



p2 Wuhan begins COVID-19 testing of its 11 mn people

p5 4 new containment zones declared in Guwahati

p11 Assam migrant workers in Tamil Nadu in dire straits

NEWS Capsule

UV ray system

GUWAHATI, May 14: A UV ray system brought from Canada is being installed at GMCH so that the facility remains disinfected from COVID-19 virus. It will be commissioned in about ten days. The hospital will open for general patients from tomorrow. – Staff Reporter

Vijay Mallya

LONDON, May 14: In a major setback, embattled liquor baron Vijay Mallya today lost his application seeking leave to appeal in the UK Supreme Court, setting a 28-day clock on extradition process. – PTI

Road mishaps

LUCKNOW, May 14: Fourteen migrant workers were killed and nearly 60 injured in two road accidents today while they were on the way to their homes in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, police said. – PTI

Also see page 3

JOCOSERIOUS



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Seven more test COVID-19 positive in State

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: Seven persons, including a 13-year-old child, who had returned from Mumbai in bus and reached here on Tuesday have tested positive for COVID-19, taking the total number of cases in the State to 85.

The seven new COVID-19 cases include three cancer patients, three of their attendants and a child with heart ailments. The adults were identified as Manoranjan Saha, Pradip Kumar Bania, Gopindra Chandra Malakar, P Basudev Patowari,

Nilakantha Deb, Mina Rani Bania. After arrival, all were quarantined at Raddison Blu hotel and their samples taken for test.

“Seven of the returnees have tested positive. We have taken them to GMCH where they will be admitted. The child will be given a separate room where her mother, even though she is not infected, can also stay. The others will be admitted at the COVID ward,” Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

SEE PAGE 6



Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma visiting COVID-19 quarantine facilities at Sarusajai in Guwahati on Thursday. – UB Photos

COVID-19 STATUS

WORLD	
Confirmed cases	4,383,360
Cured/Discharged	1,565,606
Death	298,392
INDIA	
Confirmed cases	78,003
Cured/Discharged	26,234
Death	2,549
ASSAM	
Confirmed cases	85
Cured/Discharged	40
Death	2

Data as on Thursday

Centre announces free foodgrain to migrant workers

- Farmers to get concessional credit
- Working capital loan to street vendors

NEW DELHI, May 14: The government on Thursday announced a Rs 3.16 lakh crore package of free foodgrains for migrant workers, concessional credit to farmers and working capital loan for street vendors as part of the second tranche of fiscal stimulus to heal an economy hit hard by coronavirus lockdown.

At a news conference, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said 8 crore migrant workers will get 5 kg of

grains and 1 kg of pulses free for two months, while 50 lakh street vendors rendered jobless by the lockdown would be given a working capital loan of Rs 10,000 each.

As many as 2.5 crore farmers will be provided Rs 2 lakh crore of concessional credit through Kisan Credit Cards.

Also for post-harvest (Rabi) and current Kharif crop requirements in May and June, NABARD will provide Rs 30,000 crore additional

emergency working capital funding for farmers through rural cooperative banks and regional rural banks.

Sitharaman said the Central government will bear Rs 3,500 crore cost of giving free foodgrain and pulses to migrant workers. State governments will be responsible for implementation, identification of migrants and full distribution.

SEE PAGE 6

Govt to reverify all beneficiaries in State

PM-KISAN scheme

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: The Assam agriculture department is aiming to carry out 100 per cent reverification of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme's beneficiaries in the State.

Revealing this, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora today said Assam will be the first state of the country to do hundred per cent beneficiary reverification for the specific scheme.

The reverification of beneficiaries for the scheme was started in the State from No-

vember last year as per direction of the Union government. Initially the Union government had directed to carry out five per cent reverification of the total beneficiaries in each State, but later Assam has decided to cover 100 per cent beneficiaries under the drive.

The statement of the minister came after a section of the local media had widely reported the anomalies that took place during the beneficiary selection process for the scheme in different parts of Assam.

SEE PAGE 6

Rlys cancels regular tickets till June 30

NEW DELHI, May 14: Bookings made before and during the lockdown period for journeys to be taken till June 30 on regular trains have been cancelled, the Railways said on Thursday, indicating that normal passenger services are unlikely to resume by that date.

However, Shramik Specials introduced on May 1 and special train services that started on May 12 will continue, the national transporter said in an order. The

Railways has also made it mandatory for its passengers to give their destination addresses for contact-tracing, if needed.

While earlier, the regular train passenger services were cancelled until “further advice”, the Railways’ Thursday order indicated that there would be no resumption of these services at least till the end of June.

SEE PAGE 6

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TENDER NOTICE

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER
 Chief Engineer, Assam Police Housing Corporation Ltd., Rehbari, Guwahati-8, Assam Re-invites Bids in two bid system through e-tender and sealed tender for the Balance works under MOITRI Scheme, various works under Annual Action Plan MPF (Plan) 2013-14 (State Share), various works under Civil Defence & Home Guards, various works under 13th FCA Balance Works and various works under Assam Police Headquarters with a validity of 120 days from the date of opening of the tender. The invitation of bids is open to all Prospective Bidders and the Registered Contractors of Assam Police Housing Corporation Ltd. as per Detail particulars may be seen at website <https://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.
 Sd/- Chief Engineer, Assam Police Housing Corporation Ltd. Rehbari, Guwahati-8.
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 Sri Kishori Mohan Sarma & 5 Ors. ...Appellants/ Applicants -versus- Smt. Pakheswari Kachari & 13 Ors. ...Respondents/ Opp. Parties To.
 1. Smt. Pakheswari Kachari W/o Late Paniram Kachari Kherakuchi (Kerakuchi) P.O. Saukuchi, P.S. Basistha Guwahati-781034 Kamrup(M), Assam
 2. Sri Amiya Kumar Das S/o Sri Khagen Chandra Das R/o House No.6 Bikash Nagar Borsojai Jagaran Path P.S. Basistha Guwahati-781028
 3. Sri Bipul Kumar Das S/o Sri Khagen Chandra Das R/o Bikash Nagar Borsojai, Sarat Chandra Sinha Path P.S. Basistha Guwahati-781028
 4. Sri Kishan Singh S/o Sri Mani Singh R/o Lachit Nagar Ulubari P.S. Paltan Bazar Guwahati-781007 Kamrup(M), Assam
 5. Smt. Sarala Das Baishya W/o Phaniram Baishya R/o Sankar Nagar Ghoramara Guwahati-781028
 6. Sri Narendra Chandra Das S/o Dharani Dhar Das R/o Bharalumukh Santipur Mouza Jalukbari P.S. Bharalumukh, Kamrup(M) Guwahati-781009 Assam
 7. Sri Basanta Kumar Baishya S/o Sri Madhav Chandra Baishya R/o Santipur P.S. Bharalumukh Guwahati-781009 Kamrup(M), Assam
 ...Respondents
 8. Sri Rajesh Goswami S/o Sri Ganesh Goswami R/o House No. 30 Near Bhetapara Chariali Beltola, P.S. Basistha Kamrup(M), Assam
 9. Sri Laxmi Buragohain S/o Sri Prafulla Buragohain R/o Maidamgaon, Mouza Beltola, P.S. Basistha, Kamrup(M), Assam
 10. Sri Sheonath Prasad S/o Sri Raghuveer Prasad R/o Borsojai (Bhetapara) Mouza Beltola, P.S. Dispur Kamrup(M), Assam
 11. Sri Ugra Barman S/o Late Haricharan Barman R/o Hengerabari, P.S. Dispur, Guwahati-781036 Kamrup(M), Assam
 12. Girish Chandra Varma S/o Maharathi Varma R/o Narengi, P.S. Noonmati Guwahati-781026
 ...Proforma Respondents
 Take notice that above named Appellant/ Applicant has preferred an civil revision and vide Order dated 18.02.2020 passed by the Hon'ble Gauhati High Court in I.A.(C) No. 977/2020 arising out of FAO No. 19/2020 and the Hon'ble Court was pleased to direct the parties to maintain status quo in respect of the land covered by Dag No. 3087 of Patta No. 1555 and Dag No. 3088 of Patta No. 1556 covered by Village - Borsojai, Mouza - Beltola in the district of Kamrup(M) and notice was issued in the said interlocutory application and that 25th day of May, 2020 has been fixed for appearance.
 If no appearance is made on your behalf by yourself or your pleader on the date so fixed, the matter be heard and decided in your absence.
 Given under my hand and seal of this court on this 13th day of May, 2020.
 Sd/- Deputy Registrar (J-II) Gauhati High Court Guwahati.
 CD/LN/P/BP000009/1

Trump targets Voice of America

WASHINGTON, May 14: President Donald Trump has had many targets in his war against the media, but perhaps none is more surprising than the Voice of America, the venerable US-funded institution created during World War-II to broadcast independent news and promote American values to the world.

Trump and his supporters have accused the outlet of "disgraceful" reporting and are now pushing hard to install their choice to run the government agency that oversees VOA and its affiliates.

That battle is about to hit Congress, where partisan lines have been drawn amid a debate that could have a significant impact on the future of the global broadcaster.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had been scheduled to vote on Thursday on Trump's nominee to head the US Agency for Global Media, which runs VOA and its sister outlets Radio Free Asia, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Cuba-focused Radio Marti. - Agencies

Suicide attack in Afghanistan kills 5

KABUL, May 14: A suicide bombing in Afghanistan's eastern Paktia province on Thursday that looked to target a military compound but exploded before its destination killed five civilians and wounded at least 29 others, including civilians and military personnel, Afghan officials said.

The Taliban took responsibility for the bombing, calling it retaliation for statements by President Ashraf Ghani blaming it for an attack earlier this week against a maternity hospital that killed 24 people, including two newborns as well as several mothers and nurses. - AP

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CONSTRUCTION OF TOILETS AT ALIPURDUAR DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. 39W-2/APDJ Dated 13-05-2020. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. 13-AP-I-2020. Name of work: Construction of Toilets at New Cooch Behar, New Alipurduar, Dhurguñi & Alipurduar Jn. circulating area of railway stations. Tender Value: ₹50,26,789.91. Earnest Money: ₹1,00,600/- Cost of tender document: ₹5,000/- E-tender will be closed on 09-06-2020 at 13:00 hrs. & opened on 09-06-2020 at 15:00 hrs. at DRM (W)/Alipurduar Jn. office. For details please visit in website www.ireps.gov.in
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STORES E-PROCUREMENT

Tender Notice No.: S/01/2020-21, Dated: 12-05-2020 (1) All tenders have been uploaded on Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS). www.ireps.gov.in. For details & necessary guidelines for quoting against e-tender. Please visit IR E-Procurement portal. (2) The prospective tenders are advised to get them registered on the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> online. This registration is mandatory for participation in e-tendering and is free of charge. (3) Offers are to be submitted online only. Offers sent/submitted against such e-tenders through e-mail, post/fax/in person will be rejected summarily without any consideration. (4) This notice is for information during initial phase only. In future, no such notice shall be published. Vendors are requested to get registered with IREPS and visit portal www.ireps.gov.in for future tenders. (5) Please submit offers online for the following materials: **SN.1: Tender No.: 40/205024/01/01/2020. Brief Description, PL No & Quantity:** Rechargeable LED based maintainer/white torch type of LED SMD LED cool white power etc. to PL-4330N001. Qty: 1500 Nos. for SSE/Store/SWS/Pandu. Closing/Opening date : 15-05-2020 **SN.2: Tender No.: 40/190355/01/02/2020. Brief Description, PL No & Quantity:** 4.5 KW Brushless alternator without Rectifier cum regulator equipment for 110 volt DC SG TL coaches including all accessories as per RDS/s spec. etc. To PL-45030819. Qty: 71 Nos. for Dibrugarh Town/WS/Depot. Qty: 28 Nos. for Pandu GSD. Qty: 68 Nos. for New Bongaigaon WS/Depot. Qty: 8 Nos. New Jalpaiguri GSD. Qty: 5 Nos. Kalthar GSD. Closing/Opening date : 18-05-2020. PCMM, Maligaon NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Serving Customers With A Smile

Wuhan begins testing of its 11 mn people

CHINA REPORTS 15 NEW COVID-19 CASES

BEIJING/WUHAN, May 14: China has reported 15 new COVID-19 cases, including 12 asymptomatic infections, the health authorities said on Thursday, as the mass testing for the deadly coronavirus began for the 11 million people in the city of Wuhan, amid apprehensions about a second wave of the pandemic.

According to China's National Health Commission (NHC), the three new cases are domestically transmitted, with two reported in Liaoning province and one in Jilin province.

As of Wednesday, the overall confirmed cases on the mainland had reached 82,929, including 101 patients who were still being treated. Overall, the death toll in China stood at 4,633, the NHC said.

Following a spike in cases, officials in Jilin city of the north-east China's Jilin province have adopted a number of more stringent measures to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Gai Dongping, vice-mayor of Jilin, told reporters on Wednesday that the city had reported a total of 21 community cases, with two asymptomatic patients, since the first cluster infection was reported a week ago.

"The current outbreak is very serious and complex and poses a major risk of further

spread. In order to prevent and stem the spread of the epidemic, the Jilin epidemic prevention and control group has decided to implement control measures in the urban area of Jilin," she was quoted as saying by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post.

The NHC said that 712 people with asymptomatic infections were under medical observation. This included 574 in Hubei province and its capital Wuhan.

The local Health Commission in Wuhan said no new confirmed case of coronavirus was reported on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Wuhan began a massive campaign on Wednesday to test all of its over 11 million people.

The tests to be completed by May 20 began as a top health official warned that China's risk of COVID-19 cluster infections caused by the sporadic cases cannot be ignored, although the epidemic is in a generally stable state in the country at the moment.

The newly-reported six confirmed domestically transmitted cases in the Chinese mainland on Tuesday were all related to previous cluster infections, Song Shuli, a spokesperson for the NHC told the media here in Beijing on Wednesday. - PTI



Icelandic horses go wild as they are for the first time in the season driven from their stable to a meadow on a stud farm in Wehrheim near Frankfurt, Germany on Thursday. - AP/PTI

'Pandemic becoming child rights crisis as 6,000 kids could die daily'

UNITED NATIONS, May 14: The UN's children agency has warned that an additional 6,000 children could die daily from preventable causes over the next six months as the COVID-19 pandemic weakens the health systems and disrupts routine services.

As the coronavirus outbreak enters its fifth month, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) requested USD 1.6 billion to support its humanitarian response for children impacted by the pandemic.

The health crisis is "quickly becoming a child rights crisis. And without urgent action, a further 6,000 under-fives could die each day," it said.

With a dramatic increase in the costs of supplies, shipment and care, the agency appeal is up from a USD 651.6 million request made in late March

reflecting the devastating socioeconomic consequences of the disease and families' rising needs.

"Schools are closed, parents are out of work and families are under strain," UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore said on Tuesday.

"As we reimagine what a post-COVID world would look like, these funds will help us respond to the crisis, recover from its aftermath, and protect children from its knock-on effects."

The estimate of the 6,000 additional deaths from preventable causes over the next six months is based on an analysis by researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, published on Wednesday in the *Lancet Global Health Journal*.

UNICEF said it was based

on the worst of three scenarios analysing 118 low-and-middle-income countries, estimating that an additional 1.2-million deaths could occur in just the next six months, due to reductions in routine health coverage, and an increase in so-called child wasting.

Around 56,700 more maternal deaths could also occur in just six months, in addition to the 144,000 likely deaths across the same group of countries. The worst case scenario, of children dying before their fifth birthdays, would represent an increase "for the first time in decades," Fore said. "We must not let mothers and children become collateral damage in the fight against the virus. And we must not let decades of progress on reducing preventable child and maternal deaths, be lost," she said. - PTI

London Diary
 Hiramoni Sarma



PM's lockdown address leaves Britain confused

In a recorded TV address, Boris Johnson set out limited relaxations of lockdown rules on May 10. The rules are only applicable in England. Workers who are unable to work from home are now actively encouraged to return to work if they can do so safely and avoid public transport if possible. People are allowed unlimited outdoor exercise, sunbathe in parks and drive to beauty spots, but fines are increased for those who break the two-metre social distancing rule.

Boris Johnson's decision to loosen the lockdown from 'Stay Home' slogan to 'Stay Alert' slogan has not been taken well with the leaders of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland refusing to change the 'Stay Home' message. According to Nicola Sturgeon, the First Minister of Scotland, dropping the 'Stay at Home' message can have catastrophic consequences and ordered Scots to follow different sets of rules for outdoor exercise. Mark Drakeford, the First Minister of Wales also advised people in Wales not to change 'Stay at Home' guidelines. The Welsh government's Twitter feed broadcast a 15-second clip with an unambiguous voiceover stating "you must stay home".

Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer criticised the Prime Minister for not having clarity on the proposed easing out lockdown plan with no appropriate guidelines. Trade Unions have not agreed to the new workplace guidance either. Union's general secretary, Dave Prentis is clear in his statement that the return to work must be safe and employees' safety is of utmost importance.

Supporters of Mr Johnson argue that he is trying to strike a balance between setting out a roadmap for reopening the economy and making no promises about exactly when schools, shops, cafes, and restaurants would open. However, sooner or later Johnson is going to have to pick a side in the argument over whether the threat of a crashing economy will require taking some risks.

Poster redesign to raise a smile

York National Railway Museum that initially created posters of picturesque destination of Cornwall, the Yorkshire Coast and Northern Ireland in order to encourage public to travel to those places, have now redesigned the posters with slogans such as "Visit when this is all over" and "One day soon, but not today." The Director of the Museum hopes that while people cannot visit these scenic places currently. These redesigned posters might give people something to look forward to once the lockdown is lifted.



YORKSHIRE COAST
 One day soon but not today
TRAVEL BY TRAIN
 BRITISH RAILWAYS
 RAILWAY MUSEUM SERVICE & HERITAGE STAY AT HOME. SAVE LIVES

'Never give up, never despair'

Millions of Britons celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE Day despite the lockdown and paid tributes to the heroes who helped the nation win World War-II 75 years ago. VE Day (Victory in Europe Day) is a celebratory day to mark the end of World War-II in Europe which is celebrated every year on 8th of May.

The Queen addressed the nation and paid tributes to the generations of both 1945 and 2020 in a pre-recorded televised address from Windsor Castle. As the Queen remembered Britain's sacrifices during the second world war, she also praised the nation's response to the pandemic. During her speech, the Queen said: "When I look at our country today, and see what we are willing to do to protect and support one another, I say with pride that we are still a nation, those brave soldiers, sailors and airmen would recognise and admire." She continued by

saying: "Today it may seem hard that we cannot mark this special anniversary as we would wish. Instead, we remember from our homes and our doorsteps. But our streets are not empty; they are filled with the love and the care that we have for each other." This was the Queen's second televised address during the coronavirus outbreak, following her speech to the country on 5th April.

Labour appeals for relief to renters

Labour party has urged the government to do more to protect the private renters beyond June as polling shows that over 1.7 million people in the private sector fear they will lose their jobs by this summer. Since March, Housing Associations are banned from evicting tenants who have fallen behind on rent payments due to the pandemic and the ban expires at the end of June. Labour party says that the current protection for renters is woefully inadequate and has suggested that people should be given two years to pay back rent arrears accrued because of the coronavirus crisis.

Deaths in mental health hospitals

Mental Health hospitals are warned to protect their vulnerable patients, as deaths in mental health hospitals have doubled compared with last year. According to the charity Inquest, reasons may be many such as external agencies not scrutinising units during the pandemic, indirect impact of Covid-19 on the therapeutic services, medication, seclusion-and self-inflicted deaths. Such dramatic increase in deaths is extremely worrying and the charity said that more needs to be done to understand the context.



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Corona Snippets

Odisha couple skips wedding bash, donates to CM's fund

KENDRAPARA (Odisha), May 14: Putting to rest plans of a grand wedding, a couple in Odisha's Jagatsinghpur district has tied the knot in a simple ceremony and donated a part of the funds set aside for the occasion to aid the State in its fight against COVID-19.

The groom, Jyoti Ranjan Swain, said the two families had made elaborate plans for the wedding, but the couple decided to ditch the celebrations, and donate Rs 10,000 to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

"We had earlier arranged a grand function. But the lockdown threw a spanner in the works. So we decided to donate a part of the money saved for the wedding to help the State combat the pandemic," said the groom, a resident of Erasama block in the district. - PTI

No money to be charged for migrants travelling in trains: Yogi

LUCKNOW, May 14: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said that no money will be charged from migrant labourers for the special trains arranged on the request of the State.

"The CM has decided that no money will be charged from migrant labourers coming on trains run on the State's request to the railways. For this advance payment will be given to the railways. It has also been decided to impose a fine of Rs 100 on those not wearing masks or covering their faces," Additional Chief Secretary, Home and Information, Awanish Kumar Awasthi told reporters here.

He said that so far 318 trains have brought 3.84 lakh migrant labourers to UP from other States, while 72,637 people, including students, have been brought by roadways buses. - PTI

167 go missing from train bringing migrants to Haridwar

HARIDWAR, May 14: As many as 167 passengers of a special train bringing migrants to Haridwar from Gujarat's Surat have gone missing, causing concern among officials here.

The number of passengers who boarded the train here does not match with the list of passengers received from Surat, Haridwar District Magistrate C Ravishankar said on Thursday. "The discrepancy is being looked into. If these passengers have gone missing after boarding the train in Surat then it is a serious matter," he said.

As per the list received from the Surat administration, 1,340 people were travelling by a special train that left Surat on May 12 but when it reached Haridwar station, only 1,173 passengers got down from the train. - PTI

Kerala sees spike in COVID-19 cases as 26 more test positive

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, May 14: In a steep rise in COVID-19 cases in Kerala in several days, as many as 26 people, including 7 foreign returnees and a police personnel, tested positive on Thursday, taking the number of people under treatment to 64.

The tally of COVID-19 cases in the State has risen to 560. While 10 of the new cases were from Kasaragod district, Malappuram reported five, Palakkad and Wayanad three each, Kannur two and Pathanamthitta, Idukki and Kozhikode districts one case each, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said. Three people - two from Kollam and one from Kannur - have recovered, he told reporters here. - PTI

Case lodged against 40 persons for attending religious event

MUMBAI, May 14: An offence was registered against 40 persons from the Muslim community who allegedly defied the COVID-19 lockdown by participating in a religious ritual in south Mumbai's Dongri area, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on Wednesday at Banatwala Building, where two flat owners organised the observance of 'Maatam', a ritual performed by Muslims, an official said.

At least 40 persons, including women, had participated in the ritual and a case was registered against them under relevant Sections of the Indian Penal Code and Disaster Management Act, he said.

Police have also served notices to the organisers. - PTI

DU final year exam for UG, PG from July 1

NEW DELHI, May 14: The Delhi University will hold examinations for its final year post graduate and under graduate students from July 1 and in case the situation arising out of the COVID-19 outbreak does not normalise, it will adopt 'Open Book' mode to conduct the test, the varsity said on Thursday.

Under the 'Open-Book' mode of examination, the student will be able to refer books, notes and other study materials to answer the questions.

Students will sit in their homes and will download question papers for their respective course from the portal. They will upload the answers in a span of two hours. - PTI



Migrants wait for a means of transport to reach a railway station and board a special train to their native places in Uttar Pradesh, in Ahmedabad on Thursday. - PTI

Doubling time of COVID-19 cases slows down to 13.9 days in last 3 days: Vardhan

NEW DELHI, May 14: The doubling time of coronavirus infection cases has slowed down to 13.9 days in the last three days, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Thursday, as the COVID-19 death toll rose to 2,549 and the number of cases to 78,003.

The minister visited the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) here and dedicated the COBAS 6800 testing machine to the nation.

Altogether 14 States and Union Territories have not

reported any case of COVID-19 in these 24 hours, he said. These States and UTs are Gujarat, Telangana, Jharkhand, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Puducherry.

"It is heartening that the last three days' (COVID-19) doubling time has slowed down to 13.9 days, while the doubling time in the past 14 days was 11.1," Vardhan was quoted as saying in a health

ministry statement.

About ramping up testing capability, the minister said, "We have now developed a capacity to conduct 1,00,000 tests per day. Today marks an important milestone as we have carried out nearly 20 lakh COVID-19 tests at more than 500 laboratories - 359 government and 145 private - in the country."

The COBAS 6800, he said, is the first fully automated, high-end machine for real-time COVID-19 PCR testing procured by the government, and is installed at the NCDC.

"The COBAS 6800 will provide quality, high-volume testing with a high throughput of test around 1,200 samples in 24 hours. It will largely increase the testing capacity with reduction in pendency," Vardhan said.

Highlighting its other features, the Union Health Minister said COBAS 6800 is robotics-enabled minimising the chance of contamination as well as the risk of infection among healthcare workers since it can be operated remotely with limited human intervention. - PTI

Failed students of classes 9, 11 to get another opportunity: CBSE

NEW DELHI, May 14: Students of classes 9 and 11, who failed in the exams this year, will get a one-time opportunity to appear in school-based tests and improve their performance in view of the COVID-19 situation, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has announced.

The board had last month announced promoting all students up to class 8, irrespective of their performance in the exams.

"In view of requests from parents and students, as a one-time measure in an extraor-

inary situation, the CBSE has decided that all failed students of classes 9 and 11 will be given an opportunity to appear in a school-based test again. The opportunity will be extended to students irrespective of whether their exams have been completed and results announced or have not been completed.

"The facility will be extended irrespective of the number of subjects and attempts," CBSE Exam Controller Sanjay Bhardwaj said.

The board has clarified that the one-time opportunity is

being extended only in the current year in view of the unprecedented conditions of COVID-19 and the benefit will not be extended in the future.

"Schools, by providing remediation to such students, can conduct online, offline or innovative tests and may decide on promotion on the basis of the test. The test can be taken in all subjects in which the students have failed. Before holding the test, the schools will give sufficient time to the students to prepare," Bhardwaj said. - PTI

Thackeray, 8 others elected unopposed to Council

MUMBAI, May 14: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and 8 other candidates belonging to the ruling and Opposition parties were declared elected unopposed to the State Legislative Council on Thursday.

The biennial elections for the 9 seats of the Council, which fell vacant on April 24, were scheduled to be held next Thursday.

The election process was initiated on May 4 to fill up vacancies for 9 seats, which fell vacant after the completion of the term of 9 members.

However, State Governor BS Koshiyari had recently written to the Election Commission of India (ECI), requesting it to hold the polls to enable Thackeray to complete the constitutional provision of getting elected to the legislature within six months of becoming Chief Minister.

The 9 candidates in the fray were Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray and Neelam Gorhe, NCP's Shashikant Shinde, Amol Mitkari, Congress's Rajesh Rathod, and four candidates of the Opposition BJP - Ranjitsinh Mohite Patil, Gopichand Padalkar, Ajit Datke and Ramesh Karad. - PTI

'Indian troops continue posture along China border'

NEW DELHI, May 14: The Indian troops are maintaining their "posture" along the border with China while infrastructure development in the frontier areas is on track, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane said on Thursday, days after personnel of the two countries were locked in two separate incidents of violent face-offs.

Gen Naravane said the incidents in Eastern Ladakh and North Sikkim involved aggressive behaviour by Chinese and Indian troops resulting in minor injuries to personnel from both the sides. The Army Chief said both sides "disengaged" after dialogue and interaction at the local level.

"It is reiterated that both these incidents are neither correlated nor do they have any connection with other global or local activities," he told journalists when asked about the face-offs.

"All such incidents are managed by established mechanisms wherein local formations from both sides resolve issues mutually as per established protocols and strategic guidelines given by the Prime

Minister after the Wuhan and Mamallapuram summits," Gen Naravane said.

He said Indian border troops have always been upholding peace and tranquillity along the border areas.

"I can say with confidence that development of infrastructure capabilities along our northern borders is on track. Our force posture will not suffer due to the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

It is learnt that the situation in the Eastern Ladakh region remained tense with troops of the two countries maintaining a close watch on each other demonstrating aggressive posturing, even 9 days after the violent clash involving 250 soldiers from both sides.

The confrontation began on the evening of May 5 and both sides decided to "disengage" the next day.

In a separate incident, nearly 150 Indian and Chinese military personnel were engaged in a face-off near Naku La Pass in the Sikkim sector of the Sino-Indian border on Saturday. At least 10 soldiers from both sides sustained injuries in the incident. - PTI

'Work from home' to be new normal for govt offices post lockdown

NEW DELHI, May 14: 'Work from home' may become a new normal post-lockdown for government employees to ensure social distancing norms till the coronavirus pandemic is checked.

Draft guidelines in this regard have been circulated by the personnel ministry to all Central government departments asking them to send their comments on it by May 21, failing which, it would be presumed that they are in agreement with the proposed draft.

Preparing for life amid COVID-19 pandemic, the ministry said that the steps were being initiated because the virus necessitated many ministries to operate from home to maintain social distancing.

According to the draft, the government may provide option for work from home to eligible officers and staff for 15 days in a year as a matter of policy.

There are 48.34 lakh Central government employees. "Many of the ministries and departments in government have successfully managed and rendered exemplary results in combat against the ongoing pandemic outbreak during the lockdown period by leveraging e-office and video confer-

encing facilities of National Informatics Centre (NIC). This was the first of its kind of experience in Government of India," it said.

It is quite likely that for the near future, the Central Secretariat will continue to go for staggered attendance and variable working hours to maintain social distancing at workplace, the ministry said.

"Therefore, a broad framework for work from home is important to standardize the operating procedure even post-lockdown situation and to ensure safety and security of information, while accessing government files and information remotely from home," it said.

The draft has given broad standard operating procedures (SOPs) that will ensure smooth and seamless functioning of the government works besides imparting resilience in the ecosystem even in post-lockdown situation.

Employees will be provided with logistic support in the form of laptops or desktops by the respective ministries or departments and employees will be reimbursed for Internet services that they would use while working from home. - PTI

14 home-bound migrants die in 2 road mishaps, nearly 60 injured

LUCKNOW, May 14: Fourteen migrant labourers were killed and nearly 60 injured in two road accidents on Thursday while they were on the way to their homes in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, police said.

In an early morning accident in Guna, around 180 km from Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal, eight Uttar Pradesh-bound migrant workers were killed and nearly 55 injured when the truck they were travelling in collided with a bus, the MP police said.

The second accident took

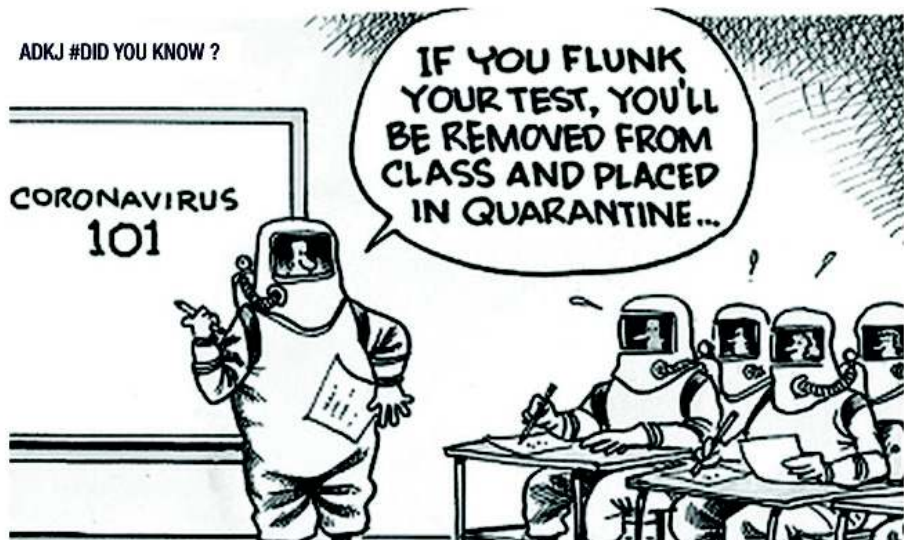
place in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar when six migrant workers walking to their homes in Bihar from Punjab were killed and four seriously injured after being hit by a bus on the Delhi-Saharanpur Highway, officials said.

The Guna accident took place around 3 am when the truck carrying nearly 65 migrant labourers from Maharashtra to Uttar Pradesh collided with a bus, which only had a driver, coming from the wrong side on the Guna bypass road, Superintendent of Police Tarun Nayak said.

The injured are undergoing treatment at the Guna district hospital, he said, adding that none of them sustained any serious injury.

Prima facie, it seems the carelessness of the bus driver caused the accident, Nayak said, adding a case has been registered against the bus driver and further investigation is under way.

The deceased were residents of Unnao and Raebareilly districts of Uttar Pradesh, according to police, who also said the truck carrying the migrant labourers was going to Unnao. - PTI



The Nodal Point

The current control room for Corona virus control of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is based in a century old building in Civil Lines, New Delhi. In the past the building was the residence of the commander-in-chief of the British Army in India.



EventBot: Mobile banking Android malware horsing around in cyberspace

NEW DELHI, May 14: A mobile banking malware called 'EventBot', which steals personal financial information, may affect Android phone users in India, the federal cyber-security agency has said in a latest advisory.

The CERT-In has issued a caution, saying the Trojan virus may "masquerade as a legitimate application such as Microsoft Word, Adobe flash and others using third-party application downloading sites to infiltrate into victim device".

A Trojan is a virus or malware that cheats a victim to stealthily attack its computer or phone-operating system.

"It has been observed that a new Android mobile malware named EventBot is spreading.

"It is a mobile-banking Trojan and info-stealer that abuses Android's in-built accessibility features to steal user data from financial applications, read user SMS messages and intercept

SMS messages, allowing malware to bypass two-factor authentication," the CERT-In advisory said.

The Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) is the national technology arm to combat cyber attacks and guard the Indian cyber space.

EventBot, it said, targets over 200 different financial applications, including banking applications, money-transfer services and cryptocurrency wallets, or financial applications based in the US and Europe region at the moment but some of their services may affect Indian users as well.

The virus "largely targets financial applications like Paypal Business, Revolut, Barclays, UniCredit, CapitalOne UK, HSBC UK, TransferWise, Coinbase, paysafecard etc.," the CERT-In said.

The agency said while EventBot has not been "seen" on Google Playstore

still now, it can "masquerade" as a genuine mobile phone application.

"Once installed on victim's Android device, it asks permissions such as controlling system alerts, reading external storage content, installing additional packages, accessing Internet, whitelisting it to ignore battery optimisation, prevent processor from sleeping or dimming the screen, auto-initiate upon reboot, receive and read SMS messages and continue running and accessing data in the background," the advisory explained.

"Also, it can retrieve notifications about other installed applications and read contents of other applications.

"Over the time, it can also read Lock Screen and in-app PIN that can give attacker more privileged access over victim device," the advisory said.

The CERT-In has suggested certain counter-measures to check the virus infection into Android phones:

"Do not download and install applications from untrusted sources like unknown websites and links on unscrupulous messages; install updated anti-virus solution; prior to downloading or installing apps (even from Google Playstore), always review the app details, number of downloads, user reviews, comments and the 'additional information' section.

Exercise caution while visiting trusted/un-trusted sites for clicking links; install Android updates and patches as and when available; users are advised to use device encryption or encrypting external SD card feature available with most of the Android operating system."

"Make sure you have a strong AI (artificial intelligence) powered mobile antivirus installed to detect and block this kind of tricky malware if it ever makes its way onto your system," the advisory states. - PTI

MESSAGE FOR TODAY

The best portion of a good man's life is his little nameless, unencumbered acts of kindness and of love.

— WORDSWORTH

The Assam Tribune

Worrying development

With the State recording its biggest single-day Covid-19 case spike on Wednesday – all detected in and around State capital Guwahati's commercial hub Fancy Bazar – a stringent monitoring mechanism needs to be put in place all over the State. As many as 15 persons – all said to be contacts of a Fancy Bazar hotel worker who had tested positive a day before – tested positive, taking the total number of cases in the State to 79. Given the spread of the coronavirus in the Fancy Bazar localities, the affected areas need to be declared as containment zones. The chain of the contacts of all those affected needs to be established immediately so that the required interventions including screening and quarantining can be facilitated. Given that Fancy Bazar is a congested place and is visited daily by people in large numbers from all over the State over commercial purposes, any further spread of the coronavirus might be disastrous for the whole State. With inter-State travel restrictions lifted, thousands of people stranded in other parts of the country are now entering Assam and without a stringent monitoring protocol in place, the situation can turn grave in the days ahead. We have already witnessed how a single bus from Rajasthan added considerably to the number of patients in the State. Also imperative is to sanitize the bus and railway stations frequently and to remove the encroachments that add to congestion in these areas. The area in and around the ASTC bus station and the railway station is under large-scale encroachment by vendors and the authorities need to clear these parts immediately.

With indications evident that the State is going to see a surge in the number of Covid-19 patients in the coming days, screening and treatment facilities need further augmentation. Thankfully, 39 of the infected in the State have so far been cured and the death rate has been kept quite low. The need to keep the number of the infected to a reasonable level is also imperative from the point of facilitation of treatment. A massive surge in the number of patients can overwhelm the hospitals and cause large-scale deaths without treatment. Also clear is the fact that the nationwide lockdown which has been extended three times has not led to a downward trend in the number of new cases. Compared to India, some other countries that had resorted to similar shutdowns witnessed a downward trend in the Covid-19 curve. Factors such as India's huge population, poor educational and healthcare indices, etc., too, are having a bearing on the situation. With India's chart instead showing a steady rise in new cases, governments and healthcare experts need to do some quick brainstorming for reducing the trend in the number of new transmissions. Questions have also arisen now whether bureaucratic mess-ups both in the procurement of PPEs and rapid testing kits have frittered away the advantage, i.e., the time bought by the lockdown.

Remedial measures

The Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent prolonged lockdown have wrought havoc on the Indian economy by bringing almost all commercial and trade activities to a halt. Equally important, it had forced lakhs of workers, who constitute the backbone of the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), to leave their place of work and return to their native villages, thereby creating a vacuum which would act as a constraint in any endeavour to kick-start renewed manufacturing activities. One needs to bear in mind that the MSME sector contributes to 45% of India's industrial employment, half of the nation's exports and constitutes 95% of all manufacturing units in the nation. The danger of the Indian economy contracting to an unsustainable level having become very real, the Centre has stepped in to try and revive the economy by infusion of capital, and appropriately the very first set of 15 measures announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as a follow-up of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of a Rs 20 lakh crore economy revival package contains ones directed towards helping this sector. Among the six measures specifically designed to help MSMEs are collateral-free loans to small businesses amounting to Rs 3 lakh crore and additional debt and equity infusion as also a new policy to shield Indian businessmen from 'unfair' competition from foreign counterparts so as to boost indigenous enterprise.

Restriction on foreign companies offering tenders below Rs 200 crore is also designed to boost domestic entrepreneurship. The Finance Minister has underlined her objective of expanding the definition of MSMEs and introducing new thresholds based on turnover while elevating the investment ceilings, thereby giving incentives to individual units to expand so that more jobs are created. She has also sought to assist entrepreneurs through measures to decrease the regulatory burden on companies, while increasing the take-home pay of employees. Nine measures announced by her embrace other integral sectors of the economy which had been hard hit, including non-banking financial companies, micro finance institutions, the real estate sector and Employees' Provident Fund. With the Rs 1.7 lakh crore stimulus package announced earlier by the Finance Minister and steps taken by the Reserve Bank of India since lockdown began on March 24 midnight, the total liquidity support announced under the fiscal and monetary measures so far totals Rs 12.88 lakh crore. The Finance Minister is expected to follow up the first lot with more remedial measures in the coming days catering to other sectors which have been distressed by the lockdown. However, it would be needless to point out that their success in putting the Indian economy on the development trajectory will depend to a great extent on successful containment of Covid-19 in the country, for even if the economy is opened out, activities will gather pace only after normalcy returns.

Growth and development post Covid-19

■ Dr Bhupati Kumar Das

The world is changing very fast and Covid-19, the first pandemic of globalization (the virus appearing in China at dawn can travel to the US by dusk), has delivered a strong message. The excessive use and abuse of mother earth for our greed has brought us to a dangerous situation forcing nature to read us the riot act. The irony is humans provide the conditions for pandemic to prosper. By destroying biodiversity and animal habitat, we are bringing human beings into the equation with animal reservoirs of diseases. As Professor Frank Snowden, author of *Epidemics and Society*, says, we have a ticking time bomb, because we live in a world of microbes and we create channels that microbes can exploit. The technology, innovation, information and environment are changing so fast that we now need visionary leadership to manage a post-Covid-19 world where the new-normal rules.

When we talk about a topsy-turvy future, two aspects of life predominantly come into mind – one, the present state of extreme wealth inequality all over the world and the second, the use of an unsustainable level of earth's biocapacity to achieve our progress.

We need to face the stark reality of growing inequality in the world resulting from the present growth models. Oxfam data (An Economy for the 99%) show, the richest eight persons now have more wealth than half the population of the

world. The story is the same for India. Fifty-seven richest people have more wealth than the poorest 70% of the country. Two-thirds of India's current wealth had been created in-between year 2000 to 2014, going mostly to the rich. This trend has to be reversed as this growing inequality would result in severe adverse consequences in society. The other aspect is about growing restlessness of the unemployed youths. We are sitting on a ticking time bomb threatening the stability of our society. It's vital that the governments, the corporates and the community organizations join hands to tackle the issue jointly.

Secondly, we should be seriously concerned about the rapid rate of ecological collapse arising from the present developmental models adopted by the rich industrialized countries and blindly copied by the rest. The overdependence on fossil fuels for economic growth has led to over-exploitation of natural resources and the insatiable greed for profits has led to over-consumption of goods and services. All these add up to unsustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions, global warming and climate change. The global mean temperature is now 0.8°C above pre-industrial level, sea levels rose by 20 cm and are

now rising 3.2 cm per decade, oceans have warmed up and are acidifying. If proactive national action plans are not taken to reverse the trend, we will reach a 4°C world by 2100. Consequently, the rise in sea levels can lead to the submergence of land inhabited by 200 million people in India and China and around 700 million people globally. Fortunately, world leaders have come around to agree through the Paris Agreement under UNFCCC

With this framework, the whole definition of developed countries changes to those who are maximizing their economic growth and social infrastructure by staying within the biocapacity of one earth. Some of the so-called developed countries cease to be developed while some developing/underdeveloped countries would qualify as developed.

to take proactive, time-bound national action plans to contain the temperature rise by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Still the new leadership would face a humongous task to combat the problem of flooding and huge global warming-impacted refugees.

As per the Global Footprint Net-

work, we are already consuming the equivalent of 1.6 earths of biocapacity meaning that we need 1.6 earths to provide the resources we use and absorb our wastes at present levels. So we are already in overshoot state. The overshoot day is the day when humanity has used up the resources that it takes the planet the full year to regenerate. Earth overshoot day has moved from early October in 2000 to August 13 in 2015. Come to January 1, what happens – mahapralaya?

Highly industrialized countries presently consume the equivalent of several earths' biocapacity in per capita terms. The USA, for instance, consumes the equivalent of four earths, Luxembourg nine earths and so on. So, we need to redefine the concept of development. Are the so-called developed countries really developed?

For long, the Gross National Income was the only measure to define developed countries, developing countries, underdeveloped countries. Subsequently, the Human Development Index was added as a second dimension so that higher GNI along with higher HDI can qualify a country as developed. We have seen the track record of these so-called developed countries. They are all consuming the equivalent of many earths, a direct path to environmental unsustainability. The irony is, the rest of the world

has been encouraged to follow the same path of development.

We need to develop new growth trajectories ensuring ecologically sustainable development that expects all countries to live within the biocapacity of the earth. Economic growth has to be pursued within this biocapacity to maximize the physical and social infrastructure. In this context, this writer along with Dr Usha Jumani, a management consultant, is advocating a three-dimensional framework as a design approach to sustainability. The per capita GNI, the per capita HDI and the per capita Global Hectares are the three dimensions of Dr Jumani's framework. The per capita Global Hectares which allows us to live within the biocapacity limits of one earth becomes the main criterion here. With this framework, the whole definition of developed countries changes to those who are maximizing their economic growth and social infrastructure by staying within the biocapacity of one earth. Some of the so-called developed countries cease to be developed while some developing/underdeveloped countries would qualify as developed. So, the time has come to evolve a new definition of developed countries and to pursue a new growth trajectory bringing Global Hectares into the equation.

We need to reorient our lifestyles and redefine the meaning of development accordingly. India can take a lead on this. Covid-19 is a stark warning and the new leadership better pay heed to this. Our lifestyles and life choices affect all of us. The future is up to us.

Economy reeling under Covid-19

■ Nabajyoti Bhuyan

After the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 as a pandemic, the countries all over the world have taken it seriously and come forward to resist its spread with any means. Almost all the countries voluntarily opted for lockdown so that every citizen can avoid coming in close contact with others and maintain social distance. The worst-hit countries like Italy, the US, Spain and France took this hard decision a little bit late and now they have paid for that mistake. The Indian authorities have taken the decision for lockdown before the situation went out of control. With limited resources of medical facilities, India has no way out except lockdown to prevent the spread of this highly fatal disease.

Lockdown is really a hard decision and is having an adverse effect on the economy. The most affected class is the poor daily wage earners and the unorganized workers. Almost all of these people have lost their livelihood at their workplace of big cities and were stranded in different places without proper amenities. The Government has taken a step with the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana to support this class of people. The Finance Ministry has already come forward with different stimuli to boost up the economy and support the common people as well as the corpo-

rate houses with different economic relaxations. India has already covered two phases of lockdown successfully, now Lockdown 3.0 is going on with ample relaxations including financial activities. But it is really alarming that after taking so many precautionary measures, the total number of infected persons in India has crossed the 70,000 mark.

As informed by the head of the International Monetary Fund, the whole world is heading towards a grim economic condition. The IMF head also warned that all its 189 members will suffer from falling standards of living due to this pandemic. Three months ago, the IMF had predicted that the world economy would grow by 3.3% this year, but contrary to this prediction, the world economy has suffered a lot due to this lockdown in almost all countries and will face the worst condition after the 1930 Great Depression. The poor and developing countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia will suffer the most.

Surprisingly, the aftermath of this pandemic will not create a normal economic recession, but it will lead us to a very alarming economic downturn. In recessions, the economic downturn is being compensated by stimulating demand. But this time during the Covid-19 outbreak, governments and authorities are advocating social distanc-

ing and asking people to reduce non-essential transactions so that people can stay at home. So the suppression of demand is happening in all industrial sectors which will lead us to a situation which no one has ever experienced.

If we consider the worst economic recessions in history, it is found that the goods producing sectors were hit first. But in this pandemic scenario, the service sectors are badly affected, be it travel, aviation or hospitality. If we judge this with gender specific aspects, the service sectors are normally dominated by female employees and the production sectors are dominated by males. So there is a probability that the female employees may suffer more than their male counterparts.

China was first badly affected by this virus almost four months back, but its repercussion was felt all over the world and India was not spared from it. First the electronics sector was hit; 55% of India's electronics import comes from China which slid down due to this disease. China is India's third largest export partner for raw materials like organic chemicals, mineral fuels, cotton, etc., but due to the lockdown in China, the export sector was also affected. Seventy per cent of active pharmaceutical ingredients are imported from China, which are essential for the Indian pharmaceutical companies. This has already created an adverse effect on

the Indian pharmaceutical sector.

India is also famous for historical tourism; every year India witnesses a lot of international and domestic tourists. But after the outbreak of Covid-19, the tourism sector is going through record low footfalls. The aviation sector is another sector which is also badly affected by this pandemic, as people prefer to stay home, maintaining social distance and avoiding travel. All domestic and international flights have been cancelled and the aviation sector became non-operational. Another sector which is going through tough times is the hospitality sector.

However, some sectors are seeing an upward trend in business even in these days of crisis. One such sector is the telecom sector; after the lockdown was imposed, people stuck in their homes started passing their time with their smart phones using data and making calls to near and dear ones. Another such sector is the insurance sector with some governments even voluntarily issuing medical insurance for the health and other emergency workers. The common people will also opt for medical and life insurance after this dreaded disease outbreak as authorities have asked insurers to cover Covid-19 cases in their existing policies. The healthcare sector may witness a boom after this pandemic.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sith-

araman recently announced that the RBI has taken some steps to maintain adequate liquidity in the system, incentivizing the bank credit flows, easing financial stress and enabling normal functioning of markets after the difficulties due to Covid-19. It will certainly help small businesses, MSMEs, farmers and the poor. The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has also welcomed this step. This is the second consecutive set of stimuli by the RBI to revive the Indian economy post Covid-19 outbreak.

After the Lockdown 3.0 has been implemented, sectors like auto, electronics and other manufacturing units have resumed their production with limited manpower and safety measures. Ford India and Maruti Suzuki have reopened their dealer chain with new SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) which support digital and contactless measures. Ola and Uber have resumed services in the Orange and Green zones. Electronics major Samsung has partially resumed its production in their Noida plant. E-commerce companies are now operating fully and delivering non-essential items also. Stalalone shops are now open and gradually almost all economic activities are happening, though Moody's sees a 0% economic growth in year 2020-21. Everyone has to be cautious and needs to balance between economic health and personal health.

Letters to the EDITOR

Burying procedures

way the threat of the virus spreading from the graveyard may be reduced considerably. The corona pandemic has also taught us the importance of valuing and giving dignity to life when one is alive. One should have a befitting life because the dead cannot feel the befitting farewell given to him or her. Yours etc., PURABI P BARUA, Guwahati.

Cattle on highway

Sir, – Through the columns of your esteemed newspaper, I would like to share a necessary issue with the people in general. Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a rapid downfall in the number of vehicles running on the highways. Therefore, the highways are mostly in deserted conditions. As a result, large numbers of cattle are seen gathering on the highways frequently. Cattle are mostly seen taking rest, and the calves are seen in the playful behaviour like jumping, etc. Probably such types of scenes are witnessed in many places along the highways in Assam. And due to such cattle on the highway, a large number of accidents occur daily where even

lives have been lost. In my district, I have frequently heard such accidents where vehicles smashed against such cattle roaming and lying on the highway. On the other hand, the vehicle drivers too should minimize their speed limit if they see such gathering of cattle. Being the most intelligent organism on earth, we have certain responsibilities in such situations. Yours etc., UTTAM SONOWAL, Dhemaji.

Mental harassment

Sir, – The news report 'Body of AUU Prof found hanging in office chamber' (AT, May 13) reveals that Professor Abhijit Sarma, who published several books on his subject, left a suicide note with a phrase 'being deceived' which indicates the possibility of unreported workplace mental harassment. Further, other such reports state that the professor was under punitive action on the basis of a written complaint of a female student, against him, on mentally harassing her for long time. Both have opened the vistas of doing something concrete against the menace.

Petitions on workplace harassments are rare in India although only 'proper and effective legislations can control workplace humiliation' ('Workplace harassment', Rupa Barman Borgohain, AT, January 13, 2019). It's a very daring, distressing act of seeking legal recourse against one's own colleagues. For students, it is impossible. Male students' grievances on mental harassment are not addressed at all. Yours etc., SOME CONCERNED CITIZENS, Guwahati.

Digital fraud

Sir, – There is an alarming increase in digital frauds during the ongoing lockdown. India's usage of the internet is the second largest in the world and in this period many people are using their mobile data more than ever before, even for downloading television shows, movies, music, playing online games and other content. In order to take advantage of this spurt in online usage, many sites are providing pirated versions of such movies and shows. Unfortunately, a lot of these unverified sites have hidden

viruses and ransomware. Recently, software firm Cognisant Tech was subjected to such a hack. I would like to warn the esteemed readers to avoid suspicious links when using internet data. Yours etc., CHANDAN KUMAR NATH, Barpeta.

Sikim and coronavirus

Sir, – The Sikkim Government's timely action to fight against the coronavirus is commendable. The State Government has been able to prevent the spreading of the disease in Sikim, a vulnerable State because of the fact that it is a favourite destination for both domestic and foreign tourists. But in view of the gravity of the situation, the Sikim Government took prompt action to prevent the spreading of the coronavirus well before the Government of India imposed the lockdown. The Sikkim Government deserves praise for this. Yours etc., PUTUL SARMA, Biswanath Chariali.

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

4 new containment zones declared in city



Security personnel at Panbazar Railway Colony.



Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at Kumarpara.



A policeman keeps watch at Fatasil GS Colony.



An ambulance seen at Santipur. — AT photos

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: With the detection of 15 new corona positive cases within 24-hours on Wednesday, the Kamrup (Metro) district administration today declared four new containment zones in and around Fancy Bazar, the largest business hub in the North East. The newly declared containment zones are Kumarpara, Fatasil GS Colony, Panbazar Railway Colony and Santipur.

The administration vide a notification, also expanded the covering area of the containment zone encircling Rajkamal Hotel at Fancy

Bazar. The new boundary of the containment zone is MG Road on the northern side, Jail Road or Jai Narayan Road on the southern side, SRCB Road on the eastern side and Chamber of Commerce Road on the western side.

The boundary of the Kumarpara containment zone is Rupnagar byelane on the north, residence of one Dimbeswar Das and others on the south, residence of one Victor Baishya and others on the eastern side and residence of one Purabi Sarma and others on the western side.

The boundary of the Fatasil GS Colony containment zone is Bibha Mishra RCM complex on the north-

ern side, Gurucharan Sharmah Road on the southern side, Sani Mandir Tinali on the east and Fatasil Road on the west.

The boundary of the Panbazar

and Railway Higher Secondary School on the western side.

In case of the Santipur containment zone, the northern boundary is Pubali Path, vacant plot of

one Arun Sharma is the western boundary.

The order of containment zone for these areas will remain effective until further orders from the district administration.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Suprotiv Lal Barua said police personnel in adequate numbers have been deployed in all the containment zones to strictly restrict any unauthorised entry or exit, except emergency services. He said police personnel will be on round-the-clock duty at these places.

Notably, locals of these areas support the containment zone declara-

tion order. "The situation is really very challenging for us. Hope such restrictions will save us," a resident of Fancy Bazar area said.

Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup (Metro) district Biswajit Pegu said health workers will collect around 300 samples from these containment zones for COVID-19 tests, adding that contact tracing of the infected persons is under way. The district administration is also taking measures to supply rations at the doorstep of every household inside the containment zones.

This morning personnel of the Fire and Emergency Services carried out sanitization in these areas.

Kumarpara, Fatasil GS Colony, Panbazar Railway Colony and Santipur have been declared as containment zones after detection of 15 new corona positive cases in Fancy Bazar area on Wednesday

Railway Colony containment zone is Colony Road on the north, Railway Colony Road on the south, GRP Colony on the eastern side

one Karuna Pathak Sharma is the southern boundary, residence of one Pranab Sharma forms the eastern boundary and residence

Govt frames fresh quarantine procedure for returnees

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: The State health department today released a fresh quarantine SOP for the people returning from outside, under which asymptomatic pregnant women, elderly person, people over 75 years and requiring assistance, persons due to attend funerals and rituals associated with death, children below 10 years of age and Divyangs will be allowed home quarantine.

The second passenger train from Delhi is scheduled to reach Assam tonight with 219 passengers. The first Shramik Special train—plying from Chennai—will also reach Northeast tonight carrying 625 returnees.

The passengers would be screened after they disembark and those who are found to be symptomatic will be isolated and taken to institutional quarantine centres. Others will proceed in government-provided vehicles to the institutional quar-

antine facilities arranged in their home districts by the DCs.

All train passengers to Assam, irrespective of boarding station, will be put in an institutional quarantine facility first.

"As far as possible, we will arrange single rooms with toilets attached. We have asked the DCs to requisition all hotels, guest houses and similar facilities in their districts on rent," Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The passengers will be tested within the first seven days. "If they test negative, they will be allowed to go for home quarantine, after stamping on their hands. The total quarantine period, including periods of both institutional and home quarantine of a passenger, should not be less than 14 days," he said.

Rental charge of the institutional quarantine facilities will be assessed by DCs and borne by the government.

Once hotels and lodges are exhaust-

ed, quarantine facilities can be set up in various institutions like marriage halls, prominent educational institutes and other establishments where single toilet can be provided to one individual or to a group who have travelled together.

Similar food will be provided to all passengers under an institutional quarantine facility of any type across the district according to per person, per day norms to be circulated separately.

Medical teams will conduct periodic checks in the quarantine facility to detect infection, if any, in the facility.

Home quarantine of passengers will imply that the entire residence will be a containment zone during the quarantine period. No person will be allowed to enter or exit the zone during the period. Food will be provided by the administrations.

Committees are being constituted at the local level to monitor the adherence to home quarantine norms by the people.

Govt may go for mobile tracking to scan Fancy Bazar visitors

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: If the number of COVID-19 positive cases in Guwahati's Fancy Bazar rises, the Assam government may go for a Nizamuddin-type mobile tracking to trace people who were in the area during the last six days and screen them, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said today.

Following the detection of fifteen positive cases yesterday, swab samples of around 340 contacts were taken and sent for tests today.

"If the cases jump from fifteen to 30/40, we will go for a mobile tracking to trace all those people who were there during the last six

days. We have already asked Assam Police to be on the job," Sarma said, adding that such people will be screened, if not tested.

He urged all those who had come into contact with the positive people to report to the government "to make the government's job easier."

The fifteen COVID-19 positive people of Fancy Bazar tested yesterday are contacts of a hotel worker, Mangru Sahani, the first case in the area. One is a barber from the Kumarpara area who did haircut of over 70 people, including Sahani's. Another is the manager of the hotel where Mangru worked. A driver, a tea shop owner and two stranded persons lodged in

the hotel also have tested positive.

Four areas in and around Fancy Bazar have been declared as containment zones.

The minister further said the government had anticipated that few people in the buses from Mumbai might test positive and as such utmost precaution was taken.

"A special protocol was followed so that the virus does not spread. The hotel staff at Radisson Blu where they were quarantined was equipped with PPE. Before making the test results positive, we evacuated the patients from the hotel to GMCH and transported the others to their home districts," he added.

Cotton student body opposes seat reduction in HS, sends memo to CM

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 14: The Cotton University Students' Union (CUSU) on Thursday sent a memorandum to the Chief Minister over the reduction in the number of seats in higher secondary classes of the university. A copy of the memorandum was also sent to the State Education Minister.

CUSU vice president Manisha Deka said that the seat reduction process in HS Arts and Science streams in Cotton University has pushed the whole education system to a great uncertainty. The total intake for Science stream was 500 seats and the same for Arts stream was 160, but as per new rules the numbers were reduced to 320 and 120 seats respectively, she rued.

"We raised several questions in the memorandum and urged

the government to resolve them soon. The decision (seat reduction) will harm the students, especially those from poor economic backgrounds as they cannot pay high fees in private institutions. The university can easily increase the seat capacity, but sadly, it is doing just the opposite," Manisha alleged.

The university vide a notification on Monday, had stated that admissions into the university's HS first year classes would be in the order of 320 students in the Science stream and 120 seats in the Arts stream. After the announcement, the students of the university vehemently opposed the decision of the university authority.

Meanwhile, Academic Registrar of the university Sanjay Kumar Dutta said, "The decision was taken at the tenth meeting of the Cotton University Executive Council held on

January 24 this year. The intake capacity was reduced in both the streams only to provide quality teaching to the students. Earlier, there used to be more than 100 students in one section of each stream, which is a huge number. Now, there shall be 80 students in each of the four sections in the Science stream and 120 students in the Arts stream. There is only one section in the Arts stream."

The CUSU also demanded availability of modules of the previous year's question papers for all HS students and specific classrooms or halls for each stream as the students have to rush from one department to another to attend their classes. Meanwhile, the Students' Federation of India, Assam State Committee has also opposed the decision of the university to reduce the number of seats.

CM hails role of mask-making women's SHGs

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 14: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today visited the mask-making facilities of women SHGs under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, Assam, at Tatimara, Chandrapur in the city and took stock of their activities while encouraging them to continue the economic endeavour.

He also appreciated the members of women SHGs for setting a strong example of economic resilience in the

times of a global pandemic.

The members of 10,659 women SHGs have produced a total of 51,23,194 face masks till now and out of these, 31,71,314 masks have been sold. With the brand name 'Assomi', 84 stalls have been opened to sell masks in 33 districts of the State and a total of Rs 7.15 crore has been earned through the sale of masks by the women SHGs. More than 4 lakh masks have been distributed free of cost. Sonowal said that people

would need to carry on observing the COVID-19 protocols like mask-wearing, social distancing and frequent hand washing as there is no vaccine for the deadly virus yet, and strict observance of health department guidelines only would ensure containment of the outbreak.

He also said that steps have been taken to bring back the State's people stranded outside and those returnees must also adhere to COVID-19 protocols. Referring to the 15 people

in Guwahati testing positive for COVID-19 yesterday, Sonowal urged people not to panic as only staying united in this fight against the global pandemic can bring victory. Ostracising of coronavirus patients should never happen and he assured that the government was fully capable of handling rising cases of COVID-19 in the State.

Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Naba Kumar Doley accompanied the Chief Minister during the visit.



WEATHER GUWAHATI

LOCAL FORECAST:
Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain/thundershower. Maximum and minimum temperatures are most likely to be 32°C & 21°C respectively on Friday.

TEMPERATURE:
Max 27.8°C
Min 21.2°C

Cop among two held for flouting curfew; Rs 17L seized

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 14: The Hatigaon police last night seized around Rs 17 lakh and detained two persons, including a police constable named Sanjiv Das, from Lakhimi Nagar in the city.

The other detained person has been identified as Ifikar Ali. A case has been registered in this regard at the police station.

A police source said, "A patrol team of the police station stopped a vehicle at 1 am, which had the duo in it. They were detained as they violated the curfew and carried such a huge amount."

Fish seed farm resumes production

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: The newly renovated fish seed farm located at Ulubari here has started its production activities from Wednesday. The farm was renovated under the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART) and inaugurated by Fishery Minister Parimal Suklabaidya.

Death condoled

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: President of Journalists Association of Assam (JAA) DN Chakravartty and Bhupen Goswami, its chief organiser and former general secretary, in a joint statement, have condoled the death of senior journalist Suresh Chandra Barthakur of Sonitpur district. They described him as a relentless worker for freedom of the press and the cause of the people. "In his death, the mofussil journalists of Assam have lost a towering figure and a trusted leader," they observed.

OBITUARY

JC Mahanta

GUWAHATI, May 14: Jagat Chandra Mahanta, retired Secretary, Irrigation

Department of the Government of Assam, passed away at his Nabin Nagar residence in the wee hours today. He was 88.

He leaves behind his wife, two daughters, a son and a host of relatives and admirers. He was cremated at the Nabagraha crematorium.

Lockdown relaxation shoots up road accidents

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: Although the rate of road accidents decreased drastically during the first and second phases of lockdown in Assam, in the third phase during which the government brought about some relaxation to the norms, the rate has risen again.

According to data available with 108 Emergency Service, from March 1 to March 23, the number of daily average reported road accidents was 103. The number decreased to 33 during the period March 24-May 3. But from May 4 to May 11, the rate of daily average reported road accidents has increased to 47.

From March 1 to March 23, the emergency service had attended altogether 2,378 road accident cases. Out of those 1,635 were cases related to two-wheelers,

266 were cases involving four-wheelers, 83 were related to three-wheelers, 12 were train accidents and 382 were other vehicular accidents.

From March 24 to May 3, altogether

The rate of road accidents had decreased drastically during the first and second phases of lockdown in Assam

1,337 road accident cases had been attended by the emergency service. Out of those, 957 involved two-wheelers, 111 involved four-wheelers, 30 were cases related to three-wheelers, two were train accidents and 237 were other vehicular accidents.

From May 4 to 11, altogether 377 road accidents were reported in the State. Out

of those, 277 were related to two-wheelers, 36 involved four-wheelers, 12 involved three-wheelers and 52 were other vehicular accidents.

From March 1 to 23, the daily average two-wheeler accidents was 71. Between March 24 and May 3, the number decreased to 23. But from May 4 to May 11, the number increased to 35.

In case of four-wheeler accidents, the daily average cases was 12 in the period from March 1 to 23. During the lockdown, the number decreased to three but after the relaxation it rose to five.

From March 24 to May 3, the highest 137 road accidents were reported in Kamrup district, followed by Nagaon district (96) and Sonitpur district (79). From May 4 to May 11, highest 35 cases were reported from Nagaon district, followed by Golaghat district (34) and Kamrup district (26).



A cattle egret seen in the Bharalu river in Guwahati on Thursday. — UB Photos

Papon's song featuring Assamese film stars spreads message of hope

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: Amid lockdown blues and stressful phase triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the major names of the Assamese film industry have come together to spread the message of hope and positivity through a video based on noted singer Papon's composition *Paar Hobo Aei Xomoy*.

Though the composition was released on Earth Day (April 22), a self-shot video of the

Assamese film stars has recently surfaced on social media, receiving encouraging response from fans within the State and all over country.

Actors like Jatin Bora, Ravi Sharma, Prastuti Parashar, Nishita Goswami, Aimee Baruah, Utpal Das, Kalpana Kalita, Joy Kashyap, Shyamontika Sharma, Tanvi Sharma, Ananya Pasoni, Gunjan Bhardwaj, and Rimpri Das are

the part of this video. "I am overwhelmed by this grand gesture by the biggest actors of the Assamese film industry. Also, I am extremely happy that this song is receiving so much love and appreciation. I hope this inspires people to stay strong during these difficult times," said Papon.

The entire video is shot on mobile phones during this lockdown. Self-shot videos of

lockdown have been a huge trend in social media presently, enabling friends and family to come together on a common display place, despite observing the norms of social distancing.

The song that basically conveys 'This time, too, shall pass' was written, sung and shot by the singer himself during lockdown. The song reached the stars of the Assamese industry and they showered love by making a beautiful video.

State Govt likely to shift academic year to April-March

The change suggested by the task force will be in conformity with the academic year of CBSE and education boards of most of the other states

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: The Government of Assam is contemplating changing the academic year of the State's school and colleges from January-December to April-March every year, as per suggestions of a task force constituted for the purpose. The current academic year is also likely to be extended till March 31, 2021. The measure has been suggested to compensate the loss of academic days due to the prevailing lockdown crisis. The government has asked the stakeholders to submit their opinions regarding the issue on the official website of the Board of Secondary Education, Assam, (SEBA) <http://sebaonline.org> in the link 'suggestion

on revision of academic year'. The change suggested by the task force will also be in conformity with the academic year of CBSE and education boards of most of the other states. A notification issued by the State education department has asked all the educational institutions up to university level to prepone their summer vacation and count it from May 1 to May 31, 2020 instead of July 1 to July 31. It needs mention that recently Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had announced the possibility of shifting the academic session and the change in the timing of summer vacations. The government notification has further mentioned that the distance education service currently being ex-

tended by all teachers shall also continue. The government has urged the teacher community to encourage and motivate the students for optimum utilisation of the e-initiatives like Diksha App, Biswa Bidya Assam App and classes broadcast through Doordarshan and All India Radio. The government is also organising various competitions among students including essay writing, poem writing, short notes for students of Class IX to three-year degree course under the Samagra Siksha Abhiyan. Students from Class VI to Class XII have been asked to prepare projects on science and innovative ideas, poem writing etc., during the lockdown. The results of HSLC and HSSLC examinations will be declared on time

and digital marksheets will be provided through digital mode. Educational institutions will arrange for admission of students based on the digital marksheets and verification through the result gazette provided by the government. Hard copies of marksheets and certificates will be provided after opening of educational institutions. Admission procedure is to be done online as far as possible, the notification mentioned. In regard to research studies of students, the government has allowed such students to attend required institutions from June 1 onwards observing all safety norms. The universities have been asked to adopt alternative and simplified modes of semesters as suggested by the UGC.

CM visits quarantine facility at Sarusajai

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, May 14: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today visited the quarantine facility set up at the Sarusajai Sports Complex, accompanied by Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma. They inspected the facilities made available for screening, registration, testing and quarantine of all symptomatic patients of the State and the people who are returning from outside Assam. The quarantine centre set up at the indoor stadium of the sports complex with its

two extensions has so far provided facilities to 2,286 persons. As many as 1,109 persons have already been released. Moreover, considering the need of more quarantine facilities in view of a huge number of people of Assam returning, 61 hotels have been earmarked for the people to choose as quarantine centres. Senior officials of the health department, Kamrup Metropolitan DC Biswajit Pegu, District Development Commissioner Atul Kumar Sarma, Joint Director of Health and others were present during the visit.



Agriculture Minister Atul Bora addressing mediapersons in Guwahati on Thursday. — UB Photos

FCI effort on for adequate foodgrain supply in NE

PRANJAL BHUYAN

GUWAHATI, May 14: With the nationwide lockdown having completed 50 days, state-owned Food Corporation of India (FCI) has ramped up its activities in the north-eastern region as part of efforts to ensure supply of basic essentials to citizens in this part of the country. FCI has been able to induct a whopping 7.7 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of foodgrains across its facilities in the NE region so far during the lockdown. "We have handled a total of 273 railway rakes during the lockdown period till now,

which is equal to 5.5 rakes per day with a quantum of around 15,800 MT," said an official. The official added that a total quantity of 3.13 lakh MT of foodgrains has been issued during the lockdown across the North East under regular allocation for the National Food Security Act (NFSA). In addition, 3.43 lakh MT of stocks have been issued to the north-eastern states under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY). "Adequate stocks have been issued to every state government in the North East to provide sufficient foodgrains to all

beneficiaries. Put together, the total foodgrain stocks issued to cater to the needs of people under various schemes during the lockdown so far is 7.3 lakh MT at an average of 15,000 MT per day. This includes issuance under the NFSA, the PMGKAY, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and other schemes," the official said. FCI officials said that the respective state governments have been given the choice to lift foodgrains at the rate of Rs 21 per kg for wheat and Rs 22 per kg for rice to meet any additional demands to cater to requirements of persons not covered under the NFSA. Over 70,300 MT of rice has been offloaded in the market through this scheme since imposition of the lockdown. "In addition, states have been authorised to requisition wheat for flour mills directly from FCI at open market sale rates. This has been done to keep the open market prices under check and to ensure adequate availability of wheat and the system is being operated through the respective district magistrates," an official said.

Rlys cancels ...

(Contd from page 1)

"Regular passenger service, including Mail/Express, Passenger and Suburban services have been cancelled until further advice," said the Thursday order. "The competent authority has desired that all the tickets booked for the above trains for the period upto June 30, 2020 may be cancelled and full refund generated as per provisions," it said. The tickets to be cancelled were booked before and during the lockdown period, till April 14, when the Railways was still allowing bookings for journeys in June, an IRCTC official said. — PTI

Centre announces ...

(Contd from page 1)

Also to benefit the migrant workers, the government plans to allow inter-state portability of ration cards under public distribution system (PDS) so as to allow them to use their cards anywhere to avail benefit. For small businesses, the Minister announced a 2 per cent interest subvention under MUDRA-Shishu loans of upto Rs 50,000. This would cost the government Rs 1,500 crore. For street vendors, the working capital loan would cost Rs 5,000 crore. She also announced Rs 6,000 crore employment push, using Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) funds. — PTI

Seven more test ...

(Contd from page 1)

All the other returnees have tested negative and they have been sent for home quarantine to their respective home districts in ASTC buses. A total of 132 cancer patients and attendants as well as six children and their parents had reached Guwahati in six buses on Wednesday night after starting off from Mumbai on May 9. The oldest patient brought from Mumbai was 75-year-old and the youngest was only around 18 months. Earlier, COVID-19 tests were carried out

among the returnees when they were at Assam Bhavan in Mumbai and four persons had tested positive. They were hospitalised and it is learnt that all of them were discharged after being cured. However, some who returned in the six buses were not from Assam Bhavan. They were staying elsewhere in Mumbai. Joint Resident Commissioner of the Assam Bhawan, Mumbai, Devashis Sharma, who had accompanied the patients, is on his way back to Mumbai along with 12 drivers and one Assam Bhawan employee.

Govt to reverify all ...

(Contd from page 1)

Bora said the department has set a deadline of May 15 to complete the reverification process. But some districts are seeking extension of the deadline. "The PM-KISAN is a scheme with hundred per cent funding from the Union government, which aims to provide an income support of Rs 6,000 per year to all farmer families across the country in three equal instalments of Rs 2,000 each every four months," he told the media. Accepting that some anomalies might have taken place in the beneficiary selection process, the Minister asserted that the entire process was undertaken following the guidelines of the Central government. A section of the local media reported that a large number of names, including family members of government officials and political leaders,

were accommodated in the beneficiary list. As part of the reverification drive, the department has already eliminated more than seven lakh names from the list of beneficiary and two officials each in Barpeta and Morigaon districts have been suspended. Bora, who also holds the veterinary portfolio, further informed that direction has been given to all the officials concerned to carry out verification on the mortality rate of pigs caused due to the outbreak of African swine fever. He said the number of pig death cases increased exponentially after the State government announced financial assistance to the affected piggery farmers. Till Wednesday, the disease had claimed as many as 14,919 pigs. In order to carry out mass testing for the disease, the government has also written to the Union government seeking recognition to the laboratories of Assam, he added.

ADVERTISEMENT

In extension of the last date for submission of applications advertised vide memo no: DW/PR/ST/933/2019-20/5/7288 Dated 19.03.2020 that the Directorate of WPT & BC, Assam is inviting applications from individual farmer belonging to ST/OBC communities for distribution of Paddy Reaper and Power Weeder for the welfare of the OBC Community. Filled in applications as per the following format in this regard is to be submitted from intending applicants on or before 30.05.2020 through mail/post. The email-id for submission of application is application.directorate@gmail.com. No delay in receipt of application due to postal delay may be considered after the last day of submission of applications.

APPLICATION FORM FOR PADDY REAPER FOR ST/OBC FARMERS

Name of the applicant :
Name of Father/Mother :
Male/Female : DoB : Voter ID No :
Address (As per Voter ID) :
Ph No :
Enclosed : 1. One passport photo 2. Caste Certificate 3. Voter ID
I declare that the statements in application are true to the best of my knowledge.
Signature of the applicant

APPLICATION FORM FOR POWER WEEDER FOR OBC FARMERS

Name of the applicant :
Name of Father/Mother :
Male/Female : DoB : Voter ID No :
Address (As per Voter ID) :
Ph No :
Enclosed : 1. One passport photo 2. Caste Certificate 3. Voter ID
I declare that the statements in application are true to the best of my knowledge.
Signature of the applicant

No. ACE/WR/G-197/2019-20/52

PRESS NOTICE FOR BID

Additional Chief Engineer, Upper Assam Zone, Water Resources Department, Dibrugarh, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites Tender for the following works

Sl No.	Name of Division	Name of Scheme	Source of Fund
1	Dhakuakhana Water Resources Division	Immediate measures to recoup the flood damages caused by river Brahmaputra at Bamunichapori, Kopchang and Bandana under SDRF for 2019-20	SDRF
2	Resources Division	Immediate measures to recoup flood damages at Baligaon area from the flood devastation of river Brahmaputra under SDRF for 2019-20	
3		Immediate measures for restoration of Chengajianghat and its adjoining areas under SDRF for 2019-20 (Phase-II)	
4	Dhemaji Water Resources Division, Dhemaji	Immediate measures for restoration of B/dyke from Kerker to Bhalukaguri and Mudo to Jiadh village at Gaighat area under SDRF for 2019-20	SDRF
5		Immediate measures for restoration of check bund at Ch. 1000m of Gainadi L/B embankment D/S of NH-15	
6		Immediate measures for restoration of Jiadh left bank embankment from Basin to Railway line in between 9th Km. and 16th km. under SDRF for 2019-20	
7	Dibrugarh Water Resources Division, Dibrugarh	Immediate measures to restore damage due to flood on the L/B of river Kundil at 8th mile RCC bridge for 2019-20	
8		Immediate measures at Bogorbari area along the L/B of river Noa-Dehing for 2019-20	
9		Immediate measures to Saikhowa bund Ph-II at Milanpur area for 2019-20	
10		Immediate measures to Saikhowa bund Ph-II at Sissini Bhojoni for 2019-20	SDRF
11		Restoration of damaged section of Namrup-Tingkhong road due to Flood of river Desang at Namrup T.E. Near Namrup Railway Station under SDRF for 2019-20	
12		Immediate measures to Tie bund from Naw beef to Aghunibari(Recoupment damage section at Sessanepali area) for 2019-20	
13		Immediate measures to recoupment of various damage reaches and closing of breach of Charaipani bundh both banks from Natunmati to Kakodunga outfall under SDRF for the year 2019-20	
14		Immediate measures to avert flood devastation at different reaches of river Bhogdoi at Gogadhar bridge area, Kothalguri, Mariani Town area) for the year 2019-20 under SDRF	
15		Immediate measures for restoration of Gutung area from the flood damages of river Gelabeel under SDRF for the year 2019-20	
16	Jorhat Water Resources, Division Jorhat	Immediate measures for restoration of West Firi Gaon area from the flood damages of river Brahmaputra under SDRF for the year 2019-20	SDRF
17		Immediate measures for restoration of Kurabahi Satra area from flood damages of river Dhansiri under SDRF for the year 2019-20	
18		Immediate measures for restoration of Amguri area by flood damages of river Doyang under SDRF for the year 2019-20	
19		Immediate measures for restoration of Dhansiri bundh from Chowguri to Barpathar under SDRF for the year 2019-20	
20		Immediate measures to recoup flood damaged crest and slope of PGJH from Ch.4775M to Ch.9900M and Ch. 11000M to Ch. 15000M under SDRF for 2019-2020.	SDRF
21	Majuli Water Resources Division, Majuli	Immediate measures to recoup flood damages on LB of river Subansiri at Maghuachuk area to save the PGJH dyke under SDRF for 2019-2020	
22		Immediate measures for restoration of flood damaged river bank at Gamur and its adjoining areas (Baliokabaowa to Silakola)of Kherkotia river in Majuli for the year 2019-20	
23		Immediate measures for-restoration of flood damages of Subansiri river at Karatipar area in Majuli for the year 2019-20	
24	North Lakhimpur Water Resources Division	Immediate measures for flood damage restoration work at downstream of Dhanurghat from Hamara to Chenimorghat on R/B of river Subansiri under SDRF for 2019-20	SDRF
25		Immediate measures for restoration of flood damages to Subansiri right bank embankment at Tella pathar Na-ali in between Ch. 35650 to 37100m including pro-siltation measures under SDRF for 2019-20	
26		Immediate measures for restoration of breach like damaged to Subansiri right bank embankment from Bhimporghat to na-Ali at Ghansarai, Mudoibeel are in between Ch. 35650m to 37100m under SDRF for 2019-20	
27		Immediate measures to R/B of river Subansiri for restoration of flood damages at Katari Chapori, Chouldhowa under SDRF for 2019-20	
28		Immediate measures for restoration damages of ring bund of Ranganadi at Bongaon (No.2 Amtola) under SDRF for 2019-20	
29		Immediate measures for restoration at Ahomgaon (Phase-I) on the dyke Desang bund right bank from Nagalamora to Bahgarh under SDRF for 2019-20.	SDRF
30	Sivasagar Water Resources Division, Sivasagar	Immediate measures for restoration of breach like damages at Majalia Konwargaon on the dyke of Desang bund left bank from Rajgarh to Pathaligarh under SDRF for 2019-20.	
31		Immediate measures for restoration of damages at Dhemaji Desangpani of Desang right bank under SDRF for 2019-20.	
32		Immediate measures for restoration of breach like damages at Raghubari Reach II on dyke Dikhow Bund L/B from Namdang out fall to Dikhowmukh under SDRF for 2019-20	
33	Upper Assam Investigation Water Resources Division, Jorhat	Immediate measures to against the flood damages of B/dyke from Neamati P.W.D. road to Gohaigaon (Bor Ali) (From Ch0.00m to Ch3000.00m) against flood damages of 2019-20.	SDRF

All details can be seen at website : <https://assamtenders.gov.in>

- The interested registered Contractor/ Bidders of WRD who are experienced in the execution of works under Water Resources and possess required technical and financial strength may obtain the SBD which can be down loaded from the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in> Amendment/Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website.
- The Contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of the Govt. of Assam website <https://assamtenders.gov.in> Contractors can download documents free of cost. Contractors have to necessarily download the bidding document from the ETS using their own ID (Digital Signature Certificate). Bid documents not procured (downloaded) through the ETS/not using the contractor's own user ID will be considered invalid and summarily rejected. Contractors submitting bids online have to submit copy of the documents of technical bid required to be submitted manually before the expiry of the sequence 'Online Bid Preparation & Submission' in the tender schedule. The last date and time for submission of the Technical Bids manually is the same as the expiry of the sequence 'Online Bid Preparation & Submission' in the tender schedule. Bid will be rejected/ cancelled if Financial Bid submitted off-line/hard copy.
- All the interested bidders are requested to read the Bid Document carefully before submission of their bid.
- Issue of work order is subject to accordance of Administrative Approval from the competent authority.
- For any e-tendering related queries please mail to aceuazetendering@gmail.com

Sd/- Additional Chief Engineer
Upper Assam Zone,
Water Resources Department, Dibrugarh

Janasanyog/C/455/20

No. AASC (L)78/87-88/PT/22

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders in two bid system affixed with non-refundable court fee stamp of Rs.8.25 (Rupees Eight and twenty-five paise) only are invited from firms for providing integrated pest control services to this Directorate. The tenders will be received up to 12 noon June 5, 2020 and will be opened on the same day i.e. June 5, 2020 at 3 pm. The interested tenderers or their authorized representative may be present at the time of the opening of the tenders. The interested firms may collect the tender document from the Administrative Officer, Assam Administrative Staff College during the office hours on payment of Rs. 500.00(Rupees Five Hundred) only in cash which would be non-refundable.

The tender documents may also be downloaded from the website, www.aasc.assam.gov.in. However, the payment of Rs 500.00 only in cash will have to be made in any case.

The Director of Training, Assam Administrative Staff College reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender papers without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/- Director of Training

Assam Administrative Staff College

Janasanyog/C/427/20

PRESS RELEASE

Proposal for extending the Academic Year for all Educational Institutions under Elementary & Secondary Education w.e.f. the year 2020.

Due to current scenario of COVID 19, the Educational Institutions in Assam are closed since long. In order to minimize the loss of academic days, the Govt. of Assam proposes for extending of current Academic year up to 31st March, 2021 and also proposes to continue the Academic Year from 1st April to 31st March every year.

It is requested to offer your valued suggestion online within 15 days by visiting SEBA'S Official website and click on the link portal for suggestion on revision of Academic Year.

You may directly visit (<http://sebaonline.org/suggestion>) and mark your suggestions.

Sd/- Commissioner Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Elementary & Secondary Education Department

Janasanyog/D/566/20

No. DMA(T)08/2020/274

NOTICE INVITING OF TENDERS FOR DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING OF SOLAR STAND ALONE ALL IN ONE LED STREET LIGHTING SYSTEM WITH 7.0 M GALVANIZED OCTAGONAL POLE AT ULBs OF ASSAM

Sealed Tenders are invited by Directorate of Municipal Administration, Assam from eligible bidder for supply, Installation & Commissioning of Solar Stand Alone All in One LED Street Lighting System with 7.0 m Galvanized Octagonal Pole at ULBs of Assam. Interested Bidders are therefore invited to submit their Bid (Separate Technical and Financial) for supply, Installation & Commissioning of Solar Stand Alone All in One LED Street Lighting System with 7.0 m Galvanized Octagonal Pole at ULBs of Assam online through the Assam Govt. e-procurement portal <http://assamtenders.gov.in>

Detailed Terms of Reference and other conditions may be seen and can only be downloaded from website <http://assamtenders.gov.in>. The Bid document can be downloaded till 05.06.2020 up-to 1.00 pm.

Online submission of NIT will be up-to 05.06.2020 at 1.30 pm.

Director, Municipal Administration, Assam Dispur, Guwahati-781006

Janasanyog/C/436/20



WEATHER NORTHEAST

Forecast for NE: Rain/thunderstorm is very likely to occur at many places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura.

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

Temperatures:

Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	28.6
Tezpur	28.5
Silchar	34.2
Dhubri	26.3
Jorhat	28.0
N Lakhimpur	27.6
Shillong	22.5
Cherrapunjee	24.9
Aizawl	31.6
Kohima	25.0
Pasighat	28.9
Itanagar	27.0
Imphal	30.0
Agartala	36.6

Central team in Tripura for COVID-19 assistance

CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, May 14: A three-member Central medical team led by Prof GK Medha, head of the Department of Community Medicine of the Meghalaya-based NEIGRIHMS arrived at Ambassa in Dhalai district today. The visit comes in the aftermath of a major COVID-19 outbreak in the 86th and 138th battalions of the BSF headquartered at Jawaharnagar.

The team, which came by road, later held a video conference with officials of the Central Surveillance Team, New Delhi at the conference hall of the District Magistrate (DM) of Dhalai. Thereafter, they had a separate meeting with the DM and the CMO of Dhalai district.

The Central team will take part in a scheduled

meeting with Tripura Additional Chief Secretary RK Rakesh, who is handling the COVID-19 battle in the State, here tomorrow.

It may mentioned here that 155 samples had tested positive in Tripura with most of the cases being reported from Jawaharnagar where the two BSF battalion headquarters are based. The outbreak set alarm bells ringing, prompting the State Government to seek help from the Centre. The Central team is expected to suggest a road map to stop a possible community transmission in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak at Jawaharnagar.

During the past 24 hours, 16 BSF jawans, who had earlier tested positive, were released from the GB Pant Hospital here following their recovery. They will now be

quarantined at the BSF Hospital at Salbagan.

A total of 11,733 samples were collected for COVID-19 tests in Tripura so far, out of which tests were conducted on 11,146 cases. Eighteen COVID-19 patients have recovered from the disease and there has been no casualty till date.

Meanwhile, the State Government has decided to increase the manpower engaged in the ongoing battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. As many as 24 doctors and an equal number of nurses will be appointed on an urgent basis to augment the shortage in skilled manpower. All the new appointments will be made on contractual basis. A doctor will receive a month pay package of Rs 50,000, while a nurse will get Rs 20,000.



Meghalaya Assembly Speaker Metbah Lyngdoh addressing media persons after an all-party meeting on COVID-19 in Shillong on Thursday. Chief Minister Conrad Sangma and Leader of Opposition Dr Mukul Sangma are also seen. - UB Photos

Meghalaya Govt, Opp unite in fight against COVID-19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG, May 14: The NPP-led Meghalaya Government and the Opposition Congress have joined hands to put up a united fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in the State. The ruling and Opposition parties resolved to work together to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic during a meeting chaired by Speaker Methbah Lyngdoh today.

Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, his Cabinet colleagues, Leader of Opposition Mukul Sangma and other MLAs were present in the meeting, which was the second such meeting between the ruling and Opposition parties on COVID-19.

Emerging from the meeting, the Speaker said that "we had a fruitful discussion", and that the State Government detailed the steps taken so far to contain the pandemic in the State. Chief Secretary MS Rao made the presentation to the legislators.

Chief Minister Sangma said the meeting sends "an important message that all legislators are working together in

this fight against COVID."

"It only helps the Government and the officials to improve on their response to the pandemic," he said.

The Leader of Opposition said the scientific world is grappling to find a vaccine for the virus and at this juncture, it is important to improve the efforts put in so far. He added that the efforts should be made to keep the State COVID-free.

The State Government gave a summary of the stranded people, and an update on the status of health infrastructure and testing facilities in the State. It also gave details of the entry protocols and the evacuation model adopted to bring back the stranded people. It was informed that till Wednesday evening, 3,978 stranded individuals were brought back to the State.

As many as 1,861 free provision kits were distributed till May 13 to individuals under home quarantine.

The meeting urged the citizens to "support COVID-19 positive individuals, accept the returnees from outside the State and not to stigmatise them or their families."

24 Bangladesh tourists to return home today

RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, May 14: As many as 24 Bangladesh nationals, stranded in Assam and Meghalaya, will return to their country tomorrow.

The Bangladesh High Commission had requested assistance for facilitating movement of their nationals from Assam and Meghalaya to return to their country by road. They will cross three border points - Dawki, Sutarkandi and Changrabandha (West Bengal) - during their homeward journey.

Thirteen vehicles have been arranged for the stranded tourists, including three students, to reach the international border, from where they will be transported in vehicles arranged by Bangladesh.

Eleven tourists will cross through the Dawki border, five from the Sutarkandi Immigration Point and eight from the Chengrabandha Immigration Point.

Bangladesh Assistant High Commissioner in Guwahati Shah Mohammad Tanvir Monsur told *The Assam Tribune* that 40 people - mostly tourists - have already returned to Bangladesh from the North East since the start of the lockdown.

Tripura COVID-19 count touches 156

AGARTALA, May 14: One more Border Security Force (BSF) personnel has tested positive for novel coronavirus in Dhalai district, taking the total number of COVID-19 cases in the State to 156, said Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb.

The latest patient is also from the BSF's 86th battalion which, along with the 138th battalion, accounted for most of the cases reported in the State this month.

Deb tweeted on Wednesday night: "652 civilians & BSF officials have undergone COVID-19 test, among them 1 BSF official of 86th Battalion, Ambassa found COVID-19 POSITIVE. We are conducting maximum number of COVID-19 tests to ensure better safety of every people of this State."

Earlier, 151 BSF personnel and their family members from the two battalions based at Ambassa in Dhalai district had tested positive

for COVID-19.

The district has since been declared a red zone and six deployment areas of the BSF have been designated as containment zones, they said.

Meanwhile, 16 BSF personnel, including two who have completely recovered from COVID-19 and the remaining who were found to be asymptomatic, have been released from the State-run GB Pant Hospital and placed under observation in a quarantine facility, senior minister Ratan Lal Nath said.

Altogether 2,771 people are currently quarantined in the State, of whom 221 are in facilities and the rest under home isolation, said Nath, who is also the Cabinet spokesperson.

The first two COVID-19 patients in the State have recovered and two other patients who had left Tripura have been designated as "transferred out", leaving 152 active cases in the State. - PTI

Man pays more than Rs 9 lakh to clear others' loans

ZODIN SANGA

AIZAWL, May 14: Tough times bring out good people who rise to the occasion to lend a helping hand to others. Heart-touching stories of extraordinary kindness have poured in during these challenging times, and one such instance came to light here where a mysterious man has helped four persons repay their loans. Thanks to this man, whose identity is known to bank clerks alone, the four petty traders have been able to repay their loans in full.

Assistant manager of SBI's Aizawl main branch, Sheryl L Vanchhawng, said a man phoned the bank a few days ago and asked if there were borrowers who were unable to repay their loans due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown and expressed his willingness to help them.

"We selected four borrowers, who had otherwise regularly paid their monthly instalments but struggled to repay their loans due to the lockdown. This person then paid a total of Rs 9,96,365 to clear their debts through online transaction," she said. With their debts now cleared, the bank on Wednesday returned the loanees their land settlement certificates, which they had mortgaged.

Following this development, the four loanees, including three women, wanted to thank the generous man in person, but they could not do so as he chose to remain anonymous.

One of them, Muana L Fana, took to the social media to thank the man whom he called "a guardian angel". Fana had started poultry farming with the loan amount. But a series of misfortunes struck him and his situation worsened after the coronavirus outbreak. He owed an outstanding amount of Rs 2,46,631 to the bank, which has now been cleared by the mysterious man. Bank sources said even before the current crisis, the man in question had helped a few others in repaying their loans.

26 stranded persons return to Nagaland

KOHIMA, May 14: A group of 26 stranded persons returned to Nagaland in an Assam-bound special train from Delhi this morning, officials said. This was the first batch of stranded persons to return to Nagaland in a train, they said.

The group alighted at the Dimapur Railway Station around 3.20 am from the Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express, an official said. Twenty-one are from Nagaland and the rest are from Manipur, he said.

All the returnees were screened and the Nagaland residents were taken to a quarantine centre, while those from Manipur headed for their home State in a private vehicle, the official said.

Meanwhile, a total of 221 Nagaland residents stranded in

ASSAM ELECTRICITY GRID CORPORATION LIMITED
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
 NIT No. AEGCL/DGM/TT/TEZ/T-20/2020/105, dtd.: 15-05-2020
 The Deputy General Manager, Tezpur T&T Circle, AEGCL, Tezpur invites tender under sealed cover in prescribed form with 180 days validity for the following works:
 1. Name of work: Erection, testing and commissioning of 33KV bay at 132 KV Shankardevnagar GSS for 33 KV Hojai feeder under "Deposit Work Scheme".
 2. Tender Fee: ₹1,000.00
 3. Issue of tender paper: On all working days from 15-05-2020 to 12:00 Hrs. (IST) of 05-06-2020.
 4. Receipt of tender paper: On all working days up to 17:00 Hrs. (IST) of 06-06-2020.
 5. Date of opening: 13:00 Hrs. (IST) of 08-06-2020.
 Interested bidder may obtain the bid documents from C/o the undersigned or from our official website www.aegcl.co.in in case, the date of receiving and opening of Tenders is declared as Holiday/ Strike or Bandh, then the same will be received and opened on the next working day.
 Sd/- Deputy General Manager, Tezpur T&T Circle

NORTH EASTERN COALFIELDS
Coal India Limited
 (A Maharatna Company under Ministry of Coal)
Margherita-786181 (Assam)

Registered Office : Office of the General Manager, North Eastern Coalfields, Coal India Limited, Dist Tinsukia, Assam-786181, Corporate ID No. 123109W1973GOI028844, Phone No. 03751-220344, E-mail: gmnmrg1@sanchnet.in, Website : www.neccoal.co.in

All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in respective subsidiary Company, CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiaticnders.nic.in> and Central Public procurement portal <https://eprocurement.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>

Sd/- General Manager, NECC, Margherita.

ASSAM GRAMIN VIKASH BANK
 Head Office: G. S Road, Bhangagarh, Guwahati-781005, Assam
 Website: www.agvbank.co.in, Email: agvbank@yahoo.co.in
 Phone: 0361-2466953/995783638/7002986478

Appointment Notice

Assam Gramin Vikash Bank is looking for a suitable candidate for appointment as legal advisor in the Bank, purely on contractual basis. The interested candidate having LLB degree from recognized university and registered with Bar council of India or State Bar Council may apply by sending their updated CV with 2 color photos on or before 05.06.2020. The monthly fixed remuneration of the legal advisor will be Rs. 20000/-.

The CV can be forwarded to:-
 General Manager
 Assam Gramin Vikash Bank
 Head office, Bhangagarh, Guwahati-781005, Assam

Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any or all candidatures at its sole discretion without assigning any reason thereof.
 Note: In case of any corrigendum issued on the above advertisement, it will be published only on Bank's website.
 Date: 14.05.2020 Sd/-
 Place: Guwahati General Manager

Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority
 STAFFED Building, Bhangagarh, Guwahati - 781005
 Website: www.gmda.assam.gov.in Tel: 0361-2529650/9824
 E-mail: ceogmda@gmail.com, ceogmda-as@nic.in Fax: 0361-2529991

REQUEST FOR EMPANELMENT OF RTP
 Dated: 13-05-2020

The Chief Executive Officer, GMDA, Guwahati, invites RFE (Request for Empanelment) from Architects/ Engineers/ Town Planners/ Group or Agency registered with GMDA/ GMC as RTP whose qualifications are as per Appendix-II of the Guwahati Building Construction (Regulation) Byelaws, 2014 as amended and with 10 years experience in providing services to clients for obtaining building permission from GMDA/ GMC.

The empanelled Architects/ Engineers/ Town Planners/ Group or Agency shall be associated with GMDA/ GMC for processing the Planning Permit and Building Permit for speedy disposal of the proposals up to G+2 residential building.

Name of Work	Cost of RFE Document (non-refundable)	Date of online submission of RFE for Empanelment
To assist Authorities in processing Planning Permit and Building Permit for disposal of the proposals up to G+2 residential building.	Rs. 10,000/-	From 20-05-2020 to 27-05-2020 up to 16:00 Hrs

* Details may be seen in the RFE document for this service in the GMDA's official website www.gmda.assam.gov.in in the tender section.
 * The Chief Executive officer GMDA Guwahati reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals without showing any reasons whatsoever.
 Moloy Bora, IAS
 Chief Executive Officer
 Guwahati Metropolitan Dev. Authority

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, GUWAHATI
 Government of India, Ministry of Finance
 Suwama Bhawan, House No. 12, New Town Path, G.S. Road, Ulubari, Guwahati-781007

NOTICE OF DEMAND TO THE CERTIFICATE DEBTOR (S)
 (See sections 25 to section 29 of the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 and under Rule 2 of Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act, 1961)

D.R.P.C. No. 2828 dated 20.04.2018
 State Bank of India, Amerigod Branch, -Vs.- Sri Sankar Chetry

To
 (Certificate Debtor No.1)
 Sri Sankar Chetry S/o Sri Prem Bahadur Chetry C/o Khargeswar Sharma, Highway Refill centre, Near Amerigod Nursery, P.O. Amerigod, Guwahati-781023

This is to certify that a sum of Rs. 22,52,585.56/- (Rupee twenty two lakh fifty two thousand five hundred eighty five & paise fifty six only) as per details given below has become due from you consequent to a Recovery Certificate issued by the Ld. Presiding Officer by an order dated 23.02.2018 in case No. OA. No. 274 of 2015.

1. Certificate Amount	Rs. 15,17,091.00
2. Interest from 12.08.2015 to 09.07.2018 @ 13.50%	Rs. 7,17,494.56
3. Costs	Rs. 18,000.00
4. Less: Amount paid by the Certificate Debtor	Rs.
TOTAL	Rs. 22,52,585.56

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sums within 15 days of the receipt of this notice failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Sections 25 to Section 29 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and under Rule 2 of Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

3. In addition to the sums aforesaid, you will be also liable for (a) such interest as is payable in accordance with the recovery certificate (IRPC No. 2828 dated 20.04.2018) for the period commencing immediately after the date of recovery certificate to the date of realization, and (b) all costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the services of notices and of warrants and other processes and proceedings taken for realization of the dues.
 Given under my hand and seal on 13th day of March, 2020
 Recovery Officer-II

Music keeps quarantined people entertained in South Sikkim facility

A CORRESPONDENT

GANGTOK, May 14: Music is keeping a group of 77 persons entertained at the institutional quarantine centre of the Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure and Eco-Tourism (IHCAE), Chemchey, in South Sikkim. Two blocks of the IHCAE comprising 21 rooms, are being used as a quarantine facility for those returning to the State from outside. The IHCAE provides adventure-related training courses.

Songs and instrumental music played by frontline

workers, including the IHCAE staff, police and medical personnel posted there, fill the air most of the evenings. The melodies are played from the front yard of each block, with the door at the main entrance locked so that people undergoing the mandatory quarantine cannot come out to the front yard and those present on the courtyard cannot go inside.

IHCAE Deputy Director Kazi Sherpa said that he wants everyone involved in the COVID-19 battle to remain in a positive frame of mind and a happy environ-

ment. The quarantined people and the officials manning the centre can have some fun and wonderful experience through these cultural shows, Sherpa said.

There is a wall built for imparting training in rock climbing. Police, medical and other workers are also encouraged to use this training facility so that they remain rejuvenated, focused and healthy, Sherpa said.

Once the inmates leave the centre after completing the 14-day quarantine, the IHCAE staff duly disinfect and sanitize the items that have

Lockdown curbs relaxed

CORRESPONDENT

TURA, May 14: In compliance with the order issued by the State Political Department, the West Garo Hills District Magistrate has permitted reopening of all private clinics, nursing homes and laboratories with medical professionals and staff with immediate effect.

The inter-State movement of medical professionals and staff has also been allowed subject to strict compliance with all protocols and guidelines prescribed by the Ministry of

Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Other activities permitted in the district from Wednesday include takeaway or home delivery services of restaurants, cafes, food outlets, etc., barring in the Tura main market, subject to compliance with the protocols and guidelines.

Senior citizens above 60 years of age have been exempted from requiring vehicle and curfew passes, but they must carry a valid photo identity card as age proof while travelling.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Satradhikar passes away

DOOMDOOMA, May 14: Sri Sri Chidananda Murti, the Satradhikar of Bordirak Sonali Satra established in 1915 near Kakopthar in Tinsukia district, passed away on Tuesday night. He was 81 and was suffering from old-age ailments. His last rites were performed on Wednesday by following religious rituals. The death of the Satradhikar was widely mourned in the region. – Correspondent

Food items distributed

DOOMDOOMA, May 14: Bosconet & AIDA of New Delhi with support from Marelli India distributed food items among 25 poor and needy families of Doomdooma town who are facing hardship due to the ongoing lockdown in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Father Nabor from Bosconet in cooperation with local NGO STCPY distributed emergency relief kits among the families at Doomdooma Natya Mandir on Wednesday. STCPY activists Ramesh Goswami, Geeta Goswami, Dr Ashma Ghaznavi, Dr Champa Rao Mohan and Chitra Hazarika and Doomdooma Press Club president Arjun Baruah were also present on the occasion. – Correspondent

NDRF conducts sanitization

DHEMAJI, May 14: A team of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) carried out a sanitisation drive on Wednesday in several places of Dhemaji town and Bordaloni Tinali. The NDRF personnel sprayed sanitizers at different public places of Dhemaji town including the Dhemaji Deputy Commissioner's office, SP's office, ATMs, petrol pumps and marketplaces. – ANN Service

Crucial police meet

HAILAKANDI, May 14: Police have started virtual meeting-cum-briefing sessions with officers-in-charge of all police stations with a view to deal with the COVID-19 crisis in an efficient way in Hailakandi district. Superintendent of Police Pabindra Kumar Nath said through video conferencing on Thursday that all the OCs of the police stations were instructed to deal with any COVID-19 related situation together. – Correspondent

New course at AWU

JORHAT, May 14: Assam Women's University (AWU) at Rowrah here will be launching Master's Degree in Physiotherapy in the upcoming 2020-21 session. A press note by AWU stated that the university which runs a bachelor's programme on physiotherapy, is set to become the only state government institute to offer both bachelor's and master's degree in physiotherapy in Assam. Aiming at increasing popularity, demand and future self-engagement prospects of the physiotherapy subject, AWU prepared the course at par with national-level institutes. The fee structure is also designed in comparison with similar courses offered by premier institutes of the country. – Staff Correspondent

Transport facilitation cell

HAILAKANDI, May 14: In a bid to streamline the movement of people coming from outside the district through various modes of transport, the Hailakandi district administration has constituted a transport facilitation cell. The 11-member cell, set up by Deputy Commissioner MN Dahal on Wednesday, will ensure transportation of inbound passengers, keep proper upkeep of records of incoming passengers boarding the buses and strictly enforce social distancing norms by passengers during boarding and travelling. – Correspondent



Livelihood amidst lockdown: Zakir Hussain, a hawker, selling copies of an Assamese calendar in North Lakhimpur, during the lockdown on Thursday. – Photo: Farhana Ahmed

How KNP finally got Bandardubi, Deosur areas

CORRESPONDENT

KAZIRANGA, May 14: Relentless efforts by the forest department, wildlife conservationists and legal experts finally helped Kaziranga National Park (KNP) formally get the evicted land of Bandardubi and Deosur, which was handed over on Wednesday night at the office of the Kaliabor subdivisional officer (civil).

Terming it a historic day for the entire KNP team, park director P Shiva Kumar said Bandardubi and Deosur areas were rhino bearing areas till 1953. Even now, at least 11 rhinos and other wildlife are being seen grazing there, which indicates that the evicted land of Bandardubi and Deosur have been always a core part of KNP.

According to sources, with the passage of time, subsequently Bandardubi and Deosur were taken over for non-forest purposes by people with vested interests. In the early part of the 1980s, the areas were marked and handed over for forest purposes,

but again in the later part of the 1980s, those areas were used for non-forest purposes, which gradually led to human settlements.

In September 2016, Bandardubi and Deosur had been evicted by the government as per an order of the Gauhati High Court. But even after more than three years, the evicted portion was not formally handed over to the KNP, as there were still many people with vested interests who did

not want the land to be part of KNP. There was also no clear indication from the Kaliabor civil administration as to when the evicted land would be handed over to the KNP.

A report in *The Assam Tribune*, dated February 6, 2020 spoke of the non-transfer of the already evicted land of Bandardubi and Deosur to the wildlife division of Kaziranga, following which the wheels started rolling in Dispur to ensure smooth handing

**Preparations on to quarantine home-bound train passengers**

A high-level meeting discussing arrangement of quarantine facilities in Sivasagar. – Photo: Correspondent

CORRESPONDENT

SIVASAGAR, May 14: A meeting was organised at Sivasagar Sukapha Bhawan in the presence of State Minister for Disaster Management Jogen Mohan, MP Topon Kumar Gogoi, Sivasagar Deputy Commissioner Lakhinandan Gogoi and other district officers on quarantine facilities to accommodate the home-bound railway passengers.

The district administration has already prepared 1,015 beds in different quarantine homes in Thowra, Anguri, Nazira and Sivasagar for quarantining the passengers. The railway passengers from outside the state will be brought to Sivasagar by ASTC buses from Dibrugarh. An Assistant Commissioner has been entrusted with the responsibility to supervise the entire activity.

The Disaster Management Minister called upon the panchayat officials to cooperate with the district administration

in helping the stranded people in reuniting their respective families.

Topon Kumar Gogoi directed the officials to provide facilities to the persons to be kept in the quarantine houses. The Joint Director Health will monitor the check-up and testing part, and if any positive case is found, then he or she will be treated in special COVID-19 hospitals. The meeting was also attended by Thowra MLA Kushal Duwori.

ANN Service adds from Sonari: Altogether 16 COVID-19 Care Centres/Quarantine Centres have been set up in Charaideo district where the stranded people of the district coming from different states by trains will be quarantined after arrival. Revenue Circle Officers of Sonari, Sapekhati and Mahmora have been asked to supervise the activities.

Charaideo Additional Deputy Commissioner Pranab Kumar Bora will be the overall in-charge of Sonari Revenue Circle. Revenue Circle Officer Priyangshu

Bharadwaj will be in-charge of the COVID Care Centres at Sonari College.

Barpeta Correspondent adds: The Barpeta district administration has begun its exercise to quarantine home-bound people. Six quarantine centres have been set up and 400 rooms in 18 hotels have been booked for this purpose across the district.

BH College Howli, Barnagar College and Barnagar Girls High School at SARBHOG, auditorium of Madhab Choudhury College, Barpeta, ITI Barpeta and Mini ITI at Titka have been set up as quarantine centres. These centres will accommodate 460 persons but there is a provision for extension of another 1,000. Works for making of basic facilities like beds and toilets are going on in a war footing in these centres.

Barpeta Deputy Commissioner Munindra Sarma assessed the activities in the proposed quarantine centres at a meeting.

Power shortage hits COVID-19 tests at SMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SILCHAR, May 14: At a time when the number of COVID-19 positive cases reached 14 in Barak Valley including currently admitted 11 cases and collection of swab samples has gained momentum, doctors and microbiologists at Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH) are facing inconveniences due to power outage while running tests.

SMCH vice principal Dr Bhaskar Gupta said power cuts have hindered the completion of swab sample tests for COVID-19. "We have generator facilities for back-up but we need continuous power supply to complete the tests which require many hours. Many tests are pending," Dr Gupta said.

He said that 2,128 swab samples have been tested so far. The second round of tests of the 10 Ajmer-returned passengers who are now undergoing treatment at the COVID-19 ward have yielded no negative results till now.

The third round of tests of the patients, secondary contacts of Nizamuddin Markaz returnees from Karamganj district, will also be done, Dr Gupta said.

Talking to *The Assam Tribune*, SMCH principal Dr Babul Kumar Bezbaruah said, "The authorities of As-

sam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) have been formally informed about the need for installing a dedicated power substation at the hospital so that power supply remains uninterrupted. However, it is surprising to see that even after a year and despite advance payment of Rs 3.58 crores, the APDCL authorities are yet to come up with any initiative for the power substation at the hospital premises. The higher authorities have been informed about the need for the substation as well."

When asked about the issue, Minister of Forests, Fisheries and Excise Parimal Suklabaidya, who is also chairman of the SMCH Management Committee, said that talks are being held with the authorities concerned to install the substation at the hospital.

He assured all assistance in solving the crisis faced by the hospital authorities, especially during the emergent situation on COVID-19.

Meanwhile, Krishnendu Nath, General Manager of APDCL at Silchar informed that the procedure for installation of the 2x2.5 MVA substation at SMCH has been finalised and work order has been issued to the concerned contractor from office of the Chief General Manager at Guwahati and the task would be completed soon.

Masks mandatory in Jorhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, May 14: The Jorhat district administration has cautioned people who do not wear masks in public places like offices, markets, hospitals and while travelling to public places of facing penal action.

In an order passed by the District Magistrate, it was reiterated that wearing three-layered masks or a cloth to cover mouth and nose is mandatory. If a person does not wear a three-layered mask, then he/she will have to cover face and mouth with two-layered linen or hand-woven cloth. People found not wearing masks will face penalty in the range

of Rs 500-Rs1,000.

Officials or any person without mask will not be allowed to attend any meeting. One person's mask cannot be used by another and disposable or single-use mask should be properly destroyed.

Before destroying single-use masks, the masks should be washed with warm water and soap and dried in sunlight, while cloth masks too should be cleaned with soap and warm water before and dried before re-use, the order mentioned.

Employers and heads of offices will have to strictly ensure that employees wear masks, the order said.

DRL conducts extensive sanitization in Sonitpur district

CORRESPONDENT

TEZPUR, May 14: Defence Research Laboratory (DRL), Tezpur has been carrying out sanitization in various government offices and military establishments in Sonitpur district to prevent spread of COVID-19.

Immediately after the lockdown, DRL Director Sanjai K Dwivedi constituted a task force comprising Dr Pronobesh Chattopadhyay, Dr Vanlalhmuaaka, Ashok Naglot and Capt (Dr.) R Shanmugadevi. The task force pro-

duced and distributed sanitizers and disinfectants, and has been carrying out sanitization programmes across several offices, banks, ATMs and public places. "The move is aimed at checking spread of the virus, which has posed a serious threat to the entire world," he said.

The DRL COVID-19 team also conducted sanitization in BSNL Head Office, Tezpur, Telephone Exchange Office, Tezpur, Income Tax Department, Deputy Commissioner Office, SP Office, Police Reserve and police stations,

offices of Child Protection and Development unit, SBI branches, SBI Regional Business Office (RBO) and 28 SBI ATMs of various branches located in and around Tezpur." Dwivedi mentioned and added that the DRL team also created awareness among the officials.

The team also carried out extensive sanitization in Niz Haleswar, and in some other villages in Sonitpur District, covering all the important check points including government ration outlets, grocery outlets etc.

Int'l Nurses Day observed

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, May 14: International Nurses Day was observed in Hailakandi in a befitting manner on Tuesday. A function was held at the GNM Training School in honour of nurses and healthcare workers.

Joint Director (Health Services) Dr Ramesh Chandra Dwivedy said nurses are at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19 and it reminds us of the pivotal role nurses play.

The nurses took a pledge to do everything in their power to raise the standards and prestige of practical nursing and to devote their lives

to service and to the high ideals of the nursing profession.

GNM Training School Principal in-charge Luna Seal and National Health Mission District Programme Manager Maruf Alom Barbhuiya were also present.

International Nurses Day is organised on May 12 to celebrate the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. Each year, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) comes up with a theme to honour nurses. Florence Nightingale was the first person to turn the nursing profession into an organised sector with standardised roles and responsibilities. In 1854, she brought 38 volunteer

nurses to care for soldiers during the Crimean War. Prior to that, both male and female nurses were usually untrained family members of soldiers who tended to the ill and the wounded.

The day was first proposed by an officer with the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Dorothy Sutherland in 1953 and subsequently proclaimed by then US President Dwight D Eisenhower. International Nurses Day was first celebrated by the ICN in 1965. This year's International Nurses Day is special because it marks the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale.

Rare white crow sighted in Duliajan

ANN SERVICE

DULIAJAN, May 14: Amidst the negativity during the COVID-19 outbreak, a photograph of a rare white crow has led to curiosity among nature lovers.

Nagen Baruah, a photographer of the Public Affairs department of Oil India Ltd, captured in his camera a photograph of the rare white crow recently near OIL's field headquarters at Duliajan. The white crow was seen with other crows at the time when Baruah captured the photo.

Asked about details of the bird, environment activist and nature organisation Nature's Beckon coordinator Soumyadeep Datta called it a rare case. Datta identified the bird as a common crow (*Corvus splendens*). He said he had observed partial white feathers of crows earlier, but had never seen a completely white crow. He said that the main cause of the white colour of the bird remains unknown, and it shall be interesting to find out if there is any other white crow in Duliajan.

The bird will open new doors of biological studies, he added.

According to scientific journals, a white crow can have all white feathers and pink feet, legs and bill. These are features of albino birds.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology explains albinism as a genetic mutation that prevents the production of melanin in the body. Albinistic birds have pink eyes because without melanin in the body, the only colour in the eyes comes from the blood vessels behind the eyes. Another genetic defect is leucism, which is a form of partial albinism, and affects the deposit of melanin in feathers.

OBITUARY

Debajit Barooah

GUWAHATI, May 14: Debajit Barooah, former secretary of the Assam branch of the Eastern India Motion Picture Association, died at his Silpukhuri residence on May 8 after prolonged illness. He was 84.

Known by his nickname Bhuna, Barooah was associated with many social and cultural organisations including the Silpukhuri Puja Committee. He was a stage actor, and also appeared in significant roles in three Assamese movies – *Maa Kamakhya* directed by Anowar Hussain, *Agni Kanya* directed by Jahnur Barooah and *Mrityuhin Jiban* directed by Monurjan Sur.

Barooah is survived by his wife and a daughter.

Keshab Gogoi

CORRESPONDENT



DOOMDOOMA, May 14: Keshab Gogoi, a retired pharmacist of Doomdooma State Dispensary and a social activist, breathed his last on Wednesday morning at his residence at Uchamati in Doomdooma town. He was 81. He leaves behind his wife, a son and a daughter.

Gogoi was associated with Doomdooma Naamghar, Doomdooma Sakha Sahitya Sabha, Doomdooma Sports Association, Doomdooma Rajahuwa Rongali Bihu Sammilan and several other organisations.

UN hails India's stimulus package, cuts growth to 1.2%

Subsidy for affordable housing to be extended till March 2021: FM

NEW DELHI, May 14: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today announced that the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) for middle income groups to buy affordable housing units will be extended till March 31, 2021.

The scheme was last extended till March 2020.

Addressing the media here, Sitharaman said that the extension would benefit 2.5 lakh middle income families. So far, the scheme has benefited 3.3 lakh middle class families, she added.

The Finance Minister said that it will lead to an investment of Rs 70,000 crore in the housing sector and also create jobs.

As per the government, the decision will stimulate demand for steel, cement, transport and other construction materials.

The decision is part of the Rs 20-lakh crore economic package announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday.

Further, the Centre will also launch a scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana for migrant labour and urban poor to build affordable rental housing facilities for them.

Under the scheme, government-funded housing in cities will be converted to affordable rental housing complexes under the public-private partnership mode. Further, the government will also incentivise manufacturing units, industries, institutions to develop affordable rental housing complexes on their private land and operate them.

Meanwhile, property developers and consultants said the extension of CLSS for middle income group till March 2021 will boost demand for affordable housing, while rental housing policy for migrant labour/urban poor will open new business opportunities for builders. — Agencies

UNITED NATIONS, May 14: The UN has welcomed India's COVID-19 mega stimulus package, calling it the largest among developing countries, even as it slashed its growth rate for this fiscal year to 1.2 per cent.

Development Research Branch Chief Hamid Rashid said on Wednesday that the stimulus package "is a very welcome development in terms of ten per cent of GDP (gross domestic product), largest so far in developing countries."

"India has a domestic commercial market and large capacity to implement that large stimulus package," he said at a news conference to release the mid-year World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) update.

But he added that its impact would depend on how it is designed. The package announced on Tuesday by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is valued at Rs 20-lakh crore or about \$266 billion.

UN's Chief Economist Elliott Harris said, "The pace and strength of the recovery from the crisis not only hinges on the efficacy of public health measures in slowing the spread of the virus, but also on the ability of countries to protect jobs and incomes, particularly of the most vulnerable members of our societies."

The efficacy of the stimulus packages introduced by various countries would depend on their focus and if they would stimulate the purchasing power of the people.

The 1.2 per cent growth estimate for India for the current fiscal year is a drastic COVID-19-fuelled cut from the 6.6 per cent made in January by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, but it would still be the second-highest growth rate among major economies, trailing only China.

The update expects India's rate of GDP growth to increase to 5.5 per cent in the next fiscal year.

China is expected to grow by 1.7 per cent this year and increase to 7.6 per cent next year.

The world economy ravaged by COVID-19 is projected to shrink by 3.2 per cent this year, with the developed countries bearing the brunt with their economic growth shrinking by 5 per cent.

The update called it "the sharpest contraction since the Great Depression in the 1930s."

The UN update said, "The global economy is expected to lose nearly \$8.5 trillion in output over the next two years due to

the COVID-19 pandemic, wiping out nearly all gains of the previous four years."

"Nearly 90 per cent of the world economy has been under some form of lockdown, disrupting supply chains, depressing consumer demand and putting millions out of work," it said.

The UN projection for India for the current fiscal year is less than the 1.9 per cent made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) last month.

Asked about the wide discrepancy between the UN and IMF projections, Hamid said the reason was that the IMF used the purchasing power parity rate while the UN used the market exchange rate.

The PPP rate "gives more weight to developing countries, that shows a slightly higher growth rate than we would have," he said.

The update carried a dire warning that "an estimated 34.3 million people will likely fall below the extreme poverty line in 2020, with 56 per cent of the increase occurring in African countries."

Asked where the rest of the increase in extreme poverty will take place, Hamid said that one of the areas seeing it will be South Asia, with pockets in India and Bangladesh. — IANS

Nissan launches BS-VI Datsun GO, GO+

NEW DELHI, May 14: Nissan Motor India today said it has launched the BS-VI-compliant versions of Datsun GO and GO+ models in the country.

The five-seater Datsun GO is available at a starting price of Rs 3.99 lakh for manual variant and Rs 6.25 lakh for CVT trim.

On the other hand, the seven-seater Datsun GO+ is priced at Rs 4.2 lakh for manual variant and Rs 6.7 lakh for the CVT trim.

"With the new Datsun GO and GO+, we have introduced high-quality products that not only have a strong value proposition but are also future-ready," Nissan Motor India MD Rakesh Srivastava said in a statement.

Built with Japanese technology, both cars are BS-VI-compliant and offer the most affordable CVT (continuously variable transmission) options in India, he added. — PTI

No. UWS(T)-1 072/2000/PH-III/
EXTENSION OF TIME FOR SNIT NO 41 OF 2019-2020

It is general information to the intending bidders for SNIT No 41 of 2019-2020 which was issued vide letter No. UWS (T) 1072/2000/PH-III/406, dtd. 13.03.2020 and UWS (T) 1072/2000/PH-III/407, dtd. 20.03.2020is hereby extended, the detailed tender papers may be obtained from the office on payment of cost of bid in cash for each group during office hours on application from 18.05.2020 to 23.05.2020.

The tender papers will be received up to 3.00 pm of 29.05.2020 and the same will be opened on the same date at 3.30 pm in the office of the undersigned in presence of the tenderers or their authorized representatives who would like to be present. Other conditions will remain same.

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

Janasanyog/CF/298/20

No. SMC/15/2020/15
EXTENSION NOTICE

With reference to APWD-Building Tenders Extension Notice vide T.O. letter No. Bn/50/2019/9 Date 27.04.2020 the date and time of Tender Schedule for the work "Construction of 09 nos. of new model women colleges in the State of Assam at Sonai, Karimganj, Hallakandi, Chenga, Batadraba, Jaleswar, Mangaldoi, Golakganj and Bilasipara" has been extended as a precautionary measures for Pandemic Corona Virus disease.

The respective date of Tender download and Bid Submission is extended to 20.05.2020 upto 02.00 PM and date of Technical Bid Opening on 21.05.2020 at 02.00 PM. Details of bids may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours.

All other terms and condition will remain same.

**Sd/- Chief Engineer, PWD (Bldg.)
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati- 3**

Janasanyog/C/451/20

No. DRC-XIII/16/98/NIT/TSK/144
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Superintending Engineer P.W.D. Dibrugarh Road Circle, Dibrugarh on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bid from the approved and eligible contractors registered with Assam PWD (Roads) for Construction/Improvement of Roads under SOPD-G for the Year 2019-20 for 6 (Six) Nos of road works in Tinsukia District of Assam under **Sadiya LAC** under Tinsukia, Doomdooma and Sadiya Territorial Road Division, Tinsukia amounting to **Rs. 605.48 Lakhs (Approx)**. Details may be seen at website-<http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

**Sd/- Superintending Engineer PWD
Dibrugarh Road Circle, Dibrugarh**

Janasanyog/CF/302/20

No. ASOM.1/2020-21/6
INFORMATION FOR MUGA FARMERS/REARERS

Handloom Textiles and Sericulture Department, Government of Assam intends to provide financial assistance of Rs. 2000/- (Rupees Two thousand) only per existing Muga Farmer/Rearer through Assam Silk Outreach Mission Society for procurement of Muga Seed Cocoons/Dtis for next batch of Muga rearing.

The intending Muga Farmers/Rearers are requested to contact with the Assistant Director of Sericulture/Superintendent of Sericulture of the respective District/Sub Division within 20th May, 2020.

**Sd/- Mission Director
Assam Silk Outreach Mission Society
Khanapara, Guwahati-22**

Janasanyog/DF/188/20

No. ACE/T/NIT/07/PT-II/2017-18/39
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Additional Chief Engineer, P.W.D. Road Tezpur Zone, Tezpur invites bids for Road Works on behalf of Governor of Assam for 10 (ten) nos of Packages for Road Projects under SOPD (G) for the year 2019-20 in (Barchalla, Rangapara Sootea and Behali LACs) of Assam from approved & eligible registered Contractors enlisted with APWD in the category of Class-I (A and B) amount to Rs. 22,81,49,000.00/- (approx), including GST, LABOUR Cess etc.

Note :- Value of work is approximate and may be differ in the detail bid document for which no claim will be entertained.

Details may be seen at website-www.assamtenders.gov.in from 22.05.2020. Amendment/ Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notification shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/ bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWD, Assam website <http://assamtenders.gov.in>.

**Sd/- Addl. Chief Engineer, PWD (Roads)
Tezpur Zone, Tezpur.**

Janasanyog/CF/300/20

MSI board okays supply of Vitara Brezza to Toyota

Maruti Q4 net dips 28% to Rs 1,322 cr

NEW DELHI, May 14: The country's largest car-maker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) has reported a 27.77 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 1,322.3 crore in the quarter ended March 2020, hit by lower sales volume and increase in expenses.

The company had logged a net profit of Rs 1,830.8 crore in the January-March period of 2018-19.

Meanwhile, the auto major said it has resumed production at its Manesar plant following easing of lockdown guidelines and may also start the Gurugram plant by May 18-19.

Net sales during the quarter declined to Rs 18,207.7 crore, down 15.2 per cent from Rs 21,473.1 crore in the year-ago period.

Total car sales during the fourth quarter declined by 16 per cent to 3,85,025 units over the same period of 2018-19.

Commenting on the results, MSI Chairman RC Bhargava reiterated that the auto industry has been going through a prolonged slump since last year and the slowdown had its impact on the company as well.

For the entire 2019-20 fiscal, MSI posted a net profit of Rs 5,677.6 crore, down 25.78 per cent from Rs 7,650.6 crore in the 2018-19 fiscal.

Net sales last fiscal stood at Rs 75,660.6 crore as against Rs 86,068.5 crore in 2018-19.

Supply of Vitara Brezza to Toyota: Maruti Suzuki India on Wednesday said its board has approved supply of a derivative of compact SUV Vitara Brezza to Toyota Kirloskar Motor which will then sell the vehicle under its own brand name. This will result in incremental sales for the company, MSI said in a regulatory filing.

Toyota and Suzuki had executed a memorandum of understanding on February 6, 2017 to begin concrete examination towards realisation of business partnership in areas including environmental technologies, safety technologies, information technologies, and mutual supply of products and component.— PTI

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Net sales last fiscal stood at Rs 75,660.6 crore as against Rs 86,068.5 crore in 2018-19.

No. CS/T/BD/11/2019/38
PRESS NOTICE (RE-TENDER)

The Chief Engineer, PWD (Buildings), Assam on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites bids from the APWD Contractor of Class-1 (A) for the following work having experience in similar nature of works.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours from 15.30 hrs. of 16.05.2020 to 14.00 hrs of 05.06.2020.

The earlier Press Notice published vide letter No. CS/T/BD/11/2019/6 dtd. 16.08.2019 is hereby cancelled.

The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in.

Sl. No.	State/Package	Name of work	Approx. value of work (Rs.)	Time of completion	Bid security	Bid Security to be drawn in favour of	Cost of Bid Documents (Rs.)
1	DIET	Construction of Civil Works of Academic Building as Non Recurring Central Assistance in respect of New DIET at Kamrup Metro	2,06,87,600.00 (Approx)	9 (nine) months	Rs. 4,13,752.00 for General & Rs. 2,06,876.00 for Reserved Category	EE PWD, Guwahati Building Division-II, Dispur, Guwahati-6	6,500/-

**Sd/- Chief Engineer, PWD (Building)
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati- 3**

Janasanyog/C/431/20

Unfair business practices

CCI dismisses charges against SBI, Patanjali, Int'l Traders

NEW DELHI, May 14: Fair trade regulator CCI today dismissed a complaint alleging abuse of dominant position by SBI and collusion with Patanjali Ayurveda and International Traders in a bidding process.

The order came on the complaint filed by RH Agro Pvt Ltd, a large-scale basmati rice manufacturer. The matter pertains to auctioning of RH Agro's property by SBI after its account was classified as non-performing asset (NPA).

RH Agro's manufacturing plant at Sonepat, Haryana had been extended as primary security to a consortium of banks for availing term loan and working capital requirement for its business.

However, after the firm's payments were constrained in 2012-13, the primary security was shut down and seized by SBI. The complainant's account was declared as NPA and valuation of land, building and assets was also undertaken.

The initial valuation undertaken by SBI had come out to be nearly Rs 70 crore. The same valuation when undertaken by the complainant through government-approved valuers in July 2016 came out to be Rs 121 crore. SBI, in January 2015, stated the current value to be Rs 141.65 crore.

Afterwards, an e-auction was held for the mortgaged property in 2016.

The two bidders who participated in the auction were Patanjali Ayurveda Ltd and International Traders. The assets were sold to the highest bidder Patanjali – which made a bid of Rs 69,72,50,000.

However, RH Agro alleged that the earnest money on behalf of International Traders was also arranged by Patanjali in order to make it participate in the bidding process and create a smokescreen to make it look like as though it was an independent bidder.

"The informant alleges that arbitrary practices adopted by the officials of the State Bank of India are anti-competitive in nature as the officials of the bank abused their dominant position by restricting access to market to other players to make the bid," the CCI order noted.

However, CCI said any bank under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act has the right of enforcement of its security interest and if a borrower makes any default in loan repayment, then the account is classifiable as NPA. — PTI



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, flanked by Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur and Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey (R) addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Thursday. — PTI

Govt decodes TDS/TCS rate cut

NEW DELHI, May 14: Taxpayers who have not furnished PAN or Aadhaar while filing tax returns will not get the benefit of lower rates of the tax collection at source (TCS) and the tax deduction at source (TDS).

Also, the TDS has not been reduced on salary income, cash withdrawal of over Rs 1 crore from bank accounts and foreign remittances, a top Finance Ministry official said here today.

As part of the Rs 20-lakh crore economic package, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced 25 per cent reduction in TDS/TCS for the non-salaried specified payments made to residents for balance period of FY21 – from May 14 to March 31, 2021.

It was done to provide more money into the hands of taxpayers to deal with the economic situation amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The TDS on salary has not been reduced to prevent the salaried people from facing a heavy tax burden at the end

of the year, at the time of filing returns and paying the full quota of taxes for the year.

"Similarly, cash withdrawals and foreign remittances have also been kept out of the rate reduction ambit to promote digital transactions and restrict larger outflow of money," Finance Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey said, clarifying the position after second instalment of economic relief package was announced by the Finance Minister.

He said the reduction in TDS/TCS rates was largely to facilitate businesses get that much extra in this difficult period. The benefit would accrue to TDS on all kind of interest on securities, dividend, bank savings accounts where the rate will come down to 7.5 per cent from 10 per cent.

Similarly, payments to professionals would also attract lower TDS rate of 7.5 per cent. If you have sold a property or bought a car or paid rent, 1 per cent TCS is applicable. This will now come down to 0.75 per cent.

Pandey said 23 items under TDS and 12 under TCS would get the benefit of lower rate.

Apart from the 3-4 excluded items, it has also been clarified that reduced rates would not be applicable for taxpayers who have been denied lower rates (of TCS/TDS) due to non-furnishing of PAN/Aadhaar. The tax is required to be deducted at a rate of 20 per cent or higher for this category of taxpayers, as per the section 206 AA of the Income Tax Act.

As per the announcement, the reduced TDS rate will be applicable to payment for contract, professional fees, interest, rent, dividend, commission and brokerage. The TCS is applicable on sale of tendu leaves, timber contained under a forest lease, any other forest produce, scrap, minerals, grant of licence, lease of parking lots, mining and quarrying, sale of motor vehicle above Rs 10 lakh. The existing rates vary between 1 per cent and 5 per cent. It will now be between 0.75 per cent and 3.75 per cent. — IANS

Trade bodies hail Centre's stimulus

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, May 14: Trade bodies of State have hailed the Union government's fiscal stimulus of Rs 20-lakh crore to help the COVID-19-hit Indian economy.

FICCI Assam State Council has welcomed the announcement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the fiscal stimulus and the supplementary announcement of stimulus for the MSME sector by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

FICCI's State Council Chairman Ashish Phookan said the stimulus package announced by the Prime Minister and the first tranche of the same announced by the Finance Minister yesterday was a timely initiative to provide the much-needed relief to various sectors.

"The proposal to provide collateral Rs 3-lakh crore free

loans and Rs 50,000-crore equity infusion to MSMEs is particularly welcome and will benefit many MSMEs across the country, including the North-east, by improving their liquidity position," he stated.

He also welcomed the decision to change the definition of MSMEs by broadening the scope of inclusion. "The decision to disallow global tenders for projects below Rs 200 crore is very welcome. This is a good opportunity for all of us to take advantage of such schemes and take the country forward in these difficult times," he added.

The Indian Chamber of Commerce also complimented the Finance Minister for announcing forward-looking stimulus package for MSMEs.

"Turnover-based definition of MSME has addressed a long-pending demand and extended the benefits to a large number of companies. Secondly, Rs 3-lakh crore free

No. SENL/NIT/399/B/2018-19/970
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Superintending Engineer P.W.D Nalbari Road Circle, Nalbari on behalf of Governor of Assam invite bids from approved and eligible contractor registered with APWRD for 1 (one) No. schemes under SCSP under Bhawanipur Patacharkuchi & Sarukhetri Territorial Road Division, Pathsala amounting to Rs. 167.348 L (Approx). Details may be seen at website-<http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours from 18.05.2020.

**Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD
Nalbari Road Circle, Nalbari**

Janasanyog/CF/308/20

No. SENL/NIT/N/2020-21/50/965
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Superintending Engineer P.W.D Nalbari Road Circle, Nalbari on behalf of Governor of Assam invite bids from approved and eligible contractor registered with APWRD for 1 (one) No. scheme for Construction of Road under SOPD (G) for the year 2019-20 under Nalbari District Territorial Road Division, (Nalbari LAC) amounting to Rs. 118.30 L (Approx). Details may be seen at website <http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours from 19.05.2020.

N.B. The Tender amount has been considered including all taxes. (GST, L/Cess etc.).

**Sd/- Superintending Engineer, PWD
Nalbari Road Circle, Nalbari**

Janasanyog/CF/310/20

No. DRC-XIII/16/98/NIT/TSK/142
PRESS NOTICE INVITING RE-TENDER

Superintending Engineer P.W.D. Dibrugarh Road Circle, Dibrugarh on behalf of Governor of Assam invites re-bid from the approved and eligible contractors registered with Assam PWD (Roads) for Construction/Improvement of Roads under SOPD-G for the Year 2019-20 for 7 (Seven) Nos of road works in Tinsukia District of Assam under **Sadiya LAC** under Tinsukia, Doomdooma and Sadiya Territorial Road Division, Tinsukia amounting to **Rs. 678.21 Lakhs (Approx)**. Details may be seen at website-<http://assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours.

**Sd/- Superintending Engineer PWD
Dibrugarh Road Circle, Dibrugarh**

Janasanyog/CF/304/20



Mystery unravelled

Why men are dying more from COVID-19 than women

All over the world at least 2.97 lakh people have lost their lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While novel coronavirus has equal potential to penetrate and spread irrespective of gender and age, but common notions that males are more susceptible to COVID-19 as compared to women and even fatalities among the males are more, have been seen in the worldwide data of COVID fatalities and India is no exception.

On March 17, Dr Randeep Guleria, Director, AIIMS Delhi, had told IANS that a trend that is quite conspicuous in the worldwide data of COVID-19 is that males are more vulnerable to COVID 19 as compared to women but the reason for the trend was not ascertained. "One interesting trend is also that it has occurred more in men compared to women," he said adding, "the reason is yet to be found behind such a trend."

Well, it seems that the mystery has been decoded by the health community of the world. In a report published on May 10 in the 'European Heart Journal' it was found that more concentration of Angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 or ACE2 in males as compared to females could be responsible for such a trend. The report said, "The current pandemic

coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 infects a wide age group but predominantly elderly individuals, especially men and those with cardiovascular disease."

The study also said that "patients with heart failure, plasma ACE2 concentrations were higher in men than in women, possibly reflecting higher tissue expression of this receptor for SARS coronavirus infections. This could explain why men might be more susceptible to infection with, or the consequences of, SARS-CoV-2."

The sample size for the study was 1,485 men and 537 women with heart failure and the results were validated in 1,123 men and 575 women. However, none of them was COVID patients. But the researchers involved in the study believed that other research on how ACE2 interacts with the virus can help explain the variance in death rates between men and women.

ACE2 is an enzyme, present in most organs and is attached to the cell membrane of mainly lung type II alveolar cells. It binds with coronaviruses like the one which causes COVID-19 and allows them to more easily infect healthy cells.

However, experts in India attribute men's lifestyle responsible for such a trend.

(Source: IANS)

Kids

Cartoon Network

- 12:00 Ogy And The Cockroaches
- 13:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbak
- 15:00 Roll No. 21
- 16:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbak
- 17:00 Ogy And The Cockr...
- 18:00 Roll No. 21
- 19:00 Bandbudh Aur Budbak
- 21:00 Ogy And The Cockr...
- 23:30 The Tom & Jerry Shows

Cartoon Network

- 12:00 Chhota Bheem Movie - In Rise of Kirmada
- 12:30 Chhota Bheem Kung Fu Dhamaka
- 13:00 Chhota Bheem
- 15:00 Chhota Bheem Kung Fu
- 15:30 Chhota Bheem
- 16:30 Grizzy & The Lemmings
- 17:30 Chhota Bheem
- 18:30 Chhota Bheem Aur Chhachhaaya
- 19:30 Chhota Bheem
- 21:00 Grizzy And The Lem...
- 22:00 Mr. Bean
- 23:00 M.A.D.
- 23:30 Grizzy And The Lem...

Entertainment

SONY SAB

- 12:00 Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah
- 17:00 My Name Iji Lakkhan
- 17:30 Badi Doooor Se Aay
- 18:00 Office Office
- 18:30 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 19:00 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 19:30 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 20:00 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 20:30 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 21:00 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 21:30 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 22:00 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 22:30 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi
- 23:00 Partners Trouble Ho Gayi

STAR PLUS

- 12:00 Mahabharat
- 13:00 Yeh Rishita Kya Kehlata Hai
- 14:30 Diya Aur Baati Hum
- 16:00 Saath Nihaana Saathiya
- 17:30 Mann Ki Aawaaz...Pratigya
- 18:30 RadhaKrishn

STAR BHARAT

- 12:00 Savdhaan India - F.I.R.
- 13:00 Naya Adhyay
- 14:00 Savdhaan India : India Fights Back
- 17:00 Savdhaan India - Naya Adhyay
- 19:00 Devon Ke Dev Mahadev

Colors

- 12:00 Khatra Khatra Khatra
- 15:00 Mahabharat
- 17:00 Veer Shivaji
- 18:00 Balika Vadhu
- 19:00 Mahabharat
- 21:20 Jai Shri Krishna
- 23:10 Dance Deewane

Entertainment

STAR PLUS

- 20:00 Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar
- 20:30 Savdhaan India : India...
- 21:00 Savdhaan India - F.I.R.
- 22:45 Savdhaan India : India Fights Back

STAR BHARAT

- 12:00 Taare Zameen Par
- 15:00 Choti Bahu

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Movies

UTV MOVIES

- 13:40 Pyaar To Hona Hi Tha
- 16:25 Tumko Na Bhoonai
- 19:55 Ziddi
- 23:00 Ek Aur Tezz Hero

HBO

- 12:10 Godzilla: King of the Monsters
- 14:20 Aquaman
- 17:00 Dora and the Lost City of Gold
- 18:45 Bumblebee
- 21:00 Batman Begins
- 23:55 I Am Legend

HARRISON FORD

- 11:15 The Jungle Book
- 13:00 The Simpsons Movie
- 14:25 The Rock
- 16:40 The Nutcracker and the Four Realms
- 18:25 Beauty and the Beast
- 19:55 Polic Story 2
- 22:10 Air Force One

Movies

STAR MOVIES

- 22:10 Air Force One

MOVIES

- 12:00 Movie
- 15:00 Movie
- 18:00 Movie
- 21:00 Movie

STAR GOLD

- 23:00 Coolie No. 1

Infotainment

NAT GEO WILD

- 12:00 Animal Fight Club
- 12:15 The Living Edens
- 13:00 Wild Families
- 14:00 Secrets Of Wild India
- 14:45 Monkey Thieves
- 15:10 Survival Of The Fittest
- 16:00 Trials Of The Wild
- 16:30 Animal Fight Club

NAT GEO WILD

- 16:50 Secrets Of Wild India
- 17:40 World Wild Web
- 18:10 The Great Serengeti
- 19:00 Real Wild Battles
- 20:00 Survival Of The Fittest
- 20:45 Africa's Deadly Kingdom
- 21:00 Africa's Wild Side
- 21:40 Trials Of The Wild
- 22:00 India's Jungle Heroes
- 23:50 Dangerous Encounters
- 23:30 Monkey Thieves

ANIMAL PLANET

- 12:00 Brave Wilderness
- 13:00 Animals Unleashed
- 13:30 Animal Planet Exclusives
- 14:00 Amazing Animal Families
- 14:30 How Do Animal Do That?
- 15:00 Nature's Strangest
- 15:30 The Cute Ones
- 16:00 Mahayudh
- 17:00 Crickley! It's the Inwins
- 17:30 Animals Unleashed
- 18:30 Bizarre Beasts
- 19:00 Animal Planet Exclusives
- 20:00 Nature's Strangest
- 20:30 Killer Instincts

HISTORY TV

- 12:00 Special Operations India
- 12:30 Ancient Aliens
- 13:30 Meenakshi Amman & The
- 14:00 Food Tech
- 15:00 OMGI! Yeh Mera India
- 16:00 Forged In Fire
- 17:10 Storage Wars
- 18:00 Monster Motor Challenge
- 19:00 Food Tech
- 20:00 OMGI! Yeh Mera India
- 21:00 Forged In Fire

Regional

NEWS LIVE

- 07:00 Breakfast Live
- 08:00 Live at 8
- 09:00 Good morning Assam
- 10:30 Assamese news
- 11:30 Katha Baria (R)
- 12:00 Mid Day Live
- 13:00 Assamese Telefilm
- 14:30 Afternoon Prime
- 17:30 Guwahati Bisech
- 18:00 Guwahati Live
- 18:30 Breaking @ 6:30
- 19:00 Assamese Prime Time
- 20:00 Discussion Show
- 21:00 Super Prime Time
- 22:00 Live at 10
- 22:30 Noix Guwahati
- 23:00 Noix Batori

NEWS 18

- 07:45 Pratham Xongbad
- 14:00 Biyolir Headline
- 16:00 Abeler Khabar
- 16:30 Superfast Prime Time100
- 17:00 City18
- 18:00 Prime Time18
- 19:00 Dintur Shironam
- 20:00 Porjyobekhyon
- 21:00 Aparadh Nama
- 22:00 North East Scan
- 23:00 Noix Xironam

raing

- 17:00 Xopun
- 17:30 Baralia Kal
- 18:30 Xopunor Aasutia Rang
- 20:00 Jonaki Kareng
- 20:30 Xopun
- 21:00 Oi Khapla
- 21:30 Bah Amarawati Bah
- 22:00 Borola Kal

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- 15:00 Movie
- 18:00 Movie
- 21:00 Movie

STAR GOLD

- 23:00 Coolie No. 1

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, May 15, 2020:

Imaginative and quietly magnetic, this year finds you working on a very important project. You will be granted the funds to do this, and do not have to worry about finances as others do. Social distancing also will not be such a problem for you. If single, you are naturally a loner and may decide to keep being one. If attached, you continue being supported by your partner, who is happy to do so. SCORPIO likes solitude, too.

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

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
 ***** Today you will deeply appreciate reverie and solitude. Great creative inspiration develops while you are alone. Keep a journal in which to preserve your notes and sketches for future reference. Thoughts come together with new depth and power. Tonight: A second chance at a project.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
 ***** Get to know those whom you admire better. A sense of humor and the art of pleasant conversation will be the keys to entering a new social circle. Warm feelings are shared with a special someone. Tonight: You intuitively know what needs to be said.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
 ***** You will want to contribute and achieve today. Avoid involvement in job politics though. There are some delicate situations among colleagues. It is wise to remain alert and cautious, and all will be well. Tonight: Call an elderly family member just to check in.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
 ***** You seek wider intellectual horizons today. Purchase books and consider online classes. Friends can be very opinionated. Help a comrade direct anger in a constructive way. Choose your associates with some discretion. Tonight: Make it OK to be spontaneous.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
 ***** You keep a positive mindset today. Negative programming, especially about economic issues, can seem discouraging. Cope by seeking to understand the force of fate. Others are emotional and sensitive. Be kind and offer sympathy. Research that which puzzles you. Tonight: Knowledge brings empowerment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
 ***** Today allows your best qualities to shine. You will be an example to others. Relationships enter a calmer phase. Others will be less demanding. You will see every setting in a new light. Tonight: A child or loved one has some strong feelings to share. Listen well.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
 ***** Your health takes a turn for the better. Animal companions are especially in tune with your needs today. Enjoy exercise or spiritual healing sessions with a loved one. Accept invitations. An admirer is making a special effort to add to your happiness. Tonight: Early bedtime.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
 ***** Long-standing communication problems with a child or romantic interest can be overcome. Practice writing the perfect love letter or poem. Communicating your feelings is significant if you are to successfully woo the perfect partner. Tonight: Brings the promise of love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
 ***** An appreciation of your personal heritage is heightened today. Focus on deepening bonds with family members. Relationships will be steadier and satisfying. The people in your immediate surroundings assume deeper significance. Tonight: Attend to home maintenance and repair projects.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
 ***** Today is good for talking through problems and finding answers. Honesty and ethical behavior provide the standards for success. Be a good listener. Conversations, practical study and short outings are all catalysts for progress. Tonight: Solidify an important relationship when the chance appears.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
 ***** Today you might yearn for more and do not fully appreciate the bird in the hand. You are tempted to overspend. Bartering and bargain hunting provide a much more worthwhile alternative. Tonight: A discussion about the logistics of a financial situation is necessary.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
 ***** Today feels quite rare and magical, and you will feel better energy than you have in a long while. You will be appreciated, and an important point is made or a goal reached. There is the promise of romance. Tonight: The unexpected keeps popping up.

Thought for the day
 All men commend patience, although few are willing to practice it.
 - THOMAS A KEMPIS

LOCKHORNS

LOCKHORNS

THE PHANTOM

BLONDIE

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

Tribune CROSSWORD - 6894

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		8	9			
10	11	12	13			
14				15	16	
17	18	19	20			
21		22		23	24	
25		26				
27						
			28	29	30	31
32	33				34	
				35		
36						37

SOLUTION TO TRIBUNE CROSSWORD - 6894

Across

- List (4)
- Salted or roasted kernel? (6)
- Cry of delight (3)
- Operatic solo (4)
- Rocket launchers (8)
- Very drunk (informal) (7)
- Calculating frame with strings and beads? (6)
- Japanese city destroyed and devastated by atomic bomb (9)
- Crow sound (3)
- Expert (3)
- Cunning (3)
- That gentle (9)

Down

- Actual, existing (4)
- Branchlet (4)
- Unruly crowds (4)
- Simple life form (6)
- Large deer (3)
- Give aid to (6)
- Possesses (3)
- Ancient (9)

Other words:

- person from Paris? (9)
- Wealthy (7)
- Be defeated (4)
- Hip friend (3)
- Period of immaturity (6)
- "Hey, you!" (4)
- Yom Kippur (3,5)
- Be defeated (4)
- Hip friend (3)
- Period of immaturity (6)
- Actual, existing (4)
- Branchlet (4)
- Unruly crowds (4)
- Simple life form (6)
- Large deer (3)
- Give aid to (6)
- Possesses (3)
- Ancient (9)

HEALTH CAPSULES®

by Bron Smith

HOW COMMON IS HEART DISEASE? GET MOVING!

ONE IN FOUR AMERICANS HAS SOME KIND OF HEART DISEASE. ALONG WITH CANCER AND DIABETES, IT HAS REACHED EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS. THE STANDARD AMERICAN DIET (S.A.D.) IS A STRONG CONTRIBUTING FACTOR, AS WELL AS LACK OF REGULAR PHYSICAL EXERCISE.

Health Capsules is not intended to be of a diagnostic nature.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.

IEBRK
 POLIS
 IPRYLM
 CEISBP

When you don't share your _____, you resent hearing the _____ of other people. - Chuck Palahniuk (8...)(same word twice)

SOLUTION

Answer: When you don't share your problems, you resent hearing the problems of other people. - Chuck Palahniuk



Passengers, who arrived on a special train from New Delhi, seen at the New Dibrugarh railway station on Thursday. — UB Photos

Four diagnosed with fever on arrival at Dibrugarh rly station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DIBRUGARH, May 14: A family of four, who arrived from Delhi this morning at the Dibrugarh Railway Station in Banipur along with the other passengers, were diagnosed with symptoms of fever during the preliminary test and immediately rushed to the designated quarantine centre at Jokai Model Hospital for further examination.

The health officials informed that the parents as also their two minor children were diagnosed with fever symptoms on their arrival. Nodal officer and joint director of health services Dr Nabajyoti Gogoi told newsmen at the railway station that swab samples would be collected for test and efforts would be made to release the results as early as possible.

Altogether 261 passengers, who were stranded in Delhi due to COVID-19 induced lockdown, were received by officials from their respective districts, including from Arunachal Pradesh, with all COVID-19 health protocols in the presence of Labour and Tea Tribes' Welfare Minister and Revenue Minister Jogen Mohan at the railway station.

Among the passengers who alighted from the train here, 13 were from Arunachal Pradesh. Seventy-four were Dibrugarh-bound passengers while the rest of the passengers were from Tinsukia district (97), Dhemaji district (28), Lakhimpur district (19), Charaideo district (21), Sivasagar district (5) and Biswanath district (4).

On their arrival, each passenger was screened at their respective district

health screening camps set up on the station campus. The Dibrugarh-bound passengers were screened at their respective revenue circle health screening camp at the site. The administration had also arranged light food for the passengers at the station. The passengers were later moved to their respective districts and revenue circles for mandatory quarantine at designated centres.

On their arrival and during the health screening, the passengers were not allowed to meet their parents, relatives, friends or anybody for that matter. The railway station was cordoned off and the entry for the public was restricted.

Sources said some Dibrugarh-bound passengers disembarked at other stations also as more passengers were expected here.

Shramik Express to reach Badarpur today

CORRESPONDENT

HAILAKANDI, May 14: The Shramik Express train is reaching Badarpur railway station in Karimganj on Friday.

The train that originated at Chennai will terminate at Bhairobi in Mizoram. It reached Malda in West Bengal in the afternoon today.

Sources said of the 78 passengers arriving by the special train, 75 are from Karimganj and three from Cachar.

Meanwhile, the Hailakandi district administration has set up an in-bound passengers facilitation centre at Badarpur railway station manned by officials of the administration, police and health personnel to facilitate the smooth movement of passengers to the district. After screening, passengers will board the buses arranged by the administration to the institutional quarantine facilities here.

Meanwhile keeping in view the return of people, who were stuck in different parts of the country due to the lockdown, in the next couple of days by trains and other modes of transport, the administration has set up additional quarantine centres in schools and colleges, besides strengthening the isolation wards in hospitals. Deputy Commissioner, MN Dahal inspected the Algapur College, Mohonpur CHC and Algapur Model Hospital to oversee the arrangements for quarantining of the in-bound people for a duration of 14 days.

Assistant Commissioner, Parikshit Phukan said calls are being made to the passengers travelling by trains to South Assam as per the passengers' lists to keep a tab on the persons. Phukan added that no passenger from the district travelled by the Rajdhani Express that reached Guwahati on Wednesday night.

ASHA body's memo to CM

ANN SERVICE

DULIAJAN, May 14: The Dibrugarh district unit of State Union of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) today sent a memorandum to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal for fulfilling their four charter demands. Signed by district members of the union — Geeta Gowalla, Rina Rai, Sikha Ghosh and Tilumoni Gogoi — the memorandum was submitted to Attached Circle Officer of Naharkatia, Wahidul Rehman.

The union demanded one time assistance of Rs 25,000 to each ASHA worker, who is giving services to stop the spread of coronavirus. The union also demanded an insurance coverage of Rs 50 lakh for every ASHA worker. Thirdly, the union demanded to facilitate PPE kits for every ASHA worker of the State.

The union also demanded equal status of jobs for ASHA workers like other employees of National Rural Health Mission.

The union expressed its discontent over not getting recognition and job security even though ASHA workers have been engaged as frontline fighters against COVID-19 in the country.

20 stranded persons from Delhi, other places arrive at Nagaon

A CORRESPONDENT

NAGAON, May 14: Around 20 people who were stranded in Delhi and other places outside the State arrived at their home town here in the wee hours on Thursday on a special train provided by the Central government.

Sources said all of them have been admitted immediately in Kandali Model Hospital for the time being and would be shifted to the special quarantine

centres set up at various locations in the district.

However, sources said other 19 people from outside the State would reach Nagaon late on Thursday night and they would also be put under special quarantine.

Speaking to this correspondent here on Thursday, Deputy Commissioner Jadav Saikia said those people who reached late night on Wednesday had been admitted in the isolation ward at Kandali Model Hospi-

tal and would be shifted soon.

Meanwhile, the district administration and district health services, have completed all preparations to deal with the COVID-19 positive patients in the old building of Nagaon Swahid Bhugswari Phookonani Civil Hospital.

The old building of the hospital has been transformed into a complete COVID-19 hospital with all facilities, where altogether 150 patients could be accommodated.



Heavy traffic at Rangiya town during the third phase of lockdown, as seen on Thursday. — UB Photos

'Bihu Uruuwa Utsav' at Ghilamara

ANN SERVICE

DHEMAJI, May 14: The people of West Ghilamara area have been celebrating the 'Bihu Uruuwa Utsav' (meant for bidding farewell to Bohag Bihu) every year on 30th and 31st of Assamese month of Bohag under the aegis of the Paschim Ghilamara Yubak Sangha.

This year, the 47th custom-

ary Bihu celebration was observed yesterday only by hoisting the flag and performing *smriti tarpan* due to the ongoing lockdown.

The flag on the occasion was hoisted by social worker Mahesh Dutta while the flag of the Yubak Sangha was hoisted by former president of the Sangha Dilip Bora.

Meanwhile, *smriti tarpan*, on the occasion, was done by

Dipu Boruah, secretary of the Paschim Ghilamara Yubak Sangha. The function was celebrated with tokenism in presence of only 5 persons by maintaining social distancing in the spot.

It may be mentioned here that several other Bihu Samilani of Ghilamara have cancelled Bihu celebrations this year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

New parking system introduced in Jorhat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, May 14: With an objective to increase revenue collection of the Jorhat Municipal Board during the lockdown period, the JMB has introduced a system of charging parking fees of vehicles parked in notified areas of the town on an hourly basis.

AJMB official told this newspaper that after several relaxations were granted by the Government in the third phase of the lockdown allowing people to come out of their homes using vehicles under certain conditions, the Board at present administered by an Assistant Commissioner (IAS cadre) Aditya Vikram Yadav, in the capacity of Executive Officer, decided to introduce a new system to mop up revenue.

As the term of the previous JMB, administered by elected ward commissioners (with BJP majority) ended on March 31, 2020, the Jorhat Deputy Commissioner Roshni A Korati directed Yadav to assume charge as the Executive Officer of the board and administer the civic body.

It may be mentioned here that on March 31 this year the term of the one-year period of contract awarded to lessees (private parties) to collect parking fees in different localities under the municipal areas expired and the process of calling for fresh tenders to allot contracts to lessees could not be done due to the lockdown in force.

In view of the present situation, the collection of parking fees has been done by JMB employees.

The JMB official said that as per the new system, the parking fee of a four-wheeler for first one hour is Rs 10, for two hours Rs 20, for three hours Rs 30 and after three hours Rs five per hour.

For 12 hours the fee for four-wheeler is Rs 70 and for 24-hour is Rs 120, the official informed.

In case of two-wheelers for first two hours the fee is Rs 10, for three hours it is Rs 20, after three hours Rs five per hour while for 12 hours and 24 hours the fee are Rs 70 and Rs 120 respectively.

The official said like earlier

provision, the yearly parking ticket (a sticker) for two-wheelers is Rs 250 and Rs 400 for four-wheelers, which were sold at the JMB office. Vehicle owners having the yearly ticket do not have to pay parking fee on a daily basis.

When contacted, Yadav said that the new system has been introduced as a way to increase revenue collection of the Board in view of the ongoing situation and also to put in place a system that will discourage people to park vehicles for a long period.

He said that the new system was expected to contribute towards bringing down incidence of parking vehicles in no-parking areas as space constraint in the parking areas was likely to be come down a bit.

Yadav added that Jorhat was a promising urban centre and in the future further growth in this regard was expected that will lead to increase in vehicles on roads manifold, and hence, having a parking system in place like the one introduced will help in implementation of the traffic control/management plan.

37 returnees reach Jorhat by special train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, May 14: The first batch of 37 returnees from outside the State stepped out from the special train carrying them at Mariani railway junction under Titabar Civil Sub-division of the district today.

In a separate vehicle, nine persons who attended the infamous Tabilighi Jamaat markaz at Delhi's Nizamuddin area in March this year, also returned to Jorhat today.

Jorhat Deputy commissioner Roshni A Korati informed

that the nine Tablighi Jamaat members returned to Jorhat from Rajasthan.

"They (Tablighi members) have been tested and found negative for COVID-19 in Rajasthan. Hence they will be sent for home quarantine after stamping. We have taken their samples also, as is the procedure for all incoming passengers from other States," Korati said.

The Deputy Commissioner further stated that all of them belonged to the Deberapara area of Jorhat near Mariani.

She said that out of 37 train passengers screened today, 19 belonged to Jorhat, 1 to Majuli, 15 to Golaghat and two to Sivasagar. All of them would be put under home or institution quarantine, the Deputy Commissioner added.

It may be mentioned here from May 6 till today, 565 people who arrived by own vehicles or ambulances, have been screened at the zonal screening centre for six districts of Upper Assam set up at Kakodunga (bordering Golaghat district) on the western outskirts here.

Assam migrant workers in Tamil Nadu in dire straits

SIVASISH THAKUR

GUWAHATI, May 14: Notwithstanding government interventions towards facilitating return journeys for those stuck outside the State during the lockdown, a vast segment of disadvantaged migrant workers continues to languish for want of support from the authorities.

Their woes are compounded by the fact that they no longer have jobs and their little savings are exhausted. Even the toll-free helpline that has effectively served many stranded across the country has failed to reach some such most vulnerable segments.

The plight of 500-odd workers from Assam engaged with a battery manufacturing unit of Exide Industries Limited at Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu exemplifies the agony of the stranded who have now exhausted the little means from the local authorities and are desperate to return home.

The workers said they had been without salary immediately after the lockdown.

Narrating their harrow-

ing ordeal, Dipak Nath, one of the workers, told *The Assam Tribune* that the pangs of hunger and humiliation were getting too overbearing for them since the past couple of weeks.

"Since the lockdown had started we got 15 kg rice, 1 kg dal and one litre oil from the Tamil Nadu government as one-time assistance but once that got exhausted, things worsened manifold. Our little savings also got exhausted and now shopkeepers are unwilling to give essentials on credit," he added.

Ruing that only about one-fifth of the workers based there got the announced financial assistance from the Assam government by way of bank account transfer, Nath said many could not elicit any response from the helpline due to technical issues.

Sometimes the helpline asked them to contact the local authorities only. As the chemical factory is located in a remote area of the State, transportation bottlenecks have further compounded their woes.

The workers have also uploaded a video of their plight in social media.

According to Nath, 200 of

the workers stuck up near the industrial unit are from Raha in Nagaon district of Assam. Nath, also from Raha, graduated in 2014 and has been working there since.

"We are desperate to be back with our families but we have no money to buy train tickets. There is a clear gap between the government's announcements and delivery on the ground. Matters have not been helped by the fact that the Tamil Nadu officials speak only English and Tamil. We tried to take up things with Assam government authorities but to no avail," Nath said, adding that their families were also largely dependent on them for living.

Pointing out that many of their colleagues from other states were facilitated bus journeys following intervention by their respective state governments, Nath said the Assam government should also adopt a similar approach.

"Most of our co-workers are gone now with the help of their authorities. If the Assam government is serious about our return, it should reach out to us. If we are not taken out of this place, we could even die of hunger," he said.

2 State youths stranded in Delhi rescued

SPL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, May 14: Acting on basis of media reports and on instructions of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Assam Government officials on Thursday separately rescued two stranded youths and gave them shelter.

The first youth identified as Santosh Bora, hailing from Lakhimpur's Pahumarah village was working as an agriculture worker in Punjab. He reached Delhi after walking from Amritsar penniless and helpless and had stationed himself in front of the Paharganj Railway Station from where he was rescued.

The second youth Raja Doley of Maderguri village of Lakhimpur district was a daily wage earner was in Delhi but because of the lockdown he lost his job and got stranded before the Assam Government officials rescued him too.

Official sources said today that on instruction of the Chief Minister, Principal Resident Commissioner, Kailash Samria directed Assam Bhavan officials to search for the youths and rescue them.

Sources said that Assam Bhavan officials after rescuing them took them to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital for health check-up as well as to ascertain their COVID-19 status. Both of them have been shifted to Assam House here and will be kept under strict monitoring till the COVID-19 report comes in.

Depending on their COVID-19 status, steps will be taken to send them back to their respective destinations, said sources.



District administration officials sealing an unhygienic dry fish market, at Sonari on Thursday. — UB Photos

It's not like I don't want to face fast bowlers, asserts Dhawan

NEW DELHI, May 14: Opener Shikhar Dhawan has asserted that he can very well take on the fast bowlers but at the same time conceded that he doesn't want to face the innings' first ball whenever a pacer starts the proceedings.

Dhawan was responding to the not-too-flattering recent remarks about him by his opening partner Rohit Sharma and David Warner, his former team-mate at Sunrisers Hyderabad.

"No, no I disagree to that. It's not like I don't want to face fast bowlers. Everyone has their views, I am an opening batsman. I have done that role for India for eight years now, so obviously I play the fast bowlers," Dhawan said during an Instagram live session with former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan on Wednesday.

"If I do not face them in the first over, then I eventually do in the second over," he added.

While Dhawan has played many fine

innings since making his India debut, it is his opening partner Rohit, who has emerged as the team's batting mainstay alongside captain Virat Kohli.

He was candid about his unwillingness to take strike first up when a speed merchant is operating at the other end, calling it more of a "mental" thing.

It's not like I don't want to face fast bowlers. Everyone has their views, I am an opening batsman. I have done that role for India for eight years now, so obviously I play the fast bowlers.

- Shikhar Dhawan

"Yes, I do not like taking strike on the first ball of the match and I am honest about it but if any youngster like Prithvi (Shaw) comes in the side and he is not comfortable taking the first ball then obviously I would take the strike.

"But with Rohit, it started in Champions Trophy where I told him to take the strike and that sort of continued as I don't like to change things much," the left-handed batsman said.

The Delhi player said it's a challenge for every opener to stand up to fast bowlers in seaming conditions.

"Of course if we play in England in seaming conditions, it is challenging for everyone, it's not like I don't want to face fast bowlers."

Both Rohit and Dhawan have been opening for India since the Champions Trophy in 2013, before KL Rahul burst on to the scene.

During a recent chat, Warner and Rohit talked about the experience of opening with Dhawan. - PTI

Akhtar accuses ICC of bias after being trolled by apex body

KARACHI, May 14: The flamboyant Shoaib Akhtar has accused the ICC of "throwing neutrality out of window" after being trolled by the apex body for claiming that he can even now dismiss Australian run-machine Steve Smith in a jiffy.

The International Cricket Council used a series of images featuring basketball star Michael Jordan to troll Akhtar after he claimed that he can get Smith out on the fourth delivery after three "hurting" bouncers.

In the ICC's first picture



Jordan looks down at something. In the next image, it is revealed as Akhtar's tweet, and third one shows the legendary basketball player laughing.

Akhtar, 44, tweeted on Wednesday that he was not amused by the ICC response. "A symbolic tweet, how ICC has thrown neutrality out of the window. Basically this is how the state of affairs are run there," Akhtar tweeted.

One of the fastest bowlers the game has seen, Akhtar posted an old video of himself

and captioned it: "Dear @icc, find a new meme or Emoji. Sorry i couldn't find any, only found some real videos."

Earlier, Akhtar had taken to social media to respond to a poll on ESPNcricinfo that pitted some of the best in the business from the previous era with bowlers and batsmen from the modern-day.

Responding to the post that had pitted Akhtar against Smith, the Pakistani said, "Even today, 3 hurting bouncers and i can dismiss @stevesmith49 on the 4th ball. Lol." - PTI

Archer calls for "crowd simulation" at closed door matches

LONDON, May 14: World Cup-winning England pacer Jofra Archer has suggested playing audio of crowd noise to create a "realistic" atmosphere if cricket resumes behind closed doors amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The coronavirus outbreak has caused a collapse of sports events worldwide, forcing either cancellations or postponements.

Like other sports, international and domestic cricket too has been disrupted prompting the national boards to contemplate resuming the game behind closed doors.

"We play music at cricket. Why can't we play some crowd simulation?" Archer said on the BBC podcast 'Stumped'.



"We can play the clapping, play the oohs and the aahs and just try to make it as realistic as possible," he added.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is exploring the possibility of using bio-secure venues, where players stay at the ground and are tested regularly. - PTI

NRAI nominates Anjum Moudgil for Khel Ratna

NEW DELHI, May 14: The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has nominated ace shooter Anjum Moudgil for the Khel Ratna - the country's highest sporting honour - while recommending Jaspal Rana for the Dronacharya Award for the second year in a row.

Moudgil, the 26-year-old rifle ace who started shooting in 2008, is among the first two Indians to have secured quota places for the Tokyo Olympics.

The NRAI on Thursday said it will be sending the Sports Ministry the names of champion pistol shooters Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma, Manu Bhaker and promising rifle shooter Elavenil Valarivan for the

prestigious Arjuna Award. Bhaker and Valarivan's names were added to the list on Thursday, according to federation sources.

NRAI President Raninder Singh said in a statement, "Our shooters had an outstanding last season and it was a particularly difficult selection to make this time around. I wish all those recommended all the very best and hope those who could not make it this year, force us to do so next time around with their performances."

"I believe all are equally talented and will certainly reap rich rewards if they carry on the way they have."

Bhaker and Valarivan's names were added to the list on Thursday. - PTI

Swiss prosecutor in FIFA probe to be hauled

GENEVA, May 14: Switzerland's attorney general, who is conducting investigations into alleged corruption at FIFA, will be hauled in front of the Swiss parliament's judicial committee, the body said.

Michael Lauber, the Alpine nation's top prosecutor, will be quizzed at the committee's next meeting on May 20.

The committee of lawmakers "then intends to decide on the possible opening of a revocation procedure against him," it said in a statement.

In Switzerland, the attorney general is chosen by parliamentarians.

Lauber was investigated by the supervisory authority watchdog that oversees his office with regard to his informal meetings with FIFA president Gianni Infantino, the head of world football's governing body, in 2016 and 2017.

The committee said it had noted the disciplinary decision taken by the watchdog on March 2 to sanction Lauber by cutting his salary.

That investigation found that Lauber committed "very serious breaches" before, but also during the disciplinary proceedings, said the committee.

"These included statements contrary to the truth, violation of the duty of loyalty or obstruction of the disciplinary investigation," it said. - AFP

Brighton's Murray fears PL 'rush' to restart

LONDON, May 14: Brighton striker Glenn Murray fears Premier League football is being rushed back too soon, with death rates from coronavirus still stubbornly high in the worst-hit country in Europe.

Premier League chiefs hope to resume the postponed campaign in mid-June and want players back in full training in the next two weeks.

But Murray believes the Premier League is moving too fast in their attempts to conclude the season, with Britain's official death toll standing at more than 36,000.

"Football isn't necessarily a necessity - it's a game, it's a sport," Murray told Sky Sports on Thursday.

"I mean, what if we go through all this rigmarole of trying to get back started, and we have a second peak and we're stopped anyway?"

"I just can't understand after just sort of loosening the lockdown why we're in such a rush to get it back. Why can't we just wait sort of a month or so to see if

things go to plan?" The Premier League invited captains and bosses to share their thoughts on a return to action during conference calls on Wednesday.

West Ham midfielder Mark Noble and Watford forward Troy Deeney were reportedly critical of the resumption plan.

Murray, who was also on the call, is concerned training and matches could start and then have to stop if players test positive.

The league hopes to get the backing of clubs to restart at their next meeting on Monday, with the return of Germany's Bundesliga this weekend providing a test case.

"Obviously we're all going to be watching the Bundesliga because it's football and we all love football," Murray said.

"It'll be nice to see a live sport on TV without doubt. But I think what we're not taking into consideration is that Germany have only had 7,000, 8,000 deaths, I think, and they've got 20 million more people than us." - AFP



Serie A clubs want to resume coronavirus-hit season on June 13

ROME, May 14: Italy's Serie A clubs have said they want to return to competition on June 13 if they get the all-clear from the government.

"Regarding the resumption of sports activities and in compliance with government decisions and in accordance with medical protocols for the protection of players the date of June 13 for the resumption of the championship has been indicated," Lega Serie A said in a statement.

Sport in Italy has been suspended since March 9 amid the coronavirus pandemic which has killed over 31,000 people in the country.

All 20 top-flight clubs had already voted unanimously to finish the campaign but this



Lorenzo De Silvestri (L) and Tomas Rincon of Torino FC arrive to take part in an individual training session.

is the first time a date has been set for a return.

Sports minister Vincenzo Spadafora told the Italian parliament he had received a letter from Italian Football Federation president Gabri-

allowing the resumption without further difficulty of collective training from May 18," Spadafora said.

Italian teams returned to individual training on May 4 after a two-month lockdown, with group sessions now set for next Monday under very strict conditions.

There has been much debate over the quarantine period after a positive test, with government scientists seeking a two-week isolation period for those who have been in contact with the infected person.

Italian football chiefs have pushed back the end of the season to August 2, allowing time for the latter stages of the Champions League and Europa League to be played later in the month. - AFP

STATE INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ

ITANAGAR, ARUNACHAL PRADESH
No. SIRD&PR-96/2019 (CMAGY)/744 Dated 13th May 2020

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Shri. Pema Khandu
Hon'ble Chief Minister



Shri. Bamang Felix
Hon'ble Minister, RD & PR

SIRD&PR Arunachal Pradesh an Apex State Level Institute for training and research in the field of Rural Development & Decentralised Planning under its project on Chief Minister Aadarsh Gram Yojana (CMGAY) seeks to engage dynamic Indian students having done post graduation and graduation from reputed Institute & Universities and like IITs/IMS/ISB as **Arunachal Pradesh Rural Development Fellows (APRDF)**. The Fellows would be expected to support the various activities on planning and monitoring of CMAGY in the state for a fixed period.

A. Eligibility:-

Senior Fellows

- Master in any discipline with minimum experience of three years/Graduation in any discipline with minimum of five years' experience
- At least 60% marks in both under graduation & post-graduation level.
- Candidates with domain experience as per the guidelines from premier institutes likes IITs/IMS/ISB will be preferred.
- Candidates with knowledge of Project Management skills, experience in implementation and monitoring of Govt. Schemes, ICT proficiency in MS office, PRA, training and capacity building will be preferred.

Jr. Fellows

- Master in any discipline with minimum experience of one year/Graduation in any discipline with minimum of three years' experience
- At least 55% marks in both under graduation & post-graduation level.
- Candidates with domain experience from premier institutes likes IITs/IMS/ISB will be preferred.
- Candidates with knowledge of Project Management skills, experience in implementation and monitoring of Govt. Schemes, ICT proficiency in MS office, PRA, training and capacity building will be preferred.

B. Period:-

The period of fellowship shall be at least 9(Nine) months but shall not exceed the duration of the project. Fellows not completing the requisite period shall not be issued.

C. Number of Fellowship:-

- Senior Fellows : 2 (Two)
- Jr. Fellows : 2 (Two)



D. Fellowship:-

- Rs. 70,000/- per month for Sr. fellows
- Rs. 35,000/- per month for Jr. Fellows

E. Procedure of Application :-

Guidelines for APRDF along with online application can be accessed and submitted from the given link www.sirdarun.org. Shortlisted candidates fulfilling the conditions shall be required to appear before the Selection Committee and once selected shall be willing to join the fellowship at short notice. Offline applications will be summarily rejected.

F. Last Dated:-

The last date of submitting **online application** for the fellowships shall be **15 days** from the date of this advertisement.

Cancel French Open rather than play without spectators: Leconte

PARIS, May 14: Henri Leconte says the French Open should be cancelled if it is impossible to have spectators at the clay-court Grand Slam event.

"I think there is just no interest in having Roland Garros behind closed doors," Leconte, who lost to Mats Wilander in the 1988 final, told L'Equipe TV.

The French tennis federation has moved the tournament from its initial May 24-June 7 dates to September 20-October 4 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It will be difficult for the players to deal with it," Leconte said.

"This is above all else a political decision. The federation hopes that in a few months we'll be able to play Roland Garros (in normal conditions)... but playing it behind closed doors, no. I think it would be better to cancel it and start again by having a real season in 2021."

French federation president Bernard Giudicelli has said holding the tournament without spectators was one possibility being considered.

The organisers of Wimbledon have cancelled the 2020 tournament while the US Open remains for now in its original August-September slot. - AFP

SU DO KU

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

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.

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