



# 35 US states release formal reopening plans

WASHINGTON, April 30: As many as 35 of the 50 American states affected by the coronavirus pandemic have unveiled formal reopening plans, as President Donald Trump expressed confidence that “much better days” are ahead for the country that has been hit hard by the “invisible enemy”.

By Wednesday, 61,000 Americans have lost their lives due to the coronavirus and over 10 lakh people have tested positive, the highest for any country in the world.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Alhajain Lutfun Nahar Huq (Jeuty)**

W/o Late Zahirul Huq  
Demise : 01-05-2002

To us, the source of our strength to look far and beyond. May the Almighty grant you eternal peace.

Rabia, Hasan, Sumi, Lomi, Amar & Zuur.

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**MONUWAR UDDIN AHMED**

A year has passed by since you have left us leaving behind all your sweet memories

The pillar of strength that we could always rely on.

A pious soul, loving and kind, upright & just, in heart & mind

There is not a moment in our life that you are not by our side.

Every second your memory lingers on, as you were as before

Your guiding hand from heaven shall remain our strength in life which death also cannot deny

The legacy of your love towards your family and values that you left behind will continue to guide us in all our endeavours.

We deeply miss you every moment.

On this day we remember you with a heavy heart and pray to Almighty that Your Soul rest in eternal peace in Heaven.

Zabin Ahmed (Wife)  
Nafisa Ahmed (Daughter)  
Masroor Ahmed (Son)  
Asad Iqbal (Son in Law)  
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“We think we really have crossed a big boundary, and much better days are ahead, and I often say I see the light at the end of the tunnel very strongly.”

— Donald Trump

“We mourn, and I have to say this so strongly we mourn every life tragically lost to the invisible enemy. And we are heartened that the worst of the pain and suffering is going to be behind us,” Trump said, during a White House roundtable on Wednesday with industry executives on “Opening Up America Again”.

Most industries and business activities remain shut and over 95 per cent of the country’s 330 million population have been under stay-at-home orders. Over 26 million Americans have applied for unemployment benefits and the number is expected to go up to more than 30 million.

The US economy has come to a standstill. It grew by negative 4.8 per cent in the first quarter. On Wednesday, Trump exuded confidence that economy would be back on

track by the fourth quarter. “We think we really have crossed a big boundary, and much better days are ahead, and I often say I see the light at the end of the tunnel very strongly,” Trump said.

“We are seeing tremendous pent-up demand, and it’s a beautiful thing to see, so it’s wonderful to have America industry leaders, and that is what you are, true leaders to the White House,” he told the industry leaders.

“This demand is going to be incredible. I think next year is going to be an incredible year for our economy. I think the fourth quarter is going to be really, really good,” he added.

Thanks to the devotion of the American people, the number of new cases continues to decline, the United States has now conducted nearly six million tests, far more

than any other nation, the President said.

“And so much has been learned about what we are fighting, and if it does rear up a little bit in the fall or even a lot, we will be able to put it out. We will put out the embers,” he added.

Vice President Mike Pence said he is encouraged by the progress, and even the hotspots around the country cases are levelling off and in some areas going down.

“Hospitalisations are declining even in the greater New York City area. That is a testament to the American people to the way the American people now nearly 45 days ago embraced the guidelines to slow the spread. And as we come to the end of this mitigation period, states across the country have all embraced those same mitigation and social distancing efforts,” he said. — PTI

## Sailors become biggest cluster of infections in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, April 30: Sailors at a Sri Lankan naval base have become the biggest cluster of coronavirus infections in the Indian Ocean island nation with 248 testing positive for the disease, authorities said on Thursday.

Sri Lanka’s Army Chief Lt Gen Shavendra Silva said that out of 30 cases discovered in the last 24 hours, 22 are Navy sailors and another seven had close contact with them.

The virus is believed to have entered the camp on the outskirts of the capital, Colombo, last week when sailors were deployed to hunt down a group of drug addicts who had contact with a COVID-19 patient and

About 4,000 Navy troops are being quarantined inside the camp while 242 relatives have been taken to four quarantine centers run by the Navy.

Sri Lanka has had 649 COVID-19 patients and seven deaths. About half of the sick were diagnosed after April 22 and include 257 sailors or close contacts.

According to the newspaper *Lankadeepa*, with the largest circulation in the country, at least six villages have been sealed off this week in different parts of Sri Lanka because of exposure to the sailors who returned home. About 1,300 other people have been asked to self-quarantine, the paper reported.

In a bid to control the spread of the virus, the government has cancelled home leaves for troops and ordered them to return to camps. — AP

## Germany to take ‘small steps’ to loosen lockdown

BERLIN, April 30: Germany’s Health Minister has warned against significantly relaxing restrictions imposed to curb coronavirus infections, saying this could recklessly endanger the country’s achievements in fighting the pandemic.

In an op-ed on Thursday for daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Jens Spahn welcomed the public debate over loosening the lockdown. But he said that especially because Germany has so far come through this crisis better than others it would be reckless to endanger this hard-won joint achievement.

Germany has recorded almost 162,000 cases of COVID-19 and 6,467 deaths so far, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. That is about a quarter the number of deaths recorded in Britain and France, which have a similar number of confirmed cases. — AP



Members of a youth group in Star Wars costumes entertain locals along a road in Manila, Philippines, on Thursday. — AP/PTI

## Philippines rejects China’s move on island

MANILA, April 30: The Philippines on Thursday protested China’s designation of a disputed South China Sea reef, which it has turned into a heavily fortified island base, as a Chinese administrative center.

The Department of Foreign Affairs issued a statement objecting to what it called China’s illegal designation of Fiery Cross Reef as a regional administrative center in the hotly contested Spratly archipelago.

It’s the latest in a series of disagreements in the sea as Asian nations grapple with the coronavirus pandemic. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused China last week of taking advantage of widespread distraction over the pandemic

to advance its territorial claims.

The Philippines calls on China to adhere to international law, the department said, reminding Beijing of a 2002 agreement that urged governments with rival claims in the sea to exercise self-restraint and avoid actions that would escalate the disputes and undermine regional stability.

The Philippine government has protested China’s self-declared territorial zones in the waters starting in 2012, with what it said was Beijing’s unlawful establishment of a Sansha City covering much of the South China Sea.

It said it does not recognise Sansha nor its constituent units and any subsequent acts emanating from them. The Depart-

ment of Foreign Affairs cited a July 2016 international arbitration ruling that invalidated China’s sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea on historical grounds. China refused to participate in the arbitration case, which was initiated by the Philippines, and refused to recognise the ruling.

Last week, the Philippines protested China’s establishment of two districts to administer two disputed groups of islands and reefs in the South China Sea.

One district reportedly covers the Paracel islands and the other has jurisdiction over the Spratlys, where China has turned seven reefs, including Fiery Cross, into missile-protected island bases, including three with runways. — PTI

## More flights to evacuate stranded Brits from India

LONDON, April 30: The UK on Thursday announced seven further charter flights to bring over 2,000 British travellers stranded in India due to the coronavirus pandemic lockdown back home to the UK.

All the new flights are between Amritsar and London to cater to the thousands still stranded in Punjab, with a daily flight planned every day between May 5 and 11.

Once these flights are completed, over 15,000 British travellers will have been brought back from India on 59

government-chartered flights, the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) said.

“These additional flights will help over 2,000 more people get back to their loved ones here in the UK. I would like to thank the government of India for their help in making it happen,” said Lord Tariq Ahmad, FCO Minister of State for South Asia and the Commonwealth.

The UK government has previously announced 52 charter flights bringing back over 13,000 people from India. The latest tranche brings that total

to 59 flights, catering for 15,000 people and over 10,000 of those have already travelled, with the remaining amount due in coming weeks.

“Our charter programme has already helped more than 10,000 British travellers return home from India by ensuring flights to the UK have run every day since April 8, with thousands more due to depart in the coming days,” he said.

As with the last round of charter flights, seats on the new planes will be allocated to those who have already regis-

tered via the government’s online booking portal.

Jan Thompson, Acting High Commissioner to India, said: “This fifth round of flights brings the total number of planes we have organised from India to 59.”

“There have been daily departures from across the country for weeks, which have helped thousands of people get back to their friends and families in the UK. My team and I will continue to do all we can to support British people who remain in India,” Thompson said. — PTI



Retiring First President of Poland’s Supreme Court Malgorzata Gersdorf (left) wears a face mask, as she stands next to the head of the Iustitia Association of Judges, Krystian Markiewicz, in Warsaw, Poland, on Thursday. Gersdorf’s going is seen as an end to the court’s fight against the right-wing government’s push to take control of the judiciary. — AP/PTI

## About 50 bodies found in trucks outside NY funeral home

NEW YORK, April 30: Police were called to a Brooklyn neighbourhood on Wednesday after a funeral home overwhelmed by the coronavirus resorted to storing dozens of bodies on ice in rented trucks, and a passers-by complained about the smell, officials said.

Investigators who responded to a 911 call found that the home had rented four trucks to hold about 50 corpses, according to a law enforcement official. No criminal charges were brought and the official, who was not authorised to speak publicly about the investigation, spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The Andrew T Cleckley Funeral Home was cited for failing to control the odors. The home was able to obtain a larger, refrigerated truck later in the day, the official said.

Workers suited up in protective gear could be seen in the afternoon transferring bodies into the refrigerated truck.

A person who answered the phone at the fu-

neral home hung up without speaking. Subsequent calls went to voicemail, which was full.

New York City funeral homes have struggled in the city since late March.

The city set up temporary morgues. Hospitals used refrigerated tractor trailers to cart away multiple bodies at a time, sometimes loading them in public view on the sidewalk. Crematoriums have been backed up. Funeral directors across the city have pleaded for help as they have run out of space.

The NYPD notified the state Department of Health, which oversees funeral homes, about the situation at the Andrew T Cleckley Funeral Home. It did not respond to an email seeking comment.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams went to the scene on Wednesday evening. “While this situation is under investigation, we should not have what we have right now, with trucks lining the streets filled with bodies,” he said. — AP

## Angelina Jolie pays homage to Irrfan Khan

LOS ANGELES, April 30: Irrfan Khan stood out for his generosity, says Hollywood star Angelina Jolie as she remembered her *A Mighty Heart* co-star, who passed away after a battle with cancer.

The 54-year-old actor died in a Mumbai hospital on Wednesday after a two-year fight with a rare form of cancer. He was buried at the Versova graveyard.

Jolie and Irrfan collaborated on Michael Winterbottom’s 2007 film about US journalist Daniel Pearl who was killed in Pakistan in 2002.

She played the role of Pearl’s widow Marianne, while Irrfan appeared as Zeeshan Kazmi, the chief of Karachi Police.

In a statement, Jolie said it was a

“privilege” for her to work with Irrfan as she hailed him for his commitment to his craft.

“I had the privilege of working with Irrfan Khan on the set of *A Mighty Heart*. He stood out for his generosity as an artist, which made it a pleasure to work in any scene with him,” Jolie said.

“I remember the intensity of his commitment, and equally his smile. I send my condolences and my sympathy to his family, his friends, and all admirers of his work, in India and around the world,” she added.

Irrfan had followed up *A Mighty Heart* with Hollywood films such as *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Life of Pi*, *Jurassic World* and *Inferno*.

Hollywood celebrities Chris

Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard and Natalie Portman also mourned Khan’s death.

Pratt and Howard had famously collaborated with Irrfan on their 2015 blockbuster *Jurassic World* and they remembered the actor as a “screen legend” and an “exquisite human being”.

“So sad to hear about the passing of screen legend @irrfank. Irrfan Khan played Masrani in *Jurassic World*. He was an exquisite actor and human. He will be missed,” Pratt tweeted.

Howard shared two stills of hers with Irrfan from the Colin Trevorrow-directed adventure thriller and said she feels “lucky” to have worked with the actor.



“Irrfan, you are an exquisite human being and we will all miss you dearly. These images are from the first and last day of filming, and I was lucky enough to spend them working with you. Love to you and your family always,” she posted.

Trevorrow was among the first from Hollywood to pay tributes to Irrfan. — PTI

## S&T WORKS AT LUMDING

E-Tender No. SNT-01-LMG-2020-21 dated 29-04-2020. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Name of work & Place: At Lumding; Provision of LAN connectivity at Sr. DSC/Lumding office. Tender Value: ₹1,90,891.97. Earnest Money: ₹3,800/-. Cost of tender document: ₹1,000/-. Closing of E-Tender: 26-05-2020 at 15:00 hrs. & opening of E-Tender: 26-05-2020 at 15:30 hrs. For details please visit in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

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## AMOC OF BIO-TOILETS

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Sr. DME, Tinsukia

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## REPLACEMENT OF STAFF QUARTERS & HIRING OF VEHICLE

E-Tender Notice No. TSK/Engg/14 of 2020 dated 29-04-2020. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Item No. 1. Brief Description of Item: At Simlaguri Jn.: Replacement of type-I Qtr with type-II Qtr. (12 units). Tender Value: ₹1,84,67,688/-. Earnest Money: ₹2,42,300/-. Cost of tender document: ₹5,000/-. Item No. 2. Brief Description of Item: Hiring of (one) Tata Mobile/Bolero/Mahindra pick up van double cabin vehicle along with driver for carrying of materials under of Assistant Divisional Engineer/Dibrugarh Town for a period of 2 (two) years. Tender Value: ₹8,63,955/-. Earnest Money: ₹17,300/-. Cost of tender document: ₹2,000/-. Item No. 3. Brief Description of Item: Hiring of one TATA SUMO/JEEP/JYPSY or similar alongwith driver for use of Sr. Divisional Engineer/I, N.F. Railway, Tinsukia for 24 months. Tender Value: ₹8,93,122/-. Earnest Money: ₹17,900/-. Cost of tender document: ₹2,000/-. Date & time of closing of tender: 26-05-2020 at 15:00 hrs. & opening of tender: 26-05-2020 at 16:00 hrs. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available up to 15:00 hrs. of 26-05-2020 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

DRM (W), Tinsukia

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# Doubling rate of COVID-19 11 days, case fatality 3.2 pc: health ministry

NEW DELHI, April 30: The doubling rate for COVID-19 cases has improved to 11 days in the country as against the 3.4 days before the lockdown was imposed and the case fatality has been recorded at 3.2 per cent, the Union health ministry said on Thursday.

Addressing a press briefing, Joint Secretary in the ministry Lav Agarwal said the doubling rate of COVID-19 cases in several States is better than the national average.

He said the doubling rate of COVID-19 cases was found to be between 11-20 days in Delhi (11.3),

Uttar Pradesh (12), Jammu and Kashmir (12.2), Odisha (13), Rajasthan (17.8), Tamil Nadu (19.1) and Punjab (19.5). A doubling rate of between 20-40 days was seen in Karnataka (21.6), Ladakh (24.2), Haryana (24.4), Uttarakhand (30.3) and Kerala (37.5), Agarwal said.

A doubling rate of over 40 days was noted in Assam (59), Telangana (70.8), Chhattisgarh (89.7) and Himachal Pradesh (191.6), he added.

However, Agarwal said that despite the improved overall doubling rate of a State, there can be some districts in it where the cas-

es are doubling at a faster pace.

"And thus, it is important to ensure that we continue to work in a focussed manner in the identified hotspot areas, along with the other parts of the country," he said.

The Joint Secretary said the current case fatality rate for COVID-19 is 3.2 per cent in the country, with 65 per cent of the victims being males and 35 per cent females.

"Looking at the age distribution of the deaths, 14 per cent case fatality was seen below 45 years, 34.8 per cent between 45-60 years and a 51.2 per cent case fatality was

noted among those above 60 years," he said.

"Further, if we divide the mortality cases above 60 years, then we see that the mortality has been 42 per cent in the age group of 60-75 years and 9.2 per cent in those above 75 years," Agarwal said.

Also, co-morbidities like diabetes, hypertension, chronic kidney and heart-related issues among others were found in 78 per cent of the deaths and both old age and co-morbidities were found as risk factors.

Agarwal said the recovery rate for COVID-19 has progressively

improved from 13.06 per cent to over 25 per cent in the country in the last 14 days.

He said some hospitals in the private sector are hesitating to provide critical services like dialysis, chemotherapy, blood transfusion and institutional delivery to their regular patients due to lack of understanding and fear.

"In some cases, they have closed down the clinics while some are insisting for testing before offering those services," he said, adding that the ministry has asked the States

to ensure that all healthcare estab-

lishments, especially those in the private sector, remain functional and provide critical services so that patients do not face any difficulty.

"In the context of testing, it needs to be highlighted that health facilities should prescribe testing according to the testing protocol," Agarwal said.

Healthcare service providers should take necessary precautions for personal protection and use PPE rationally in accordance with the guidelines and the healthcare facilities should follow the infection prevention and control practices,

he added.

Speaking about testing being scaled up, Agarwal said starting with one single laboratory, the RT-PCR tests are now available in 292 government and 97 private facilities across the country.

"On Wednesday, 58,686 tests were performed and if you see the average number of tests performed each day in the last five days, it comes to 49,800 tests. It is important to understand that whatever capacity is needed, we have progressively increased it," he said. - PTI

## Rishi Kapoor: An actor exits, the star continues to shine

NEW DELHI, April 30: Some people are born in the lap of luxury and some, like Rishi Kapoor, in the spotlight of fame. As Raj Kapoor's son and Prithviraj Kapoor's grandson, the stardom was destined but the legacy of good acting was very much his own.

High-spirited, sometimes irascible and always outspoken, the talented Mr Kapoor died after a two-year battle with leukaemia on Thursday, his acting boots still firmly on at age 67.

The third generation of the famed Kapoor dynasty that fused stardom with a tradition of acting, Rishi marked three innings in cinema - child actor, romantic hero over three decades and finally character artiste when he transformed from chocolate boy lover to malevolent villain (*Agneepath*), harried tutor (*Do Dooni Chaar*) and potty-mouthed grandfather (*Kapoor & Sons*).

One of Hindi mainstream cinema's most enduring stars, Rishi did almost 150 films over five decades, six if you count his walk on part when he was just a toddler during the song 'Pyaar Hua Iqraar Hua' in his father's film *Shri 420*.

Of these, almost 90 were as a romantic hero. In an age dominated by action stars, he was the eternal lover boy,



A file photo of Rishi Kapoor during a shoot at Nabha Haveli in Patiala on May 6, 2018. - PTI

dancing and serenading actresses from his contemporary Dimple Kapadia (*Bobby* and *Saagar*) to a much younger Urmila Matondkar in *Shreeman Aashique*.

Almost always the urban hero from an upper crust family, Rishi could be seen twisting and shouting in scenic lo-

cales, strumming a guitar, driving trendy cars and dressed in colourful sweaters that became his trademark.

His memorable movies comprised *Chandni*, *Karz* and *Doosra Aadmi*.

He made the most of the hackneyed roles offered to him as the poster boy of ro-

mance, often turning up as part of an ensemble cast in films such as *Kabhi Kabhie*, *Amar Akbar Anthony* and *Naseeb*.

By his own admission, Rishi, or Chintu as he was known, said he was slotted as a romantic hero and could never have done experimental films.

"Ranbir did a *Barfi*. I could

never do *Barfi*, *Sanju* or *Rocky Singh* in my time. I could never do these kinds of experimental films, which worked big time," he told PTI in an interview last year.

Later in life came experimental roles in films such as *Mulk* and *Luck By Chance*.

His latest cinematic appearance was in *The Body*, with Emraan Hashmi, in December 2019. The next, a remake of the Hollywood film *The Intern* with Deepika Padukone was announced but alas never got off the ground.

Acting was his lifeblood, and his love for food, family, friends, and films his raison d'etre just as it was for the rest of the Kapoors.

In 1970, his father - Shami Kapoor - cast him in *Mera Naam Joker* as the young Raju. Three years later came the blockbuster *Bobby*, again directed by his father, that set him firmly on the romance path.

And somewhere early on the road to stardom, he met the love of his life Neetu Singh. The couple did many films together, such as *Khel Khel Mein*, *Rajoo Chakkar* and then very recently *Do Dooni Chaar* and *Besharam*. They got married in 1980 and had two children, Ranbir, an actor-star like his father, and daughter Rid-

dhima.

For years, his Twitter bio read, son of a famous father (Raj Kapoor) and the father of a famous son (Ranbir Kapoor).

His last tweet was on April 2 when he made an appeal to all brothers and sisters from all social status and faiths to not resort to violence, stone throwing or lynching. "Doctors, Nurses, Medics, Policemen etc.. are endangering their lives to save you. We have to win this Coronavirus war together. Please. Jai Hind!"

In his 2015 autobiography *Khullam Khulla*, in which he unhesitatingly talks about his father's relationship with Nargis, his first girlfriend and Rajesh Khanna's insecurity about his equation with Dimple and how he almost turned down *Kabhi Kabhie* because Neetu had a larger role. He also admitted in the book to buying a film award for *Bobby*.

"I think that Amitabh was sulking because I had won the best actor award for *Bobby*. I am sure he felt the award was rightfully his for *Zanjeer*, which released the same year. I am ashamed to say it, but I actually bought that award. I was so naive."

Not many people would admit to actually paying money for an award. But that was Rishi Kapoor. - PTI

## Palaeosciences institute begins coronavirus testing

LUCKNOW, April 30: The Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) on Tuesday started testing samples for coronavirus, a senior scientist said. The research institute in Lucknow is the first central body in Uttar Pradesh to take on the task, Dr Neeraj Rai said. The institute will test 200 samples every day and will put out test reports every day, he said.

The BSIP has partnered with a private diagnostic firm for taking up sample testing, another official had said earlier.

Stressing that BSIP is a research institute, Rai said unlike others lab it will be able to find out how the virus is evolving and examine issues like false positives. The Central Drug Research Institute here will also begin testing for coronavirus, officials said. - PTI

### FOR LOVING REMEMBRANCE



#### LATE DR. YAMINI KANTA PHUKAN

Demise on 20.04.2013  
Punya Navami Tithi

On this "Punya Navami Tithi" you left us Seven years back. But still each and every moment you are in our heart with your noble idealism. Give us your heavenly blessings to go ahead in our life.

Bandana  
Nandini, Mandakinee



Government of Assam

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- Keshab Mahanta  
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### Rules and Regulations:

Detailed rules and guidelines can be downloaded from website <https://astec.assam.gov.in>.

N.B.: Only Scientific articles are acceptable



### Last Date of entries:

Articles must be sent only through e-mail on or before **30.05.2020** to [myessayastec@gmail.com](mailto:myessayastec@gmail.com) or [sanskarastec@gmail.com](mailto:sanskarastec@gmail.com) providing full contact address, mobile number and a passport photo.





A member of Bharat Scouts and Guides feeding animals during the lockdown, in Guwahati on Thursday. – UB Photos

## Concern at cruelty to animals amid lockdown

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: Several cases of cruelty to animals including pets amid the lockdown, have been reported from different parts of the city, alleged Just Be Friendly (JBF), a city-based animal welfare NGO here.

JBF office-bearers informed that the animals are brutally beaten with rods or other hard objects. Such inhuman behaviour of the people or animal owners is a punishable offence, they said.

Pets or stray animals do not spread coronavirus and anyone who abandons or harasses animals suspecting them to be carriers of the disease, is liable to be prosecuted under Section 11(1) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, a statement issued by JBF said.

In this connection, JBF appealed to the police to act immediately whenever any person, feeder or animal welfare activist reports such incidents. It also called upon the residents and local authorities to cooperate with animal feeders with full protection and respect as they are offering animals feed and are carrying out their fundamental duties as per Article 51A(g) of the Indian Constitution.

The NGO also provides transportation service through its animal transporting van to needy dogs from the streets of Guwahati in situations when the rescuers cannot transport the animals to the treatment centre.

JBF has also been carrying out an awareness drive through social media on the topic 'Lockdown Saviour of Animals' and appealed to everyone to put a bowl of water and some food just outside their residential compound or gate so that the nearby stray animals can consume them.

The NGO has also taken the initiative to provide animal food (packaged and cooked) to various agencies like Assam Police, press clubs, NGOs and individual feeders of Guwahati and Bongaigaon so that they can feed the stray animals during the current lockdown.

Till date a number of personalities like Rewati Chetri, Zublee Baruah, Dr Bijit Deb Choudhury, Rajib Kro, Dr Saubhaz Hazarika, Aradhana Buragohain, Poran Borkatoky and Pompi Gogoi have joined out an awareness drive through social media on the topic 'Lockdown Saviour of Animals' and appealed to everyone to put a bowl of water and some food just outside their residential compound or gate so that the nearby stray animals can consume them.

Moreover, tobacco users keen to quit smoking and smokeless products, can avail of free telephone-based quit line services launched by the Central government. The National Tobacco Quit Line Services is designed to help tobacco users quit the addiction by answering their queries, setting a quit date, formulating a personalised quit plan, and follow up through a dedicated toll-free number (1800-11-2356) that can be reached from Tuesday to Sunday between 8 am and 8 pm. It offers free confidential, personalised support by trained tobacco counsellors in English, Hindi and regional languages.

## Public health experts hail Centre's move to ban tobacco products

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 30: Public health experts have welcomed the recent move of the Central government to ban the use of tobacco products and spitting in public places with the aim to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has directed all states and union territories to ban use and spitting of chewing tobacco products in public places to prevent spread of novel coronavirus.

Over 20 states and three UTs have already banned use of smokeless tobacco products and spitting in public places during COVID-19. Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Tripura, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim are penalising violators.

"We applaud Central government for taking a timely step for imposing a ban on the sale of tobacco products and spitting in public places to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 virus. To protect their health and reduce their risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms, we urge all smokers and tobacco users to quit, especially at this critical time," said advocate Ajoy Hazarika, secretary of Consumers' Legal Protection Forum, Assam.



"There is growing evidence that smoking is a risk for COVID-19. Smoking worsens lung function and reduces immunity. Smokers who develop COVID-19 infection have more complications and greater risk of fatality. Even if a person is not affected by the virus, it is a good time to stop smoking. This improves immunity and can improve lung function within a few months. Apart from reducing risks, there are many other benefits on the lungs, heart and other parts of the body," said Dr Srabana Misra Bhagabaty, Associate Professor cum in-charge, Department of Preventive Oncology, Dr B Borooah Cancer Institute (BBCI).

Tobacco users can also avail of m-cessation, an initiative of MoHFW for utilising mobile technology for tobacco cessation. Tobacco users can register by giving a missed call to a national number (011-22901701) to avail support for quitting through constant text messaging on their mobile phones. This service uses two-way messaging between individuals seeking to quit tobacco use and experts who provide them advice and information through SMS or interactive voice response in 12 languages.

ATPA, NETA and BCP donated Rs 3 lakh, Rs 11 lakh and Rs 5 lakh respectively. The North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFi), under its CSR, also donated Rs 2 crore in addition to one-day salary of the employees amounting to Rs 5,75,673.



Photo released on Thursday shows GRP constable Sravan Kumar Jha and his brother constable Sanjoy Jha of Panbazar Police Station Traffic Branch who were arrested on Wednesday on charges of illegally transporting a huge amount of gold and cash. The inset photo shows the money and gold recovered from the two cops. – UB Photos

## Panel to form strategy to bring back people stranded outside State

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The State-Level Empowered Committee on COVID-19 today constituted a panel to formulate a standard operating procedure (SoP) for bringing back the migrant workers, pilgrims, tourists, students and others who remain stranded at different places amid the lockdown.

The committee will be headed by Additional DGP (Law and Order) GP Singh and include ADGP (Security) Harmeet Singh, CEO of the ASDMA MS Manivannan, MD of the ASTC AP Tiwari, MD of the NHM Laxmanan S and Commissioner of the transport department Adil Khan as its members.

GP Singh will be the nodal officer of the entire exercise to bring back the stranded people from other states to Assam. For the same purpose, Harmeet Singh has been entrusted to function as the alternate nodal officer.

To bring back the stranded people, the ASTC will arrange buses and NHM will bear the expenditure.

The meeting that was held today, also decided that all shops of the State dealing in textbooks will be allowed to remain open from Monday to Saturday between 10 am and 5 pm.

## Tea bodies donate Rs 19 lakh to Arogya Nidhi

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The three Assam-based indigenous tea producers' associations – Assam Tea Planters' Association (ATPA), North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) and Bharatiya Cha Parishad (BCP) – have donated a sum of Rs 19 lakh to the Assam Arogya Nidhi fund as support towards the fight against COVID-19 pandemic in the State.

ATPA, NETA and BCP donated Rs 3 lakh, Rs 11 lakh and Rs 5 lakh respectively.

The North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFi), under its CSR, also donated Rs 2 crore in addition to one-day salary of the employees amounting to Rs 5,75,673.

Employees of the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM) have contributed Rs 5 lakh towards the Assam Arogya Nidhi.

The FCI Retired Employees' Welfare Association (FCIREWA) North Eastern Zone contributed Rs 50 thousand to the Assam Arogya Nidhi to help in the fight against coronavirus.

FCIREWA NE zone's vice president Amiya Kr Sarma and zonal secretary Ratul Ch Sarma handed a cheque for the said amount to Health Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma at the NHM office here on Tuesday, said a press release issued today.

# Guwahatians found to be mentally toughest during lockdown

Nationwide survey by TRA Research

SIVASISH THAKUR

GUWAHATI, April 30: Residents of Guwahati have exhibited maximum resilience and mental wellbeing during the COVID 19-induced lockdown.

According to a nationwide survey conducted by TRA Research across 16 cities with 902 urban citizens to delve deeper into the mental wellbeing of citizens, Guwahatians showed the highest mental wellbeing (84 per cent) in their ability to cope with their current worries of family health and work stability as well as their fears on the country's health and economic impact.

Mumbai recorded the lowest mental wellbeing index at just 28 per cent, showing severe stresses and anxieties among the citizenry, followed by Lucknow at 36 per cent.

Guwahati was followed by Delhi-NCR (78 per cent) which had the second best mental wellbeing score. Other cities which displayed a 'Good' ability mental wellbeing of their citizens include Indore (75 per cent), Coimbatore (73 per cent) and Pune (72 per cent).

N Chandramouli, CEO, TRA Research,

a consumer insights and brand analytics company, explaining the concept said that citizens' mental wellbeing in the context of the research was seen as their ability to cope with current worries regarding the pandemic.

"The ability to cope with worries depends on the individual's mindset of course, but also depends on the city's general acceleration rate in patients, as also the city's complex demographics that may impede coping with the pandemic. The rapid spread in Mumbai, with the highest number of COVID-19 patients, is also reflected in the low mental wellbeing of its citizens with regard to coping with the disease," he added.

The mental wellbeing index has been calculated with the coping index as the numerator and the worry index as the denominator, measured as a percentage, and the coping index was measured on four parameters and the worry index on six.

Dr Jalpa Bhuta, MD, Consultant Psychiatrist, practising at Global Hospital and Hinduja Khar, said that coping skills were determined by one's resilience, attitude,

belief system and support system.

"It is reassuring that most of the people in smaller cities are coping better with good mental wellbeing. In the larger cities there could be many factors responsible like worry on account of stability of work. When our identity is determined by our career and earning capacities, people can feel at a total loss when that may get impacted. Relationships are also getting fragile in bigger cities, giving poor interpersonal support, which is much needed for a sense of mental wellbeing," she said.

On the difference in cities, Chandramouli further elaborated, "The smaller cities have a relatively higher mental wellbeing index as compared to the larger ones. Guwahati, Jaipur, Indore, Pune, Coimbatore are coping better with the situation than their counterparts in cities like Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata."

Dr Bhuta suggested attitudinal alterations to cope. "It is important for all of us to find peace within ourselves, develop a more spiritual and accepting attitude, learn to deal with change and embrace the higher power during difficult times."

## Ration given to priests, workers of Umananda Temple

STAFF REPORTER/  
CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI/JORABAT, April 30: The Kamrup (Metro) district administration on Thursday distributed free rations among the priests and workers of the Umananda Temple here. The Inland Water Transport department also donated food items among them as they remain stranded on the island amid the lockdown.

Meanwhile, during the ongoing lockdown, the Kamrup (Metro) district administration

has issued more than 8,000 vehicle passes so far. The administration also rejected around 1,500 applications seeking vehicle passes, as the applicants failed to mention valid reasons.

Again, the administration has arranged 170 buses to transport around 3,500 labourers stranded in the city, to different parts of the State.

Amid the nationwide lockdown in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, the 128th Battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on Wednesday distributed food items,

masks, sanitizers, etc., among over 200 needy people of Ural and Kahikuchi villages under Sonapur revenue circle under its civic action programme.

The troops, under the guidance of Commandant Surjit Kumar Atri, also distributed nutritious meals while at the same time making sure the hygiene standards are not compromised.

The CRPF officers present on the occasion also called for use of soap to ensure that people first wash their hands before eating. The battalion plans to hold more such programmes.



Representatives from the Kamrup (M) district administration distributing essential food items at the Umananda Temple, in Guwahati on Thursday. – UB Photos

## Media Adviser to CM calls on eminent personalities

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 30: As a part of the government bid to reach out to people, Media Adviser to the Chief Minister Hrishikesh Goswami today called on a number of intellectuals, litterateurs, journalists, artists and eminent personalities, talked to them and took stock of their health condition.

While spending time with them, Goswami apprised them of the steps the Government of Assam has been taking to deal with the COVID-

19 situation. On behalf of the government, he also expressed his gratitude to these personalities for their role in educating the people on following social distancing norms.

Goswami today met The Assam Tribune editor Prafulla Govinda Baruah at the latter's residence here and enquired about his health and wellbeing. Goswami thanked him for the role the Assam Tribune Group of Newspapers has been playing in sensitising the public on the need to break the chain of transmission of the

dreaded virus in the State. Goswami also met writer-journalist Homen Borgohain, artist Neel Pawan Baruah, poet Nilamani Phukan, actress Anupama Bhattacharjee, cartoonist Troilokya Dutta and talked to them on COVID-19 and the State's response to mitigate the problem, besides enquiring about their wellbeing.

The Media Adviser also met the Deka Satriya of Barpeta Satra Nabajit Das, who is recuperating from his illness at the Apollo Hospitals here and wished him a speedy recovery.

## Webinar on corona impact on agri, allied sectors

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The State government is working on a war-footing to check the loss suffered by the horticulture and food processing sector by using its experience of other disasters like flood, and it has been able to control the situation to a large extent.

Deputy Director of Horticulture and Food Processing Khagen Sharma said this here today while taking part in a webinar organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce on the said topic 'The impact of coronavirus outbreak on agriculture and allied sectors of the North East and its revival strategy.'

Sharma informed that amid

the lockdown, the State has exported fruits and vegetables to various states like Bihar, Manipur, West Bengal, etc. and each district administration has allowed a certain number of vehicles to sell the commodities.

"By doing so, a new business model has emerged where there is no middleman, and farmers are selling directly to customers through government-approved vendors by maintaining social distancing," he said.

Chairman of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Paban Kumar Borthakur said despite the global economic slowdown, the agriculture and food processing sector still has a lucrative mar-

ket. He said despite the lockdown, around 60 per cent of agri-exports are still going on.

Prabhat Bezbaruah, chairman of the Tea Board of India, said the tea industry is facing a tremendous problem of logistics, as they have limited scope for transporting the products to consumers.

Deputy General Manager of APEDA Dr Saswati Bose said there would be a paradigm shift in the way goods are exported in the new world order. Most of the biggest horticulture-producing countries like Spain, Mexico and the Netherlands have been affected greatly due to coronavirus and it could be a very good opportunity for the NE exporters to gain their share in the world.

## Hema Bharali's demise condoled

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: Mourning the demise of Padma Shri award winning social activist and Gandhian Hema Bharali, the Assam Shishu Kalyan Sadan, Jalukbari today remembered her pioneering role in establishing the Sadan, a home for orphans and children in distress, way back in 1956.

"She herself was associated with day-to-day works in the home like providing training on handloom and handicraft, gardening, etc. Apart from other leading ladies including Amalrava Das, Rajbala Das and Malati Barua, Hema Bharali also contributed immensely in day-to-day affairs of the Sadan. As communication was a problem in those days, they used to travel on boats and used to collect donations from public to help the children of Shishu Kalyan Sadan," a condolence message by secretary of the Sadan Dipika Choudhury said.

A tribute meeting held today on the premises of the children's home offered prayers for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Social activist and vice president of Save Guwahati Build Guwahati Ajoy Dutta also condoled Bharali's death, recalling her as one of the most inspiring ladies of Assam and a true Gandhian. "A great patriotic woman, Hema Bharali remained a dedicated social worker throughout her life. Her life and work would continue to inspire the coming generations," he added.

## Sanitization, distribution of food by NDRF

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The 1st Battalion NDRF Guwahati today carried out a sanitization drive at Reserve Bank of India and Gauhati University. NDRF teams sprayed disinfectants on the premises as well as the vicinity of both the institutions.


During the programme the NDRF rescuers laid emphasis on social distancing, hand washing, use of sanitizer and following lockdown norms to contain spread of coronavirus.

The NDRF rescuers also distributed food among more than 2,500 needy people at Matiyapara, Jahajghat, Uzan Bazar, Katamura, Bargaon, Changsari, Bazarapara, Palasbari and Mirza today.

The exercise was carried out in collaboration of Akhil Bhartiya Terapanth Yuvak Parishad and Amrit Bhog Bhandara Guwahati.

The Ajmal Foundation donated 200 packets of grocery items to mediapersons on the Guwahati Press Club premises today.

Rotary Club Guwahati also handed over hand sanitizers and face masks to the Press Club office-bearers.



**WEATHER GUWAHATI**

**LOCAL FORECAST:**  
Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunder/lightning. Maximum and minimum temperatures are most likely to be 34°C and 21°C respectively on Friday.

**TEMPERATURE:**  
Max 33.5°C  
Min 20.0°C

## Vety students to help fight pig disease

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The State government will engage the postgraduate level students of the College of Veterinary Science in its bid to contain the unknown disease which led to the death of more than 2,000 pigs in six districts of Assam.

An official source said that the student engagement process will start after receiving the final report from the Bhopal-based National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases, to which the State veterinary department has sent samples of

infected pigs to ascertain the disease.

After the report comes, the department will act on the issue by following Central government guidelines, the source said. The disease originated in Dhemaji district and spread to Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Lakhimpur and Biswanath. At present, the highest number of pigs died in Dhemaji district, followed by Sivasagar district.

Reviewing the situation on Wednesday, Agriculture Minister Atul Bora instructed all senior officials concerned to accord priority to the issue. He directed all offi-

cial to create mass awareness to check the apprehension among common public and to send teams of doctors to every district if required.

Bora also informed that the government would take steps to compensate the entrepreneurs who are facing losses due to the disease. He strictly asked every official not to neglect duty during such hard times.

Meanwhile, the Agriculture Minister today visited the areas affected by the disease. He also visited Majuli and Golaghat, which fall near the affected districts.

## FIR filed against writer's remarks made on Facebook

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 30: An FIR was filed at the Hatigaon Police Station in connection with alleged derogatory remarks made on Facebook by writer-politician Satya Ranjan Bora against an Assamese family.

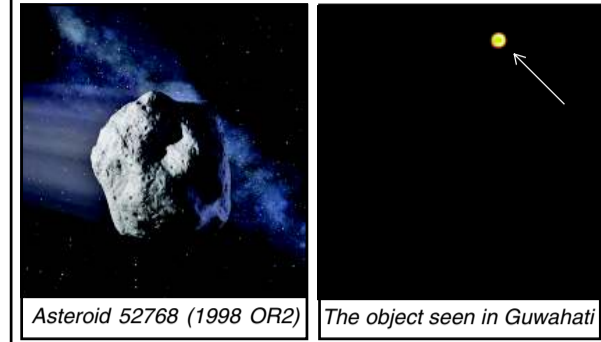
A source at the police station said that Assam Pradesh Congress Committee minority cell chairman Salman Khan filed the FIR today, where Khan mentioned that Bora had remarked that a Majuli-based family had fed a Muslim person and allowed him to perform *namaz* in their house.

## Blog writing competition

GUWAHATI, April 30: The All Assam Tourism Students' Union (AATSU) is organising a prize-money blog writing competition on May 2 on topics related to tourism.

Interested people can prepare the blog containing minimum 200 words and send it to WhatsApp number 7002941356, stated a press release here.

## Unidentified object in city sky could be a drone, say experts



RITURAJ BORTHAKUR

GUWAHATI, April 30: A dazzling unidentified object, reported to have been spotted in the sky by some onlookers in Guwahati last night, generated a lot of curiosity among citizens.

Although NASA had said that an asteroid named '1998 OR2' would fly past Earth at a safe distance of 3.9 million miles/6.2 million kilometres on Wednesday, scientists here debunked the perception that the object seen last night over Guwahati could be that asteroid.

The 1998 OR2 flew past Earth at a distance calculated to be more than 16 times the average distance between Earth and Moon.

Guwahati Planetarium Curator BC Bora told *The Assam Tribune* that the asteroid cannot be seen with the naked eye and one would need a telescope for it.

A video circulated in the social media showed the bright object – often sparkling – in the atmosphere, not very far from Earth's surface. Some onlookers reported to have taken the video, apparently with their cellphone cameras.

"It (1998 OR 2) cannot be so bright, nor can it be seen with the naked eye," Bora said, adding that it could be either an artificial satellite, a drone, a jet plane, a sky lamp, or a balloon used for lab purposes.

Former Associate Professor of North Guwahati College Tapan K Sarma, however, insisted that the object is most likely to be a drone.

"Drones, or small planes that fly without humans, are used in photography nowadays. It is very often used in war and spying. The military has been doing drone tests in the last few months. We cannot exactly say it's a military drone, but I strongly feel that it is indeed a drone. Some also fly drones as a hobby," Sarma said.

The NASA had said that 1998 OR2 – also known as Asteroid 52768 – which is calculated to be around 2 kilometres wide, would zoom past Earth on Wednesday afternoon (IST) at a distance of 6.2 million kilometres.

Altogether 22,261 near-Earth asteroids (NEAs) are known to scientists as of March 5, 2020, and only 1,955 of them are considered to be potentially hazardous.

## Illegal banners, hoardings being removed by GMC

CITY CORRESPONDENT

GUWAHATI, April 30: The Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC) has been removing illegal hoardings and banners across the city. Five hoardings and 966 banners have already been removed in five places of the city under the drive in the last few days.

All these hoardings were put up without the GMC's permission.

In a statement, the Corporation has urged the advertising agencies concerned to repay their dues within five days.

"Stringent action will be initiated soon if the dues are not paid; these firms would be barred from carrying out any sort of advertisements within Guwahati," the statement added.

Several agencies have put up hoardings and banners without the Corporation's permission and some have been put up after the completion of the programme, the statement said, while asserting that "from now on, the GMC will slap fine on these agencies in this regard."



A fruits-laden tricycle goes past a coronavirus-themed artwork made on a wall at Fancy Bazar in Guwahati, on Thursday. – AT photo

## IIT-G working on COVID-19 vaccine

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, April 30: The Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT-G) on Wednesday announced that it is collaborating with Ahmedabad-based pharmaceutical firm Hester Biosciences Ltd to work on vaccine development for COVID-19.

IIT-G and Hester Biosciences expect the vaccine to be ready by the end of this year to start animal studies. The work is currently in its early stage of development.

The vaccine will be based on recombinant avian paramyxovirus-based vector platform.

The recombinant avian paramyxovirus-1 will be used to express the immunogenic protein of SARS-CoV-2. The recombinant avian paramyxovirus-1 expressing the SARS-CoV-2 protein can be used as a vaccine candidate for further study.

The team at IIT Guwahati is headed by Dr Sachin Kumar, Associate Professor of the Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering.

Dr Kumar and his team have generated the recombinant avian paramyxovirus-1-based vaccine platform for classical swine fever and Japanese Encephalitis. The role of IIT-G is to produce the recombinant vaccine candidate.

IIT-G Director Prof TG Sitharam said, "I am hopeful that the outcome of this important collaboration will be a win-win situation for the country and will lead to breakthrough results in prevention of COVID-19 as well as provide leads for vaccine development against other diseases in the immedi-

ate future."

The avian paramyxovirus-1 has been explored as a vaccine vector for various animals and human pathogens. It has been used to express the immunogenic protein of human pathogens such as HIV, avian influenza virus, human parainfluenza virus and SARS-CoV.

Similarly, it has also been explored as a vaccine vector for animal pathogens such as infectious bursal disease virus, infectious laryngotracheitis virus, bovine herpes virus and the Nipah virus.

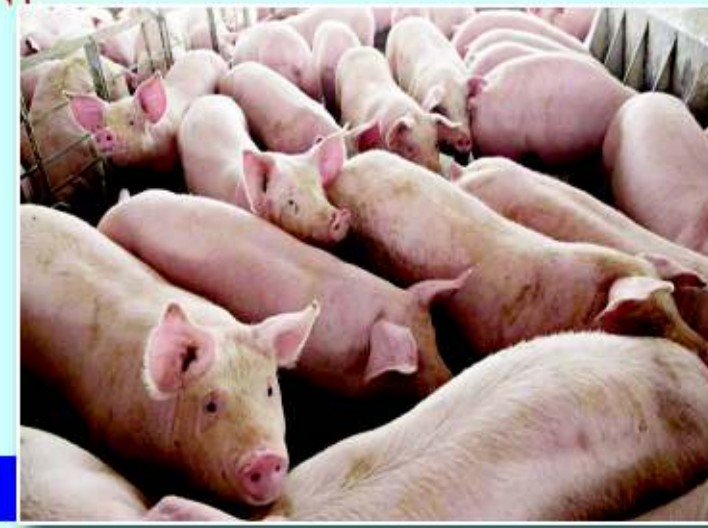


## গাহৰিপালকসকলৰ জ্ঞাতাৰ্থে

সাম্প্ৰতিক সময়ত অসমৰ ছয়খন জিলা ক্ৰমে ডিব্ৰুগড়, শিৱসাগৰ, যোৰহাট, ধেমাজি, লক্ষ্মীমপুৰ আৰু বিশ্বনাথত গাহৰিৰ এক অচিন ৰোগত বিভিন্ন বয়সৰ প্ৰায় দুহেজাৰৰো অধিক গাহৰি মৃত্যুমুখত পৰিছে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰৰ পশুপালন আৰু পশুচিকিৎসা বিভাগে বিষয়টো অতি গুৰুতৰ হিচাপে বিবেচনা কৰি ইতিমধ্যে যাবতীয় ব্যৱস্থা গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। ৰোগ বিধৰ নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ আৰু সংক্ৰমণ ৰোধৰ বাবে নিম্নলিখিত নীতি-নিয়মসমূহ মানি চলিবলৈ আপোনালোকলৈ আহ্বান জনোৱা হ'ল -



- গাহৰি পামসমূহৰ জৈৱ সুৰক্ষা নিশ্চিতকৰণৰ বাবে যত্নপৰ হওঁক।
- গাহৰি পামসমূহলৈ অন্য ঠাইৰ পৰা নতুন গাহৰি আনি নোসোমাব আৰু নিজৰ পামৰ পৰা কোনো গাহৰি উলিয়াই অন্য ঠাইলৈ নপঠিয়াব।
- পালকসকলে নিজৰ নিজৰ গাহৰি পামসমূহ পৰিষ্কাৰ-পৰিচ্ছন্ন কৰি ৰাখিব।
- গাহৰিপামত কোনো কাৰণতে অচিনাকি অথবা নতুন ব্যক্তিক প্ৰবেশ কৰিবলৈ নিদিব।
- যিহেতু ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰে ইতিমধ্যে আক্ৰান্ত জিলা কেইখনত গাহৰি তথা গাহৰি মাংস বিক্ৰী কৰাটো সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে নিষিদ্ধ কৰিছে, গতিকে পালক তথা ব্যৱসায়ী সকলে সেইবোৰ এলেকাত গাহৰি বা তাৰ মাংস বেচা-কিনা নকৰিব।
- যিকোনো কাৰণত গাহৰিৰ মৃত্যু হ'লে মৃতদেহ কমেও ছয় ফুট দৰৈ গাঁত খান্দি মাটিৰ তলত পুতি থব।
- মৃত গাহৰি কেতিয়াও মুকলি ঠাই, নৈ, বিল, খাল আদিত নেপেলাব।



- অসংগঠিত ৰূপত বাসস্থানৰ নাতিদূৰৈত পালন কৰা গাহৰিসমূহৰ ক্ষেত্ৰতো উল্লেখিত নিয়মসমূহ সতৰ্কতাৰে পালন কৰক।
- গাহৰিৰ যিকোনো ৰোগৰ লক্ষণ দেখা মাৰেই তাৎক্ষণিকভাৱে ওচৰৰ পশুচিকিৎসালয় বা পশুস্বাস্থ্য উপ-কেন্দ্ৰৰ সৈতে যোগাযোগ কৰক।
- গাহৰি পালকসকলে গাহৰি পালনৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত যিকোনো সমস্যাৰ সন্মুখীন হ'লে ততালিকে বিভাগৰ ট'ল ফ্ৰী নং ১৯৬২ত যোগাযোগ কৰক।

পশুপালন আৰু পশুচিকিৎসা বিভাগ, অসমৰ দ্বাৰা জনহিতাৰ্থে প্ৰচাৰিত

## MESSAGE FOR TODAY

*Don't walk in front of me... I may not follow  
Don't walk behind me... I may not lead; Walk  
beside me... just be my friend.*

— ALBERT CAMUS

## The Assam Tribune

### Covid-19 scenario

The clouds which darken the global sky are threatening to grow darker and the Covid-19 scenario, in the absence of a weapon which can arm mankind to fight the coronavirus, is becoming grimmer. The only ray of light is provided by China, the country where the pandemic began, which has been able to return to a semblance of normalcy, giving hope that other impacted nations might succeed in doing the same. Ironically, the country to be worst affected has been the 'most powerful nation on Earth', the United States of America, which at the moment seems to be the most powerless nation on the planet! The number of people infected by Covid-19 in the US, at the time of writing, has reportedly crossed the one million mark, and deaths rose to over 58,300. Such figures denote the biggest loss of human lives experienced by the US from a single occurrence in recent decades, exceeding as they have the number of American soldiers who lost their lives in the Vietnam War. According to the US National Archives, 58,220 American soldiers died in the Vietnam conflict, which began in 1955 and ended in 1975. The difference, of course, is that a generation of young Americans lost their lives in the war which had spawned the 'make love, not war' hippy movement, while it has been the aged and economically deprived who have been devoured by Covid-19!

The primary reason why America is suffering so grievously is the belated nature of its response to the pandemic, which President Trump had initially dismissed as nothing more than the common flue. Being criticized for his mishandling of the pandemic, with approval ratings slipping, Trump has engaged in his characteristic diversion tactic, attempting to shift the blame on to China and hinting that the latter's version of the genesis of Covid-19 was not true. According to the conspiracy theory being floated around and fed by people like Trump, the virus did not originate in an animal market in Wuhan but was artificially created in a laboratory and somehow leaked out. Besides Trump, who had asked for an investigation into the origins of the virus and whether it had actually escaped from Wuhan Institute of Virology, Britain, Australia and Germany have called for more transparency from Beijing. As if to take the wind out of the sails of such world leaders, China has now announced that it would allow American scientists to work with their Chinese counterparts to investigate the origins of the novel coronavirus. Reportedly, Ian Lipkin, Director for Centre for Infection and Immunity of Columbia University, and Lu Jinhai of Sun-Yat-Sen University of Guangzhou, will conduct the probe. Such a probe, if it does transpire, might serve to provide greater clarity to the origin of the virus and lay to rest this brewing controversy.

### They kept us enthralled!

Two great personalities who in their own inimitable ways enthralled the movie-lovers passed away on consecutive days creating a void in the entertainment industry. While both of them charted different routes to attain stardom, both fought bravely till the very end against their ailments. Irrfan Khan lost the battle against a rare form of cancer on Wednesday while Rishi Kapoor, who kept the killer crab at bay since 2018, breathed his last on Thursday. Like he was in reel life, even in real life Rishi Kapoor kept the doctors who treated him entertained till the end. Rishi Kapoor charmed his way into the hearts of millions of fans from the seventies of the last century. Though a romantic hero, Rishi Kapoor performed diverse roles with ease in his long and illustrious career. It was his debut movie as a lead actor in *Bobby* in 1973 which catapulted Rishi Kapoor into instant superstardom. And since then there was no looking back. Rishi Kapoor etched a name for himself as the top romantic hero of his time. From 1973 to 2000, he played the role of the romantic hero to perfection in 92 films. His roles in hit films like *Laila Majnu*, *Prem Rog*, *Saagar*, *Chandni*, *Karz*, *Heena*, *Sargam*, *Bol Radha Bol*, etc., made him popular as a romantic hero. In the later stage of his career, he acted in films like *Kapoor and Sons*, *102 Not Out and Mulk*. His contribution was recognized and was bestowed with the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008.

As Rishi Kapoor was born in the first family of Hindi cinema, being the son of legendary Raj Kapoor and grandson of Prithviraj Kapoor, it was easy for him to take the much-needed break in the highly competitive world of Hindi cinema. But for Irrfan Khan, to get the break wasn't the easiest of tasks. He transitioned from the TV soaps to the big screen by putting in years of hard work. The success of Irrfan Khan epitomizes the fact that talent can overcome all the hurdles. Irrfan was neither an action nor a romantic hero. He was a versatile actor who could fit into any role with ease. His powerhouse performances in movies as diverse as *The Namesake* and *Maqbool* made him stand out as an actor with a difference. And his ability to enact a variety of characters made him a favourite among the movie-lovers. Not only in Bollywood, but even in Hollywood Irrfan shone bright. Irrfan will not only be remembered for his performances in Hindi movies like *Paan Singh Tomar*, *Pikku* and *The Lunchbox* but even for English movies like *The Slumdog Millionaire*, *The Amazing Spider Man*, *The Life of Pi*, *Jurassic World*. With the passing away of Rishi Kapoor and Irrfan Khan, the nation has lost two of its best actors and their death has caused irreparable loss to the world of cinema.

# Time to take bold measures

■ Paresh Malakar

The Covid-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented scenario worldwide. Never were humans so scared. Never before human activities came to such a grounding halt. It pushed everyone inside the four walls of their house. Like the air and the waters, it is a great leveller. It knows no nationality, religion, class and caste. But who could be more ingenious than the politicians? They can even use Covid-19 for partisan ends. Covid-19 has struck even the wealthiest nations hard. After China, Italy and Spain, it is spreading like a wildfire in the USA, the wealthiest nation on earth. It has also exposed the frailty of their health services. Should America spend more on weapons or on health services? And, most importantly, its medium of spread is no ordinary thing. They were aeroplanes, steel and glass frames, shiny aisles, ubiquitous handshakes of business conferences and high profile parleys.

Presently, we are in its grip. We don't know when the respite will come. Each pandemic is a watershed moment in history. It changes the face of the world and human civilization. We do not know the cause of this virus. But we know why and how it has spread in the world. It is difficult to stop its spread and pace because we live in a globalized world. It can spread through all the means of our comfort and luxury. It can spread

through our mode of existence. There is no way to stop it unless we stop everything. So there is nothing, no aeroplane is flying, no train is running and no bus is plying. And our luxury cars are parked in the garages.

Each county in the world is trying to make a sense of it. Each country is trying to cope with it. Which countries will be able to deal with this emergency better? It seems the countries practising good governance are positioned better to deal with this. It is common sense that people centric, better governed dispensations will always respond better to such emergencies. However, governance is never a one-way traffic. The role of the citizenry is equally important. Here one can also add the element of national character. Does gender also play a role in governance? Why is it that all the counties with female heads have responded better in managing the Covid-19 crisis?

How, for that matter, has India fared in dealing with Covid-19? Ours is a filthy and dirty country. Our public health system is not up to the mark. The mushrooming of nursing homes and private hospitals is a telltale sign of our public health malady. Except Kerala, the

public health system in our country is in disarray. That it is in disarray was reflected in the National Preparedness Survey on Covid-19 report prepared by the Department of Administrative Reforms, Government of India. As per this report, there are inadequate medical facilities to deal with any Covid-19-related health emergencies in Cachar, Charaideo, Dima Hasao, Karimganj, Nalbari, Sonitpur and Udalguri districts in Assam. A

**Governance is never a one-way traffic. The role of the citizenry is equally important. Here one can also add the element of national character. Does gender also play a role in governance? Why is it that all the counties with female heads have responded better in managing the Covid-19 crisis?**

sound healthcare system is never built overnight. Our hospitals should be equipped with adequate healthcare facilities, doctors and caregivers.

Many epidemiologists have said that the virus turns deadly in cold weather, but loses its steam in hot and humid weather. That was experienced in the European and other countries in the West including

the USA. As of now the highest death toll has been reported from the USA. Its effects in the cold countries have been severe. These countries are the worst sufferers so far. In India we are happy and lucky that the hot summer days are here again. But has India prepared well for the Covid-19 emergency? The above survey doesn't give us a sense of satisfaction. Except Kerala, and a few others, most of the States are not adequately prepared to deal with the pandemic.

But that is only one side of it because Covid-19 is not only about our health, it is also about our economy. Its economic fallout may far outweigh its health impact. World over, an economic crisis is looming large. There has already been a debate on medical health versus economic health on the issue. The other day, eminent public health consultant Deepak Natarajan, in an interview with Karan Thapar in 'The Wire', said that

he didn't support the wholesale lockdown. According to him, this would cripple the economy and endanger the livelihoods and lives of hundreds of millions of daily-wagers and rural landless labourers. He advised targeted lockdown. This may sound controversial but cannot be ignored given the present state of our economy. Shouldn't some warning have been

issued and necessary preparations taken before declaring the lockdown? After the sudden lockdown, we saw how millions of hungry, thirsty, sick, young and old migrant workers began a long march home to their villages. In the last few days too, we have been witnessing sporadic upsurge of poor people on the streets in different parts of India which has also thrown the social distancing measures to the winds.

We are in the middle of a crisis. It is difficult to say anything definitively at the moment. But we must see to it that we adopt the best available measures to deal with the crisis. For this we should try to involve the best of experts and policymakers. As Natarajan has suggested, maybe we should explore the possibility of imposing targeted lockdown than the blanket one. In this respect, the office order issued by the Union Home Ministry detailing the instructions is a welcome step. So far Assam is concerned, it will certainly be necessary to work in tandem with the national initiative. But that doesn't mean that we cannot have an Assam-specific plan. Following the national guidelines, a State-specific framework must be worked out by involving experts through wider consultations. At this hour of crisis, the top political and bureaucratic leadership must be courageous enough to take bold measures aimed at addressing our socio-economic and epidemiological concerns.

## Tea industry and Covid-19 threat

■ Dwaipayana

When an industry, be it small or large, suffers a serious dribbling in production under a Catch-22 situation triggered by any kind of infectious and dreadful disease or virus pandemic, then managing the resultant financial crisis by it alone is not just time consuming but very challenging as well. That is exactly what is happening to the tea industry in Assam, a sharp decline in production due to the prolonged lockdown that has been in force since March 24 across India necessitated by the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

The tale of West Bengal with relation to the tea production is also equally grave. West Bengal, like Assam, is also set to witness a big slump in tea production because of the ongoing lockdown. Since the tea industry in Assam and West Bengal – the two main tea producing States in the country – has been under the lockdown as part of the aggressive measures to bring down Covid-19 cases, through three vital weeks of production, it is estimated that it is poised to suffer a loss of around 150 million kg of tea, while the resultant total revenue loss for Assam tea estates will be nearly

12%. With the tea industry in both the regions having been at the crossroads under the impact of the country-wide lockdown stemming from the Covid-19 crisis, it will probably be prudent on the part of the incumbent Central Government to timely come forward with a bailout package to help the tea industry to secure the livelihood of 1.2 million workers belonging to multi-ethnic groups engaged in the industry. If the Centre really announces a satisfactory economic package for the workers and employees only for the period under closure due to the risk of a major Covid-19 spread, then the management of the industry, on the other hand, will have to try and work out an effective system to boost the rate of tea production and the volume of export and reduce the cost of production after the situation is back to normal. There is no gainsaying that the sharp decline in the growth rate of tea production and a spike in its cost are the two main irritants that have led the tea industry to a near-moribund state financially.

However, it is good to learn that more than two weeks after the lockdown was enforced across the country, the Dibrugarh district administration ordered to resume the

tea gardens' normal activities in the district from April 11 last. The decision was taken in a meeting between the Deputy Commissioner and the stakeholders of the tea gardens of the district on April 10. But had the administration, instead of issuing its order, implemented Dispur's reported directive for resumption of plucking of new green leaves from April 1, strictly adhering to the guidelines issued by the Deputy Commissioners and the Health Department in the State, the industry could not have possibly faced the problem of overgrowth of tea leaves. The decision in this regard was taken by a Cabinet meeting on March 29 last. But because of the delay in giving the permission to the industry, the first-flush crop will perceptively overgrow affecting its quality during the second flush that begins mid-May. By all accounts, the Dibrugarh administration seems to have taken the decision about the reopening of the tea gardens in Assam palpably, given the current sorry economic state of the tea industry, emanating from the prolonged lockdown over the Covid-19 threat, and the livelihood of the very large number of workers engaged in the sector. The District Commissioners in other districts such as Tinsukia and Ca-

char are likely to take similar decisions about resumption of plucking new leaves in the districts soon.

The problem of overgrowing crops was due to the plucking of new leaves left untouched since March 22. However, there is yet another problem of skimming of accumulated tea bushes. It may also take about three weeks' time, if not more, when all the tea gardens in Assam reopen. So it is against this shabby backdrop that it will seldom be surprising if the gardens suffer a setback in output. Indeed the State Government cannot be blamed for keeping the State under the prolonged lockdown since March 24. It was imposed as a part of aggressive measures only to check Covid-19 transmission. Therefore, from that perspective, the Dibrugarh district administration's decision in this regard has been a well-considered one.

The tea planters in North Bengal who have last year suffered a huge financial loss with the tea prices drastically plummeting in the country have pleaded with the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee, to be allowed to resume activities in the tea industry given the two major reasons – one is securing the livelihood of as many as five lakh work-

ers who are directly or indirectly involved in the industry of North Bengal, and the other to salvage 40% of the first flush tea which is the largest revenue earner for the Darjeeling tea industry. They reportedly called for an early reopening of the tea gardens on the premise that a further delay will ruin the first flush teas. But as of now there is so far no report trickling in about the Chief Minister issuing orders for the reopening of the gardens.

As regards the tea industry in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, it was about to witness an output decline in the first six months due to the Covid-19 impact. But the Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments have balanced the emerging situation by timely allowing the plucking and other activities for the tea gardens in the States.

Back home, in Assam, the small tea growers, like the tea industry in the State, are also finding themselves on a sticky wicket with their around 3.75 lakh workers on a casual basis facing a spectre of financial hardship in view of the normal activities in the tea gardens coming to a standstill owing to the virus outbreak. So to remedy the situation, the Government can as a short-term measure toy with the idea of a one-time financial largesse.

### Letters to the EDITOR

Sir – The print media is recognized as the vibrant means for dissemination of the authenticated information in every corner of a region, irrespective of class and creed. Unfortunately, it has suffered a major setback at the time of the corona pandemic. In Assam this crisis is not because of the lockdown alone but for the poor mindset of the elite groups of the society which have refused to allow newspaper hawkers to enter their premises to distribute the dailies in the morning, even after the assurance from the competent authorities regarding lack of possibility of transmission of infection through newspapers. In Assam, I am surprised to know that newspaper subscriptions have fallen beyond anticipation even in the Capital Complex area of the State under the Guwahati-6 postal zone. The print media is unquestionably considered as an important means for mobilizing and strengthening the public opinion in all developmental programmes and also as an eye-opener for the administration as well as to the public and polity in an hour of crisis for receiving feedback. In this context, unfortu-

## Special relief for print media

nately, it has suffered a serious setback because of misconceptions, put under the public domain by fake and bogus messages and remarks circulated in social media mentioning newspapers as a carrier of the virus. Being a well-wisher of such organizations, I could not only appreciate the deterioration of their financial conditions, but am also concerned with the well-being of the hawkers and the agents of the newspapers. It will take time for the print media to regain their earlier position. Therefore, I request the State Government to prepare a package of relief for the print media as a whole. Yours etc., Dr TAPAN DUTTA, Jorhat.

### Rent concessions

Sir – Amid the nationwide lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, State Health Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma has recently made an appeal to all the respective landlords and owners of private hostels, paying guests accommodations and rented houses to adopt a humanitarian approach towards their tenants and boarders and provide them relief such as concession of rent during the lockdown period. His request to the landlords and owners to provide 50% concession to the students and tenants working under private sector and others who do not have a

regular source of income is highly welcome. It has been noticed that many landlords have accepted the request. I was pleasantly surprised when the owner of the rented house where I was staying in Guwahati called me recently and intimated about her decision to reduce my house rent to half. Yours etc., BASANT GOGOI, Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh.

### Opportunity knocks

Sir – The Covid-19 pandemic has heaped unimaginable miseries on the people across the world. One wishes it never had happened. However, there are lessons to take away from this unprecedented catastrophe. It also presents an opportunity for the Government to take the issue of public hygiene forward and save a lot of people, especially from the lower economic strata, from falling sick and further hurting their fragile pecuniary condition. Spitting and littering in public places seem to be quite a normal and acceptable thing to do for a large section of our people. It has become a habit and they seem to do it unconsciously. But this despicable behaviour is very disturbing to many and this section would like to see a change towards a cleaner public space. Here is the opportunity. People are now worried about

the escalating threat of the coronavirus and are more likely to respond positively to any directive of the Government against spitting and littering in public places. The Government should not let such an opportunity pass. It would do well to involve all – the public, business establishments, industries, schools, colleges, religious institutions, etc., in creating a lasting change in behaviour of people for conduct in public places. While continuing the ban on spitting in public places, offices, etc., it may consider undertaking a sustained awareness drive, including visual displays, on the ill effects of spitting and littering. It may also consider initiating punitive actions like imposing fines, publicly punishing erring individuals, as is being done to defaulters during the ensuing lockdown. Yours etc., BARUN BARPUJARI, Six Mile, Guwahati.

### Tribute to Irrfan

Sir – On April 29, 2020, amidst the nationwide lockdown for the corona pandemic, the news of the demise of an exceptional actor Irrfan Khan poured in. Social media was filled with condolences, grief and prayers of the departed soul.

The death of any public figure irrespective of their forte impacts the common men. Their ideologies, motivational talks, work that they

have performed during the lifespan, become a source of inspiration for many. People miss the hero, the role model or a prominent face. But this time it was different. Irrfan Khan's death felt like a personal loss to many. As if one among us has gone too early, as if some tasks remained unfinished, as if many dreams shattered quite abruptly, as if time has played an unfair game.

His movies were never so glitzy, as compared to the other Khans of Bollywood, still his phenomenal performances made them remarkable. He optimized every shot and convinced the audience that with the art of acting, one can supplant the stereotypical dashing look, six packs, fancy dance style, etc. His simplicity in the charismatic world of Bollywood made him different than the rest. He was the one who looked real even in the reel life, whom we wanted to watch more and surely never wanted to say goodbye so soon.

His journey is truly larger than his life. But he will live among us through his versatile work. He felt like one among us whom we miss dearly. Yours etc., SWASTICA GOSWAMI, Six Mile, Guwahati.

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



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

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

**Temperatures:**

	Max (°C)	Min (°C)
Dibrugarh	30.2	20.4
Tezpur	31.0	21.2
Silchar	30.9	22.0
Dhubri	30.6	22.5
Jorhat	30.7	20.6
N Lakhimpur	30.9	20.3
Shillong	19.6	-
Cherrapunjee	21.7	14.8
Aizawl	24.6	17.1
Kohima	21.4	11.2
Pasighat	29.4	20.0
Itanagar	33.9	20.4
Imphal	26.0	17.9
Agartala	31.6	22.2

## Tripura on edge after driver from Chennai tests positive

CORRESPONDENT

AGARTALA, April 30: Tripura has got fresh jitters after a person from Tamil Nadu who was in the State on April 27 and 28, tested positive for COVID-19.

The person in question – an ambulance driver from Chennai – had come to the State to drop five persons at Udaipur subdivision in Gomati district during the lockdown period. As part of the COVID-19 guidelines, all the other primary contacts of the ambulance driver – one more driver and the five others – will undergo tests.

The driver was diagnosed with COVID-19 on Wednesday, sending alarm bells ringing here. He had already left for Chennai along with the other driver.

Meanwhile, the five persons of Udaipur have been sent to institutional quarantine by the district administration, said

Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath.

The issue of lifting the lockdown was discussed in an all-party meeting last night and almost all representatives of the political parties who attended the meeting, advocated exiting the lockdown in a phased manner depending on the ground situation, Nath said.

“There will be relaxation on some sectors. This will be decided by the State Cabinet shortly before May 3, the last day of the ongoing lockdown,” the minister said.

Nath stated many political party representatives, who lauded the State Government’s role in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, expressed the fear that there might be adverse impact if the lockdown was fully withdrawn after May 3.

The problem of bringing back people stranded outside the State was also dis-

cussed in the meeting. “The meeting took stock of the State’s financial position. The expenses will be more if the Government brings back all the stranded people. That is why the Government has decided to allow the stranded people to return home on their own, while it will provide all logistical support,” Nath said.

The Education Minister made it clear that the Government cannot only bring back the students who are stuck at Kota.

In the meeting, State Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar informed the political parties about the steps taken by the Government in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the future plans.

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb presided over the meeting, which was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Jishnu Dev Varma, Forest Minister Mevar Kumar Jamatia and Opposition leader Manik Sarkar.



A vehicle disinfection tunnel being inaugurated at the Budhjungnagar Industrial Estate in West Tripura district, on Thursday. – Photo: Correspondent

## Nagaland Cong demands rollback of COVID-19 cess on fuel

CORRESPONDENT

DIMAPUR, April 30: The Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) today demanded immediate rollback of the COVID-19 cess levied by the State Government on diesel, petrol and motor spirits in the State.

Nagaland is reportedly the first State in the country to levy a COVID-19 cess on diesel and petrol.

Additional Chief Secretary and Finance Commissioner Sentiyanger Imchen said diesel price in the State has been increased by Rs 5 per litre, and that of petrol and other

motor spirits by Rs 6 per litre as COVID-19 cess with effect from the midnight of April 28.

“In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section 3 of section 3A of the Nagaland (Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants) Taxation Act, 1967 (as amended), the Governor of Nagaland is pleased to notify that in addition to existing rate of tax and cess, the COVID-19 Cess shall be levied against Entry Serial Number 3 & 4 of Schedule II of the Act,” Imchen said in a notification issued on Wednesday.

In a release, NPCC presi-

dent K Therie said imposition of the COVID-19 cess on diesel and petrol at the rate of Rs 5 and Rs 6 respectively is not acceptable under the present circumstances as it would result in price rise of commodities.

He said instead of imposing the cess to increase the fuel prices, the Government should concentrate on restructuring the State’s economy to stimulate economic growth and check price rise.

In the present situation where people have lost business and jobs, development activities have halted, industries have closed down, and

farming activities have been affected, imposition of the extra tax is nothing but adding salt to injury, Therie maintained.

The NPCC said the State Government has passed a Rs 21,049-crore budget and this money is available with the Government.

“In addition, the State Government has received the State Disaster Response Management funds and perhaps the Prime Minister CARES fund too. We have also seen the North Eastern Council has released grants while the Centre is supplying PPE materials,” it added.

## 8 COVID-19 patients have fully recovered: Meghalaya Govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

SHILLONG April 30: The Meghalaya Government today stated that eight COVID-19 patients in the State have fully recovered, while the reports of the tests on three other patients are awaited.

The eight patients were tested on Wednesday and found negative. However, as per protocol, their test samples were collected again after 24 hours and sent for tests today. “The new test results were also negative, which means that they have fully recovered,” Deputy

Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said.

These eight patients have been advised to be in home quarantine for the next 14 days. “They do not have any symptoms of the disease and they can carry on with their normal life, but they have been advised to be in home quarantine,” he added.

Two other patients have also tested negative. Their test samples will be taken again and tested after 24 hours and if found negative after the second test, they, too, will be declared fully recovered. The test result of another patient is awaited, Tynsong added. There were 11 active cases of COVID-19 in the State and with today’s development, the number of active cases has gone down to three now.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Chief Minister appealed to the public not to stigmatize the patients.

**Stranded citizens:**

Meghalaya has initiated the process of bringing back its citizens stranded in other North Eastern States, tentatively by May 5.

In a notification, the State Government said that Meghalaya citizens stranded in any of the North Eastern States can initiate the process of returning home by registering online. Those wishing to return should register at [meghalayaonline.gov.in/covid/](http://meghalayaonline.gov.in/covid/) before May 4. The notification stated that it is a prerequisite to register and fill up the online form. Those not having Internet access can call 81320 11037, 84330 38716, 97115 44148 and 73385 50288 between 9 am and 8 pm till May 4.

On the other hand, citizens stranded outside the North East region may have to wait a little longer till the Railways and flight services resume across the country.

## Arunachal gets first COVID-19 testing lab

CORRESPONDENT

ITANAGAR, April 30: Arunachal Pradesh’s first COVID-19 qRT-PCR laboratory opened today at the Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (TRIHS) Hospital at Naharlagun, which has been converted into a dedicated COVID-19 hospital.

The COVID-19 testing laboratory will start collecting samples for suspected coronavirus from May 1 onwards.

The testing laboratory was inaugurated by Health and Family Welfare Minister Alo Libang in the presence of Secretary (Health) P Parthiban, TRIHS Director Dr Moji Jini and other senior officers of the department.

Speaking on the occasion, Libang informed the gathering that the State Government has initiated the work to establish two more COVID-19 testing laboratories – one at Pasighat and the other at C-Sector, Naharlagun.

“Work on the proposed laboratory at Pasighat is currently under way, while the one at C-sector in Naharlagun will be completed in a couple of days. We assume that with the establishment of the COVID-19 qRT-PCR laboratory at the TRIHS, samples of around 100 people can be tested on a single day. This will increase to another 200 samples a day once the laboratory at C-Sector, Naharlagun, is made operational,” he said.

The Health Minister also informed that work is under way to establish the COVID-19 hospital at Midpu in Papumpare district.

**Stranded citizens:** With just three days left for the nationwide lockdown to end, the Arunachal Pradesh Government today said that it was making arrangements to bring back its citizens, including students, who are stranded in other parts of the country and who wish to return to the State.

“In the first phase, the Government plans to make arrangements for bringing back those stranded in other North Eastern States in consultation with the respective State governments. Those availing of the services will need to pay for the transport charges,” State Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar said on Thursday.

## HC takes cognizance of Aizawl violence

CORRESPONDENT

AIZAWL, April 30: Taking suo moto cognizance of an incident in which local task force volunteers of Dinthar ID-19 tested in the Aizawl Bench of the Gauhati High Court has sent a notice to the Aizawl DC and SP, asking them to submit a status report within two weeks.

The Court on Wednesday said that it had taken notice of the incident that occurred on the night of April 25, from news reports and a press statement issued by the Dinthar local-level task force on COVID-19. It remarked that there was a clear violation of Article 21 of the Constitution that protects life and personal liberty.

The local task force volunteers had nabbed the eight youths for alleged violation of lockdown restrictions and smoking of ganja, taken them in their

custody, and beaten them up with canes. A video clip of the incident, secretly filmed by one of the victims, went viral on the social media.

Taking serious note of the use of physical force on the youths, the Court said, “No person or authority has the right to take the law into one’s own hands. If the youths were caught with ganja or violated lockdown curfew, they should have been handed over to the police. The illegal acts of the youths should not have been dealt with another illegal act, as two wrongs don’t make a right.”

The Court made the State Government of Mizoram, the chairman of the State-level task force on COVID-19, the Home Secretary, the Aizawl DC, the Aizawl SP, the Vaivakaw Police Station OC and the chairman of Dinthar local-level task force on COVID-19, respondents in the case.

## Sikkim Chief Secy reviews action plan

GANGTOK, April 30: Sikkim Chief Secretary SC Gupta today chaired the State-level task force meeting to review the Government’s action plan in line with the new guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs with respect to COVID-19, on April 29.

The Chief Secretary stated that Ringzing Bhutia, Secretary, Coordination (COVID-19), has been appointed as the State nodal officer to liaison with nodal officers of other States to facilitate the return of people from Sikkim, who are stranded outside the State. He stressed the need to finalise the arrangements to quarantine the people coming from outside the State. A brief presentation on the newly created online registration portal was made on the occasion. The portal will facilitate the travel of Sikkimese people from outside the State after its approval.

The district collectors highlighted the level of preparedness in their respective districts, and provided feedback on the online registration portal. They also gave information about the quarantine facilities being arranged in their respective districts. – A Correspondent



Lockdown violators being detained by Manipur Police at Singjamei in Imphal on Wednesday. – Photo: Correspondent

## Manipur Govt seeks Centre’s nod for chartered flights to bring back residents

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 30: The Manipur Government is seeking permission from the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Union Ministry of Home Affairs for chartered flights to bring back the State’s stranded citizens from different parts of the country. This was stated by Manipur Health and Family Welfare Minister L Jayantakumar Singh while speaking to reporters at his residence here today.

Stating that the Government is tak-

ing steps to bring back Manipuri people stranded outside the State, Jayantakumar Singh said that as a first step, four buses had already been sent to Assam to bring back 84 persons who are stranded at the Manipur Bhawan in Guwahati. The passengers will be strictly screened once they arrive at the Mao Gate, after which they will be sent to quarantine centres for a day for further examination. Later, they will be recommended a 14-day mandatory quarantine either at home or at institutional quarantine centres,

depending on the decisions taken by health experts.

The minister said that the local people should not stigmatize the persons who are returning home. He also highlighted the facilities available to tackle COVID-19 at different district hospitals, including the RIMS and the JNIMS.

Stressing the need to maintain good health and practise social distancing to keep COVID-19 at bay, the State Health Minister said that the Government has been making the best efforts to fight the pandemic.

The Manipur Government is keeping in touch with the Union Ministry of Health for suggestions to take up further steps in curbing the pandemic. Stating that both COVID-19 patients of the State were discharged after they were found negative in successive tests, Jayantakumar Singh, however, clarified that this does not mean that the State is totally free from the disease.

Manipur’s first COVID-19 case was reported on March 24, while the second was confirmed on April 2. No new case has been reported in the State.

**ASSAM ELECTRICITY GRID CORPORATION LIMITED**  
**NOTICE**  
 Considering the exigencies of current situation of Lockdown imposed by Government of India to contain the spread of Covid-19 pandemic, the last date for submission of Life Certificate by Family Pensioners of ASEB and its successor companies has been extended till 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020.  
 Sd/- Member & Chief Executive,  
 ASEB Employees Pension Fund Investment Trust  
 CAS/2020/29

**NORTH EASTERN COALFIELDS**  
**Coal India Limited**  
 (A Maharatna Company under Ministry of Coal)  
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 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](http://www.coalindia.in) respective subsidiary Company, CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public procurement portal <https://procurement.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>  
 Sd/- General Manager,  
 NEC, Margherita.

**National Highways Authority of India**  
 (Ministry of Road Transport and Highways)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**USER FEE APPLICATION ON 6-LANE MIKIRATI HAWGAON TOLL PLAZA AT CH. 33.625 ON NH-27 (OLD NH-36 & 54)**

The public are hereby informed that pursuant to Fee Notification published in the Gazette vide S.O. No 743 (E) dated 17th February, 2020 published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-3, Sub-section (ii) on 17.02.2020 by M o R T & H, the user fee for section from Km 0.321 to Km 5.500 and from Km. 5.500 to Km. 37.894 of NH-27 (Old NH-36) and from Km 0.000 to Km. 22.000 of NH-27 (Old NH-54) (Nagaon - Daboka - Lanka - Haflong Section) in the State of Assam is going to start w.e.f. 08.00 Hrs on 03-05-2020 at 6-lane Mikirati Hawgaon Toll Plaza at the following rates:

Sl. no.	Type of Vehicle	Fee rate for vehicle for one way trip (in rupees)	Fee rate for vehicle for return trip in a day (in rupees)	Fee rate for vehicle for monthly pass valid for 30 journeys in a month (in rupees)	Fee for one way trip of commercial vehicles registered in the District (in rupees)
1	Car, jeep, van or Light Motor Vehicle	75	115	2555	40
2	Light Commercial Vehicle, Light Goods Vehicle or Mini Bus	125	185	4130	60
3	Bus or Truck (Two Axles)	260	390	8650	130
4	Three-Axle Commercial Vehicles	285	425	9435	140
5	Heavy Construction Machinery (HCM) or Earth Moving Equipment (EME) or Multi Axle Vehicle (MAV) (four to six axles)	405	610	13565	205
6	Oversized Vehicles (Seven or more axles)	495	745	16515	250

**NOTE:**  
 1. The rate for monthly pass applicable for local non commercial vehicle residing within a distance of 20 Km. from the toll plaza shall be Rs. 270/-.  
 2. The fee rate mentioned at Column 6 is for single trip and is applicable for Commercial Vehicles (excluding vehicle plying under National permit), registered within the District where the fee plaza is located.  
 3. Return journey valid for 24 hours form the time of payment.

**BUILDING A NATION, NOT JUST ROADS**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Relief distributed

DHEMAJI, April 30: Dipak Kalita, an agent of newspapers, distributed relief materials among 25 hawkers here on Tuesday. During the distribution, he appealed to them to follow the guidelines set by the Centre to combat COVID-19. The newspaper hawkers have hailed the initiative of Kalita. — ANN Service



Newspaper hawkers of Dhemaji after receiving food bags from a book stall owner. — Photo: ANN Service

## Woman killed at Tihu

TIHU, April 30: One Prativa Barman, wife of Umesh Barman of Gobaradal village (Chamoitapara) in Tihu subdivision, died on Tuesday after a tree fell on her. She was 48. According to sources, Barman tried to pull out a betel nut tree at her residence and suddenly it fell on her. — ANN Service

## Food items distributed

BAIHATA CHARIALI, April 30: A team of volunteers led by BJP leader Diganta Kalita on Wednesday distributed masks, sanitisers and gloves among people engaged in essential services and mediapersons at Kamalpur. The Circle Officer of Kamalpur revenue circle also distributed food items among families of bamboo artisans in Baredala who have been facing hardship due to the lockdown as their bamboo products have remained unsold. — ANN Service

## Exam on social media

PATACHARKUCHI, April 30: As schools are closed due to the lockdown and students are mostly sitting at home, most of the schools in Baksa district have started online classes. A school recently held unit tests for students on WhatsApp. Dr Ananta Academy situated in Jalah held the online examination with the parents and guardians taking on the role of invigilators of their own wards. The examination began at 9.30 am and was completed in an hour. The answer scripts were also sent to the school via WhatsApp. — ANN Service

## MLA gives food, medicines

MIRZA, April 30: Chhaya MLA Rekiuddin Ahmed has donated food items and medicines among the poor people. The MLA also provided masks and sanitisers to customers and shopkeepers for their safety. In this context, he appealed to the people to maintain social distancing in a bid to prevent spread of the novel coronavirus. "People should remain indoors. That is the only option available now," he said. — ANN Service

## Door-to-door classes

TIHU, April 30: Online classes have been very helpful for students during the lockdown. Many teachers here are trying to cover the syllabus and keep students engaged in studies through online classes. Some teachers of Milon High School, Gobaradal are also taking classes with door-to-door visits to the homes of students who do not have smartphones. Teachers of Dharmapur Jyandieni High School of Kaithalkuchi are also taking classes with door-to-door visits. — ANN Service

## Contribution to CM's fund

DOOMDOOMA, April 30: The Tinsukia Zila Sahityasewi Mancha (TZSM), a literary organisation of Tinsukia district, has contributed Rs 10,000 to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. TZSM secretary Sarat Chandra Chiring Phukan and treasurer Abhijit Khatanar handed over a cheque of the amount to Circle Officer Nandita Roy Gohain of the Doomdooma Revenue Circle at her office on Thursday. — Correspondent

## Bridge construction

DIPHU, April 30: The construction of an RCC bridge over the Difloo river near Malasi in Bokajan subdivision has resumed after it was closed immediately following the announcement of the lockdown. Officials and construction workers confirmed that they have received permission to resume work. Work on the bridge, being built under the supervision of PWD Kohora Road Division under the Assam government's pilot project Mahavir Lachit Chilarai Setu Nirman Abhijan, was held up following the declaration of the lockdown by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus pandemic. People in villages like Sarbe Kro, Dadhora, Upper Dadhora, Dipluso, Rong-ar-eh, were hoping that the construction would be finished before the monsoon. — Correspondent

## Prasad Goswami: a tribute



Prasad Goswami, our youngest *khura*, passed away on April 21. He was 76.

Born at Saudkucki Satra (Bamungaon) Jorhat, to late Kamaleswar Goswami and late Ghanakanti Goswami, our *khura* came to Guwahati to pursue higher studies. He got enrolled in the post-graduation classes at Gauhati University and cleared the MA final examination securing the first position in Economics.

He started his career as a lecturer in Pandu College. Goswami was later elevated

to the post of head of the Economics department and also served the institution as its principal in-charge till his retirement in 2004. In between, he did MPhil from Devi Ahalya University Indore, Madhya Pradesh during 1986-88. He represented his college in the Assam College Teachers' Association for a long time, and after retirement, he served the Retired College Teachers' Association as its secretary.

He was actively associated with the local organisations of Tetelia area of Jalukbari where he settled permanently, besides being a great sports and music enthusiast.

On the occasion of his *ad-yashradhya* today, we pray to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul.

— Dibyendu Goswami

## Venture, private school teachers forced to sell vegetables

## CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, April 30: Around 30,000 teachers working in 6,000 venture educational institutions across the state are facing severe economic hardship during the ongoing lockdown period. Thousands among them are doing some petty trade with their families and children for a meal.

Talking to this correspondent, Pradip Kumar Moran, president of the Assam Apradeshikrita Shikshanushan Suraksha Mancha, said, "Thousands of teachers are selling vegetables with their families to manage a meal. One of my colleagues, who has been teaching in a venture school for the last 20 years, is doing bamboo craft work to survive."

Moran said that the suffering of the teachers of venture educational institutions has been going unnoticed for the last 30 years. On the other hand, teachers working in private schools have also been suffering from hardship

during the lockdown.

"Private schools owners say that teachers' salaries are paid from the funds which are collected as monthly tuition fee from the students. As the fee collection has been stopped, the schools are unable to pay the teachers. Private tuition has already been stopped. The teachers get very small amount of salary, so there is no question of saving. Now the teachers are hopefully looking to the government to provide them some financial assistance in this period of crisis. The education department should ensure that teachers should be paid through their bank accounts and submit the list to district administration," said a senior teacher of a private school here.

"NGOs should come forward to help these teachers. The NGOs and samaritans should help them reaching their doorsteps," said another teacher of a venture school.

"It was almost the beginning of the session and the schools were shut down suddenly. We too are in



In a bid to earn his daily bread, a venture school teacher weaves a basket during the lockdown period in Doomdooma. — Photo: Abhijit Khatanar

financial crisis. Yet, the school management is trying its best to provide salary to its all teaching and non-teaching staff," said the owner of a private school here.

It can be mentioned here that the state government on March 15 or-

dered shutting down of educational institutions as a preventive measure to stop the spread of COVID-19.

**Thefts on the rise:** Sporadic incidents of theft in Doomdooma circle are on the rise in the last couple of weeks, with the miscreants tak-

ing advantage of the lockdown.

In such an incident, burglars broke open RK Medical, a medicine wholesale store in the town and stole a monitor of a computer set on Tuesday. Another nearby outlet was completely looted.

## BJP leaders flayed for holding meetings during lockdown

## CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, April 30: The Assam Pradesh Youth Congress Committee (APYCC) has criticised the travel itinerary of Phani Sharma, state general secretary of the BJP and in-charge of North East in Tinsukia district, and his participation at meetings at Tinsukia and Sadiya along with Labour Minister Sanjay Kishan and Digboi MLA Suren Phukan during the ongoing lockdown.

APYCC general secretary Masum Baruah in a press release stated that Sarma, a resident of the Red Zone containment area of COVID-19, visited Tinsukia dis-

trict and held a party meeting at Manab Kalyan Bhawan, Tinsukia on April 26, which was also attended by Kishan and Phukan.

He wondered how a senior leader of the ruling party could defy the COVID norms and disregard the efforts of the Prime Minister in containment of the pandemic.

Baruah questioned the authority under whom the BJP leader travelled across the state. The Tinsukia district administration ought to be responsible for giving permission to hold the meeting or else the minister misused his power and violated the COVID-19 protocol, the Youth Congress leader said.

## Standalone shops allowed to open in Jorhat district's rural areas

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

JORHAT, April 30: The Jorhat district administration has allowed opening of standalone shops in rural areas on three days fixed by the administration under certain conditions.

An order passed by the Jorhat District Magistrate on Wednesday stated that in pursuance of an order of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and per the decision made by the State Level Empowered Committee, COVID-19, Assam, standalone shops in rural areas could be opened on three days fixed by the administration area-wise.

The order said standalone shops will be allowed to operate from 10 am to 5 pm and no shops in rural areas within 5-km boundary of Red Zone areas will be allowed to open.

The order stated that shops will have to operate with bare minimum staff and shopkeepers will have to ensure strict compliance of social dis-

tancing, hygiene practices of hand-washing, and sanitizing frequently among staff members and customers. Spitting is strictly prohibited. Non-compliance of the conditions will lead to immediate closure of the shops.

**Water supply bills:** The executive engineer of the Assam Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Board (Jorhat Division) has urged consumers of the Board to send their names along with consumer numbers via SMS/WhatsApp to two mobile numbers in order to enable the Board to dispatch the monthly bills to the customers.

The Board has not been able to deliver the monthly bills at the customers' homes due to the ongoing lockdown.

The executive engineer stated that consumers of Jorhat will have to SMS/WhatsApp their names along with the consumer number to 9957186302, while consumers of Mariani, Titabar, Dergaon Golaghat, Bokakhat, Amguri, Sonari and Namrup will have send the information

to 6000799972. **Akhil Gogoi's release sought:** A letter signed by 102 persons belonging to different professions seeking early release of KMSS leader Akhil Gogoi was sent to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal through Legislative Assembly Speaker Hitendra Nath Goswami on Wednesday.

A four-member delegation led by Birodhi Oikya Mancha, Jorhat district unit president Niranjan Mahanta handed over the letter to Goswami at the Jorhat Circuit House.

**Contribution to Assam Arogya Nidhi:** The Lakhminagar Unnayan Samity, with contributions from people of Lakhminagar donated Rs 50,000 to Assam Arogya Nidhi. A cheque of the amount was handed over to the Jorhat Deputy Commissioner.

Meanwhile, ICICI Foundation, Jorhat, provided 650 bottles of hand sanitizer and 1,500 masks to the Jorhat district administration.



The entry point of Abdul Latif Baruah Road in Ward No. 11 of North Lakhimpur closed with a bamboo pole after the area was declared as a Containment Zone following the detection of a COVID-19 positive case recently. — Photo: Farhana Ahmed

## People seek lockdown relaxation in Sadiya

## CORRESPONDENT

DOOMDOOMA, April 30: With Sadiya subdivision in Tinsukia district being enlisted in the Green Zone under the COVID-19 pandemic, the people here desire more relaxation in the ongoing lockdown to resist the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

Tinsukia Additional Deputy Commissioner Shyamal Kshetra Gogoi, who is

also in charge of SDO (Civil), Sadiya, said in a press statement that the Sadiya subdivisional administration took all measures to enforce the lockdown at all levels in the subdivision. Due to the active role of police, no case of lockdown violation has been reported from any part of the subdivision.

All government orders, news bulletins and precautionary measures for the prevention of coronavirus transmission

are being circulated among the public on a regular basis by the SDIPRO office, Sadiya.

All government offices in the subdivision have been functioning since April 21 following the government order of 33 per cent attendance. Permits for inter-district transport are being issued to the people who have applied for the same at the SDO (Civil) Office, Sadiya from April 25, informed Gogoi.

## Demand for preservation of Singlijan Reserve Forest

## CORRESPONDENT

BISWANATH CHARIALI, April 30: The people of Dullungmukh, Nagabil, Helem Sapori, Sirajuli, Uttar Karibil, Karibil Kochari, Karibil Nepali and Bheuladanga under Helem Revenue Circle in Biswanath district have demanded preservation of the Singlijan Reserve Forest to save its flora and fauna.

The Singlijan Reserve Forest, which is located in the northern part along the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, have been encroached by a

section of people causing major concern. What is more alarming is that valuable trees have been destroyed.

The encroachers have already planted rubber plants and mustard cultivation in a huge stretch of land. This Singlijan Reserve Forest is home to wild elephants.

Worried over the situation, local people have submitted a memorandum to the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (T), Upper Assam Zone, Guwahati seeking his intervention in this regard.

Recently, the Range Officer of Borgang Range visited inside the Singlijan Reserve Forest along with forest guards and local police to take stock of the situation.

They found that valuable trees were chopped off inside the forest at Dullungmukh area. Such anti-social activities took place very recently during the lockdown period.

The petitioners of the surrounding villages have demanded immediate action against the encroachers for the sake of the wild animals in the forest.



A tree cut by miscreants in the Singlijan Reserve Forest along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border in Biswanath district. — UB Photos

## Subdued celebration of NCHAC's 69th foundation day

## CORRESPONDENT

HAFLONG, April 30: Debolal Gorlosa, Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council (NCHAC), on Wednesday conveyed his gratitude to the people for their cooperation during the COVID-19 crisis.

Addressing the media on the occasion of the 69th foundation day of the oldest council in the country, Gorlosa said, "This year, for the first time, since the beginning of the NCHAC in 1952, we decided not to have any celebration as the nation is facing the threat of this dangerous pandemic."

Usually, this day is celebrated in a grand way as it is one of the most important days for the North Cachar Hills region, but this year, the occasion was overshadowed by the coronavirus pandemic, Gorlosa said.

He expressed his gratitude to the people who drafted the Constitution of India, including India's first Law Minister Bhim Rao Ambedkar, who played a pivotal role in the drafting of the Constitution, and kept in mind the people of every group and community across the nation.

Gorlosa said he was happy that he got an opportunity to serve the people of the district as the CEM. During his second term as the CEM, his Cabinet prioritised five aspects for the betterment of the people of Dima Hasao — roads, water supply, health care, electricity and education.

Every year, during the monsoon, people especially in Haf-long and Umrangso face acute shortage of water, he said, adding that he was hopeful that the work undertaken under a special package will help overcome this water crisis to a certain extent by next year.

Expressing happiness over the work undertaken during his tenure, Gorlosa said he was confident that the district will be in a much better position in the years to come.













The Rishi Kapoor you didn't know

Open, frank and unfiltered are some of the words used to describe Rishi Kapoor's life...

A day after he was hospitalised here, Rishi Kapoor is no more. He passed away on Thursday after a two-year battle with leukaemia. He was 67.

IANS brings you some trivia from the multifaceted life that he led.

\* Rishi Kapoor's love for food, especially non-vegetarian food, is not something that the world doesn't know about.

\* He visited Chennai because he was coming after a darshan at Tirupati.

\* Rishi Kapoor had a thing for 'agarbatti', and used to carry a pack wherever he went.

\* His favourite fragrance was Nag Champa.

\* The world lovingly calls him Chintu ji, and in 2009 he even starred in a film by that name.

But he hated his nickname, and once took to

Twitter to share his old picture and expressed his views on nicknames, saying "parents must never nickname a child".

\* Several reports are suggesting that he used sweaters to look hot.

\* He did two international movies - "Don't Stop Dreaming" in 2007 and "Sambar Salsa" in 2008.

\* He struggled with depression at one point of his career due to back to back failures.

\* His songs are evergreen, and still loved by one and all. But Rishi personally never liked many of his songs.

\* He admitted that there was a time when he was a male chauvinist.

\* He always admitted to his flaws. The actor once confessed to buying a film award.

\* In his book "Khullam Khulla: Rishi Kapoor Uncensored", he claimed his father Raj Kapoor was involved with other women even while he was married to Krishna Raj Kapoor.

(Source: IANS)

Kids section with CN and Pogo logos and program listings.

Entertainment section with Sony SAB, Star Plus, and Colors logos and program listings.

Movies section with UTV Movies, WB, and HBO logos and program listings.

Infotainment section with National Geographic Channel and Animal Planet logos and program listings.

Regional section with News Live and Raining logos and program listings.

Star Movies and Star Gold section with Zee Cinema and Star Gold logos and program listings.

Know your DAY

By JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY for Friday, May 1, 2020:

You have a way of making your words count. This year, calm and realistic, you conquer the world.

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) \* You might find yourself having to pay for everyone.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) \* If you are yearning to put forward mothering instincts, put them into domestic projects today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) \*\*\* Things could go a bit awry with a sibling, cousin or neighbor today.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) \* Take advantage of positive opportunities to either increase your income or buy luxury items today.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) \* You choose to take advantage of certain financial opportunities that present themselves today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) \* Save social plans for when aspects are better.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) \* There is a mix of social life and work today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) \* Career endeavors still seem a bit shaky, as they will be for some weeks to come.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) \* Use opportunistic aspects to make contact with new people.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) \* A confidential conversation with a family member helps you over the rough spots.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) \* Today favors stable and long-term ties.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) \* You feel lethargic and inattentive when it comes to domestic matters.

Thought for the day: Work out your own salvation. Do not depend on others. - BUDDHA

LOCKHORNS cartoon by Lee Falk. A man is being pulled into a large water tank labeled 'LOCKHORNS'.

Cartoon by Lee Falk. A man is being crushed by a large, heavy object.

THE PHANTOM cartoon by Lee Falk. A man is being pulled into a large, dark, tunnel-like structure.

BLONDIE cartoon by Bob Barthel. A man is talking to a woman about deleting pictures and a sundae.

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE cartoon by Berne Reiter. A man is talking to a woman about being a stupid idiot.

Tribune CROSSWORD - 6882 grid with numbers 1-31.

Across and Down clues for the crossword puzzle.

SOLUTION TO TRIBUNE CROSSWORD - 6882

HEALTH CAPSULES and JUMBLED WORDS sections.





# Football's return 'good for everyone': Mourinho

LONDON, April 30: Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho believes bringing football back, even behind closed doors, would be a much-needed morale boost for fans starved of action during the coronavirus crisis.

No Premier League games have been played since March 9 due to the pandemic, which has claimed more than 26,000 British lives. Dutch football chiefs have called an end to the Eredivisie season while French sports minister Roxana Maracineanu on Thursday called for the French league to end

the Ligue 1 season.

England's top-flight clubs are due to meet on Friday with "Project Restart" at the top of their agenda. They will discuss how they can complete the season despite the logistical difficulties.

"I miss football," Mourinho told Sky Sports from the Tottenham Hotspur stadium, which has been transformed to house a testing centre, outpatient services for a local hospital and a food distribution hub.

"But I prefer to say I miss our world, like I think we all do. Football is just part of my

world. But we have to be patient, this is a fight that we all have to fight."



Even if matches can return, they will be played behind closed doors for the foreseeable

future to minimise the risk of spreading the virus. Mourinho, though, be-

**If we play the remaining nine matches this season it will be good for every one of us.**

**- Jose Mourinho** believes players will still be putting on a show for millions watching around the world.

"If we play the remaining nine matches this season it will be good for every one of us," he said. "It will be good for football, for the Premier League.

"If we play football behind closed doors I'd like to think that football is never behind closed doors.

"With cameras, it means that millions and millions are watching. So if one day we walk into this empty stadium, it will not be empty, not at all."

Prior to the shutdown, Mourinho said he could not wait for the season to end due to a debilitating list of injuries.

Yet Spurs could make a late run to finish in the top four should the campaign get back under way, with Harry Kane, Moussa Sissoko, Steven Bergwijn and Son Heung-min - who is completing a short period of national service - now recovered from injury.

"They are recovered from their injuries, so Harry Kane is not injured, Moussa Sissoko is not injured, Steven Bergwijn is not injured, but it is one thing not to be injured, it's another thing to be ready to play football," Mourinho added. - AFP

## Chuni Goswami passes away at 82

KOLKATA, April 30: Legendary former India football team captain Chuni Goswami died at a private city hospital here on Thursday after suffering from prolonged illness. He was 82. He is survived by his wife Basanti and son Suddipto.

"He suffered a cardiac arrest and breathed his last in the hospital at around 5 pm," a family source said.

Goswami was captain of the 1962 Asian Games gold-medal winning team and had also represented Bengal in first-class cricket tournaments.

For the last few months, Goswami was suffering from underlying ailments with sugar, prostate and nerve problems. Goswami played 50 matches for India from 1956 to 1964.

As a cricketer, he represented Bengal in 46 first-class games between 1962 and 1973.

Under his leadership, India bagged gold in the 1962 Asian Games, finished runner-up in the Asian Cup in 1964 and narrowly lost to Burma in Merdeka football six months later.

Goswami always donned the Mohun Bagan jersey and is a club legend. - IANS



## Labuschagne, Burns among six new faces to land CA contracts

MELBOURNE, April 30: Senior batsmen Usman Khawaja and Shaun Marsh missed out but the fast-rising Marnus Labuschagne and Joe Burns were rewarded for their performances in Cricket Australia's annual player contracts announced on Thursday.

The list, which has come later than scheduled due to the upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, features six new faces for the 2020-21 season - Mitchell Marsh, Ashton Agar, Burns, Labuschagne, Kane Richardson and Matthew Wade to the list.

"Marnus's rise has been meteoric and well-documented, Joe has been a good Test match player, Ashton Agar's form in T20 internationals has been exceptional, while Kane Richardson has been outstanding in the 20-over and one-day games," Chief selector Trevor Hohns said in a statement on Thursday.

Labuschagne has risen to No. 3 in ICC rankings after making Test debut for Australia in 2018. In 14 Tests he has played, Labuschagne averages over 63 and has accumulated 1459 runs. Burns averages over 50 in both Tests and ODIs. - PTI

## Police file reveals suspicions of Blatter in FIFA TV deal

LAUSANNE, April 30: A police report obtained by AFP showed that suspicions of impropriety against fallen FIFA boss Sepp Blatter over a controversial TV deal "were well-founded" despite Swiss prosecutors dropping the case.

Swiss legal chiefs suspected Blatter of having signed a "contract unfavourable to FIFA" with the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) then led by Jack Warner, who has since been banned from football for life and charged with corruption by American justice officials.



The deal had granted television rights for the 2010 and 2014 World Cups to the CFU for \$600,000 (536,000 euros), an amount deemed to be significantly below market price.

## RR launches fundraiser

NEW DELHI, April 30: Indian Premier League side Rajasthan Royals have launched a fundraiser on social networking site Facebook for the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The franchise has set up a dedicated fundraiser page on Facebook where donors can contribute towards Gram Chetna Kendra, an NGO that works in Rajasthan with a focus on children and women projects.

The funds received via this initiative will focus on extending help to women and dependent families from underprivileged households in the state of Rajasthan by providing over 200,000 nutritious meals. - PTI

## COVID-19 outbreak will not affect women's sport: Perry

SYDNEY, April 30: Amidst concerns that cash-strapped governing bodies will give priority to men's events over less-lucrative women's fixtures once the health crisis triggered by COVID-19 pandemic is over, star Australia all-rounder Ellyse Perry believes that women sport will emerge unscathed.

Sporting activities around the world have been brought to a grinding halt by the coronavirus outbreak.

Boards like Cricket Australia are facing a financial crisis and were forced to lay off majority of their staff but Perry believes that governing bodies will look for new ways of revenue generation.

"Sport in general is resilient and I can't actually see it having a long-lasting negative effect," Perry told the Australian Associated Press.

"It's certainly made organisations rethink how they run their sports and their codes and potentially strip it back to what is really important.

"That's not necessarily a bad thing. I don't think it's going to affect women's sport. It's become so apparent that if you want all your population engaging in your code you need to engage all the population. And part of that is having women's involvement," she added.

Women's cricket has enjoyed unprecedented attention in the recent years, with about 86,000 spectators attending the Twenty20 World Cup final between Australia and India, last month. - PTI

## Donation to Assam Arogya Nidhi

GUWAHATI, April 30: Former secretary of the Assam Cricket Association Bikash Baruah and ex-State player Susanta Biswa Sarma, who are the president and secretary of the Natun Sarania Gandhi Basti Rajahua Mandir Parisalana Samittee, in a release stated that the organisation has donated an amount of Rs 30,000 to the Assam Arogya Nidhi.

**Cycling Association of Assam:** The Cycling Association of Assam (CAA) has donated Rs 25,000 to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and Rs 25,000 to the Assam Arogya Nidhi. The cheques were handed over to Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma respectively, informed CAA secretary Dr Tapan Das and joint secretary Dibya Jyoti Rajkhowa in a release. The amount has been donated to fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

### SU DO KU

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

**Solution of last problem**

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

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.

### Shradhanjali

01.05.1959 27.04.2018

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