ট্রিবিউন বিশ্ভিত্তে, গুরাহাটী - ও

www.assamtribune.com

Google Play ePaper app for The Assam Tribune



**GUWAHATI, MONDAY, MAY 11, 2020** 

Pages **12** Price: **₹ 6.00** 

p2 Trump's response to pandemic absolute disaster: Obama

p7 Tripura COVID-19 tally rises to 132

'Fake' farmers return over **p8** Rs 10 lakh to PM Kisan fund

#### 5 Al pilots test positive

MUMBAI, May 10: Five pilots of Air India and two employees of the national carrier's engineering services subsidiary AIESL have tested positive for COVID-19, airline sources said on Sunday. The pilots, however, had not operated any flight in the last three weeks. - PTI

#### **Parliament**

NEW DELHI, May 10: The Monsoon Session of Parliament, which normally begins in the last week of June or in the first week of July, may still be held on time, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said on Sunday, amid concerns that the coronavirus pandemic may delay its start. - PTI

#### Medical aid

NEW DELHI, May 10: India has sent medical assistance to the Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles by a naval ship following requests from these countries for help in fighting COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of External Affairs said. - PTI

#### Special trains

NEW DELHI, May 10: The Indian Railways has operated 366 'Shramik Special' trains since May 1 and ferried home around four lakh migrants stranded in various parts of the country amid the coronavirus-induced lockdown, officials said. -

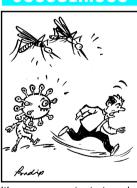
#### Spitting ban

NEW DELHI, May 10: Over 25 states and Union Territories, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Delhi, have banned the use of smokeless tobacco products and spitting in public places in view of COVID-19, the Union Health Ministry said. -

#### Jadhav case

ISLAMABAD, May 10: Pakistan today said it has "fully complied" with the ICJ judgement in the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, days after India's lead counsel asserted New Delhi had hoped it might be able to persuade Islamabad to release the Indian death-row convict.

#### **JOCOSERIOUS**



It's now a constant struggle for survival!

# No COVID-19 case in 10 states, UTs in last 24 hrs

NEW DELHI, May 10: No COVID-19 case has been reported in 10 states and Union Territories in the last 24 hours and the recovery rate has increased to over 30 per cent, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Sunday, asserting that India was moving fast on the path of success in the fight against the pandemic.

According to Health Ministry data, 1,511 COVID-19 patients recovered in the last 24 hours – the highest number of recoveries recorded in one day.

India carried out 86,000 tests for COVID-19 on Saturday and India's testing capacity now stands at 95,000 samples per day, Vardhan told reporters after inspecting a COVID-19 care centre in the Mandoli area in the national capital.

India had started from one laboratory and now there are 472 laboratories testing for COVID-19, he said.

There are 4362 corona care centres across the country where 3,46,856 patients with

NEW DELHI, May 10:

With the focus on boosting

economic activities amid a

graded exit from the corona-

virus-induced lockdown,

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi will interact with chief

ministers of various states

via video conference on

This will be his fifth inter-

action with the chief minis-

ters after the COVID-19 out-

break in the country. The

Prime Minister's Office said

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10:

Samples of 71 boarders of the

Regional Dental College hos-

tel and around 538 staff of the

Guwahati Medical College and

Hospital (GMCH) have been

found negative for COVID-19.

ed after two doctors - one

from the GMCH and another

from the dental college – test-

boarders of the dental college

hostel, cook, chowkidar as

'The samples of all the

ed positive for the virus.

The tests were necessitat-

Monday afternoon.

India moving fast on the path of success in fight against the pandemic: Vardhan



mild or very mild symptoms can be kept, he said.

"We are moving fast on path of success in the fight against COVID-19. The doubling rate for the last three days is 12 (days). The recovery rate has crossed 30 per cent. Out of around 60,000 COVID-19 patients, about 20,000 have recovered and gone home," Vardhan said.

"Our mortality rate is still

PM to interact with

CMs today

Focus likely on boosting economic activity

amid lockdown

the video conference will

Sources in the government

said the focus of the meeting

would be on boosting eco-

nomic activities and pushing

efforts to convert 'red' zones

with high COVID-19 case

load into 'orange' or 'green'

The number of COVID-19

infections has more than dou-

bled since the Prime Minis-

ter interacted with the chief

ministers last on April 27 –

Samples of dental college

boarders negative

well as the canteen staff have

tested negative. Two other

doctors working with the pos-

itive patient in the triage sec-

tion of GMCH screening area

have also tested negative,"

official sources said, adding,

some 1,500 tests are being

come. All are negative. These

were mostly of the doctors.

We are also taking the sam-

ples of patients and other staff.

The samples are being sent to

ICMR-Lahowal, AMCH, Bar-

peta and even Delhi for tests.

"So far 538 results have

conducted at GMCH.

zones.

begin at 3 pm on Monday.

at 3.3 per cent.... In the last 24 hours, there has been no case in 10 states and Union Territories. There are four states or Union Territories where there has not been a single case till now," Vardhan said. India has total 36 states and Union territories.

He also said that Central teams are being sent to Delhi and nine states to assist their governments in managing the outbreak.

The states where teams are being sent are Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal.

The government is making all efforts at every level to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the fight against COVID-19 anywhere and states are given all help they need, Vardhan said.

"The Central government has distributed 72 lakh N95 masks and 36 lakh personal protective equipment kits to the States so far," he said. -

from just over 28,000 cases

Days after the meeting, the

Central government had ex-

tended the lockdown by two

more weeks till May 17 to

arrest the spread of the vi-

rus, but gave several relaxa-

tions in economic activities

The nationwide lockdown

>> SEE PAGE 6

has been in force since

The results will take some

Currently, there are 350

patients admitted at the

GMCH and new patients are

not being admitted since the

detection of the positive case

Many doctors and nurses,

who were in contact with the

PG student who tested posi-

tive, have been quarantined.

Even if their results come neg-

ative, the direct contacts will

have to stay in quarantine for

some time and another test

conducted after some days.

within the facility.

time," the sources said.

and movement of people.

March 25.

to nearly 63,000 cases.

#### Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visiting the Zonal Health Screening Centre and quarantine facility set up at Tezpur Central University, on Sunday. - UB Photos First batch of Govt to chalk out plan on stranded people flood relief camps in State leave Delhi for Assam

R DUTTA CHOUDHURY

GUWAHATI, May 10: At a

time when the Assam Govern-

ment is fighting the coronavi-

rus pandemic, it will have to

get ready to face the fury of

floods and the major worry this

time will be setting up of relief

camps for affected people by

maintaining social distancing to

prevent spike in the COVID-

19 cases. Meanwhile, people

of Assam who will return to

India from abroad will have to

stay in quarantine facilities in

the places where they land

before they are allowed to pro-

State Chief Secretary Ku-

mar Sanjay Krishna told The

Assam Tribune that the

ceed to the State.

NEW DELHI, May 10: The first batch of 167 people from Assam, who were stranded here, left for their home state on Sunday in six buses. The trip is being organised

SPL CORRESPONDENT

by local NGO Shristi and some students of Delhi University in association with Assam Bhavan here and the State government. The group is scheduled to

reach Guwahati on Tuesday morning. Sources said each of the passengers contributed Rs 7,000 and they may have to pay even more.

Some 800 stranded people had opted for the trip and another batch is being organised in coordination with the Assam government.

The passengers today mostly comprised students, pilgrims and patients, sources said, adding that they were medically screened before boarding the buses that were also sanitised.

#### Indian, Chinese troops clash in Sikkim sector

NEW DELHI. May 10: Troops of India and China were involved in a fierce faceoff near Naku La pass in the Sikkim sector of the Sino-Indian border, official sources said on Sunday.

A number of personnel on both sides sustained injuries as they exchanged punches, they said, adding that the troops disengaged after a dialogue at the local level.

It was the first case of troops from both sides exchanging blows after a similar incident had taken place in Pangong Lake in Ladakh in August 2017.

>> SEE PAGE 6

new challenge Government would chalk out detailed strategies to deal with floods as adequate care would have to be taken while providing shelter to the people affected by natural calamities. He said that a meeting involving all concerned including the Water Resources Department, Revenue Department, Assam State Disaster Management Authority, State and National Disaster Response Forces, Army etc would be held within a week to chalk out an action plan to deal with floods.

Maintaining social distance in camps

Sources in the State Disaster Management Authority also admitted that this year, relief camps and shelter places would have to be ner to prevent spreading of COVID 19. Sources said that guidelines have already been sent to the Deputy Commissioners and Sub Divisional Officers in this regard and a detailed standard operating procedure is being prepared, which would be circulated within the next few days. Sources said normally all

set up in a well planned man-

relief camps are overcrowded, while some people also take shelter on the embankments. But if any person is affected by COVID-19 in one particular camp, the possibility of other inmates getting affected cannot be ruled out. Under the circumstances, the number of camps may increase substantially and the DCs and SDOs would have to identify camps well in advance and chalk out a plan to shift the affected people to such camps.

>> SEE PAGE 6

# **Save SOCIETY**

# Passenger trains to operate from tomorrow

SPL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, May 10: The Indian Railways will gradually restart passenger train operations from May 12, initially with 15 pairs of trains (30 return journeys).

These trains will be run as special trains from New Delhi station connecting Dibrugarh, Agartala, Howrah, Patna, Bilaspur, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, Secunderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Madgaon, Mumbai Central, Ahmedabad and Jammu Tawi, official sources said.

Thereafter, the Railways shall start more special services on new routes, based on the available coaches after reserving 20,000 coaches for COVID-19 care centres and adequate number of coaches being reserved to enable operation of up to 300 trains everyday as 'Shramik Special' for stranded migrants.

Booking for reservation in these trains will start at 4 pm on May 11 and will be available only on the IRCTC website. Ticket booking counters at the railway stations shall remain closed and no counter tickets (including platform tickets) shall be issued.

Only passengers with valid confirmed tickets will be allowed to enter the railway stations. It will be mandatorv for the passengers to wear face cover and undergo screening at departure and only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to board

# SHGs contributing to State's economy during lockdown

SIVASISH THAKUR

GUWAHATI, May 10: With the COVID-19-induced lockdown casting an ominous shadow over mass livelihoods, self help groups (SHGs) have come to assist the healing process of the State's economy.

The most conspicuous engagement from the SHGs has been manifest in mask-making, a completely new vista thrown open by the contagion. Members of SHGs across villages comprising mostly womenfolk have been making large-scale cotton

washable masks – branded Asomi -- with the count being well over 41 lakh now.

"Over 41 lakh masks have been made till now by 10,497 members from 4.971 SHGs across the State. Of these, 3.36.468 masks have been distributed for free and 11.10.712 masks sold. A total of 57,762 masks were distributed in tea gardens and another 1,16,185 distributed to institutions and government departments. So far 84 mask selling outlets have been opened in 31 districts, facilitating their easy availability to the masses at reasonable prices," a Panchayat & Rural Development Dept

Masks apart, sale of all perishable items from SHG



source told The Assam Trib-

members such as vegetables, eggs, milk, poultry, etc., have been connected with the district administrations so that they can procure for supply in the areas needed. Permits of sales were also obtained by SHG members to sell their products during the lockdown period. Till date approximately

47,653 SHG members have done sale of perishable commodities worth over Rs. 5.31 crore under the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM) during the lockdown.

In addition, 7,803 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) have reached out to

96,312 needy families and individuals and provided them with dry food items and sanitary items

"Bank Sakhis (Banking Correspondence Agents-BCAs) are providing doorstep banking services to the rural masses and till now 89 BCAs have covered 2,933 households and done transaction of than Rs. 32 lakh. They have also done transaction of over Rs. 6.28 crore to 60,588 individuals of rural areas at their Customer Service Points (CSPs)," sources said.

>> SEE PAGE 6

#### **COVID-19 STATUS** WORLD Confirmed cases 4,141,710 Cured/Discharged 1,458,191 Death 281,642 INDIA Confirmed cases 62,939 **Cured/Discharged** 19,358 2,109 Death ASSAM Confirmed cases 62 Cured/Discharged 34 Death Data as on Sunday

# Trump's response to pandemic absolute, chaotic disaster: Obama

WASHINGTON, May 10: President Donald Trump's handling of the coronavirus pandemic has been "an absolute chaotic disaster" for America, Barack Obama has said, the starkest assessment yet from the former President about his successor's "anaemic and spotty" response to the global health crisis.

Obama slammed Trump during a private call on Friday night with people who worked for him in the White House and across his administration, according to US media reports.

In a 30-minute conversation with members of the Obama Alumni Association, the former President, a Democrat, said the poor response to the coronavirus outbreak served as a critical reminder for why strong government leadership is needed during a global crisis.

During the call, Obama said his Republican successor's approach to government was partly to blame for the US response to coronavirus.

the US and the country has 1.2 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 – both by



far the highest in the world.

Trump's approach to the coronavirus pandemic has oscillated. In February, he dismissed it, saying it would disappear, but by mid-March he acknowledged its severity.

"It would have been bad even with the Over 78,000 people have now died in best of government," Obama was quoted the Trump administration's handling of as saying in the call.

when that mindset of 'what's in it for me' and 'to heck with everybody else', when that mindset is operationalised in our government," Obama, who was US President for two consecutive terms from 2009 to 2017, said.

The call was intended to encourage former Obama staffers to become more engaged in ex-Vice President Joe Biden's White House bid against Trump in the November presidential elections, CNN reported.

"This election that's coming up - on every level - is so important because what we're going to be battling is not just a particular individual or a political party," Obama, who endorsed Biden officially last month, said.

"What we're fighting against is these long-term trends in which being selfish, being tribal, being divided, and seeing others as an enemy - that has become a stronger impulse in American life."

Obama used the strongest words for the coronavirus crisis and its worldview. "It has been an absolute chaotic disaster CNN noted. – PTI

# Citing virus, Iran says it's ready for prisoner swap with US

TEHRAN, May 10: Iran of the Covid-19 disease university professor. because of fears that the will prefer lives to politics." coronavirus could put the lives of the prisoners at risk, Iranian the media reported on Sunday.

answer, so far," said Rabiei. custody, including Sirous "We hope that as the outbreak Asgari, a

SITUATION VACANT

Urgently required retd. Bankers/

Govt. Officials for Guwahati.

Contact: 87249-67620, 97062-

Required Businessman, VRS,

Housewife work from home

digitally 50k Monthly. Contact-

Company payroll job, S.M.

Jorhat, Sibsagar, Marioni, NLP,

Dibrugarh, S(16-20)K

Incentive. # 786newjob@

Required retired persons &

Entrepreneurs for MNC. Earning

Rs. 45,000/-. Work from home

**EDUCATIONAL** 

**We are Geared** 

for the Next Decade

Job Ready Courses

NIMATION & GRAPHICS.

Counselling for Admission from 9.00am to 5.00pm

GEC-Certified Courses now 175

**GODOWN** 

2500 to 98,000 sq.ft. Industrial

Shed/Warehouse, Godown at

Khanapara, Beltola, Lokhra,

Amingaon, Changsari, Mirza

PACKERS & MOVERS

R.D. Packers & Carriers,

Household, Shifting local &

National. Contact: 94353-

**OFFICE SPACE** 

Contact: 99549-95356, 97070-

Space for rent.

sq.ft.

deposit.

46000, 0361-2236400.

P&M/P/AC000067/15

400/1000/1500/3000

security

OS/P/SP000035/8

Godown/P/AC000050/30

H.O.: SILPUKHURI, GHY-3. 97060-79979 © 97060-79989 For Franchise © 97060-79999

CD/Edu/RL001043/1

SV/P/AC000063/12

8638269613.

gmail.com

SV/P/AC000073/8

SV/P/AC000085/6

Contact: 9678180856

SV/P/AC000087/8

26337

45000/month.

says it is ready for threatens the lives of Iranian unconditional prisoner swap citizens in the US prisons, the they were making progress in talks with the United States US government eventually efforts to secure the release

Rabiei said Iran considers responsible for the health of suggestions that a swap was in An Iranian news website, the Iranian prisoners, adding the works for the imprisoned Khabaronline.ir, quoted that "it seems that the US has Cabinet spokesman Ali Rabiei more readiness to bring the as saying there is a "readiness" situation to an end." Rabiei did for all prisoners" to be not elaborate but Iranian media discussed without condition. in recent months said there "But the US has refused to are several Iranians in US

60-year-old

**TUITION** 

HIGHLY EXPERIENCED

HOME TUTORS FOR (VIII-

XII) PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY,

**MATHEMATICS. CALL:** 

80111-98297.

Last week, US officials said Iran. But they were also government pushing back on Iranian

Iranian American officials have

been trying to deport since last

Ken Cuccinelli, the acting Deputy Homeland Security Secretary, said on Wednesday that the cases of American detainee Michael White in Iran

and Asgari, the Iranian imprisoned in the United States, have never been connected. He expressed of a detained Navy veteran in frustration with recent comments from Iranian officials that there may be a link between the two and complained that Iran had been slow to accept Asgari's return.

White, of Imperial Beach, California, was detained in July 2018 while visiting a girlfriend in Iran. He was convicted of insulting Iran's supreme leader and posting private information online. – AP

# First batch of 88

Tuition/P/SL000001/7 **GUARANTEED** EXPERIENCED ONLINE/ OFFLINE HOME TUTOR (VIII - XII) PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, MATHEMATICS. 91270-

Tuition/P/AC000074/8

100% experienced home Tutor for (XI-XII) Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics. P.C.M. Point.

Tuition/P/AC000037/29

#### **HOUSE & FLAT**

3/6 BHK flat at Santipur, Guwahati-09 & single BHK flat at Kahilipara, Guwahati-19. Ph,: 90859-39393 H&F/P/AC000072/7

Residential 2/3 BHK flat/ commercial space at Noonmati Opp. Axom Jatiya Bidyalay, Ph. 98640-10641.

H&F/P/SP000045/3

80% work completed 2/3 BHK flat at Chandmari Colony (Nizarapar). Avail PMAY benefits Ph. 98640-10641. H&F/P/SP000044/3

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have changed my name from Arup Kakati to Arup Kashyap, vide affidavit before the Notary Public, Kamrup (M) of Assam on 07.01.2020. PN/P/NP000018/1

#### **HOARDING**

For rent Hoarding space 40' x 20' in Bhangagarh. Contact 99549-95356 Hoarding/P/SP000036/8

#### **ASTROLOGY**

Mata Mahakali Astrologer A to Z problem solution on phone Love affairs, Husband Wife dispute, Court case, Business enemy, Family problem, Love marriage, Real estate problem call us for immediate solution. Give a new look to your life. Call: 9636010099 Astro/P/AC000031/10

For pick up of Classified Advertisements from your doorstep ..

Ph: 97060-43680 or 70860-44611

# nurses from India arrive in UAE

batch of 88 nurses from India ground in dealing with this arrived in the UAE to help the country's stretched healthcare professionals amid a surge in the number of COVID-19 infections in the Gulf nation that has crossed 17,000,

The Ministry of Health and up with Aster DM Healthcare Prevention said the UAE group, with the support from reported 624 new cases on the Indian Consulate and the Saturday, taking the total number of infections to 17,417.

The number of fatalities reached 185 after 11 deaths were reported on the day.

The nurses, who are from Aster DM Healthcare hospitals in the states of Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra, will be put under quarantine for 14 days after which they will be assigned to various field hospitals as per requirement, the Khaleej Times reported.

They arrived on a special flight at the Dubai airport on

India's Ambassador to UAE Pavan Kapoor said that this would further strengthen the long-standing friendship

between the two countries. "India and the UAE are partnership translates into

DUBAI, May 10: The first concrete cooperation on the pandemic. Helping a friend in need is the motto of cooperation between our two countries," he

According to a report in the Gulf News, the arrival of the according to media reports. nurses was facilitated in a tie-UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

> India's Consul General Vipul said, "It is yet another example of strong India-UAE bilateral ties and reflects deep understanding of problems faced by expatriates as well as UAE nationals in the UAE.

"We feel extremely proud to be a part of this joint initiative in providing relief for COVID-19 patients in different facilities," he said. Azad Moopen, founder chairman and managing director of Aster DM Healthcare, said the group felt duty bound to assist UAE by bringing their medical professionals from India for best possible healthcare delivery to citizens, residents showing how a strategic and visitors during the COVID-19 situation. – PTI

kilometre (10-square-mile)

kilometres (90 miles) south

lagoon, which is 145

of Tirana, the capital.

LOS ANGLES. May 10: The who's who of music world including Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Elton John remembered architect of Rock 'N' Roll Little Richard for his immense contribution to the field of arts.

Little Richard died on Saturday at age 87 after battling cancer.

Soon after the news of the musician's death spread, his friends, admirers and celebrity fans shared tributes on social "I just heard the news about Little

Richard and I'm so grieved. He was my shining star and guiding light back when I was only a little boy. His was the original spirit that moved me to do everything I would do," Dylan posted on Twitter.

The veteran musician remembered

## Rock 'N' Roll giant

Dylan, Jagger, Elton pay

tributes to Little Richard

Pope Francis delivers his blessing from the window of his studio overlooking an empty

St Peter's Square due to anti-coronavirus lockdown measures at the Vatican on Sunday.



Little Richard as a "generous, kind and humble" man. "I played some shows with him in Europe in the early nineties and got to

hang out in his dressing room a lot. He was always generous, kind and humble. And still dynamite as a performer and a musician and you could still learn plenty from him," he said.

Jagger said the music icon was the biggest inspiration during his early teens and his tunes still have the same magic.

"I'm so saddened to hear about the passing of Little Richard, he was the biggest inspiration of my early teens and his music still has the same raw electric energy when you play it now as it did when it first shot through the music scene in the mid-50's," the Rolling Stones frontman said.

"So sad to hear that my old friend Little Richard has passed. There will never be another! He was the true spirit of Rock'n Roll!" added Rolling Stones guitarist, Keith Richards.

John tweeted, "Without a doubt musically, vocally and visually – he was my biggest influence. Seeing him live in my teens was the most exciting event in my life at that point. Goosebumps, electricity and joy came from every pore." – PTI

#### 792 inmates in California prison test COVID-19 *bositive*

SAN FRANCISCO, May 10: At least 792 inmates at a jail in Central California have tested positive for COVID-19, making it the worst-hit in the US federal prison system.

Nearly 70 per cent of the inmates at Federal Correctional Institution Lompoc have tested positive, exploding by more than 300 in recent days, Xinhua news agency quoted the Los Angeles Times as saying in a report on Saturday citing prison officials.

Eleven staff members were also infected at the Lompoc facility, which houses 1,162 low-security inmates. A military mobile hospital has been built on the grounds to cope with the growing number of stricken patients, according to the Los Angeles Times report.

The increasing totals come days after the Federal Bureau of Prisons announced earlier this week that it would substantially expand testing starting at detention and quarantine sites throughout the federal prison system. – IANS

#### 2nd flight from UK takes off for Bengaluru with 323 Indians

LONDON, May 10: Air India's second repatriation flight to bring back Indians stranded in the UK due to the coronavirus lockdown took off from the Heathrow Airport here for Bengaluru on Sunday with 323 passengers.

Besides the 323 students, tourists and other Indian passport holders, the flight is flying back the body of a 37year-old Indian-origin man who committed suicide at his home in south-east England.

This was the second of the first set of seven Air India repatriation flights as part of the Indian government's Vande Bharat Mission to bring home stranded Indians.

Gadigeppagouda Onkaragouda Patil died at Slough in Berkshire on March 13, days before the pandemicrelated lockdown grounded international flights to India.

"This was a complicated case but with the help of the Indian government, his family will be able to conduct his last rites," said the President of the Overseas Friends of BJP (OFBJP) diaspora group, who is involved with the coordination of the repatriation

process. - PTI

# Myanmar military starts truce with terms

Myanmars military on Sunday began a ceasefire for more than three months, however it will not cover areas where ethnic rebels the government in effect until August 31. considers terrorist groups are

Among the exceptions are Arakan Army (AA) rebels who mainly operate in the states of Rakhine (west) and Chin (northwest), the conflict with which has intensified since January, reports Efe news.

declared by the Myanmar it will continue fighting in certain military, also known as the Tatmadaw, was announced on Saturday night and will remain

According to the military command, the ceasefire is enforced with an objective to focus on the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tatmadaw, which has been accused of having attacks in August 2017 sparked committed multiple crimes a brutal military campaign against humanity, did not explain

The unilateral ceasefire in its statement the reasons why areas and threatened to break the truce in others if attacked.

> government designated the AA as a terrorist organisation, while only one other rebel group of the dozens operating in the country is currently classified as such - the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), whose against the Rohingva minority.

The conflict with the AA which began in 2009 with the aim to achieve greater autonomy for its territory, On March 23, the resumed in November 2018, leading to the displacement of 150,000 and hundreds of deaths.

"It's really hard to collaborate with the government as the Myanmar Army is escalating its confrontation in northern Rakhine state." spokesperson Khine Thukha told Efe news. – IANS

# With fewer humans to fear, flamingos flock to Albania lagoon!

10: Home confinement rules have upset some people in Albania, but humans getting their wings clipped during the coronavirus pandemic has allowed flamingos and other birds to flourish in a coastal lagoon by the Adriatic Sea.

Local officials and residents say the flamingo population is up to about 3,000 at Narta Lagoon, an important waterfowl habitat that greater flamingos returned to in recent years after a long

absence.

Bird watchers also have fearless flamingos all noticed more pelicans, around?" Dhimiter Konomi. herons and other species this part of a local group that spring at the 28-squaremanages commercial fishing

in Narta Lagoon, said as the big, long-necked birds stood in the shallow water. Operations halting at a "Isn't that beautiful to see

nearby saltworks and reduced human activity of all types during the pandemic explains why birds are flocking to the lagoon, said

Nexhip Hysolokaj, a regional biodiversity expert. Flamingos are "a very

delicate species," and not having vehicles or visitors around suits them, he said. "They have found food

likely helped them increase

and calmness, and that has

coronavirus-induced calm is conducive to establishing the lagoon as a place where they can nest and breed.

the flamingos to see if the

the numbers," Hysolokaj

said.

Konomi says a lagoon

Researchers plan to study

crowded with feathered life is a treasure that could boost tourism.

But Hysolokaj is less keen to attract conventional tourists to the lagoon, which is part of a protected landscape of sand dunes, wetlands, islands and beaches that supports diverse fauna as well as avians. He described it as the "lung" of Vlora, the nearest city. "There should be a

stable but alternative tourism, naturally letting campers come, beaches used, with environmental biking, educational paths and more because it's so close to Vlora," Hysolokaj said. - AP

#### INS Magar arrives at Male port to evacuate nearly 200 Indians

NEW DELHI, May 10: *INS Magar* on Sunday arrived at Male to bring nearly 200 stranded Indian nationals home from Maldives amid the coronavirus pandemic.

INS Magar, designed for landing operations, had made all necessary logistic, medical and administrative preparations at her base port Kochi to comfortably accommodate civilians before setting sail towards Maldives.

The ship will evacuate nearly 200 citizens while ensuring all precautions, including social distancing norms, are followed, the Navy stated.

"An entirely separate section of the ship with essential facilities like food and washrooms has been prepared to accommodate the evacuees and a separate mess has been allotted for ladies, infants and senior citizens," it mentioned.

The evacuees have been divided into groups to avoid crowding at common areas like the dining hall and bathrooms, the Navy noted. – PTI

# AP's COVID-19 tally shoots up by 50 to 1,980

AMARAVATI, May 10: The Chennai Koyambedu connection had a clear reflection on the number of fresh coronavirus cases in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday as the border districts of Chittoor and SPS Nellore reported 16 and five in the last 24 hours as the states overall tally shot up by 50 to 1,980.

The official bulletin showed one fresh Covid-19 death in Kurnool district and put the overall count at 45, as the one fatality reported in Vizianagaram on Saturday was not added to the table.

Over 160 people with contacts to people who returned from the Koyambedu wholesale market in Chennai were traced in Chittoor district and tests so far revealed 27 COV-ID-19 positive cases in the last two days, official sources here said. The total number of patients discharged from hospitals now increased to 925, leaving 1,010 active cases in the state. – PTI

# Rly minister urges states to allow special trains to ferry migrants

NEW DELHI, May 10: Railway Minister Piyush Goyal has appealed to all states to permit the operation of migrant special trains so that the stranded can reach home in the next three to four days.

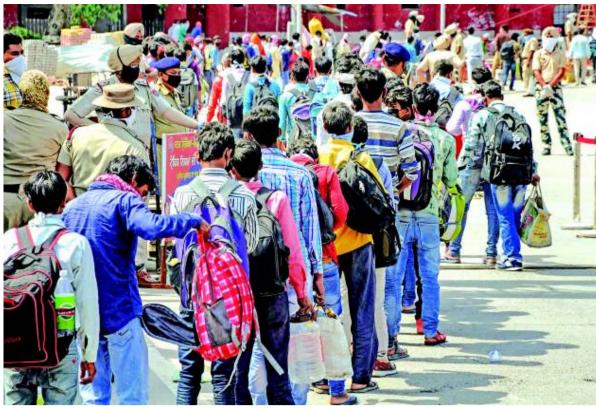
The appeal comes a day after Home Minister Amit Shah wrote to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to allow such trains to run.

"As per the directions of Hon'ble PM @NarendraModi ji, Railways is fully geared up to run 300 Shramik Special trains everyday at short notice since the last six days.

"I appeal to all the states to give permission to evacuate and bring back their stranded migrants so that we can get all of them back to their homes in the next 3-4 days itself," Goyal tweeted on Sunday.

On Saturday the West Bengal government claimed it had given clearance to eight trains to be run carrying its migrant home. Four of these trains, it said, were to depart on Saturday, which did not.

Senior railway officials say the national transporter has a capacity to run around 300 trains per day ferrying around 20 lakh migrants in a maximum of five days.



Migrants arrive at Amritsar Railway Station by buses to board a special train for Barauni in Uttar Pradesh on their way back to home, amid the lockdown, in Amritsar on Sunday. – PTI

However, they said, clearances from states are not forthcoming, especially from states like West Bengal and Rajasthan, which till now have accepted the least

number of such trains despite being a significant source of migrant population.

As on May 10, a total of 366 Shramik Special trains have been operationalised across the country, of which 287 had reached their destinations and 79 trains are in transit.

These 287 trains were terminated in various states like Andhra Pradesh (1 train), Bihar (87), Himachal Pradesh (1), Jharkhand (16), Madhya Pradesh (24), Maharashtra (3), Odisha (20), Rajasthan (4), Telangana (2), Uttar Pradesh (127), West Bengal (2). – PTI

# PM must intervene to prevent starvation deaths, says Antony

NEW DELHI, May 10: Senior Congress leader and former Defence Minister AK Antony on Sunday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene immediately to prevent starvation deaths in the country in the wake of the nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Noting that the situation on the ground was "very difficult", the Congress leader said it was high time the prime minister announced a relief package for the poor and a financial stimulus for the economy.

"The situation is very difficult. The prime minister must intervene immediately. Otherwise, there would be deaths due to hunger and starvation," Antony told PTI.

He also urged the prime minister to take care of the problems of the migrant labourers, the poor and vulnerable sections of society and provide them with a relief package that includes food and cash.

He also demanded an economic stimulus package for reviving the country's economy and putting it back on rails. "It is high time the prime min-

ister should intervene and come out with a relief package for the poor people and an economic stimulus package for the industry," he said.

nomic stimulus package for the industry," he said.

Seeking early action on this front, the former defence minister felt the economic activity in the country was totally shut due to the lock-

"Otherwise, there will be a total economic crisis in the country," he felt.

down and if timely steps are

not taken it could be too late.

Antony also wrote to the prime minister expressing concern over the serious situation in the country and saying that unless there is immediate government intervention, there would be many deaths because of hunger and starvation.

"These deaths would outnumber the casualties because of COVID-19. This is a tragedy that should be avoided at all costs," he told the prime minister.

He also said that as seen across the world, if unchecked, this virus could bring the entire healthcare system to its knees, and cause innumerable loss of lives. – PTI

# Naval ship arrives in Kochi with 698 repatriated Indians from Maldives

KOCHI, May 10: *INS Jalashwa*, carrying 698 repatriated Indian citizens from the Maldives, arrived at Cochin Port on Sunday morning, completing the Indian Navy's first massive evacuation exercise from foreign soil during the COVID-19 lockdown.

"The first group of 698 persons evacuated from the Maldives arrived at Cochin Port today (Sunday) at 9:30 am by 'INS Jalashwa' of the Indian Navy", a Port Trust statement said.

The group comprises 595 males and 103 females. Of this, 14 are children below 10 years

and 19 pregnant women.

Though most passengers are from Kerala and Tamil

Nadu, there were repatriates of 18 other states and Union Territories also in the ship, which began its journey from Male to Kochi on Friday night.

The ship has berthed at BTP Jetty and the disembarkation procedures are being carried out at Samudrika Cruise Terminal, the statement said. Inspector General of Police

Vijay Sakhare said all arrangements are in place to facilitate the safe stay of those repatriated, comprising 440 Keralites and people from other parts of the country.

Four passengers are from Lakshwadeep. The other passengers are from Tamil Nadu (187), Telganana (9), Andhra Pradesh (8), Karnataka (8), Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan (3 each) and Goa (1), Assam (1).

There are seven passengers each from Uttarakhand and West Bengal, Delhi (4), Puducherry (3), while there are two passengers each from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, the sources said.

Passengers showing COV-ID-19 symptoms are being disembarked first, followed by others in small groups, districtwise, a Port Trust official said.

Thermal screening of passengers on arrival is being carried out by the Port Health Organisation.

Customs and Immigration

procedures are carried out

of SIM cards by BSNL and installation of ArogyaSetu in mobile phones of passengers, the official said.

Disinfection facilities for baggage and free wifi have been

inside the Terminal, where

arrangements have also

been made for distribution

gage and free wifi have been made available by the Port at the Terminal. Arrangements for onward travel to hospitals or institutional quarantine centres and home quarantine have been ensured by the state government by deploying ambulances, state transport buses and taxis, the official said.

These arrangements are coordinated by the District Administration, Police and Health Departments. – PTI

#### Eminent historian Hari Shankar Vasudevan dies KOLKATA, May 10: Emi- Centre of Calcutta Universi- Gayatri Spivak of Columbia

KOLKATA, May 10: Eminent historian Hari Shankar Vasudevan died at a private hospital here on Sundy. He was 68.

Vasudevan had tested positive for novel coronavirus on May 6 after being admitted with high fever and breathing difficulty symptoms on May 4 but had other chronic ailments also, his family said.

they said. Vasudevan is survived by his wife Tapati Guha Thakurta and a daughter. He was considered one the

He died at 1 am on Sunday.

foremost names in Russian and Central Asian history.

Condoling his demise, West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar recalled "Prof Hari Vasudevan, an eminent scholor, UGC Emeritus Professor, Department of History and China ty as well as Ex Director of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies -MAKSIAS, an autonomous body under Ministry of Culture Govt of India."

The governor in the state-

ment said Vasudevan died of coronavirus.

It said "Professor Hari

Vasudevan was prominent specialist in Russian and European history and Indo-Russian Relations. He was also Visiting Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation and President, Institute of Development Studies, Kolkata and these positions he made commendable contributions."

"He was involved in projects on Indo-Russian relations and the Radiating Globalities project initiated by Gayatri Spivak of Columbia University (New York). At ORF, he was evaluating the overlap between 'Look East' and 'Look Far East' policies of India and the relationship between Greater Eurasia ideas of the Russian establishment and Chinese establishment," the statement added.

Describing Vasudevan as a multifaceted person. Dhankhar said he made his mark while being involved in a formal consultative capacity with projects/institutions of the Ministry of Culture, MHRD, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India and was Chairman of the Textbook Development Committee for the Social Sciences of the NCERT from 2005. – PTI

# ADKJ ADID YOU KNOW?

#### Formidable Fifteen

There were a total of fifteen women who were part of the constituent assembly of India. They were Ammu Swaminathan, Dakshayani Velayudhan, Begum Aizaz Rasul, Durgabai Deshmukh, Hansa Jivraj Mehta, Kamala Chaudhary, Leela Roy, Malati Choudhury, Purnima Banerjee, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Renuka Ray, Sarojini Naidu, Sucheta Kriplani, Vijalakshami Pandit and Annie Mascarene.



#### Pregnant COVID-19 warrior in Karnataka wins accolade

BENGALURU, May 10: A nine-month pregnant nurse on COVID-19 frontline in Karnataka has emerged as a shining example for selfless dedication to work, with Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa expressing his gratitude and requesting her

to go on maternity leave.

Roopa, working on a contract basis at Jayachamarajendra Taluk Hospital in Yediyurappa's home district of Shivamogga, insisted on continuing to discharge her duty despite health officials' advising against it citing her advanced pregnancy and surfacing of fresh COVID-19 cases in the district.

"Roopa, I am amazed to learn about your efforts. It is nice to learn that a woman from my district is putting in so much of efforts.

At least now please take rest and return to work after

delivery... I humbly request you to take rest from today," the Chief Minister told her over the phone. Recently, the nurse was deputed to Gajanur in the same district to tackle cases of coronavirus.

She has been commuting from Teerthahalli to Gajanur by bus for the past few days.

Meanwhile, Shivamogga, which was under green zone till now, saw a spurt in cases on Sunday with eight people testing positive and one of them was from Teerthahalli.

It was then the district and Taluk health officials realised that Roopa would risk her life if she continued to work and asked her to take a break, sources in the CM office said.

However, Roopa was adamant that she would continue to serve the patients during the pandemic. – PTI

# **OSBI**

#### **GOOD NEWS for FARMERS**

In view of the difficulties faced by farmers following Covid-19 pandemic, State Bank of India hereby announces sanction of an additional pre-approved loan of 10% of existing limits to all KCC (Kisan Credit Card) borrowers and SHG (Self-Help Group) in the Agriculture segment whose loan accounts are regular.

For further details, borrowers may please contact their branch.



Visit: bank.sbi Follow us on 🔞 🔾 🔘 🔞 📵

# 75% cases asymptomatic or showing mild symptoms: Kejriwal NEW DELHI, May 10: Del- Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari Sunday that 73 people have Addressing an online brief care centre where he/she can

NEW DELHI, May 10: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said 75 per cent of COVID-19 cases in the city are asymptomatic or showing mild symptoms, and asserted that the number of serious patients and deaths caused by the infection is "less".

"The number of serious patients is less. The number of COVID-19-19 deaths is very less," he said, a day after his government was attacked for "under-reporting" the deaths.

"under-reporting" the deaths.
On Saturday, Congress leader Ajay Maken sought more transparency from the Kejriwal government and

urged the chief minister to "tell the truth", saying people have a right to know about the severity of the outbreak.

Officials of the 10 hospitals treating COVID-19 patients have said the number of people dead due to the virus is higher than what the Delhi government's bulletin reflects.

A confusion has prevailed over the exact number of deaths as the data from four hospitals showed that 92 people succumbed to the infection against 68 reported by the government till Friday.

However, Kejriwal said on

Sunday that 73 people have died due to the virus.

He said Delhi has reported

6,923 coronavirus cases, out of which 2,069 have recovered, while 91 patients are in ICU and 27 are on ventilator support. It has been observed that 82 per cent of people dead were above the age of 50, Kejriwal said, requesting senior citizens to take precautionary measures against the infection.

"Out of 6,923 COVID-19 patients, only 1,476 are admitted to hospitals," he said, adding that the rest are getting treatment at their homes and COVID-19 care centres.

Addressing an online oriering, Kejriwal said those asymptomatic or showing mild symptoms need not to be admitted to hospitals and can be provided treatment at home.

"Our team makes inspection of their home to ascertain whether social isolation can be observed or not. Our teams are in regular touch with such people and if needed, family members of affected person can contact officials," he said.

If there is no sufficient space at home to ensure social isolation, the government sends the patient to a COVID-19 care centre where he/she can stay for 14 days, he said.

He said the government has attached the Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital with two-three five-star hotels where frontline warriors, infected by COVID-19, are being treated.

"It pained me when I heard that the Opposition was criticising our move. I want to ask you whether corona warriors should not be given better facility," he said.

This is not the time to do politics but time to work together against the virus, the AAP chief said. – PTI

4 THE ASSAM TRIBUNE, GUWAHATI MONDAY, MAY 11, 2020

#### **MESSAGE FOR TODAY**

Turn your wounds into wisdom.

- OPRAH WINFREY

### The Assam Tribune

#### **Cold comfort**

In the absence of a vaccine or drug to combat the lethal Covid-19 virus, there is little the governments around the world can do apart from imposing measures such as lockdown, and India is no exception. Every bit of non-routine information, therefore, induces hope. For instance, the medical community as well as a knowledgeable segment of the population is awaiting with bated breath for the results of tests being conducted by Indian Council of Medical Research, dubbed as Project Placid: Phase II Open Label Randomized Controlled Trial, which has been approved by the Covid-19 National Ethics Committee, to assess the safety and efficacy of convalescent plasma. Similarly, all eyes are being focused on the global effort at finding a vaccine or cure, for it would be foolish to merely bury our heads ostrich-like in the sand, and keep clutching at straws to justify steps being taken. It is all very well for the NITI Aayog members to assert that the number of positive Covid-19 cases were stabilizing and that the government lockdown has successfully 'flattened the curve', and that India was nowhere close to the kind of escalation of coronavirus cases that it witnessed during the pre-lockdown phase. Also, it would be merely deriving cold comfort from 'expert' inferences that India's recovery rate, the number of people cured in a day as a proportion of total number of people who have recovered, is improving.

True, from under 10% in early April, the recovery rate has climbed to almost 30%. Also true is the fact that just three of every 100 confirmed cases, or one out of every 10 closed cases (total deaths and recovered cases) are now ending in fatalities, developments which are in stark contrast to those experienced by many countries in the world. Yet the reality that the Covid-19 cases in India continue to show a rising trajectory, (at the moment of writing over 63,000 have been affected and 2109 have died), and that States like Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat, Delhi and Tamil Nadu are causing great concern, has to be kept in mind. Also to be taken into account is the mass movement of migrants that is currently occurring within the country as well as stranded Indians abroad being brought back. This coronavirus is proving to defy all predictions and models, thus it would be foolish to rely on statistics to derive false hope. In fact, so far, there is absolutely no certainty how the virus in India would behave in the future, though some experts have projected that the affliction would peak somewhere between June and July. Thus India has many miles to travel before it can get a grip on this coronavirus, and rigorous vigilance must continue on the part of various agencies and more responsibility must be shown by the people themselves.

### On high alert

While the northeastern States including Assam have done relatively better than most other States of the country in containing the coronavirus outbreak to a reasonable level this far, there can hardly be any room for complacency. Four northeastern States are free from the virus now and Sikkim never had a single case throughout. But Assam has now shown disturbing signs of a community spread with the headcount of the infected on the rise and this calls for matching arrangements by the State Government. The foremost among the needs is to subject every homebound person from other States to institutional quarantine. Already some batches of such people were advised home quarantine only and the disturbing fallouts are there for all to see. Batches in lesser numbers should be facilitated entry into the State so that there is no difficulty in ensuring foolproof quarantine. Barring Assam and Tripura, the other northeastern States have done really well in tackling the situation - their case helped no doubt by their smaller populations, rugged terrains, and the procedural restrictions on the entry of outsiders even during normal times. Assam being the gateway to the Northeast, understandably had a tough ask and matters were not helped by the porous Assam-Bangladesh border and the lack of adequate vigilance on the Assam-West Bengal border. Given that several northeastern States share international boundaries, a streamlined border vigilance mechanism is highly imperative in the current situation.

While the Centre has lauded the efforts of the northeastern States vis-a-vis the pandemic, the coming days are bound to bring in a lot of challenges with the lockdown norms relaxed considerably. A boost in the healthcare facilities including screening and treatment is a must under the circumstances. Issues such as testing facilities, healthcare infrastructure, surveillance, contact tracing, etc., will assume a lot of significance if the battle against Covid-19 were to be won. In the event of a major surge in the days ahead, the Government will also have to consider arrangements for treatment of those at their homes with mild Covid-19 symptoms in accordance with the Centre's guidelines. In Delhi, out of 6,923 Covid-19 patients, only 1,476 are admitted in hospitals, with the rest getting treatment at their homes and Covid-19 centres. The presence of a big percentage of asymptomatic patients will always make the task of monitoring and identifying patients difficult and hence the need for responsible action by the masses. Persons even with mild symptoms would do well to get themselves screened for preventing further transmission. As hospitals and quarantine centres will face or have already started to face shortage of masks and PPEs, the Centre should intervene in a big way to facilitate supply of these protective kits.

# Pandemic and the narrative of hate

#### Shibdas Bhattachariee

his is a tough time for the global community as civilization is struggling to protect humanity from the onslaught of a new age pandemic. The death toll and cases of infection because of Covid-19 are increasing with every passing moment. India has already entered into the third phase of lockdown on this backdrop. No doubt, the pandemic is the prime issue of discussion around the globe in the given time. But there are some embarrassing realities, particularly the perception with which politicians, societies, communities, races and obviously leaders across the world are looking at things including the role played by mainstream media and social media. The present situation is not different from what had happened for centuries during pandemics, be it the Cyprian plague, Justinian plague, Black Death, Colombian Exchange, first cholera pandemic, Russian flu, Spanish flu, Asian flu and others. This demands the role of all the stakeholders to be placed under the scanner considering the things happened so far since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The medical fraternity of India is delivering with utter devotion to save the lives of the people. The police personnel and other agencies are working round the clock. The Indians have hailed their efforts with gratitude. But this is also true that organized crime is on the rise against the staff of medical, security and other agencies. Doctors and other medical profession-

als have been forced to vacate rented houses at this hour of crisis in many places. They are working amidst the shortage of PPEs. In some cases, medical and security personnel became the victims of mob violence. Merely calling them real heroes, clapping for them or lighting lamps hardly suffice. Therefore, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences appealed to the Government to take step against this. The concern was echoed in PM Modi's voice who asked

Modi's voice who asked the Indians to stop treating medical workers as pariahs. However, things hardly changed on the ground.

Similarly, communal and sectarian intolerance rose after the Nizamuddin Markaz incident. Things worsened because a section of media virtually made almost the entire Muslim community responsible for spreading the virus in India. Media reports connecting the Markaz incident with jihad

and Pakistan increased the level of intolerance, and the country's social media did the rest. There is no doubt that those who were involved in the Markaz incident and the fugitives deserve legal action. But this does not allow anybody making communal hyperbole. For this, the Central Advisory Committee had to make it mandatory not to disclose names, identity and locality of the corona patients. Administra-

tions put restriction on singling out

any community and area responsible for the spread of Covid-19. But this delayed action has already done much damage as suspicion, hatred and untouchability got a fertile ground to thrive.

So also, sectarian intolerance kept rising during the time against people of some regions of India, particularly the Northeast. Calling famous Manipuri artiste and former Indian Idol contestant Meiyang Chang 'Corona' is not just a scattered incident but symbolic indeed. The Rights and Risks Analy-

For rulers and politicians, these negative sentiments are important than human lives. Media needs agenda to be hyperbolic. Social media is doing the rest, creating psychological distance among the people in the name of religion, region, caste, creed, race and all other divisive affiliations.

sis Group (RRAG) brought out a report called 'Coronavirus Pandemic: India's Mongoloid Looking People Face Upsurge of Racism' on violence and stigmatizing the people of the Northeast. Union Minister Kiren Rijiju also admitted the fact and issued a statement against this. All these expose that vulnerability is ever prevalent in India in the forms of communal-sectarian-regional intolerance being used as a political agenda, with a section of

Indian media enhancing this. This is not a fight against corona but political vandalism. Unfortunately, a large section of Indian media justified this. So also, news anchors making personal attack against one another based on political loyalty shows a gloomy picture.

The global scenario is worse. Political-ideological differences, racial discrimination, communalism and illogical assessment of the situation are some forms. Blame game and exchange of provocative statements are on the rise now. The

African nations blame the European ones for spreading the virus calling the white people dirty. The protests in Mexico, the racist statement of Thailand Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul against the Europeans are indicative of this. Iran believes Covid-19 is an American conspiracy to kill the Shia community. North Korean President Kim Jongun warned to shoot down the people with Covid-19. The Network

Contagion Research Institute, an independent third party that tracks misinformation and hate across social media channels, released a report recently that looked at the spread of hate online against the Asians in congruence with the pandemic. This sounds convincing if one looks at the recent incidents of atrocities in the United States and some European nations against the Asian people. Since the first report of Covid-19 on American soil,

Asian-Americans had to suffer both physically and economically in the US as the Americans consider the people of Asian origin responsible for spreading the virus.

All these unmask the reality how under the shade of the pandemic, communal and sectarian intolerance, racism, regionalism and all other forms of discrimination have been used as tools of politics. The most unfortunate fact is: how xenophobia has got institutionalized by the governments of different nations which is against all ethical values. Similarly, in some form or other, a section of media in both India and abroad has legitimized xenophobia and disseminated the same among the ordinary people. The fact is that hatred and bias are so dominant and deep-rooted that they do not change with the passing time. The incidents happened so far prove it. For rulers and politicians, these negative sentiments are important than human lives. Media needs agenda to be hyperbolic. Social media is doing the rest, creating psychological distance among the people in the name of religion, region, caste, creed, race and all other divisive affiliations. It will be better if the media affords to organize constructive debates against xenophobia. The message is loud and clear: there should be organized fights against the pandemic that demands cooperation among different nations. For this the government of every nation should think pragmatically and deliver as per the need of the hour. Xenophobia of all kinds should be dealt with strongly. The battle should be against the disease and not against humanity.

# Is India ready to reopen?

#### ■ Prassenjit Lahiri

s India gets ready to come out of lockdown and reopen, the future course of the coronavirus pandemic and its containment will largely be each individual's responsibility.

Ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Janata Curfew on March 22, 2020 and subsequent lockdowns to fight the coronavirus pandemic, the entire nation has been under home confinement, with citizens allowed to venture out only for essential and urgent needs. Now as the Government has announced Lockdown 3.0 for another two weeks, while a partial reopening of businesses in the green and orange zones is happening, a state of confusion and fear has set in too.

Since the time the lockdown was announced, all the State governments have followed through and encouraged people to stay indoors. But now, slowly, a subtle shift is starting to happen where the imposed restrictions are gradually be-

ing lifted, opening up the society. From this point ahead, the ultimate responsibility falls upon the citizens. Sure, the government agencies will keep a careful check on the situation and communicate public health guidelines and decide when to completely open businesses and schools, but in a country of more than a billion, individual decisions, both small and big, taken by each and every citizen about how to go about their life, will decide the future course of this global pandemic.

Governments all over the world are faced with the dilemma – whether to lift the lockdown to reopen the economy or remain in lockdown to save the lives of the vulnerable? India is inching towards the 63,000 coronavirus case mark and epidemiologists say the peak is yet to happen. But on the other hand, a divide is starting to emerge between workers who have the benefit of a steady income and paid leave as opposed to the daily wage workers, deprived of their livelihoods.

ers, deprived of their livelihoods. Finding the right balance between trying to save lives versus livelihoods is not merely an economic or political issue; it is also a moral issue, consequences of which all of us will have to live with for the coming years. It is a terrible and very difficult choice to make. Life, as we know it, has been disrupted and for the foreseeable future, absolute liberty and freedom, in terms of going about our lives before the pandemic, is not something we can expect to enjoy.

While speaking to friends and colleagues, in India and abroad, one found that people are conflicted and split down the middle about what their actions are going to be once the lockdown is lifted. Some of the parents cannot wait for the schools to start and their children to get back to school. They feel online classes do not give their children a holistic education and interaction with friends, the environment of a school is necessary. Another issue with parents having a young child is who is going to look after the kids once both parents have to head out to work, as schools are going to be closed for a much longer time. Some, however, are wary and would rather let their kids stay home. Few just cannot wait for the flights to resume and take off for a vacation, while on the other hand, few of them, in good conscience, want to delay all travel plans till the fall. It is really hard coming to terms with the new normal. Planning for the future seems futile, as the future itself is uncertain.

The biggest question all of us are faced with now is how we navigate through this moment. And, can we put our trust in the State, our government, our colleagues and neighbours and, most of all, ourselves, in making the right decisions as we start to emerge out of our homes? Being holed up in the confines of our homes, do we cross paths with as threats? How can we be sure the shops we visit are disinfecting the doorknobs, handles and surfaces? Are we scared to get on to modes of public transportation with the fear of a co-passenger infecting us? Do we act to benefit ourselves or act for

the greater good? Our reactions to these new realities will be crucial to reshaping and defining relationships and society as a whole.

Although the lockdown has been

extended by another two weeks till May 17, 2020, in India the partial reopening has started to happen from May 4, 2020, wherein certain businesses and travel modes have been opened up in phases, with social distancing measures put in place. Crowded gatherings are however still banned. Still there is a lot of uncertainty and fear among people as they're not sure of what's about to come. The important thing to remember as we start venturing out is each of our decisions is going to shape the rate of infections, economic policies and government guidelines. Absolute freedom is not something we should be expecting at this point and for the foreseeable future we should be okay with constrained but acceptable degrees of freedom, for the greater good. How we choose to act, and out of trust or fear, will remodel us not just as a society, but as friends, colleagues, neighbours and families.

# to the **EDITOR**

Sir, – This is with reference to the article, 'Press freedom, Covid-19 and infodemic' (AT, May 7). While I completely stand with what has been explained by the author, I also want to bring to light the efforts that some honest journalists have been putting in to make the Press truly free by changing their business models, to begin with. Subscription-based news, online, is slowly becoming a norm and is being led by acclaimed news portals such as The Ken and Newslaundry. The state of the Indian Press is inarguably questionable right now which is also evident by the low rankings that India has maintained on the global Press Freedom Index; we are far behind some of our friends in the Arab world too. While this business model for journalism is slowly growing, but given the high quality and truly investigative pieces that have been coming out from these media houses, this model is sure to rise as steadily as it is. I would like to end my note with the fact that the Press truly is the fourth pillar of democracy and there is no way that political vendetta will ever truly kill it. And we citizens too have a huge role to play in upholding press freedom as well. Yours etc., AAYUSHI PATWARI, North Lakhimpur.

# Press freedom

#### Online learning

Sir, - As the schools and colleges are closed during the lockdown period, the students are confined to their residences. So they are being given online lectures by different teachers at the behest of different institutes. But, the students cannot interact in this type of teaching. Further, they cannot talk to any other classmate. In schools, the students are not confined all the time. They start their day with prayers. They also go for drills and play various sports. But in online classes, the students are not getting such things. Yours etc., PUTUL SARMA, Biswanath Chariali.

Social media misuse Sir, -Today's youths are increasingly flocking to social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp and many others without knowing their pros and cons. They are misusing these platforms and creating unwanted environment, leading them to anxiety and depression, making them more materialistic and addicted to too many bad things. They are into dirty and cheap chats which is diverting their minds from the main path and hampering their academic life. Moreover, they are wasting their time in these platforms simultaneously without caring about their future. It's really necessary to

take some steps against such misuse or put some limitations in using these platforms and educate them about the best practices of social media. Yours etc., SHRISTI KALITA, Jorhat.

#### **Coal mining**Sir, – A news item 'Concern

over coal mining in Dehing Patkai' (AT, May 8) is a concern for the mankind in general and the biodiversity in particular. The open cast mining of coal is a bad practice and detrimental to environment; we have seen this in Meghalaya. I am surprised to know how the standing committee of the National Board of Wildlife could approve such a foolish step, that too within a wildlife sanctuary. Is it not a violation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 itself? Once a part of this rainforest is cleared, it will never be revived and we will witness drastic changes within no time including more wild animals coming to human zones. We should have learnt a lesson from the outbreak of Covid-19, which is indirectly related to the destruction of forests and killing of wild animals. Yours etc., HILLOLJYOTI SINGHA, Kokrajhar.

#### Opening schools

Sir, – There has been a discussion on opening the schools in Jorhat. I feel scared even assuming this. I have seen the condition of the private schools.

Classrooms have more than 40-50 kids in one section with not the best of hygiene and sanitation. Bathrooms are not properly cleaned. As such pushing so many children to school during this Covid-19 is risking their life. They are the future of our society. We must not risk their lives just in a hurry to open schools. I request the school administrators and the Assam Government to think twice before this decision is taken. When the people of adult age fail to maintain social distancing and hygiene, what will the kids do? How will the teachers handle and keep them safe? Yours etc., RAJESH K SINGH, Jorhat.

School fee hike Sir, – The Covid-19 pandemic has put the corporate sector in a shambles. Job losses, pay-cuts and leave without pay have become a norm across industries. Similarly, the Central and State governments in India have decided to freeze the dearness allowance (DA) hike from January 2020 till June 2021. This will impact the government employees in a pandemic-ridden, inflation-hit economy. These are the reasons why the Assam Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma asked the schools to charge half of the fees for the month of April 2020. However, ignoring such pleas and the plight of parents, schools across Guwahati have increased

Maharishi Vidya Mandir, a leading school in Guwahati, has increased their fees by a whopping 13.5% on the last year's fees. Such arbitrary fee hike by schools are not only apathetic, but also antisocial. Through your esteemed daily, I would like to draw the attention of the authorities concerned to take necessary action against such arbitrary fee hike by the schools. Yours etc., DILIP HAZARIKA, Chandmari, Guwahati.

their fees substantially. The

#### Irresponsible behaviour Sir, – The State Government is

making sincere efforts to bring back the people stranded in different parts of the country due to the national lockdown. Proper facilities for quarantine and health check-up have been set up at different locations in the State. However, many people returning from outside recently by their own vehicles are seen to break the guarantine rules and escape. At this hour of extreme health emergency, such irresponsible behaviour on the part of the citizens should not be tolerated and be penalized. The penalty in the form of fines can further be utilized for improvement of healthcare infrastructure of the State. Yours etc., JAYEETA SHARMA, Guwahati.

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.



**GUWAHATI** LOCAL FORECAST: Partly cloudy sky to

thundershower. Maximum and minimum temperatures are most likely to be 33°C & 22°C respectively on Monday.

generally cloudy sky

with possibility of rain/

**TEMPERATURE:** Max 36.2° C Min 21.8° C

Speaker extends Rs 1.5 lakh to CM's Fund, Rs 1 lakh to PM CARES CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 10: In an expression of solidarity, Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly Hitendra Nath Goswami today contributed Rs 1,50,000 to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

He handed over the cheque to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal at the latter's official residence at the Brahmaputra State Guest House here today.

The Speaker also contributed Rs 1 lakh to the PM CARES and handed over the cheque to the Chief Minister.

The Speaker also handed over cheques that he received during his last visit to Jorhat from different individuals and organisations to the Chief Minister as contributions to the Assam Arogya Nidhi. The Chief Minister thanked the Speaker for his benevolence in the prevailing situation.

#### Relief materials distributed to needy families CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 10: The Vivekananda Sporting Club, a socio-cultural club of Guwahati, today distributed relief materials to 250 needy families of Kalapahar, Colony Bazar area.

Secretary of the club Bieswar Rov expressed his gratitude towards the State Excise Department and Sailendra Pandey, PRO to the Excise Minister Parimal Suklabaidya, for providing the club with hand sanitizers which were being used to sanitize all beneficiaries.

#### Blood camps organised STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10: National Medicos Organization (NMO) and Seva Bharati Purbanchal in collaboration with different hospitals across Assam organised 'Rakta Dhara', a voluntary blood donation camp, today to commemorate the first war of Indian independence – Sepoy

A total of 13 camps were organised across 11 districts of the State with a collection of 441 units of blood. Another blood donation camp was organised at Dimapur under their banner where a total of 14 units of blood were collected. This was informed by NMO Assam secretary Dr Raktim Pratim Tamuli and Seva Bharati Purbanchal president Ramen Sarmah while expressing their gratitude to all the blood donors and organisers for helping them in the noble venture.

Various eminent personalities donated their blood at several locations

In another blood camp, organised by Marwari Hospitals since yesterday, altogether 50 blood donors from ICI Angels (Junior Chamber International), Guwahati, and JCI Hunar, Guwahati, donated blood.



Cartons of food and water bottles being placed in front of the gate of a GMCH hostel that has been tagged a containment zone, in Guwahati on Sunday. - UB Photos

# 2 spl trains carrying stranded people reaching NE shortly

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10: The first two Shramik Special trains, bringing people stranded in other parts of India, to the North East are expected to reach this region within two or three days.

These will be the first such trains to arrive in this part of the country.

"Two Shramik Special trains, one headed for Tripura and another for Manipur, will reach the respective states with stranded people of those states in the next twothree days," said Subhanan Chanda, chief public relations officer (CPRO) of the Maligaon-headquartered Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR).

The train to Tripura will originate from Bengaluru, while the train to Manipur will depart from Chennai.

Around 1,000-1,200 passengers are expected to arrive on each of the trains. Chanda said the Shramik

Special trains are operated only on receipt of requests from the respective state governments by observing the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

While NFR has operated several Shramik Special trains in various parts of the country during last week, these will be the first such services to the northeastern states.

Another six Shramik Special trains will reach various stations of Bihar, located within the jurisdiction of the NFR, in the coming two or three days.

"Till today, 21 Shramik Special trains have reached the NFR zone with nearly 25,000 people, comprising mainly students, patients and migrant labourers with their family members. Out of the total 21 trains, 10 have arrived at Katihar, seven trains have arrived at Purnea, three at Arariya, and one has arrived at Kishanganj stations with stranded people from various parts of the country including Kozhikode, Kota, Jaipur, Nandurbar, Hisar, Surat, Vadodara, Bharuch, Ghatkesar, Ludhiana, Ambala, Aligarh, Rohtak, Kalvan, Bhiwani, Jalandhar and Ben-

galuru," Chanda said.

"All the passengers were from various districts of Bihar and received by respective civil administration of Bihar at the railway stations after following all necessary COVID-19 protocols. The stations concerned were properly barricaded by deploying adequate Railway Protection Force (RPF), Government Railway Police (GRP) and local police personnel to prevent the entry of unauthorized persons. All passengers were guided by RPF and GRP personnel in queues after de-boarding from the train for proper screening by Bihar govern-

ment officials by maintaining

they were accommodated in buses for dispatch to their respective districts," he said.

Manipur and Tripura are also expected to follow the same protocol when the Shramik Special trains reach

the two states. Indian Railways started the Shramik Special trains from May 1 to move migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and other persons stranded at different places due to the lockdown as per guidelines issued by the MHA.

These special trains are running from point to point on the request of both state governments concerned as per the standard protocol for sending and receiving such stranded persons. Only those persons enlisted by the state governments concerned and brought to the station can travel on these special trains and no individual shall come to any railway station on their own.

### Action plan ready to provide mental health support to persons in need

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10: Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the State health and family welfare (H&FW) department has come up with an action plan and a standard operating procedure (SOP) to provide mental health support to the common public.

The action plan and SOP on the management of mental health issues during COV-ID-19 pandemic outbreak in Assam were prepared by a committee of experts headed by the head of the Psychiatry department of the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) Dr Suresh Chakravarty.

An order issued by the H&FW department cited that the action plan and the SOP will be implemented under the aegis of National Mental Health Programme (NMHP), Assam.

For this purpose, the department partially attached two faculty members of the Psychiatry department of GMCH - Dr Shyamanta Das and Dr Mythili Hazarika – to the NMHP cell under the National Health Mission, Assam, temporar-

Dr Das will look after all the matters related to pharmacological treatment including training, referral, telemedicine, etc., and Dr Hazarika will look after all matters related to psychological support including training, telecounselling, etc.

Moreover, Dr N Lalsim, additional director of health services, has been entrusted to coordinate among all the stakeholders to address the mental health concerns of the general public and the needs of those with psychiatric illness in a proper way.

#### Police cane unruly buyers at Iorabat market CORRESPONDENT

JORABAT, May 10: The Jorabat police today cracked the whip on citizens who had ignored the government's lockdown guidelines.

Even as the nation is currently under COVID-19 lockdown, a good number of people gathered at the 14th Mile weekly market, which defeated the very purpose of the lockdown.

A conscious section of people, witnessing the crowd gather at the weekly market, informed the Sonapur police, under which the area falls.

After noticing no response from the Sonapur police, they again informed the Jorabat police about the issue.

After reaching the spot, the Jorabat police resorted to lathicharge to disperse the crowd that gathered at the market and even outside grocery stores.

# **NDRF** sanitizes **Tribune complex**

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 10: Personnel of 1st Battalion NDRF Guwahati, under the supervision of its Commandant Randhir Singh Gill, carried out a sanitization drive at The Assam Tribune complex here today.

The team sprayed disinfectant consisting of sodium hypochlorite.

The NDRF battalion also distributed food to more than 400 needy people at Nizsundary Gupa, Bargaon and Changsari in Kamrup district, in collaboration with Akhil Bhartiya Terapanth Yuvak Parishad, Guwahati.

During the programme, the NDRF team emphasised social distancing, hand washing, use of sanitizer and following lockdown guidelines to stop the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.



NDRF personnel spraying disinfectants in the Assam Tribune premises, in Guwahati on Sunday. - AT photo

#### CM speaks to noted persons over phone the chain of the coronavirus former MP Dr Arun Sharma,

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 10: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today spoke to several eminent personalities, sports organizers, social activists and journalists over phone and apprised them of the government's strategies to break

infection in the State. Sonowal informed them that besides protecting and saving precious lives from COVID-19, the government is working wholeheartedly to create a robust healthcare infrastructure.

He said the government is also working to strengthen the economy, which has been badly hit by the pandemic. The personalities Sonowal

spoke to today include ex-principal of B Borooah College Ambikagiri Roy Chowdhury's grandson Jagadindra Roy Chowdhury, former head of the Assamese department of Pandu College BP Upadhaya,

former ambassador to North Korea Binanda Kr Gogoi, journalists Naba Thakuria and Rupam Baruah, businessman Krishna K Goenka, sports organiser Manoj Mohanty, and social activists Gauranga Roy, Dilip Basu and Swapnanil

### FLO Northeast new committee formed

GUWAHATI, May 10: The annual change of guard ceremony of the North East chapter of FICCI Ladies Organisation was held on May 9, which saw Juhie Saboo taking charge from Srutimala Duara as the new chairperson of FLO Northeast, stated a press release issued here today.

The ceremony was conducted on an online platform, along with other chapters across India, in view of the present scenario created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Juhie Saboo, while accepting the responsibility, presented her vision for the term 2020-21 and promised that despite the hurdles created by the pandemic, FLO Northeast will continue to work and reach out in every possible way, especially to empower women.

The new executive board members are Suruchi Agarwal, senior vice chairperson; Meghali Das, vice chairperson; Shweta Jindal, secretary; Ramita Jhunjhunwala, treasurer; Santasree Malik, joint secretary; and Geetika Jain, joint treasurer.

On May 12, Jahnabi Phookan will take charge as the national president of FICCI Ladies Organisation. She will be the first from the Northeast to head the organisation, the release added.

GUWAHATI, May 10: Former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has called for more Central assistance to Assam and the northeastern states to tide over the economic crisis brought about in the wake of the COVID-19 pan-"Substantial amounts of funds should be given to North East states, especially to Assam, under the PM CARES Fund," said the sen-

Gogoi.

He said the austerity measures adopted by the government should be spelt out properly. "The Government of Assam should conduct a detailed survey to make an assessment of loss incurred during the total lockdown by

ior Congress leader.

provide adequate financial support. The economic advisory committee, formed under the chairmanship of retired IAS officer Subhash Das, should plan long-term and short-term measures and schemes to cope up with the declining economic situation and also for a future course of action. The committee should submit its report to the government within a month. The recent hike in VAT on petrol and diesel should be withdrawn immediately as it affects all sections of society. Immediate steps

He said the decision to impose the nationwide lock-

should be taken to support

and save the small industries

and traditional crafts," said

ed that it was carried out without proper planning.

Centre must help states in tiding over crisis: Gogoi

"As a result, lakhs of poor people, including daily wage earners, rickshaw-pullers, handcart pullers, traders, small businessmen, farmers, weavers, milk producers and fishermen, among others, have been adversely affected," said Gogoi.

He added that five-six lakh workers from Assam are being stranded in different parts of the country and they have lost their jobs and livelihood.

that we have not seen any concrete steps taken by the government for providing financial assistance to help the affected poor people. Even those who are stranded in different parts of the country

"It is most unfortunate

their own expenses to travel by train to their respective states. Only after Sonia Gandhi raised the issue and instructed Congress units of various states to bear the expense of the railway fares did the Government of India decide to bear 85 per cent of the cost and leaving remaining 15 per cent to the respective state government. The whole expense should have been borne by the Centre," said Gogoi.

He said the condition of the Indian economy was deteriorating even before the onset of the pandemic and added that COVID-19 has only made the situation worse. "Every poor jobless per-

son should be given at least Rs 7,600 and 10 kg of rice.

different sectors in order to down was necessary, but add- were initially asked to bear MGNREGA schemes are not being implemented properly There are a total of 27 crore MGNREGA job cardholders in India, out of which 12 crore job holders are active. However, only 93 lakh job cardholders have been provided jobs, while the rest of the cardholders are yet to be given jobs under this scheme. I urge the government to give jobs to all MGNREGA active cardholders. Importance must be given to MGNRE-GA scheme. Even town areas also should be covered under this scheme at this stage," said the three-time Chief Minister.

Gogoi alleged that some elements across India are trying to spread divisiveness in the name of the pan-

### AIR engaging people through quiz

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10: The Regional News Unit of the All India Radio Guwahati has found a unique method to engage people positively and constructively during lock-

Apart from airing news and special COVID-19 programmes, the unit has adopted methods to connect to listeners through quiz.

"Love for quiz is universal. Keeping this in mind, a series of quiz programmes have been organised. Eight quiz events have been organised during the lockdown to keep our listeners engaged

in a positive direction. We have received a very encouraging response," News Editor Manas Pratim Sarma said.

One such quiz was organised during the COVID-19 special Dristipat programme.

The Assam Police, CID, NHM, ASDMA, Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission, Education Department and the Sports Authority of Assam partnered with the All India Radio in this effort.

The last episode of the quiz was broadcast on Sunday with My Gov Assam. Over a thousand quizzers and radio listeners have been taking part in the events.

#### STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10: Although pig farming is a very lucrative livelihood option in Assam, it has been facing a series of challenges including the pig health issue.

The pig health issue has got immense attention in recent times, as the outbreak of African swine fever has killed more than 13,000 pigs in nine districts – Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Majuli, Golaghat and Kamrup Metropolitan - within just four months.

According to the Assam Pig Breeding Policy, 2019, prepared by a panel of experts under the aegis of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary department, a large number of infectious and metabolic diseases that are prevalent in Assam have serious implications on pig productivity, export potential along with safety and quality of pig products.

The policy was approved

by the State government last year but yet to be implemented by the department. A senior official said that due to the coronavirus outbreak, they could not start the process to implement the policy.

By pointing out that many

of these diseases have zoonotic importance, the policy suggested that there is a need to strengthen the prevention and control measures along with diagnosis, treatment and tracking.

Apart from this sugges-

Pig farming facing hurdles in Assam tion, the policy said that in Assam there is a constraint of veterinarians and paraveterinary staff which needs to be addressed immediately. It also pointed out that Assam needs adequate infrastructure for ensuring biosecurity, proper quarantine systems and services to prevent the ingress of diseases across the states and national borders. It is noteworthy that the African swine fever originated in China last year and later spread to Assam through Arunachal Pradesh. The policy further said cli-

mate change and global warming may have serious implications on the pig sector due to which changes may take place in case of the epidemiological pattern of vector-borne diseases.

#### Former minister Ratnakar Rao dies at 92

HYDERABAD, May 10: Congress veteran and former minister Juvvadi Ratnakar Rao passed away at a hospital in Karimnagar district of Telangana on Sunday due to age-related illness.

He was 92 and is survived by three sons, a party lead-

"He passed away at the hospital at around 6 am today (Sunday). He was admitted to the hospital on Saturday evening," senior Congress leader and MLC T Jeevan Reddy said. Ratnakar Rao had been suffering from age-related health issues, Reddy added.

Ratnakar Rao was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly thrice in 1989, 1999 and 2004 from the Buggaram Assembly Constituency and served as a Minister for Endowments between 2006 and 2009. Reddy, who was his Cabinet colleague, said. The funeral will be conducted in Ratnakar Rao's native village, Timmapur, he said.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao expressed condolence over the death of Rao and gave instructions to accord a state funeral.

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee president and MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy and several party leaders were among the others who expressed their condolences. – PTI

#### 334 COVID-19 'super-spreaders' found in Ahmedabad

AHMEDABAD, May 10: As many as 334 coronavirus 'super-spreaders' have been found in Ahmedabad so far, and it is the main reason for the order to keep shops of groceries and vegetables closed till May 15, officials said on Sunday.

'Super-spreaders' are the infectious disease carriers who could transmit the pathogen to a large number of people. They could be vegetable vendors, grocery and milk shop owners, petrol pump attendants or garbage collectors who, by the nature of their job, carry the risk of getting infected and infecting others.

Till Saturday, Gujarat reoorted 7.797 coronavırus positive cases and 472 deaths. Of these, Ahmedabad alone has reported 5,540 cases and 363 deaths. - PTI

#### Wadhawans' bail plea rejected, sent to judicial custody

MUMBAI, May 10: A special court here on Sunday rejected the interim bail plea filed by DHFL promoter Kapil Wadhawan and his brother, Dheeraj, arrested in connection with the Yes Bank scam, and sent them to judicial custody.

As the CBI custody of the Wadhawan brothers ended on Sunday, they were presented before the court, which sent them to judicial custody.

Later, they applied for a temporary bail citing the coronavirus outbreak and the risk it posed to jail inmates. However, the court rejected their plea.

The Wadhawans' lawyer argued that they are susceptible to contracting coronavirus infection due to their health issues.

"After what has been reported in the newspaper with respect to the Arthur Road jail having coronavirus positive cases and Taloja (prison) saying that it will take the accused inside only after conducting tests, it would be in their interest that they get bail for some time,' he told the court.

Right to health is one of the integral aspects of right to life. Therefore, they should be granted interim bail, he added. - PTI

# Use internal assessment mechanism instead of exams in schools: Sibal

NEW DELHI, May 10: Various universities will With uncertainty looming also have to take a decision over the 2020-2021 academon whether or not to delay ic session of schools in the the academic session and wake of the COVID-19 panthey have the autonomy to demic, former Human Retake a call and a decision cansource Development Minisnot be forced on them, Sibal ter Kapil Sibal on Sunday told this news agency in an said either all students barinterview. The University ring those in Class XII be pro-Grants Commission (UGC) moted or an internal assesshas issued guidelines to uniment mechanism be put in versities that the new acaplace to save children in Class demic session for freshers will begin from September, X and other levels from exwhile for the existing stuamination stress

The senior Congress leader also suggested that courses can be reduced both in schools and universities and the teaching time lost in the 2020-21 session due to the pandemic could be made up in the next year with extra effort from both the teacher and student communities.

dents from August. However, it has said the guidelines are advisory in nature and universities may chalk out their own plans according to the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in their

Asked about the uncertainty looming large over the 2020-21 academic session in schools which are shut and holding online classes, Sibal said going forward there could be two options that can be considered for school students

barring those in Class XII. One way is to promote everybody and take some extra classes when the pandemic is over as well as ensure students complete their course in the next class, Sibal said.

"The other way is that if you are confident that your teachers will make an objective assessment of the student community which a majority of them might, then you leave it to them and the school to make the internal assessment and promote those to Class XI who have done well (or to the next class for students of other classes)," he said, asserting that it would save the students from the examination stress.

He, however, cautioned that internal assessment may throw up problems of subjectivity and objectivity has to be ensured.

It is finally up to the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry to decide on such issues, he added. Innovative ways should be

found so that students are not punished for what they are not in control of, said Sibal, who was the HRD Minister from May 2009 to October 2012 in the UPA-II Government.

As the HRD Minister, Sibal had spearheaded a reforms process in the education sector under which it was decided to abolish compulsory CBSE Board exams

for Class X. However, in 2018, the CBSE reverted to the mandatory examination for Class X.

Asked about pending classes X and XII CBSE as well as other board exams, the Rajya Sabha member said, "I think as far as Class X board exams are concerned there should be a rethink. For Class XII board exams, I think that in the light of the pandemic, the university calendar for the year should change and in that context let us hope for the lockdown to be over and then the exams can be conducted."

On competitive examinations like the JEE and NEET, Sibal said the current situation of the pandemic has put the students from the poor and marginalised sections of the society at a disadvantage. - PTI

# have a face-off in Sikkim?

Why did India, China

NEW DELHI, May 10: The skirmish between the Indian and the Chinese soldiers along the border in north Sikkim is yet another indicator of a bilateral relationship that has been in a tailspin for some time now.

Ever since the coronavirus pandemic, which originated in the Wuhan city of Hubei province, the relationship between the two countries has been under strain. Though unlike the Trump administration, the Modi Government did not blame China for the spread of COVID-19 infection, mainstream media and social media users in India have been critical of the Xi Jinping government.

Overlooking the public outrage in India, the BJP Government went ahead with ordering COVID-19 rapid testing kits from China. However, after several complaints of fault in the kits, the Government cancelled orders for about half a million kits, causing exasperation in Beijing.

The negative view against New Delhi worsened when the Government last month changed the rules of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). To check predatory business practices during the coronavirus-related lockdown in the country, the Centre put all FDI proposals from countries sharing border with India under the government approval route.

Ever since China has been outspoken about its displeasure with India. Jayadev Ranade, a leading expert on China, said that though the face-off between the two patrols, including fisticuffs and confrontation with weapons, have occurred in the past, the

latest skirmish is a result of deterioration in relations.

The face-off occurred in Naku La sector, ahead of Muguthang pass, 5,259-metrehigh in the northern Sikkim State along the border with Tibet. The area is where China has been claiming that a dispute exists.

"Within a year of having agreed with the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee that Sikkim belongs to India and China will have no claim on it, a Chinese Vice Foreign Minister told our then External Affairs Minister that the issue is not settled," Ranade said. China, he

leading expert on China said that though the face-off between the two patrols, including fisticuffs and confrontation with weapons have occurred in the past, the latest skirmish is a result of deterioration in

Jayadev

Ranade, a

said, has been beefing up its forces and defence infrastructure in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). "Around April 2, there were 300-500 People's Liberation Army vehicles around Tashigong opposite Demchok-Koyul, relaying the runway at the Gargunsa airport," he pointed out.

relations.

A professor of Chinese studies at JNU in New Delhi, Srikanth Kondapalli argued that the face-off in Sikkim is in accordance with the direction received from the PLA. "China's apex foreign affairs work conferences of November 2014 and June 2018 ordered the foreign ministry and the embassies abroad to pursue the goals related to border with India, as listed in the PLA white papers of 2015 and 2019."

The Naku incident, he said, is a follow-up to the directives which were also reflected in the Doklam incident in 2017 or the Pangong Tso incident in 2019 or the Asaphila incident in Arunachal. "As the directives are from the top, we should expect more of such incidents in future and take remedial measures," he warned.

China's relations with India depend on the dynamic that evolves between the US and China and separately between India and Pakistan. "Beijing's ties with the US are currently fraught, and India-Pakistan ties are also tense. The skirmish could well be timed to keep us under pressure, caution us not to do anything to upset the CPEC, not back Taiwan on its admission to the WHO," Ranade said.

Additionally, Ranade said there are signs of inner-party factionalism in the Chinese Communist Party and differences with Xi Jinping in China.

Through aggressive actions amid a pandemic, China may be seeking to remind its neighbours that they could face further trouble by siding with the West in supporting an inquiry into the origins and spread of the coronavirus, security expert Brahma Chellany wrote in a series of tweets.

The forthcoming WHO assembly meeting will see a push for such an inquiry, he alerted.

The skirmish, Chellany said, comes after Chinese coast guard ships, for a second day in a row, intruded into the waters of Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands. - IANS

#### '60-70% people will get corona if vaccine is not developed' JAIPUR, May 10: Health is

one of the most important pillars of sustainable development, and India needs to spend more on healthcare infrastructure as the coronavirus crisis will have a major impact, public health strategist Dr David Bishai has said.

In his address at the webinar organised by the Indian Institute of Health Management and Research (II-HMR), Jaipur on "Effect of COVID-19 on Indian Economy: Policy and Programmatic Implications" attended by 722 participants, Bishai, a professor at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, suggested focusing on the health needs of the poor. He also raised the concern that the COVID-19 outbreak would not end until 60-70 per cent of the human population is immune to the virus, as it may take between 18 and 24 months to develop a vaccine for it.

If a vaccine is developed in the next two years, it will impact Indian economy dramatically, particularly the health sector because there will be less money and the human resource available to run the existing programmes will not be enough, Bishai said.

"The immediate need is to recover small business post COVID-19 by ensuring that the credit should reach them regularly from banks so that employment can be created," he said.

Dr Narain Sinha, Professor, University of Botswana, talked about the Indian economy before COVID-19, the present situation, and the economy after COVID-19. His absolute focus was on the issue of migrant workers as they are the most important for Indian economy.

"During lockdown, 92.5 per cent of labourers have lost one to four weeks of their work. Therefore, the Government should make immediate policies according to local demographic, social and economic fabric," he said.

Ujwal Thakar, ex-top banker and ex-CEO, Pratham India, and Board Member, Educate India, said that COVID-19 has forced the entire system to think about the biggest disaster i.e. poverty. – IANS

#### Extension Notice of Advertisement No. 1/2020 Advertisement for the post of Vice Chancellor, Assam

Agricultural University, Jorhat, Assam

n reference to Advertisement No. 1/2020 for the post of Vice Chancellor, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat published on 25th March, 2020 in (1) The Times of India- Mumbai Edition, (2) The Hindu- Chennai Edition, (3) Hindustan Times–Delhi Edition, (4) The Telegraph Kolkata Edition, (5) Nav Bharat Times- Delhi Edition, (6) The Assam Tribune, (7) Dainik Purvoday and (8) in the website of Assam Agricultural University (www.aau.ac.in), the last date of submission of Application (both Hard Copy & Soft copy ) as per earlier Advertisement has been extended till 5:00 PM on 10th of June, 2020.

Sd/- Addl. Secretary to the Governor, Governor's Secretariat, Raj Bhavan Janasanyog/DF/157/20 Guwahati-781001, Assam

Road Circle, Jorhat



A woman sits inside a circle on the road carrying her child as she waits to board a special bus for Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, during the ongoing lockdown, in Patiala on Sunday. - PTI

# India needs 'whole-of-govt approach' to confront strategic uncertainties: Army Chief

NEW DELHI, May 10: The time has come for India to adopt a "whole-of-government approach" in decisively confronting the "strategic uncertainties" looming on its horizon as well as non-traditional threats like pandemics, Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane has said, strongly pitching for broadening the country's national security doctrine.

Talking about complex geopolitical power play in India's neighbourhood, General Naravane said the Indian armed forces are determined to "cement" the country's reputation as a net security provider in the region.

"There is an entire spectrum of strategic uncertainties that looms on the horizon and a whole-of-government approach is the need of the hour to deal with them," the Army Chief said.

Though General Naravane did not elaborate, his comments came in the backdrop of the Pakistan-supported Taliban's aim for a role in power structure in Afghanistan and China's persistent efforts to expand military ties with countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar and the Maldives.

"In dealing with issues of global nature, the armed forces with their inherent capabilities and capacities will cement India's reputation as a net secuing security as a holistic con-

cept," General Naravane said. India is learnt to have been worried over the extremely fragile and dynamic situation in Afghanistan after the US sealed a historic deal with the Taliban providing for withdrawal of American troops from the war-ravaged country.

The Army Chief said that India needs to broaden its understanding of national security and must examine nontraditional threats like pandemics "de-novo" as they have the potential to inflict severe damage on the country. "We need to act and prepare ourselves accordingly." - PTI

#### Indian, Chinese troops ...

(Contd from page 1) "Troops resolve such issues mutually as per established protocols. Such an incident occurred after a long time," said a source.

It is learnt that a total of 150 soldiers were involved in the face-off on Saturday. The sources said temporary and short duration face-offs occur due to differing perception of the border by both sides.

The troops of India and China were engaged in a 73-day standoff in the Doklam tri-junction in 2017, which even triggered fears of a war

between the two neighbours. The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control, the de-facto border between the two countries. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet, while India contests it.

Both sides have been asserting that pending the final resolution of the boundary issue, it is necessary to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas. – PTI

#### Govt chalks out plan ...

(Contd from page 1)

Meanwhile, commenting on the issue of bringing back people of Assam stranded abroad, the Chief Secretary pointed out that the Government of India has already started the process of flying such people back to India. About 1,700 persons from Assam stranded in different countries have applied through Indian embassies in those countries to return home. But such people will have to stay in quarantine facilities in the places where they land before they are permitted to return to the State.

The Chief Secretary also said that a number of foreign tourists were stranded in Assam when the lockdown started and all of them have left. The Government provided them passes to proceed to the states from where they could avail the special flights operated by their respective countries to return home. The last foreign tourist to leave Assam was a Greek woman who was stranded in Majuli, he added.

#### PM to interact with CMs ...

(Contd from page 1)

Several states have recently relaxed labour laws to pump up industrial activities with staggered shifts or limited staff as a fresh spike in coronavirus cases could undo the gains so far.

Monday's meeting could also discuss further relaxations as part of a graded exit from the lockdown, but all restrictions are unlikely to be withdrawn in one go, the sources suggested.

The meeting comes days be-

fore the third phase of the lockdown ends on May 17. At a meeting on Sunday, state chief secretaries told Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba that while protection is required from COVID-19, economic activities also need to be stepped up in a calibrated manner.

With thousands of migrant workers taking special trains to go back to their home states due to the lockdown, the restarting of industrial activities will prove to be a challenge for states. - PTI

#### SHGs contributing ...

(Contd from page 1)

Not just in villages, women SHGs across the urban landscape have also engaged themselves in various productive ventures during the lockdown. In Morigaon district for instance. 31 SHGs and their registered cooperative federations of the Morigaon Municipal Board under the Assam State Urban Livelihoods Mission Society (ASULMS) has extended every possible help and aid to the needy families and homeless persons of Morigaon

This is in addition to their producing cheap cotton face masks to tackle mask shortage amid the contagion. Over 26,000 masks have been collectively produced and distributed to different departments and pharmacies so far by 12 SHGs - Milijuli SHG, Gitamandir ALF, Mother Teresa SHG, Apsara SHG, Suruj SHG, Nandini SHG, Darpan SHG, among others. Karunamoyee Sarma, member of Milijuli SHG, said, "We started producing twoand three-layer cotton masks with traditional gamosa design and supplied to government departments and pharmacies at per unit price of Rs 20-40 on the advice of ASULMS officials. Thus, we utilised the stock of unsold gamosas and earned profits by selling over 2.100 masks.

Responding to the call of City Mission Management Unit (CMMU) officials, a number of SHGs and their arealevel federations had also come out with their limited capacity to help out the poorest of the poor, maintaining the norms of social distancing. They made people aware of the precautions to prevent spread of the coronavirus. Members of Darpan SHG and Pahi SHG of Ward No. 2, Morigaon, served free food to homeless persons and poor families of Morigaon town. They also served free food to police personnel on duty and other essential service providers.

"Altogether 20 SHGs and their cooperative federations have provided relief and aid to nearly 673 poor families of the town. SHGs like Lakhimi, Pragoti, Nupur, Dharitri, Shristi, Kanaklata, Bohagi and Cooperative federations namely Kanaklata, Manikanchan, Gitamandir, Pranami, Paribartan, Puhor, Kadambari, Kuhipat, etc., provided essential foodstuffs to those families," Rupjyoti Borah, City Project Manager, Morigaon Municipal Board, said. Kusumi Bala Sarkar, president of Paribartan Area Level Federation Cooperative Society, said that reaching out to dozens of poor families and helping them with essential foodstuffs gave them immense satisfaction. "We thank ASULMS officials for their guidance," she said.

No- SE/JRC/SOPD(G)/101

#### PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Superintending Engineer, P.W.D. Jorhat Road Circle, Jorhat, Assam on behalf of the Governor of Assam invite bids for 26 nos. of Packages for Roads and Bridge Projects under SOPD(G) for the year 2019-20 for the following LAC of Assam from approved and eligible contractors with APWD amounting to Rs. 2284.285 Lakhs (Approx.).

Details of the bids may be seen at e-procurement portal website www.assamtenders.gov.in Amendment/Addendum to the SBD if any and further notifications shall appear in this website and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractors/bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in for participating in the bidding process.

**TABLE** 

SI. No.	Name of Scheme/LAC	No. of works	Approx. value of work (Rs. in Lakh)
	SOPD(G)		
1	Majuli	11	1076.40
2.	Amguri	15	1207.885

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, P.W.D. Janasanyog/CF/209/20

# WEATHER **NORTHEAST**

Forecast for North Eastern States: Rain/thundershower is very likely to occur at a few places over Arunacha Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram &

Warning: Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty wind with speed (30-40) kmph is very likely to occur at isolated over Assam Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur & Mizoram. Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty wind with speed (50-60) kmph is very likely to occur at isolated places over Tripura.

#### Temperatures:

Ma	ıx (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	34.3	20.0
Tezpur	34.9	22.4
Silchar	37.1	23.9
Dhubri	33.5	23.8
Jorhat	34.2	18.4
N Lakhimpur	34.3	19.5
Shillong	23.6	_
Cherrapunjee	26.7	16.4
Aizawl	29.2	16.9
Kohima	24.8	15.7
Pasighat	34.4	21.5
Itanagar	36.2	21.9

#### **Manipur CM** inspects Ima **Keithel**

Imphal

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, May 10: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh today inspected the 'Ima Keithel' (mother's market) in Imphal on the occasion of Mother's Day.

Visiting the Ima Keithel premises where repairing works are in progress, he said, the market has been playing a vital role.

MLA Th Satyabrata of Yaiskul Assembly constituency, Principal Secretary (MAHUD) Rakesh Ranjan and Director Th Harikumar besides officials of Imphal Municipal Corporation (IMC) were present during the visit of the Chief Minister.

Later speaking to reporters about the traffic congestion in the Thangal. Paona, Khwairamband Keithel and Keishampat to Khoyathong stretch, the Chief Minister appealed to the residents, shopkeepers to park their vehicles properly to avoid traffic congestion. In this context, the developmental works carried out by the State government for the people. The Chief Minister also appealed to the people to extend cooperation to the State government in the days to come.

Key functionaries of the women vendors' body of Ima Keithel who were present during the visit. also thanked the authorities concerned for taking up the repairing works. "The reparing works will help to a large extent," a section of senior members of the body said.

It may be noted that the repairing works at Ima Keithel were taken up by the IMC taking advantage of the ongoing nationwide lockdown since April 22.

### CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, May 10: The spike in COVID-19 cases continued in Tripura with 17 more jawans of the BSF's 86th battalion testing positive, raising the State's tal-

Barring a few, most of the COVID-19 patients in Tripura are BSF personnel posted at Jawaharnagar in Dhalai district.

As the situation is slipping out of control, the State government has decided to conduct intensive tests in certain BSF battalions and posts along the Indo-Bangla

Apart from the BSF installations in Jawaharnagar, tests were also conducted at BSF BOPs in Longthari Valley subdivision today. An elaborate plan has been chalked out to conduct tests in the BOPs manned by the force's 31st battalion.

The jawans of the 31st battalion are deployed along the Indo-Bangla border in South Tripura district adjoining Bangladesh's Ramgarh Upa Zilla, which has been declared as a contentment zone by the Bangladesh government.



Sources said a decision has been taken to conduct COVID-19 tests at all vulnerable BSF battalion headquarters and posts in the wake of the outbreak at its two battalion headquarters in the State.

"In the worst-affected Dhalai district, a total of 276 swab samples have been collected today as part of the intensive sample collection drive following the outbreak. It will continue for the next few days,"

Till date, 8,809 samples have been collected of which 8,340 have been tested and results of 8,221 samples came out negative. Two COVID-19 patients have recov-

Meanwhile, a special train carrying 1,200 persons, who were stranded at various parts of Karnataka, started its journey to

The State government is in close contact with Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Assam to evacuate its stranded people. As on today, around 33,000 people from Tripura are stranded in 11 States due to the lockdown.

The government would bring back all the stranded people in a phased manner. "Among the stranded people, we are giving priority to patients, students and pilgrims," the official said.

IANS adds: Meanwhile, the experts from National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) would study the huge coronavirus infection among the Border Security Force (BSF) troopers and their family members as the positive cases already climbed to 132, top officials said.

In all 121 BSF men of two battalions -138th and 86th – and 10 family members – five children and five women - and a BSF civilian mess worker were infected by the virus in eight days in northern Tripura's Dhalai district. Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Sanjay Kumar Rakesh said that a high-level team from NCDC would soon visit Tripura to study

the high rate of coronavirus infection among the BSF jawans and their kins.

Responding to the state government's requests, the NCDC experts would study the cause of COVID-19 infection among the central paramilitary force in Tripura,' Rakesh told IANS. He said that during a discussion (through video conferencing) with Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Harsh Vardhan on Saturday, the issue was discussed and requests for additional COVID-19 testing laboratory in Tripura.

"Besides additional COVID-19 testing laboratory, we have sought additional ventilators and testing kits. The minister was very positive towards our needs and problems," the Additional Chief Secretary said. The Health Minister held several hours long discussion through video conference with the ministers and top officials of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim and reviewed the status of COVID-19 in the northeastern states along with the measures being taken for its containment and management.

# NPF asks Nagaland to be cautious on stranded people

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, May 10: The Naga People's Front (NPF) cautioned the Nagaland government that the process of bringing back the stranded people of the state may lead to a potentially disastrous situation if it is done in a haphazard manner. Welcoming the decision of the government to bring back the stranded people, the party, in a release issued by its press bureau, said the government should be cautious enough while differentiating the stranded people returning to the

It urged the state government to exercise utmost caution as influx of illegal immigrants and new migrants is

Tripura Correspondent

CORRESPONDENT

district hospitals in Mizoram as COVID-

19 sample collection centres by the

State Government has left the doctors

According to the doctors, it is unsafe

The State Government has recently

notified that civil hospitals in all 11

districts of Mizoram will be collection

centres for nasopharyngeal swab. With

this, there are now 12 collection centres,

including the Zoram Medical College

to collect throat swab samples at civil

working there worried.

hospitals for COVID-19 test.

(ZMC) at Falkawn in Aizawl.

AIZAWL, May 10: Declaration of all

a distinct possibility, especially considering that Nagaland is categorized under green zone and opportunists may seek to take advantage.

The Opposition party stressed that stringent and detailed verification of documents should be undertaken before entry of the stranded people into the state, particularly in the case non-Naga indigenous persons. It said there is high possibility that many illegal immigrants, under the guise of residing in Nagaland, may claim their right to return without proper and valid documents.

"This may lead to population explosion as well as the thread of spreading the dreaded pandemic in our state," it cautioned.

It suggested, as a remedial measure,

A senior CPI (M) leader distributing relief materials among villagers at Baganbari in Khowai district on Sunday. - Photo:

Mizoram doctors express concern over

sample collection in district hospitals

Only ZMC has been designated as a

COVID-19 hospital. A senior doctor of

Aizawl Civil Hospital said it is very risky

to collect sample of a suspected COVID-

19 patient in a civil hospital as it could

illnesses come to the civil hospitals. If a

suspected COVID-19 patient comes

here to give his sample and

subsequently tests positive, the entire

hospital would be exposed to risk.

Normally, it takes at least two days to

get test result. The damage could be

done in these two days," a senior doctor,

who chose to remain anonymous, said.

He said all the doctors and nurses

"People with different types of

put many other patients at risk.

renewal of expired inner line permit of non-indigenous people who are stranded outside the state and desire to re-enter the state should not be entertained till such time the entire country is considered a green zone or a similar solution arrives.

The whole process of screening and isolating each new entrant into the state, quarantine and testing of suspected persons must not be compromised at any cost, the party said.

The party also reminded the government of its appeal to pay heed to the price rise of the essential commodities. Instead of paying more attention to the generation of revenue, the government's priority should be the welfare of its people, it said.

want civil hospitals to remain

coronavirus-free and that collection of

samples be done only at the ZMC, which

The State Government has made it

mandatory for people who have

returned from outside the State and

having COVID-19 symptoms to give

their samples at their respective district

civil hospitals for testing. It has not gone

The doctors said they have spoken to

the Director, Hospital and Medical

Education, about the risks involved in

designating civil hospitals as sample

collection centres and the State Gov-

down well with many doctors.

ernment's response is awaited.

is a designated hospital.

#### Sikkim CM urges people not to misuse relaxations

A CORRESPONDENT

GANGTOK, May 10: Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has said the countrywide lockdown to tackle the spread of COVID-19 has come at an economic cost and impacted the State as well as the national exchequer.

This led to the Central Government and many States, including Sikkim, to ease restrictions to restore socio-economic balance, he said.

"But the number of vehicles and people in the streets left me worried. I appeal to everyone to avoid misusing the relaxations and follow the guidelines issued by the government for the safety of everyone. Most of the people infected by the virus are asymptomatic and could unknowingly spread the virus. We need to be as much careful as possible,"

The State has started bringing back the stranded people and around 80 Sikkimese people, including 19 students from Kota, have reached Rangpo and sent to quaranting

He added that they must stay in quarantine for at least 14 days where they will be monitored and tested at regular intervals. The State also issued

fresh guidelines for them and following all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the frontline warriors and other people.

"Unless there is a vaccine for the virus we are all prone to it and the only remedy, for now, is to stay at home and practise social distancing. I appeal to all the citizens, NGOs and political parties to stay united and request everyone to follow the guidelines issued by the government and avoid leaving homes," the Chief Minister said.

# NPCC calls Rio's lockdown exit plan vague

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, May 10: The Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) has suggested lockdown exit measures, which primarily focuses on sustaining livelihood in the State. Calling Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio's lockdown exit plan

vague and directionless, NPCC president K Therie, in a release, said, "We have to prepare to live with the coronavirus for times to come."

Therie said Rio in his exit plan ignored economic distress and suggested that the State Government address certain issues on a priority basis to sustain livelihood.

Referring to the Chief Minister's "distress letter" to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for release of State's share in Central taxes, the NPCC said when the State Government cannot even get its own share of taxes from the Centre, there is no question of the Centre giving additional or special plan and non-plan assistance to the State. "We cannot expect the BJP government to rescue the State's economy saddled with huge deficit. We must plan for a self-content economy," the NPCC said.

The NPCC opposed sending away migrant workers from the State, saying this will further paralyse development activities. It said the government should facilitate resumption of work by migrant workers instead of sending them away, if they wish to stay back. Considering the economic impact on each citizen and family after the lockdown, the NPCC said the government should provide free education as every family cannot afford online education. The State Government may think of having its own satellite channel or online learning facilities for meeting this emerging necessity, it said.

The NPCC said the government should increase grant-inaid to private schools and reduce admission and tuition fees. Some other measures suggested by the NPCC include health services and health insurance schemes for every citizen, stimulus to restructure the economy, resolution of the Naga political problem to get rid of multiple taxation, facilitation of loans from banks and other financial institutions for local entrepreneurs, declaration of all areas under town and municipal councils as cadastral areas, allocation of land for industries in the industrial zone, plan to create two lakh jobs, facilitation of agricultural growth and arrangement of marketing channels, training of local workforce to replace migrant workers, compensation to hospitality sector, provid-

ing stimulus to agriculture and farming and reduction of tax-



es, rent and utility bills.

lorth Eastern Development Finance Corp. Ltd. NEDFi House, G.S. Road, Dispur, Guwahati-781006 Tel: +91 361 2222200, Fax: +91 361 2237733 / 34 CIN: U65923AS1995GOI004529

NOTICE FOR CANCELLATION OF EOI

The "Notice Inviting Expression of Interest for empanelment of Internal Auditor" and "Notice Inviting Expression of Interest for empanelment to conduct Secretarial Audit" published in newspapers on 30-12-2019 and on www.nedfi.com are hereby cancelled due to unavoidable circumstances

Sd/- Deputy General Manager & Company Secretary



#### SBI INFRA MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS PVT. LTD. (A Wholly Owned Subsidiary of SBI) Circle Office, Third floor, SBI LHO Building, Dispur, Assam - 781006

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) COMMERCIAL/OFFICE SPACE REQUIRED ON LEASE

SBI from Owners/Power of Attorney holders for premises on lease rental basis for Commercial/Office use for Bishnupur Branch Bishnupur, Chirang District, Assam of State Bank of India having built up area of approx. 280 sqm (3000 Sqft) to 325 sqm (3500 sqft) located within 1km from existing branch premises (Preferably or main road). The detailed terms and conditions, formats for submission of bids may be obtained from the office of "Regional Manager Regional Business office, State Bank of India, Bongaigaon 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, above SBI Bongaigaon Branch, Main Road, Bongaigaon Assam" and also can be downloaded from website www.sbi.co.ir

SBI Infra Management Solutions Pvt. Ltd. invites offers on behalf o

under procurement news section. he last date for submission of tenders is up to 1500 hours on 30.05.2020. Circle Head & Assistant Vice President (Civil)

# 

North Eastern Development Finance Corp. Ltd.
NEDFi House, G.S. Road, Dispur, Guwahati-781006
Tel: +91 361 22222200, Fax: +91 361 2237733 / 34
CIN: U65923AS1995GOI004529

NOTIFICATION

#### **EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR EMPANELMENT OF INTERNAL**

AUDITORS, GST ANNUAL AUDITORS AND SECRETARIAL AUDITORS NEDFi invites application from experienced and practicing firms of Chartered Accountant/ Cost Accountants/ Company Secretaries for empanelment to undertake

i) Internal Audit

ii) GST Annual Audit iii) Secretarial Audit

The detailed document for Expression of Interest (EoI) consisting of the scope of work, terms and conditions etc. together with annexures. are available on the website of the Corporation viz. www.nedfi.com Interested firms / LLPs / Companies meeting the requisite eligibility criteria may send their application in prescribed format in sealed envelope as mentioned in the EoI so as to reach the Corporation's Registered Office latest by Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 1500 hours. Sd/- Deputy General Manager & Company Secretary

#### Mizoram's corona-free status due to discipline of people: CM improve the state's connectivity with

NEW DELHI, May 10: Mizoram's coronafree status can be attributed to the discipline of its people and the combined efforts of the church, NGOs and administration, says Chief Minister Zoramthanga.

While happy that his state has managed to contain the spread of COVID-19, the chief minister told PTI he was worried about the economic slump due to the lockdown and the threat posed by corona carriers from neighbouring Bangladesh and Myanmar.

On Saturday, Mizoram became coronavirus-free with its lone COVID-19 patient being discharged from hospital, officials in the state capital Aizawl said. The credit, Zoramthanga said, goes to the discipline of the people who allowed the state to execute all the provisions suggested by a special task force constituted for the sole purpose to curb the spread of the virus.

"Mizoram is a very disciplined state With the help of the church, NGOs and administration, we have so far survived this crisis and are determined to continue to do so in the future," he said in a phone interview from Aizawl.

However, the threat from "corona carriers" looms large over the northeastern state, which shares a 510-km border with Myanmar and a 318-km border with Bangladesh, he said.

"This is a great threat for us as there are high chances of people from Myanmar and Bangladesh infiltrating into Mizoram due to the open borders. We are taking all measures to stop it." he said.

The 75-year-old former rebel leader, serving his third term as chief minister of the Christian majority state, said his government is extra careful and has deployed Mizoram Police personnel at all major checkpoints so there is no possibility of any infiltration.

While Bangladesh has reported 13,134 cases of coronavirus with 206 deaths, Myanmar has 177 cases. Infiltration from both the countries into India is quite common.

Discussing the nationwide lockdown, in place since March 25 to curb the spread of the disease, Zoramthanga said it will adversely impact Mizoram since, like other northeastern states, it too depends on the Central government for funds to run its economy.

"Mizoram, like other states in the northeast, is a centrally funded state and gets 90 per cent of its funds from the Centre If the country's economy suffers, which is likely to be the case, the ripple effects will be felt more here and will stay for long," he said.

"The real effects would be felt once the COVID-19 crisis is over This cannot be ignored," he added.

According to Zoramthanga, infrastructure

projects in his state will be impacted the most. Mizoram has the highest number of pending road infrastructure projects in the region. Work on more than 50 big-ticket road projects launched by the Central government owned National Highways Infrastructure Development Corporation to Myanmar to boost India's trade with southeast Asian nations has been suspended due to the lockdown. "Our road projects will get hampered the

most. But this seems something where nothing much can be done. We can only wait and watch," Zoramthanga said. The Chief Minister also said his

government is in touch with the ministries of Railways and Civil Aviation to bring back over 5,500 Mizos stranded in several parts of the country due to the lockdown. "We've brought back Mizos stranded in

neighbouring states in the northeast. But for the residents of the state who are stranded far away in other states, we are in touch with the Railways and Civil Aviation ministries to get the matter resolved," he said.

Mizoram shares its zero COVID-19 cases status with four other states in the region -Manipur, Sikkim, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. - PTI

#### **NEWS IN BRIEF**



Paramaatma Saikia, an MSME craftsman, keeps himself busy during the lockdown with bamboo work at his home at Gharmara village in Dhenukhona, in Lakhimpur district on Sunday. - Photo: Farhana Ahmed

#### Woman killed in mishap

DOOMDOOMA, May 10: Rumi Saikia Lahon (45) of Bishnu Nagar, Rupai Siding, was killed in a road mishap near Dr Bhupen Hazarika Setu under Dholla Police Station on Saturday. The deceased woman was returning home from Sadiya with Bandana Borah (55) of Bijoy Nagar, Rupai Siding, in the latter's car (AS-06-V-2889, which was being driven by Bandana's son. The car fell into a roadside ditch when the driver lost control over the wheels near Dholla Tea Estate on the southern side of the Setu. Both the passengers and the driver were taken to Dangari Community Health Centre where the doctor declared Rumi Saikia Lahon brought dead while Bandana Borah was referred to Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi Civil Hospital, Tinsukia in a critical condition. - Correspondent

#### 6 shops sealed

NALBARI, May 10: The Nalbari district administration has sealed six business establishments of Ghograpar area in Nalbari district following violation of the lockdown norms. Following a written complaint from the Ghograpar Police Station about the violation, Deputy Commissioner Bharat Bhusan Dev Choudhury sealed five grocery shops and an electrical shop. Earlier, the administration also sealed eight other shops in Nalbari town due to lockdown violation. – Correspondent

#### Donation to Assam Arogya Nidhi

DOOMDOOMA, May 10: The teaching and nonteaching staff of Makum College and Makum Junior College in Tinsukia district have donated one day's salary to Assam Arogya Nidhi to fight against COVID-19. Makum College acting principal Dr Pranita Neog, Makum Junior College principal Joykanta Chetia and Makum College head assistant Nanda Baruah handed over a cheque of Rs 34,000 to Tinsukia Additional Deputy Commissioner PK Das. - Correspondent

#### JNV students return

KALAIGAON, May 10: As many as 13 students – eight boys and five girls - along with a male teacher, a female teacher, driver and handyman arrived at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) campus near Kalaigaon recently from some JNV schools in Jharkhand where they had gone under a student exchange programme. The students were not allowed to enter the JNV campus, and were told to go home. The four staff were allowed to enter the school campus. Their bus from Jharkhand (JH-OL-W-9763) was kept outside the school gate. A medical team from Chamuapara Mini PHC arrived at the JNV campus for a medical check-up and sample collection. The medical team collected nasal swabs and data from the staff for COVID-19 tests. All the four staff members were stamped, and quarantined for 28 days. – Correspondent

#### Pork sale banned

NALBARI, May 10: In view of the African Swine Fever reported in many upper Assam districts, the Nalbari district administration has banned the sale of pork and transport of pigs from one place to another, as a precautionary measure. Additional District Magistrate Sanjib Kumar Bora, under section 144 of IPC, strictly prohibited the sale of pork with immediate affect. If a pig dies under any circumstances, the district administration has also asked pig owners not to throw away the body or put it in an open place. -Correspondent

#### 9 labourers reach Saraibil

GOSSAIGAON, May 10: A group of nine labourers stranded at Tura in Meghalaya arrived at the Assam-Meghalaya border near here by a bus on May 8. Every one underwent thermal scanning and was examined by doctors and medical staff. They were allowed to proceed towards Gossaigaon and arrived at Guru Fella near Gossaigaon around 1 am on May 9. After getting down from the bus, they moved towards Saraibil police outpost on foot and reached there at 5 am. Members of the Seemanta Chetana Mancha, Kokrajhar district, arranged food for the workers. Another medical team arrived, and all the labourers were thoroughly examined, before being sent for 14-day home quarantine. - ANN Service

# 'Fake' farmers return over Rs 10 lakh to PM Kisan fund

CORRESPONDENT

NALBARI, May 10: Following Nalbari Deputy Commissioner Bharat Bhusan Dev Choudhury's order for a magisterial inquiry into the gross anomalies in the selection of beneficiaries for the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (or PM Kisan) in Nalbari district, many alleged 'fake farmers' have started refunding the amount in the district administration's account fearing legal action.

The 'farmers' who received the

fund under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi but were not eligible to get the benefits, have refunded more than Rs 10 lakh so far.

Talking to this correspondent, the Deputy Commissioner said the persons who refunded the amount are either from government service or from economically sound families. Some of them included 3-4 members from their own families to get the benefit of the Central government scheme.

Deputy Commissioner Dev

Choudhury said that following complaints from a cross section of people, he ordered a magisterial inquiry into the anomalies. The probe committee headed by district development commissioner Krishna Baruah has been asked to submit its report within 15 days.

The Deputy Commissioner stated that as people pointed fingers towards panchayat representatives, he has asked the probe committee to strictly verify the names of their relatives in the list of beneficiaries.

It may be mentioned here that strong resentment has been prevailing among people of Nalbari district over the alleged nepotism and corrupt practices in the selection of beneficiaries for PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.

The Union government, under this scheme, deposited Rs 2,000 as the first installment of the yearly grant of Rs 6,000 in the bank accounts of farmers to compensate for the loss during the lockdown.

However, gross anomalies came to light over the selection of needy

farmers. It has been alleged that local BJP leaders, panchayat representatives and corrupt officials of the Agriculture department were involved in the selection of beneficiaries from non-farming sectors.

The names of students, service holders, wives of service holders, and financially sound businessmen and 3-4 members from the same families were part of the list of beneficiaries. Even the names of panchayat representatives were found in the list.

# 15 arrested for smuggling drugs from Nagaland

CORRESPONDENT

SIVASAGAR, May 10: A total of 15 drug peddlers were arrested by Nazira police from various places of the town following reports of smuggling of narcotics like brown sugar from neighbouring Nagaland.

The arrested men have been identified as Javed Rahman, Nishant Baruah, Ganesh Berma, Pranjal Gogoi, Arunjyoti Bailung, Anis Akhtar Ali, Bijay Kalita, Debabrat Bora, Bidyut Ghashi, Chandan Borgohain and Babu Mohan. Four more persons - Washim

Hussain, Hirokjyoti Chutiya, Bhaity Doley and Dhrubajyoti Kalita, all from Dibrugarh – were arrested on April 26.

Police has appealed to all guardians to keep vigil on the movement of their wards and asked them to inform police if they find anything suspicious.

**Leopard captured:** Forest department officials captured a leopard in a cage placed at Moran Natun Nagar near the Tiloi Beat Office. The leopard with three cubs had been roaming around the tea garden areas, killing cattle. The three cubs have not been recovered yet, while the mother leopard was released at the Joypur Reserve Forest in Dibrugarh district.

**Donation to Assam Aro**gya Nidhi: ONGC Retd Employees Association Sivasagar president Deva Bharali and secretaries Lalit Kalita and Dilip Saikia handed over a cheque of Rs 75,000 to Sivasagar Deputy Commissioner Lakhinandan Gogoi for Assam Arogya Nidhi as their contribution to the government in its fight against coronavirus. The Sivasagar Doul Unnayan Samiti also contributed Rs 1 lakh to the Assam Arogya Nidhi.



Frontline health workers trying to cross a bridge made of a single bamboo pole at Dhansirimukh in Bokakhat. In the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, Health department workers like ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activist), MPWs (multipurpose worker), and ANMs (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives) are having to face several problems, including risks to their own lives. - Photo: Sanjoy Kumar Hazarika

#### Majuli-Jorhat ferry service suspended indefinitely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, May 10: The Majuli district administration has suspended Majuli-Jorhat to and fro passenger service from today indefinitely in view of three Covid-19 positive cases detected in Jorhat on Saturday night.

An order passed by the Majuli District Magistrate today stated that in view of the threat posed by the potential outbreak of novel coronavirus and to ensure all possible preventive measures to stop the virus from spreading as well as for protection and safeguarding public health in Majuli district, ferry services between Majuli-Jorhat and viceversa are suspended with immediate effect.

The order mentioned that only boat ambulances will be allowed to ply between Majuli-Jorhat and in case of goods ferry to ply, approval for the same has to be obtained from Food and Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs department authorities of Majuli district.

The order further stated that the suspension of the passenger ferry service between Majuli-Jorhat will remain in force until further orders.

It may be mentioned here that the Brahmaputra island administration had allowed resumption of daily ferry service from two ghats of Majuli to Nimatighat in Jorhat to and fro under certain conditions on May 5 after the third phase of lockdown came into force across the country from May 4.

# Siba Krishna Phukan: a tribute



Late Siba Krishna Phukan, a gentleman par excellence was a retired Chief Manager of the State Bank of India, who passed away at his residence in the SBI Officers' Colony at Ambikanagar, Guwhati on May 2 last. He was 86 at the time of his demise.

Late Phukan, who was my youngest maternal uncle was the youngest and fourth son of late Rudra Nath Phukan and late Khiroda Devi of Choladhora, Jorhat. He was residing in his own house at the State Bank Colony at Guwahati for a pretty long time. He served the State Bank

of India in various capacities at different places. Earlier, in his college days, he was an avid reader and had deep interest in films as well. Later after he retired, he contributed much in the field of education and was closely connected with a number of educational institutions. As detailed above, he was loved and respected by his associates and friends for his cordial and amiable nature.

Phukan leaves behind his wife Nirmala Phukan and three sons, three daughtersin-laws, two grandsons, one grand-daughter and a host of relatives and friends.

On the occasion of his adyashraddha today, I pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to his departed soul.

- Aswini Boruah

#### Syeda Jamila Rahman



Our mother, Syeda Jamila Rahman, left for her heavenly abode on April 2 last after a brief illness. Ma was born on July 23, 1943 in Guwahati to Dr Syed Latifur Rahman and Syeda Ana Rahman. She and her three siblings grew up in various places like Lakhimpur. Jorhat and Nagaon as Nana, our grandfather, who was

the civil surgeon at that time, was in a transferable post. He later moved to Shillong as the Joint Director of Health under the Government of Assam and she passed her matriculation from Shillong's Laban Girls High School in 1960. She went and attended Saint Mary's College and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1965. She was a talented violinist and she took to playing violin from her school days in Jorhat. She continued playing her violin through her college days, well into her golden years much to the admiration of everyone.

She married our father, Syed Hasinur Rahman on October 31,1965 in Shillong and they together started their life in Guwahati. A beautiful person inside and out, Ma was gentle, patient, soft spoken and kind.

She adored her family and her six grandkids were the light of her life. She kept her love of music alive through her grandkids. Ma also enjoyed visiting places. She enjoyed her trips to Shillong to meet her cousins and loved her stay in Kolkata, where Baba was posted as the Trade Advisor in the early 1990's. Today, as we observe her *chalisa*, we would like to pay our solemn tribute to a wonderful human being.

- Syeda Nassera Yasmin Haque

#### Prof Ratan Barman



Prof Ratan Barman was born on March 6, 1961 at Rongchongi, Chabua, Dibrugarh. He was an alumnus of the Department of Commerce, Gauhati University. He obtained his doctoral degree from the Department of Commerce, Dibrugarh University. His work life began at Brah-

maputra Board and he was posted in Guwahati. Later, he joined Diphu Government College in 1989. He spent nearly 30 years of his life at Diphu, spreading

education among the students. Prof Barman passed away suddenly on April 27. Prof Barman, who is one of founder faculty of Assam Universi-

ty Diphu campus, joined the Department of Commerce in 2007. Besides, holding the office of the Head of the Department, he discharged other administrative responsibilities too.

Under him, many scholars were awarded doctorate and MPhil degrees. Prof Barman was a member of various academic bodies in Assam University, Silchar and other universities. Besides, he was the life member of Indian Commerce Association and executive member of North East India Commerce and Management Association.

It is an honour to write this tribute to Prof Barman – a mentor. colleague, teacher, scholar, elder brother, friend, administrator and man of principles. In whatever role we knew him, from whatever vantage point, he stood apart as someone special! His special leadership abilities and charismatic personality were readily apparent! He was committed not only to focused research but also to overall academic excellence.

His sudden demise is not only a loss of the Department but a loss for the entire fraternity. May his soul rest in eternal peace. - Dr Joyjit Sanyal, Dr Subit Dutta

#### **OBITUARY Gautom Deuri**

CORRESPONDENT

MORIGAON, May 10: Gautom Deuri, a leading businessman and citizen of ward no.6 of Morigaon town, breathed his last on Saturday at Assam Medical College Hospital, Dibrugarh following a briefillness. He was 49. Deori was involved with several sociocultural organisations. An engineering graduate, he was also an AASU activist during 1986-87. He was also an executive member of the Morigaon Chambers of Commerce and Morigaon Sadar Bihu Sanmilani. All the organisations with which he was involved and the Morigaon Press Club condoled his death. Deori leaves behind his wife, a son and a daughter.

#### Dr Ananda Sarma



GUWAHATI, May 10: Dr Ananda Sarma, a renowned eve specialist and sportsman left for his heavenly abode on May 9 at Tezpur. He was

Born on August 15, 1930, the third son of Late Kamala Kanta Sarma of Bamungaon, Tezpur, he completed his primary education from Tezpur Carmel and Tezpur Government Boys Higher Secondary School and afterwards from Cotton College in Guwahati. A graduate in medicine from Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh, he later established himself as a renowned eye specialist.

His contribution in sports, specially to the first class cricket and football of Assam is commendable. He represented the Assam Ranji team. For his performance in first class football in the State, he is renowned as the 'White Horse' of football.

During the Chinese aggression in 1962, he singlehandedly managed five government hospitals in Tezpur, for which he was awarded a honorary membership of the Red Cross Society and received a letter of appreciation from the President of India.

He is survived by his wife Minu Devi, a retired lecturer of Darrang College, Tezpur and three sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

#### KNP to get possession of three areas under 7th, 8th additions Forest is presently under Nagaon people called for dividing the above

AJIT PATOWARY

Finally, it seems that the Kaziranga National Park (KNP) will get possession of Deurchur Chang, Palkhowa and Banderdubi areas, covered by its seventh and eighth additions. For several years, the KNP authorities have been trying to get possession over these areas.

Things went to such a pass that the Gauhati High Court had to intervene in the matter and issue an order to free these areas from encroachment. The High Court order came in the wake of the suo motu PILs (66/2012, 67/2012) and Writ Petitions (Civil) (648/2013 and 4860/2013). Following the High Court order, the encroached areas of Deurchur Chang and Palkhowa were freed from encroachment on September 19, 2016. An amount of Rs 14.7 crore was also distributed among the around 300 evicted fam-

Later, a joint survey was conducted by the Revenue and the Forest Departments in these areas on February 11 and 12 this year. Simultaneously, the boundary of the evicted areas was also demarcated. During the joint survey, the re-encroachment at Banderdubi area too was cleared.

However, the civil administration of Kaliabor subdivision was unable to hand over these areas to the KNP authorities due to pressure from some people of the neighbouring localities. The proposal for notification of the KNP seventh and the eighth additions did not cover any human habitation or settlement areas. Only the evicted areas, Proposed Reserved Forests (PRF), Un-classed State Forests (USF) and government land were there in the proposal, as these areas are prime wildlife habitat-cum-corridors.



The proposed seventh addition of the KNP is part of the Deosur, Chirang and Amguri Animal Corridors and contiguous to the KNP's first addition. This area connects KNP with the Bagser Reserve Forest and forested areas of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. This region was initially proposed as part of the KNP's first addition, but, sub-

sequently dropped from the final notification.

The Ghorakati Range, Burapahar, along with two anti-poaching camps and tongis of the KNP are located in the USF land area. This area is located between the old and new NH-37. KNP animals regularly use it.

Deosur Proposed Hill Reserve

nue officials.

KNP's Burapahar Range. It is a natural highland. Wild animals take shelter here during the floods. It has natural vegetation to feed the wild animals. This proposed addition will facilitate the migration of the KNP animals to the Karbi Anglong Hills and will thus help in conserving the KNP's endangered species. In their bids to get possession of

Territorial Division of the Forest

Department. It is contiguous to the

these areas, KNP authorities have been dashing off letters to the revenue authorities. On May 5, 2020, Minister Kes-

hab Mahanta, who also represents Kaliabor as an MLA, held a meeting with the belligerent people, who are resisting the proposal for inclusion of these areas in KNP, in the presence of the Forest and Reve-

In the meeting, the belligerent

the officials of the Forest and Revenue Departments finally made them agree to the idea of KNP's acquisition of these areas, but with the condition to apply effective measures for saving their lives and property from the depredation of the wild animals. The meeting decided that the

KNP authorities would submit a plan to the Kaliabor civil administration on May 10, 2020 for ensuring safety of the life and property of the people living in the localities adjacent to these areas. KNP Director P Shivkumar exuded the hope that following submission of this plan, KNP would be able to acquire the above areas within a week's time.

areas into three zones of activities

related with forestry, tourism and

revenue administration. However,

persuasions from the Minister and

# BUSINESS & Economy — the assam tribune, guwahati 9

#### Hero MotoCorp reopens 1,500 outlets, sells 10,000 bikes

NEW DELHI, May 10: Two-wheeler major Hero MotoCorp said here today it had revived retail operations with reopening of over 1,500 customer touch-points, including authorised dealers and service outlets, in the past few days

The company in a regulatory filing said since the resumption of retail services, 10,000 motorcycles and scooters had been sold. The reopened outlets contributed around 30 per cent of the company's domestic retail sales, it said.

"Keeping the safety and well-being of everyone as top priority, the company has issued a 'restart manual' to dealers, service centres and parts distributors," it said.

Hero MotoCorp started vehicle dispatches from manufacturing facilities for the current financial year (FY21) on May 7. All Hero MotoCorp manufacturing units across the globe had halted operations since March 22 as a precautionary measure against COVID-19.

"On May 4, Hero Moto-Corp became the first twowheeler manufacturer in the country to resume operations as it reopened three plants – Dharuhera and Gurgaon in Haryana and Haridwar in Uttarakhand," it said.

Besides English and Hindi, the company has released the 'restart manual' in 10 regional languages. It has proved immensely helpful in rural and interior areas. The manual has a lot of visuals that accurately yet simplistically convey all crucial aspects to be followed.

Hero MotoCorp recently shared similar safety manuals with employees of its three manufacturing facilities. The manuals focused on safety and hygiene measures to be followed within the plant. - IANS

#### RIL fixes May 14 as rights issue record date

NEW DELHI, May 10: Oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has fixed May 14 as the record date for determining shareholders eligible to apply for India's biggest rights issue of Rs 53,125 crore.

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's firm had on April 30 announced fund raising of Rs 53,125 crore by way of a 1:15 rights issue, the first such issue by RIL in nearly three decades.

One share will be offered for every 15 shares held at Rs 1,257, a 14 per cent discount to the closing price for April 30.

RIL's share price has since risen to Rs 1,561.80 (Friday's closing price), but rights issue price remains the same.

"We inform you that the Rights Issue Committee constituted by the board of directors of the company has, at its meeting fixed Thursday, May 14, 2020 as the 'record date' for the purpose of determining the equity shareholders entitled to receive the rights entitlement in the rights issue," the firm said in a regulatory filing. – PTI

# FM to review credit offtake with PSB CEOs today

NEW DELHI, May 10: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will hold a review meeting with CEOs of public sector banks (PSBs) on Monday to discuss various issues, including credit offtake, as part of efforts to prop up the economy hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

The meeting, to be held via video-conferencing, will also take stock of interest rate transmission to borrowers by banks and progress on moratorium on loan repayments, sources said.

The RBI had on March 27 slashed the benchmark interest rate by a massive 75 basis points and also announced a threemonth moratorium to be given by banks to provide relief to borrowers whose income has been hit due to the lockdown.

The deployment of excessive funds by banks under the reverse repo route may also come up for discussion on Monday. sources said.

Besides, progress under the targeted long-term repo operations (TLTRO) for the NBFC sector and microfinance institutions (MFIs), and sanctions under the COVID-19 emergency credit line will also be reviewed.

Under the emergency credit line, borrowers can avail a maximum of 10 per cent of the existing fund-based working capital limits, subject to a cap of Rs 200 crore.

Public sector banks have sanctioned loans worth Rs 42,000 crore to the MSME

sector and corporates since the start of the lockdown.

The Finance Minister had on Thursday said as many as 3.2 crore borrowers have taken advantage of the three-month moratorium scheme on repayment of loans announced by the Reserve Bank.

"PSBs complemented RBI on loan moratorium. Their effective communication & proactive actions ensured that over 3.2 cr a/c availed 3-month moratorium. Quick query redressals allayed customer concerns. Ensuring responsible banking amid #lockdown," she had tweeted.

Sitharaman also said state-owned banks have sanctioned loans worth Rs 5.66-lakh

crore to borrowers during March and April, and disbursement will start soon after the lockdown is lifted.

She said the banks sanctioned loans worth Rs 77,383 crore between March 1 and May 4 to provide sustained credit flow to non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies.

Besides, under TLTROs, total financing of Rs 1.08-lakh crore was extended, "ensuring business stability and continuity going forward", she had said.

Meanwhile, MFI association Sa-Dhan, in a communication to the Finance Minister, said the sector expects to lend close to Rs 50,000 crore over the next six months, mostly by way of emergency or top-up loans to existing borrowers.

However, it expressed concern that there is a possibility of shortfall of collections by over 30-40 per cent by September and a potential default by MFIs to their

lenders to the extent of 10 per cent. There is likely to be a surge in demand from microfinance borrowers, given that they urgently need credit to rebuild their lives and stabilise their incomes.

However, field collections will be affected given the negative impact of the COV-ID-19 crisis on clients' incomes as well as uncertainty in operations post lockdown in many districts, Sa-Dhan said. – PTI

# Centre issues fresh guidelines for manufacturing units

NEW DELHI, May 10: As the restrictions are being gradually eased in some zones to bring the economy back on track, the Centre has issued fresh "guidelines for restarting manufacturing industries after lockdown", advising them not to try to achieve high production targets.

In order to minimise the risk and to encourage a successful restart of industrial units, the guidelines advised the industries to consider the first week as the trial or test-run period while starting the units and ensure all safety protocols.

The guidelines were issued on Saturday to all Chief Secretaries and administrators of Union Territories (UTs) as the 14-day lockdown 3.0 is on and will end on May 17.

To minimise the risk, the Centre has advised that employees who work on specific equipment are sensitised and made aware of the need to identify abnormalities like strange sounds or smell, exposed wires, vibrations, leaks, smoke,

NEW DELHI, May 10: The government is

working on several initiatives, such as prepa-

ration of huge land pools, to attract potential

investors to India amid the coronavirus-trig-

on account of the COVID-19 crisis, many for-

eign companies are looking to reduce their

dependency on China and set up manufactur-

When it comes to land, States prepare their

land inventory and we aggregate those and

make available to all potential investors," the

According to Federation of Indian Export Or-

ganisations (FIEO) President Sharad Saraf,

steps like fixing accountability on State and Cen-

tral government officers to perform in a time-

bound manner; deemed approval for all licenc-

es and permits if not granted well in time; change

"We are working on a lot of initiatives.

Due to disruptions in the global supply chain

gered turbulence, a senior official said.

ing facilities in other countries.

government official said.

abnormal wobbling, irregular grinding, or other potentially hazardous signs which indicate the need for an immediate maintenance or if required shutdown.

"Especially during the COVID-19 times, ensure all lockout and tagout procedures are in place on a daily basis (not

#### Restarting of industries post-lockdown

applicable for units running 24 hours)," the generic guidelines mentioned.

The guidelines suggest inspection of all equipment as per the safety protocols during the restart phase. In case the industry has any difficulty in managing crucial backward linkages that may be critical for their safe functioning, they should approach the local district administration for specific assistance, the guidelines suggest.

The District Magistrate, as per the

in land acquisition law; power connection in one

month and bank loan sanction within two months

Sharing similar views, President of Inter-

national Chamber of Commerce, Paris-India,

Vikramjit Singh Sahney said with stagnant

economic activity, production coming to halt

and cash flows drying up elsewhere, India

should present itself as the most viable desti-

nation for global companies looking at other

"Despite reduction of corporate tax rates."

especially for new manufacturing units, bulk

of shifting from China is going to Vietnam,

and State governments will have to develop

industrial parks and corridors on lines of China

and ensure consistent policy framework for

foreign investors, which is a matter of concern

for most of them," Sahney said. - PTI

"Apart from ease of doing business, Central

can help in attracting overseas firms.

investment destinations.

Indonesia and Malaysia.

Govt working on several

initiatives to woo investors

guideline, may be instructed to ensure that in such instance, the industries unit may be facilitated to run their end-toend operations, in the overall interests of all industrial security, it said.

The guidelines were issued considering that some of the operators might not have followed the established standard operating protocol (SOP) due to the closure of industrial units during several weeks of lockdown and it may result in some of the manufacturing units, pipelines, valves having residual chemicals, which may pose risk.

The same is true for the storage facilities with hazardous chemicals and flammable materials, the guidelines mention. Combustible liquids, containers with gaseous substances, open wires, conveyor belts and automated vehicles make manufacturing facilities a high-risk environment. "Improper enforcement of safety codes and improperly labelled chemicals can further pose serious health hazards," it said. - IANS



Labourers load salt bags onto trucks from a goods train, during the ongoing COVID-19 nationwide lockdown, in New Delhi on Sunday. – PTI

#### States for reviving economic activities in calibrated manner

NEW DELHI, May 10: The State Chief Secretaries today called for stepping up of economic activities in a calibrated manner considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

The demand was raised at a meeting Union Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba had with the Chief Secretaries and Principal Secretaries (Health) of States and Union Territories (UTs) through video link. They shared with Gauba information on the situation during the lockdown. The lockdown, enforced on March 25, was to end on April 14. It was extended to May 3, and then again to May 17.

Reviewing the COVID-19 situation in States and UTs, the Cabinet Secretary noted that over 350 Shramik special trains had ferried 3.5 lakh migrant workers. He urged them to cooperate with Railways in running more Shramik special trains.

Noting the cooperation of States and UTs in return of Indians from abroad under the Vande Bharat Mission, Gauba said movement of doctors, nurses and paramedics should be unhindered and steps be taken to facilitate and protect corona warriors. - IANS

#### Tea prices continue to rise

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, May 10: Due to low crop, prices of Assam tea continued to see a strong demand, with most of the

"Even old season teas which are difficult to sale are now selling with good demand and getting Rs 40-50 higher than what it got before lockdown," Secretary of the Guwahai Auction Buyers Association Dinesh Bihani told this newspaper.

The decline in production of tea due to the lockdown is estimated at 32 million kg, with the loss incurred by the industry believed to be about Rs 600 crore. At this week's auction, old season teas were also readily

bought, with western India and North India buyers participating actively, Bihani added.

The State government has allowed the industry to function with full manpower from this weekend.

The government has also announced a waiver of the minimum fixed charge of supply of natural gas to the tea gardens which were closed during the lockdown period.

The tea production in India during 2019 was 1,389.70 million kg. Tea production in Assam in 2019 was 715.49 million kg, i.e., 51.51 per cent of the total tea production in India.

Due to excess production of lower quality teas, the auction prices were down last season. Some teas were difficult to sell even at Rs 50-55.

Recently, the Tea Board had decided to conduct random checking of auction teas to monitor quality and compliance of

#### Life insurance policies

#### IRDAI extends grace period till May 31

NEW DELHI, May 10: IRDAI has further extended the grace period for renewal of life insurance policies whose premium was due in March till May 31 in wake of the extension of lockdown to fight spread of coronavirus.

On March 23 and April 4, IRDAI had announced additional grace period of 30 days for policies where premium fell due in the months of March and April.

This was done to provide "relief" to life insurance policyholders in wake of the unprecedented lockdown situation as a result of global pandemic COVID-19, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) had said.

Now as the lockdown has been further extended up to May 17, 2020, the regulator has allowed extended grace period up to May 31 for all life insurance policies whose premium was due in March keeping in view the difficulty faced by some policyholders

to renew the policies in time. "On a review of the recent situation of lockdown resulting from global pandemic of COV-ID-19 across the country and representations received, it has been decided that for all life insurance policies where the premium falls due in the month of March 2020, the grace period shall be allowed till May 31, 2020," it said in a release.

All policyholders are requested to note that the objective of grace period allowed is to pay all the premiums due within that period so as to keep the policy coverage in force, IRDAI further said. – PTI

A woman wearing face-mask amid concerns over COVID-19 sells hand-fans made with palm leaves, in Agartala on Sunday. Hand-fans are in demand during the summer

#### Not offering emergency loans through **YONO** platform: SBI

MUMBAI, May 10: State Bank of India (SBI) today clarified that it is not offering any kind of emergency loans to customers through its YONO platform.

Media reports have stated that the public sector lender is offering emergency loans of up to Rs 5 lakh within '45 minutes'. The loans will be given at an interest rate of 10.5 per cent and EMIs will start after a period of six months. the reports said.

"There is a news being widely reported about 'SBI Emergency Loan scheme via YONO'. We would like to clarify that SBI is not offering any such loan at present. We also urge our customers not to believe in these rumours," the bank said in a statement.

SBI, however, said it is in the process of introducing a pre-approved personal loan offering through YONO to provide relief to its salaried customers who are facing cash-flow problems due to the COVID-19 crisis.

YONO, or 'You Only Need One', is a digital service platform of SBI which provides its customers all-inone solutions for banking, shopping, lifestyle and investment needs. - PTI

# Banks find new ways to amuse & inform during lockdown

NEW DELHI, May 10: At a time when the spread of COVID-19 has made social distancing a buzzword, banks have increased their reliance on social media to engage with their customers - may it be for disseminating information or for dispelling their boredom.

The government imposed a 21day countrywide lockdown beginning March 25 to check the spread of coronavirus, and extended it twice, prompting business entities including banks to get innovative on social media. Among the noteworthy initiatives by banks during the lockdown, HDFC Bank came out with a scheme to help its customers find their hidden artistic talent.

"Tired of staying home and having nothing to do? HDFC Bank Fingage presents The Art Project, to give you a #BreakFromBoredom! Unlock your creativity during the lockdown & stand a chance to win exciting prizes!," tweeted the bank, trying to engage its customers during the lockdown.

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has come up with a contest on the Mother's Day with a catchy slogan, "For her, you will always remain a child". Since the lockdown has made

online banking more vulnerable to fraudsters, several banks are regularly warning their customers against possible frauds. "Beware of fraudsters who pose

as bank officials and scam people by gaining remote access to their mobile phone screens through an app. Inform us when you identify a scamster through e-mail: epg.cms@sbi.co.in & report.phishing@sbi.co.in," tweeted SBI. Similar warnings were issued by a few

other lenders.

"Fraudsters find new ways to target innocent people. And this time, they are targeting through banking and other payments apps to steal your hard-earned money. Be careful and keep following the #PNB-KaFunda to learn the ways to avoid them," PNB tweeted

Another public sector major Canara Bank warned its customers in a tweet, "Don't get hooked by #Phishing! Always check before you click on any links. Be cautious about opening any attachments or downloading files received via e-mail/sms, if source is unknown. A few banks have also come up with 'lockdown offers' for their customers.

HDFC Bank offered discount on purchase of jewellery on Akshaya Tritya with a promise that part of the money would go to

PM-CARES Fund.

"This Akshaya Tritya, buy jewellery from the safety of your home, with HDFC Bank credit cards! With every purchase above Rs 10,000, we will contribute Rs 100 to the PM-CARES Fund and you earn 5X re-

ward points," HDFC Bank tweeted. Union Bank of India has offered discount on purchase of medicine.

"In this difficult time, it's easy to save some cash on your pharmacy bill. Just use #UnionBankofIndia cards at your nearest Apollo Pharmacy Store to get up to 15% off," UBI said in a tweet.

SBI gave a similar offer to its customers: "Get a health check from the comfort of your home with Apollo 24/7. Earn great discounts on key lab tests via YONO SBI app."

Some banks are telling customers how they are tweaking services to suit the times.

Union Bank of India informed its customers that for the time being there would be no charge on withdrawal of funds from ATMs of other banks. "To ease the lockdown burden, debit card ATM withdrawals from any other bank ATMs will be free of charge till 30th June 2020," the bank said in a tweet.

Banks are also making sure people in rural areas do not crowd the branches for direct benefit transfers.

The country's largest lender SBI informed that the second instalment of Rs 500 had been deposited in the accounts of female Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana account holders under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. It also provided a schedule for withdrawal of funds by them so that social distancing norms are not breached. - PTI





Dinesh Bihani

15) of Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) held on May 6, the total tea offerings were 6,546 packages, out of which 93 per cent was sold. There was a strong demand for the limited quantity of new season Assam teas. Prices were around 50 rupees higher compared to last year. Old season teas were being readily absorbed. West-

AS per the latest auction sale (No

ern India and north India buyers actively participated. The auction average price for this week stood at Rs 269.03.

Top garden prices						
BOP	Price	BOPSM/BP	Price	OF/PF	Price	
HALMARI	433	HALMARI	413	HALMARI	371	
DUKLINGIA	340	HOOKHMOL	352	MADHUPUR	311	
KOPATI	302	MADHUPUR	340	KOPATI	305	
MUKTABARI	302	DUKLINGIA	332	SUNDARPUR	301	
BEHALL	201	DECKIVILITI	336	MAHALLIVMI	300	

Secretary, Guwahati Tea Auction

ovies

17:50 Jaanbaz Ki Jung 20:00 Housefull 4

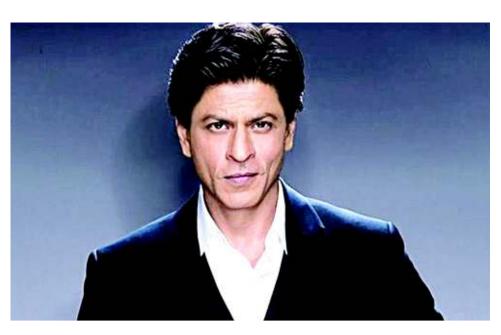
12:00 3 Idiots 15:40 Katamarayudu

12:45 Shazam!

15:05 Pokemon Detective

18:05 Don Ki Jung

# ——Leisure & Lifestyle ——



# Spook challenge

SRK has asked people to make scary indoor films

head of the launch of his web production, the horror show Betaal, Shah Rukh Khan has announced an interesting task for people amid the lockdown. He wants people to make 'scary' indoor films. Three winners will get a chance to do a video call with the superstar.

Sharing the details, SRK took to social media and wrote: "Since we've all got a bit of time on our hands in quarantine, thought I can get us all to work a bit... in a fun, creative and spooky way. How about channel the inner filmmaking ghost in us to make a scary indoor film with an element of horror in it.'

People can mail their work to teamdigital@redchillies.com by May 18. The entries will be judged by *Betaal* co-director Patrick Graham, cast members Viineet Kumar and Aahana Kumra, and Gaurav Verma of Red Chillies Entertainment, producers of the show.

"Ghosts are welcome to send their entries too," SRK quipped.

The project is a collaboration between SRK's Red Chillies entertainment, Netflix, SK Global, and Blumhouse Productions, the banner that is known for its Hollywood horror productions as Paranormal Activity and Insidious.

SRK and his wife Gauri have also offered their four-storeyed personal office space to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation

(BMC) to be utilised as a quarantine facility for women, children and the elderly.

Thanking the Bollywood superstar and his wife for their act of generosity, BMC shared on social media: "#StrongerTogether We thank @iamsrk & @gaurikhan for offering their 4-storey personal office space to help expand our Quarantine capacity equipped with essentials for quarantined children, women & elderly. Indeed a thoughtful & timely gesture! #AnythingForMumbai #NaToCorona.'

The superstar's decision to donate his office comes just a couple of days after he made huge contributions to the government to aid the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.

SRK, through his IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), has committed to contribute to the PM Cares Fund. Through his film production banner, Red Chillies Entertainment, he will give to the Maharashtra CM's Relief Fund. The superstar has also pledged Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare providers and workers in Maharashtra and West Bengal.

SRK's Meer Foundation along with the foundation Ek Saath will provide daily food requirements to over 5,500 families for at least a month in Mumbai. Meer Foundation is also collaborating with Roti Foundation to provide meals to underprivileged people and daily wage labourers.

(Source: IANS)



21:00 Oggy And The Cock... 22:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbal 23:00 Courage The Cowardly. 23:30 The Tom & Jerry Show

Pag 13:00 Chhota Bheem 14:30 Chhota Bheem Ka Troll

15:30 Chhota Bheem 16:30 Grizzy And The Lemm. 17:30 Chhota Bheem 18:30 Chhota Bheem Aur... 19:30 Chhota Bhe 20:30 Chhota Bheem Chatpa 20:30 Chhota Bheem

21:00 Grizzy And The Lemm. 23:00 M.A.D. 23:30 Grizzy And The Lemm

WILD

12:10 Ultimate Weekends

14:30 India's Lost Worlds India's Jungle Heroes

16:00 Africa's Deadlies

16:45 Wild 24

17:35 World's Deadliest 18:20 Wild Far East 19:10 Animal Fight Club

19:55 Kenny And Zoltan's

20:40 Born In Africa 21:30 Wild Hunters

23:05 Wolves of Yell

12:35 Ancient Aliens

15:55 Forged In Fire 16:45 Idiot TV 17:10 Storage Wars

17:30 Shipping Wars 18:00 FoodTech

19:00 Counting Cars 20:00 Modern Marvels

22:00 Pawn Stars

21:00 Dynamo: Magician

13:25 Pawn Stars 13:45 Storage Wars 14:15 Modern Marvels-Mega...

15:05 OMG! Yeh Mera India

22:15 Wild 24

17:15 Sweet November 19:10 Little Big Shots UK 21:50 Genius Junior

colors

12:00 Dard-E-Dil

14:00 Mahabharat

16:45 Dard-E-Dil

19:00 Mahabharat

21:25 Jai Shri Krishna

12:15 Going In Style

16:10 Jai Shri Krishna

12:35 The Lion Kingdom

14:30 4 Deadliest Snakes of India

14:45 How Do Animals Do That? 15:10 Nature's Strang... 15:35 World Of The Wild

16:00 Intruders 16:55 Attenborough's Wild.

17:40 Animals Unleashed 18:05 Wildest Survival 19:00 Animal Planet Exclusive

22:30 Epic Earth

23:00 Expedition Mungo

20:00 Into the Wild: Bear Grylls. 21:00 World's Wildest Co

12:00 Running Wild With Bear.. 12:55 Adventure: Man V. Monste

13:45 Monster Croc Wrangler

15:00 Wildlife: Hostile Planet

15:55 Monster Croc Wrangler

16:45 Adventure: Primal Survivo

17:05 Adventure: Dirty Rotten.

19:00 Wildlife: Hostile Planet

19:55 Running Wild With Bear.

21:10 Adventure: Monster Fish

23:45 Investigates: Air Crash.

22:00 Spotlight: Cosmos

18:00 Adventure: Primal Survivo 18:30 Monster Croc Wrangler

RANGLER

14:05 Snakes in The City

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

**Øtv** 12:00 Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hain! 15:00 Laal Ishq 23:00 Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hain!

rishtey

Entertoinment

11:55 Kuch Kuch Hota Hai 15:35 Sasural Simar Ka 17:45 Kasam Tere Pyaar Ki 19:05 Madhubala - Ek Ishq Ek

Junoon

20:05 Sasural Simar Ka 12:45 Best Of The Kapil Sharma 15:30 Best Of Crime Patrol 18:35 Best Of The Kapil Sharma

22:30 Best Of The Kapil Sharma Zcafė

12:00 Mid Day Live

17:30 Guwahati Bisesh

18:00 Guwahati Live 18:30 Breaking @ 6:30

21:00 Kotha Barta

22:30 Noixo Guwahati 23:00 Noixo Batori

21:30 Talk Time

22:00 Live at 10

16:00 Upasona

13:00 Assamese Feautre film 16:30 Discussion Show (R)

19:00 Assamesse Prime Time

ra

18:00 North East Diva GF

18:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HLs

19:30 Ind vs Aus 2013 ODI HLs 20:00 Cricket Connected 2020

20:00 Cricket Connected 2020 20:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HLs

21:00 Cricket Connected 2020

23:00 IND vs AUS 2017 ODI HLs 23:30 Hero Indian Super League...

22:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HLs

13:00 E Cricket Challenge

19:00 Cricket Cor

21:30 Test Review

20:00 Discussion Show (R)

20:00 Super Dancer - Chapter 3 21:10 The Kapil Sharma Show

20:00 The 100 21:00 Supergirl 22:00 Starry Nights Gen Y 23:00 Love Island UK 15:30 Dance India Dance 17:00 Sa Re Ga Ma Pa

13:00 Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Ha 17:30 Mann Ki Awaaz...Pratigya 18:30 BadhaKrishn 20:30 Mahabharat

22:00 Devon Ke Dev Mahadev

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

18:00 Prime Time 18

19:00 Dintur Shironan 20:00 Porjyobekhyon

21:30 Aparadh Nama

22:00 North East Scar

15.30 Yuba Darpan 16:00 Abelir Batori

16:05 Tezaswini (Epi-65) 16:30 Geetmala

17:00 Nimishote Bato

17:02 Rong Birong

18:45 NE News

15:00 Chah Gachar Maje Maje

14:00 CA Archive Programming15:00 Men In Blue Victorious

19:30 India's Golden Mome... 20:00 Nail-Biting Finishes 20:30 CA Archive Programming

17:00 E Cricket Challenge 18:00 Arena - E Sports 2020

18:30 Great Centuries

19:00 India's Finest

21:30 Colour Me Blue

22:30 Nail-Biting Finishes

23:30 India's Golden Mome

14:00 WWE BlockBuster

22:00 India's Finest

22:30 Noixo Xiron

17:00 City18

Region

M\*VIES

17:25 Planes

23:30 Ong Bak

Pikachu 16:55 What Men Want 18:40 Godzilla: King Of The 13:00 The Nutcracker And The Four Realms
14:45 Captain America: Civil Monsters 21:00 The Final Destination

22:25 Journey To The Center Of The Earth 18:55 X-Men: Apocalypse 21:25 Gone In Sixty Seconds

13:20 Winter's Tale 15:15 Flashdance 16:40 Zambezia 18:00 The Naked Gun: From the Recruit

21:00 Deep Impact Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy



UTV MOVIES 16:55 Action Jackson 20:00 De De Pyaar De 22:40 Garam Masala SIGIS

13:00 The Monkey King 2 15:35 MLA Ka Power 18:25 The Expendables 3

19:00 WWE SmackDown

20:00 WWE BlockBusters

22:00 Undertaker Special

22:30 WWE BlockBusters

23:00 WWE SmackDown

18:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HL

15:45 Dhadkan

14:15 Bindi 16:15 Main Khiladi Tu Anari 19:40 Ravan Raai: A True Story



20:00 Cricket Connected 2020

20:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HLs 21:30 Cricket Connected 2020 21:30 Test Review 22:30 VIVO IPL 2019 HLs 23:00 IND vs AUS 2017 ODI HLs 23:30 Football United Special 2020 SONY

13:00 NBA 2019/20 HLs 14:00 Immortal14:30 NBA2K Sundays With.

15:30 Impact Wrestling 2015 17:30 Olympic On The Record 18:00 NBA 2K Players Tourname

13 An idiotic persor

15 A snake-like fish

16 Affirmative vote

18 Be unwell (3)

19 Obese (3)

22 Epoch (3)

21 Sportive (7)

23 Modern prefix (3)

24 Exhibition building

25 Hole-cutter (5)

AIDS (3)

26 As an Arab he is

(3)

(3)

# Know your **DAY**

#### By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Monday, May 11, 2020:

Individualistic and creative you produces many wonders in this year of isolation. It is very important for your imagination to be deeply understood by another. If single, you search for that other — and may decide to keep on searching. If attached, you both exist in your own little world. Happy as clams, you both create beauty together. If not, you part ways amicably. AQUARIUS The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-

Average: 2-So-so: 1-Difficult.

ARIFS (March 21-April 19) \*\*\* Complications are likely to be left in the business of Unresolved problems from last fall are reactivated with bosses or unresolved problems from last fall are reactivated out once and other authority figures. Use today to get them straightened out once and for all. Tonight: Don't be surprised if things have to be redone TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Spiritual books, tapes and lectures can be comforting. If you have been considering getting more education in order to boost your income, today is the time to follow through. Transportation delays can be a bit challenging. Tonight: Defer to a loved one on plans. GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ Companions have different financial priorities than you. There might be some awkwardness involving an investment or a loan. The dilemma can be solved tonight. Friends have iovful announcements and interesting plans to share. Tonight: Direct feelings of anger toward creating positive changes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

\*\*\*\* Today accents new cycles in partnerships and relationships. Permit those closest to you to move forward and grow. This will enhance the love you share. Your loved ones will be eternally grateful. Tonight: You will enjoy living on the edge a bit.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) ★★★★ The lion wears a rich, beautiful mane. Likewise, the Leo-born are often blessed with thick, beautiful hair. Today, explore new coiffures or haircuts. By caring for your crowning glory, your overall wellbeing acquires additional sparkle. Tonight: Your energy improves. Celebrate yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) \*\* ★ While you seem to be getting a lot accomplished, others may be experiencing some romantic complications. Tread cautiously if you find yourself being drawn into a soap-opera-type scenario. Issues around children may also arise. Tonight: Keep your plans

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

\*\*\* A relative or one ★★★★ A relative or extended household member is ready to make some changes. Look at different options. Assemble magical workings to bless home and hearth. The situation will improve by tonight. Tonight: You feel a renewal of enthusiasm and creative energy.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Relatives need extra love and care, especially if they are being difficult. Try to avoid taking sides if friends are squabbling. Tonight: Contact a mentor you trust and listen carefully to their words.

★★★ Be patient and add to your earnings slowly. A windfall is not in the stars, but consistent effort will be rewarded. You will be tempted to take a risk or make a major purchase. Tonight: Approach this with caution. It is better not to overextend yourself. CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

\*\*\*\*\* Your character seldom admits failure. Tou have most do today. You will be motivated and assertive. Unusual combination to today. You will be instrumental in helping you reach importions of ideas and events can be instrumental in helping you reach important goals. Tonight: Check in on an elderly relative or neighbor who is lonely. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

\*\*\*\* Today brings a renewed sense of freedom and confidence, and you will work well alone. Wrap up in a cozy robe and burn the midnight oil on a work or creative project. The results will be brilliant. Tonight: Look it over and feel proud of yourself. PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★★ Friends offer assistance today. Goodwill and companionship are extended. Any apparent problems can be easily solved if you will just confide in a comrade. Help comes your way from a hidden or unexpected benefactor. Tonight: You will cherish a few stolen moments in

#### Thought for the day

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. – RABINDRANATH TAGORE

#### **LOCKHORNS**



JUST ONCE IN MY LIFE I'D LIKE TO EXPERIENCE THE HAPPINESS OF THE GUYS IN BEER COMMERCIALS."

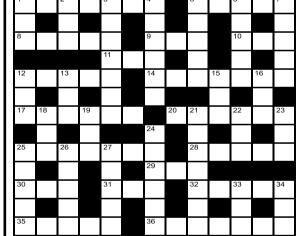


R THE PHANTOM By Lee Falk RACK AWAY FROM THE GATE, CHATU. AGE WILL TELL I'VE COME HERE TO

#### **BLONDIE** THIS ARTICLE ASKS: "DOES VOUR MARRIAGE STILL PACK PLENTY OF PIZZAZZ?") I KNOW THREE PEOPLE WHO WOULD SAY OURS DOES! WHILE C'MON, WE'RE STILL WRAP YOUNG!







29 Engage in espio-

nage (3)

31 An enemy (3)

32 Onward in time (5)

36 An explosive

35 Wading bird (5)

30 Not (3)

Across

Nuclear straint accord

(4,3)low : keeping a low profile, in a way ? (5) Contagious fear

9 Large weight (3) 10 Lyricist Gershwin (3)

11 Colourful Japanese carp (3) 12 Foam (5)

14 Obsequies (7) 17 Social blunders

20 III humour (6) 25 Highland (7)

28 Texas shrine (5)

cocktail (7) 1 Male sheep (3) 2 Fall from grace (3)

3 Excavating machine (7)

4 Formally advise 5 First Soviet pre-

mier (5) colder (5)

7 Chalice (5) 12 Mist or smog (3)

6 More chilly or

rich and respected (5)

27 Like an elf (5) 33 Large mouse (3) 34 Virus that causes

**SOLUTION TO TRIBUNE CROSSWORD - 6890** 27 Elfin, 33 Rat, 34 HIV.

Playful, 22 Era, 23 Neo, 24 Museum, 25 Punch, 26 Ameer 7 Grail, 12 Fog, 13 Oaf, 15 Eel, 16 Aye, 18 Ail, 19 Fat, 21 Down: 1 Tup, 2 Sin, 3 Backhoe, 4 Notify, 5 Lenin, 6 Icier, Heron, 36 Molotov.

16au, 28 Alamo, 29 Spy, 30 Nae, 31 Foe, 32 Forth, 35 Koi, 12 Froth, 14 Funeral, 17 Gaffes, 20 Spleen, 25 Pla-Across: 1 Test ban, 5 Lying, 8 Panic, 9 Ton, 10 Ira, 11

#### **HEALTH CAPSULES®** by Bron Smith WHAT IS A CORONARY

CALCIUM SCAN? THE CORONARY CALCIUM SCAN DETECTS ONLY CALCIUM IN THE ARTERIES, NOT A CORONARY CALCIUM CT SCAN IS A USEFUL THE AMOUNT OF

TOOL TO DETERMINE CALCIUM IN THE 3 MAJOR ARTERIES THAT CARRY BLOOD TO THE HEART'S MUSCLE TISSUE THOSE WITH THE MOST CALCIUM IN THESE ARTERIES CARRY A 6-FOLD GREATER RISK OF DYING FROM

HEART DISEASE THAN THOSE WITH NO CALCIUM. Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.

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

> **ATNTU** LNYDUU LOUYFJ

WOOSH

An ignorant person is one who doesn know what you have\_\_\_\_ \_\_ \_ \_ Will Rogers (4,5,3)

doesn't know what you have **just found out** – Will Rogers Answer: An ignorant person is one who Words: Whoso, taunt, unduly, joyful.

# Himanta visits Zonal Health Screening Centre at TU

CORRESPONDENT

TEZPUR, May 10: Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma today visited the Zonal Health Screening Centre, quarantine facility set up within the Tezpur University campus and inspected the facilities made available for screening, registration and testing of all passengers returning from outside the state.

He was accompanied by MP Pallab Lochan Das, Minister of State, H&FW Pijush Hazarika, MLAs, senior officials of the Health Department, and Deputy Commissioner Manvendra Pratap Singh, among others.

To contain the spread of COVID-19, and as per directions received from the state Department of Health, the Sonitpur district administration had set up a Zonal Screening Centre in Tezpur Central University at Napaam to screen all people belonging to the five districts falling under the North Assam Division, ie., Udalguri, Sonitpur, Biswanath, Lakhimpur and Dhemaji districts who return from outside the state. The Minister first inspected the screening centre set up at the Community Hall being used for screening of passengers and then the Kendriya Vidyalaya which has been used to set up an institutional quarantine facility with 250 people capacity.

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, May

10: Fired by the zeal to

make face masks

women SHGs in

abundantly available.

Hailakandi have lately

kiosks so as to cater to

the needs of the public.

Since the inaugura-

tion of the first mask-

Hailakandi town under

the Assam State Rural

(ASRLM) on April 29, a

have been sold till date.

kiosk was inaugurated

by District Develop-

Another mask-selling

total of 18,320 masks

Livelihood Mission

selling kiosk in

set up mask-selling



He later had a brief meeting with senior district and health department officials along with top administrators of Tezpur Medical College and Hospital and issued necessary directives to ensure proper screening and registration and subsequent monitoring of all people who report at the venue.

The Minister also interacted with the Vice-Chancellor of Tezpur Central University Dr VK Jain and informed him that the quarantine facility at KV will not be used to house any COVID-19 positive patient, but will only be used for screening and observation of all inbound people. All COVID-19 positive patients will be

Women SHGs doing brisk

business by selling masks

district administration

has made wearing of

masks or face covers

mandatory. The DDC

appealed to the public

to buy these products

from the women SHGs

so as to support them

financially and occupa-

Sources said 72

women SHGs under

ASRLM in the district

have produced 1,41,898

masks till date. Biplob

Kumar Nath, DPM of

production of masks,

said: "The two-leafed

mask prepared from

cotton cloth is sold at

Rs 25 apiece". Nath

ASRLM, who is

supervising the

tionally.

ment Commissioner

(DDC)-cum-Project

Vikram Dev Sarma at

Katilcherra Block on

Speaking at the

Sarma said, "During

pandemic, the demand

for masks is increasing

by leaps and bounds. To

contagious disease at

essential. All these

by women self-help

groups under the

Assam State Rural

Livelihood Mission."

In the meantime, the

bay, wearing of mask is

masks have been made

inaugural function,

the coronavirus

keep the highly

Friday.

Director of DRDA

kept and treated at the Isolation Ward of Tezpur Medical College and Hospital or other dedicated COVID-19 hospitals identified for the purpose.

Dr Sarma assured him that the Government will take all precautionary measures for the safety and security of the residents of the campus.

Later, briefing the media about various steps taken to deal with the current situation prevailing due to COVID-19 pandemic, Dr Sarma said that community transmission has not happened in Assam till date.

"When more than 100 people are infected, then it will be known as community transmission," he said, adding that general screening will not be done at the quarantine centres from now onwards. Only the swab will be taken from people coming from outside. He also said that people stranded outside the state are in a very precarious condition for which as per the central government's direction, the state is taking initiative to bring back them to their homes.

On the other hand, he assured that more precautionary measures would be taken in the quarantine centres. "It is time to face the challenge and we will have to be more cautious. Uptil now, a total of 126 people have been tested in the TU Zonal Screening Centre," he mentioned.

said the sale of masks

is satisfactory as more

and more people are

realising their impor-

The residents of

the district sincerely

endeavour of ASRLM,

Hailakandi to cater to

the needs of the public

by making available

masks at reasonable

price at a time when

they are being sold at

inflated rates owing to

acute shortage and

unprecedented

demand.

Hailakandi, Katlicherra

and other places across

tance to save them-

selves from the

dreaded virus.

appreciated the



Extending blood bonds beyond kinship: Rakta-Dhara Statewide Voluntary Blood Donation Camp being held to mark 163 years of Sipahi Vidroh, organised by National Medicos Organisation at North Lakhimpur, on Sunday. – UB Photos

#### Blood donation camp held to mark Sipahi Vidroh

NALBARI, May 10: The Assam branch of National Medicos Organisation in association with Seva Bharati, Purbanchal, organised a voluntary blood donation camp at the Blood Bank of Swahid Mukunda Kakati Civil Hospital here today.

The blood donation camp was held to mark the 163rd anniversary of the historic Sipahi Vidroh (Sepoy Mutiny) of 1857.

The camp was inaugurated by Ashok Sarma, MLA of Nalbari LAC in the presence of Dr Numal Momin, MLA of Karbi Anglong district.

In the blood donation camp, Dr Mriganka
Talukdar, present of district
BJP, Dr Ramesh Chandra
Bhattacharya, Dr
Kameswar Lahkar, Dr
Khanindra Mohan Saud and
Dr Utpal Das were
present.

A total of 30 units of the life-sustaining fluid was collected at the voluntary blood donation camp.

#### Concern over mushrooming of 'pharmacies' STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 10:
Amidst the ongoing medical emergency in the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic, the All Adivasi Tea Tribes Jagran Association (AAT-TJA) today alleged that a number of pharmacies, having no registration certificate from the authority concerned, have been mushrooming in some tea gardens areas of the State since the past few days.

According to a statement of the AATTJA, such pharmacies, which mainly deal in contraband narcotics tablets along with some fake medicinal items, have been noticed in tea garden areas of Sivasagar, Charaideo, Golaghat, Tinsukia and Darrang districts.

# Red Cross, Thalassemia Day observed in Hailakandi

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, May 10: Amidst the nationwide lockdown to break the transmission chain of the dreaded coronavirus pandemic, World Red Cross Day was observed in Hailakandi district on Friday last.

The programme started with hoisting of the flag by the president of Hailakandi district branch, Kshitish Ranjan Paul. Maintaining social distance, members of the Red Cross distributed masks and sweets among the people and security personnel present.

umdar and Samsuddin Barlaskar also addressed the gathering. World Red Cross Day is

Dr Rubeya Begum Maz-

observed on May 8 in sync with the birth anniversary of Henry Dunant, who was the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The main aim of the Red Cross Society is basically to inspire, initiate and encourage all kinds of humanitarian activities at all times and under all circumstances.

Further, a blood donation camp was organised at the Blood Bank of Hailakandi's SK Roy Civil Hospital in collaboration with Barak Valley Voluntary Blood Donors' Forum, Bajrang Dal and Jeevan Daan on Friday on the occasion of Thalassemia Day.

The day is observed to honour patients suffering from this disease. People also express gratitude to all the scientists whose dedication and enduring efforts have contributed to make life better for the thalassemia patients.

The president of the forum, Dr Paritosh Chandra Dutta informed that altogether 13 persons, including a woman, donated blood on the occasion

# Kishanganj returnees sent to quarantine in Cachar dist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR, May 10: At least 14 students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalay in Cachar district's Pailapool, who returned from a study tour in Bihar's Kishanganj, were kept under quarantine.

Dr Bhaskar Gupta, Vice Principal of Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH) said today, "swab samples of the students have been collected while the students are now under quarantine."

Further, Dr Gupta in-

formed that there has been no COVID-19 positive result from the hospital in the last 24 hours although results of some of the samples are yet to be obtained.

The SMCH Vice Principal added that even as the hospital was catering to the medical needs of general patients, the rising trend of COVID-19 cases has made things dif-

ficult for the hospital authorities regarding admission of patients. Patients who are experiencing extreme health complications are only given admission in the hospital, he maintained.

Asked about the health condition of the COVID-19 patients at the hospital, Dr Gupta informed that all the 11 patients, including six female and five male are stable and treatment is in progress.

### Madina Khatun: a tribute

Septuagenarian Madina Khatun of Bilasipara made a remarkable footprint in social media at the age of 67 years till her last breath. She wrote articles, poems and limericks which were widely accepted. Her vast knowledge was noticed in various comments she made in different articles written by famous people in Facebook. She became popular day by day and became Madina di or Aita in social media.

Born at Bilasipara in Dhubri district, she hailed from a conservative Muslim family. She always espoused causes which she felt were correct. Having completed her grad-



uation in the sixties, she joined Assam govt service. She was the first lady Chirastadar of Assam, a post created in the Land and Revenue Department.

A studious lady, she was an active member of *Axomiya jatua-thas, khondo bakyo, foko-*

ra jojona, xathor, probad ityadi and participated by posting various Assamese Jatua thas and xathor. Fighting against cancer since the last two years, she finally breathed her last on April 20 at the age of 73 years.

Before her death, she wrote "Goodbye my friends" on her Facebook wall on April 9, which was her last message in social media.

The members of Axomiya Jatua-thas, khondo bakyo, fokora jojona, xathor, probad ityadi were deeply shocked on her sad demise and wish her departed soul eternal peace in heaven. You will always be remembered Madina di.

– Pratul Barkataki

Alert today, alive tomorrow: Hailakandi DDC-cum-DRDA Project Director Vikram Dev Sarma inaugurating a mask-selling kiosk run by a women's SHG.— Photo: Hailakandi Correspondent.

# Call to cancel coal mining project at Saleki in Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve

ABHIJIT KHATANIAR

DOOMDOOMA, May 10: Nature lovers, environmentalists and green NGOs have intensified their protest against the decision of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) to allow coal mining at Saleki in Dehing Patkai Elephant Reseve.

The Dehing Patkai Elephant Reseve, of which Saleki is a part, is the largest rain forest in India. It stretches for 575 sq kms in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Sivasagar districts in Upper Assam. This virgin forest land is also referred to as the Amazon of the East. The biodiversity of this forest is very rich and unique.

Hoolock gibbon, slow loris, pig-tailed macaque, stump-tailed macaque, capped langur, Indian leopard, Asian elephant, Royal Bengal tiger, gaur, Chinese pangolin, Himalayan black bear, Himalayan squirrel, leopard cat, clouded leopard, porcupine, crab eating

mongoose, sambar, sun bear, binturong, barking deer, golden cat and marbled cat are some of the animal species found here.

Further, Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve is also home to around 293 different species of birds, besides rock python, king cobra, Asian leaf turtle and monitor lizard are among the most common reptiles found here.

Moreover, the forest is also home to 30 different species of butterfly which thrive in the beautiful tropical vegetation along with over 100 species of orchids.

Amidst the nationwide lockdown in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in its 56th annual meeting held on April 7 last through video conferencing under the chairmanship of Prakash Javedkar, Chairman of NBWL and Union Minister for Forest, Environment and Climate Change approved a coal mining project in the Saleki proposed reserve forest, which is a part of the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve.

The NBWL standing committee had discussed and subsequently approved a proposal for use of 98.59 hectares of Saleki land for a coal mining project by North Eastern Coal Field (NECF), which is a unit of Coal India Limited. The NBWL, it may be pertinent to add here, is under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoFCC).

It may be recalled that the NBWL had in its 54th meeting constituted a panel with Prof. R Sukumar, a member of NBWL as its head to visit the proposed Lekhapani open cast project under Lekhapani Range of Digboi Forest Division in Tinsukia district.

As per the report submitted by the panel, the Standing Committee of NBWL recommended the proposal for broken up area (57.20 hectares) for approval subject to submission of a rectified site-specific mine reclamation plan in consultation with the Forest Department of Assam.

On the other hand, for the unbroken area (41.39 hectares), the NBWL will consider the matter after the user agency submits a feasibility report for underground mining and compliance report regarding fulfilment of all the other conditions recommended by the

This recommendation for coal mining in the forest by the NBWL has been strongly opposed by the nature lovers, environmental activists and NGOs. The protesters opined that while offering recommendation for coal mining in the forest, the NBWL has overlooked the fact that this is a Protected Area and "should be conserved and protected from any destructive activities in order to ensure the country's ecological and environmental security".

The protesters urged the Prime Minister, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Chief Minister of Assam and the NBWL to stop any current or future coal mining project at Saleki and the whole of Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve, stating that coal extraction will have a catastrophic consequence for the entire ecosystem in the region.

Due to the ongoing lockdown, various NGOs and environmental activists have launched a protest campaign against this issue through social media. A few among them have also embarked on a signature collection drive too.

It may be mentioned here that the Dehing Patkai region is already threatened by high polluting industries such as coal mines, oil refineries and gas drilling adversely affecting the biodiversity in the region.

"Though the NBWL allowed the coal mining project on April 7, 2020, but illegal mining has been going on covertly by the coal mafia in the forest for long, thereby affecting the biodiversity of this virgin forest land," alleged the environmental activists.

# Roland Garros could be behind Bundesliga restart on track despite closed doors: French tennis boss

PARIS, May 10: French tennis chief Bernard Giudicelli admitted on Sunday that Roland Garros, already controversially pushed back four months due to the coronavirus, could be staged behind closed doors.

Giudicelli, who said that the French federation (FFT) had "no regrets" over its unilateral decision to move the clay court Grand Slam from May 24-June 7 to September 20-October 4, insisted all options remain on the table.

"We haven't ruled out any option. Roland Garros is first and foremost a story of matches and players," he told the Journal du Dimanche.

"There is the tournament taking place in the stadium, and the tournament on TV screens.

"Millions of viewers around the world are waiting. Organising it behind closed doors would allow part of the business model - television rights (which account for more than a third of the tournament's revenues) – to go ahead. This cannot be overlooked."

The spread of the coronavirus has halted all tennis since mid-March and will not resume until July 13 at the earliest. Wimbledon has already been cancelled for the first time since the Second World War.

The US Open, due to take place in New

York from August 31-September 13, is also in question with a decision expected in mid-June.

Close to 500,000 fans regularly attend Roland Garros every year.



However, an indication as to the thinking around the 2020 edition came on Thursday when the FFT decided to reimburse all tickets bought for the original date of the tournament rather than transfer them.

Giudicelli admitted that the start of the rescheduled French Open could even be pushed back a further week to begin on September 27.

That would allow a two-week break be-

tween the US Open and Roland Garros.

"I have regular discussions with Andrea Gaudenzi (president of the ATP), Steve Simon (president of the WTA) and David Haggerty (head of the ITF) and another call is planned next week to see how we have progressed.

"We are working well together, but it is still a bit early to precisely determine the schedule." Giudicelli is adamant that the FFT was right to shift the tournament back by four months with the death toll from the coronavirus in France standing at 26,310 by Saturday night.

"Roland Garros is the driving force of tennis in France, it is what feeds the players in our ecosystem (260 million euros in revenue, or 80 per cent of the turnover of the FFT)," added Giudicelli, describing himself as the "good father".

"We think of them first, protecting them. We made a courageous choice and today, no one regrets it. A tournament without a date is a boat without a rudder we don't know where we're going.

calendar as possible, anxious not to harm major events, so that no Masters 1000 or any Grand Slam would be affected. The turn of events seems to have proved us right." - AFP

"We positioned ourselves as far in the

FRANKFURT MAIN, May 10: The Bundesliga restart is not at risk even after the entire squad of second-tier Dynamo Dresden was placed under quarantine,

ball League (DFL) said. Dynamo were ordered to self-isolate for 14 days on Saturday after testing uncovered two new coronavirus cases.

the head of the German Foot-

The blow came just days after Chancellor Angela Merkel's government gave the green light for the Bundesliga season to resume on May 16 following a twomonth absence.

But DFL boss Christian Seifert downplayed the Dynamo setback.

"It's not a reason to call the entire season into question," he told German broadcaster ZDF late on Saturday.

"It was always clear to me that this could happen. We're at the very beginning of the restart." The Bundesliga will

Christian Seifert

Dresden setback: DFL boss

be the first top European league to restart matches since the outbreak of the coronavirus forced lockdown measures to be imposed across the continent.

Matches will be played behind closed doors and with a maximum number of 300 people, including both teams, allowed at each game.

In the run-up to the re-

start, all teams must go into a one-week quarantine training camp.

There are still worries that an outbreak of the coronavirus in the league could halt the resumed season, this time for good.

Seifert said that although he saw no problem right now, further coronavirus cases could throw a spanner in

"It can reach a scale where it's not feasible any more,' he said. "It would depend on how much time there is left to finish the season." The Bundesliga season is slated

to end on June 30, he said. "A lot of player contracts are running out so we want to play as many games as possible before then," Seifert said, adding that some matches could also be post-

poned until early July. The quarantine means that Dynamo, who are bottom of the second division, will not be able to play their fixture against Hanover next weekend.

As well as the players, the club is isolating its entire coaching and supervisory staff.

The German league said on Thursday that it had recorded 10 positive cases from 1,724 tests of players and staff at the top 36 clubs in the first wave of testing, and two more in the second. – AFP

# Plans are in place to start outdoor training: Rijiju

NEW DELHI, May 10: Plans are in place to start outdoor training in premier centres in India later this month and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said the government had to tread a careful path to ensure that athletes remained free from COVID-19.

Rijiju had already said that his ministry was devising a plan for a phased resumption of national camps for Olympic-bound athletes, starting with the athletes currently based at NIS Patiala and SAI Centre in Bengaluru by the end of this month.

"A roadmap is being prepared. If something happens to top athletes it will be a setback and so we are careful and that's why there are no positive coronavirus cases for our athletes till now. Players are pride of our country and so we can't risk anything," Rijiju said.

"Medical experts, technical committee are working to start things. We have started preparing, NIS Patiala, Delhi IG stadium, SAI centres, premier sports centres will be opened after lockdown," he was quoted as saying by India Today.



The coronavirus-forced nationwide lockdown, which has been extended till May 17, forced the sports ministry to delay the resumption of the training camps at SAI centres.

Rijiju said preference will be given to athletes who have qualified for Tokyo Olympics or those who have to go for Olympic qualifiers. He said other athletes might have to wait till at least September but added that this shouldn't make them sad as everyone will come back to the field in a planned manner.

"Players request to allow them to play. But everyone can't be given permission together as it would be risky and so top athletes who have qualified for Olympics or have to go for qualifiers will be given preference.

"No need to be sad for other athletes. Federations are requesting and I know how boring it is without sports but this challenge is for everyone and we will have to wait. We are planning in that manner and the road map is ready.

Rijiju also assured that all the players and coaches will be looked after and they would not be left to suffer in these difficult times. – PTI

### Top-flight football returns in the Faroe Islands

TRSHAVN, May 10: The first official football to be played in western Europe since March took place to little fanfare, behind closed doors in the Faroe Islands.

Originally scheduled to start two months ago, the Faroese top flight belatedly kicked off its 2020 season this weekend after being delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In the last of Saturday's five games, three-time national champions Vikingur were held to a goalless draw by AB.

Vikingur captain Atli Gregersen, who has made 59 appearance for the Faroes' national team, told AFP that he hopes supporters can return to the grounds as soon as possible.

We play for the fans, so it's very hard to play a game without spectators," the 37-year-old said.

"But with a little luck, it will soon be over and we can have our fans back again.' Under normal circumstances, around 10 per cent of the

52,000 inhabitants of the islands, situated between Iceland and Scotland, can congregate in the region's largest stadium. But despite not being allowed inside the grounds, several fans gathered outside to be close to the action.

"I really, really missed it. I play football myself, I played it every day, but since the virus, there is nothing left," AB supporter Sverri Petersen said.

Faroese domestic football, semi-professional and affiliated to FIFA since 1988, has never garnered so much attention. Norwegian television has even bought the rights to show the first 12 rounds of matches, which has given the clubs a significant financial windfall.

'This is a great opportunity... Some players dream of playing full-time internationally. Now, all eyes are on them," said Trondur Arge, a sports journalist at Sosialurin, the largest



Assam Hockey officials distributing masks and sanitizers to health workers in Nagaon.

# Dutee distributes 1000 food packets in her village amid lockdown

NEW DELHI, May 10: Contributing in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, top Indian sprinter Dutee Chand drove down nearly 70 km from Bhubaneswar to her village to distribute food packets.

Dutee took special passes from the authorities in the state capital and took her Mahindra XUV, donated to her by Anand Mahindra in 2016, to her village Chaka Goopalpur in Jajpur district of Odisha.

"This lockdown has hit hard the people in my village and I just wanted to help them in whatever small way I could. So, I took special passes and reached my village on Friday. I distributed food packets to around 1000 people," Dutee, who has now returned to Bhubaneswar, told PTI.

"My family and I had informed the villagers about my visit. People came to my house and I distributed food packets."



The 24-year-old Dutee is now at the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) in Bhubaneswar, where she had pursued Business Administration degree.

The athletics track there has been named after her.

"I am planning to go back again and distribute food to the villagers. We have around 5000 people in the village and next time I will take 2000 food packets," she said.

"I approached KIIT founder (and BJD Member of Parliament) Achyuta Samanta for help. I spent Rs 50,000 from my pocket and the rest was arranged by him." she said.

ympics and the qualification process has been suspended by World Athletics till the end of the year. She had travelled to Patiala in March to

Dutee is yet to qualify for the Tokyo Ol-

try and qualify for the Olympics in the Indian Grand Prix Series but the worsening health crisis had led to the suspension of athletics calendar.

She said the smiling faces of her villagers and the thought of making a small contribution on her part has lessened the anxiety of an athlete vet to qualify for the Olympics. – PTI

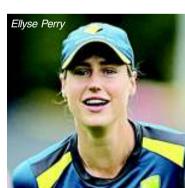
### Women T20 World Cup became bigger than tournament itself: Perry

MELBOURNE, May 10: This year's T20 World Cup was a seminal event in the women's game as it touched a chord with one and all while attaining unprecedented heights in increasing popularity, feels star Australian all-rounder Ellyse Perry.

Perry missed out on the business end of the tournament due to a hamstring surgery but she does not regret it as the event was not just about her or her team-mates.

"Personally, it was poor timing and I would have loved to have played in the rest of the tournament, absolutely without a doubt. But at the same time, it's not about me." she told Cricket Australia website.

"Sometimes I think about that tournament, and particularly about that final, and I don't even think it was about our team. It was just about the event, the moment in women's cricket that it created was just



absolutely incredible. Hopefully, what it does for the sport has a flow-on effect."

Perry insisted that it did not matter who played or who missed in the final because it

was a huge moment for women's cricket. "And I think that was something the team was really quick to acknowledge. All the the last little bit, it made that whole tournament so much bigger than just the tournament itself. "It was more about the sport and women's sport in Australia and around the world. We all felt like that, whether you were play-

ing or not. This was so much bigger than just one game of cricket or one innings or

one spell of bowling from any one individu-

past players and all the effort that's been

put into developing women's cricket over

al. It was about the moment." The final against India turned out to be the most-watched women cricket match with close to 90 lakh fans thronging the

MCG to watch action unfold. It was completely different from the

matches the women cricketers have been accustomed to, playing before empty stadiums. - PTI

9

# UFC 249 ushers in fan-free, mask-filled era of sports

JACKSONVILLE (Florida), May 10: Kicks, punches and grunts echoed through the empty arena. Coaches, commentators and camera clicks resonated like never before.

Blood, sweat, swollen eyelids and face masks signalled the return of UFC, the first major sporting event to resume since the coronavirus shuttered much of the country for nearly two months.

UFC 249 ushered in a new look for sports, too. One without fans and amid several safety precautions. It was definitely different - two fighters adjusted their approaches because of what they heard announcers say and a welcome reprieve for a sports-craved country that went nearly eight weeks without any live events.

Nearly five hours after President Trump congratulated UFC for restarting the sports world, Justin Gaethje stunned heavily favoured Tony Ferguson (26-4) in the main event, earning a TKO in the fifth and final round of the headliner that was deemed an interim lightweight title bout.

It essentially gives Gaethje (22-2) the right to fight titleholder Khabib Nurmagomedov next. Nurmagomedov was unable to fight this weekend because of travel restrictions.

Gaethje flipped himself out of the octagon and back in after the victory and then screamed repeatedly. "I want the real one," he said as he threw down the interim belt.

The stacked fight card saw 33-year-old Henry Cejudo, with blood gushing from his forehead and running down his chest, defend his bantamweight title against Dominick Cruz and then announce his retirement in the middle of the octa-



Anthony Pettis (left) lands a kick on Donald Cerrone during a UFC 249 bout in Jacksonville, - AP/PTI

Printed and published by Ganesh Ch. Das on behalf of Assam Tribune Pvt. Ltd. at the Tribune Press, Tribune Buildings, P.O.- Assam Tribune, M.R.D. Road, Chandmari, Guwahati-781003. Tel. 0361-2661360, 0361-2661360, 0361-2668807 (News Desk), FAX 0361-2666396. E-mail:

gon. It also included heavyweight contender Francis Ngannou pummel another opponent, former NFL defensive end Greg Hardy, to win for the sixth time in eight fights and former welterweight champion and fan favourite Donald Cowboy Cerrone lose his fourth straight.

Trump was part of the event as well. His taped message was played during ESPN's broadcast of the undercard. "I want to congratulate (UFC President) Dana White and the UFC," Trump said. "They're going to have a big match. We love it. We think it's important. Get the sports leagues back. Let's play. Do the social distancing and whatever else you have to do. We need sports. We want our sports back."

UFC 249 was originally scheduled for April 18 in New York, but was postponed in hopes of helping slow the spread of COVID-19.

The mixed martial arts behemoth will hold three shows in eight days in Jacksonville, where state officials deemed professional sports with a national audience exempt from a stay-at-home order as long as the location is closed to the pub-

#### **SU DO KU** 5 2 3 8 7 3 1 9 5

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

#### Solution of last problem

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

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