prakash

very encouraging and good.

It gives a ray of hope to save

people's lives from corona-

"The initial results are

Narayan Hospital.

virus," he said.

"Ten days ago, we had got

tients in the city.

regimen.

the pandemic.

The slogan given by the

The Prime Minister said

Maharashtra 6430

dividual samples in a negative pool are regarded as negative while if a pooled sample tests

The Prime Minister was

interacting with gram pan-

chayat heads and members

to mark Panchayati Raj Di-

vas on Friday. The pro-

gramme was scheduled to be

held in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh

but was held by a video

bridge following the corona-

"This pandemic has

thrown at us new challenges

and problems which we have

never imagined, but it also

taught us a very good lesson

He was joined by SK Sa-

rin, the director of the Insti-

tute of Liver and Biliary Sci-

ence, at the press confer-

The four patients who

were given plasma therapy

have shown improvement in

their health conditions, res-

piratory rate and oxygen sat-

Two of the four patients,

whose condition was serious,

have now been shifted to gen-

eral ward from the ICU and

two others are also respond-

>> SEE PAGE 6

ing well, he said.

uration, Kejriwal said.

ence.

>> SEE PAGE 6

with a strong message.

virus-induced lockdown.

s on April 24, 2020 at 18:00 GMT +5:30

ways, he said.

positive, each person in the pool is tested individually to find out who is affected.

Pool testing increases the testing capacities of labs and saves time, reduces cost and lowers manpower.

In Dhubri, swabs of five people will be mixed together and so altogether 30 tests will be done initially at the Barpeta laboratory. All the three locations identified for the random tests in Dhubri district have containment zones.

"The decision to initiate random tests at Dhubri was taken because we are getting cases from the district at intervals, unlike in Golaghat where all the cases were reported at the same time," Sarma said.

>> SEE PAGE 6

Govt to provide medicines not available locally

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: The State government has engaged 4,000 MPWs (multi purpose workers) and ASHA workers to provide medicines not available locally to the doorstep of patients.

"The medicines should not be available within 10 km radius of the residence of the patients. Calls can be made at 104. We will also provide a WhatsApp number where the prescription can be sent," Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said today.

>> SEE PAGE 6

Good demand for Assam Tea amid challenges

Auction resumes



RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, April 24: As auction resumed on Thursday, Assam tea saw strong demand even for old season teas. However, despite the relaxation, challenges remained for the fund-starved industry, particularly in sending samples to buyers and getting payments on time.

"There was a strong demand for nominal weight of old season teas on offer at the auction centre in Guwahati yesterday. Teas are selling at Rs 20 to Rs 30 higher than prelockdown levels, and at times substantially higher for select better lines," secretary of the Guwahai Tea Auction Buyers Association Dinesh Bihani told The Assam Tribune.

However, very poor varieties of teas were neglected by the buyers and sold at below Rs 80.

Majority of buyers were upcountry buyers and there was some nominal support from big packeteers.

This week, some 28,306

packages (each package is on an average of 32 kg) were on offer at the GTAC and more than 90 per cent of it was sold. The next sale will have

season tea and the strong demand is likely to persist which might see them getting Rs 25 to Rs 30 more than last year, the industry feels. However, some hiccups

remained for the industry.

"It will be a challenge to send samples to the buyers properly and on time. Most of the buyers are from the COVID-infected places like Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat," secretary of the Tea Association of India Dipanjol Deka said.

The gardens are working with 50 per cent workers, yet providing ration and wages to the entire workforce,' he added.

"There is a fund crunch in the gardens. They need to get the payments of sale on time, or else it will be difficult to get them going. We are keeping our fingers crossed," he said.

Inter-dist movement from today for 3 days

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: The State government will facilitate the inter-district movement of around 1 lakh people in the next three days.

Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the DCs have received requests from 51,402 people who have own vehicles. After scrutiny, 19,000 requests have been rejected as they did not fall under the "emergency category" as specified by the Central government.

"The DCs have issued car passes for 12,206 people to travel on April 25. The remaining will be accommodated on the next two days," he

ceived calls from 41,651 stranded people who wanted to avail the free ASTC service. "We will try to cater to all

The 104 helpline had re-

these people and if required extend the number of days,' the Minister said. This section of people will

receive the e-tickets in the mobile through SMS which will also have details of the bus route and the location where they can board it.

>> SEE PAGE 6

391 students from Kota to arrive on Sunday STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: As

many as 391 teenagers currently studying in Kota, Rajasthan are being brought back to the State in 17 buses. The move was initiated af-

ter other States too began bringing back their students from Kota, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The State government has sent a team of eight police officials to escort the buses, which are likely to arrive in the State at 5 am on Sunday.

Tonight, they will halt at Kushinagar where UP government has arranged their stay for the night. Each student has paid Rs 7,000 for the journey and the State government has only provided the logistic support, the minister said.

As the students will come from red zone, they will have to be in institutional quarantine upon reaching.

"After 5 days, we will conduct COVID-19 tests and their release from quarantine will be decided by doctors. As they were in quarantine at Kota, the chances of them being infected are only on the way," Sarma said.

>> SEE PAGE 6

SC grants 3-week protection Treatment of COVID-19 patients Initial results of plasma therapy to Arnab Goswami

Alleged defamatory statements against Sonia

hus in Maharashtra.

persons, including two sad-

NEW DELHI, April 24:

The Supreme Court on Friday granted 3-week protection from any coercive action

tices DY Chandrachud and to Republic TV editor-in-MR Shah, in a hearing conchief Arnab Goswami on ducted through video con-FIRs against him for alleged ferencing, took note of the defamatory statements submissions of senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi and said against Congress Chief Sonia Gandhi he made in the that Goswami shall be pronews show on the recent Paltected against any coercive ghar mob-lynching of three steps for the telecast of the

Stay at HOME **Stay SAFE**

A bench comprising Jusnews channels. It also said that Goswami

can file anticipatory bail plea in connection with the FIRs after three weeks and he should cooperate with the investigating agency. The top court allowed

alleged defamatory news

programmes aired on the

Goswami to amend his plea for impleading the complainants against him as parties in the apex court and also permitted him to seek clubbing of FIRs lodged against him.

Centre's call to monitor movement of heavy vehicles through KNP

KALYAN BAROOAH

NEW DELHI, April 24: Reviewing the situation in the Kaziranga National Park in advance, the Centre on Friday directed the State government to develop a robust system to monitor the movement of heavily loaded vehicles plying through the National Highway through the wildlife sanctuary.

In the backdrop of the perennial floods that hit the Park ever year, Union Minister for Environment and Forest and Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar today held a meeting with State



klabaidya and officials of his Ministry and State Forest Department.

After chairing the meeting, the Minister Tweeted: "Chaired a meeting through video conferencing with Assam Forest Minister @Parissues related to the mitigation of losses of wildlife due to annual floods at Kaziranga and other protected areas of Assam.'

The minister said that he has directed the Assam forest department to make oversignages, gates and other cost-effective measures. "Also directed to make

pass, install speed governors,

overpasses, install speed governors, signages, gates and other cost effective mitigation measures for prevention of killings of wild animals due to accidental hits by vehicles," Javadekar tweeted.

"Also asked the State government to develop robust systems to monitor the movement of heavily loaded vehicles plying on roads passing through the KNP in Assam," he tweeted.

>> SEE PAGE 6

Tea industry staring at huge loss, reveals NETA report

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, APRIL 24: The North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) has done a SWOT analysis of the

impact of the Covid-19 lockdown of the Assam tea industry, for assessing both positive and negative attributes, and to determine how best to sustain in this difficult time.

Stating that the industry will be able to harvest the second flush teas - harvesting months being May and June - the report said that as every year the second flush teas fetch better price.

"There is no leftover stock with tea traders spread across

India because there was no supply of tea in March. Very small quantity of tea will move out of Assam in April. Tea in Assam is seasonal in nature and the peak plucking

More than 2,698,733 declared cases have been

The country with the most deaths is the United States

with 49,963, followed by Italy with 25,549, Spain with

22,157, France with 21,856 and Britain 18,738.

registered around the globe

Data as on Friday

Death toll from the pandemic 190,089

At least 762,060 patients recovered

corona count

October when about 60 per cent of tea leaves are plucked. This will act to the industry's advantage," NETA adviser Bidyananda Barkakoty said. The report said that as it

months are July, August, September and

would take some more time for the supply chain to stabilize, tea producers would face huge liquidity crunch and the total revenue loss from March 23 to April 14 would be in the range of Rs 1,200 crore. "The crop loss in March and

April will continue till May because of the necessity of skiffing of overgrown leaves due to the lockdown.

>> SEE PAGE 6

International —

B'desh won't accept any more Rohingya: FM



DHAKA, April 24: Bangladesh won't accept any more members of the Rohingya Muslim minority. Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said, amid reports that hundreds of refugees were stranded at sea trying to enter the country.

"We have decided we won't allow any new Rohingya. This is for the normal time in addition to the COV-ID-19 situation. We don't want to accept any people in areas that we want to keep protected," Momen told Efe news on Thursday.

It was reported on Wednesday that two fishing trawlers carrying an estimated 500 Rohingya women, men, and children were in the Bay of Bengal after Malaysian authorities pushed them away.

The two trawlers are headed towards Bangladesh a week after an earlier vessel carrying nearly 400 Rohingya refugees arrived there on April 15.

Momen admitted that they had reports about the two boats but said the government's priority was the top protect the refugee camp area where tens of thousands Rohingyas are currently living.

"It's a crowded area. If one infected person comes somehow he will spoil everything," he said. Momen said ongoing unrest in Myanmar's Rakhine state between the Arakan Army and Myanmar Army is another reason for Bangladesh

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to turn back the Rohingya.

"Seemingly, a war is going on between Rakhine Army and the Myanmar Army. It a battle zone... Moreover, they (Myanmar) released 800 Rohingvas before the election. They were sent back to Rakhine, so we don't know who is coming," he said. The Minister also criticised the European Union and the British government for supporting Myanmar and urged the global leadership and the UN to take the responsibilities of the Rohingya. "Global leadership, the UN

should take care of them. Let them take these Rohingya. How many (more) we would accept? Many leaders say many things. They have no shortage of land. Let them accept the Rohingya. Everyone is being pushed towards us."

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has also expressed its concern over the Rohingya stranded at sea and urged greater coordination-and responsibility-sharing between states to address the maritime movements of refugees and asylum-seekers in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea.

"We are increasingly concerned about reports of failure to disembark vessels in distress and of the grave immediate risk, this poses to the men, women, and children on board,' Indrika Ratwatte, UNHCR Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, said in a statement. - IANS

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& Family Members

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Seema Barua

(Maa), Pinky & Ujjal

Death Anniversary

NASA wants people to watch historic SpaceX launch from home

This is the first time NASA astronauts will launch from American soil on a rocket built in the US since the end of the Space Shuttle programme

Since then the US space agency has relied on Russia's Soyuz capsule to ferry its astronauts to and from the ISS, an arrangement that has cost NASA about \$81 million per passenger, said the report.

Naturally, the excitement about witnessing a historic mission would have drawn a lot of people to Florida next month and in normal circumstances, there could hardly have been any reason for NASA to not promote it. In view of the spread of



COVID-19, NASA is urging people to watch the event online.

"A lot of the folks on the line here know that when we launch to space

from the Kennedy Space Center, it draws huge, huge crowds, and that is not right now what we're trying to do," Bridenstine said.

"We're trying to make sure we have access to the International Space Station, without drawing the massive amount of crowds that we usually would," he added.

The Demo-2 mission will be the final major step before NASA's Commercial Crew Programme certifies Crew Dragon for operational, long-

duration missions to the space station.

This certification and regular operation of Crew Dragon will enable NASA to continue the important research and technology investigations taking place onboard the station. NASA selected SpaceX and Boeing to create integrated spacecraft, rockets and associated systems to carry astronauts on NASA missions. - IANS

China will pay a price for causing pandemic: Pompeo

WASHINGTON, April 24: Blaming China for the coronavirus pandemic, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said it has caused a "huge challenge" for the global as well as the US economy by not sharing the information they had and the ruling Communist Party "will pay a price" for it.

COVID-19 restrictions, the historic

SpaceX mission to launch two NASA

astronauts to the International Space

Station (ISS) on May 27 is set to be a much quieter affair than it would have

been in normal times, with the US

space agency asking people not to trav-

el to Florida to witness the spectacle.

this launch, but to do so from home,"

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine

was quoted as saying in a press con-

The SpaceX's Crew Dragon space-

ference on Thursday by The Verge.

craft, carrying NASA astronauts Rob-

ert Behnken and Douglas Hurley, is

scheduled to lift off on a Falcon 9 rock-

et from Launch Complex 39A at the

"We are asking people to join us in

China has come under increasing pressure from nations across the world, including the US, over the lack of transparency in its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, which has so far claimed more than 190,870 lives globally, with America leading the tally with nearly 50,000 deaths. President Donald Trump had

said his administration was looking into reports that the novel coronavirus "escaped" from a Wuhan virology laboratory before it spread to the world.

"I am very confident that the Chinese Communist Party will pay a price for what they did here, certainly from the United States. I don't know exactly what form that

will take," Pompeo told Fox News in an interview on Thursday night. However, he underlined that the focus was not on China now but the US administration's goal is to control the virus and revive the American economy.

"It's on making sure we keep Americans safe, take down the health risk, keep people healthy as we can, and get this economy going back." he said.

"But I am very confident. I

talk to business people all around the country. I talk to ordinary citizens — people who have put their lives at risk over the last weeks. They know that this is a result of this virus that originated in Wuhan, China, and they know that the Chinese government didn't do the things it needed to do. There will be a cost associated with that," Pompeo asserted.

Pompeo said there will be a time to make sure that "we get this right" and to make

sure that the US is not dependent on China for its pharmaceutical goods.

The top US diplomat said Americans are angry over China's handling of the coronavirus outbreak and President Trump Global economy

also feels the

same way. "China caused an enormous amount of pain, loss of life, and now a huge challenge for the global economy and the American economy as well, by not sharing the information they had. We still don't have full transparency from the Chinese Communist Party...there are things we don't know...We haven't been able to get our team on the ground to do the work that it

"This is an ongoing challenge in that the Chinese Communist Party and the World Health Organisation have failed to do the things they have the responsibility to do when they have a pandemic inside of their country," he said. - PTI

needs to do," Pompeo said.

manipulated or constructed: WHO

GENEVA, April 24: All available evidence to date suggests that the novel coronavirus has a natural animal origin and was not a manipulated or constructed virus, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said.

'Many researchers have been able to look at the genomic features of SARS-CoV-2 and have found that evidence does not support that SARS-CoV-2 is a laboratory construct," said the global health watchdog, stressing that if it were a constructed virus, its genomic sequence would show a mix of known elements, but "this is not the case", reports Xinhua news agency.

The novel coronavirus was identified in early January and its genetic sequence shared publicly on January 11-12, the WHO noted.

According to the world health body, the full genetic sequence of the novel coronavirus from the early human cases and the sequences of many other

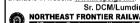
human cases from China and all over the world showed that the novel coronavirus has an ecological origin in bat populations.

Although the intermediate animal host has not been identified, the WHO said, all available evidence indicated the novel coronavirus has a zoonotic

source of the outbreak in China, a number of investigations are currently underway or planned.

As of Friday morning, the global number of coronavirus cases stood at 2,708,470, with 190,788 deaths. - IANS

Station in Lumding Division on commissio basis for a period of 05 (five) years Advertised Value: ₹1.00/-. E-Tender wi



Cases in China's Hubei drop below 50

for 1st time WUHAN, April 24: The number of confirmed COV-ID-19 cases in Hubei province dropped to below 50 for the ww.ireps.gov.in. first time since the pandemic originated in its capital Wuhan last December, a health

As of Thursday, no new confirmed or suspected cases had been reported in the province for the 20th consecutive day, said Mi Feng, spokesperson for the National Health Commission, at a press con-

According to the commission's daily report, Hubei had 47 confirmed cases of COV-ID-19 on Thursday. Mi also said all the COVID-19 patients in serious condition in Wuhan have been cured.

official said on Friday.

ference in Beijing.

The last patient in serious condition in Wuhan was cured on Friday, reducing the number of such patients in the city to zero, the spokesperson added.

As of Friday, China reported 83.884 coronavirus cases with 4,636 deaths, much less that other countries, including the US which now accounts for the highest number of infections and fatalities in the world. – IANS

Lost soccer male fans

love soccer or are a die-hard fan of football teams, read this carefully. Researchers have found that lost football games may trigger heart attacks in male fans.

"Strong emotions can induce heart attacks and our study indicates that losing a home game can affect supporters," said study author Dr Lukasz Kuzma of the Medical University of Bialystok in Poland. "The findings suggest that the mental and emotional stress of defeat can provoke cardiac events," Kuzma add-

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ender Notice No.: 04-ENGG-RNY-202 dated 22-04-2020. E-Tenders are invited by ned for the following work Tender No. 1. Brief Description of Item tation colony and New Bongaigaon Railwa ospital maintenance of staff quarters, roa drains and pipe lines and other water suppl orks etc. and line section maintena staff quarters and stations, service buildin tc. at Jogighopa, Abhayapuri Asa Majgaon Assam including gate goomtie man quarters, level crossings, bridge wayembankment and all other assets fro KM 0.00 to KM 34.00 etc. (II) Zone-Bongaigaon, New Bongaigaon & Dangtal a fficer's bunglows, officer's rest house a officer's club. (for one years). (Balance work ender Value: ₹3,44,65,569.15, Earne Money: ₹3,22,300/-, Cost of Tende nt ₹10 000/- Date of closin E-tender: 15-05-2020 at 13.00 hrs. ning of Tender: 15.00 hrs. of 15-05 2020 at DRM (W), Rangiya. For details

DRM (W), Rang

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are invited for the following works: Iter No.1. Brief Description of item: Balance provision of 3x6.1m R.C.C. Box at km 386/2-3 and 2x6.1m R.C.C. Box at km 387 3-4 in Nakachari - Seleng Hat to avoid water logging. Tender Value: ₹2,23,66,286/-; Earnest Money: ₹2,61,800/-. Item No.2. Brief Description of item: (1) Tinsukia Division Replacement of 03 Nos existing bridge to 1x 2.00m RCC Box of suitable size by Box Pushing Method. (Br. No. 356, 1 & 2). (2 Replacement of 03 Nos existing bridge to 1x 2.00m RCC Box of suitable size by Box Pushing Method. (Br. No. 18, 115 & 157 (3) Replacement of 02 Nos existing bridg by 1x 2.00m RCC Box of suitable size b Box Pushing Method. (Br. No. 178 & 179 Tender Value: ₹4,24,89,349/-; Earnes Money: ₹3,62,500/-. Item No.3. Brie Description of item: At Dibrugarh Town Barbari colony- Replacement of overagec split bamboo Qtr with Type-III Qtr (8 Units) (Qtr No- E/31ABCD, E/54AB, M/13A, EL/ 46B). Tender Value: ₹1,83,17,727/-Earnest Money: ₹2,41,600/-. All above

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DRM (Work)/Tinsukia

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E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs on 18-05-2020 and **Opened at** 16:00 hrs on 18-05-2020. The complete information

with the tender document of abov

hrs of 18-05-2020 in website

New York City toll at 16,388; study says 1.9 mn infected and were not those isolated at

Damage from a tornado is seen on Thursday in the Yaupon Cove subdivision in the aftermath

of a tornado that struck a day earlier, in Onalaska, Texas. - AP/PTI

NEW YORK, April 24: As deaths in New York City from COVID-19 has reached 16,388, a study has shown that at least one in five persons or 1.9 million there may have had the disease.

Governor Andrew Cuomo said on Thursday that based on sample anti-body tests the study concluded that 22.1 per cent of the city's 8.6 million residents had had COVID-19.

That would work out to 1.9 million, although officially only 263,460 confirmed cases have been reported.

The discrepancy points to about 1.5 million having had a milder attack or not having any symptoms or not sought treatment or testing. A significant outcome of the

study is that the death rate from the disease is much lower than the 6 per cent with the lower number of officially reported cases coming down to about 0.5 per cent using the higher number of cases from the study.

carriers of the disease un-

knowingly spreading it.

At the same time, the study points to higher risks from the large number of silent

Unlike the test used to diagnose if a person has COV-ID-19, the anti-body test of the blood shows if a person has had had the disease by looking for anti-bodies produced by the body to fight it.

While in the case of many diseases having had it gives immunity, scientists say it may also happen with COVID-19 but it has not yet been definihome leading to varying results between two groups. "So we have to analyse

that, what does that do to the

numbers," he said. Officially, the first COVID-19 case in New York City was confirmed on March 1 when a healthcare worker who had travelled to Iran tested positive.



tively proven scientifically. The study was based on 3,000 samples collected from 40 locations like shops around the state over two days starting on Monday

While sharing the results during his briefing, Cuomo said the findings were preliminary and put some caveats. The people tested were outside their homes

lence of COVID-19 in the city's population may indicate that the disease was circulating in the city much earlier. Although the total number

of cases and deaths continue to climb, the pandemic appears to be ebbing as the number of new cases reported is coming down, despite a small spike on Wednesday. – IANS

LONDON, April 24: If you

ed. – IANS

games may cause heart attacks in

COVID-19 not viruses isolated from

To better understand the

be closed at 11:00 hrs. on 25-05-2020. The



15-2020. Name of work: Awarding of Hall Contract at Dagaon Railway Station i Lumding Division on commission basis for a period of 05 (five) years. Advertised Value: ₹1.00/-. E-Tender will be closed a 11:00 hrs. on 25-05-2020. The complete Sr. DCM/Lumdin

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Re-Tender). E-tenders are invited by t undersigned for the following work: Name of work: Hiring of 4-wheeler commercia ehicle (Scorpio/Bolero/Innova (Crysta llong with Driver) for use of Sr. DCM Lumding for a period of 02 (two) years .e. 730 days). Approx. Tender Value 7,37,300/-; Earnest Money: ₹14,800/-E-Tender will be closed at 11:00 hrs. or 9-05-2020 and Opened at 12:00 hrs. or 29-05-2020 and **Opened at** 12,00 his. of 29-05-2020. The complete information with the tender documents of above 4 ender will be available from 29-04-2020 upto 11:00 hrs. of 29-05-2020 in websit

ww.ireps.gov.in Sr. DCM/Lumding
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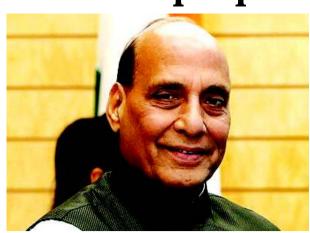
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GODOWN

Rajnath reviews armed forces preparedness



manders of the armed forces to ensure that India's adversaries do not get any opportunity to exploit the current situation arising out of the coronavirus pandemic, officials said.

Singh reviewed the operation-

ADKJ #DID YOU KNOW ?

NEW DELHI, April 24: De- al preparedness of the armed fence Minister Rajnath Singh forces and asked the top militoday directed the top com- tary brass to be "fully vigilant" to deal with any possible external security challenge facing the nation, they said.

Officials the top Army brass ation along the Line of Control At a high-level meeting, in Jammu and Kashmir as well in areas close to the border

Singh also directed the armed forces to ensure judicial utilisation of financial resources in view of adverse impact of the pandemic on the country's economy.

Officials said Singh asked top military commanders to identify tasks and projects which could assist revival of the economy.

The meeting was attended by Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane, Chief of Navy Staff Admiral Karambir Singh, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar and Secretary Defence (Finance) Gargi Kaul.

Top military officials from key apprised Singh about the situ- commands of the Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force also attended the meeting through video conference. - PTI



A woman buys vermicelli from a roadside kiosk ahead of the holy fasting month of Ramzan, during the nationwide

NGT lays stress on scientific

National Green Tribunal today directed a team, comprising the Centre and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), to supervise handling and scientific disposal of COV-ID-19 waste in accordance

with the guidelines. The tribunal said that while the generated waste.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the Chief Secretary of States and Union Territories to closely monitor the scientific storage, transport, handling, management and disposal of COVID-19 waste as its

"At the national level, let a high-level task team of Ministry of Environment, Health, Urban Development, Jal Shakti, Defence and CPCB supervise the handling and scientific disposal of COVID-19 waste in accordance with the guidelines," the bench said.

It also directed the state departments of environment and pollution control boards to ensure compliance of Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016 and furnish action take report to CPCB.

"Let CPCB take further steps and furnish a consolidated report to the NGT on the steps taken and the ground status as on May 3, 2020. The report may be furnished by June 15," it said.

The NGT further said that improper handling poses a grave the COVID-19 pandemic has threat to the environment and affected a number of people

"There is a need to incorpo-

than one-and-a-half lakh peo- trol Committee to put in seriple have died the world over. ous efforts to mitigate the pos-Disposal of COVID-19 sible risk of unscientific dispos-

Mumbai cops to use drones for enforcing lockdown

MUMBAI, April 24: Drones will be used to enforce the lockdown for the coronavirus outbreak to ensure there are no violations in Mumbai during the month of Ramzan that begins on Saturday, a police official said.

Drones will be used to monitor if people gather on terraces of buildings and around mosques to break fasts or offer prayers, he said.

Religious leaders have been spoken to and they have assured cooperation, he added.

People are being told to observe rituals keeping in mind the lockdown in place for the coronavirus outbreak, and help will be taken from NGOs etc., to deliver food to those staying in red zone containments areas, said Mumbai Police spokesperson Pranay Ashok.

"There will be adequate police deployment during this period, including personnel from State Reserve Police Force, Riot Control Police, Quick Response Teams. Drones will be used to check if people are gathering on terraces of buildings or mosques to break fasts or offer al of bio-medical waste. – PTI prayers," he added. – PTI

disposal of COVID-19 waste NEW DELHI, April 24: The health of people. across the world and more trol Board and Pollution Con-

Bio Medical Waste Rules deal with waste generated in dealing with infectious diseases, the coronavirus pandemic has presented further challenge in terms of capacity to scientifically dispose of

waste in general bins so as to be part of municipal waste or unscientific handling sewage and other liquid waste without safeguards can also be hazardous, the tribunal said.

rate best practices in the light of further experience and new thoughts emerging from time to time, apart from continued supervision and monitoring, compiling data in an online format, use of electronic/digital manifest system to track and log COVID-19 waste," it said.

There is also need for creating awareness about the precautions and steps to be taken by all handlers and workers as well as citizens, the tribunal added. The green panel had on Tuesday urged the State Pollution Con-

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WORLD MALARIA DAY

(25th April, 2020)

Let's join hands and pledge to fight against Malaria

ZERO MALARIA **STARTS** WITH ME



NHM/19-20/D/236

Symptoms of Malaria

- High fever with severe cold
- Vomiting and Headache
- Sweating and feeling tired after fever is over.

To get rid of Malaria

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- Protect yourself from mosquito bite and use LLIN/Mosquito net while sleeping
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MESSAGE FOR TODAY

A good laugh is sunshine in the house.

- WILLIAM M THACKERAY

The Assam Tribune

Rejuvenating economy

With the Covid-19 cases going up to 35 in Assam following the detection of a positive patient at Dhubri, rapid tests have started across the State, beginning with a containment zone in State capital Guwahati. Although these quick-time tests that can produce results in 15 minutes are not confirmatory, yet those are essential for surveillance in view of the rapid spread that the coronavirus is capable of. While the number of positive cases in Assam has till date been far less compared to the figures in many other regions, there can be no room for any complacency. This, together with the fact that the overall screening in the State has been much less than the desired standards, rapid testing is a must under the current circumstances. Meanwhile, the medical college hospitals in the State which had been kept aside for Covid-19 patients have now been made open for general patients, given that there has not been any rush of Covid-19 patients in the State. The arrangement with private hospitals to get the existing patients at the medical college hospitals had drawbacks, resulting in cost escalation for such patients, many of which come from weak financial background. The emerging situation vis-a-vis the Covid-19 outbreak also serves to highlight the urgent need for investing heavily in public healthcare infrastructure. A robust public healthcare delivery system as in States like Kerala can come handy in tackling such pandemic.

The ongoing lockdown seems to have arrested the transmission of the coronavirus to a large extent in many States, indubitably a welcome development. Had the virus spread in the manner it had done in countries like Italy and the USA, the havoc such a catastrophe can trigger will be unimaginable in a populous and developing nation like India where public healthcare facilities continue to be grossly inadequate to tackle a massive pandemic. But it would be suicidal to lower our guards and in all probability the nationwide lockdown is going to get another extension once it comes to a close on May 3. At the same time, no less Herculean will be the economic challenge that stands to confront the country after the lockdown is withdrawn. The Government would, therefore. do well to get many of the activities linked to the masses' livelihood restarted in a phased manner without compromising on the required norms, especially physical distancing. Partial reopening of industrial activities will also have to be considered on the conclusion of the ongoing phase of the lockdown. Bereft of their livelihood, a vast segment of the poor are staring at an uncertain future while a large majority of the middle class, too, will feel the heat of the shutdown with the spectre of job loss looming large. Coupled with disturbing fallouts of a sluggish economy, unemployment is going to be high post-lockdown and how the Government goes about the task of rejuvenating the economy will be very crucial in the days ahead.

Covid-19 conundrum

Even as many countries, following the strategy of China where Covid-19 had originated, impose lockdowns on their citizens to 'break the contagion chain' and stem the spread of the coronavirus which might otherwise overwhelm their health systems, this affliction has become something of a conundrum as far as the extent of its spread and the deaths it has caused is concerned. Health experts around the world have been questioning the statistics being churned out by the John Hopkins University tracker on the number of people infected or killed by the virus at the global level, the number who have recovered, as also the breakdown of figures for individual nations. At the moment of writing, the figure of afflicted worldwide stands around 20 lakhs and the number of dead at around 2 lakhs, most of these being accounted for by developed nations. The US by itself accounts for almost 9 lakh infected and over 50 thousand dead, with Spain (2 lakh/22 thousand), Italy (1.9 lakh/25 thousand), France (1.6 lakh/22 thousand) and the UK (1.5 lakh/19 thousand) being some of the examples of high rate of infections and fatalities. However, contrary to the logical assumption that countries with extremely poor health systems would be more severely impacted, many less developed nations in Asia, Africa and South America are showing lesser numbers, Indonesia (8 thousand/650), Bangladesh (4 thousand/150), South Africa (4 thousand/ 75) being pertinent examples.

At this moment India, mercifully, has around 24 thousand afflictions and just over 700 deaths, which seems to be on the lower side given that it is the second most populated nation in the world. Though a Government assessment states that the numbers are low due to the lockdown and other measures taken, how far this is true remains moot. For instance, at the inception stage of the lockdown lakhs of migrant workers had made their way back to their native places, giving rise to concerns that it would lead to spread of the pandemic. This has not, thankfully, happened and most rural areas are apparently free of the infection. A similar poser has been raised by the instance of Dharavi, Asia's largest slum and the most densely populated area of the world, where practices like 'social distancing' and 'quarantine' are almost impossible. Yet Dharavi at the moment has just over 200 cases and 13 deaths, which is something the authorities have to be thankful for. It is of little use, of course, speculating if some other reasons apart from administrative measures are responsible for the prevailing situation in India, and health experts no doubt will factor them in while deciding whether to extend the lockdown or not. However, given the low level of testing in the country, as also the fear that many cases are asymptomatic, the Government needs to act cautiously while responding to the numbers.

How Assam prepared its war against corona

■ Prof Subhash Khanna

n these times of the widespread crisis, there lies immense responsibility on the Government and the medical fraternity of a region to prepare for successfully tackling any impending pandemic, such as the Covid-19. The State of Assam in the far east of India has set an example of a unique coalition of the Government and the private hospitals when they decided to fight out the Covid-19 battle jointly.

As regards to our preparedness, the first proposal was not to repeat the mistake of keeping the Covidinfected patients in all the hospitals, as done by other developed and developing countries. This had led to widespread contagion of the coronavirus among other non-infected patients as well as the medical staff in those regions. Further, the limited availability of PPEs or adequate protective gear led to the healthcare workers being exposed to infected patients. As in April, 25% of the healthcare workers in the USA have been allegedly exposed to Covid-19 due to this. The USA is also facing a major ventilator shortage with an additional requirement of approximately 50,000 units. Therefore, during mid-March, the Health Minister of Assam, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, invited all the private hospitals of Guwahati to come up with a Covid-19 preparedness plan. In the meeting, everyone's suggestions were taken and discussed, and a plan was subsequently devised.

First and foremost, a decision was taken to send the identified and suspected Covid cases to only the government hospitals. Second, all medical colleges of the State were converted into Covid hospitals. Follow-

ing this, the Health Minister, via signing of an MoU with the private hospitals, decided to shift a total of 753 patients from the Gauhati Medical College Hospital (GMCH), which otherwise has a capacity of 2,500 beds, to other private hospitals. Within two days the MoU was signed and the patients were shifted out of the medical college. It was fur-

ther decided with mutual understanding that these patients would be covered under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Atal Amrit Abhiyan scheme wherein they would be treated at almost one-sixth of the typical charges. Food and other amenities would be provided free of cost to all patients, similar to the GMCH. This model was replicated in Dibrugarh and Silchar as well. The only services to be provided in medical college hospitals were limited to cancer treatment (in the adjacent

cancer hospitals) and obstetric cases. A decision was also taken to strengthen the paramedical staff for any eventuality by bringing in 500 trainee nurses from study centres and along with final year MBBS students a strong young force was trained in a short time.

In the meantime, the Health Minister took the initiative of starting five prefabricated Covid hospitals in different parts of the State having a capacity of 300 beds each specifically to treat Covid-19 patients. This writer is glad to share here that his proposal of starting a quarantine centre was appreciated and a decision was taken

to build a quarantine centre at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium, Sarusajai, with a capacity of 1,000 people. The quarantine centre was fabricated and made operational in less than a week's time. With regard to doctors and other medical staff, the model followed in the UK has been pursued. It involves seven days' duty in ICU with two weeks quarantine. For working doctors and other med-

As an outcome of these preparations, at present with only 35 positive Covid cases, the Government of Assam has made available more than 5,000 beds for Covid patients. The State of Assam is now fully ready to fight the Covid-19 pandemic due to the surefooted preparedness strategy that is in place.

ical personnel, it was decided with concurrence of the Tai Group of Hotels that the Taj Vivanta Hotel in Guwahati would be set aside for their self-quarantine period. Similarly, in other districts, the Minister chose the best of the hotels for lodging of the Covid-19 medicos and paramedical staff. Further, for isolating suspected Covid patients, the quarantine centres were made ready in three days' time. A decision was also taken to convert some of the Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and civil hospitals into Covid hospitals. And all this was done even before a single positive case of coronavirus infection

was detected in the State. The dynamic Health Minister travelled to various parts of the State placing his own life at risk along with most of the senior health officials to supervise all preparations personally.

vise all preparations personally.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is of great importance to the doctors and nurses when it comes to protecting themselves from potentially infectious patients, toxic medi-

cations and other dangerous substances used in healthcare delivery. The shortage of PPE poses tremendous challenges to provision of healthcare in times of a pandemic as Covid-19. Giving this utmost priority, PPEs were ordered directly from China in large numbers by the Government of Assam through chartered flights. Making this a reality, 50,000 PPEs arrived on April 15 directly from Guangzhou. At the time when the first Covid-19 case was reported, approximately 14,000 PPE

were available in the State. Along with the latest addition, the total PPE stock in Assam has gone up to 1,50,000. Assam has been the first State in the country to do so. Moreover, ventilators have also been procured by the Government of Assam on a war footing. A half-constructed ICU block was completed in a few months' time at Gauhati Medical College with a capacity of 54 beds. With this, the total strength of ICU beds with ventilators at this premier institution went up to 162.

In private hospitals, Triage Booths have been established where emergency screening of patients is being Emergency Departments/Rooms (ER) and constitute of tents that have been set up outside the hospital campus or in the garages. At first, the patient is kept isolated in the ambulance wherein an attendant is brought to the screening area and asked preliminary questions regarding the medical history of the patient. If the patient has a history of cough, fever, breathing difficulty or any other suggestive history, etc., he/she would be immediately shifted to the Covid hospital or the nearest medical college. If the medical history suggests otherwise, he/she is now assessed and examined by the ER resident or consultant with full PPE gear. Thus, only one doctor, fully equipped with PPE, is exposed to the patient. Once the examination is satisfactory, the doctor gives a go-ahead for the patient to be admitted in the hospital. Strict orders have been given to all non-Covid hospitals not to admit any suspected Covid patient with fever/ breathing difficulties, on failure of which judicial action would be taken. Further, it has been notified that no emergency patient that needs treatment would be refused to be admitted by any private hospital.

done. These are placed outside the

As an outcome of these preparations, at present with only 35 positive Covid cases, the Government of Assam has made available more than 5,000 beds for Covid patients. Therefore, the State of Assam is now fully ready to fight the Covid-19 pandemic due to the sure-footed preparedness strategy that is in place.

One wishes that this model is followed by other States and the developing countries so that the Covid-19 pandemic is efficiently tackled with minimal contagion and mortality rates.

Race for Covid-19 vaccine

■ Dr Kandarpa Saikia

urrently, there is no successful drug for treating coronavirus disease or Covid-19. A vaccine may be the most effective solution to end this pandemic. A recent article published in The New York Times opined that a global race for a coronavirus vaccine is under way and the United States, China and Europe are battling to be the first to find a cure. The article also stated that US President Donald Trump has asked the experts about making sure a vaccine is produced on American soil, to ensure that the United States can control its supplies. At this point of time, it is difficult to predict who will get the scientific accolade, the patents including the revenues, but it is sure to be in short supply as the government concerned will ensure its availability for their own people first. It is to be recalled that in the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, Australia was among the first to manufacture a vaccine, but did not immediately export it because it wanted vaccines for its citizens first.

Laboratory-modified viruses (or bacteria) are used as vaccine; when injected in human body, it develops immunity but not enough to make humans sick. These are biological products but new technology platforms for quick production of vaccines are coming up.

Bringing a vaccine to the market required 10 to 20 years of processing time in the past. Normally, in the pre-clinical stage, a vaccine which is developed in the laboratory is tested on animals. If it proves to be safe and capable of producing required immune response, then it enters a three-phase very long clinical/human trials to standardize the safety, efficacy and side-effects before the vaccine actually reaches a clinic or a hospital.

According to the latest New England Journal of Medicine, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), an international non-profit-making organization working and coordinating for the preparation of vaccines globally, laid out an accelerated version of this process so that it will be more suitable to a pandemic. Cautiously, the CEPI has not declared a timeline to its accelerated concept but an estimated time period of 12 to 18 months is taken into account. In this paradigm, different phases of trials will proceed including scaling up of production capacity. As per the CEPI's latest report of April 8, 2020, 115 vaccine candidates are in varying stages of development out of which 78 are confirmed as active. Most of the active projects are in exploratory or preclinical stages with their existing technology platforms like peptide based, recombinant protein, DNA, RNA, etc. However, the good news is that six candidates have recently moved into Phase I clinical trials, including 'mRNA-1273' of Moderna, USA, 'Ad5-nCoV' of CanSino Biologics, China, 'INO-4800' of Inovio. USA, 'LV-SMENP-DC' and pathogen-specific 'APC' of Shenzhen Geno-Immune Medical Institute of China and 'ChAdOx1' of Oxford University.

In India, Zydus Cadila and Serum Institute have been listed by the WHO for developing the virus but Biological E, Bharat Biotech, Indian Immuunologicals and Mynvax are also working on it.

The CEPI, established in 2017 in Switzerland, is an innovative partnership between public, private, philanthropic and civil organizations, currently raising a fund of 2 billion dollars (Rs 200 crore) to fight against the coronavirus. As on today, the CEPI has already provided millions of dollars as initial funding to Curevac of Germany, Inovio, Moderna, University of Pittsburgh and Novavax of USA, University of Hong Kong, Institute of Pasture, France, University of Oxford and the University of Queensland to develop Covid-19 vaccine candidates with a hope that at least one candidate vaccine would be ready by 2021. The organization is also of the opinion that it is taking a financial risk with its accelerated 'pandemic paradigm' because it may not be materialized.

Whatever the consequences would be, the accelerated paradigm of CEPI is being implemented now and the race has begun. As soon as the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes Covid-19, was shared by the Chinese Government on January 11, 2020, it triggered intense global R&D activities to develop a vaccine. Remarkably, Moderna Inc., a biotechnological company collaborating with the scientists of the NI-AID (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases) of the USA, performed clinical testing of its 'vaccine candidate' named mRNA-1273 in just two months time after sequence identification. The first volunteer received its first vaccine dose on March 16 last. Forty-five healthy adult volunteers between 18 to 55 years of age will receive different doses of this vaccine over an approximate period of six weeks. After the completion of this Phase I clinical trial. Phase II and III would be completed by this year end and probably the vaccine will be ready in 2021. Moderna has been working for years and is credited for developing seven vaccines including the one for Zika virus.

Unlike a biological vaccine, messenger RNA (a singlestranded molecule that is complementary to one of the DNA strands of a gene) developed with genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2 has shown the capability of reducing huge viral load on rabbits during preclinical trials last month. It is expected to boost robust immunity on humans against Covid-19; if successful, it will work like a software. CureVac, another biotechnology company in Germany, which is also undertaking mRNA vaccine production, is expected to start its clinical trials in May. The company says that they will be able to scale up the production up to 400 million doses per year once it is ready. 'Ad5nCoV' is a vaccine developed by CanSino Biologics of China. It has arrived in Phase II trial along with the Academy of Military Medical Science of China. This vaccine candidate is genetically engineered and is expected to be ready in a year's time.

The candidate vaccine 'ChAdOx1 nCoV-19' of Oxford University, a recombinant viral vector vaccine, has started its human trials on April 23 last. The efficacy results of Phase III trial will be available by the autumn 2020, Sarah Gilbert, vaccinologist of the project, told *The Lancet* journal.

There are eight other technology platforms in different counties which are working on preparing a Covid-19 vaccine. Even then, one thing is sure that a vaccine against Covid-19 will not be available soon. That is why the WHO has warned that the easing of lockdown may kill millions of people globally.

to the **EDITOR**

Sir, – India has lost two positions in the recently-published World Press Freedom Index 2020 as compared to the year 2019. It is published by the Reporters without Borders based on some parameters like pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, infrastructure and abuses on journalists. Among 180 countries, as always the Scandinavian countries have secured the top positions with North Korea occupying the bottom place. India has been ranked 142nd below the countries like Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Palestine and even Afghanistan. The two prime reasons for the degradation cited by the organization are the abrogation of Article 370 which virtually blocked the journalists from entering Kashmir, and the Hindutva ideology.

World Press Freedom Index and India

As the media is considered as the mirror of modern society and the fourth pillar of democracy, it's really a dangerous sign for us. The mad race for TRP, yellow journalism, nexus among administrators, politicians and journalists, pressure from shareholders are some major reasons for our bad position. The need of the hour is to initiate some much-needed reforms for the regulation of media houses, especially the electronic media. My advice would be that the Government and the media houses should form a committee with equal participation from both the sides to formulate some guidelines and policies for the selfregulation of media. State funding for the media is another solution to mitigate the pressure of shareholders. The journalists also have some responsibilities like adhering to professional ethics, impartial and unbiased presentation of news, etc. Yours etc., NILADRI MAHANTA,

Jail Road, Jorhat.

Books and journals

Sir, - Reading books makes you

smarter, it increases creativity. The regular habit of reading will lower the stress level. Study reveals that reading a book even protects you from Alzheimer's disease and so on. But in spite of all such positive effects, books are still not considered an essential item by the Government. The ecommerce companies are to resume the supply of essential items soon amid the lockdown but the list of such items does not cover books and journals. I had ordered several books just before the commencement of the lockdown. Besides, three monthly journals are regularly delivered by private courier but due to the lockdown, I have not received those books and journals. I firmly believe that thousands of readers like me will definitely subscribe to my view. I would like to request the Government to declare books and journals as essential items and exempt the same from the purview of the current restrictions. Yours etc., JAYANTA DEKA, Mangaldoi.

Civic sense

Civic sense Sir, – It is very unfortunate that the people of the State have shown their very narrow civic sense during the lockdown period. It is seen when they come out of their homes for the purchase of essential commodities or for other urgent works. Though the police personnel present try to maintain discipline, but, all their efforts go in vain as most of the people are not interested to follow the regulations. Recently in Nagaon, such a situation arose in the wholesale vegetable market where a large number of people gathered to buy vegetables without maintaining social distance and creating a chaotic situation in the market. Finding no other alternative, the police were compelled to use force to disperse the people from there. This has happened as most of these people never learnt what civic sense means. Yours etc., KISHORE KR SAIKIA, Nagaon.

Relief packages

Sir, – With passing time, it is becoming clear that India's lockdown has turned into a human tragedy. The poor are starved of food and shelter. Are the relief packages announced by the government to the economically weaker section sufficient? While free rations have been sanctioned, how will the needy people access them, especially those without any government document like a ration card? The seamless distribution of ration should be done in a proper way. The Government should formulate a way of using the State machinery to distribute food to the poor. If the supply chain does not work efficiently, a huge amount of food will be wasted and it will lead to massive losses for both the Government and the poor people. In this crucial situation, we need larger relief packages from the Government. Yours etc., SIMA PHUKAN, Biswanath Chariali.

Articles (within 1000-1100 words) and Letters to the Editor for publication in the editorial page may be sent to the email ID: editor@assamtribune.com.



LOCAL FORECAST: Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain/thundershower is very likely to occur. Maximum and minimum tempera tures are most likely to be 29°C & 19°C respectively on Saturday.

TEMPERATURE: Max 26.0°C Min 18.2°C

GMC lists 18 areas for extensive fogging till May 3

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 24: The Guwahati Municipal Corporation has listed 18 areas of the city for extensive fogging operation till May 3.

A source in the GMC said, "Two teams have been formed to carry out the fogging operation in different areas of the city. Team one, led by Bhaben Choudhury, will cover Jalukbari, Sixmile, Kahilipara, Boragaon, Sarumotoria, Bharalumukh, Uzan Bazar, South Sarania and Fatasil. Team two, led by Satya Narayan, will cover Garigaon, Beltola, Beltola Tiniali, Lokhra, Hengrabari, Athgaon, Rehabari, Fancy Bazar and Shantipur. The fogging operation will be continued till May 3."

Altogether ten portable machines and two vehiclemounted machines will be used in the fogging operation.

"The teams have been formed after the GMC received several complaints from residents about a rise in mosquito menace in different parts of the city. These two teams will mainly look into the complaints received by the GMC. They will also simultaneously cover the areas close to the place from where the complaints are received," the source added.

Meanwhile, leader of Team one Bhaben Choudhury said extensive fogging operation has been going on since the day the nationwide lockdown was enforced.

Govt call to reduce school fees for April hailed

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: Welcoming the State government's suggestion to the private school authorities to reduce school fees by 50 per cent for the month of April in view of the ongoing lockdown, and also to pay full salary to the teaching and nonteaching staff, the Guardian Association of Private/Public Undertaking School Students today said that the government should also activate the fee regulatory commission and monitor the activities of the schools.

"Since 2014, we have been raising a number of issues concerning private schools in matters of unreasonable fee hike, huge weight of school bags, change in textbooks, etc., and calling for streamlining the same. A PIL is also pending on these issues in the Gauhati High Court. We urge the government to keep a constant watch on these issues," it said in a statement.

Sanitization CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 24: The Guwahati Municipal Corporation under the supervision of its Commissioner Devajyoti Hazarika today sanitized the Athgaon Kabarsthan area using 'Varun' vehicle of Assam Police and fire tenders of the State Fire and Emergency Services.

Organisations continue to help needy people

CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI/JORABAT, April 24: Apart from extending help to needy people personally in their respective areas, several forest department officials from the Kamrup Metro unit of the All Assam Forest Employees' Union (AAFEU) today came together to distribute ration among the poor families amid the nationwide

The unit's president Jayanta Kalita and general secretary Prahlad Gayan along with Jorabat Forest Beat Officer Jintu M Talukdar provided ration packets besides other items of daily use to over 150 families of the Assam-Meghalaya border area near the Marakdola Forest Beat Office.

"Besides distributing ration, our union has also conducted awareness campaigns, with special emphasis on the importance of maintaining social distancing and providing correct information to the people of the areas our officers are posted in," Kalita said.

Moreover, the union is also extending help to the students hailing from the economically backward families of the border area from Jorabat to Byrnihat, while requesting them to contact at 7002480369 for required books



People maintain social distancing as they wait to receive ration packets in front of Marakdola Forest Beat Office. - Photo: Jorabat Correspondent

and various stationeries.

In another such initiative, several youths from Jorabat – including Alok Das, Pranay Biswas, Prameshwar Puri and Gopal Roy today distributed ration packets consisting of rice, potato, edible oil, pulses, onion, sugar, salt, biscuits and soaps to 50 families of Jorabat's 13th Mile area near Jagannath Mandir.

In another initiative, Sixmile resident Dr Gitartha Roymedhi also distributed ration

to five needy familes of Jorabat, while also enlightening about 20 individuals on the ways to keep them safe during the pandemic. He stressed that the habit of maintaining cleanliness should be continued throughout life.

West Guwahati MLA Ramendra Narayan Kalita distributed 200 packets of food items comprising rice, dal, potato, salt, etc., among poor and needy families on Kalapahar-Lokhra Road in the city today. Helpmax Society also, in collaboration one hundred poor families in different localities of the city such as Uddayachal Milit Path, Christianbasti, Jyotinagar, Bamunimadam and near Bhupen Hazarika Jatiya Vidyalaya, Gandhibasti. Most people in these areas are daily wage earners and they have been badly affected by the lockdown.

with the Kamrup Metro district adminis-

tration, distributed free dry ration to around

Helpmax Society had earlier distributed cooked meal packets to 200 homeless

people near the Sukreswar Mandir. BSF Guwahati Frontier has been

reaching out to the needy people living in the vicinity of its headquarters at Patgaon.

The Frontier is not only engaged in manning the Indo-Bangladesh border but also extending all possible help to the needy villagers on the border belt as well as those living near the headquarters.

Today, the Frontier helped in distribution of food items among the people of Palashbari village hit by the lockdown.

The people were made to stand in a queue with in neatly drawn circles that ensured proper physical distancing. They were urged to make social distancing a habit to ensure their safety during the

Guwahati Foodie, an online community of more than 1,00,000 food lovers, recently distributed necessary daily ration to 150 needy families in Bharalumukh, Panjabari, Odalbakra and Sarumotoria areas of Guwahati during the nationwide lockdown in their second round of relief measures. The team also gave 50 litres of milk from Purabi Dairy to an NGO, Destination, which takes care of children with special needs.

Lions Club members with the help of the Assam Police Reserve also distributed food packets to poor people on Thursday.

HS final year exam results likely in June

MAMATA MISHRA

GUWAHATI, April 24: The Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AH-SEC) has indicated the possibility of declaring the HS final year exam results in June, 2020 as it has resumed assessment of the answer sheets in all its 48 evaluation zones across the State.

The State education department has issued a notification to the deputy commissioners of all the districts to allow and ensure safe passage to the teachers engaged in the evaluation process to and from the evaluation zone, to complete the exercise smoothly for declaring

Last year, the HS final year exam results were declared on May 25, 2019 and this time AHSEC was planning to announce the results within May 15.

Sources in the AHSEC confirmed that the evaluation zones have been asked to complete the process by May 5 so that the rest of the procedure can be efficiently carried out when the lockdown is eased. Approximately 7,000 teachers are engaged in the evaluation process across all zones.

AHSEC Controller of Examination Pankaj Borthakur told *The Assam Tribune* that more than 80 per cent evaluation was complete before the entire exercise came to a halt due to the nationwide

"Now, as the assessment has started again, we are trying to complete it in a manner so that results can be declared within June. This however, is subject to an improvement in the prevailing condition and easing of travel restrictions. Borthakur added.

State Education Minister Himanta Biswa has also been monitoring the entire process, he mentioned.

This year, approximately 2.35 lakh students wrote their HS final exams in Arts, Commerce, Science and Vocational streams. The exams were held from February 12 to March 14 at 772 centres.

Meanwhile, the AHSEC has already confirmed promotion of HS first year students to the next grade without conducting any examination. From Friday onwards, it has also started putting online course content for the second year students on https://YouTube.com/c/EduAid India.

The council will upload videos of business studies from Monday to Saturday, accountancy on Monday and Thursday and economics on Tuesday and Friday. Schedules of other subjects will also be given subsequently.

NFR increases parcel train service during lockdown

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: Maligaon-headquartered Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has increased services of parcel freight trains during the current nationwide lockdown. This parcel train service can be availed by anybody who needs to send consignments to different places by calling a centralised helpline number.

'We have so far run 88 trips of parcel special trains carrying materials like milk and milk products, medicines, masks, personal protection equipment (PPE), sanitizers and baby food, among other items. These trains run like normal passenger trains with fixed departure and arrival time and date. Within the north-eastern region a few parcel special trains have also been operated to destinations like Agartala, Dibrugarh and Mendipathar carrying about 500 tonnes of various items and also blood samples so that the landlocked states neighbouring Assam could also reap the benefits," said Subhanan Chanda, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) of NFR.

He said that in recent days, e-commerce portals like Amazon and the Central government's India Post have also availed this service to book their consignments from here to

Fridays for Future

plan to feed

waste collectors

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 24: The Fridays for Future, a movement for climate justice, has started a social experiment called 'power of 300' in the social media platform Instagram to generate money to feed a waste collector in the city for an entire month.

Waste collectors, who keep the cities clean, are among the most affected sections of people amidst the nationwide

'COVID-19 has posed immense challenges to humanity and led to financial struggle, especially the underprivileged section, who are suffering the most. So, our team has designed this experiment to generate money that is enough to feed a waste collector for an entire month," a

"To make this possible, we need at least 300 people. In this experiment, the people will have to keep their milk and oil packets clean and dry and store them for an entire month. We will collect those items from their doorstep. The money will be raised from selling those items, which will be handed over to the waste collectors," he added. The Fridays for Future created a link through which anyone can register for this experiment.

"Once a person registers with us, we will send a picture, which will guide them to keep milk and oil packets clean. Our little conscious steps can lead to a better environment for all and feed the waste collectors," he further added.

day announced the launch of #RadissonCares in India - a campaign aimed at bringing about a positive difference in the lives of its guests as they stay home amidst the nationwide lockdown, stated a press release issued here. "This campaign is our trib-

Radisson Hotels

campaign for its

at-home guests

Radisson Hotels on Wednes-

GUWAHATI, April 24:

ute towards the health, wellness and overall wellbeing of our guests while they stay indoors. We miss and care for them, and when it is back to business as usual, we will be there to welcome them with our caring hospitality," said Zubin Saxena, managing director and vice president, operations. South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. The campaign is being rolled out in five phases and will bring together tips and insights in the areas of housekeeping, food and beverage. elderly care, and health and wellness from the Group's service professionals.

Subsequent phases of the campaign will present expert advice from chefs and service professionals, including Rakesh Sethi, corporate executive chef, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. Guests can learn how to keep their homes safe and hygienic, use immunity building ingredients in home-cooked food, keep the elderly healthy and safe, and ensure personal wellness through this initiative, the release stated.

PPE kits to **BSF Hospital**

GUWAHATI, April 24: The Assam Sindhi Panchayat on Wednesday donated face masks, sanitizers and PPE kits to BSF Hospital Patgaon. Officebearers Kishan Rupani, Pankaj Khemani, Mukesh Achantani, Ashok Karamchandani, Jitender Khattar and Shyam Meghani handed over the goods to Dr Shekhar Jaiswal in the presence of Dr Umesh Tiwari, Dr CS Velangi and Dr Debashish Naag.



Caring two hoots: Throwing caution to the wind, people gather in large numbers at Fancy Bazar in Guwahati violating the social distancing norm. on Friday. - UB Photos

UNICEF for normal resumption of immunisation in most Assam districts

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 24: Multilateral agency UNICEF today expressed hope that the immunisation programme resumes soon in a normal way in most districts of Assam, barring areas classified as 'red and containment zones'.

"As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, over 117 million children in 37 countries may miss out on receiving life-saving measles vaccine. In many places, children are missing on critical vaccines due to recommendations and requirements around physical distancing and isolation, or due to reduced access to overstretched health services. These circumstances are putting children, especially the most vulnerable, at a risk of outbreaks of other diseases such as measles. Immunisation is vital now, more than ever," said Dr Madhulika Jonathan, Chief of Field Office of

UNICEF Assam. She added, "But we must balance its critical importance with the fact that we are facing a very serious and deadly health crisis. And as part of that crisis, the government has been prioritising the most urgent needs first, including preventing further spread of COVID-19."

UNICEF has advised parents to get children vaccinated as soon as the COVID-19 outbreak is brought under control and routine services resume.

While essential doses for institutional deliveries have continued uninterrupted in the State during the lockdown, Assam is among the few states that resumed routine immunisation last week at the sub-centre level. This has been done under strict guidelines of personal hygiene, physical distancing and mask usage.

"This World Immunisation Week, UNICEF hopes that the immunisation programme resumes in a normal way in most districts of Assam, barring areas classified as 'red and containment zones'. There is intensive planning under way by the government to ensure 'catch-up' vaccinations as soon as the restrictions are eased," added Dr Jonathan.

According to the National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16), less than half (47.1 per cent) of Assam's children between 12-23 months are fully immunised, i.e., they have received BCG, measles and three doses each of polio and diphtheria (DPT). However, a huge disparity is seen when it comes to rural and urban areas in Assam, with coverage in rural areas standing at around 45 per cent and at around 71 per cent in urban areas.

"These are difficult times. Parents may feel overwhelmed with uncertainties and worries about COVID-19 and its impact. In these times, our message is that parents ensure children receive their routine immunisation while following national and state guidance on preventive measures, in-



cluding physical distancing, hand washing and proper coughing and sneezing hygiene," said Dr Ionathan.

According to UNICEF, immunisation is one of the most effective public health interventions.

"The COVID-19 outbreak reveals what is at stake when communities do not have the protective shield of immunisation against an infectious disease. No vaccine exists yet for COVID-19. However, there are effective and safe vaccines for other serious and highly contagious diseases like measles. Along with taking appropriate measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, there is need to ensure that Assam's children are up-to-date with their vaccination schedule," said Dr Jonathan.

She added that for this there is need to ensure investment in health workers and their protection from the infection as they are the first in line of defence against this global epidemic.

UNICEF has supported the

National Health Mission, Department of Health, Government of Assam, with training of 45,000 ASHA and ANM workers on the COVID-19 outbreak. The training covered issues around safe practices, community surveillance, home quarantine, using a mask, facts and myths, among other aspects.

UNICEF works on-ground closely with partners including the Government of Assam, other UN agencies and civil society organisations, to ensure availability of vaccines and their access to children, especially the most vul-

"UNICEF has been consistently providing technical support towards systems strengthening through the expansion and operationalisation of cold chain points, and supportive supervision of village health nutrition days (VHND) sessions to ensure quality of services. UNICEF also supports training and on-site capacity building of health care personnel," said Dr



A volunteer screens a worker at a grain market for coronavirus infection during the nationwide lockdown, in Bikaner on Friday. – PTI

Software to detect COVID-19 developed

NEW DELHI, April 24: An IIT-Roorkee professor claims to have developed a software which can detect COVID-19 within five seconds by using X-ray scan of the suspected patient.

The professor, who took over 40 days to develop the soft-

ware, has filed a patent for the same and has approached the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for a review. Kamal Jain, a professor at the institute's civil engineering

department, claims that the software will not only reduce testing costs, but will also reduce the risk of exposure to healthcare professionals.

So far, there is no verification of his claim by a medical institution.

"I first developed an artificial intelligence-based database after analysing over 60,000 X-ray scans, including those of COVID-19, pneumonia and tuberculosis patients to differentiate between the kind of chest congestion suffered in the three diseases. I also analysed the chest x-ray database of the United States' NIH Clinical Centre," Jain told this news agency. – PTI

GOVT. OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL CUM CHIEF **SUPERINTENDENT** JORHAT MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, JORHAT

(UNDER SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION, JORHAT

No. SMEJ/JMCH/2389/2019/4736

CANCELLATION NOTICE

This is for information of all concerned that the Expression o Interest (EOI) for supply of medicines, surgical items, implants and other consumable items pertaining to medical store for empanelment with JMCH to privide Atal Amrit Abhiyan (AAA), Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) beneficiaries floated vide EOI No. SMEJ/JMCH/2389/2019/138 Date: 10.01.2020 is hereby cancelled with immediate effect.

Sd/- Principal cum Chief Superintendent Jorhat Medical College & Hospital, Jorhat

Janasanyog/C/53/20

No. SE(B)JHT/(C/S)/S-67/19-20/

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The Superintending Engineer, PWD, Jorhat Building Circle invites bid on behalf of the Governor of Assam from registered eligible contractors for the works Construction of Auditorium Building at Tingkhong Dibrugarh, Assam (Ph-II) amounting to Rs 84,11,000.00 (Rupees eighty four lakhs eleven thousand) only. The details may be seen at the website www.assamtenders.gov.in. Amendment/ Addendum to the SBD, if any and further rectification shall appear in the website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The Bidders must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWD, Assam, website www.assamtenders.gov.in.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD **Jorhat Building Circle, Jorhat** Janasanyog/CF/21/20

CORRIGENDUM TO IFB NO. 79, 89, 90, 91 & 92 OF 2019-20

This is for information to all concerned that the last date and time of submission of Bid for IFB No. 79, 89, 90, 91 & 92 of 2019-20 invited vide this office Memo No. PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-24854-58 Dated 14.02.2020 PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-29238-63 18.03.2020, PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-28265-70 Dated 07.03.2020, PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-28271-76 Dated 07.03.2020 & PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-29071-134 Dated 17.03.2020 respectively are hereby further extended upto 16.00 hours of 11.05.2020 and the same shall be opened at 15.00 hours of 12.05.2020 for facilitating wide participation from eligible intending bidders since the lockdown period is in force. All other terms & conditions will remain same.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (PHE) Water, Assam Hengrabari, Guwahati- 36 Janasanyog/C/75/20

SC grants ...

(Contd from page 1)

The bench, while staying investigation in different FIRs lodged in various States also transferred the defamation case lodged in Nagpur to Mumbai and clubbed it with the FIR lodged by Goswami in connection with attack on him and his wife allegedly by some Congress workers.

The top court also issued notices to the Centre and States including Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Telangana on the plea of Goswami. The top court also clarified that no investigation will be carried out in any fresh FIRs lodged against Goswami arising out the news show related to Palghar incident.

Goswami said in his plea that the FIRs which have been already registered, and the ones which are anticipated, are in relation to the broadcasts aired on Republic TV on April 16, and R. Bharat on April 21, which were in connection with the comments given by a member of Congress in relation to India's COVID-19 testing measures and the unfortunate lynching of three individuals (including 2 sadhus/priests) in Palghar on April 16. – PTI

Centre's call ...

(Contd from page 1) Official sources said that as the annual floods in KNP has become a source of headache for the Centre as well as the State government, therefore this year the Ministry of Environment and Forest has undertaken advance review and passed a series of directions to the Assam government to take a series of measures to mitigate the problem.

Last year the overall flood situation in Kaziranga National Park-cum-Tiger Reserve was one of the worst with 95 per cent of the park being inundated. The 158 forest camps set up by the forest department were also inundated by rising flood waters. While 14 hog deer had been rescued and eight had been hit by vehicles, another four hog deer were under treatment at Borjuri in Kaziranga.

The Kaziranga National Park in Assam is home to the world's largest population of Indian onehorned rhinoceroses and also home to a tiger reserve.

Govt to ...

(Contd from page 1)

Moreover, the government has also stepped up surveillance in Dhubri and Kokrajhar as they border West Bengal where the situation of COVID-19 outbreak is more serious. If positive cases emerge during the random testing at Dhubri, a similar exercise may be conducted in Kokrajhar.

No.UWS(T)-1072/2000/Pt-III/

Re-Tender for e-Procurement Notice 40 OF 2019-20

It is general information to all the intending bidders for e-Procurement IFB No. 40 of 2019-20 for the works of "Supply, fitting, fixing, laying, testing & commissioning of clear water pumping main and distribution main of Na-Ali water supply scheme for shifting of pipe lines due to proposed construction of fly over at Na-Ali, Jorhat" which was issued vide letter No. UWS (T)-1072/2000/Pt-III/405/589-595 dated 13.03.2020 is re-tendered and time schedule is as follows.

SI. No	Scheduled	Start Date	Start time	End Date	End time
1	Tender publishing	04/05/2020	11.00 Hrs	_	_
2	Tender download	04/05/2020	11.00 Hrs	15/05/2020	14.00hr
3	Bid submission	11/05/2020	11.00 Hrs	15/05/2020	14.00hr
4	Bid opening	15/05/2020	15.00 Hrs	_	
				•	

Others conditions will be remain same.

Sd/- Managing Director, **Assam Urban Water Supply &** Sewerage Board, Guwahati-6

National

Call to release child labourers voluntarily

NEW DELHI. April 24: Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi urged Prime Minister Narendra from prosecution or other punitive action to all employers of child labourers if they voluntarily release children confined inside factories and other work places during this period.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Satyarthi said he is making this "unusual" request due to the "ideological and emotional dilemma" in such an extraordinary situation.

"I am saying what I am feeling. They are all our children and our children must not die. We have failed in saving our children from child labour and exploitation, they must be saved from hunger and desperation. The life of every single child is above everything else," he wrote.

"The demand for a notification to give respite to employers of child labourers for three months is the last thing that I would have ever thought in my life. Extraordinary situations call for extraordinary steps and I strongly feel that in order to save the lives of lakhs of children trapped in slavery and child labour across the country, this step is the only option left now," Satyarthi said in the letter.

"These children, who work in factories located in Jaipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi and other cities, were trafficked from different states and forced into labour. And now, even our activists are not being able to reach the children because of rules and regulations of the lockdown," Satyarthi asserted in his letter.

organisation as well.

Seeking quick, timely and safe repatriation of the children once the lockdown is lifted. Satyarthi sought constitution of an inter-ministerial task force to formulate and implement a strong action plan for combating the sudden spike in child trafficking once some semblance of normalcy is restored after COVID-19. - PTI

Satyarthi rued that while the child labourers would not be paid their full wages earlier, they Modi today to give three months' immunity are not being provided food now. The employers have fled to the safety of their own homes,

Urging the government to make proper provisions for food, safety, shelter and medical treatment for the children released during the lockdown, Satyarthi said, if required, the help and assistance of local NGOs should be taken. Besides, he offered all possible support from his

Dhankhar accuses Mamata of 'explicitly appeasing' minorities



KOLKATA, April 24: The confrontation between the West Bengal government and the Raj Bhavan escalated further today with Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar accusing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of "explicitly appeasing" the minority community.

Referring to Banerjee's Thursday letter to him where she accused him of "repeatedly interfering" in the functioning of her



said the Chief Minister's outburst is an alibi strategy to cover up "monumental failures" in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.

Urging the TMC supremo "to shun politics and confrontational approach", Dhankhar said her conduct is only compounding the miseries of the people of the state.

"Your communication is

part of the alibi strategy that emanates from a script that seeks to cover up monumental failures in these challenging times by a series of blunders," the Governor said in his second letter to Banerjee after her Thursday letter set off acrimonious exchanges between the two constitutional functionar-

"Your appeasement of the minority community was so explicit and awkward on the Nizamuddin Markaz incident. This is most unfortunate and cannot be appreciated," he said, referring to an event where Banerjee was asked to comment on the Tablighi Jamaat congregation in the national capital. - PTI

"It has taught us that we

self-sufficient. It has taught us

solutions outside the country.

This is the biggest lesson we

Every village has to be

provide for its basic needs.

Similarly, every district has

level, every state has to be

self-reliant at its level and

self-reliant at its level, he

said. – PTI

can board it.

the whole country has to be

Inter-dist ...

(Contd from page 1)

The government is also

cabs and 30 city buses on the

people to reach the bus stand

or the place from where they

People, however, cannot

districts. Tomorrow, ASTC

people. "Tickets will be ten

hours before the schedule

time of journey," ASTC MD

move out of the red zone

will ferry some 12,600

AP Tiwari said.

planning to run some 100

three days to facilitate the

to be self-sufficient at its

self-sufficient enough to

have learnt," he said.

that we should not look for

have to be self-reliant and

Tea industry ... Self-reliance ... (Contd from page 1)

(Contd from page 1)

"The total crop loss will be about 80 million kg. The tea gardens have resumed their operations from April 15 with 50 per cent workforce. Therefore, crop loss and the revenue loss will further increase, hurting the industry," Barkakoty said.

Reasoning that tea being an immunity booster and it is likely that consumption of tea will increase in the days ahead, Barkakoty said that exports to China was a welcome possibility. He added that it is an opportunity for the industry to explore new markets for exporting tea based on the health benefits of tea and also to sell tea directly through online platforms.

"About 18 per cent of India's production is exported and the remaining 82 per cent is consumed domestically and therefore export of Indian tea may get affected. The Out Of Home (OOH) consumption is almost negligible due to lockdown and it will continue even after partial relaxation of lockdown. There was no harvesting of tea leaves for three weeks followed by skiffing of more than 35 per cent of tea bushes and now only 50 per cent of workforce is deployed as per government order, therefore the crop loss may be much more than estimated, constituting a threat," the report sad.

Initial results ...

(Contd from page 1)

The Chief Minister, however, said that these are only initial results and nobody should think that the government has found a cure for coronavirus.

In the plasma therapy, antibodies from the blood of a patient who has recovered from COVID-19 are used to treat serious

"Once we get nod from the Centre, we will be able to use plasma therapy on all serious COVID-19 patients across Delhi. reiterate that this is early result which is very encouraging. We must not think that we have found a cure for COVID-19," Kejriwal said.

The Chief Minister appealed to all people who have recovered from the disease to come forward and donate plasma for serious COVID-19 patients to save their lives.

SK Sarin said that if 10 to 20 COVID-19 patients are treated using plasma therapy, it could be considered a good lead.

"Plasma therapy is an old technique which is being used for decades. As we don't have a cure for coronavirus, it is useful for serious COVID-19 patients," he said.

Sarin said donating plasma would be an act of patriotism by recovered patients. It does not lead to any weakness in the body of the donor, he said. "It is not blood donation... Plasma therapy is also inexpensive," he said. - PTI

Govt to provide ...

(Contd from page 1)

If the medicine is available in the district, the health workers will deliver it to the patient in 24 hours. "If we have to get it from the medical colleges it may take about 48 hours, and if we have to procure it from outside, it may take a week's time," he said. The patients will not have to pay for those medicines available in the government store.

"Also, medicines up to Rs 200 will be given free. For those costing more than Rs 200, the payment will have to be made to the health workers who deliver the medicine," the minister said, asking people not to misuse the facility.

Assam Police personnel have so far delivered medicines to over 4,800 patients at their doorstep during the lockdown.

No. EGTRD/GCD-I/TB-I/2019-2020/ PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer, PWRD, East Guwahati Territorial Road Division, Chandmari, Guwahati-781021, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bids for Improvement/Re-construction/Construction works, under SOPD (G) for the year 2019-2020, amounting to Rs. 790.342 lakhs in 25 (twenty five) nos. of works. Details may be seen in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 04.05.2020 to 06.05.2020. Amendment/addendum to the SBD, if any and further notifications shall appear at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWRD East Guwahati Territorial Road Division, Janasanyog/CF/23/20 Guwahati-21.



অসম লোকসেৱা আয়োগ **ASSAM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

No.26PSC/DR-73/1/2019-2020

NOTIFICATION

In continuation of this office Advt. No.02/2020 vide No.78/PSC/DR-5/1/2019- 2020, dated 20.03.2020 which was issued inviting application form for filling up of 1(one) post of Director, Directorate of Archives, Assam under Secretariat Administration (Estt.) Department, it is for information to all concerned that the last date of receipt of application form is hereby extended up to 12.06.2020 instead of 30.04.2020 due to outbreak of corona virus.

Other terms and conditions of the earlier Advt. mentioned above will remain the same. Sd/- Secretary,

Assam Public Service Commission Jawaharnagar, Khanapara, Guwahati-22

Janasanyog/D/293/20

ADMISSION NOTICE

Counseling for Admission into Post Graduate in MDS Courses in the Regional Dental College, Guwahati for the Session 2020

It is for general information to the candidates that the counseling for admission into the MDS courses in the Regional Dental College, Guwahati (Assam Quota) for the Session 2020 will be held on 30th April/2020 (Thursday) at Office of the Director of Medical Education, Assam, Sixmile, Khanapara, Guwahati-22 at 11:00 am. Candidate whose names have appeared in the State of Assam merit list of NEET-MDS-2020 conducted by the National Board of Examination, New Delhi and who secured merit position upto 10 in the said merit list as well as who have fulfilled all the eligibility criteria for admission into MDS courses against Assam State -Quota seats as per rules are hereby requested to physically appear for the counseling with their necessary documents as per schedule mentioned above.

Sd/- Principal i/c Regional Dental College, Guwahati-32. Janasanyog/D/299/20

CORRIGENDUM TO IFB NO. 93 & 94 OF 2019-20

This is for information to all concerned that the last date and time of submission of Bid for IFB No. 93 & 94 of 2019-20 invited vide this office Memo No. PHE-8/ MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-136-41 dated 08.04.2020 & PHE-8/MM/2014-15(Vol-II)/T-130-35 dated 08.04.2020 are hereby further extended upto 16.00 Hours of 14.05.2020 and the same shall be opened at 15.00 Hours of 15.05.2020 for facilitating wide participation from eligible intending bidders since the lockdown period is in force. The pre bid meeting has been rescheduled as following:

- 1. IFB No. 93 of 2019-20: Pre bid meeting scheduled on 05.05.2020 at 3.00 PM at the conference hall of the O/O Chief Engineer (PHE) Water Assam, Hengrabari, Guwahati- 36.
- IFB No. 94 of 2019-20: Pre bid meeting scheduled on 06.05.2020 at 3.00 PM at the conference hall of the O/O Chief Engineer (PHE) Water Assam, Hengrabari, Guwahati- 36.

All other terms & conditions will remain same. Any changes, if required, will be intimated in the portal www.assamtenders.gov.in.

> Sd/- Chief Engineer (PHE) Water, Assam Hengrabari, Guwahati- 36



ASSAM STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION

(A Govt. of Assam Undertaking) G.S. ROAD, AMARAWATI PATH, CHRISHTIAN BASTI, DISPUR, GUWAHATI-781005, ASSAM Ph.: 0361-2343722, 2345252, Fax: 0361-2343722 E-mail: aswcghy@gmail.com

No. AWC.ENGG.467/2017/NABARD/WIF/220

Dt.:-24.04.2020

EXTENSION NOTICE (E-Procurement)

This is for general information of all concerned that due to outbreak of Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic and nationwide lockdown w.e.f. 25th March to 3rd May, 2020, the date for pre-bid meeting & as well as submission of Bid (both online & off line mode) for "Construction of Multi Commodity 5000 MT Cold Storage project under WIF of NABARD at Pachimboragaon" vide Tender ID 2020_CD_17215_2 & Tender reference No:- AWC.ENGG.467/2017/NABARD/WIF are hereby extended up to 8th May, 2020 @ 16.0.0 Hrs (Pre-bid meeting) & 18th May, 2020 @ 14.0 Hrs (Bid submission). The details may be seen at website http://assamtenders.gov.in

> Sd/-**Managing Director**

Janasanyog/CF/25/20

Janasanyog/CF/19/20

Rapid antibody tests begin in Tripura

CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, April 24: As Tripura is on course of declaring itself a COVID-19 free State, the State Government has embarked on a mission to conduct rapid antibody tests to check the containment level on the ground, sources said.

Health workers have already kickstarted rapid antibody tests at Udaipur in Gomati district and Damcherra and Satnala in North district to assess the ground situation in the aftermath of the detection of two positive cases of COVID-19.

The State Health and Family Welfare Department has already procured 3,800 kits for conducting rapid antibody tests, out of which 3,700 kits have already been distributed in all the districts. A total of 330 collection centres have been set up to execute the ambitious mission.

The sources said that Tripura has 1,900 cility quarantine. Altogether 4,222 sam-COVID-19 test kits, and that the ICMR ples have been collected for tests so far has promised to provide one more testing machine. The State has performed well on the prevention front after detection of the two positive cases.

complete a 14-day quarantine period following release from hospital, the second patient also tested negative last night. He in the entire State, barring the three conwill be sent to 14-day quarantine if he comes out clear in the next test.

It effectively means that Tripura will become a COVID-19 free State and an official declaration will be made after getting a nod from the Centre.

Official figures suggest good performance in the ongoing battle against the pandemic with only 290 persons placed in trical goods and agricultural equipment. quarantine now. Out of the total quaran- Besides, day and domestic workers can tined individuals, only 111 are under fa- also avail of the relaxation now.

and 4,006 of them have already been test-

Meanwhile, Tripura Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar, citing guidelines of the While the first patient is now about to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, said that the relaxation given by the Ministry of Home Affairs would be applicable tainment zones where the COVID-19 patients had stayed.

> New activities that came under relaxation since Thursday include hardware shops, shops selling raw materials used in industrial units, charcoal and other fuel used in brick kilns, motor repair shops, salons, laundries, carpentry, pottery, elec-



Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma receiving a cheque from a donor for the CM's Relief Fund, at his office in Shillong on



occur at most places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Megnalaya, Nagaland, Manipur Mizoram and Tripura.

Warning: Thunderstorm with squall with speed (50-60) kmph accompanied with hail is very likely to occur at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Heavy rain is very likely to occur at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura

remperatures:		
Max	(°C)	Min (°C
Dibrugarh	22.7	17.6
Tezpur	23.8	18.5
Silchar	24.0	20.8
Dhubri	25.1	19.8
Jorhat	21.0	17.4
N Lakhimpur	23.3	18.5
Shillong	18.3	-
Cherrapunjee	21.2	14.8
Aizawl	23.7	15.2
Kohima	20.2	-
Pasighat	19.8	18.0
Itanagar	23.8	18.0
Imphal	20.1	13.7
Agartala	30.5	21.0

Meghalaya Youth Cong files FIR against Arnab

CORRESPONDENT

TURA, April 24: The Meghalaya Pradesh Youth Congress (MPYC) has filed a police complaint against the host of Republic TV, Arnab Gos-

In the FIR, the MPYC stated that on April 21, Goswami sought to attack the Constitution of the country and what it stands for, during his show on the television news channel.

The Congress has been up in arms after the blatant attacks on the party and its chief by Goswami over a lynching incident that took place in Maharashtra. The MPYC quoted Goswami's remarks on television and contended that they could be classified as a hate speech and an attack on the

Constitution of India. "It is therefore an offence under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Information Technology Act, 2000 and guidelines of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting," stated the MPYC FIR.

Nagaland Cong seeks action on 'data breach'

CORRESPONDENT

Nagaland Pradesh Congress State stranded outside and fac-Committee (NPCC) today ing distress due to the lockasked the State Government to take cognisance of the alleged leak of personal data of people from the State stranded outside.

Expressing serious concern over the data breach, the NPCC demanded that the Government take necessary action in this regard.

formation which includes Aadhaar and bank account details, the nodal officials concerned have committed a serious blunder," a press release issued by the NPCC said.

Minister Neiphiu Rio had announced cash assistance to the people of Nagaland stuck out- nodal officer for monitoring and side the State due to the on- coordination with other States,

portal, iamstranded.nagaland. DIMAPUR, April 24: The gov.in, where any citizen of the down can apply for assistance.

The stranded people were asked to provide their personal data such as name, mobile number, present address, contact number and address of their families, Aadhaar number, and details of their bank accounts to avail of the financial assistance. "By sending the entire in-However, the data were reportedly leaked and circulated through various messaging apps.

The NPCC said the breach mirrored unpreparedness and inefficiency of the State Government machinery. It said the On April 20, Nagaland Chief clarification issued by Principal Director of School Education Shanavas C, who is the

Mizoram COVID-19 patient

discharged from Mumbai hospital

AIZAWL, April 24: One of the seven COV- including an employee, are undergoing treat-

recovered and was discharged from a hospian, who first tested positive there on April 13,

tal on Friday, State Health Department offi- was discharged from a hospital after she tested

the tested positive for novel coronavirus—in a hostel run by a church, the officials said

nection with the treatment of other diseas- zoram – a 50- year-old pastor – who had trav-

es and had been staying in the Mizoram el history to Amsterdam. He is currently un-

The patient was among three persons The discharged patients are now quarantined

negative twice.

ID-19 patients from Mizoram, who have ment for COVID-19.

As of now, six people of the Mizoram House, lege in the State. – PTI

been undergoing treatment in Mumbai, has

on April 18. They went to Mumbai in con-

House there.

ment subsequently launched a "shifting the blame on those points of contacts such as union leaders in different parts of country tasked with the verification process".

The NPCC said the nodal officer and his team must own moral responsibility for not applying their minds while handling personal details of the stranded people.

"For verification, they could have simply sent only the name, address and phone number given by the applicants to the respective point of contacts," it said.

The State Congress also said the details sent to the points of contact on MS Excel format should have been passwordprotected. It urged the State Government to expedite the process of disbursing financial assistance to the stranded people while ensuring that those applygoing lockdown. The Govern- to a news portal is more about ing fraudulently are penalised.

Earlier on Wednesday, a 22-year-old wom-

There is only one COVID-19 patient in Mi-

dergoing treatment at the Zoram Medical Col-

Arunachal Guv greets people on Moh-Mol, Gumkum Gumpa

CORRESPONDENT

ITANAGAR, April 24: Arunachal Pradesh Governor Brig Dr BD Mishra (retd) has conveyed his greetings to the people of the State, particularly the Tangsa and Puroik communities, on the eve of their annual festivals, Moh-Mol and Gumkum Gumpa respectively.

In his message, the Governor said that since time immemorial, the Tangsas have celebrated Moh-Mol with great joy and merriment, which is essentially an agriculture-related festival signifying harvesting and the new sowing season of crops. They have continued this ageold tradition, generation after generation.

He further said that the Puroik community celebrates this day as Gumkum Gumpa. It observes the occasion for reunion and collective resettlement of their community. "I hope this festival will bring progress and prosperity for our Puroik people across the State. Equally, this festival will promote harmony and create strong bonds in their society," the Governor said.

"This year, during these festivals, we are putting in all our might to defeat the spread of COVID-19. I call upon our Tangsa and Puroik brethren to has rushed relief materials, incelebrate this vibrant socio- cluding silpaulin sheets and GI cultural event at home and roofs, to the affected villages maintain social distancing. Let us all unite in taking precautions taken shelter in community against Coronavirus infection, in letter and spirit, and remain safe," the Governor appealed.

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, April 24: The

Nagaland Police today detained

two persons for alleged fraud-

ulent registration to avail of fi-

nancial aid extended to citizens

of Nagaland stranded outside

the State. This followed a com-

plaint from the Principal Di-

rector of the School Education

Department, Shanavas C, a

Nagaland Police release said.

Thinyizu village in Phek dis-

trict and currently a resident

of Kenuozou Colony, Kohima,

and Pozu Daile of Phuba vil-

lage in Senapati district of Ma-

It said Veduzo Rokha of

Dingko's wife thanks BFI for air ambulance

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 24: Former Asian Games gold medallist Ngangom Dingko Singh's family has thanked everyone, particularly the Boxing Federation of India (BFI), for arranging an air ambulance to airlift the ailing pugilist to the national capital for treatment.

Dingko Singh will be flown from Imphal in a SpiceJet air ambulance on Saturday. His wife, Ngangom Babai, said that the family wanted to thank everyone who supported them during this hour. "We thank the BFI for making this arrange-

The decision to fly Dingko to Delhi was taken by SpiceJet Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh who is also the president of the BFI.

Dingko missed a scheduled radiation therapy a fortnight back as he could not go to New Delhi to resume his treatment for cancer due to the ongoing lockdown.

The ailing pugilist-turned-coach of the Sports

Authority of India, who is currently staying at his home at Sekta village in Imphal East district, met Chief Minister N Biren Singh today.

In a tweet, Biren Singh said, "State Government allows renowned boxer & Ariuna awardee Ngangom Dingko to fly to Delhi in air ambulance for availing cancer treatment at ILBS Hospital. Read two tests for COVID-19 also done & found negative. While extending financial assistance to the living sports legend, I wished him speedy recovery on the people's behalf."

The 41-year-old Arjuna awardee was diagnosed with bile duct cancer, which is a form of liver cancer, during the later part of 2016.

In January 2017, a surgery was also performed on him at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) at Vasant Kunj in New Delhi. Since then he had been visiting his doctor at the ILBS for annual radiation procedure.

Local MLA Ksh Biren Singh has assured all possible help during Dingko Singh's stay in the national capital.

Hailstorm damages houses in Mizoram AIZAWL, April 24: Thun-

derstorm, accompanied by hail, lashed several parts of Mizoram last evening, leaving a trail of destruction. More than 200 tin-roofed houses were damaged by hailstones in Hliappui village of Saitual district. Many houses were also damaged in villages adjoining Hliappui.

Local MLA L Thangmawia

The affected families have halls and other houses in the villages as rainstorm continued till this evening. – Correspondent

the Nagaland Government

web portal to avail of financial

aid meant only for Naga citi-

zens stranded outside the

State. The duo were sum-

moned to the cyber crime po-

lice station in Kohima and lat-

er released on personal bond.

had earlier announced a special

package under which citizens of

the State stranded outside can

avail of financial assistance by reg-

istering on the iamstranded.

The police cautioned the pub-

lic not to use fraudulent means

to avail of any packages offered

by the Government during the

nagaland.gov.in web portal.

The Nagaland Government

2 detained for fraudulent

registration for aid

Meghalaya COVID-19 patients stable

SHILLONG, April 24: All 11 active COVID-19 patients in Meghalaya have remained in a stable state and no new cases have been reported from any part of the State so far.

The State Government has stated that till Friday, 1,130 samples have been tested and 1,048 were found negative. Results of the other samples are still awaited.

The State Government has already announced that retail stores selling essential commodities will open on four weekdays from Monday, They were, however, closed today as the relaxation period ended and curfew was reimposed. However, wholesale stores will remain open from Friday till Sunday to replenish their stocks, as per the State Government's guidelines. - Staff Correspondent

NSCN(I-M) workers held

ITANAGAR, April 24: Troops of the Assam Rifles under the aegis of the Indian Army apprehended two overground workers of the NSCN (I-M) near Lower Kollam village and Khonsa town in Tirap district on Thursday.

an operation in the area and apprehended the duo who have been identified as Tewang Hangsik, a resident of Lower Kollam, and Dongley Lowang of Lower Chinghana village.

Based on a specific Intelligence inputs, the troops launched

The troops also recovered 30 sacks of rice weighing 1,500 kg, suspected to have been siphoned off from PDS stocks for use by the insurgent group.

The apprehended duo, along with the seized rice, were handed over to the Khonsa Police Station, stated a Defence release

here today. – Correspondent NORTH EASTERN ELECTRIC POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

SHORT NOTICE INVITING BIDS (E-Tender) (DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING) NIB No. 353 Dated 23.04.2020

CIN: U40101ML1976GOI001658

NEEPCO Ltd. invites online electronic bids from prospective bidders fulfilling the Qualifying Requirement under Single-Stage Two-Envelope bidding system through Domestic Competitive Bidding (DCB) route for carrying out the work of "Design, Fabrication, Supply, Erection Testing & Commissioning of Penstock and Steel In-Liners in Umrong System of Kopili Hydro Electric Project (275 MW)

For further details, interested bidders may visit the websites https://etenders.gov.in, www.neepco.co.in. changes / modifications / notifications against this updated on the websites mentioned above

Last date for online submission of bid is 21.05.2020 by 14:00 Hours (IST). Chief General Manager (C), I/C Contracts & Procurement

nipur and currently residing at COVID-19 crisis and said such Villagers casting fishing nets in the Khowai river at Khowai subdivision in Tripura on Friday. Themezie Colony, Kohima, acts would be liable for penal achad fraudulently registered on tions as per the provisions of law. 289 seized cattle die along border amid ongoing lockdown Meghalaya due to various reasons including ill-"There are an estimated 1,700 cattle in these 4,000 kg of cattle fodder to the BOPs. Moreover,

SHILLONG, April 24: Amid the ongoing nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 289 heads of seized cattle have perished in the past one week along the international border with Bangladesh due to illness and lack of basic facilities.

The BSF looks after the cattle which it seizes on the border, at the border outposts. The border guarding force said that the ongoing lockdown has affected the condition of the seized cattle. Uncontrolled death of cattle may lead to spread of diseases, the BSF further cautioned.

border outpost in East Khasi Hills district of

ness and lack of proper infrastructure," UK Nayal, BSF Deputy Inspector General and Press Relations Officer, said today. These cattle were later buried by the BSF troops.

Most of these cattle are those seized from smugglers by the BSF. Technically, these cattle should be handed over to the Customs Department or the State administration and auctioned, but that has not happened lately. For the last one year, neither the Customs Department nor the State police has taken care of the seized cattle or auctioned them.

This has forced the BSF to look after these "In the past one week, 289 cattle died at the cattle at the Muktapur, Pyrdiwah, Lyngkhat, Bholaganj and Rinku BOPs in East Khasi Hills district.

BOPs and our men are taking care of them," Nayal said. He pointed out that the BSF has been facing severe problems "due to lack of infrastructure and wherewithal".

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing lockdown have only aggravated the problem. The BSF is battling to keep the seized cattle alive, the official said.

Since the BSF does not have the requisite infrastructure or is mandated to look after the cattle, these animals are kept in the open without any shed, exposing them to adverse weather conditions, leading to illness and death.

Meanwhile, as a temporary arrangement, the BSF Frontier Headquarters here has provided ladesh through the porous borders.

tarpaulins have also been provided so that temporary sheds could be arranged for the cattle.

Appealing to the State Government to come forward to assist them in this regard, Naval said that the BSF, along with the civil society, has made a very modest effort and will continue to try saving these animals. But the State Government must step in, he stressed.

Echoing him, BSF Inspector General, Meghalaya Frontier, Kuldeep Saini said that there is an urgent need to address the problem and the State authorities have been requested to pay attention to the crisis.

Cattle are smuggled from Meghalaya to Bang-



The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), GOI has accorded Environmental Clearance for Onshore Oil & Gas Development Drilling and Production in Mechaki Area covering Mechaki, Mechaki Extension, Baghjan and Tinsukia Extension PMLs in District Tinsukia (Assam) by M/s Oil India Limited.

The copies of Environmental Clearance, F. No. J-11011/1260/2007-IA-II (I) dated 9th April 2020, are available for reference with MoEF&CC, Pollution Control Board, Assam (PCBA) and may also be seen at websites of MoEF&CC and OIL The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Gol

has accorded Environmental Clearance for the said project

under the provisions of EIA Notification, 2006. Sd/- Nodal Officer EC/FC/NBWL

Oil India Limited

BBE EK KAAM

NEWS IN BRIEF



With Ramzan, the Muslim month of fasting, being observed amidst the lockdown, a fruit vendor patiently waits for customers in North Lakhimpur on Friday. Photo: Farhana Ahmed

Migrant worker dies

JORHAT, April 24: A person who was found at the historic Dhodar Ali under Selenghat Police Outpost of the district on Wednesday with some health problems, later died at the Bhogamukh Model Hospital under Teok Revenue Circle after he was brought to the hospital by the policemen for treatment. A Jorhat district administration press note stated that Nagen Rabha (45) of Lakhipur under Uriamghat Police Station in Golaghat district, coming from Namsing (Nagaland), was found at Hatimuria near Dhodar Ali bridge in a weak condition. Policemen from Selenghat Outpost took him to Bhogamukh Model Hospital under Teok Revenue Circle to provide medical treatment and he was attended to by the doctor on duty. the note stated. However, the condition of the person deteriorated after sometime and he collapsed, the note said, adding that cardiac arrest was suspected to be the cause of death. - Staff Correspondent

Masks for mediapersons

GUWAHATI, April 24: Hayat Hospital, Guwahati has distributed around 200 masks and bottles of sanitisers to people from the field of media and journalism, stated a press release. Ayaskanta Chakraborty, executive director of Hayat Hospital, stated that inspite of the threat of COVID-19, mediapersons were working 24x7 and keeping people upbreast about the happenings around the globe. Parag Jyoti Dutta, general manager of Hayat Hospital, gave a presentation on the precautions to be taken by mediapersons at the workplace to avoid the virus.

CRPF donates school items

SIVASAGAR, April 24: As part of its Civic Action Programme, the CRPF's 149 Bn based in Sivasagar organised a function to dedicate library items like bookshelves, tables, chairs and books to Govt Secondary School at Laktong, Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh recently. On the occasion, Commandant JV Tusing urged the students to strive to become role models. Assistant Commandants Sanjay Kushwaha and Kamala Prasad, school headmaster Akhil Tekhil, teachers and students were also present on the occasion. - Correspondent

Bar raided

DOOMDOOMA, April 24: Police raided a bar at Koliapani Road in Doomdooma town on Thursday afternoon amidst the ongoing lockdown. Though the shutter of the bar was found closed, police officials found a few youths inside the premises when they opened the shutter. Police drove out the youths and locked the bar. - Correspondent

Theft at grocery shop

GOSSAIGAON, April 24: Amidst the ongoing lockdown, thieves allegedly looted a grocery shop of one Vinode Mall at Maharajpur Tiniali in Gossaigaon by breaking five locks at the shop while it was raining heavily on Friday night. Mall noticed the theft on Saturday morning when he came to open the shop. He alleged that the thieves looted Rs 5,000 in cash, 5 litres of mustard oil, and one sack of rice. Though there is a night watchman engaged by the business community at Maharajpur Tiniali, he did not notice the theft. - ANN Service

Illicit liquor seized

DHUBRI, April 24: Dhubri police carried out raids at different places under Dhubri Excise Circle under the supervision of the Superintendent of Excise, and seized almost 30 litres of illicit liquor, and 150 kg of raw material used for making country liquor (Pachwai). The raids took place in Golakganj Bazar, Golakganj Chariali, Koimari Part-II, Harirhat Bazar, Gauripur town, and Suparighat. Distilling apparatus were also seized and two cases have

been registered. - Correspondent Youth commits suicide

GOSSAIGAON, April 24: A 22-year-old youth, identified as Sukumar Barman, son of late Ravindra Barman, allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself at the Srirampur refugee colony. The youth was working outside Assam, but lost his job a few months earlier and was sitting idle. He stayed at the refugee colony with his parents, and in frustration, allegedly committed suicide in the morning of April 22. On getting information, a magistrate and police from Simultapu outpost reached the house of the youth and sent the body to Kokrajhar for post-mortem. - ANN Service

Mediapersons, hawkers feted

PATACHARKUCHI, April 24: Phani Pathak, state executive member of the BJP, visited the residents of several reporters under Bajali subdivision on Thursday and greeted them with a gamosa. Pathak also met hawkers of Patacharkuchi and Pathsala and as a recognisation of their valuable service during the lockdown, he offered them gamosas. He also met senior citizens. including Krishna Roy, producer of Abahan Theatre, and retired principals and headmasters of several colleges and schools of the region. - ANN Service

Ramzan appeal

DERGAON, April 24: The Golaghat district administration has appealed to all Muslims to take precautionary measures during Ramzan due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In a press release, Deputy Commissioner Bibhash Chandra Modi said namaz should be read at home and iftars should also be taken only at home. - Correspondent

Relief distributed

PATACHARKUCHI, April 24: Giridhar Choudhury, a senior advocate of Pathsala town, has been distributing packets of essential commodities among the needy people of Bajali subdivision from the begining of the lockdown. He visited Bargunari village on Wednesday and distributed relief to more than 50 people. - ANN Service

Food distributed

TIHU, April 24: The Pachim Nalbari mandal committee in association with other mandal committees of the BJP distributed food items to 11,000 families in 11 villages under Dharmapur LAC. A team from the Pachim Nalbari mandal committee also distributed food items to 250 differently abled persons. - ANN Service

Bid to misinterpret Malik's poem deplored

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, April 24: The Jagannath Barooah College, Jorhat, Jorhat unit of AASU and the students' union of Jagannath Barooah college, has demanded appropriate legal action to be taken under law against people who reportedly have spread communal hatred on social media by quoting a few stanzas of the poem Moi Asomiya, penned by legendary Assamese literrateur Late Syed Abdul Malik, a Padma Bhushan awardee and a former Asam Sahitya Sabha president.

A press note issued by the Jorhat district unit AASU assistant general secretary and also the advisor of the Jorhat regional unit of the students' body, Bijoy Shankar Bordoloi stated that it has come to the notice of students' organisation that an unscrupulous person was trying to spread communal hatred in the society by misinterpreting a few stanzas of the famous poem (*Moi Asomiya*) of Syed Abdul Malik, one the great literary figures of Assamese literature, by uploading a few lines of the said poem in the social media.

The note said that several persons too have posted highly objectionable and hate-mongering comments on the said post which was a crime under law for trying to foment communal hatred among the public.

He said that the AASU unit of Jagannath Barooah College, the students' union body of the college and Jorhat district unit of AASU, while condemning the act of defaming the great icon of Assamese society (Syed Abdul Malik), also a former teacher of Jagannath College, and trying to fan communal hatred, has demanded strong legal action against the persons involved in the despicable act, the note mentioned.

The note stated that a delegation of

Jorhat district unit AASU along with the students' union body and college unit of AASU of Jagannath Barooah College submitted a memorandum to the Jorhat Superintendent of Police seeking an investigation into the matter immediately and thereafter taking prompt and strong action under the law against those found to be involved in the act.

Excise personnel drive: Meanwhile, in a drive against illicit liquor by State Excise department staff on Wednesday at areas of Boloma Tea Estate and Teok Pirakata under Teok Revenue Circle, 35 litres of sulai (Illicit liquor), 440 litres of raw materials kept to prepare sulai and a few instruments used to prepare the brew were seized and destroyed on the spot.

A district administration official informed that one person was arrested under State Excise law on charges of producing the illicit liquor.

Assam-born Nandy sisters winning hearts from afar!



ARINDAM GUPTA

SILCHAR, April 24: Like any other bhaat, daali and alu-pitika lover, Assam-born singing sensations Antara and Ankita anxiously wait for their visit to the State during Rongali Bihu. This year, however, no such delight was in store for the Nandy sisters.

Along with the rest of the nation, the sisters too are following the lockdown in a bid

Nandeswar

Dutta

ANN SERVICE

Nandeswar

Dutta, a Leftist

leader and social

worker

Machkhowa Pathaliyal village

here died on April 23 follow-

ing cardiac arrest. He was 97.

Movement in the 1970s, and

played a prime role in the es-

tablishment of Machkhowa

Town High School by donat-

ing land for the school. Dutta

leaves behind his wife, two

sons and daughters-in-law

BC Saikia

died at his residence in Ka-

beichuba village in Sipajhar

on Thursday at the age of 82.

ers of Sipajhar BEd College.

Saikia was also the founder

president of Bordaulguri Sa-

hitya Sabha. Saikia is sur-

vived by his wife, three sons

and a daughter.

Saikia was one of the found-

GUWAHATI,

April 24: Badan

Chandra Saikia,

retired principal

of Sipajhar HS

& MP School,

and several grandchildren.

Dutta joined the Krishak

OBITUARY

to defeat COVID-19 by staying indoors at their Pune res-

Despite the distance, their festive spirit has not come down as both girls beloed by their mother behind the camera, utilised the time to come up with renditions of two popular Assamese songs, the videos of which went viral on social media. Such was the impact of a video on "Phul Phulise Boxonter Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma mentioned the Nandy sisters in a tweet. The Assam Tribune re-

tot" that even Health Minis-

cently caught up with Antara over telephone on the response to the videos and what plans the sisters harbour.

"Our parents, Animesh and Jui Nandy, moved out of Assam when I was just fourand-a-half years old. We went to Kolkata and our parents wished that I should get trained in Hindustani classical music. I started learning under Ustad Rashid Khan ji and now I am working with AR Rahman sir. Being out of our homeland for so long, the penchant is always there to rush there during Bihu. But considering the circumstances, we decided to make the most of the time at home and sang our hearts out. The video came out well and we felt connected to the people in Assam and the North East," said Antara, who is studying at Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communications.

On the sidelines of her studies, she has sung songs for some films in Assam but her heart always longs to come back and work on authentic Assamese music. "I genuinely miss being in Assam. Along with my sister, we have some videos which went viral as well. But there was always a doubt whether people of my State saw those. Have we been able to relate to them or not? But the response to the recent

videos was phenomenal and far beyond our expectations. At home now, we are taking notes of Goalparia songs. I am looking forward to coming back home and working on unadulterated Assamese music and researching the rich musical diversity of the North East and folk music by late Kalika Prasad Bhattacharjee," she said.

Asked about her and Ankita's response to the tweet from Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Antara said "that left us with no words. At 5 am, Kalpana Patowary ma'am sent a screenshot of the tweet and the workaholic in me was sitting idle, repeatedly looking at the tweet all day. I wish I could meet Dr Sarma in person and thank him for the inspiring gesture."

The singer thanked the government for doing a commendable job in saving millions of lives and urged the people to stay at home and utilise the time with creative activities along with family members.

"Staying at home for such a long period becomes boring. However, we must realise that this phase too shall pass soon. Our videos were meant to convey the message that all of us need to stay at home and keep a positive frame of mind. Unlike advanced countries, our government, despite the limited health infrastructure, is doing its best to ensure lesser casualties, and better health for all," Antara said.

Mangaldai BJP MP's appeal to party workers



Our government and party workers, are both functioning like a mission against the spread of the deadly COVID-19

CORRESPONDENT

MANGALDAI, April 24: Mangaldai Lok Sabha MP Dilip Saikia of the BJP has urged party leaders and workers to engage themselves to combat the COV-ID-19 pandemic and prevent possible starvation in a mission mode.

Saikia in the presence of the two BJP MLAs of the district Gurujyoti Das and Binanda Kumar Saikia, was interacting with the media following a review meeting with the party's local leaders about the situation arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic here at his residence on Thursday afternoon.

Saikia informed that with voluntary contribution from altogether 1,700 members, the party has managed to reach out to nearly 40,000 families from the economically weaker sections of the society in the district.

Besides, from collective donations from around 850 party workers, an amount of Rs 11 lakh has been deposited to the PM Cares Fund while another amount of Rs 17 lakh has been donated to the Assam Arogya Nidhi. "Our government and party workers, are both functioning like a mission against the spread of the deadly COVID-19 and also ensuring that not a single person has to die of starva-

–Dilip Saikia

He claimed that special benefits of centrally-sponsored welfare schemes like PM Jan Dhan Yojana, PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, NFSA, Ujwala, etc., have reached 99 per cent of the targeted ben-

tion," Saikia reiterated.

The parliamentarian expressed gratitude to all concerned including personnel from the Health, Sanitation, Police departments and the media for showing courage in keeping Darrang and Udalguri districts completely free from coronavirus infection. Saikia also gave a face mask and a hand sanitiser bottle of 100 ml each to the mediapersons present.

Dr Kamaleswar Goswami: a tribute



Dr Kamaleswar Goswami, my boss, friend, long-time associate and former Director of Assam Forensic Science Laboratory since its formative years, passed away on April 16, 2020, following a brief illness.

Dr Goswami, late Dr Kalindra Nath Chakravarty and I were the first batch of three scientific officers to join the newly established Foren-

sic Science Laboratory (FSL) of Assam in 1970. Just two years after our induction, Dr Jyoti Kanta Barooah, the founder director, retired in 1972, making us feel orphaned, since he was a very senior and knowledgeable person. It was then that Dr Goswami, being the seniormost among us, was given the charge of acting director, and under his leadership we, a group of nine officers, strived hard to develop the Assam FSL to an enviable position in the country.

Dr Goswami was appointed full-fledged director in 1977 and he continued in the post till his retirement in 2001. He was perhaps the longest serving director of an FSL in the country. Prior to joining the FSL, Dr Goswami worked as a lecturer of chemistry at Dibrugarh University. Due to his urge for doing analytical work, he left that job to join as a scientific officer at FSL, which was a lower position than that of a university lecturer.

He underwent training at the CFSL under Dr PC Maiti, a chemist of international repute. Dr Maiti recognised his talent and brought him to prominence as a reputed forensic chemist. He chaired the chemistry sessions of several national-level forensic science conferences and was also asked to give expert comments on research papers. He was later selected as an executive member of the Indian Academy of Forensic Science.

During his service, Dr Goswami was loved and respected by all and he earned a reputation for his honesty and sincerity. Although I left his company in 1987 to join as Director, FSL, Meghalaya, he remained one of my closest friends. He leaves behind his wife, two daughters and a son. On the day of his adyashraddha today, I pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to his departed soul.

- Dr Kanak Chandra Baruah

Dr Mahanta Kumar Kalita



Dr Mahanta Kumar Kalita, former secretary general and working president of the Assam Science Society, passed away on April 13 at private nursing home in Guwahati following prolonged illness.

He was a leading figure of the Assam Science Society, the main organisation of the State responsible for de-

velopment of scientific consciousness and awareness among the people. In 1987, Dr Kalita he led the nationwide movement on

science called 'Bharat Jana Vigyan Jatha' as the zonal secretary of the North East. He was one of the pioneers of the Institute of Advance Study in Science and Technology (IASST) and retired in 2003 as registrar of the institute.

A resident of Sourabh Nagar in Beltola, Guwahati, Dr Kalita hailed from a small village, Puran Katahi under Chhaygaon revenue circle in Kamrup district. He was the eldest son of late Atma Ram Kalita and late Phutuki Kalita and was a brilliant student throughout his career. He begin his career as a lecturer of physics in Nalbari College in 1969 and obtained his PhD in Theoretical Plasma Physics in 1982 from Gauhati University.

Dr Kalita was an icon who believed in 'simple living, high thinking'. Today, on the day of his adyashraddha, I pray to the Almighty to grant him eternal bliss.

- Banamali Das

Baby born on a country boat



BHASWATI K GOSWAMI

 $A^{
m pril\,21,\,2020}$ started like any normal day for the C-NES Boat Clinic health teams. There are 15 teams in all, in 13 districts across Assam. Barpeta and Dhubri districts have two units each to cater to a huge population.

The Boat Clinic team in Dhemaji, bordering Arunachal Pradesh, was prepared for another long day ahead. Times were uncertain and challenging. Along with routine health check-ups, the Boat Clinics have also been tirelessly fighting the battle against COVID-19, and spreading awareness to preBrahmaputra.

are extremely critical for the insular river islanders amongst whom the clinics deliver basic health services and more, supported by NHM,

As the Dhemaji team pro-

Regular awareness sessions

vent the pandemic in the farflung, remote and underdeveloped river islands of the

Government of Assam.

ceeded to conduct a health camp at Pakhoriguri sapori (island village), they were stopped by a few villagers. "There is an emergency," they said. A pregnant 19year-old Silaboti Boro from Udaypur village of Mechaki sapori was being brought by nearest mainland hospital as roads were closed due to the nationwide lockdown. Her husband was far away in Chennai. Silaboti started

country boat to the

labour on the boat itself and the family was not being able to contact the 108 ambulance service despite frantically trying to. The very sight of the 'Doctor's Boat' from afar

was godsend. It was noon. Medical Officer Dr Modhusmita Hazarika and ANM Mohima Boro had no time to lose. They had to take a quick decision. There was no way they could take her to the nearest health centre. It would be too late. It had to be here, now, on the country boat. The surface was cleaned, and necessary hygienic precautions taken. Gloves were put on and the duo swung into action. Exactly 26 minutes later, at 12.26 pm, a healthy baby boy weighing 3 kg was born, much to the delight of the family. A baby born on a coun-

try boat.



17 20 21 22 23
*Provisional Inverted Scale

CAPSULE

Mylab Discovery

NEW DELHI, April 24:
Pune-based molecular
diagnostics company
Mylab Discovery
Solutions on Friday said
it has joined hands with
global contract research
organisation Syngene to
cater to the country's
demand for RT-PCR
COVID-19 testing kits
amid the pandemic. – PTI

Bajaj Finserv

MUMBAI, April 24:
Bajaj Finserv
companies, along their
staff, have jointly
pledged to contribute Rs
10.15 crore to PMCARES Fund set up to
fight the coronavirus
pandemic. – PTI

Britannia Ind

NEW DELHI, April 24: Stocks of Britannia Industries on Friday jumped 3.5 per cent after the company declared an interim dividend of Rs 35 per equity share of face value of Re 1 each. – PTI

Bioplus

NEW DELHI, April 24: Bioplus Healthcare on Friday said it has launched hand sanitiser under its SterloMax brand to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. – PTI

Schaeffler India

NEW DELHI, April 24: Industrial and automotive supplier Schaeffler India on Thursday said that it has resumed operations at its Savli plant in Gujarat's Vadodara. – PTI

MSMEs seek Centre's help

NOIDA (UP), April 24: Struggling to stay afloat due to the coronavirus outbreak and the subsequent lockdown, micro, small and medium enterprises (MS-MEs) across Noida and Greater Noida have knocked the Centre's door, seeking relief measures including interest-free loans and waiver in power tariff and lease rent.

Some of them are even considering closing down their units after getting no support from the government, the Noida Entrepreneurs' Association (NEA), a local industry body, claimed.

"After completing one month of the lockdown, entrepreneurs are now calling and saying they are very upset that after this long wait they are not getting any relief from the government," NEA President Vipin Malhan said in a statement. – PTI

A longer lockdown may create problems for exporters: FIEO

NEW DELHI, April 24: Exporters body FIEO on Friday cautioned the government that if the current lockdown will continue for long, it may create problems for exporters.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) president Sharad Kumar Saraf said that several countries such as Bangladesh, Dubai and the UK have issued solutions and guidelines for lifting the lockdown, and the federation has shared those suggestions with several states in India.

"More than one month have passed since the complete lockdown was imposed and it is creating difficulty for labours and industry. If it will be continued for long, it may create problems for exporters," Saraf told PTI.

After a three week period of the lockdown that ended on April 14, Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended the countrywide lockdown for 19 additional days

till May 3 to contain the spread of the pandemic.

"...in a calibrated and calculated manner, we need to start economic activities. It is my humble appeal to allow the industry to start in different places so that economy start moving," he said adding "we need to create a balance between life and livelihood".

Further, he added that clarifications issued by the Home Ministry on April 15 guidelines for partial resumption of manufacturing units are welcome but those should percolate down.

"This has been our experience that while the home secretary gives out the guidelines and clarifications, all the chief secretaries of states do not implement it in full letter and spirit and the guidelines do not percolate down upto the ground level," Saraf said.

He also said that large areas should not be declared as red zones if only few COVID cases have been found.

"For example, Thane has been declared as red zone, just because few cases have been found in few villages. Instead of declaring whole district as red zone, only those areas where the COV-ID cases have been found should be declared as containment area and in rest of the areas, industry may be allowed to resume work," he added.

India's first case was reported on January 30 and from March 25, the country was put under a 21-day complete lockdown.

Ludhiana-based Hand Tools Association President Subhash Chander Ralhan said that the government should allow factories and shops to open otherwise it will be "very" difficult for exporters to revive the work if lockdown continues for long. The country's merchandise exports plunged by a record 34.57 per cent in March. -PTI

Volkswagen restarts production in Germany

BERLIN, April 24: After around five weeks of shutdown due to the coronavirus crisis, Germany's largest car manufacturer Volkswagen restarted production in two of its plants.

Volkswagen's vehicle plant in Zwickau, Saxony would "cautiously resume" production of its all-electric model ID.3, according to the company, Xinhua news agency reported on Thursday.

"We all have a historic task to accomplish," said Thomas Ulbrich, Volkswagen brand board member for e-mobility. "That task is to protect the health of our employees and at the same time get business back on track responsibly."

Volkswagen announced that with an initial production of 50 vehicles per day, operations were restarted "at reduced speed." Before COVID-19, production volumes at the plant had been around three times as high.

To ensure the health of its employees.

To ensure the health of its employees, Volkswagen introduced new rules at the workplace, such as an obligation to wear mouth and nose protection when keeping the minimum distance of 1.5 metres between employees was not possible.

On Thursday, Volkswagen engine plant in the

city of Chemnitz also began gradually ramping up production. Next Monday, a plant in Dresden would follow with production at reduced capacity, according to the German carmaker.

Another major German car maker Daimler had already restarted production in some selected plants earlier this week.

BMW on the other hand extended the shutdown of its plants in Europe and North America until the end of April. So far, the German luxury carmaker has not yet provided details of the planned restart of its production.

Although Germany's car manufacturers are just restarting production in their local factories, BMW's largest site in China, Shenyang plant, had already been running again since mid-February.

"In China we are seeing the first signs of recovery with a strong order intake," said BMW Pieter Nota, member of the board of management of BMW AG responsible for customer, brands and sales.

Volkswagen also announced on Thursday that that production had already been resumed at "almost all Volkswagen plants in China."-IANS

CAIT, DPIIT to launch e-commerce platform for small retailers

NEW DELHI, April 24: The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) and the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT) have joined hands to come up with an e-commerce platform for local retailers and grocery stores.

The announcement comes a day after Amazon announced its new programme 'Local Shops on Amazon' aimed at enabling local and small shops and retailers to sell their products online. Further, on Wednesday Reliance Industries made the announcement of the JioMart-WhatsApp partnership to enable transactions between 'kiranas' and consumers and support small business.

In a statement, the CAIT said that to solve the challenge of providing essential goods to the Indian citizens during the COVID-19 situation, DPIIT, which comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, along with the traders' body

MUMBAI, April 24: The

Indian IT sector is staring at a

revenue growth sliding to a

decadal low of up to 2 per cent

and an impact on profitability

owing to narrowing of margins

due to the COVID-19 pan-

demic, a report said on Friday.

out on new deals, which will

compromise future reve-

nues, and also face reverses

on the existing ones, which

may be renegotiated as their

overseas clients face difficul-

ties due to the lockdowns,

domestic rating agency Crisil

The USD 97 billion IT sec-

tor is one of the largest serv-

ice exporters and helps the

economy also by supporting

over 40 lakh jobs if the IT-

enabled services are also in-

Major companies including

Infosys and Wipro have ear-

said in the report.

The companies will lose

is synergising the efforts of various companies and startups working in supply chain to help the local 'Kirana' stores take orders online and ensure last mile contactless delivery through a national e-commerce marketplace to be launched shortly.

Apart from DPIIT and CAIT, the other promoters would be Startup India, Invest India, All India Consumer Products Distributors Federation and Avana Capital, CAIT said.

"This vast purely Indian ecommerce portal will make all efforts to onboard about seven crore traders of the country. Manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers of all verticals of domestic trade and consumers will be the integral part of this ecommerce platform," said the CAIT statement.

The organisation said that the platform would be duly embedded with an efficient delivery ecosystem and digital payments.

IT sector growth may be affected

lier this month discontinued

the practice of giving yearly

guidance, while TCS hinted

at pain during the first two

finalised between March and

May, but this time around,

most clients will focus on

mitigating emerging busi-

ness risks and defer discre-

tionary IT spend, while let-

ting existing contracts con-

tinue," Crisil's senior direc-

Crisil said that revenue

growth for the industry will

decline to a decadal low of 0-

on mobility, which has result-

ed in the entire aviation sec-

tor being closed, will also

cause delays in deal consum-

The IT industry's largest

client segment of banking, fi-

mations, Sethi added.

The ongoing restrictions

tor Anui Sethi said.

2 per cent.

"Typically, new deals get

quarters of the year.

CAIT also added that the e-commerce portal will eventually be enlarged to all items being traded under domestic trade of India.

It noted that the national ecommerce marketplace has been perceived by both DPI-IT and CAIT not restricted to the present lockdown period and coronavirus crisis, but as a permanent ecommerce platform for digitising existing business of the entire trading community of India.

In this very direction, 'Startup India', the agency under DPIIT has invited applications from all companies who specialise in IT solutions and logistical support solutions amongst others with a broader reach or network across the country to come forward and strengthen this delivery mechanism. Considering the ongoing global crisis and the number of increasing casualties to the crisis we are seeking readily

deployable solutions. – IANS

nancial services and insur-

ance which accounts for 28

per cent of the industry rev-

enues will deliver an 8 per

cent topline growth on ris-

ing share of digital transac-

tions and presence of larger

and longer-term mainte-

nance contracts that are crit-

ical to operations, Crisil said.

which accounts for 8 per cent

of the IT industry revenues,

will also grow at similar lev-

However, other segments

including retail (32 per cent

of IT service revenues), and

communication, aerospace,

defence and transportation

(22 of revenues) and manu-

facturing, travel and tourism

and oil and energy will see a

steep and immediate impact

on revenues considering

sluggish demand in these sec-

tors, it said. – PTI

els, it said.

While healthcare segment,

Workers of an NGO manufacture sanitisers at Krishnanagar in Nadia district, on Friday.-PTI

Sensex down 535 points

MUMBAI, April 24: The Indian stock market snapped its two-day gaining streak on Friday with the BSE Sensex losing 500 points.

The fall was largely on the back of the weakness in global indices amid reports that an experimental drug 'Remdesivir,' a potential antiviral drug to treat COVID-19 under trials, has failed.

In a major development in the mutual fund sector, Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund late on Thursday evening announced that it was closing six of its credit funds due to liquidity issues.

The Sensex closed at 31,327.22, lower by 535.86 points or 1.68 per cent from the previous close of 31,863.08.

It had opened at 31,426.62 and touched an intra-day high of 31,842.24 and a low of 31,278.27 points.

The Nifty50 on the National Stock Exchange closed at 9,154.40, lower by 159.50 points or 1.71 per cent from the previous close. – IANS

Lockdown hits India's handset shipments

NEW DELHI, April 24: A steep annual decline in the month of March (-19 per cent) due to COVID-19 nationwide lockdown restricted the overall growth of the India smartphone shipments to just 4 per cent (year-on-year) in the first quarter this year, with a little over 31 million units, a new report said on Friday.

While January and February shipments grew due to new launches and aggressive promotions, March took the sheen off with lockdown coming into force.

According to Counterpoint's Market Monitor service, any signs of recovery will likely only start from the third quarter onwards.

"As a result, we are estimating that overall smartphone shipments will decline by 10 per cent for the full calendar year," the report noted.

"The COVID-19 effect on India was relatively mild until mid-March. However, economic activities declined as people save money in expectation of an extended period of uncertainty and an almost complete lockdown," said Prachir Singh, Senior Research Analyst at Counterpoint Research.

Almost all smartphone manufacturing has been suspended since the lockdown started from March 24.

"Further, with the social distancing norms, factories will be running at lower capacities even after the lockdown is lifted. Consumer demand will have a larger impact on smartphone sales, as people will focus on saving and, therefore, limit discretionary purchases," Singh noted.

Shilpi Jain, Research Analyst at Counterpoint Research stressed that smartphones should be considered as essential items during the lockdown as people are dependent on them as a primary mode of communication. – IANS

IndiGo plans to expand cargo operations

NEW DELHI, April 24: Even as it awaits Centre's clear indication on the commencement date of passenger services, airline major IndiGo plans to expand its international and domestic car-

go operations.

Accordingly, the airline plans to launch cargo operations to China, Singapore and Malaysia in the near future.

The move to haul more cargo assumes significance as the airline has a massive domestic network and the largest aircraft fleet in India.

However, most of these flights have been operated on a "Free-of-Cost" basis to ferry medical equipment and other essentials.

The airline's Chief Operating Officer William Boulter told IANS: "Cargo is playing a significant role for us since the passenger services are not active... We plan to expand our presence in this segment." – IANS

Labourers unload sacks of cement during the lockdown in Patna, on Friday.-PTI

Over 29 lakh aviation jobs in India may be hit: IATA

NEW DELHI, April 24: With the coronavirus crisis bringing global aviation industry to a halt, as many as 29.32 lakh jobs are likely to be at risk in India's aviation sector during the year 2020, according to a report by International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The data shows that among the Asia Pacific countries, Indian aviation sector would be the worst hit in terms of jobs, with a likely impact on 29,32,900 jobs.

The report also said that the revenue of the sector in India may fall by \$11,221 million this year compared to 2019.

Further, the passenger demand is likely to fall by 47 per cent in the country, it showed.

Conrad Clifford, LATA's Re-

cent in the country, it showed. Conrad Clifford, IATA's Regional Vice President for Asia-Pacific, said that airlines in the region face a liquidity crisis with a \$61 billion cash burn in the second quarter of 2020. "We have seen the first

airline casualty in the region.
There will be more casualties if governments do not step in urgently to ensure airlines have sufficient cash

The industry body expects that the due to the Covid-19 crisis global airline passenger revenues would drop by \$314 billion in 2020, a 55 per cent decline compared to 2019.

Airlines in Asia Pacific will



flow to tide them over this period," he said.

Clifford identified India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand as priority countries that need to take action. see the largest revenue drop of \$113 billion in 2020 compared to 2019. The passenger demand in the region is likely to fall by 50 per cent fall it showed.

These estimates are based on a scenario of severe trav-

el restrictions lasting for three months, with a gradual lifting of restrictions in domestic markets, followed by regional and intercontinental, IATA said.

Clifford noted that providing support for airlines has a broader economic implication as jobs across many sectors will be impacted if airlines do not survive the Covid-19 crisis. Every airline job supports another 24 in the travel and tourism value chain, he added.

"In Asia-Pacific, 11.2 mil-

lion jobs are at risk, including those that are dependent on the aviation industry, such as travel and tourism," said Clifford.

IATA has called for com-

bined measures including direct financial support, loans, loan guarantees and support for the corporate bond market and tax relief. – IANS

YouTube effect



How do people end up being 'confined' to Google-owned platform

Researchers have cracked how the successive recommendations generated by Google-owned YouTube's algorithm sometimes "confine" us in a bubble of similar content.

The researchers at the Centre Marc Bloch-Franco-German Research Centre for the Social Sciences in Germany studied this phenomenon by exploring recommendations from a thousand videos on different subjects, thereby running through half a million recommendations.

"We focused on YouTube which has become a major online content provider but where confinement has until now been little-studied in a systematic manner. We aim to contribute to the above literature by showing whether recommendation on YouTube exhibits phenomena typical of filter bubbles, tending to lower the diversity of consumed content," they added in a paper published in the journal PLOS

The findings showed that contrary to the al-

gorithms of other platforms, which seem to promote the exploration of novelty and serendipity, YouTube is an exception, generating several confinement phenomena.

A user's navigation based on recommendations can be seen as a movement within a network of interconnected videos: by starting from a particular video, the recommendation network is more or less closed, in other words, it leads to content that is more or less similar and redundant.

Besides, the content that leads to the most confined recommendation networks also seems to revolve around the most viewed videos or the ones with the longest viewing time.

"So far, this work appears to concur on the fact that platforms rather tend to expand the navigation landscape of users. Here, the meanfield of YouTube recommendations shows up as an exception," the researchers noted.

(Source: IANS)

12:00 Hum Paanch 12:30 Hum Paanch

13:30 Qurbaan Ha 14:00 Kasamh Se

15:00 Choti Bahu 16:00 Pavitra Rishta 17:00 Brahmarakshas

18:30 Dance India Dance 20:00 Hum Saath Saath Hair 23:30 Hum Paanch

12:15 Mahabharat 13:00 Yeh Rishta Kya Ke

13:30 Yeh Rishta Kya Ke...

15:00 Diya Aur Baati Hum

14:00 Bidaai

14:30 Bidaai

18:00 Hum Paanch

12:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbak 14:00 Raaz Roll No. 21 Ka 15:00 Oggy And The Cock. 15:30 Oggy And The Cock... 17:30 Oggy And The Cock...

18:00 Roll No. 21 Special.. 21:00 Oggy And The Cock.. 22:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbak 23:00 Courage The Coward

23:30 The Tom & Jerry Show Page

11:30 Chhota Bheem.. 12:30 Kungfu Dhamaka 13:00 Chhota Bheem Aur. 15:00 Chhota Bheem



16:30 Grizzy And The Lemm 18:30 Super Bheem-Toota..

20:00 Chhota Bheem... 21:00 Grizzy And The Lemm. 22:00 Mr. Bean: The Animated. 23:30 Grizzy And The Lemm.

WILD

JUNGLE HEROES

18:00 India's Jungle Heroe

19:00 Hostile Planet

20:00 Extreme Survivors.

22:00 Built For The Kill 23:00 Animal Fight Club

12:00 Adventure: India's.

13:00 Adventure: Primal Survivo

18:00 Running Wild/Bear Grylls

21:00 Running Wild/Bear Grylls 22:00 Spotlight: Going Viral

HISTORY

12:35 Ancient Aliens

23:00 Investigates: Banged.

14:00 Combating Covid-19

15:00 Adventure: Running...

16:00 Adventure - Gordon.

17:00 Snakes in The City

19:00 Adventure: Primal..

20:00 Earth At Home

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL

12:00 Ultimate Weekend

13:00 Ultimate Weekend 15:00 India's Jungle Heroes

16:00 Saath Nibhaana Saathiya 17:00 Mann Ki Awaaz...Pratigya nment

14:15 Modern Marvels

15:05 OMG! Yeh Mera India



18:00 Food Tech 19:00 Leepu & Pitbull 20:00 Modern Marvels-Mega. 21:00 Dynamo: Magician.22:00 Pawn Stars

PLANET 12:10 Animal Arms Race 12:58 Killer Instin... 13:15 Animal Planet Exclusives 14:10 India's Wild Tales 14:55 Wildest Survival

22:30 Storage Wars 23:00 Forged In Fire: Knife.



15:35 Attack & Defe. 16:00 World Of The W.

17:00 Ram Siya Ke Lub K. 17:30 Ram Siya Ke Lub K.

LIVE 07:00 Breakfast Live 08:00 Live at 8 09:00 Good morning As 10:00 Assamese news 11:30 Kotha Barta (R) 12:00 Mid Day Live 13:00 Assamese Telefi 14:30 Afternoon Prime

colors

15:55 Naagin Bhagya Ka.

Entertoinment

21:30 Devon Ke Dev Mahadev 22:00 Maharaj Ki Jai Ho

Zcafě

19:00 Srimad Bhagwat

20:00 Naagin Bhagya Ka.

21:00 Fear Factor Khatron Ke.

SONY

15:20 Super Dancer - Chapter 3 17:40 Best Of The Kapil Sharma...

20:00 India's Best Dancer 21:00 The Kapil Sharma Show 22:30 Best Of The Kapil Sharma...

rishteu

23:30 Best Of Crime Patrol

12:00 Agneepath 15:00 Sasural Simar Ka

22:00 Kasam Tere Pyar Ki

07:45 Pratham Xongbad

17:00 City18

08.50 Batori

18:00 Prime Time18 19:00 Dintur Shironam 20:00 Porjyobekhyon 21:30 Aparadh Nama

22:00 North East Scar

22:30 Noixo Xironam

15:30 Vigyan Prasar 15:30 Classical Music 16:00 Abelir Batori

16:05 Akholor Juti

17:30 Krishi Darshan

14:00 Biyolir Headline 16:00 Abelir Khabar 16:30 Superfast Prime Time100

16:30 Chiphung 17:00 Nimishote Batori 17:02 DD Kisan TV Serial in Hindi

18:00 Choti Sarrdaarn

12:00 I Spy 14:00 Honey, I Blew Up the Kid 16:00 The Big Bang Theory 16:30 The Big Bang Theory

17:00 The Big Bang Theory
19:00 Carol's Second Act
19:30 The Unicorn

18:00 Mahabharat 19:00 RadhaKrishr 19:30 RadhaKrishr

20:00 Mahabharat

22:30 Hostages

17:30 Guwahati Bisesh 18:00 Guwahati Live 18:30 Breaking @ 6:30 Discussion Show 21:00 Super Prime Time 22:00 Live at 10

ra 1700 Xopun 1730 Barala Kai 1830 Xopunor Aasutia Rang 2000 Jonaki Kareng 2030 Xopun

19:00 Cricket Connected 2020

18:30 Jai Ho

23:30 Hero ISL

11:00 Vivo

20:00 IPL 2014 HLs

20:30 IPL 2015 HLs

18:00 Dharabahik

19:00 Cricket Connected 2020 20:00 IPL 2014 HLs 20:30 IPL 2015 HLs 21:00 Cricket Connec 22:00 IPL 2014 HLs 22:30 IPL 2015 HLs 23:00 Indi vs NZ 2020 T20. 23:30 Football...

22:00 IPL 2014 HLs 12:00 Best Of Bayern HLs 12:30 WWE Smack Down 14:30 WWE Main Event 22:30 IPL 2015 HLs 16:00 WWE SmackDow

18:00 WWE BlockBusters 19:00 Arena eSports 19:30 Best of UCL 20:00 WWE SmackDown 22:00 WWE BlockBusters 23:00 Best of UCL HLs 23:30 Best of UCL HLs

12:00 Daraar 15:00 Dharkar

18:00 Ghatak

21:00 Gurudev

14:45 Main Khiladi Tu Anari 17:35 Rowdy Rajkumar 19:45 Saathi

12:00 Best of Bayern HLs 12:30 WWE Nxt 14:30 WWE BlockBusters 15:30 ATP Uncovered

16:00 WWE Nxt 18:00 WWE Main Event

12:10 Zameen 15:00 Gharwali Baharwali 17:10 Waah! Tera Kya Kehna 22:45 Guru

12:30 Red Dawn 13:58 The School Of Rock

15:50 Demolition Ma

17:40 Winter's Tale

13:00 Inside Out 14:40 Ice Age: The Melt 16:15 Cars 2

Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief

UTY MOVIES

18:35 Journey To The West:
Conquering The Demons
21:00 Unstoppable
23:10 Resident Evil: Afterlife

12:20 Bumblebee 14:20 Shooter 16:35 San Andreas 18:10 Mad Max: Fury Road 21:00 Rampage 23:00 Entoura

Avengers: Age Of Ultron 20:42 Avengers: Infinity Wars23:15 The Darkest Minds



12:15 Madhura Raja 15:00 Karan Arjun 18:25 Family - Ek Deal



22:00 WWE BlockBusters 23:30 Best of UCL HLs 23:30 Best of UCL HLs

12:30 Land Of Legends 13:00 NBA 2019/20 HLs 13:30 NBA 2019/20 HLs 14:00 Conte's Champions 14:30 Best of UEFA Champions 15:00 TNA Greatest Matches

SONY

16:00 TNA Greatest Matches. 17:00 Unforgettable Moments. 17:30 Land Of Legends

Know your **DAY**

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Saturday, April 25, 2020:

Nothing wishy-washy about you. You are a vigorous dynamo who will accomplish a great deal this year. Prepare for some heavy competition. Direct your energy constructively and keep trying. You'll succeed. Finances improve at the end of the year. If single, when you decide between two very different people, commitments stabilize. If attached, listen more to your partner, who adores you. Your love's magic has a mystical quality. LEO pampers you.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

 $\star\star$ Do not resist inevitable change; people will enter and leave your life. Today, allow others to grow and explore, particularly children. Relationships with siblings and neighbors can be demanding. Be patient. Undercurrents and extenuating circumstances are afoot. Tonight: The show must go on.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) $\star\star\star$ There should be profits coming to you from past work or an inheritance. Today, you can see opportunities to correct old financial problems. A loved one gifts you with an extraordinary piece of art. Tonight: Quality time with family.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

* ★ ★ ★ ★ Your natural cleverness and quickness are enhanced today and valuable information is offered during social situations. The nature of these have changed so much in this, our new time, but you adapt better than anybody. You are brilliant online. Tonight: Catch up with pals.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) ★★★★★ Your exterior shields a soft, inner self, and you protect that self today - by getting extra sleep, day-dreaming, cocooning and journaling. It is a time of connecting again with your unconscious, which has been frozen by fear of the time. Tonight: You feel your freedom.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) *** It will be a wild and interesting day. You feel that your priorities and desires are in flux. Decide what you really want and pursue it. A group or organization will be especially open to your approach. There are endings and beginnings in process. Tonight: Celebrate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) *** You work hard for security. And today your thoughts mostly revolve around your earning power. Shop online for an item you have long coveted in the days before the pandemic. The yearned for treasure may soon be your own. Tonight: Take a break.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) *** Travel would be enjoyable and rewarding, you think today. As you cannot travel, explore in your mind. You study pictures and text on faraway places. Your artistic talents are in top form, so give expression to them and make yourself happy. Tonight: Early bedtime.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) ★★★★ You receive interesting news today. You could return to an old job or revive a skill that was lucrative in the past. Look through receipts; a purchase might need to be exchanged or returned. Tonight: Defer to

a loved one on plans. SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) $\star\star\star\star$ You wake up feeling better than you have in a while. A relationship takes an intriguing turn and you are tempted to turn it further. You might not understand where the other person is coming from, so ask. Tonight:

Add more fun to the moment CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) ★★★ Your health and strength are good, but be aware of how old habits come into play today. Research a helper who could assist you. Communication with the very young or elderly are excellent. Dynamic and

original individuals impress you. Tonight: Get a good night's sleep

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) *** Talented and powerful people are growing closer to you. Happy social contacts are made. The promise of partnerships that are sources of growth and opportunity is very real. Remember to keep it playful for best results. Tonight: Special time with a child.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★ Although you usually dislike being alone, today finds you tending to withdraw for some solitary reflection. Avoid groups, even online. Reach out to those you care about, visit an art display online or complete creative projects. Tonight: A home improvement project.

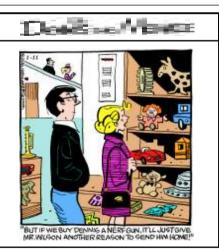
Thought for the day When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.

- MAYA ANGELOU

LOCKHORNS



"WHEN YOU SAID CREATING PASSWORDS WAS AS EASY AS 1-2-3, I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE GOING TO USE THAT."

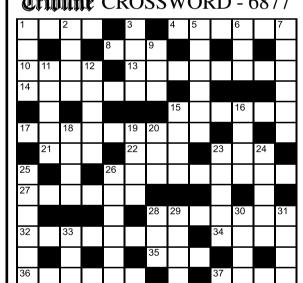


(R)THE PHANTOM By Lee Falk I SAW FOR MYSELF THE TWO MEN UP THEY'RE NOT LIKELY TO SEE RHODIA AGAIN. SAY WHAT I TOLD YOU TO SAY WITHOUT CONTRADICTION

BLONDIE HAD A TON OF WORK TO DO, BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO EVEN GET HOW WAS YOUR DAY, DEAR? ABLE TO GET ME BACK FIVE MINUTES AFTER WAS TIME I SAT TO PACK DOWN, MY UP AND COMPUTER







known as Lakshadweep (9)

27 Delighted (6)

32 Leap by a ballet

dancer (8)

28 Vacates (7)

Across Slender bars

4 Change for better (6) 8 Downhearted

34 To glut (4) 10 Fencer's sword 35 Obese (3) 36 Mooch (6) 13 Hung around (8) 37 Wading bird (4)

14 With feet apart 15 Boosted or

hoisted (6) 17 Relating to voters (9) 21 Floor covering

22 Taro dish (3) 23 Consume (3) 26 Island now **SOLUTION TO TRIBUNE CROSSWORD - 6877**

Boat propeller (3)

Down

Got by (4,2) 9 Misery (3) 11 Davidic poem (5) 12 Upright (5)

1 Earthbound bird house? (2.3) 25 Puts out by force 2 Food regimen (4) 3 Chilled (4) 5 Involve (6)

26 Enticing (6) 28 Sprite (3) 29 Intend (4)

15 Not of the clergy

16 Bangkok resident

18 Effortless (4)

19 Gemstone (4)

prey (3)

23 Changes or

emends (5) 24 Idiot box in the

20 Mythical bird of

30 Two-syllable foot (4) 31 Becomes firm (4)

33 Jeering cry (3)

Edits, 24 Tv set, 25 Ejects, 26 Luring, 28 Elf, 29 Mean, 30 lamb, 31 11 Psalm, 12 Erect, 15 Laic, 16 Thai, 18 Easy, 19 Opal, 20 Roc, 23 Down: 1 Rhea, 2 Diet, 3 Cold, 5 Entail, 6 Oar, 7 Made do, 9 Woe, Joyful, 28 Empties, 32 Cabriole, 34 Sate, 35 Fat, 36 Sponge, 37 Ibis. 15 Lifted, 17 Electoral, 21 Mat, 22 Poi, 23 Eat, 26 Laccadive, 27 Across: 1 Rods, 4 Reform, 8 Low, 10 Epee, 13 Loitered, 14 Astride,

HEALTH CAPSULES® by Bron Smith

DO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS OF THE POPULATION?

ReLIGIOUS GROUPS aRound the WORLD TenD to LIVE
LONGER THAN
the REST of the
POPULATION.
ONE 12-YEAR STUDY

REVEALED THAT ADVENTIST MALES LIVED 7.3 YEARS LONGER THAN THE REST OF THE CALIFORNIA POPULATION, WHILE ADVENTIST WOMEN LIVED 4.4 YEARS LONGER. ADVENTISTS HAVE A LOWER RISK OF DEVELOPING HEART DISEASE, CANCER, DIABETES AND OBESITY

Health Capsules is not intended

JUMBLED WORDS Given below are four jumbled words. Solv the jumbles to make proper words and mov them to the respective squares below. Selec the letters in the shaded squares and jumbl them to get the answer for the given quip.

LMEEE ADORN

GSYINT AHUBCP

year one and a half times his own weight in other people's ____. – John Updike

A healthy male adult consumes each

us own weight in other people's patience. Words: Melee, radon, stingy, hubcap.
Answer: A healthy male adult bore consumes each year one and a half times his own weight in other neonle's nationer.

to be of a diagnostic nature.

Choto Doodhpatil GP represents Assam in PM's interaction

Panchayati Raj Divas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR, April 24: The Choto Doodhpatil Gaon Panchayat under Cachar district represented Assam in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's live video conference on COVID-19 with village sarpanchs of the country on Friday on the occasion of Panchayati Raj Divas.

Assam's Choto Doodhpatil GP featured among the seven gaon panchayats of the country from States including Jammu and Kashmir, Maharahstra, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Karnataka.

During the interaction, while the Prime Minister made a humble gesture to the people of Assam for bearing with the Government's call to continue with the lockdown even during Rongali Bihu and urged the GP presidents to encourage Do gaz ki doori among people in the villages, Ranjit Sarkar, president of Choto Doodhpatil GP thanked the PM on behalf of the Government of Assam for steering the nation through the COVID-19 crisis.

"We are following constant guidance of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Health Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma and have held meetings with all concerned officials in the GP to render

AAMSU appeal

not to organise

any gathering

during Ramzan

CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, April

24: The Tinsukia District

Committee of All Assam

Minorities Students' Union

(AAMSU) has urged all the

Masjid, Maktab and Madra-

sa Committees to follow

the guidelines of COVID-19

and not to organize any

gathering during the holy

In a press release issued by

the general secretary of the

Tinsukia district committee of

AAMSU, Fariiur Rahman has

requested everyone to offer

Holy Taravih Namaaz at home

instead of organising any con-

gregation in Masjids and to

cooperate with the govern-

ment in the fight against COV-

The minority student lead-

er also requested all to do-

nate the sadqa, fitra and khai-

rat to the needy people so

that they can keep Roza with-

out any problems. He also

urged all to take care of their

immediate neighbours and

help the needy people as

The student body lament-

ed that the government's in-

itiative was not adequate and

still many poor people were

not getting food materials.

So, AAMSU has requested

all public representatives, the

civil society to come forward

AAMSU has also demand-

ed the government to in-

crease the quantity of food

items distributed through

Public Distribution System.

much as possible.

to help the poor.

ID-19 pandemic.

month of Ramzan.



A TV grab of PM's live interaction with Choto Doodhpatil GP president on the occasion of Panchayati Raj Divas.

assistance to all citizens, especially young and the elderly. We have reached out to each home to convince and encourage them to follow social distancing, practice frequent handwashing during the lockdown to keep the disease at bay. Essential food items, including 5 kgs of rice, to family identity card holders have been provided along with medicines. Health services have been provided to all at the local model hospital," Sarkar told the Prime Minister during the live interaction.

Sarkar also informed the Prime Minister that local MLA Kishore Nath has extended services to the people during the phase.

Meanwhile, Amitabh Rai, president of Cachar Zila Parishad informed that the gaon panchayats under the district are following all the norms of social distancing during the lockdown. "It is a matter of great pride for us that the Choto Doodhpatil GP of Assam has featured in the seven Panchayat heads of the country today. Through the PDS facility, Government has ensured supply of foodgrains to those families struggling for food during the lockdown. The SHGs under different blocks have been enrolled to manufacture 70,000 face covers and already over 16,000 face covers have been distributed to the people in the villages for free. Also, people in the tea gardens have been given face covers at nominal costs," Rai said.

He also informed that under the Contingency Fund of 14th Finance Commission, assistance of Rs 1000 each has been provided to those GP families which do not have BPL cards. Moreover, there are at least 200 families in every GP without ration cards and in a latest move, the Chief Minister has made further arrangements of providing 5 kgs of rice under PDS to the families which do not have ration cards, he said.

Crime rate has gone down during lockdown period: DGP

CORRESPONDENT

BONGAIGAON, April 24: "Crime rate has gone down in the State during the ongoing nationwide lockdown and the State police department is planning to chalk out a future strategy to tackle crimes which are likely to occur during the post-lockdown period," said Director General of Police (DGP) Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta in his brief to the media at Chapaguri in Chirang district today after a high-level meeting with senior police officials and Superintendents of Police of seven lower Assam districts.

The DGP had attended the meeting to review the latest law-and-order situation during the COVID-19 lockdown period and to know about the challenges faced by police personnel while discharging their duties in Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Chirang, Kokrajhar, Dhubri (red zone) South Salmara and Goalpara (red zone) districts.

To address the mental health problems among some people during the lockdown, the Police department has formed a group of counsellors with a phone number to respond to such calls, the DGP said.

In consultation with sociologists, a strategy has been planned to check crimes which are likely to be on the rise due to economical impact after the lockdown ends, DGP Mahanta said.

The Superintendents of Police of COVID-19 red zone districts shared their experiences and challenges on handling both the law-and-order situation and the public in containment areas in the meeting so that their counterparts of other COVID-19 green zone districts can be prepared mentally for such crises in the future, the DGP said. DIG (Western Range) Raunak Ali Hazarika, BTAD IGP Anurag Agrawal and DIG Violet Baruah, Commandants of police battalions and junior police officers of these districts were also present in the meeting

Home delivery of fruits begins in Hailakandi in view of Ramzan

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, April 24: Door-to-door delivery of fruits has begun in Hailakandi in view of Ramzan from Friday. The Agriculture department in association with the district administration started making door-to-door delivery of fruits, besides vegetables through hawkers.

Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer Dr RA Ahmed said the department has provided the fixed price list of fruits and vegetables to the hawkers and requested the consumers to make the payment as per the list.

Dr Ahmed said anv hawker not displaying the price list of items and taking more than the fixed rates would be penalised and his licence would be cancelled.

"Vendors will have to display the price list for information of the buyers. Any deviation on the part of the fruit vendors would pave the way for cancellation of the sale permission forthwith," he added.

He asked the public to lodge a complaint if any hawker takes advantage of the lockdown situation to dupe the consumers.

In an order issued on Thursday, District Development Commissioner

(DDC) Vikram Dev Sharma stated that no shops selling fruits and dry fruits would be allowed to sale directly to the farmers during the lockdown period.

The earlier order allowing such shops to operate stands terminated. It said in view of Ramzan beginning from Saturday and for the public in general, all kinds of fruits and dry fruits would be sold by the vendors at the doorsteps of the people across the district. The district agriculture officer would select the vendors and arrange necessary passes, specifying the area of operation to facilitate door-to-door selling of fruits, the order stated.



Police personnel distributing food items among the poor at Langtuk Rongpi village in Karbi Anglong, on Friday. – UB Photos

5142 people on home quarantine in Nagaon dist released

A CORRESPONDENT

NAGAON, April 24: Around 125 people of the district who were admitted in isolation wards at various hospitals, CHCs and model hospitals in the district have tested negative in both first and second phases.

Similarly, 5142 people who had arrived from outside the State have already completed 14 days of home quarantine. As per the directive of the Health department, all of them have been released, sources in the district health department said.

Sources said that these people were admitted to the isolation wards, especially set up at Nagaon Swahid Bhugeswari Phookonani Civil Hospital, Bebejia CHC, Rantholi, Raha, Kandali and Mowamari model hospitals to tackle the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in the district.

Dr Atul Pator, Joint Director, Nagaon District Health Services, in an interaction with this correspondent said here that a total of 125 people with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 pandemic, who had arrived from outside the State and who had made contacts with COVID-19 positive cases, had been admitted to various isolation wards set up at various hospitals and CHCs of the district. But luckily, all of them have tested negative in both the phases till date.

Besides, Dr Pator claimed that the District Health Services has not conducted rapid test on anyone in the district so far due to unavailability of test kits.

Meanwhile, two women of Dhing circle, who had returned from Morigaon, were admitted to Nagaon Swahid Bhugeswari Phookonani Civil Hospital on Thursday evening by Nagaon police and after screening, they were advised to be on home quarantine for 14 days.

National award to Raha anchalik panchayat

ANN Service

RAHA, April 24: The Salmara village panchayat under Raha anchalik panchayat has won the Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar (NDRGGSP) for 2020 for its effective implementation of various projects with the participation of people.

The award was given to the gram panchayat under Nagaon Zila Parishad for its outstanding contribution to the socioeconomic development by involving gram sabhas. The award was given by the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

The district administration of Nagaon was informed about the recognition by Commissioner of Panchayat and Rural Development Hemen Das, in a letter dated April 22, about the selection of the villages for its commendable work done during the assessment year 2018-19, an official release said.

The letter also said, the Malinipur Gram Panchayat of Sissiborgaon Anchalik Panchayat under Dhemaji Zila Parishad has also been selected for the Best Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award (GPDPA), 2020.

Rhino carcass found CORRESPONDENT

BISWANATH CHARIA-

LI, April 24: A carcass of an adult male rhino was found near the Panpur Anti Poaching Camp under Western Range of Biswanath Wildlife Division of Kaziranga Tiger Reserve today.

The Forest officials claim that it was a natural death probably due to infighting. Veterinary doctors completed post-mortem at Panpur area of 6th addition to Kaziranga National Park. The horn was collected intact by the department.

Sonowal visits storm-ravaged villages in Dibrugarh dist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, April 24: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today visited some of the thunderstorm-affected villages in Lezai under Dibrugarh West Revenue Circle to make a ground assessment of the impact of the calamity that recently wreaked havoc in the entire State.

After Sonowal alighted from his vehicle, he approached the affected families in the area. He personally witnessed the devastation of houses, granaries and flora in the area. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Pallav Gopal Jha, Moran MLA Chakradhar Gogoi, Dibrugarh MLA Prasanta Phukan and Lahoal MLA Rituparna Baruah and offi-

cials from the Revenue and Disaster Management Department.

The Chief Minister told newsmen that in the past few days thunderstorm had caused unimaginable damages to the properties of thousands of people in the State, particularly to their living houses and vegetation. "People have truly incurred enormous losses in this thunderstorm. Apart from their structures, they have also lost income generating plants like arecanut, banana groves and other plants. The State government has already directed Deputy Commissioners of each district to immediately reach out to the affected people by conducting a ground survey of the destruction. The DCs have been asked to assess the losses with all the associated departments and carry out relief measures on a war footing so that people did not face difficulties during the lock-

down period," said Sonowal. Replying to a query on whether families without land documents would receive relief items, the Chief Minister stressed that all those affected by the storm will be provided with relief materials.

Earlier, Sonowal had also visited nearby Baughpara tea estate. He appreciated the social distancing maintained by the workers of the garden as he distributed masks among them. He urged upon the workers to strictly follow the COVID-19 health protocol to protect themselves from being infected.

Inquiry into anomalies in distribution of relief sought

CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, April 24: All Assam Students' Union (AASU) general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi has demanded that an inquiry be ordered by Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal regarding alleged corruption in the distribution of free government relief materials among the poor across the state.

While distributing relief materials on behalf of Doomdooma Sanmilita Samaj, a joint forum of various organisations, among the needy families of ward numbers 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Doomdooma town, at the Doomdooma town field on Thursday afternoon, the AASU general secretary said the students' body had started a 10-day special campaign across the state to distribute essential food items among the poor families.

The district and the regional committees of AASU in association with other organisations would extend necessary help in this regard.

It may be mentioned here that Doomdooma Sanmilita Samaj has been distributing essential food items among the poor families of Doomdooma circle for the last couple of weeks.

On Thursday afternoon, the Samaj distributed essential food items among 250 poor families

of ward numbers 7 to 10 of Doomdooma town During the programme, the AASU general secretary, All Moran Students' Union president Arunjyoti Moran, secretary Naba Moran, Tinsukia district committee of AASU president Binay Dubey, general secretary Samar Gohain, assistant secretary Rana Sonar, Tin-

sukia district committee of AJYCP president

Surajit Moran, Doomdooma Press Club pres-

ident Arjun Baruah, former president Anuj

Kalita and several others distributed food

items among the poor families. Later, the student leaders distributed essential food items among 50 poor families of the Tongona area of Kakopothar. The leaders also distributed necessary stationery items among the students of this place.

Meanwhile, the Doomdooma branch of Elora Vigyan Mancha and Darpana Self Help Group distributed free masks among 200 people of Doomdooma town.

Doomdooma Jatiya Vidyalaya distributed essential food items among 18 daily labourers living in the vicinity of the school. On the other hand, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Sevashram, Doomdooma also distributed essential food items among 103 needy families here.



NCC cadets donating a cheque for Assam Arogya Nidhi to Sonitpur Deputy Commissioner Manvendra Pratap Singh, at Tezpur on Friday. - UB Photos

Storm render many families homeless in Sonitpur, Dhemaji

CORRESPONDENT

TEZPUR, April 24: Many families at Bandarmari-Khelmati under Bandarmari area gaon panchayat in Sonitpur district were rendered homeless after a severe storm lashed the area yesterday evening.

Dwelling houses of five poor families of the area and seven other families in the Khamukia area were destroyed in the storm. The affected families have

urged the government to extend its help. On the other hand, in the

Batomari area near here, dwellings of seven poor families were severely damaged due to the last evening's storm. In the incident, one minor also received injuries.

Our correspondent from Dhemaji adds: On Wednesday night, a cyclonic storm

lashed several areas of Dhemaji and Sissiborgaon circles in Dhemaii district, leaving a trail of devastation.

The storm damaged 98

dwelling houses in the Pachim Dhemaji and Sissiborgaon areas. Around 500 families in 13

villages have been affected by the storm. The cyclone also uprooted

trees, bamboo grooves and electric poles in these areas.

Dhubri artisans worst hit by nationwide lockdown

CORRESPONDENT

GAURIPUR, April 24: Professional artisans of Dhubri have been struggling for their livelihood since the lockdown was announced.

The artisans living in the town and the rural areas of the district, like Gauripur, Debottar Hasdaha, Kheksiali, Uchita, Jhapsabari, Biskhowa, Moterjhar, Kachuarkhas, etc., have long been earning their livelihood by making idols of gods and goddesses but the ongoing

lockdown has hit them very hard. Generally, this time of the year is marked by various religious events like Basanti Puja, Chadak Puja, Ashtami Mela, Bohag Ganesh Puja and the artisans here make a good amount of money by making idols of gods and god-

desses. But due to the lockdown, the artisans here have faced tremendous loss as they could not sell their products.

Karen Malakar, a state awardee of sholapith craft, told this correspondent that before lockdown he used to earn Rs 5,000 to 8,000 per month but presently, his income stands zero.

Similar opinions were expressed by artisans like Dulal Malakar of Debottar Hasdaha, Rabindra Nath Malakar of Kheksiali, Hemanta Malakar of Uchita, Amulya Malakar of Jhapsabari Part-V, Pabitra Malakar and Ratan Malakar of Moterjhar, Dulal Malakar of Kachuarkhas villages. As almost all the artisans belong to BPL category, the government should come forward to help them survive, some of the artisans here said.

Manohar may continue as ICC chairman

NEW DELHI, April 24: International Cricket Council chairman Shashank Manohar, who is expected to step down in June, might get a couple of months' extension as the ICC's Board Meeting is set to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In all likelihood, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chairman Colin Graves will replace the former BCCI president, who, it is learnt, has decided against seeking an extension for a third two-year-term.

"This is for sure that Manohar is going but he will probably stay on for another two months as the annual Board Meeting in June looks highly unlikely at the moment considering the global situation," an ICC Board member told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"So it might be in August that ICC will have a new chairman," he added.

The BCCI, however, re-

mains wary of the Vidarbha lawyer, who was seen as an adversary by some in the In-

dian board. "Till Manohar steps down officially, I will not like to believe (anything). Seeing is believing. He still has a term left. If he decides at the last moment that he wants to continue then it will be a different story," a BCCI veteran said.

Hong Kong's Imran Khawaja's name was initially floated as Manohar's possible successor, but it is understood that he doesn't have the support of the full members.

ECB chairman Graves, who is supposed to step down from his country's board in November 2020, has emerged as the favourite for the ICC top job.

Those in the know of ICC's board room politics feel that Graves' biggest advantage at this point is support from all the major Test-playing na-

Gambhir performs last rites of domestic help

NEW DELHI, April 24: India's World Cup-winning former opener Gautam Gambhir performed the last rites of his deceased domestic help after her mortal remains could not be sent to her home in Odisha due to the coronavirusforced national lockdown.

Gambhir, also a Lok Sabha MP from the BJP, posted a tribute on his Twitter page for his employee Saraswati Patra, who was working at his residence for the past six years.

"Taking care of my little one can never be domestic help. She was family. Performing her last rites was my duty," he

"Always believed in dignity irrespective of caste, creed,

religion or social status. Only way to create a better society. That's my idea of India! Om Shanti," said the 38-year-old Gambhir, who played 58 Tests for India between 2004 and 2016.

Media reports in Odisha said the 49-year-old Patra hailed from a village in Jajpur

She was admitted to Sir Ganga Ram Hospital a few days ago and was battling diabetes and high blood pressure for a long period. She breathed her last while undergoing treatment on April 21.

Union Minister of Petroleum and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan appreciated Gambhir.

Rajkishore clinches online chess title

GUWAHATI, April 24: Rajkishore Das of Mangaldai clinched the title in the GCA Online Open Chess Tournament, organised by the Guwahati Chess Academy on chess.com platform vesterday.

Rajkishore scored 6 points from 7 rounds and remained unbeaten. Samaritan Dutta of Jorhat got second position by scoring 5.5 points from same number of rounds. Hirakjyoti Deka, Depjyoti Borah and Jyostshnav Talukdar also scored 5.5 points each. They were declared third, fourth and fifth respectively

Unmilita Pathak got first position among girls. She scored 3.5 points while Bharsita Saharia and Daiwakshya Choudhury scored 3 points each and were declared second and third respectively according to their tie-break score.

Rajat Bafna scored a creditable 5 points and got first position in U-7 category. Krishnav Mrinmoy Hazarika got second position in this category by scoring 4 points. Siddharth Singh scored 3 points and got third

In the U-9 category, Hridika Das secured the top spot with 3.5 points. Anish Goswami and Sahaj Gupta also scored 3.5 points each but were adjudged second and third on the basis of tie-break score.

Pehlaj Dutta got first position by scoring 5 points in the U-11 group. Chaarvi Choudhury and Shuvang Pran Kashyap scored 5 points each but got second and third position respectively according to their tie-break

Tanveer Ahmed scored 5.5 points and got first position in the U-13 category. Jayaditya Das got second position in that group scoring 5 points while Rayhaan Hussain got third position by scoring 4.5 points.

Nihad Islam Hazarika got first position by scoring 4.5 points in the U-15 category. Rishita Sinha (4 points) got second position in this category.

Players played from their home on chess.com platform using mobile phone or laptop. Altogether 51 players from all over Assam participated in the Swiss League tournament with a time control of 10 minutes each side. Winners were given digital certificate from Guwahati Chess Academy. Pranab Kumar Nath, FIDE Instructor, was the tournament director, stated a release.

SU DO KU

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Solution of last problem

Originating from Japan, 2 3 5 9 4 8 'su do ku' is a mind game and a puzzle that can be solved with proper reasoning and logic. Fill the arid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box accommodates 1 6 the digits 1 to 9 without repeating any

8 7 6 5 2 1 4 9 2 1 6 7 5 8 9 4 6 5 1 4 8 7 3 2 9 4 2 8 3 5 9 6 7 1

Master Blaster Sachin turns 47



NEW DELHI, April 24: A name synonymous with most things good and perfect in Indian cricket, Sachin Tendulkar on Friday turned 47 and was flooded with flattering wishes from the sporting fraternity.

The diminutive Mumbaikar, the greatest accumulator of runs in the game's history, decided not to have any elaborate celebrations this year owing to the devastation caused by the COVID-19

FIH Hockey Pro

League Season 2

LAUSANNE, April 24:

Federation (FIH) on Friday

Pro League by one year till

The International Hockey

extended the second

edition of its prestigious

June 2021 after a slew of

matches were postponed

run from January to June

of the matches were

before the escalating

the competition to a

agreement with 11

including India.

The FIH said the

participating countries,

decision was reached after

India are currently fourth

on the table with 10 points

from two wins and as many

number of losses and draws

behind Belgium, Australia

and the Netherlands. – PTI

2020 and around one third

completed by early March

COVID-19 crisis brought

The Season 2 was set to

due to the COVID-19

pandemic.

standstill.

extended

"Started my day by taking blessings from my Mother. Sharing a photo of Ganpati Bappa that she gifted me. Absolutely priceless," he tweeted on Friday well past after-

A former Rajya Sabha MP, Tendulkar has slipped into the retired life after calling it quits in 2013, offering perspective on the game when sought and staying busy with social work.

"Happy birthday to the man whose passion for the game of cricket has inspired many. Wishing you an amazing year ahead paaji," tweeted India captain Virat Kohli and, like everyone else, shared a picture with the iconic righthander in which the two were sharing a laugh.

Not to be left behind was his white-ball deputy Rohit Sharma, who also listed his favourite Tendulkar mo-

"Many happy returns of the day to the great man... My two best moments with him were: 1) Sharing the match winning partnership at Sydney against Australia in the first final

"2) Receiving my Test cap at Eden Gardens," he recalled.

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah called Tendulkar "a true inspiration"

"...on the cricket field and off it, happy birthday Sachin Sir, I hope you have a great

The sentiment was shared by several other cricketers who posted their wishes on their respective social media

Iniesta reveals struggle with depression

MADRID, April 24: Andres Iniesta has described his struggle with depression while playing for Barcelona, which his mother says was a "bottomless pit" that caused her 25-year-old son to ask to sleep with his parents.

Iniesta recalls his experience with the illness in a Rakuten TV documentary, Andres Iniesta - The Unexpected Hero, which was released on Thursday and covers his move to Japanese side Vissel Kobe in 2018.

After winning the Champions League under Pep Guardiola in 2009, Iniesta was battling injury and then hit by the death of his friend Dani Jarque, the 26-year-old Espanyol defender who suffered a heart attack.

"The days pass and you realise you're not improving, you don't feel good, you're not yourself. Everything clouds over and goes dark,'



Iniesta said.

On Jarque's death, Iniesta added: "That was like a body blow, something powerful that knocked me down again and I was pretty low, clearly because I wasn't very well.' Iniesta's depression is described by those closest to him, including his mother Maria Lujan and father Jose Antonio. – AFP

Legalisation of ball-tampering could be considered, says report



Shining the ball is an integral part of Test cricket as it helps the bowlers swing the ball, both conventional and reverse.

NEW DELHI, April 24: The usage of artificial substances to polish the cricket ball, which effectively means ball tampering, could be considered for legalisation when the game resumes after the COVID-19 pandemic that has made bowlers wary of applying saliva on the red cherry.

ESPNCricinfo reported that administrators are "open to the option of allowing for the use of an agreed artificial substance to polish the ball under the supervision of the umpires", which amounts to balltampering as per the current rules governing the sport.

However, an ICC CEC member, who PTI spoke with, refused to say whether such a discussion will happen and only revealed that "saliva on the ball is something they will consider but at a later date when it looks like we will have a return to cricket".

The matter of saliva being unsafe was raised by the ICC's medical committee and it would be addressed before cricket resumes. All sports activities have come to a halt

after the coronavirus outbreak. Shining the ball is an integral part of Test cricket as it helps the bowlers swing the ball, both conventional and re-

If the move gets the go ahead, it would be quite ironic for the game's administrators after the 2018 ball-tampering controversy which led to oneyear bans on Steve Smith and David Warner for conspiring to use sandpaper to alter the

Following the chief executives meeting of the ICC on Thursday, its medical committee, headed by Peter Harcourt, had issued an update. "Our next step is to create

a roadmap for the resumption of international cricket which will include a criteria for decision making and a checklist for what needs to happen.

"This will consider everything from player preparation to government restrictions and advisories and bio-bubbles. The scale and complexity of getting cricket started again cannot be underestimated particularly with respect to a global event," Harcourt said.

Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood recently said that Test cricket will become harder if the bowlers did not have enough means to move the ball. - PTI

When Saqlain sledged Sachin only to never sledge him again

NEW DELHI, April 24: Sachin Tendulkar and Saqlain Mushtag were involved in umpteen intense battles in the '90s but one such duel left the star Pakistan off-spinner deeply embarrassed.

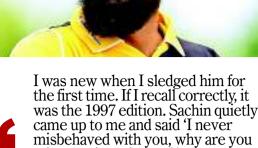
In one of his early battles with Tendulkar during the Sahara Cup in Canada, Saqlain thought it would be a good idea to sledge the champion batsman. As it panned out, the wily off-spinner sledged to never sledge the then Indian captain again.

"I was new when I sledged him for the first time. If I recall correctly, it was the 1997 edition. Sachin quietly came up to me and said 'I never misbehaved with you, why are you misbehaving with me?' I got so embarrassed that I did not know what to say to him," Saglain told PTI over phone on Tendulkar's 47th birthday.

"He said to me 'I rate you high as a person and player'. I was so embarrassed that I never sledged him again. I can't tell you what I said to him but I apologised to him after the game.

"Thereafter, even when he was smashing me all over, I never thought of sledging him," recalled the 43-year-old, describing Tendulkar as one of





misbehaving with me?' I got so

embarrassed that I did not know

what to say to him. Saglain Mushtag

the most humble human beings he met.

After the Sahara Cup, which ran from 1996-98, both were in the middle of arguably their most memorable battle during the Chennai Test of 1999, when Pakistan eked out a 12-run win despite an "unbelievable" 136 from Ten-

Saqlain got the better of Tendulkar in both the innings and his match haul of 10 wickets made all the difference.

Tempers were running high

in that high stakes game but even then Saqlain said he never tried to engage Tendulkar verbally.

"In that 1999 Test, no words were exchanged. We both were determined and focused to win the game for our countries. We put our heart and soul in it (on day four).

"I consider myself lucky that my name was attached to Sachin's cricketing career with that match. The only difference that day was that God was on my side." - PTI

Some Olympic boxing hopefuls needed only one more day

WASHINGTON, April 24: With tears in her eyes, Nadine Apetz asked herself "why not one more day?'

The German boxer had waited four years, and a ticket to the Tokyo Olympics was tantalizingly close when the qualifying tournament in London was suspended because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"One day longer and I might have had it," said Apetz, a 34-year-old welterweight who is studying for a doctorate in neuroscience.

"I was crying because I was so disappointed. You are so close to your biggest goal, and it's all stopped."

The pandemic has forced many Olympic hopefuls to wait it out, but the delay is particularly painful for the European boxers who were on the verge of qualification last month. Several were only one victory away.

The competition at the Copper Box was suspended after three days. A short time later, the Tokyo Games were postponed for one year and are now set to open on July 23, 2021. They probably shouldn't have started it in the first place, Apetz said, citing public health risks.

Fighters including Apetz, Emilie Sonvico of France and Charley Davison of Britain won their opening bouts. If they win their next one, they'll qualify.

Likewise, lightweights Luke McCormack of Britain and Nikolai Terteryan of Denmark can qualify in their next bout, while their welterweight twin brothers Pat Mc-Cormack and Sebastian Terteryan can guarantee spots with two more wins each.

The London competition lasted long enough for 16 boxers to qualify. Among them

"Tokyo 2020 see ya there," he wrote on Instagram, followed by an expletive about

was British featherweight Peter McGrail.

Altogether 61 European spots remain available.

"It was so painful for me," the 31-yearold Sonvico, who like Apetz was scheduled to fight again on Day 4, said of leaving London empty-handed.

"It's difficult because we have to go back to training. It's a lot of work, a lot of sacri-

Like other athletes, they also have practical challenges in lockdown. Davison, a flyweight who set aside earlier Olympic aspirations to start a family, trains at home while co-parenting three young children.

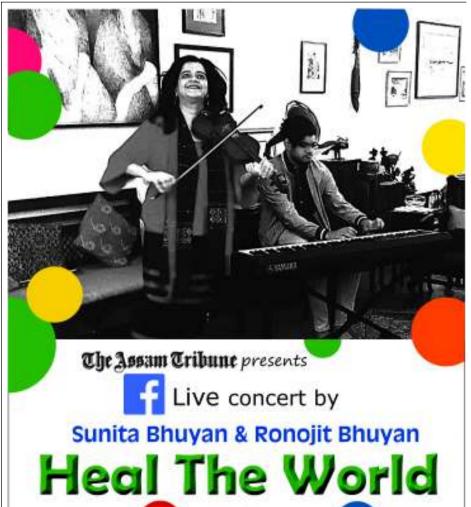
Apetz is trying to finish her Ph.D in neuroscience, examining brain stimulation in Parkinson's disease.

Sonvico is an investigator with the gendarmerie, which conducts police duties but under French military jurisdiction. She's been on leave while with the national team, but that was to end soon.

"If it goes well, I'll need one more year," said Sonvico, who uses a rowing machine and heavy bag at home in the south of France.

"It's a problem. The president of the French (boxing) federation is asking the gendarmerie to see what we can do."

Both Apetz and Sonvico set goals for Tokyo only after their division welterweight and one other was added after the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. The Tokyo Games will have five women's classes; the men's divisions were cut from 10 to eight. – AP



on April 26 (Sunday), at

https://www.facebook.com/TheAssamTribune/

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