



Glorious 16th Year

The Assam Post

PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY FROM GUWAHATI & DELHI

Always with Truth & Justice

RNI REGD. NO. ASSENG 2010/34729 THE ASSAM POST

Vol- XVI Issue No. 343 ■ Friday, July 17, 2026 ■ Guwahati Edition

E-Paper: centralread.com

Total Pages -12 Rs. 6.00



Brief Post

Road Accident
Correspondent, Manas(BTC), July 16: A tragic road accident near Galia under the Bhawanipur Police Outpost claimed the life of a young motorcyclist on the spot, while another sustained critical injuries.

According to reports, at around 11:00 p.m. on Wednesday night, Manoj Das (25) and Devajit Talukdar (25), both residents of Balarajan in Bhawanipur, were returning home from Galia on an unregistered Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle. Near Galia on National Highway-27, their motorcycle was hit by a speeding truck, which fled the scene immediately after the collision.

Manoj Das died on the spot due to the impact, while Devajit Talukdar suffered serious injuries. He was initially given first aid at the Bhawanipur Community Health Centre and was later referred to Barpeta Medical College and Hospital for advanced treatment.

It is noteworthy that Manoj Das was the only son of Kapil Thakur. He was an active member of the Bhawanipur Regional Committee of the Assam Jatiyatibadi Yuva Chatra Parishad. He was also actively associated with P a h u m a r a Mahotsav, Club Nakshatra, and several other social organizations and community initiatives.

The untimely demise of the dedicated and energetic

Contd to Pg 11.

Guv visits Manohari Tea Estate; inaugurates Tea Tasting and Tourist Lounge

Guwahati, July 16: On the last leg of his two-day visit to Dibrugarh district, Assam Governor Shri L a k s h m a n Prasad Acharya, visited Manohari Tea Estate and interacted with tea garden workers, students of Manohari TE LP School and members of the estate community.

During the interaction, Governor Shri Acharya enquired about the various welfare measures and facilities being extended to

the tea garden community, also sought feedback from the workers regarding the welfare initiatives undertaken for their overall development and well-being.

Interacting with the students, the Governor distributed sweets among them and quizzed them about their studies and their interests. He further hoped that they would become successful citizens in the days to come.

Later,

Contd to Pg 11.

Entrepreneurship Development Programme under CMAAA 2.0 held at Morigaon

Achyut KR Nath, Morigaon, July 16: The District Industries and



Commerce Centre (DICC), Morigaon, organised an Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP)

Contd to Pg 11.

Cachar's Guardian Minister Krishnendu Paul and Minister Kaushik Rai review key infrastructure projects in Silchar

Silchar, July 16: Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Barak Valley Development, Hill Areas Development and Guardian Minister for Cachar, Krishnendu Paul along with Minister for Food, Public Distribution, Housing and Urban Affairs, Consumer Affairs and Cooperation, Kaushik Rai chaired a high-level review meeting at the new Conference Hall of the DC's Office here on Thursday. The meeting brought to-

gether senior officials of the ment (PHED) and other con-



cerned agencies to review the implementation, progress and timely completion of major

Contd to Pg 11.

Dr. Prakash Kotoky to Receive "Sivasagar Samaj Ratna" Award

Khairuddin Ahmed, Staff Reporter Sivasagar, July

16: Under the initiative of the Sivasagar District Committee of the Sanskritik Mahasabha Assam and with the cooperation of the people of S i v a s a g a r, preparations are underway to organize the 20th Central Cultural Festival this year, continuing the tradition of previous years. The festival will be held on Sat-



urday, July 25, at the Kali Prasad Memorial Auditorium located at K.P. Chariali in Sivasagar town. The event will encompass various programs, including floral tributes, an open session, felicitations, the release of a

Contd to Pg 11.

3 Railway Stations of NFR to be inaugurated

PM to Inaugurate 75 Redeveloped Amrit Stations Nationwide

Maligaon, July 16: The Prime Minister of India, Shri



Narendra Modi, on Friday, 17th July 2026, will virtually inaugurate the redeveloped Majbat Railway Station in Assam, Jalpaiguri Road & Halidibari Stations in West Bengal, mark-

ing a momentous occasion for the states and the Northeast region. This event stands out as a landmark in the national rollout of the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS), as the three stations becomes a part of the

Contd to Pg 11.

Massive Fire Breaks Out in Ojasastar Village of Sarupeta

NKMajhi, Correspondent, Manas (BTC), July 16: A devastating fire broke out in Ojasastar village under Sarupeta on Wednesday night, reducing two cowsheds to ashes. Several cattle were caught in the blaze, and a pregnant cow died after suffering severe burn injuries.

According to reports, the fire started at around 9:30 p.m. in the cowshed of local farmer Ajit Pathak due to an electrical short circuit. The flames spread rapidly and soon engulfed the nearby cowshed belonging to Dhanjit Pathak.

In the incident, the cowsheds of both Ajit Pathak and Dhanjit Pathak were completely destroyed. A large

Contd to Pg 11.

DC Nagaon Assesses Locked-down Chekoni Tea Estate; Assures Workers Of Government AID

Staff Reporter, Nagaon, July 16: In a major administrative move to address the ongoing livelihood crisis, Nagaon District Commissioner Devashish Sharma visited the locked-down Chekoni Tea Estate in Jakhalabandha Wednesday evening to personally assess the hardships faced by the plantation workers. Accompanied by Kaliabor Co-District Commissioner Raj Barua, the District Commissioner conducted a thorough ground inspection of the entire estate to understand how the sudden closure has disrupted the daily lives and survival of the daily-wage labourers previously employed there.

Bypassing formal bureaucratic protocols, the District Commissioner went directly to the residential quarters of

Contd to Pg 11.



Orang Girl's Mysterious Death in Guwahati Sparks Outrage, Family Alleges Murder

Tapan Sen Gupta, Correspondent, Orang, July 16: The mysterious death of a 22-year-old Girl from Orang under Udalguri District in Guwahati has sent shockwaves across Udalguri district, with the bereaved family and several social organisations alleging foul play and demanding a high-level investigation into the incident.

The deceased, Neha Saikia, a resident of No. 2 Saikia Chuburi under Orang Police Station, was employed at a Tanishq jewellery showroom in Guwahati. She was the only daughter of Moni Saikia and Dipti Saikia, an economically disadvantaged couple.

According to family members, Neha had moved to Guwahati nearly four years ago after discontinuing her graduation studies to support her family, as her father had been

Contd to Pg 11.



Tree Plantation Drive Organized by Brikshabandhu Samaj at Khejuritol

Sabir Ahmed Sivasagar, July 16: With the message of protecting nature and conserving the environment, Brikshabandhu Samaj, Namti Chariali, in collaboration with the Namti Press Club, organized a tree plantation drive today along the historic Kharikatiya Ali near Khejuritol. The programme was

Contd to Pg 11.



HARSHIT DECOR & INTERIOR

OUR GRAND SHOWROOM

YOUR DREAM HOME STARTS HERE. ALL YOUR NEEDS, ONE ROOF.

BATHWARE FITTING • SANITARY WARE
DOOR FITTING • LOUVERS • PLYWOOD
KITCHEN ITEMS • SUNMICA • WALL PANELS
GI PIPES • LAMINATE • PVC & UPVC
PAINTS • DECORATIVE PANELS
CUSTOM HANDLES • HARDWARE

PREMIUM BATHWARE & SANITARY

DESIGNER HANDLES & HARDWARE

CONTACT US:
Phone: 94351-48182, 78960-44934
Address: LOKHRA CHARIALI, NEAR SAWAGI PETROL PUMP, NH-37, GUWAHATI - 40
Gmail: harshitdecorinterior@gmail.com

Assam’s Fishermen Population Highlights Regional Disparities and Needs

Guwahati: India's fishermen population, as reported by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, stands at a robust 2,80,63,538, with Assam contributing significantly to this national tally, boasting a fishermen population of 25,24,106. This figure, revealed by Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on December 11, 2024, sheds light on the prominent role Assam plays in the nation’s fisheries sector, despite being landlocked. The data compiled in consultation with States and Union Territories (UTs) outlines the state-wise distribution of fishermen, showing that Assam's fishermen population is the result of its extensive river systems and reliance on inland fishing, a notable contrast to the coastal regions, where marine fishing plays a dominant role. The detailed state-wise breakdown indicates that the largest fishermen populations are found in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal, with Bihar alone reporting 60,27,375, while Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal follow with 39,00,005 and 32,36,261, respectively. In comparison, coastal states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh contribute substantial figures, with Tamil Nadu accounting for 12,83,751 and Andhra Pradesh 14,96,688. However, despite Assam being geographically distant from the coast, it stands as a significant contributor to the nation's fishing community, thanks to its rivers and vast inland water bodies, such as the Brahmaputra, which provide the ideal environment for the state's flourishing fishing industry. The report also highlights the Marine Fishing Regulation Acts (MFRAs) that coastal states and UTs have enforced to regulate fishing activities within their territorial waters up to 12 nautical miles, ensuring that mechanized fishing vessels are kept out of zones reserved for traditional fishermen using non-motorized and motorized boats. For instance, Gujarat has set aside zones up to nine nautical miles, while Goa restricts mechanized fishing to 2.7 nautical miles, with similar regulations in place across other coastal states such as Tamil Nadu and Odisha. While Assam, due to its lack of a coastline, does not face such marine-based regulations, it does rely heavily on riverine fishing regulations, which are tailored to protect the interests of traditional inland fishermen who form the backbone of the state's fishing industry. These regulations are designed to maintain balance in local ecosystems, prevent overfishing, and ensure the sustainability of fish stocks for future generations. Assam’s inland fishing sector is distinct, yet equally vital in terms of its contributions to the state's economy, food security, and cultural heritage. While the state’s fishermen population may not rival the coastal giants in sheer numbers, the fishing industry in Assam is an essential part of the state's agrarian-based economy, offering livelihoods to a large segment of the rural population. Furthermore, the state’s river systems are particularly important to the livelihoods of fishermen in regions like Barpeta, Kamrup, and Dhemaji, where the fertile floodplains of the Brahmaputra provide abundant fish resources. The inclusion of Assam’s fishermen population in the national tally highlights the need for region-specific policies that cater to the unique challenges faced by inland fishermen. These challenges include restricted access to modern fishing technologies, dependence on traditional fishing methods, and vulnerability to environmental changes such as floods, erosion, and pollution. For Assam’s fishing communities, these factors mean that targeted interventions—such as increased access to sustainable fishing gear, improved market linkages, and community-based conservation efforts—are crucial for ensuring long-term sustainability and resilience. In terms of national policy, the government has been making strides to promote inclusive growth within the fisheries sector, with programs such as the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) playing a key role in modernizing the fishing industry while ensuring inclusivity. These initiatives are designed to empower fishermen in Assam and other states, particularly through subsidies for modernizing equipment, training in sustainable fishing practices, and providing access to better infrastructure and markets. Despite these advancements, challenges remain, particularly in addressing the problem of overfishing and the depletion of fish stocks in Assam’s rivers. As Assam is largely dependent on freshwater fish, conservation of aquatic biodiversity is critical. The state has seen instances of environmental degradation due to unregulated fishing practices, pollu-

tion, and encroachments on water bodies. The government must therefore implement more stringent monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to safeguard Assam’s natural resources. Additionally, the role of women in Assam’s fisheries sector is noteworthy, as women are deeply involved in processing, marketing, and managing inland fishing operations. Policies aimed at empowering women in these areas will be crucial for promoting gender equality and ensuring that women’s contributions to the sector are fully recognized. While the state’s fishing communities face a range of challenges, they also present numerous opportunities for innovation and growth. For instance, Assam has the potential to expand its aquaculture industry, which could provide a sustainable alternative to wild-caught fish. This shift would not only contribute to the state’s food security but also reduce the pressure on wild fish stocks. Similarly, the promotion of eco-friendly fishing gear, the diversification of income sources for fishermen, and the development of value-added products such as smoked fish or fish-based snacks could open new markets and strengthen Assam’s position in the national fisheries industry. The state’s proximity to the North-East region also offers opportunities for cross-border trade, particularly with neighboring countries such as Bangladesh and Myanmar. To fully capitalize on these opportunities, the state needs to improve its connectivity and infrastructure for fisheries exports, including cold storage and transportation facilities, which would enhance the quality and shelf life of its fish products. Furthermore, the recognition of Assam’s fishermen population in the larger context of India’s fisheries sector provides an important opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on the unique characteristics of inland fishing and the pressing need for policies that reflect these realities. Ensuring the welfare of Assam’s fishermen requires collaboration between the central and state governments, local bodies, and civil society organizations. With appropriate investments, regulatory measures, and community-driven initiatives, Assam’s fishing communities can thrive in a rapidly changing world. In conclusion, while the challenges facing Assam’s fishermen are distinct from those of coastal states, the government’s commitment to sustainable fishing practices, the protection of traditional livelihoods, and the empowerment of local communities is critical in shaping the future of Assam’s fisheries sector. By addressing the specific needs of inland fishermen, promoting eco-friendly practices, and enhancing market access, Assam can continue to develop as a sustainable and resilient fisheries hub in the country. The growing recognition of the state's fishermen population not only highlights the importance of inland fishing but also reflects the government’s broader goals of promoting inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and environmental stewardship across the nation. This comprehensive approach will ensure that Assam’s fisheries sector remains a vital contributor to the state’s economy and the welfare of its people. Moreover, the government’s focus on regional disparities within the fisheries sector, as evidenced by the population data of fishermen, calls for an even more localized and tailored approach to development. For Assam, this means creating policies that cater to the distinctive needs of inland fishing, as opposed to the more widely recognized coastal fishing practices. The state’s inland water bodies, including the mighty Brahmaputra River, its tributaries, and wetlands, support a thriving fishery ecosystem, yet face increasing pressure from over-exploitation, pollution, and invasive species. Strengthening management practices and investing in the conservation of these freshwater ecosystems will be essential for maintaining the delicate balance between economic growth and ecological sustainability. Assam’s fishermen population is integral not only to the state’s economy but also to its rich cultural heritage. The tradition of fishing in Assam, rooted in the indigenous knowledge of the rivers and wetlands, is more than just a livelihood—it's a way of life. As such, policies that prioritize the preservation of traditional fishing methods while promoting modern and sustainable practices will go a long way in protecting the state’s unique cultural identity. The role of traditional fishing practices, which often use non-mechanized boats and eco-friendly techniques, aligns with the government’s broader vision for sustainable fisheries management. These methods not only ensure the sustainability of fish stocks but also uphold the cultural integrity of Assam’s fishing com-

munities. Furthermore, the state's fishermen face significant challenges related to market access, infrastructure, and post-harvest losses. Poor storage facilities, inadequate transportation networks, and limited access to markets restrict the full potential of Assam’s fishing sector. The state’s fisheries industry requires urgent attention in terms of infrastructure development, including modernizing fish markets, building cold storage facilities, and enhancing transportation systems to connect rural fishermen to urban markets more efficiently. The government’s initiatives, such as the PMMSY, are poised to address these issues by providing financial support for infrastructure improvements, facilitating access to new markets, and incentivizing the adoption of new technologies. Additionally, there is an urgent need for skill development programs that equip Assam’s fishermen with the necessary knowledge and expertise to tackle modern challenges. This includes training in sustainable fishing techniques, advanced aquaculture practices, and business skills for marketing and selling fish products. Educating the next generation of fishermen in Assam about the importance of conservation, biodiversity, and sustainable practices will be key to ensuring the future of the sector. As climate change accelerates, affecting water levels, fish habitats, and biodiversity, it will be crucial for Assam's fishermen to adapt to these changes. This requires not only training and education but also a robust system of support from the government and local agencies. In terms of women’s empowerment, it is essential to recognize the critical role women play in Assam’s fisheries sector, especially in post-harvest activities such as fish processing, marketing, and retail. Women in Assam are also key players in maintaining the local fishing culture, passing down knowledge about traditional practices and fish species. Ensuring that women have equal access to resources, training, and decision-making processes within the fishing sector will promote gender equality and drive the state’s fisheries industry forward.

Pulin das remembered on 12th death anniversary

Guwahati : The twelfth death anniversary of late Pulin Das, revered as the Krira Mohirooh of Assam, was observed with solemnity at a memorial meeting held on July 16,2026 at his residence on Lamb Road in Guwahati's Jorpuhkuripar locality The programme was organised by the Pulin Das Memorial Committee to honour the memory of the legendary figure, who made lasting contributions to the State's sporting landscape as a multi-faceted personality a noted sportsman, veteran organiser, pioneering sports journalist and Assam's first sports pensioner. late Pulin Das played a pivotal role in the formation of several key sports bodies in Assam, including the Assam Cricket Association, Assam Badminton Association, Assam Table Tennis Association, Assam Football Association, Guwahati Sports Association, and the Assam Sports Pensioners' Association. He also contributed significantly to the initiation of the historic Bordoloi Trophy football tournament. During the programme. Kalyan Kumar Das, secretary of the Pulin Das Memorial Committee, appealed to Assam chief minister I Liman-ta Biswa Sarma to institute a state-level award in the name of Pulin Das to recognise excellence in sports journalism and writing. The committee also urged the government to install a bust of the late icon at a prominent location in Guwahati.



PULIN DAS
1918 - 2014

PMMSY scheme transforms Assam's Fisheries Sector

Guwahati: In a significant boost to the fisheries sector in Assam, the Department of Fisheries, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, has approved substantial development projects as part of the ambitious Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). With a total outlay of Rs. 20,050 crore for a five-year period from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25, the PMMSY scheme aims to revolutionize the sector by improving fish production, reducing post-harvest losses, boosting exports, and creating millions of employment opportunities. As of FY 2024-25, proposals worth Rs. 20,864.29 crore have been approved across various states and Union Territories, including Assam, with a central share of Rs. 8,871.45 crore, according to the Annual Action Plans submitted by the states. Assam, which is among the key beneficiaries, has seen an allocation of Rs. 11,021.90 lakh in FY 2020-21, with Rs. 8,346.61 lakh sanctioned for the current financial year (2024-25). These funds are set to strengthen Assam's fisheries infrastructure, bolster aquaculture productivity, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities to local communities, especially along the state's extensive riverine coastline. One of the prominent initiatives under the PMMSY is the identification of 100 coastal fishermen villages nationwide as Climate Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages (CRCFVs), a move that holds particular importance for Assam's vulnerable coastal areas. This initiative focuses on building resilient infrastructure such as fish drying platforms, ice plants, cold storage units, and fish markets to ensure smooth post-harvest activities and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Assam’s fishery sector is set to benefit from these projects, which will diversify livelihood options for local fishermen, with seaweed farming, ornamental fish farming, and other sustainable aquaculture activities being incorporated into the development plan. The PMMSY scheme also targets significant increases in fish production, with a goal to raise output by 70 lakh metric tonnes by 2024-25, increase aquaculture productivity from the national average of 3 tonnes per hectare to 5 tonnes per hectare, and reduce post-harvest losses from 25% to around 10%. The expected outcomes of the PMMSY include the generation of approximately 55 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities across India, which will be crucial in regions like Assam, where the fishing community plays a vital role in the local economy.

The PMMSY scheme is also focused on raising per capita fish consumption, aiming to increase the national average from 5-6 kg to 12 kg by 2024-25. With the record fish production of 175.45 lakh tonnes in FY 2022-23, up from 141.64 lakh tonnes in FY 2019-20, and a significant increase in fisheries exports, which grew from Rs. 46,662.85 crore in FY 2019-20 to Rs. 60,524.89 crore in FY 2023-24, the sector is on an upward trajectory, which is expected to have positive spillover effects for Assam’s fisheries economy. The state is also contributing to the national growth in aquaculture productivity, which has risen to 4.7 tonnes per hectare, while post-harvest losses have been cut to 10-15%. As part of its commitment to promoting sustainable practices, the Ministry of Fisheries has made considerable investments in capacity building, with training programs designed to equip local fishers in Assam and other states with the necessary skills to adopt modern fishing techniques, sustainable aquaculture practices, and climate-resilient technologies. The PMMSY initiative is also stimulating private sector participation, encouraging entrepreneurial ventures in the fisheries sector, and contributing to the economic empowerment of the local fishing community. In Assam, the focus has been on improving the socio-economic conditions of fishers, ensuring they have access to modern resources, infrastructure, and technology, which will directly improve their standard of living. A particular emphasis has been placed on enhancing fisheries-related infrastructure, which will reduce the costs and inefficiencies traditionally associated with fishing operations. With better cold storage facilities, ice plants, and improved fishing markets, the state’s fishers will benefit from an improved value chain, resulting in higher profitability. The government is closely monitoring the progress of the PMMSY, working in collaboration with states and Union Territories to ensure that the funds are utilized effectively for the development of fisheries-related infrastructure, technology, and sustainable livelihood projects. Assam, which has a long history of traditional fishing, is now on

the verge of modernizing its fisheries sector through these transformative initiatives. The identification of CRCFVs, which includes regions affected by climate change, will go a long way in boosting the resilience of Assam's coastal villages. The vulnerability of these areas to extreme weather events, including floods and rising sea levels, has necessitated these targeted interventions. By building climate-resilient infrastructure and diversifying income sources, the PMMSY will enhance the long-term sustainability of the fishing industry in Assam. A key part of the PMMSY’s success lies in the multifaceted approach that includes strengthening the infrastructure, promoting sustainable aquaculture practices, and diversifying livelihoods through skill-building and entrepreneurial ventures. With continued investment, technological advancements, and a focus on climate-resilience, the fisheries sector in Assam is poised for significant growth. As the PMMSY continues to make strides toward its goals, the people of Assam can expect a more robust, sustainable, and resilient fishing industry, offering enhanced employment opportunities and contributing to the state's economic growth. The state’s fisheries sector will not only witness improved productivity and sustainability but will also become a crucial player in India’s broader vision of becoming a global leader in fisheries production and exports. The allocation of funds, the identification of CRCFVs, and the promotion of private investments in the sector are all part of a long-term strategy to transform Assam’s fisheries landscape. In the coming years, Assam is expected to see further improvements in its fisheries infrastructure, with modern facilities and technologies making the industry more profitable and sustainable. With the PMMSY scheme, Assam is moving toward a future where its fisheries sector is thriving, resilient to climate change, and providing stable livelihoods for generations to come.

Erection of Amrit Bagan project at Rabindranath Thakur Vishwavidyalya, Hojai

In order to shoulder social as well as ethical responsibilities and restore sustainable Ecological



balance Bharat Vikas Parishad, Assam Prant in Collaboration with Rabindranath Takhur Vishwavidyalaya,IQAC and RTPIC Cell,Hojai has organised a plantation drive in the name and style ‘Amrit Bagan’ at Bharat Tirtha Bhawan with Prof. Manabendra Dutta Choudhury, Vice-Chancellor,RTV in the chair. Dr. Kishore Kumar Baruah, Prantiya President,BVP,Assam Prant, Sri Bishwajyoti Dey, Regional Joint General Secretary, BVP, North East Region , Sri Nirmal Kanti Dey, Prantiya General Secretary, BVP, Assam and Prof. Sandeep Das , Bodoland University are also on the dais .

The meeting is inaugurated with lighting the lamp followed by paying floral tributes to the portrait of Bharatmata and Swamiji by the dignitaries on the dais. The national song is chanted by members of BVP, faculties of the University as well as scholars, students present in the meeting. The dignitaries present on the dais are felicitated. Anushka Choudhury delivered welcome speech.

Nirmal Kanti Dey has dilated exuberantly regarding Bharat Vikas Parishad. Bishwajyoti Dey asserted on Environment and steps that BVP has taken for sustainable development. He urged younger generation to come forward and make Bharat clean and green with a view to make Bharat’ Bishwaguru’ . Dr. Kishore Kumar Baruah has reiterated for skill development and self reliant project. In his summilous speech Vice-Chancellor has emphasised on social responsibility and the initiation of this university in man making and nation building. Prof. Sandeep Das has displayed a power

point presentation for his innovative and creative ideas on mushroom oriented byproducts. The whole programme has been exquisitely orchestrated by Suborna Pandit. Dr. Sandeep Ratna Chasi, Registrar of the university delivered a vote of thanks which is followed by the National Anthem.

Later on saplings of fruit bearing trees of about twenty five species and mostly grafted saplings are planted in both old and new campus. Twenty Medicinal saplings are mainly planted at old campus and more than one hundred grafted fruit bearing saplings as well as ornamental trees are planted at new campus. It is assumed that bludgeon will sprout by three years . A full fledged orchard blended of exotic and indigenous saplings will definitely act as an exemplary for the generation to come.

AFFIDAVIT

My actual & correct name is Elias Ahmed father: Hafizul Hoque and Mother: Sufiya Khatun which has been recorded in all official and non official documents, but my Mother name has been wrongly recorded in my HSLC Admit and Pass Certificate Sufia Begum and HS Admit and pass Certificate Sufia Begum As declared before the Notary public, Nagaon cout vide affidavit No-IN-AS49898736000504Y dated 15 July 2026. Sufia begum instead of Sufiya Khatun

Elias Ahmed
Father : Hafizul Hoque
Mother : Sufiya Khatun
Village: paramai bheti,
Po : Dagaon ,
Ps : juria
Pin : 782124
District : Nagaon

AFFIDAVIT

Vide an affidavit sworn before the Notary, Kokrajhar on 14/07/2026, I, MD. NAJMUS SAKIB TALUKDAR, S/O Zulfikar Ali Talukdar, R/ O Vill. Shimultapu No.2, P.O. Shimultapu, P.S. Gossaigaon, Dist. Kokrajhar, Assam, declare that due to a bona fide mistake, my father's name has been recorded as MD. ZULFIKAR ALI TALUKDAR instead of the correct name ZULFIKAR ALI TALUKDAR, and my mother's name as RASHIDA BIBI instead of the correct name RASHIDAKHATUN in my CBSE Class X (2020) and Class XII (2022) Admit Cards, Mark Sheets & Pass Certificates. Both names refer to the same persons.

AFFIDAVIT

I, NURBHANU KHATUN, W/o -Akbar Ali Sk, a resident of Vill-Ushatani, PO -Aminkata, PS - Gossaigaon, Dist- Kokrajhar, Assam do hereby solemnly affirmed and declared by an affidavit before the Notary public, Govt of Assam at Bilasipara on 11/07/2026 that My actual and correct name is NURBHANU KHATUN as per my Aadhaar card, PAN Card and other documents, But my name has been wrongly recorded in my SBI Bank Account vide A/C No. 31983411376 under Gossaigaon Branch as NURBHANU BIBI instead of NURBHANU KHATUN. That, NURBHANU KHATUN and NURBHANU BIBI are the same person having one identical person i.e. myself.

Acer, Intel and Infinity Learn introduce integrated Ecosystem for NEET CBT readiness

Bengaluru: As NEET transitions to a Computer-Based Test (CBT) format from 2027, Global Technology leaders Acer and Intel, along with Infinity Learn, one of India's leading learn-

ing students to prepare confidently for the future of competitive examinations. The integrated platform includes the Infinity Learn app, AI Mentor AINA, LIVE and recorded classes, curated study material, chapter-wise adaptive practice, mock tests and test series, detailed performance analytics with personalized improvement recommendations, and a NEET CBT simulation experience that closely replicates the expected examination environment. Sushma Boppana, CEO & Director, Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions & Founder, Infinity Learn, said: "For decades, NEET aspirants have prepared for a pen-and-paper examination. The transition to Computer-Based Testing marks a defining shift in India's competitive exam landscape, making digital readiness as important as academic preparation. At Sri Chaitanya and Infinity Learn, we believe preparing students for the future means equipping them with both academic excellence and digital confidence. As educators, it is our responsibility to help students embrace this change, and we're delighted to partner with Acer and Intel, who share our vision. Together, we are combining trusted technology, AI-powered learning and our proven NEET expertise to build a comprehensive CBT readiness ecosystem, ensuring every aspirant has the access, skills and confidence to succeed. "Harish Kohli, President & Managing Director, Acer India, said: "At Acer, we believe technology has the power to transform learning and unlock opportunities for millions of students. As competitive examinations increasingly move towards digital formats, access to the right technology & device becomes crucial to student success. Through this exceptional collaboration with Intel and Infinity Learn, we are enabling students with a reliable Intel-powered Acer Aspire laptop bundled with a comprehensive NEET preparation ecosystem that supports learning, assessment and continuous improvement. Together, we aim to equip students with both the technology and study material needed to excel in the next generation of competitive examinations."



ing platforms for competitive exam preparation, an initiative of Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions, have come together to create India's first integrated NEET Ready Ecosystem. As the first outcome of this collaboration, Acer, Intel and Infinity Learn unveiled India's First NEET Ready Laptop, equipping students with the technology, learning ecosystem and digital confidence required for the transition to NEET CBT. The collaboration brings together Acer's trusted Aspire series laptops, Intel's advanced computing technologies and Infinity Learn's AI-powered NEET preparation ecosystem, creating a first-of-its-kind solution that addresses one of India's emerging education challenges: ensuring every student is digitally ready for high-stakes computer-based examinations. Every year, more than 22 lakh students appear for

and digital confidence. With nearly 70% of NEET aspirants coming from Tier 2, Tier 3 and rural India, access to personal computing devices remains uneven. As students prepare for the shift to CBT, this partnership brings together trusted technology and proven NEET expertise to help them build confidence in both learning and digital test-taking. Designed to support student success in the transition to NEET CBT from 2027, the offering features Acer Aspire laptops powered by Intel processors, delivering the performance and capabilities students need for learning, practice and computer-based examinations. Pre-loaded with Infinity Learn's comprehensive NEET preparation ecosystem. Built as an all-in-one learning solution, it comes pre-loaded with Infinity Learn's comprehensive NEET preparation materials allow-

Ather to unveil mass-market EL platform scooter at Community Day 2026

Bengaluru: Ather Energy Limited, one of India's leading electric two-wheeler manufacturers, today announced that the fourth edition of its flagship community event, Ather Community Day, will be held on 29 August 2026 in Bengaluru. The theme for this year's event is "A New Dawn of Magic", where Ather will unveil the first scooter from its new EL platform, marking its entry into the mass-market scooter segment. Alongside the new scooter, Ather will introduce a range of innovations across technology, charging, and the ecosystem that will make the ownership experience more seamless and connected. The EL platform is Ather's next-generation vehicle architecture and the company's first all-new vehicle platform since the 450. Engineered from the ground up for greater versatility, scalability, and manufacturing efficiency, it will underpin Ather's future product portfolio across segments. The first scooter built on this platform marks a significant milestone for Ather, enabling the company to address the mass-market through the Rs. 1

lakh to Rs. 1.25 lakh price segment while expanding its total addressable market and opening the next chapter of growth. The Ather Community Day 2026 will bring together thousands of Ather owners, automotive and technology enthusiasts, and partners for a first look at the products, technologies, and experiences that Ather has been building. Over the last three years, Ather Community Day has evolved into one of India's most anticipated automotive and technology events. More than a product showcase, it has become Ather's platform for sharing its vision for the future, introducing new technologies, and bringing its community closer to the company's products and ideas. The 2025 edition, held on 30 August 2025, welcomed more than 4,000 attendees and saw the unveiling of the EL platform, the introduction of the Redux concept vehicle, Ather's next-generation fast-charging technology, and AtherStack 7.0, setting the foundation for the company's next phase of innovation. Ather Energy Limited (ATHERENERG | 544397 | INE0LEZ01016) is a

pioneer in the Indian electric two-wheeler ("E2W") market (CRISIL Report). Founded in 2013 by Tarun Mehta and Swapnil Jain, Ather designs and manufactures high-performance electric scooters. Ather launched its first electric scooter in 2018. Its current E2W portfolio consists of two distinct product lines: the Ather 450 series, focused on performance-oriented customers, and the Ather Rizta, a convenience-first family scooter line launched in 2024. Together, these product lines offer a total of 9 variants. Ather was the first two-wheeler OEM in India to establish a dedicated fast charging network, the Ather Grid, which is designed and built in India. Today, Ather operates the widest 2W fast charging network in the country. As of March 31, 2026, with a strong emphasis on R&D and innovation, Ather holds 326 registered trademarks, 271 registered designs, and 52 registered patents, along with pending applications for 120 trademarks, 40 designs, and 591 patents globally.

HPCL launches "HP Navya" on Instamart

Mumbai: Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), a Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise, today introduced HP Navya, its next-generation Composite LPG Cylinder brand, reaffirming its commitment to innovation and customer convenience. To enhance ease of access, HPCL has collaborated with Instamart, India's pioneering quick commerce platform, enabling customers to order HP Navya cylinders seamlessly through the platform. As customer expectations continue to evolve towards greater speed, convenience and digital accessibility, HPCL is leveraging innovative channels to make LPG more accessible than ever before. Through its partnership with Instamart, HPCL is enabling customers to seamlessly order HP Navya cylinders with the convenience of doorstep delivery. HP Navya represents HPCL's next-generation Composite LPG Cylinder designed for modern living. The 10 kg lightweight composite cylinder is easy to carry, safe, corrosion-free and features a translucent body that enables customers to conveniently monitor the gas level. Its compact, contemporary design makes it an ideal choice for apartments, small families, working professionals, students, and households looking for a convenient secondary LPG cylinder. The partnership combines HPCL's trusted LPG distribution network with Instamart's quick-commerce platform to deliver an enhanced customer experience while maintaining the highest standards of safety and reliability. Speaking on the occasion, Amit Garg, Director-Marketing, HPCL, said: "Customer needs are evolving, and HPCL is committed to provide innovative solutions to meet them. We are making LPG more accessible and convenient for Naya Bharat with focus on safety, trust and reliability that customers associate HP Gas with. HP Navya, our new Composite LPG Cylinder brand, reflects our commitment to delivering innovative energy solutions that make everyday life simpler and more convenient. Through the Instamart platform, we will be able to reach customers through a fast, convenient and

digitally enabled platform, making HP Navya Composite LPG Cylinders more accessible while enhancing the overall customer experience." Shri Amitesh Jha, CEO, Instamart, said: "Instamart has expanded its consumption use cases well beyond groceries to become part of everyday life. With HPCL, we're extending that convenience to an essential household service, bringing LPG onto Instamart while maintaining the safety and reliability standards consumers expect." The service will initially be launched as a pilot in Bengaluru. Thereafter, HPCL will progressively expand availability of HP Navya to other cities across the country. The launch of HP Navya reinforces HPCL's continued focus on innovation, digital transformation and customer-centricity. By combining trusted energy solutions with the speed and convenience of quick commerce, HPCL is redefining the LPG purchasing experience and making clean cooking fuel more accessible and trendy for customers across India.

ized investment thinking to India's next generation of wealth builders." Mr. Hiten Jain, Fund Manager, Invesco Mutual Fund further said, "In today's dynamic markets, alpha generation extends beyond simply riding the tide - it requires navigating both opportunity and risk. Conventional long-only funds can make money when stock prices go up. However, return generation within markets is inherently non-linear and characterized by periodic dislocations. Summit Equity Long-Short Fund is designed to capture both long and short opportunities enabling it to effectively capitalize on market volatility and evolving opportunities." The minimum investment amount during the NFO is Rs. 10,00,000/- and in multiples of Rs. 1/- thereafter.

Invesco Mutual Fund launches Summit Equity Long-Short Fund

Guwahati: Invesco Mutual Fund has announced its entry into Specialized Investment Fund (SIF) category under the brand name Summit SIF. Marking entry into SIF, it further announced launch of its first SIF investment strategy, the Summit Equity Long-Short Fund (An open ended equity investment strategy investing in listed equity and equity related instruments including limited short exposure in equity through derivative instruments). Summit Equity Long-Short Fund is designed to capture both directional upside through long positions and tactical downside opportunities through short positions. The strategy reflects the core philosophy of Summit SIF: adapting to market conditions while seeking alpha. This investment strategy will combine two distinct

strategies to deliver an edge to the portfolio: A directional long strategy driven by a bottom-up stock selection process anchored in Invesco Asset Management (India)'s categorization framework; A Tactical short position via derivatives aimed at capturing downside opportunities in stocks expected to underperform. The investment strategy will be managed by Mr. Hiten Jain and will be benchmarked to BSE 500 TRI. Speaking at the launch, Mr. Saurabh Nanavati, MD & CEO, Invesco Asset Management (India) Pvt. Ltd. said, "We are at an inflection point in Indian asset management. The SIF category gives experienced investors access to a level of portfolio flexibility that was previously the preserve of institutional capital. Summit SIF is our commitment to bringing special-

M/s Bimal Auto strengthens with New Ashok Leyland 3S Dealership at Dibrugarh

Guwahati: Ashok Leyland, the flagship company of the Hinduja Group and one of India's leading commercial vehicle manufacturers, today strengthened its presence



in Upper Assam with the inauguration of a new state-of-the-art 3S (Sales, Service and Spares) dealership at Dibrugarh in partnership with M/s Bimal Auto Commercial Pvt. Ltd. Spread across 40,000 sq. ft., the dealership is equipped with 10 modern service bays and has been developed to offer customers a complete range of sales, service and genuine spare parts under one roof. Strategically located, the facility will cater to customers from Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Dhemaji and Lakhimpur, improving accessibility to Ashok Leyland's products and after-sales services across Upper Assam. The dealership is equipped with advanced workshop infrastructure, including wheel alignment systems, pneumatic tools, accident repair facilities and mobile service support, enabling quicker turnaround times and higher vehicle uptime for customers. Speaking on the occasion, Ms.

Madhavi Deshmukh, National Sales Head, Ashok Leyland, said: "The North-East continues to be an important market for Ashok Leyland, and we remain committed to strengthening our customer support infrastructure across the region. The inauguration of our Dibrugarh dealership is another step towards providing customers with easier access to our products and world-class after-sales services. We are pleased to partner with Bimal Auto Commercial Pvt. Ltd. in this journey." Commenting on the inauguration, Mr. Rohit Sarawgi, Managing Director, M/s Bimal Auto Commercial Pvt. Ltd., said: "We are delighted to inaugurate the Ashok Leyland dealership at Dibrugarh. This facility has been established with modern infrastructure and skilled manpower to deliver a superior ownership experience to our customers. We are confident that it will strengthen commercial vehicle support across Upper Assam and contribute to the region's growing transportation needs." Ashok Leyland continues to expand one of India's largest commercial vehicle sales and service networks, ensuring customers have access to a wide portfolio of products, including the Ecomet range of Intermediate Commercial Vehicles, haulage trucks and tractor-trailers, all range of tippers, school bus, staff bus and route bus and supported by trained professionals and modern service infrastructure.

CM graces 35th JK Architect of the Year Awards in Guwahati

Guwahati: The 35th JK Architect of the Year Awards (JK AYA) Ceremony, organized by JK Cement Ltd., was successfully held on 15th July 2026 in Guwahati, Assam. The prestigious milestone ceremony brought together eminent architects, construction industry professionals, academicians, and government dignitaries, reaffirming JK AYA's position as one of India's most respected and enduring architectural award platforms. The evening was graced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma, as the Chief Guest. His presence added immense stature, regional pride, and inspiration to this landmark 35th-anniversary occasion. The ceremony was attended by senior leadership from JK Cement Ltd., including Dr. Nidhipati Singhania, Vice Chairman, Dr. Raghavpat Singhania, Managing Director, JK Cement Ltd. & Chairman - JK AYA and Mr. Rana Pratap Singh, Administrator - JK AYA. Renowned architects, AAA National Council members, government officials and design professionals from the North-east, across India, and abroad were also present. The program commenced with the welcome of the dignitaries followed by the traditional lamp-lighting ceremony, symbolizing knowledge, creativity, and progress. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Nidhipati Singhania emphasized JK Ce-

ment Ltd.'s 35-year commitment to architecture, nation-building, and sustainable development. A poignant highlight of the evening was a special retrospective honoring the awards' historic 35-year legacy and paying homage to the foundational vision of Late Shri Yadupati Singhania, whose ideals and leadership continue to inspire generations and guide the company's contribution to the architectural fraternity. Mr. Rana Pratap Singh, Administrator - JK AYA, expressed his sincere gratitude to the distinguished guests and the architectural community for their continued support. He also acknowledged the jury members and Professional Advisor Ar. Aiban S Mawkhroh Ji for their meticulous evaluation of entries, while thanking the local Guwahati organizing teams for the seamless execution of the ceremony. The event also featured an engaging Winning Entries Exhibition, which attracted keen interest from young architecture professionals and students from the region, offering valuable exposure to innovative, sustainable, and contemporary architectural thought. The landmark ceremony concluded with networking and dinner, marking a memorable evening celebrating architecture, legacy, and excellence in the Northeast.

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank launches Mutual Fund Distribution Services

Guwahati: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank recently launched its Mutual Fund distribution services, marking a significant milestone in the Bank's journey towards offering comprehensive banking solutions. This offering is designed to provide customers with a seamless and digitally enabled investment experience that is supported by curated fund options, simplified onboarding processes along with in-depth analytics for better financial planning. The platform offers easy onboarding with minimal customer input, multi-channel access through Internet Banking, Mobile Banking, and RM channel. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank has partnered with leading AMCs to offer customers a wide range of investment options. Commenting on the launch Mr. Hitendra Jha, Head of Retail Liabilities - TASC & TPP, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank said, "At Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, we are committed to empowering our customers with accessible and transparent wealth creation opportunities. The launch of our Mutual Fund distribution platform marks an important

milestone in our journey of providing comprehensive financial solutions. With a seamless digital experience, wide range of mutual fund offerings across channels, we aim to simplify investing and help customers make informed financial decisions aligned with their goals." Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Limited is a Scheduled Commercial Bank serving ~1 Cr+ customers through 776 branches across 335 districts in 26 states and Union Territories, supported by robust digital channels. The Bank offers a diversified portfolio spanning across Affordable Housing, MSME, Agri, Vehicle, Gold, Micro-Mortgage, FIG, and Microfinance (group and individual) loans. As of March 31, 2026, Ujjivan's gross loan book stood at Rs. 40,655 Cr, with deposits of Rs. 45,668 Cr and a Net worth of Rs. 6,816 Cr. The Bank is rated AA- (Stable) for long-term facilities and A1+ for short-term instruments by CARE Ratings and CRISIL, respectively, reflecting the sustained strength of the banks performance and balance sheet.

Amway launches Artistry Skin Nutrition multi-defense UV protect

Guwahati: Amway India, a leading company supporting health and wellbeing, has recently launched the Artistry Skin Nutrition Multi-Defense UV Protect, an advanced daily defense solution to support skin against modern environmental aggressors, enriched with the goodness of Nutrilite botanicals. The launch further strengthens the Artistry Skin Nutrition portfolio, which is thoughtfully designed to address evolving skincare needs through targeted, nutrition-inspired skincare so-

lutions that combine the goodness of nature with cutting-edge science for healthy looking skin. Speaking on the launch, Rajneesh Chopra, Managing Director, Amway India, said, "The Indian skincare landscape is evolving rapidly as consumers are increasingly becoming conscious of their skincare needs for which they seeking effective, science-backed, and thoughtfully formulated products. At Amway India, we are committed to deliver innovations that meet these evolving consumer needs."

Editorial



PMAY-G

A major beneficiaries’ convention under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana (PMAY-G) along with the state-level award distribution ceremony of the Maha Awas Abhiyan is set to be held in Satara district of Maharashtra, marking another significant step in the Government’s continued push toward rural housing development, infrastructure expansion and welfare-oriented governance aimed at improving the lives of economically weaker sections across rural India. The large-scale programme is expected to witness the presence of several prominent leaders including Union Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Sunetra Pawar, with the event being viewed as an important milestone in strengthening rural welfare delivery and accelerating the vision of providing pucca houses and modern infrastructure to every deserving family in villages. During the programme, five lakh newly constructed houses under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana will be formally handed over to beneficiaries across Maharashtra, symbolising the Government’s commitment to ensuring dignity, security and improved living standards for rural households. Keys of the newly built homes will also be symbolically handed over to six selected beneficiaries during the ceremony, reflecting the transformational impact of the scheme on families that previously lived in kutcha or inadequate housing conditions. The event is also expected to highlight the achievements of the Maha Awas Abhiyan, which has emerged as an important state-level initiative complementing the Centre’s rural housing mission by encouraging faster implementation, improved transparency and greater coordination among local administrative bodies. Officials associated with the programme said the convention would showcase the collective efforts of the Union and Maharashtra governments in strengthening rural development and ensuring that welfare benefits reach eligible citizens in a time-bound and transparent manner. The Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana has become one of the flagship rural welfare schemes of the Government, focusing on providing permanent housing equipped with basic amenities to economically disadvantaged families residing in villages and remote regions. Since its launch, the scheme has transformed the rural housing landscape by replacing temporary and unsafe dwellings with durable houses that provide beneficiaries with a sense of ownership, dignity and social empowerment. Government data indicate that nearly three crore houses have already been constructed across the country under the scheme, reflecting the scale and pace of implementation achieved over the years. The housing initiative has also generated employment opportunities in rural areas through construction activities, demand for local building materials and engagement of workers and self-help groups in associated development work. The scheme has further contributed to improving sanitation, access to electricity, drinking water connectivity and overall quality of life in villages, thereby supporting the broader vision of inclusive rural development. The Satara programme is expected to serve not only as a ceremonial distribution event but also as a platform to recognise the contribution of officials, local institutions and stakeholders who have played a role in successfully implementing rural housing and infrastructure projects across Maharashtra. Awards under the Maha Awas Abhiyan are likely to honour districts, local administrative units and officers who have demonstrated outstanding performance in achieving housing targets, maintaining transparency and ensuring timely completion of projects. The event assumes additional significance as Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is scheduled to announce approval of central assistance worth Rs 8,368 crore and 50 lakh for Maharashtra under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana for the financial year 2026-27, a move expected to further accelerate housing construction in rural areas of the state. The substantial financial assistance is likely to help Maharashtra expand the coverage of the scheme, clear pending targets and strengthen implementation capacity at the grassroots level. Rural development experts believe that sustained financial support from the Centre will play a critical role in ensuring that economically weaker households continue to benefit from secure housing and improved infrastructure facilities. The announcement is also expected to reinforce cooperative federalism by highlighting coordination between the Union and state governments in implementing welfare-oriented programmes aimed at social upliftment and economic empowerment of rural communities. Alongside housing initiatives, the programme will also witness approval for 35 road projects worth Rs 122 crore and 98 lakh under Phase Four of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, another flagship rural development programme focused on improving road connectivity in villages and remote habitations. These projects are expected to benefit 35 rural habitations in Maharashtra by improving access to transportation, healthcare services, educational institutions, agricultural markets and employment opportunities. Enhanced road connectivity has long been viewed as a key driver of rural economic growth because it strengthens mobility, facilitates trade and improves delivery of public services. Officials stated that the new projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana would help bridge infrastructure gaps in underserved areas while promoting balanced regional development. Better roads are also expected to support farmers by enabling smoother transportation of agricultural produce to markets and reducing logistical challenges faced by rural communities.

China’s rise, America’s fear: No escaping the Thucydides Trap

It was the rise of Athens and the fear that rise engendered in Sparta that made war inevitable — History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides, Greek General and historian.

Thucydides writes in his book that the 27-year war between Athens and Sparta, which lasted from 431 to 404 BCE, was inevitable because Sparta (the traditional superpower) feared the rise of Athenian power.

In 2017, American political scientist Graham Tillet Allison Jr. wrote in his book *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’s Trap?* that China’s rise could lead to a war with the US. “For seven decades since World War II, a rules-based framework led by Washington has defined world order, producing an era without war among great powers. Most people now think of this as normal.” Today, according to Allison, “an increasingly powerful China is unravelling this long period of peace, throwing into question the peace that the past two to three generations have taken for granted”. In an essay for the *Financial Times* in 2012, Allison coined the term “Thucydides Trap”, a situation in which a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power. In the book, he writes: “As a rapidly ascending China challenges America’s accustomed predominance, these two nations risk falling into a deadly trap first identified by the ancient Greek historian Thucydides.” The US and China are “on a collision course for war—unless both parties take difficult and painful actions to avert it”. Allison mentioned 16 cases in which a rising and an established power faced the trap, of which 12 ended in a war. Allison’s warning haunted the Xi Jinping-Donald Trump summit when the Chinese president asked at Beijing’s Great Hall of the People, “Can China and the United States overcome the Thucydides Trap and create a new paradigm of major country relations?”

Xi’s mention of the Thucydides Trap, the first time in his seventh meeting with Trump, clearly showed that China is America’s biggest challenge—and Athenian China won’t hesitate to take on the Spartan US.

Xi didn’t challenge Trump openly but made it clear that either both nations resolve their differences amicably or risk confrontation. Xi’s statement was the Sun Tzu style of masterclass diplomacy—offer a chance to your adversary to retreat. In *The Art of War*, Chinese General, strategist and philosopher Sun writes: “Build your opponent a golden bridge to retreat across.”

Xi also said that “the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” and “Make America Great Again (MAGA)” could coexist.

Xi might have offered a bridge to Trump, but the reality is diametrically opposite.

Great Rejuvenation vs MAGA

Neither “the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” and MAGA can coexist nor can both nations overcome the Thucydides Trap. In fact, the “Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” and the Thucydides Trap are intertwined. Both Washington and Beijing are trapped in a massive power struggle in which only one can emerge as the winner. Trump might have taken his MAGA base for a ride with his unachievable dream of a unipolar world where only the US rules. However, America can’t be great again with the Communist Party of China’s (CPC) core vision of “the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” and Xi’s “Chinese Dream” intact. Similarly, the US, especially MAGA, is the biggest hurdle in Xi’s mission of “Make China Great Again”. The slogan “the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation” was coined by the late Chinese President Jiang Zemin, the first Paramount Leader to revolutionise China’s military, in 2001. The “Great Rejuvenation”, a historical and ideological goal, aims to strengthen China’s economy, military and technology, and to restore its global influence by 2049, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China. Xi’s “Chinese Dream” is the modern and personal version of the “great rejuvenation”. Both are used interchangeably by the CPC. A nation can’t aspire to be a superpower unless its economy, technology and military are the strongest. Therefore, the Chinese Dream isn’t only about economic and technological advancement; it’s also about becoming the most powerful military. On the other hand, MAGA wants “America First” in every sphere—economic, technological and military might.

In a 2017 interview with *The Washington Post*, Trump said, “To me, it [MAGA] meant jobs. It meant industry, and meant military strength. ... it meant so much.” Economically, MAGA advocates aggressive US trade protectionism to the point of economic coercion to protect domestic industries, businesses and workers from foreign competition.

Trump’s unlawful tariff war was the best example of economic pressure on US trading partners. China took the biggest beating. Trump slapped 145 per cent tariffs on China, which retaliated by imposing 125 per cent duties on US goods and restricting rare earths exports. In technology, the US, rattled by China’s rapid advancement in artificial intelli-

gence (AI), has restricted cutting-edge AI chips to Beijing. These chips play a critical role in processing Large Language Models. The share of American firms, such as NVIDIA (Blackwell chips), in the global market for graphics processing units is around 90 per cent, dominating from electronic design automation (EDA), used to design circuits, to the architecture powering advanced neural networks. Xi believes that “chips are as important for manufacturing as hearts are for humans” and semiconductor sovereignty is critical for China to become a superpower. However, China lacks cutting-edge EDA tools to improve and upgrade semiconductors and advanced lithography machines required to design cutting-edge chips. Militarily, China is the biggest threat to the US in the Western Pacific, especially the South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS), and the Indo-Pacific, particularly Taiwan. China claims around 90 per cent of the SCS and 60 per cent of the ECS. Both seas contain massive unexplored energy reserves. Per US Geological Survey estimates, the SCS contains 2.4-9.2 billion barrels of petroleum, around 216 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas, cobalt and rare earths. According to the US Energy Information Administration, the ECS holds around 60-100 million barrels of oil in proven and probable reserves and 1-2 Tcf of proven and probable natural gas reserves. The US doesn’t claim these seas unlike China and others—Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei in the SCS, and Japan, Taiwan and South Korea in the ECS. However, the vast untapped hydrocarbon resources are a gold mine for the US, which regularly conducts freedom of navigation operations in these seas to contest the illegal Chinese claims. Besides, the US has defence pacts with Japan and the Philippines. These US actions have not only riled China but also are a big hurdle to its unbridled ambition to be the only superpower.

Every Time US Acts, China Retaliates

Every time the US exerts pressure, China retaliates.

The US imports more from China than it exports with electrical machinery and electronic equipment accounting for around 28 per cent (\$120 billion) of all imports. In 2025, the US goods trade with China totalled an estimated \$414.7 billion—imports were \$308.4 billion and exports \$106.3 billion, a trade deficit of \$202.1 billion. When the US slapped tariffs on China and restricted access to cutting-edge chips, Beijing retaliated with restricting the rare earth exports. China not only produces almost 70 per cent of rare earths—a group of 17 metals used in electronic products, electric vehicles, energy systems and military applications—but also accounts for 90 per cent of the rare earth processing, separation and magnet production. In 2025, the US imported around 10.4 million kg valued at \$107 million from China, 71 per cent of total US rare earth imports. After China restricted rare earth exports, the US had to sign a deal eliminating curbs on American EDA companies sending technology to the country. In return, China relaxed some export controls on antimony, gallium and germanium. In the contested seas, according to the Department of Defense, Chinese warplanes conducted dangerous manoeuvres close to US fighter and reconnaissance planes and strategic bombers around 200 times in 2021-23. In August 2022, China unilaterally suspended military communication, including theatre commander-level phone calls and the China-US Military Maritime Safety Consultation Mechanism (MMCA), with the US to protest then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan. Military communication was restored in November 2023. Gaining military superiority has an extremely important role in China’s “Great Rejuvenation”. The 2015 Defence White Paper states that the PLA take its “dream of making the military strong as part of the Chinese Dream”.

“Without a strong military, a country can be neither safe nor strong.”

A 2025 White Paper, “China’s National Security in the New Era”, states the same objective.

Taiwan Part of China’s Great Rejuvenation

Economic and technological tit-for-tat aside, the most dangerous aspect of China-US relations is Taiwan. Reunification with Taiwan is an integral part of the “Great Rejuvenation”, and Xi hasn’t ruled out military force in the “unavoidable” process. The 2015 Defence White Paper states that reunification with Taiwan “is an inevitable trend in the course of national rejuvenation”. The 2019 Defence White Paper also mentions that “to solve the Taiwan question and achieve complete reunification of the country is in the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation and essential to realising national rejuvenation”. Allison’s warning in his book sounded ominous at the summit as Xi, in his starkest and bluntest warning yet to the US regarding Taiwan, told Trump to back off. Behind closed doors, Xi told Trump during a 2-hour, 15-minute meeting that the “Taiwan question is the most important issue in China-US rela-

tions”, Chinese state media reported. “If mishandled, the two nations could collide or even come into conflict, pushing the entire China-US relationship into a highly perilous situation,” the Chinese leader said. On the other hand, the US is bound by the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act to provide “defence articles and defence services” to Taiwan. The president is also bound to inform Congress if threats to Taiwan pose any danger to the United States interests. Subsequently, the president and Congress “shall determine the appropriate action in response to any such danger”. The Act doesn’t specify whether the US will intervene militarily if China attacks Taiwan. Even the idea of or any discussion about American intervention is anathema to China. A day after then-President Joe Biden said in Japan on May 23, 2022, that the US would militarily intervene if China tries to annex the island country by force, a furious Beijing warned America to be “cautious in words and deeds”. The White House immediately denied any change in its ‘Once China’ policy. Trump, who has maintained strategic ambiguity on military assistance to Taiwan in a conflict with China, told reporters while returning from the summit that Xi doesn’t want a war over Taiwan. When Xi asked whether the US would intervene in a conflict with Taiwan, Trump claimed to have replied, “I don’t talk about that.” After approving an arms package worth \$11 billion for Taiwan in December, Trump hasn’t approved a second package worth around \$14 billion. “I will make a determination over the next fairly short period,” he said when asked about the package.

Trump’s most significant comment on Taiwan on board the Air Force One was, “The last thing we need right now is a war that’s 9,500 miles away.”

Clearly, Trump got Xi’s warning on Taiwan. Moreover, several wargames have shown that the US would lose to China in a war over Taiwan with its military bases and Carrier Strike Groups in the Indo-Pacific attacked by Chinese ballistic missiles.

US Threat to China’s Ambitions

Beijing wants to dislodge the US from its position of global stewardship—and the Iran War is an opportune moment. Trump’s cavalier and dangerous attitude has dragged West Asia to the precipice. China exploited the war to gain a tactical advantage over the US in diplomatic, informational, military and economic spheres, according to a confidential US intelligence analysis. China has sold arms to America’s Persian Gulf allies as they faced barages of Iranian missiles and drones. China has also offered its green energy technology to several countries, including Thailand, Australia and the Philippines, to avert future oil crises caused by conflicts. China also minutely studied and learned from the US and Iranian battlefield tactics, attacks and counterattacks and how a nation militarily inferior to the US managed to withstand its massive firepower and retaliate devastatingly. China wants to lead a “turbulent” world, but the US is the biggest threat and obstacle to its global ambitions. The 2025 White Paper highlights China’s global ambitions of being a force for maintaining “world peace and stability” and injecting “reliable stability into a turbulent world”, especially in the Asia-Pacific. On the other hand, the document criticises the US, without naming it, for “hegemonism, power politics, Cold War mentality, bullying, exploitation and zero-sum games” which are “causing profound harm”. “Some major powers are disregarding their international responsibilities, withdrawing from treaties and international organisations, and undermining global stability. ... Populism and extreme political ideologies are on the rise.” On the economic front, the paper blames the US for “unilateralism and protectionism” as “some countries are imposing tariffs on other countries for non-economic reasons, disrupting the global economic order”. China also mentions how the Global South has profoundly readjusted the international balance of power and is “playing an increasingly important role in promoting world peace and cooperating to address global challenges”.

The paper specifically mentions how the US is responsible for destabilising Asia-Pacific. “The Asia-Pacific region has become a focal point of great power rivalry. Some countries are strengthening their military alliances in the Asia-Pacific, courting regional allies, building exclusive small blocs, and insisting on advancing military deployments, including intermediate-range missile systems, severely exacerbating regional tensions”. The accuses the US of “blatantly interfering in China’s internal affairs” by playing the “Taiwan card” and stirring up trouble in the Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea and the East China Sea”. The document praises China for always standing on the right side of history and “stabilising an uncertain world with its own certainty”. A US-China war might not be inevitable, but both countries are trapped in a vicious struggle for power and dominance—there’s no escaping the Thucydides Trap.

Aninda Dey

"Suchita Toyota" New Dealership inaugurated at Maligaon in Guwahati

Guwahati: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) today announced the launch of its new dealership Suchita Toyota in Guwahati, expanding its retail presence in the state of Assam. The new dealership represents a strategic step in the company's continued efforts to enhance customer accessibility, reinforce cus-



tomers trust and effectively address the region's evolving mobility aspirations and requirements. The new facility was inaugurated by Mr. Sachin Sharma, Vice President – East Region, Sales-Service-Used Car, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, along with Mr. Raghupati Bhuwalka, Dealer Principal, Suchita Toyota. Situated at Maligaon Guwahati, the new facility is spread across 19,000sq.ft and offers comprehensive end-to-end 3S (Sales, Service, and Spares) operations. Backed by a highly trained team the dealership is equipped to deliver a seamless customer experience in line with Toyota's global standards. The facility also features Toyota U-Trust, providing customers with a trusted platform for the purchase, sale, and exchange of pre-owned vehicles, further enhancing convenience and ownership satisfaction. Speaking on the occasion Mr. Sachin Sharma, Vice President – East Region, Sales-Service-Used Car, Toyota Kirloskar Motor said, "We are pleased to welcome Suchita

Toyota to the Toyota family. The inauguration of this new facility in Guwahati marks an important step in further enhancing our presence in the Northeast region, a market with significant growth potential. As we continue to expand, our focus remains on developing a robust and future-ready network that is well-equipped to support sustainable growth while delivering a superior and consistent Toyota ownership experience to our customers." Commenting on the inauguration, Mr. Raghupati Bhuwalka, Dealer Principal, Suchita Toyota, said, "Our partnership with Toyota Kirloskar Motor represents a pivotal milestone in our commitment to delivering a customer-centric automotive experience. Aligned with Toyota's global benchmarks of quality, reliability and transparency, this facility is designed to foster trust, enhance convenience and build enduring customer relationships. We look forward to serving customers in Guwahati with a seamless and rewarding ownership journey." The new facility will retail Toyota's entire product portfolio, including the latest Urban Cruiser Ebella, All-New Camry and Urban Cruiser Taisor, along with established models such as the New Innova Crysta, Innova Hycross, Fortuner Legend, Hilux, Glanza, Urban Cruiser Hyryder and Rumion, as well as premium offerings like the LC300 and Vellfire. With the inauguration of this facility, Toyota further strengthens its network in Assam with 34 customer touchpoints across the state. This expansion aligns with Toyota's commitment to expanding its customer-centric network and delivering a seamless ownership journey through trusted products, transparent processes and quality service.

Satradhikar Janardan Dev Goswami graces Sri Ram Katha training valedictory ceremony

Guwahati: The valedictory ceremony of the Sri Ram Katha Training Programme, organised by Shree Hari Satsang Samiti, Purvottar, was held with great devotion, spirituality and religious fervour at the GMCH Auditorium, Bhangagarh, in the sacred presence of Satradhikar Prabhu Janardan Dev Goswami of Uttar Kamalabari Satra, Majuli. The august presence of Satradhikar Prabhu Janardan Dev Goswami, who attended the programme as the Special Guest, added immense spiritual significance to the occasion. The ceremony was also attended by Mahamandaleshwar Keshav Das Maharaj of North Guwahati, ISKCON Guwahati President Janardan Das, Samiti President Kailash Lohia, Working President Binod Kayal, Margdarshak Arun Kumar Bajaj, General Secretary Balkishan Poddar, Ramavatar Bharatia, Anand Poddar and Organisation Secretary Pramod Rajbanshi. The programme commenced with Mangalacharan and the ceremonial lighting of the lamp. The welcome address was delivered by Working President Binod Kayal. Addressing the gathering, Samiti Chairman Kailash Lohia said that Shri Ram Katha is not merely a religious discourse but a powerful medium for preserving Indian culture, moral values and the spirit of selfless service. He urged all the trained Kathavachaks to play an active role in promoting religion, culture and ethical values in society. He also congratulated Ajit Kumar Jana on being elected as the MLA from the Dantan Assembly Constituency of West Bengal. Speaking on the occasion, Margdarshak Arun Kumar Bajaj highlighted the achievements of the Samiti over the past year. He informed that the trained women Kathavachaks have successfully conducted more than 4,000 Shri Ram Katha programmes and over 5,500 Satsang programmes. He further stated that the Samiti's Rath has carried out various religious programmes in more than 200 villages. In addition, the organisation has

been actively working in over 2,000 villages across the North Eastern region, making a significant contribution towards social and national development. On the occasion, newly elected MLA from Dantan Assembly Constituency, West Bengal, Ajit Kumar Jana was felici-

tradition of Shri Ram Katha as an invaluable heritage of Indian culture, he urged the trained Kathavachaks to spread the ideals of Lord Shri Ram to every section of society. Mahamandaleshwar Keshav Das Maharaj and ISKCON Guwahati President Janardan



tated. Mahesh Beria was also honoured for providing space for the Shree Hari Satsang Samiti office in Jorhat and for his valuable contribution to the growth of the organisation. The Samiti also felicitated outstanding Kathavachaks for their exceptional performance during 2025–26. Sumi Kishan was honoured as the Best Kathavachak, Richa Payeng for conducting the highest number of Shri Ram Katha programmes, Junali Bora for her active contribution to the Samiti, Gayatri Rabidas for programme management, and Jitumoni Dahatiya under the "Paravartan" category. Delivering his blessings, Satradhikar Prabhu Janardan Dev Goswami said that Shri Ram Katha inspires people to follow the path of truth, discipline, morality and selfless service. Describing the

Das also appreciated the religious and social initiatives undertaken by Shri Hari Satsang Samiti, Purvottar, for the welfare of society and described the organisation as a source of inspiration for the community. Earlier, during the inaugural cultural segment of the programme, the trained Kathavachaks showcased their talents and reaffirmed their commitment to spreading the ideals and values of Shri Ram Katha throughout society. Priya and Archana Kashyap presented soulful devotional bhajans that created a deeply spiritual atmosphere. Trained Kathavachika Kamala Munda delivered an inspiring discourse on Shri Ram Katha, while Damayanti Rabha and Nirmala Chimiya shared their training experiences and expressed heartfelt gratitude towards the Samiti.

adidas celebrates football, culture and community through landmark Mizoram Exhibition Match

Mizoram : adidas India brought its FIFA World Cup 2026 celebrations to Mizoram by partnering with the Mizoram Football Association and hosting a special evening that fused football with the state's music, dance and sporting culture at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium, Aizawl, one of India's highest and most iconic stadiums. The evening opened with a live performance by Mendal, followed by a traditional Cheraw (bamboo dance) performance – celebrating the state's cultural heritage. This was followed by two matches that were kicked off by the Chief Minister of Mizoram, Mr. Lalduhoma. The first between the state's A-listers, from musicians and artists to YouTubers and fashion creators, people from all walks competing on one field. The second between elite athletes and India's top footballers, all played using TRIONDA, the official match ball of the FIFA World Cup 2026. The evening closed with a performance by Lilac, followed by a presentation ceremony. Marking the occasion, the brand also released a short film capturing the emotion, passion and everyday spirit of football in Mizoram – a tribute to a state where the game runs deeper than sport, set against the backdrop of the FIFA World Cup 2026. As the Official Partner of FIFA, adidas has been celebrating the World Cup and connecting with its fans across India through digital takeovers of FIFA's

official channels, a first-of-its-kind Spotify Megahit Mix integration, and bold OOH and DOOH executions in key markets. The brand has also brought the tournament closer to the football community through the adidas Creators League and immersive retail experiences featuring football installations, gaming zones and interactive product activations. Mizoram marks

to celebrate a community that has long embodied the spirit of the game. Through this, we wanted to tell an authentic story of a region where football is part of everyday life and create experiences that bring fans, culture and the game closer together. We have been working to make football a truly immersive experience for Indian fans at every level, and



Mizoram is the most authentic expression of that belief." Adding to the excitement, Mr. Lalreng Puia, Honorary Secretary of Mizoram Football Association said, "Football has always been at the heart of Mizoram, shaping communities and creating opportunities for young talent across the state. Seeing a global sports brand celebrate our clubs, our traditions and our people on a national stage is a proud moment for Mizoram. Initiatives like this not only shine a spotlight on our football ecosystem but also encourage greater investment in grassroots football and inspire the next generation to dream bigger." As the excitement of the FIFA World Cup 2026 continues to inspire millions across the globe, adidas remains committed to celebrating the communities that keep the spirit of football alive every day. Through stories like Mizoram's, the brand continues to champion football culture in India by creating experiences that connect local passion with the global game.

the most personal chapter of this celebration yet, bringing the World Cup home to a state where football is a way of life. Speaking on the initiative, Bhawna Sikka, Senior Director brand, adidas India said, "Football isn't just played in Mizoram, but it is lived every single day. The passion that exists here makes it one of the most inspiring football communities in the country. As the world comes together to celebrate the FIFA World Cup 2026, we wanted

age greater investment in grassroots football and inspire the next generation to dream bigger." As the excitement of the FIFA World Cup 2026 continues to inspire millions across the globe, adidas remains committed to celebrating the communities that keep the spirit of football alive every day. Through stories like Mizoram's, the brand continues to champion football culture in India by creating experiences that connect local passion with the global game.

Vinayak Distributors celebrates 26 years of trust with grand anniversary sale

Guwahati: Celebrating over two decades of excellence, Vinayak Distributors, one of Northeast India's most trusted names in premium hardware and home interior solutions, has announced its Grand Anniversary Sale, offering discounts of up to 80% on selected products for a limited period. Located at Dr B.K. Kakati Road, near Ulubari Flyover, Guwahati, the company's sprawling 10,000 sq. ft. showroom showcases an extensive range of premium products, including architectural hardware, modular kitchens, kitchen appliances, modular wardrobes, sliding partitions, laminates, decorative panels, digital locks, door hardware, and other interior solutions. The showroom has become a preferred destination for homeowners, architects, interior designers, builders, and developers seeking quality products under one roof. The anniversary celebration is a tribute to the unwavering trust and support of customers who have been part of Vinayak Distributors' remarkable journey since its inception in 2000. Announcing the special anniversary campaign, Mr. Pawan Sureka, Proprietor of Vinayak Distributors, said, "Our journey over the last 25 years has been built on one simple principle—customer satisfaction. We have always believed that selling a product is just the beginning of a long-term relationship. Our commitment

to quality, prompt service, and dependable after-sales support has helped us earn the confidence of thousands of customers across Assam and the Northeast. This anniversary sale is our way of thanking them for their continued trust and loyalty." As part of the celebration, customers can avail discounts of up to 80% on selected products, including kitchen appliances, digital locks, door locks, premium hardware accessories, and other exclusive items. The offer is valid for a limited period and is expected to attract homeowners as well as professionals involved in residential and commercial projects. Over the years, Vinayak Distributors has earned a strong reputation for delivering premium-quality products backed by reliable after-sales service, quick customer response, and expert product guidance. These values have made the company one of the most preferred names in the hardware and interior solutions industry. Customers are invited to visit the showroom and experience the latest innovations in home interiors while taking advantage of the exclusive anniversary offers. With its continued focus on quality, innovation, and customer-centric service, Vinayak Distributors remains committed to enhancing modern living spaces and setting new benchmarks in the industry.

Assam young entrepreneur honoured at National Fish Farmers Day in Bhubaneswar

Guwahati: Bhargav Kr. Bhagawati, a fisheries entrepreneur from Assam, was felicitated at the ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar, on the occasion of the 26th National Fish Farmers' Day, celebrated across the country on July 10. ICAR-CIFA is India's premier institute in the field of freshwater aquaculture, and receiving recognition from this prestigious institution is considered a significant honour. Bhargav is a promising young entrepreneur whose hard work, dedication, and commitment have created a meaningful impact on society. After leaving a multinational company, he joined his family's fisheries enterprise in 2013 with a vision to expand and modernize the business. His father, Biren Bhagawati, is a renowned fish farmer in Assam who has inspired and mentored thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs to take up fisheries as a sustainable livelihood. Under Bhargav's leadership, Pabhoi Fish Farm has emerged as one of the leading aquaculture training and fish seed production centres in Northeast India. The farm has trained more than 10,000 youths through various hands-on training and capacity-building programmes. Besides producing quality Indian Major Carp (IMC) seed, the farm is also engaged in the breeding and production of several high-value indigenous fish species, including Padma, Gulsha, Chital,

and others. The consistent production of quality fish seed has earned the trust of farmers across the region. Today, Pabhoi Fish Farm supplies fish seed not only throughout Assam and the Northeast but also to several other parts of India. Bhargav has been actively collaborating with several premier research and academic institutions, including ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (ICAR-CIFA), Bhubaneswar; ICAR-Directorate of Coldwater Fisheries Research (ICAR-DCFR), Bhimtal; ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Education (ICAR-CIFE), Mumbai; Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) across Assam and the Northeast; College of Fisheries, Raha; College of Fisheries, Tripura; agricultural universities; and several colleges and educational institutions. He has also been invited by numerous government departments, universities, research institutes, and training organizations to share his expertise in aquaculture and motivate farmers, students, and young entrepreneurs. His continuous efforts to promote scientific aquaculture and encourage rural youth towards self-employment have made a remarkable contribution to rural livelihood generation and entrepreneurship development. The recognition bestowed upon him by ICAR-CIFA is a testament to his dedication, innovation, and sustained contribution to the development of the fisheries sector in India.

Centre announces Rs 8500 crore for West Bengal rural growth push

New Delhi: Giving a major push to rural development, agriculture and infrastructure in West Bengal, the Union Government has announced a comprehensive package aimed at strengthening village economies, improving livelihoods, expanding employment opportunities and accelerating the execution of key development projects across the state. Union Agriculture and Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan chaired a high-level review meeting in Kolkata with senior representatives of the West Bengal Government, including Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari, members of the state cabinet and top officials from both the Central and State Governments, to assess the progress of development programmes and identify measures for faster implementation. The meeting reflected the Centre's emphasis on cooperative governance and coordinated planning to ensure that development initiatives reach every district and village in the state. During the review, the Union Minister announced that the Central Government has approved more than Rs 8,500 crore for rural development activities in West Bengal. Combined with the State Government's contribution, the total expenditure through Panchayati Raj institutions is expected to exceed Rs 12,000 crore by March next year. The financial support is expected to strengthen local governance, improve rural infrastructure and enhance the delivery of welfare programmes in villages. Panchayats will play a central role in implementing development projects, ensuring that resources are directed towards community priorities such as roads, drinking water, sanitation, irrigation, housing, livelihood generation and social infrastructure. The announcement marks one of the largest allocations for rural development in the state and highlights the Centre's commitment to empowering local bodies as engines of grassroots growth. A major focus of the review meeting was employment generation in rural areas. The Union Minister said the government is working towards increasing guaranteed rural employment from 100 days to 125 days, providing greater income security to rural households and creating additional opportunities for wage employment. The expanded employment framework is proposed under the provisions of the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, with a renewed emphasis on creating durable community assets rather than only temporary works. The objective is to ensure that public investment generates long-term benefits through the construction of irrigation systems, rural roads, water conservation structures, agricultural infrastructure and other productive assets that support economic activity. Such projects are expected to improve

farm productivity, strengthen resilience against climate-related challenges and create sustainable sources of income for rural communities. Officials said the new framework seeks to combine employment generation with infrastructure creation, thereby delivering multiple benefits to villages across the state. Agriculture remained another key area of discussion during the meeting, with the Union Minister outlining a broad strategy to improve farm incomes and strengthen the agricultural economy of West Bengal. The Centre plans to promote crop diversification so that farmers can reduce dependence on a limited number of crops and adopt more profitable cultivation patterns suited to local agro-climatic conditions. Diversification into horticulture, pulses, oilseeds and high-value crops is expected to improve income stability while also enhancing food and nutritional security. The review also emphasised expanding the coverage of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana to ensure that more farmers receive insurance protection against crop losses caused by natural calamities, extreme weather events and other unforeseen circumstances. Strengthening the reach of the Kisan Credit Card scheme was also identified as a priority to improve farmers' access to affordable institutional credit and reduce dependence on informal sources of borrowing. Greater financial inclusion through timely credit support is expected to enable farmers to invest in quality seeds, fertilisers, farm machinery and modern agricultural practices. The Union Minister also stressed the importance of promoting natural farming as a sustainable alternative capable of reducing cultivation costs, improving soil health and enhancing environmental sustainability. The meeting reviewed initiatives to encourage farmers to adopt eco-friendly farming methods that minimise chemical inputs while maintaining productivity. Alongside natural farming, the Centre highlighted the role of Digital Agritech in transforming agriculture through technology-driven solutions. Digital platforms, satellite-based monitoring, precision agriculture, mobile advisory services and data-driven decision-making are expected to improve productivity, optimise resource use and help farmers access markets, weather information and government services more efficiently. Nutrition enhancement programmes linked with agriculture also formed part of the discussions, recognising the importance of promoting diversified food production to improve dietary outcomes and public health. Beyond agriculture and rural development, the review meeting undertook a detailed assessment of 19 major infrastructure projects with a combined investment exceeding Rs 82,000 crore. These

projects span multiple sectors, including national highways, railways, metro rail systems, petroleum and natural gas infrastructure, coal production and labour-related initiatives. The projects are expected to improve connectivity, facilitate industrial growth, generate employment and strengthen logistics across West Bengal. Officials reviewed the status of each project and identified challenges affecting implementation. Particular attention was given to issues relating to land acquisition, rehabilitation of affected families, forest clearances and coordination among various government departments. The Union Minister directed officials to resolve bottlenecks in a time-bound manner so that projects can be completed without unnecessary delays. Timely completion of these infrastructure initiatives is expected to enhance transport efficiency, reduce travel time, support industrial investment and improve access to markets for farmers and businesses. Strong infrastructure is also viewed as essential for attracting private investment, creating employment opportunities and supporting long-term economic growth. To improve coordination and monitoring, the Union Minister proposed the establishment of a State-level Project Monitoring Group. The proposed mechanism would bring together officials from different departments to regularly review project progress, identify implementation challenges and facilitate quick decision-making. Such an institutional framework is expected to improve accountability, strengthen inter-departmental coordination and ensure that administrative hurdles are addressed promptly. Effective monitoring has increasingly become a priority in large infrastructure projects, where delays often lead to cost escalation and slower economic benefits. By creating a dedicated monitoring structure, both the Centre and the State aim to accelerate project execution and maximise the impact of public investment. The meeting also reflected the importance of co-operative federalism in achieving development goals. The Union Minister emphasised that sustained progress requires close collaboration between the Central and State Governments, with both sides working together to address administrative challenges and deliver better outcomes for citizens. Development initiatives in agriculture, rural infrastructure, employment generation and public services require coordinated planning, financial support and efficient implementation across multiple levels of government. The review highlighted the need for continuous dialogue between departments and institutions to ensure that policies translate into measurable improvements on the ground. Strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions was identified as another important objective.

98th Chess Grandmaster

New Delhi: India's remarkable rise as a global chess powerhouse reached another significant milestone with 17-year-old Aswath S from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari district becoming the country's 98th Grandmaster, strengthening the nation's growing reputation in the sport and bringing India one step closer to the landmark of producing 100 Grandmasters. The young chess player secured the prestigious title after achieving his final Grandmaster norm at the 2026 Pune International Grandmaster Round Robin tournament, where he displayed exceptional composure, determination and fighting spirit under pressure. His achievement has been celebrated across the Indian chess fraternity as yet another example of the country's rapidly expanding talent pool that continues to make its presence felt on the international stage. Aswath's success reflects years of disciplined preparation, consistent performances in international competitions and the growing strength of India's chess ecosystem, which has produced world-class players at an unprecedented pace over the last decade. The teenager entered the final round of the Pune event knowing that only a victory would keep his Grandmaster dream alive. Facing USA's FIDE Master Kannan Vaidyanathan with the black pieces, Aswath produced a confident and mature performance, overcoming the pressure of the occasion to register the decisive win that completed all formal requirements for the coveted Grandmaster title. The victory marked the culmination of years of hard work and determination, making him the 98th Indian to earn the highest title awarded by the International Chess Federation (FIDE). The Grandmaster title is regarded as one of the greatest honours in chess and requires players to achieve three Grandmaster norms in high-level tournaments while maintaining a FIDE rating of at least 2500 at some stage of their career. Aswath had already crossed the rating requirement earlier and entered the Pune competition needing only one final norm to complete the journey. His performance in the tournament proved worthy of the occasion as he finished with seven points from nine rounds, registering six victories, two draws and just one defeat to finish runner-up in a highly competitive field. The only setback in his campaign came against experienced Indian Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta during the early stages of the tournament. Rather than allowing that defeat to derail his campaign, Aswath displayed remarkable resilience by regrouping quickly and producing a series of strong performances in the remaining rounds. His impressive

comeback demonstrated not only his technical strength but also the mental toughness required to compete at the highest level of international chess. The final-round victory was especially memorable because of the immense pressure surrounding the game. Playing with the black pieces, generally considered slightly more challenging due to White's first-move advantage, Aswath maintained his composure throughout the contest and capitalised on his opportunities with precision to secure the all-important full point. Before achieving his final norm in Pune, Aswath had steadily built his credentials through impressive performances in prestigious international tournaments. His first Grandmaster norm came at the Grenke Open in Germany last year, where he demonstrated his ability to compete successfully against experienced international players. Later, he earned his second norm during the renowned First Saturday GM Round Robin tournament in Budapest in December. It was during that event that he also crossed the crucial 2500 FIDE rating mark, leaving only one final norm between him and the coveted Grandmaster title. With the Pune success, he completed that journey in emphatic fashion. India's emergence as one of the world's leading chess nations has been fuelled by a new generation of exceptionally talented young players who have consistently delivered strong performances in global tournaments. Inspired by the achievements of former World Champion Viswanathan Anand, countless young Indians have embraced chess with remarkable enthusiasm. Anand's historic accomplishments transformed the sport in the country by inspiring thousands of children to pursue professional chess careers, while improved coaching facilities, stronger domestic tournaments and greater institutional support have created an environment in which young talent can flourish. The result has been a steady stream of international titles and impressive performances from Indian players across every age category. Over recent years, Indian chess has witnessed extraordinary success through teenage stars who have challenged the world's strongest players and captured prestigious international titles. The country has emerged as a dominant force in youth chess, producing players capable of competing against the very best before reaching adulthood. This remarkable depth has enabled India to become one of the fastest-growing chess nations in the world, with young Grandmasters consistently representing the country at major international championships.

India UK trade deal starts new era for growth

New Delhi: India and the United Kingdom have entered a new phase of economic partnership with the implementation of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Double Contribution Convention (DCC), marking one of the most significant milestones in bilateral relations between the two countries. The simultaneous enforcement of these landmark agreements is expected to transform trade, investment, services, employment and professional mobility while strengthening the strategic partnership between two of the world's leading economies. The agreements represent years of negotiations and reflect a shared vision to create a modern, balanced and future-ready framework for economic cooperation that benefits businesses, workers, consumers and investors alike. With CETA coming into force, Indian exporters now receive zero-duty access on 99 per cent of tariff lines in the United Kingdom, opening one of the world's most valuable consumer markets to a vast range of Indian products. The elimination of tariffs across nearly all product categories is expected to substantially increase India's export competitiveness while providing a strong boost to manufacturing, agriculture, fisheries, textiles, engineering, pharmaceuticals, leather, gems and jewellery, food processing and several other labour-intensive industries. The agreement also signals India's growing confidence as a major participant in global trade and demonstrates its commitment to expanding economic engagement with trusted international partners through comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade arrangements. Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal described the agreement as a defining moment in India's trade journey, stating that it establishes a future-oriented economic partnership capable of supporting long-term economic growth, innovation and investment. According to him, the agreement marks the beginning of a new chapter in bilateral trade and investment relations by creating an enabling environment that reduces both tariff and non-tariff barriers while encouraging deeper commercial engagement between businesses from both countries. He noted that CETA is among India's most comprehensive trade agreements, offering broad sectoral coverage and ensuring balanced gains for both economies while preserving India's developmental priorities and safeguarding sensitive sectors. One of the most important features of the agreement is the complete elimination of customs duties on a wide range of Indian products entering the UK market. Processed food products that earlier attracted tariffs of up to 70 per cent will now enjoy duty-free access, significantly improving their competitiveness. Marine products, which previously faced duties exceeding 21 per cent, engineering goods and automobile components that attracted tariffs of around 18 per cent, leather and footwear products facing duties up to 16 per cent, and textiles and garments that carried tariffs of around 12 per cent will all benefit from zero-duty treatment. These reductions are expected to make Indian products more affordable and attractive for British consumers while allowing exporters to expand market share and improve profitability. The agreement is expected to generate fresh demand across multiple sectors, leading to higher production, increased exports and greater employment opportunities throughout India. Labour-intensive industries stand to gain substantially as expanded exports create new jobs in manufacturing clusters, industrial parks and rural production centres. Farmers cultivating fruits, vegetables, spices and processed food ingredients are likely to benefit from improved export opportunities. Fishermen and seafood exporters are expected to access larger markets with greater price competitiveness. Small and medium enterprises, which form the backbone of India's manufacturing ecosystem, are also expected to benefit from easier market access and improved integration into

international supply chains. The agreement therefore extends beyond large corporations and has been designed to create opportunities across different sections of society, making economic growth more inclusive and broad-based. Equally significant is the implementation of the Double Contribution Convention, which addresses a long-standing concern of Indian professionals and businesses operating in the United Kingdom. Under the DCC, eligible Indian workers on temporary assignments in the UK will be exempt from making social security contributions there for the specified duration while continuing to contribute to India's social security system wherever applicable. This provision removes the burden of dual social security payments that previously increased the cost of overseas assignments for both employees and employers. By eliminating duplicate contributions, the agreement enhances the competitiveness of Indian companies providing professional and technical services in the UK while increasing the attractiveness of Indian talent for British businesses. The DCC is expected to benefit professionals working across information technology, engineering, financial services, healthcare, consulting, research, education and several other knowledge-intensive sectors. It supports the growing mobility of highly skilled Indian professionals while making cross-border assignments more efficient and economically viable. Companies sending employees to the United Kingdom for short-term projects will experience lower operational costs, enabling them to bid more competitively for international contracts and expand their global presence. The measure also reflects mutual recognition of the importance of skilled workforce mobility in strengthening economic ties between advanced service-oriented economies. Beyond tariff reductions, the trade agreement creates a comprehensive framework for expanding bilateral investment and commercial cooperation. Businesses from both countries are expected to benefit from improved market access, greater regulatory transparency and more predictable trade rules. The agreement encourages deeper participation in global value chains by facilitating smoother movement of goods, services and investments. Indian manufacturers will have greater opportunities to integrate with British supply networks while UK companies can expand their engagement with India's rapidly growing market. Enhanced cooperation across sectors such as technology, clean energy, financial services, digital trade, education, innovation and advanced manufacturing is expected to generate long-term economic benefits for both countries. The implementation of the agreement also aligns with India's broader economic strategy of strengthening exports, improving manufacturing competitiveness and expanding its global trade footprint. As India seeks to become a leading manufacturing and export hub under initiatives such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, comprehensive trade agreements play an increasingly important role in providing market access for Indian products and services. The United Kingdom represents one of India's most important trading partners, offering a large, high-income consumer market with strong demand for quality products across multiple sectors. Duty-free access significantly improves India's position against competing exporting nations while enabling Indian businesses to diversify export destinations and reduce dependence on a limited number of markets. The agreement carefully balances trade liberalisation with the protection of India's sensitive sectors. During negotiations, India ensured that critical agricultural and food sectors remained safeguarded against excessive import competition. Dairy products, cereals, millets, edible oils, oilseeds, apples and several vegetable products continue to receive ap-

propriate protection under the agreement. This balanced approach reflects India's commitment to protecting farmers and rural livelihoods while pursuing greater integration with the global economy. By preserving policy space in sensitive areas and expanding opportunities in competitive sectors, the agreement seeks to maximise national economic gains without compromising domestic interests. Industry bodies have welcomed the implementation of the agreement, viewing it as a catalyst for expanding exports, attracting investment and creating employment. Exporters expect faster business growth due to lower costs, improved market access and stronger buyer confidence in the UK. Manufacturers anticipate greater production as demand increases across sectors benefiting from tariff elimination. Service providers see enhanced opportunities arising from easier professional mobility and reduced compliance costs under the DCC. The combined effect of these measures is expected to strengthen India's position as a reliable supplier of high-quality goods and professional services in international markets. The agreement also reflects the evolution of India-UK relations beyond traditional trade. Over the years, both countries have expanded cooperation across defence, education, technology, healthcare, climate action, innovation and people-to-people exchanges. Economic partnership now forms a central pillar of this strategic relationship. The successful implementation of CETA and DCC demonstrates the shared commitment of both governments to creating practical mechanisms that deliver measurable benefits for businesses and citizens. It also reinforces confidence among investors by providing a stable and predictable framework for future economic engagement. For Indian consumers, stronger trade ties may eventually contribute to greater product variety, improved quality standards and increased investment in manufacturing and services. For businesses, reduced trade barriers create incentives to innovate, improve productivity and expand international operations. Enhanced collaboration between industries in both countries is expected to accelerate technology transfer, research partnerships and skill development while promoting sustainable economic growth. The agreement is also likely to encourage greater collaboration among universities, research institutions and innovation ecosystems, supporting the development of future technologies and knowledge-based industries. As global supply chains continue to evolve, India's expanding network of trade agreements strengthens its role as an increasingly important participant in international commerce. The implementation of CETA demonstrates India's ability to negotiate balanced agreements that protect national interests while creating new opportunities for economic expansion. By combining market access with safeguards for sensitive sectors and by supporting skilled workforce mobility through the Double Contribution Convention, the agreement provides a comprehensive platform for stronger bilateral engagement. It reflects India's growing economic confidence and its determination to deepen partnerships with trusted nations based on mutual benefit, shared prosperity and long-term strategic cooperation. With duty-free access covering almost the entire range of Indian exports to the United Kingdom, significant relief for professionals through the social security arrangement, and expanded opportunities for businesses, farmers, manufacturers, exporters and service providers, the simultaneous enforcement of CETA and DCC marks the beginning of a new era in India-UK economic relations, positioning both countries to unlock greater trade, investment, innovation, employment and sustainable growth in the years ahead.

Everyone’s obsessed with stronger glutes – here’s how they can help ease knee and back pain

I am convinced that we are living in the age of the posterior. And by that, I am referring to the current obsession that people have with their buttocks – specifically, attempts to achieve the round, juicy rear popularised by the



Kardashians, booty-boosting leggings brands and influencers deadlifting their ways to more followers. If you're wondering why there's now a wait for the hip thrust machine at the gym, the increased interest in gluteal workouts might be reflecting changing ideas about health, beauty and identity, said Choo Jia Yi, a senior physiotherapist with National University Hospital's Department of Rehabilitation. "There may be a change in preference for strong and athletic looks," she said. The shift shouldn't be gender-specific either. Long before the pivot in aesthetics, Choo added, physiotherapists, trainers and health professionals have long emphasised the glutes' roles in posture, lower-limb alignment and back health – attributes you don't have to be female to covet. There's also the performance side, said Benson Poh, the founder and a personal trainer at Vigeo Personal Training. "Strength and conditioning coaches have always understood that the glutes are central to power output, force transfer, and athletic movement. Sprinting, jumping, changing direction does not work well without strong glutes." Even if you have no wish to build a better booty to pad up your jeans, there are some very good reasons for paying attention to your rear: knee pain and lower back aches. Find out how.

HOW DOES A WEAK REAR CAUSE KNEE AND BACK PAIN?

The gluteal muscles – consisting mainly of the gluteus maximus, gluteus medius and gluteus minimus – account for around 16 per cent to 18 per cent of your total skeletal muscle mass, said Choo. Together, they play some very important mobility functions. "Strong gluteal muscles are essential for stable, pain free and efficient movement," she said. "They support posture, protect the knees and lower back, and power everyday activities like walking and climbing stairs." For example, the glutes are responsible for preventing your knees from rolling inwards as you walk, squat or climb the stairs. When your glutes are weak and cannot control the inward roll, extra stress is placed on the knee-cap and surrounding tissues, said Choo. Over time, this is what leads to knee pain. Poor glute activation can just as well mess up the hip. When the hip joints are not evenly activated or loaded, smaller stabilising muscles in the hip have to work overtime, which can progressively irritate the tendons or joint structures, Choo

warned. Weak glutes are also the culprits for reducing your hip's extension power, the very movement your body needs to sprint, jump or simply transition from sitting to standing. As a result, "the lower back muscles compensate to generate movement; this leads to over-use and tension in the lower back," said Choo.

WOULDN'T WALKING AND CLIMBING THE STAIRS ALREADY WORK THE GLUTES?

"Most everyday activities don't challenge the glutes enough to make them stronger," said Choo. "Walking, casual running, and stair climbing are low load, repetitive activities. Once your body gets used to them, the glutes do the minimum work needed, not enough to stimulate strength gains." For glute muscles to strengthen, she said, they need resistance, progressive load and intentional activation. Everyday activities usually lack deep-hip flexion, external resistance, and slower, controlled movements. "That's why targeted exercises such as squats, lunges and hip hinges are more effective for glute strength," she said. Age is another obstacle, according to Poh. "As you get older, muscles naturally decline in both size and strength. That decline accelerates if you're not actively training it," he said. "Everyday activities might maintain a baseline level of glute function but they won't reverse decline or build the reserve of strength you need as you age."

DOES GROWING A BIGGER REAR MEAN YOU HAVE STRONGER GLUTES?

Growing a butt for aesthetics and building one for functional purposes can't be done in exactly the same way, said Poh. When you're training for a fuller, rounder rear, the primary goal is to increase muscle size. "You want exercises that are stable enough to allow you to load the glutes heavily and create high levels of tension within the muscle fibres. Think hip thrusts with heavy weights and machine-based isolation work. The stress needs to be high and consistent, so that the muscles respond by growing," he said. Functional training is a different ballgame. "Functionally strong glute muscles need to do multiple things simultaneously: produce power to accelerate movement, decelerate movement to control load, and stabilise the pelvis during complex patterns. It needs to time its firing correctly and coordinate with the hamstrings, core and lower body as a whole." But there are instances when the two training modules can overlap. "Say you're moving well functionally, your glutes are firing and your pelvis is stable but your glutes are simply weak," Poh explained. "In that case, you can absolutely borrow from the aesthetic playbook and use heavier, more isolated loading to build strength." Conversely, functional exercises, when done well, can also introduce significant stress to the glutes and drive aesthetic improvement, he said. "Aesthetic-focused exercises, when they build genuine strength, can carry over into better movement quality and function." At the end of the day, Poh summed up, it's about understanding what you need and choosing how to apply the exercises.

WHAT ARE THE BEST EXERCISES FOR THE GLUTES?

Poh listed the following five exercises that are

great to "improve strength, muscle growth and train the movement of how the glutes function in everyday life" – along with their common mistakes and cues to get them right. The hip thrust, he highlighted, veers more towards aesthetics than function as the movement doesn't exactly replicate how the glutes move when you're standing or walking. "But it maximises tension in the glutes in an isolated manner. There is also research that shows hip thrusts can improve sprinting."

1. Deadlift

Cues: Push the hips back first, keep a neutral spine, and feel the stretch through the glutes and hamstrings as the weight descends. The drive comes from the hips, not the lower back. Mistakes: Rounding the back to lower the bar instead of hinging at the hips, which means bending at the hips while maintaining a neutral spine and keeping a slight bend in the knees. The second mistake is keeping the knees too straight. When that happens, the hamstrings take over as the primary mover and the glutes become a passenger. You need enough knee bend early in the movement, so the glutes can load properly and drive the lift.

2. B-stance deadlift

Cues: The pelvis needs to stay square and face downward throughout the movement. In this position, the glutes will have to work hard to both control the hinge and stabilise the hips. Keep 80 per cent to 90 per cent of your weight on the front leg. The rear foot should only have enough pressure to keep you from falling over. Mistakes: Same as the deadlift but with an added mistake: letting the pelvis rotate open (not seen in the video). When the hip of the lifted leg turns outward, the glute of the working leg can no longer stretch properly or stabilise the movement. The other common mistake is resting the entire rear foot on the floor. This causes you to rely on it too much for support, which ruins the unilateral or single-leg benefit of the exercise.

3. Hip thrust

Cues: Keep the toes pointing forward or slightly outwards, tuck the hips in and slow lift the butt off the floor. When lifted, the feet should be below the knees. Mistakes: Hyper-extending the lower back at the top of the movement. When that happens, the lower back is doing the work instead of the glutes. The second issue is foot placement. Feet that are too far forward or too far back change the position of the glutes, where they can't fire effectively. At the top of the movement, the pelvis should be neutral – not tilted forward – and the glutes should be fully contracted. If you feel it more in your lower back than your glutes, the setup needs adjusting.

4. Step ups

Cue: Drive through the heel of the front foot, control the descent, and feel the glutes of the working leg doing the work in both directions.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor Strengthens Large-Scale Ecological Restoration at Bannerghatta Biological Park

Handover of the 10-hectare Herbivore Safari park area which has undergone ecological restoration with native sapling plantation

Bengaluru, July 16: Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) handed over to the Zoo Authority of Karnataka an Ecological Restoration Project of 10 hectares in the Herbivore Safari Zone of Bannerghatta Biological Park. The initiative is in line with the TKM's Harmony with Nature – Green Wave projects and is part of Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER) commitment towards biodiversity conservation and environmental sustainability.

The project was handed over in the presence of Mr. A V Surya Sen IFS, Executive Director, Bannerghatta Biological Park, Mr. A Ramesh Rao, Vice President, External Affairs, Senior leadership from TKM and other officials from the Bannerghatta Biological Park.

The project involved scientific weed removal and afforestation with native saplings to restore ecological balance, enhance habitat quality and promote biodiversity. The initiative is also expected to improve forage availability for herbivore species within the park, contributing to overall wildlife well-being.

Given the presence of herbivores within the safari zone, protective measures are implemented to ensure the survival of young plantations. Solar fencing is installed around the restoration area to prevent grazing on newly planted saplings. This system will remain in place for approximately two years, allowing adequate time for the saplings to mature to a stage where they can withstand natural grazing pressure.

To further strengthen the sustainability of the initiative, the project includes the installation of a borewell supported by solar-powered pumping system. This renewable-energy-based irrigation solution will ensure a reliable water supply, particularly during dry seasons, improving sapling survival rates and supporting healthy growth.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. A V Surya Sen IFS, Executive Director, Bannerghatta Biological Park said, "Public-private partnerships play a crucial role in strengthening conservation efforts across Karnataka. This initiative by Toyota Kirloskar Motor demonstrates how the industry can actively contribute to restoring ecosystems and enhancing wildlife habitats. The integration of renewable energy solutions further reflects a responsible and sustainable approach to environmental stewardship."

Sangeet Natak Accademic awardee Prema Oja Barbayan honoured with 'Kusilaba-2026' by MSSV

Achyut KR Nath, Our Correspondent, Morigaon July 16: The Sankari Sangeet Vidyalaya, Morigaon (SSV) honoured Sangeet Natak Accademic awardee Prema Oja Barbayan, Natun Kamalabari Satra, Majuli with the "Kusilaba-2026" award on the occasion of its annual function held at Pabitora Hut, Morigaon on Thursday. The president of Srimanta



Sankardev Sangha, Morigaon Atul Ch. Das, the Secretary of Srimanta Sankardev Sangha, Morigaon Santa Narayan Deka, the president of SSV Gyanmuhan Deka, the principal of SSV Prasanna Kr. Medhi, social worker Sajidur Rahman and Mantu Kr. Nath honoured Sangeet Natak Accademic awardee Prema Oja Barbayan, Natun Kamalabari Satra, Majuli with the "Kusilaba-2026" award. Speaking on the occasion Prema Oja Barbayan said 'I was upbrought in the Kamala Satra when I was a six years old'. 'My parents always fascinated with the satra's culture. Due to which they inspired me to have a devotee of satra which I took wholeheartedly. I always worked hard to reach my goal. God always helped me and I was conferred with Sangeet Natak Accademic award on the bless of God.' Earlier Prema Oja Barbayan was honoured with a traditional gamusa, a token of SSV, a seleng, a momento of SSV, a citation and Rs. five thousand.

Sivasagar Sub-Divisional Primary Teachers' Association Holds 50th Biennial Conference; New Executive Committee Formed

Khairuddin Ahmed Staff Reporter Sivasagar July 16: The 50th Biennial Conference of the Sivasagar Sub-Divisional Primary Teachers' Association, affiliated with the Assam State Primary Teachers' Association, concluded successfully with a day-long programme at the Teachers' Bhawan on the historic bank of Borpukhuri in Sivasagar.

Founded in 1949, the Sivasagar Sub-Divisional Primary Teachers' Association has a distinguished history. The district has also produced leaders who have served as General Secretary of the Assam State Primary Teachers' Association. The conference concluded late at night after all constitutional and organizational procedures were completed. The programme began with a cleanliness drive at 7:30 a.m., followed by flag hoisting, floral tributes, tree plantation, lighting of the ceremonial lamp before the portrait of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, delegate registration, two sessions of the delegates' meeting, and an open session. The association's president, Brajen Das, hoisted the flag, while General Secretary Ranjit Gogoi paid floral tributes. Tree plantation was carried out by All India member Dipankar Konwar and Joint Secretary Indrajit Borgohain, who also delivered the welcome address. The first delegates' session was inaugurated by Utpal Kumar Baruah, Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sivasagar Sub-Division. Addressing the delegates, he emphasized that imparting value-based education should remain the organization's foremost objective. He also stated that organizations like the Primary Teachers' Association have a significant responsibility in guiding society towards discipline and moral values. The open session and the prize distribution ceremony for the Talent Search Examination were held thereafter under the chairmanship of Brajen Das, with Indrajit Borgohain conducting the proceedings. Meritorious students were felicitated with book sets and certificates of appreciation, while office bearers and invited guests were honoured with traditional Assamese gamosas and mementoes.

The keynote speaker, retired teacher and writer Shamsul Bari, delivered a lecture on "The Present Condition of Primary Schools in Sivasagar District and the Way Forward." He presented data on the number of primary schools and single-teacher schools in the district and recommended the appointment of fourth-grade staff in every primary school. Among the guests, Devajyoti Gogoi, Assistant Inspector of Schools, Charaideo District, praised the efficiency and activities of the Sivasagar Sub-Divisional Primary Teachers' Association. Greetings were also delivered by Narnath Gohain, Block Elementary Education Officer (Dimow); Rinti Dihingia, Block Elementary Education Officer (Khelua); and Parashar Saikia, Block Elementary Education Officer (Amguri).

The second delegates' session was inaugurated by former association president Bimal Bora, who wished the organization continued success and urged the new committee to work more actively. Tridip Baruah, Vice-President of the Assam State Primary Teachers' Association, attended as the election observer. Subsequently, elections were conducted for the new executive committee for the 2026–2028 term. Candidates submitted nomination forms as per the constitutional provisions. Voting was held only for the posts of General Secretary and Treasurer.

For the post of General Secretary, Ranjit Gogoi defeated Pulin Kalita by 53 votes, securing 103 votes against Kalita's 50 votes. For the post of Treasurer, Pratap Lochan Gogoi defeated Diparanjan Phukan by 42 votes, polling 98 votes compared to 56 votes secured by Phukan. For the post of President, both Swarup Borgohain and former president Haren Sharma filed nominations. However, Haren Sharma voluntarily withdrew his nomination, resulting in Swarup Borgohain being elected unopposed as President. The following office bearers were also elected unopposed: Vice-Presidents: Ranjuma Gogoi, Bikash Kumar Bora, Abdul Mustak Joint Secretaries: Dharmendra Chetia, Indrajit Borgohain, Manoranjan Tay, Fazrul Islam Bora

Joint Secretary (Women): Moni Chetia
Assistant Secretaries: Anjali Saikia, Ramen Phukan, Dulal Chandra Dutta
State Members: Ratul Dutta, Dipankar Konwar State Woman Member: Minati Dihingia Information and Publicity Secretary: Firoz Ahmed The conference was attended by several distinguished guests, including Anjali Baruah Phukan, Vice-President of the Assam State Primary Teachers' Association; former association president Prafulla Neog; State Joint Secretary Shailendra Kalita; social worker Bijumoni Dutta; social activist Amlan Jyoti Gogoi; Prakash Nath, President of the Nazira Sub-Divisional Primary Teachers' Association; and Rajen Mili of the United Teachers' Unity Forum, among others.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by newly elected General Secretary Ranjit Gogoi.

Art Exhibition 'Jatra-12' Opens in Nagaon; Paintings Inspire Thought, Says Simi Goswami

Safiqur Rahman, Staff Reporter, Nagaon | July 16: A three-day art exhibition titled 'Jatra-12', organised by Jatra – An Odyssey of the Art, Tezpur, commenced on Wednesday at Pranab Baruah Kala Kshetra in Nagaon. The exhibition is being held under the guidance of National Award-winning artist Ratumoni Das.



The exhibition was inaugurated by Nagaon District Commissioner Devashish Sharma in the presence of artists, writers, journalists and art enthusiasts. On the occasion, noted Assamese actress Simi Goswami was felicitated for her contribution to the cultural field. Speaking at the inaugural function, Goswami highlighted the significance of visual art, stating that paintings are not merely a source of entertainment but also inspire thought and broaden human perspectives. Describing herself as a lifelong admirer of theatre, she spoke about the importance of drama and acting in society and captivated the audience by reciting a poem on theatre.

Renowned artist Gokul Chhetri was also felicitated during the programme. In his address, he elaborated on the philosophy and creative dimensions of painting. Eminent poet Dwijendra Nath Hazarika shared his thoughts and appreciation for the initiative.

The inaugural programme, anchored by Shantanu Baruah, was attended by several prominent artists, journalists and art lovers from Nagaon.

The exhibition showcases artworks by distinguished artists including Ankur Saharia, Sunil Nath, Raghav Mahanta, Ratumoni Das, Achyutish Borgohain, Dr. Mridula Kashyap, Navanita Sharma and Santosh Kumar, among others.

The exhibition will remain open to visitors until the evening of July 17.

Europe looks beyond regulation in bid for tech leadership

Brussels: A new European social media platform is betting that privacy, identity verification and genuine human interaction can help it compete with American tech giants such as X and Bluesky. W Social, which unveiled its platform at the World Economic Forum in Davos earlier this year, launched its public beta in Brussels last month. The company says it wants to bring the "social" back to social media by prioritising interactions between people rather than chatbots. It also plans to host all user data on European servers under European Union privacy laws, while adopting strict age and identity verification requirements. Its launch comes as the EU seeks to regain greater control over its digital infrastructure and support home-grown innovation.

NOT ONLY A REGULATORY FOCUS

For years, the EU has been known for setting global standards for digital regulation, from data privacy to online competition. But there have been growing concerns that Europe is losing ground to the United States and China in advanced technologies. Now, policymakers want Europe to become a tech leader in its own right. W Social says Europe will need to do more if it wants to achieve that ambition. "The EU has been lagging behind; it also needs to help companies to succeed, it can't only regulate them," the platform's co-founder and chairman Ingmar Rentzhog told CNA. "If we don't step up, all our innovations are going outside to other places."

REDUCING DIGITAL DEPENDENCE

Europe remains heavily reliant on foreign technology. According to the European Commission, the EU relies on countries outside the bloc for more than 80 per cent of its key digital products, services, infrastructure and intellectual property. Recent tensions with Washington over digital regulation and economic security, and with Beijing over export controls and critical raw materials, have reinforced these concerns.

The European Commission last month adopted a Tech Sovereignty Package, a series of measures aimed at strengthening Europe's digital capabilities. The plans include expanding artificial intelligence infrastructure, increasing cloud computing capacity, boosting semiconductor production and diversifying digital supply chains. For some European lawmakers, the issue is no longer just economic but strategic. "IT solutions can be used as a tool, if not a weapon ... to show your power, your superiority and that you can do much more than the others," said Michal Kobosko, a Member of the European Parliament from the Renew Europe group. Experts say tech sovereignty is not about isolating Europe from the rest of the world. "The future for the EU is going to be finding other partners, which is why the package defines tech sovereignty not as isolation and protectionism but as openness to others who share similar standards," said Sabine Muscat, a senior digital policy fellow at the Brussels Institute for Geopolitics, a European policy think-tank.

BALANCING GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS

The EU's push for greater technological self-reliance will require careful diplomacy. One priority is reducing dependence on Chinese technology in sensitive sectors, a move that risks straining one of the world's largest trade relationships. Beijing has warned of possible retaliation, although talks between both sides continue. Kobosko said the bloc also remains heavily dependent on Chinese exports of rare earth materials that are essential for many advanced technologies. "We need to have access, we need to make sure that we have this access today and this access will be kept tomorrow, and China will not be introducing other forms of bans on the export of these critical materials," he added. At the same time, the EU must also navigate its relationship with the White House.

Iran tells Houthis to close Red Sea gateway if US hits power network

Dubai: Iran has asked Yemen's Houthi movement to stand ready to close the Red Sea oil route if the United States strikes Iranian power infrastructure, three sources told Reuters on Thursday (Jul 16), posing a potent new threat to global energy supplies. The idea has been discussed within the Islamic Republic's leadership, and the message has been conveyed to Iran's Houthi allies, two senior Iranian sources and a regional source familiar with the matter said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The sources said the Houthis had been informed recently of Tehran's request, which has not been previously reported. They did not give further details on how it had been conveyed or whether it was after US President Donald Trump's threat to attack Iranian power infrastructure on Tuesday. Iran's foreign ministry and a spokesperson for the Houthi group were not immediately available to respond to Reuters' request.

HOUTHIS DEPLOY DRONES NEAR BAB EL-MANDEB

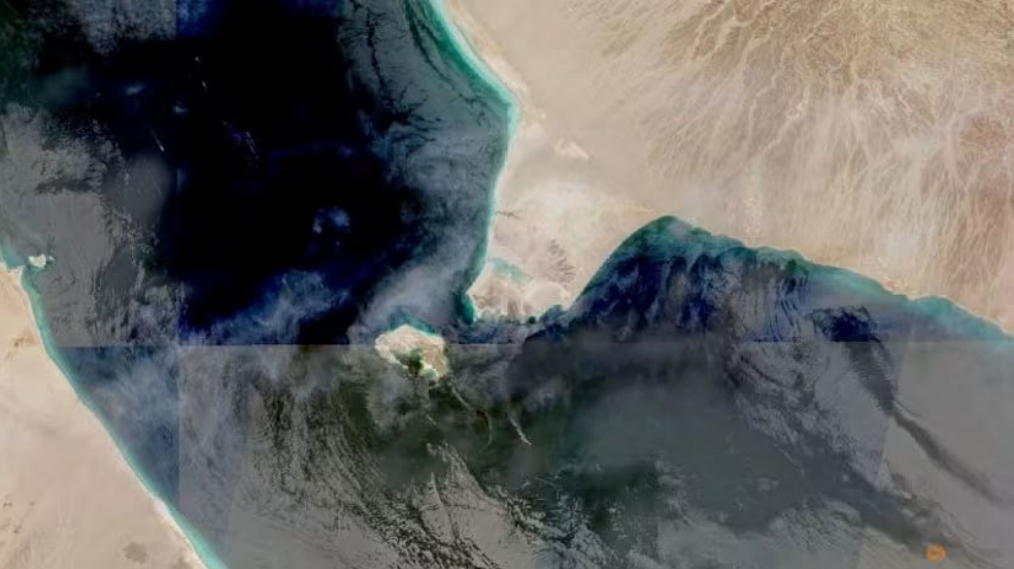
A source close to the Houthis said the group had completed preparations to attack shipping by deploying missiles and drones near Bab el-Mandeb strait, the gateway to the Red Sea, in Yemen's highlands overlooking Hodeidah and the Gulf of Aden and was awaiting the order to begin. Any threat to the Red Sea and its Bab el-Mandeb gateway risks hugely exacerbating the global energy crisis triggered by Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz and underscores the explosive risks stemming from a new round of warfare. With the Hormuz strait already shut, any Houthi attacks on vessels or ports in the Red Sea would leave the Middle East's two main oil export routes disrupted simultaneously, opening a new front in both the energy crisis and Iran's wider conflict with the United States. Representatives of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) who are already in Yemen will control the decision on when to close the Bab el-Mandeb strait, said the source close to the Houthis. In a sign of escalating tensions in the region, the Houthis fired missiles at Saudi Arabia after accusing the kingdom of bombing an airport under their control on Monday, breaking a four-year truce

in the conflict between the kingdom and the group. Torbjorn Solvedt, principal Middle East analyst with risk intelligence company Verisk Maplecroft, said the flare-up between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia had come at a bad time. "If fighting intensifies and spills over into Red Sea export infrastructure and shipping, it will threaten the only major alternative route for oil exports from the region," he said. Two regional sources close to Riyadh said the kingdom was taking threats from Iran and the Houthis very seriously, adding that Riyadh was aware the Yemeni group was now closely coordinating with Iran over the Red Sea. The conflict began on Feb 28, when Israel and the United States attacked Iran, leading Tehran to shut the Strait of Hormuz, the main route before the war for around a fifth of global energy supplies. Tensions have mounted since a fragile June truce between Tehran and Washington collapsed, reviving fears of full-scale war and disrupting energy flows through the Strait.

RED SEA CLOSURE WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT

A significant amount of Gulf oil has since been diverted to the Red Sea through a Saudi pipeline, and the waterway now carries around 7 per cent of global energy supplies. When the Houthis attacked shipping during the Gaza

war, major shipping companies diverted their cargoes to the much longer, more expensive route around Africa. With Saudi Arabia having itself diverted 70 per cent of its energy exports through its Red Sea port of Yanbu, any direct attacks there would also be a big problem for oil markets. One of the regional sources said Iran's clerical rulers were seeking to pressure the United States by raising the potential cost to the global economy, threatening Red Sea shipping and the flow of Saudi oil exports through the waterway, in what the source described as part of "Iranian thinking." Closing down the strait would not be difficult, the source said, adding: "Anybody with a firing rifle can interrupt the shipping. You don't have to have sophisticated missiles to interrupt the shipping." Iran views the Houthis as part of its regional "Axis of Resistance", an alliance that also includes Lebanon's Hezbollah and Iraqi Shi'ite armed groups that have already joined the regional conflict between Tehran and Washington. But the Houthi rebels have not formally entered the fray. The United States says Iran has provided the Houthis with weapons, funding and training, including support channelled through Hezbollah. Tehran has denied the accusation.



Thai band mourns loss of 4 members as Bangkok bar fire death toll hits 33

Bangkok: Victims of this week's flash fire at a Bangkok music bar that took more than 30 lives included four of the six core members of the band playing when the blaze broke out. The fate of the Totsakan band has been a key focus in Thailand's coverage of the blaze, and as residents expressed their sadness, confusion, outrage and demands for compensation on Wednesday (Jul 15), the sister of the group's late keyboard player struck a particular note of grace. "If I can be his representative, I think he would say he doesn't want to see everyone sad and cry," said Chanyanuch Pudmon, the sister of keyboard player Preuthipong Pudmon, as she and other family members retrieved his body from Bangkok's Institute of Forensic Science. "He would not want everyone to see him as he is now, but please remember his smile on stage, playing music that he loves." The fire that broke out Sunday night killed at least 33 people and injured dozens, with 17 hospitalised in critical condition, Erawan emergency services said. Wiroon Supasingsiripreecha, chief of the forensic institute, told reporters on Wednesday that most of the victims died from smoke inhalation, while a few died from burn injuries. What set off the blaze at the Rong Beer Na Ladprao bar in northern Bangkok and why it caused so many casualties is under investigation. Authorities are looking at whether the venue's ceiling had especially flammable sound-proofing foam, whether its exits were accessible and unlocked and whether the venue was legally registered.

BAND PLAYED GOOD-TIME MUSIC EVERY SUNDAY

Totsakan was a house band at the bar, and every Sunday they played the kind of good-time roots music that is popular, especially in rural areas where traditional beats are played on modern instruments. The band's members were among the first to spy a spark from a circuit breaker that may have set off the blaze that roared across the ceiling, which experts suspect was covered with highly combustible material. People rushed for the few and narrow exits in what they said was total darkness. The chaos was such that even after the blaze was brought under control by firefighters and the injured taken to hospitals, it was unclear who had survived and who had perished. However, for the band's leader and singer, Atipat Wijan - nickname "Ice" - a big blow came right away. In an interview with Thai TV Channel 3 just hours after the flames were extinguished, he recalled how the band's bass player called him to tell him that Nahatai Sajjalert, the lead female singer nicknamed "Breeze" - who was also his girl-

friend - was undergoing CPR behind the still-smouldering building. Ice said he tried helping the EMS team resuscitate her, but she could not be revived. "She wasn't burned at all. Her body was completely intact. She just looked like she was peacefully asleep," he recalled. Ice said it was originally believed that keyboardist Preuthipong - nickname "Kwang" - had been found and hospitalised, but that was a misunderstanding. He never made it out of the bar. Nattapat Thamnita, or "Biw", the band's drum-

26, was at the beer hall on the night of the fire with four companions. He was sitting near the stage when the fire broke out. He recounted seeing white smoke coming from the stage, which he at first thought was an effect from dry ice before realising it was the start of a fire. "When the fire broke, I just ran, and then all power went out," said Natthaphong, who said that one of his companions, a relative, died in the fire. "It was so hectic." Natthaphong said he escaped through the back door of the bar



near the bathrooms and that there was a security guard there who was using a flashlight to lead people out, contradicting reports from police that the door was not used. He said he did not recall hearing a fire alarm. Bandages covered both of Natthaphong's ears and part of his forehead. Before registering with the police, he said that he plans to seek compensation for his injuries. Kanticha Singkhon, 25, was at the police station to pick up a handbag and other personal belongings of her mother, who died in the fire. With her mother gone, Kanticha said she is now responsible for her younger brother. She said she wanted the bar owners to be the ones who reach out to the victims' families "because they would be going back to their hometowns by now. They won't have time because each victim came from far away", she said. A lawyer representing the bar owners told local media that survivors and family members will initially receive 10,000 baht (US\$300) in compensation. "It's not enough money for a funeral - I had to take a loan to arrange my mom's funeral," Kanticha said. "I have not had any financial arrangements, and no one has contacted me."

mer, was evacuated in critical condition, but also did not survive.

FOURTH BAND MEMBER DIES ON WEDNESDAY

Misery extended to Wednesday when the band announced that its other male singer, Thitiwat Kaewkanha, had died in hospital. He was initially feared dead, but had then turned up hospitalised after a day of frantic searching. According to Thai Rath, Thailand's most popular newspaper, Thitiwat, whose nickname is "Din", had burns over 80 per cent of his body. Other survivors and family members of victims of the fire visited a police station on Wednesday to seek compensation, gather belongings and give their testimony. Natthaphong Lakhorn,

US unveils new 25% tariff on certain imports from Brazil

Washington: The United States on Wednesday (Jul 15) announced a new tariff on various imports from Brazil, after a year-long investigation into the Latin American giant's trade and other policies. The 25 per cent tariff is set to take effect Jul 22, a senior US official told reporters. But a range of products, including beef, coffee and certain aircraft parts, would be exempted, the official added. The exclusions also cover certain goods that the United States does not produce. "Brazil's unfair trading practices have prevented US workers and producers from accessing this important market," US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said in a statement. "We remain open to continuing negotiations with Brazil to bring about long-needed changes to the problems identified in this investigation," he added. In earlier findings, the US investigation deemed that certain practices by Brazil were "unreasonable or discriminatory and burden or restrict US commerce". The latest move also comes as President Donald

Trump's administration pushes to rebuild his economic agenda after the US Supreme Court in February struck down a swath of his global tariffs. The Brazil tariffs were justified under Section 301 of the Trade Act, and the Trump administration this year initiated other probes using the same authority. Already, in one set of probes, US officials proposed new tariffs targeting dozens of trading partners for their alleged failures to act against forced labour. In the case of Brazil, a senior US official took aim Wednesday at what Washington deemed as adverse actions on digital trade, alongside "unfair" competition linked to state-owned electronic payments system PIX, among other issues. The US official said the door to negotiations remain open, although Washington wishes for its concerns to be resolved. For example, the United States seeks to access preferential tariff treatment Brazil provided to partners like Mexico and India as well. The official, however, rejected criticism that Section 301 probes were being used for politi-

cal purposes. While the Trump administration does not expect retaliation following Wednesday's announcement, it warned that pushback could invite further US countermeasures. For now, the United States has held constructive talks with Brazilian counterparts recently, the official said. At a public hearing held by the USTR's office in Washington this month, Brazilian conservative presidential hopeful Flavio Bolsonaro urged the United States against imposing the new tariffs. The eldest son of Brazil's former right-wing president Jair Bolsonaro argued that new duties would benefit his political rival, President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. The pair are key rivals in the October presidential ballot. Dozens of other participants testified at the two days of public hearings as well. Last year, the Trump administration hit Brazil with sharp tariffs over the coup trial against Jair Bolsonaro, who is now serving a 27-year sentence. Many of the duties were rolled back after talks between both sides, in a win for Lula.

NR plantation of 1.80 Lakh Ha completed in NE under Project INROAD in 5 years

Guwahati: Natural Rubber (NR) plantations in North East India under Project INROAD (Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development) have recorded a significant milestone after completion of FY 2025–26 plantations. Launched in FY 2021–22, the INROAD Project helped in creation of 1,79,376 hectares of new NR plantations across 113 districts in the North Eastern region of India over the last five years and is expected to complete 200,000 hectares of new plantations originally targeted. This represents the highest natural rubber plantation expansion in the country within such a short span. INROAD is a landmark and first-of-its-kind global initiative, wherein the Indian tyre industry is contributing directly to the development of rubber plantations. The project is financed by four major tyre companies — Apollo Tyres, CEAT, JK Tyre and MRF and is implemented by the Rubber Board of India. “Despite several operational challenges including Covid-induced disruptions in the beginning, nearly 90% of the ambitious target of 2 lakh hectares of new plantation has been achieved under Project INROAD during the last five years. Beyond plantation expansion, the project has also made significant progress in strengthening local nurseries and building grower capacities — a testament to the collaborative efforts of the tyre industry and the Rubber Board,” said Mohan Kurian, Chairman, INROAD Project, on the completion of five years of the initiative. Over this period, a record 8.3 crore quality planting material

has been distributed. INROAD could reach out to resource-constrained populations in the designated states, with special focus on engaging with small and marginal farmers mostly with landholdings of less than one hectare. The project has benefited over 2 lakh beneficiaries so far with improved livelihoods and socio-economic development. One of the most notable impacts of INROAD has been the rejuvenation of nursery infrastructure in the region. More than 200 nurseries are currently supplying high-yielding planting material to growers. New and improved rubber clones that are better suited to the agro-climatic conditions of the North East are being distributed through these nurseries under the INROAD initiative. “With plantations reaching a critical stage, the next component of the project — development of supporting infrastructure such as model smokehouses and dissemination of improved practices among rubber growers — is progressing well under the INROAD Skilling and Production Efficiency Enhancement Drive (iSPEED) initiative,” Kurian added. The infrastructure development being undertaken through iSPEED is expected to create significant value addition for farmers by improving the quality of rubber produced at the source. A large-scale educational and training drive is also being planned under iSPEED through a combination of digital and contact training programmes. New training materials developed under the initiative are now ready for release to support this effort.

Borluit Productions releases the title track of 'Dipholu'

Guwahati: Building on the emotional response received by Xorogi Xopun sung by the late legendary singers Zubeen Garg and Gayatri Hazarika, the makers of the upcoming Assamese feature film Dipholu have now unveiled the film's lively title track “Dipholu Nodir Paarote”, offering audiences an energetic celebration of Assam's rural life, traditions and community spirit ahead of the film's theatrical release. Released on YouTube, the song captures the colourful world of Dipholu through vibrant visuals, infectious rhythms and spirited performances by the ensemble cast. Sung by Rakesh Reeyan and Rupali Kashyap, the track has been written by Nekib, composed and directed by Jekiv, with music programming by Matrix and mixing and mastering by Nobo Medhi. Unlike the film's previously released romantic ballad Xorogi Xopun, the title track embraces the playful, joyous and celebratory mood that defines much of Dipholu. Set against the picturesque backdrop of Assamese village life, the song showcases the warmth of community life, everyday humour and the cultural vibrancy that forms the soul of the film. Director Nekib said the title track was conceived as the musical identity of the film. “Every film has one song that immediately tells audiences what its world feels like. For us, this title track does exactly that. It reflects the energy, innocence and warmth of village life while celebrating the traditions and people who make Assam so unique. We wanted audiences to smile, tap their feet and feel instantly connected with the world of Dipholu,” he said. Music composer and producer Jekiv said the team wanted the title track to stay rooted in Assamese musical traditions while presenting them in a contemporary and accessible way. “The title track carries the heartbeat of the film. It combines folk influences with a modern sound, making it both familiar and

fresh. We wanted listeners to experience the joy and optimism that run through the film, and

of Assam. Apart from the title track, the film's soundtrack includes Xorogi Xopun, one of the



we hope the song stays with them long after it ends,” he said. The music video, directed by Nekib and shot by cinematographer Uttam Kalita, features the film's entire cast and serves as a lively introduction to the characters and the world they inhabit. Colourful visuals, spirited choreography and authentic rural settings come together to create a song that celebrates Assam's rich cultural heritage while reflecting the film's light-hearted yet meaningful narrative. Produced by Jekiv and directed by Nekib, Dipholu marks Borluit Productions' entry into feature-length cinema following its acclaimed short films Rong – The Colour and Akaax Bisari – Into the Sky. Rooted in the realities of Assamese village life, the film blends humour, romance and social consciousness while celebrating the culture, traditions and resilience

last songs recorded by the late Zubeen Garg and Gayatri Hazarika, along with other original compositions featuring Rupali Kashyap, Rakesh Reeyan and Montumoni Saikia. The music has been composed and directed by Jekiv, with lyrics by Nekib and Gargee Bhattacharjee. The film stars Amrita Gogoi, Subrat Deori, Arun Nath, Arun Hazarika, Purnada Hazarika, Rajib Dowari, Jyotishman Borah, Kanika Nath, Anirban Kalita, Ankur Baidya, Dr. Hitesh Baruah, Simashree Bora, Priyanshi Kashyap and Dibya Jyoti Borah, with veteran actress Mridula Barua appearing in a special role. As anticipation builds for the film's theatrical release, the title track offers audiences a spirited glimpse into the heart of Dipholu, a film that promises laughter, emotion, music and an authentic celebration of Assamese life.

IESA welcomes SEMICON 2.0 to strengthen India's global semiconductor ecosystem leadership

Guwahati/ Bengaluru: The India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) welcomes today's Union Cabinet decisions, which together commit an outlay of Rs. 2,19,353 crore across infrastructure and electronics manufacturing, including two significant announcements for India's semiconductor and electronics industry - Semicon 2.0, approved at an outlay of Rs. 1,27,500 crore, and the new Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS), approved at an outlay of Rs. 62,500 crore over five years. Building on the strong foundation and momentum laid under Phase 1 of India Semiconductor Mission, the programme marks government's commitment on long-term policy support and India's transition from establishing semiconductor manufacturing to building a comprehensive and globally competitive ecosystem spanning fabs, advanced packaging, design, R&D, talent, machines (equipment), materials and supply chains. Phase 1 has established India's credibility by attracting over US\$20 billion in announced semiconductor investments and enabling multiple Fab and ATMP/OSAT projects. With several OSAT projects already under implementation and entering production, Phase 2 rightly places greater emphasis on semiconductor fabs, while continuing strong support for advanced packaging, thereby creating a balanced and future-ready semiconductor ecosystem. Ashok Chandak, President, IESA and SEMI India, said: "SEMICON 2.0 marks decisive step in India's journey from policy intent to execution at scale. Phase 1 established India's credibility; Phase 2 builds long-term capability. By strengthening fabs, advanced packaging, design, R&D, talent and the semiconductor supply chain, the Government is creating the foundation for a globally competitive ecosystem that will attract sustained investments, create high-value employment and significantly enhance domestic value addition. SEMICON India 2.0 comes at an opportune moment as the global semiconductor industry enters an unprecedented investment cycle. With worldwide semiconductor manufacturing equipment spending expected to grow to nearly US\$230 billion by 2028, the policy positions India to capture the next wave of global investments in semiconductor manufacturing, advanced packaging, equipment and materials, Chandak added.” “Equally significant is the approval of the Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS) that is designed to take mobile manufacturing to its next phase, with an ambition to nearly double cumulative production to about Rs. 39 lakh crore and cumulative exports to about Rs. 15 lakh crore, while creating 60,000 additional direct jobs. Given that India has already manufactured approximately 125 crore mobile phones emerging as world's second-largest mobile manufacturing ecosystem place, and now meets 99.2 percent of domestic demand through 'Made in India' devices, this scheme provides the continuity and ambition needed to sustain that momentum, while its incentives for domestic sourcing and for design and R&D by Indian brands will help deepen value addition and build genuine Indian intellectual property.”, Chandak added. “These decisions also validate the broader emphasise on Design and R&D. The enhanced focus on indigenous product development, industry-led R&D and innovation will help transform India from a design powerhouse into a complete de-

sign-to-manufacturing destination. Together with complementary initiatives, Semicon India 2.0 will strengthen technological self-reliance and establish India as one of the world's most trusted semiconductor and electronics manufacturing destinations, commented Mr. Navin Bishnoi, Chairperson, IESA. The programme is expected to catalyse another US\$40–50 billion in investments, create 2–3 lakh high-skilled jobs, significantly enhance domestic value addition and strengthen India's position as a trusted global semiconductor partner. Together with complementary initiatives such as the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), Production Linked Incentive (PLI), Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) and state programmes, SEMICON 2.0 has the potential to accelerate India's journey towards nearly 40% domestic value addition in electronics manufacturing, bringing the nation significantly closer to the vision of a truly Atmanirbhar Bharat. Key Strategic Pillars of SEMICON 2.0 • Semiconductor Fabs & Foundries: The enhanced focus on fabs will anchor India's semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem, reduce strategic import dependence and attract large-scale global investments. As India's OSAT ecosystem gains momentum, expanding fabrication capacity is the next critical step towards creating a complete semiconductor value chain and strengthening India's strategic technology capabilities. • OSAT & Advanced Packaging: Continued support for OSATs and advanced packaging will build upon the success of Phase 1, create high-value manufacturing jobs and position India as a preferred destination for advanced packaging, chiplets and heterogeneous integration technologies that are increasingly critical in the AI era. The phased tapering of incentives signals the transition of India's OSAT industry from an incentive-led growth phase to a self-sustaining, globally competitive manufacturing ecosystem. • Talent Development & Skilling: A national focus on semiconductor education, specialised training and industry-academia collaboration will help develop over 2 lakh skilled professionals and enable India to capture a significant share of the projected global demand for nearly one million semiconductor professionals by 2030. IESA's Workforce Development initiatives will complement this national mission by creating industry-ready talent across the semiconductor value chain. • Design Linked Incentive (DLI) & Product Innovation: Enhanced support for chip design, IP creation and semiconductor startups will accelerate India's transition from a design services hub to a global centre for semiconductor product innovation. Increasing the financial assistance threshold under the DLI Scheme would be a game changer, enabling Indian companies to undertake complex chip development programmes, build globally competitive semiconductor products and create valuable indigenous IP. IESA's Startup Mitra initiative is already nurturing semiconductor startups by connecting them with industry, mentors, investors and technology partners, complementing the objectives of the enhanced DLI programme. • Research & Development (R&D): A stronger focus on semiconductor R&D will ensure the long-term sustainability of India's design-to-

manufacturing journey. Alongside continued support for academic research, greater emphasis on industry-led, market-driven R&D will be critical for commercialising indigenous technologies, accelerating innovation and developing globally competitive products. IESA has already initiated this effort through its dedicated Industry Driven Semiconductor Product & Solutions (IDSPS) initiative, which promotes industry-sponsored R&D, collaborative innovation and indigenous product development. • Machines and Materials (Equipment, Supply Chain): A dedicated focus on semiconductor equipment's and subsystems, specialty chemicals, gases, materials, consumables and precision engineering will deepen domestic value addition, create significant opportunities for Indian MSMEs and establish India as a reliable and trusted partner in global semiconductor supply chains. • Integrated Semiconductor Ecosystem: Together, these initiatives will create a complete semiconductor ecosystem—from R&D and design to manufacturing, packaging, equipment, materials and talent—making India a more resilient, competitive and trusted partner in the global semiconductor value chain. Congratulating the Government of India, the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) and the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) for this visionary initiative, Mr. Pradeep Vajram, Vice Chairperson, IESA, said, "IESA looks forward to partnering closely with MeitY, the India Semiconductor Mission, State Governments, industry, academia and global stakeholders to support the timely implementation of Semicon India 2.0. Through its ongoing initiatives in Workforce Development, Startup Mitra, R&D(IDSPS), policy advocacy and international collaborations, IESA remains committed to accelerating the development of a resilient, innovation-led and globally competitive semiconductor ecosystem that advances India's vision of technological leadership and Atmanirbhar Bharat." IESA is India's premier industry body for ESDM & Intelligent Electronics. Our main objective is to establish India as a leading global hub for electronics manufacturing and design. We work with government ministries, industry players, and academic institutions to facilitate the comprehensive implementation of the Program for the Development of Semiconductor and Display Ecosystem. Our team of renowned experts in semiconductor and display technologies is committed to promoting technology solutions that positively impact the lives of 1.3 billion Indians.

HDFC Bank Parivartan empowers 9.6 lakh individuals through skill development and livelihood enhancement initiatives

Guwahati: On the occasion of World Youth Skills Day, HDFC Bank Parivartan, the CSR initiative of HDFC Bank, highlighted its continued efforts to equip young people with the skills, knowledge and opportunities needed to participate meaningfully in India's evolving economy. Since inception, the Bank's skilling and livelihood initiatives have positively impacted 9.6 lakh individuals. HDFC Bank Parivartan's approach to skill development combines formal, certification-based training with broader livelihood and entrepreneurship interventions tailored to local contexts. More than 1.96 lakh youth

have undergone formal skill training through certified programmes delivered via industry-aligned partners and NSDC-affiliated institutions, covering sectors such as healthcare, retail, logistics, hospitality, banking, insurance, EV maintenance, IT and digital technologies. These programmes are complemented by soft skills, digital literacy, financial literacy and placement support, helping young people transition into sustainable employment opportunities. The Bank has strengthened its skilling ecosystem through initiatives designed to provide industry-relevant

training and improve employability outcomes for youth, particularly young women and underserved communities. Alongside youth skilling, HDFC Bank Parivartan has enabled livelihoods and entrepreneurship opportunities for 7.6 lakh women and farmers through community-based training, enterprise development and market-linkage support. These interventions span areas such as tailoring, handloom weaving, food processing, poultry farming, dairy management, organic farming, mushroom cultivation and other micro-enterprise opportunities.

From hope to heartbreak: England denied by Argentina's late surge

Atlanta : The dream died on a summer night, as it has so many times before, not with a bang but with the familiar aching silence that settles over England after the final whistle of a World Cup defeat. England's dream of reaching a first World Cup final since 1966 was shattered as holders Argentina scored twice in the closing stages to snatch a 2-1 semi-final victory on Wednesday. The players sank to the grass. Their supporters stood frozen in the stands, scarves draped around shoulders that had carried expectation for a month. And so England's latest pursuit of the one prize that continues to define their footballing identity came to an end - not in triumph, but in the cruel space between possibility and achievement. Again. England must now regroup for Saturday's third-place match against France in Miami. There will inevitably be pointed questions for coach Thomas Tuchel after England retreated deeper and deeper following Anthony Gordon's opener, surrendering the initiative and ultimately seeing Argentina punish them with two late goals. "We have crumbled," former England captain Wayne Rooney told the BBC. "It started from the manager and the decisions he made. It was too passive. "Against this team, the world champions, you will not get away with it. This has been the biggest test and we have failed it." Tuchel, who has signed a contract extension through to Euro 2028, said he remains committed to leading England, and reminded reporters that the tournament is not over. "There is still a game to play, even if it is not one we wanted to be involved in," he said. "After that, we move forward. I am under contract

through to the home Euros in 2028 and, despite the disappointment we feel now, I am already looking ahead to that challenge." This version of England's dream had felt different. Fuelled by Harry Kane's relentless leadership and the brilliance of Jude Bellingham, England gave their supporters reason to believe. The performances were not always polished. A couple of scrappy victories demanded more grit than glamour, and at times the path forward looked anything but certain. But rather than undermining confidence, those hard-fought wins seemed to strengthen it. Because England kept finding a way. Kane provided the calm and the sense that the occasion would never overwhelm him, while Bellingham supplied the energy, and together they accounted for 12 goals - six apiece. Then came the tests. The draining 10-man battle with Mexico at altitude in Mexico City in the round of 16 revealed something deeper than talent. England showed resilience. They absorbed pressure, responded to setbacks and emerged with the conviction of a team that believed they could survive anything. Again and again, the players spoke about the togetherness of the squad, the trust they had built and the willingness to fight for one another. For a nation conditioned to expect disappointment, there was something powerfully persuasive about that togetherness, and for a while it felt as though England were building something irresistible. Instead, they have now suffered semi-final heartbreak in two of their last three World Cups, squandering a lead on both occasions. When the final whistle sounded, Bellingham's face crumpled in tears.

Scaloni faces former tutor De la Fuente in Argentina-Spain World Cup final

New York : Spain swept aside France, Argentina scrambled past England and the World Cup final has been handed a scriptwriter's dream: European champions against world and South American champions, with a teacher and his old pupil in opposite technical areas. Luis de la Fuente's Spain will try to deliver the country's second World Cup, 16 years after their first in South Africa, while Lionel Scaloni's Argentina are seeking to become the first nation since Brazil in 1962 to win back-to-back world crowns. Yet beyond the familiar heavyweight billing, Sunday's final carries a more personal twist. After Spain's 2-0 victory over France on Tuesday, and before Argentina had completed their comeback 2-1 win against England in the second semi-final the following day, De la Fuente raised eyebrows by saying he would be "delighted" to face Argentina. It was not because the 65-year-old viewed them as an easier route to glory. Quite the opposite. His answer was rooted in friendship and a relationship forged years ago at the Spanish Football Association's (RFEF) coaching academy in Las Rozas, where De la Fuente was a tutor and Scaloni one of his students. It happened in 2017, two years after Scaloni ended his playing career. De la Fuente, then in charge of Spain's youth teams, was among the figures who helped guide a recently retired player taking his first steps towards management. Neither man could have imagined the lessons of Las Rozas would one day echo all the way to a World Cup final. Scaloni spoke warmly about that period and his bond with De la Fuente at the 2024 Copa America. "Luis has been a huge help to those of us who did the coaching course in Las Rozas. I've had chats with him and I wish him all the best," Scaloni said before Argentina's Copa America quarter-fi-

nal win over Ecuador. The admiration has not flowed only one way. De la Fuente has described Scaloni as a master, an unlikely title for a former pupil but a fitting one for the man who guided Argentina to global and

live in Mallorca. Scaloni, now 48, also spent several seasons playing in Spain at Deportivo La Coruna, Racing Santander and Mallorca. "Part of my family is Spanish and, naturally, I'm supporting Spain (at



continental success. "I want Spain to do well (at the Euros) and he helped us lads who did the (coaching) course in Las Rozas a great deal. I like the way he manages things and how the players give their all for him," Scaloni said during the tournament, which coincided with the 2024 European Championship. Both managers would go on to lift the respective continental trophies. Now they meet again, not in a classroom, but with the biggest prize in football at stake. **SCALONI'S SPAIN CONNECTION** Scaloni's connection with Spain runs deeper than coaching badges. His wife Elisa Montero, who he met in 2008, is Spanish, their children were born in Spain and they

the Euros)," Scaloni said in 2024. Speaking on Tuesday, after Spain reached the final and on the eve of Argentina's semi-final, Scaloni gave a preview of the warmth — and competitive edge — that now frames the final. "I'm happy for him (De la Fuente). He deserves it. He's a great bloke. Everything we see in his national team is what we hope to see in ours," Scaloni said in Atlanta. "If things don't go well for us, I'll give him a call. If we play against him in the final ... no. Let's hope there's no call until after the final ..." There will now likely be no phone call until Sunday, so sentiment must wait. Master and apprentice must first find out who has kept the better notes as they prepare for the final.

'Crisis' in youth sports comes into focus after early US World Cup exit

Atlanta/new York : Another early World Cup exit underscores a fractured youth sports culture in the United States, as the nation hopes to catch up with footballing powerhouses that have no clogs in their talent pipeline. The Americans have not reached the quarter-finals of the global showpiece since 2002 and their last-16 exit this year rekindled a longstanding debate: Why is the world's richest country - and one of the largest - unable to compete with the best? "We need to fundamentally restructure the youth side of the sport in our country," U.S. Soccer's Chief Operating Officer Dan Helfrich told Reuters. "That means everything from lowering costs and lowering barriers to participate. It means increasing access in all parts of our country, this vast country, where right now it's inconsistent the level of participation that happens." The national governing body for the sport opened its first centralised training facility in Fayetteville this year, decades after many of the European titans have, marking the first time "U.S. soccer has ever owned a blade of grass," the centre's general manager Tom Norton told Reuters. Helfrich said the facility, which came about through a \$50 million investment from NFL team owner Arthur Blank, would announce plans in the coming months to host elite youth academies and all national youth teams. "The fragmentation that exists in the youth leagues in the country needs to be joined together. We have an active plan that we've been building and will roll out in the months to come to tackle costs, to tackle access, to tackle alignment," said Helfrich. **MORE COSTS, LESS PARTICIPATION** Those costs are at the heart of a heated debate over American soccer's "pay-to-play" model that spilled over into national headlines after co-hosts the U.S. tumbled out of the World Cup in a 4-1 thrashing by Belgium. One of the team's most celebrated former players Landon Donovan told "The Late Run" podcast there was "zero chance" he could have played youth soccer if his family faced the same costs to play that exist today, with elite academies frequently demanding high fees. "There's a real crisis in youth sports today," U.S. Senator Chris Murphy told Reuters. "It is true that increasingly if you want to play sports in this country, you have to have a family with some substantial income." Murphy introduced a bicameral bill in May aimed at eliminating private equity from youth sports, blaming the sector for driving up expenses, citing an average cost across all sports exceeding \$5,000 per year per family. The "Let Kids Play Act" would mandate private equity exit youth sports. However, he cautioned against the media momentum for looking at kids sports as a means to an end. "The way to fix youth

sports in this country is frankly less professional-looking experiences, more rec level-like experiences, lower costs, not higher costs that just have to be borne by the government," said Murphy. **COSTS RISE, PARTICIPATION FALLS** Murphy is among many who point to the Norwegian system as a model of success, with the country disincentivising competition. Norway reached the World Cup quarter-finals for the first time this year, a couple of generations after introducing "Children's Rights in Sports," a governing document that guaran-

tee youth access to sport but forbids keeping score or maintaining standings for children under 11. "There are policies and then there are stated enforcement mechanisms around this as well (in Norway) that can be attached to funding because it's more structured from the top and from the government where funding comes from," said Jon Solomon, research director at the Aspen Institute Sports & Society Program. "It's also just giving kids what they want and need at developmentally appropriate stages." The Aspen Institute, a non-profit think tank headquartered in Washington, D.C., found that U.S. families spent 46 per cent more on their child's primary sport in 2024 compared to 2019, even as overall participation declined from 56.1 per cent to 54.6 per cent. "I don't think the model that we currently have will lead to us having tremendous success," said Solomon. "We are so far behind other countries, and the culture is not as ingrained in America." **BEYOND PAY-TO-PLAY** Alan Rothenberg, former president of U.S. Soccer, said the domestic World Cup had the chance to create a new generation of athletes like Donovan, who was inspired as a child watching the tournament that Rothenberg oversaw in the U.S. in 1994. "(The World Cup has) given so much more exposure to the sport that young, talented athletes will give a second look at soccer," said Rothenberg, who praised the new U.S. Soccer training facility. "They're going to be able to assemble all these various scattered youth teams and high-level professional players into one place where they're all together and they get to know each other and develop a system, if you will, not unlike what the French and the Spanish have done." U.S. Soccer, through the Soccer Forward Foundation, announced earlier this year an initiative to expand access to places for youth and community soccer to be played. "(We have to) somehow go beyond the pay-to-play system that we have now," said Rothenberg. "Because almost by definition, that means you've got middle class and above kids playing soccer in huge numbers, but they don't tend to be the kind of kids that end up being full-time professional players. "There's millions of young, talented athletes out there playing soccer either on a non-organised basis or just kind of freelancing that we have to tap into," added Rothenberg, whose book "The Big Bounce" chronicles the trajectory of the sport's popularity in the U.S.



tees youth access to sport but forbids keeping score or maintaining standings for children under 11. "There are policies and then there are stated enforcement mechanisms around this as well (in Norway) that can be attached to funding because it's more structured from the top and from the government where funding comes from," said Jon Solomon, research director at the Aspen Institute Sports & Society Program. "It's also just giving kids what they want and need at developmentally appropriate stages." The Aspen Institute, a non-profit think tank headquartered in Washington, D.C., found that U.S. families spent 46 per cent more on their child's primary sport in 2024 compared to 2019, even as overall participation declined from 56.1 per cent to

Ireland eye end to All Blacks' 52-test Eden Park run

July 16 : New Zealand's proud home record at Eden Park comes under threat from Ireland on Saturday in the third round of Nations Championship matches as the southern hemisphere leg of the new competition wraps up. Ireland have beaten both Australia and Japan over the last fortnight and now look to extend that run across the Tasman Sea where the All Blacks have not lost at Eden Park since a 1994 defeat to France. It is a 52-test run that has turned the Auckland venue into a stronghold, and one of the sport's most feared venues. Ireland's last trip to New Zealand was for a three-test series four years ago where they lost 42-19 in the opening clash at Eden Park but then upset the All Blacks in Dunedin and Wellington for an unprecedented series success. But since then they have lost three clashes with the



Kiwis. Ireland's Auckland-born scrumhalf Jamison Gibson-Park believes his side can end the home team's streak. "We probably haven't shown it in the first two outings (of the Nations Championship), I don't think, certainly with enough consistency," he told reporters this week. "If we can get back to the level we finished at the Six Nations, I think we can be there or thereabouts, so that's our challenge for this weekend," he added. Ireland are the only side in the northern group with a 100 per cent record after the first two of six rounds while in the southern section New Zealand and South Africa have won their opening fixtures. The Springboks have a home clash against Wales and are using the encounter to blood new players with an eye to increased competition for

Alonso just wants to get home in time for World Cup final

Spa-francorchamps : Fernando Alonso's main focus for the Belgian Grand Prix weekend will be making sure he gets home in time to watch Spain play Argentina in the World Cup final on Sunday. The Spanish driver's Aston Martin team have been Formula One backmarkers this season, struggling to finish races and scoring just one point from nine rounds. Belgium, the last race before Aston Martin introduce a major chassis upgrade with an improved engine still to come, could mark a low point before things start to improve. In 2010, the last time a Formula One race coincided with soccer's biggest match, Alonso was at Ferrari and fighting for wins. Spain, now the European champions, won that World Cup in South Africa and are chasing their second crown against the holders. "It will be different. As we don't expect much this weekend," two-time world champion Alonso told reporters at Spa-

Francorchamps. "The main focus on Sunday will be to get home and watch the match, to be honest." The final is scheduled for 9 p.m. European time (1900 GMT) with the Formula One race starting at 3 p.m. local time (1300 GMT). "It's going to be tricky because we are flying back home," said Alonso. "So maybe again on Sunday the second half will be probably the moment that I will watch the game. And the first half, just miss it." Argentine Franco Colapinto, who races for Renault-owned Alpine, and Spaniard Carlos Sainz at Williams will face similar problems. "I'm definitely going to be much more nervous about the match than the race," said Colapinto. "Yesterday (the semi-final against England) we had a lot of fun, a lot of suffering. But if you don't suffer a lot, you're not Argentinian. "It was one of those matches that, you are really nervous, but then you celebrate a lot. So it was a long night, but very fun."

Gamblers account for majority of serious online abuse targeted at players

July 16 : A majority of the most serious online abuse directed at tennis players during the 2025 season came from gamblers, according to a report published on Thursday. The study, undertaken by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and World Tennis, found that gamblers were responsible for 42 per cent of all verified abuse and 59 per cent of all serious abuse targeting players across tours. A report published late last year found similar trends, saying angry gamblers were responsible for nearly half of the abusive social media posts directed at tennis players. The latest study said that more than 1.2 million posts and comments were analysed during 2025 using the Threat Matrix service, which was launched in 2024 and uses AI and open-source data to help protect athletes from online abuse and harass-

ment. Over 12,000 posts were categorised as abusive, including 3,726 deemed serious abuse involving violent, sexual, racist and targeted threats. The report said 35 accounts linked to 12 individuals, including one verified account network, were escalated to law enforcement agencies. It also said 89 per cent of accounts responsible for serious abuse in 2024 did not reappear in 2025, underscoring the effectiveness of joint enforcement efforts. "While today's findings illustrate the effectiveness of that action to date, further significant progress requires collective action from social media companies, law enforcement, governing bodies and the gambling industry and we will continue to proactively advocate for that," the WTA and World Tennis said in a joint statement.

places ahead of next year's defence of their World Cup title. **ROOKIE FLYHALF THROWN INTO DEEP END** Coach Rassie Erasmus, always looking to tinker and surprise, has picked 20-year-old debutant Vusi Moyo at flyhalf despite only one senior franchise outing for the Sharks at the end of the United Rugby Championship some nine weeks ago. "My heart skipped a bit faster when the team was announced," Moyo said this week. A similarly experimental Springbok side was stretched at home by Scotland last weekend but did run out winners. The Scots are back home this Saturday to play Fiji at Murrayfield. England returned to winning ways when they thrashed Fiji in Liverpool last Saturday but are under pressure again away against Argentina in Santiago del Estero. If they lose, the side could slump down to seventh in the rankings. In Saturday's other fixtures, Japan host France in Tokyo while Australia look to get a first win of the competition when they host Italy in Perth.

TAIPA’s 31st Foundation Day: Leaders Call for Unity, ST Status for Six Communities

Sabir Ahmed Sivasagar July 16: Marking its 31st Central Foundation Day with a two-day grand celebration, the Tai Ahom Yuba Parishad, Assam (TAIPA) renewed its long-standing demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for six ethnic communities and issued a clarion call for a united mass movement to secure the due rights of the indigenous people of Assam. The celebrations, held at the Sivasagar Yuvalad on July 15 and 16, culminated today in a massive cultural harmony rally. Spearheaded by two elephants at the forefront, the vibrant procession commenced from the Sivasagar Boarding Field, drawing large crowds as it traversed through the historic town. Addressing an open session on Tuesday afternoon, newly re-elected TAIPA Central President Diganta Tamuli emphasized that the organization, founded in 1995 for the overall development of the Ahom community, will not rest until the central and state governments address their core grievances.

> "Granting ST status to the six ethnic communities is our primary demand. Until this is fulfilled, no Ahom organization, including TAIPA, will back down. It is high time the government takes this issue seriously and grants us the status immediately," Tamuli asserted.



Call for a United Front
The event strongly resonated with appeals for political and social unity. Delivering a compelling speech as the guest of honor, Monirul Islam Bora, President of the Central Committee of the Upper Assam Muslim Welfare Council, reminded the gathering of the 600-year glorious political legacy of the Ahom Swargadeos. "From Chaolung Sukapha to Kandarpeswar Singha, the

Ahoms provided political leadership to all castes and communities of Assam. Ahom is not just a community; it is a powerful administration," Bora stated. However, he expressed deep concern over the current fragmentation among Ahom organizations, arguing that this disunity allows the government to ignore the demands of the Assamese people. He urged the historic Ahom Sabha to take the lead in convening a round-table conference to unite all divided factions. "There is an urgent need to build a powerful mass struggle from Upper Assam for the rights of all ethnic communities, including the Moran, Motok, and Chutia," he added.

Awards and Honors

The open session, presided over by Tamuli following a welcome address by Celebration Committee President Rajen Borgohain, also witnessed the presentation of prestigious awards to notable figures:

"Ahom Pran" Award:** Conferred posthumously upon late Damchao Pankaj Borgohain, the founder general secretary of TAIPA. His wife, Ritumoni Borgohain, accepted the honor on his behalf.

Ahom Ratna" Award: Presented to international sprinter Amlan Borgohain. His father, Badan Borgohain, received the award on the athlete's behalf. To mark the occasion, a commemorative souvenir titled "**Myungkham*" was officially released by senior journalist Bhaskarjyoti Bhuyan.

New Committee Formed

Earlier on Monday morning, the organizational flag was hoisted by Diganta Tamuli, followed by a 'Maidam Tarpan' performed by Shobhan Konwar. A central delegate meeting later formed the new TAIPA executive committee, electing Diganta Tamuli as President, Sanjeev Konwar as Working President, and Shobhan Konwar and Rimu Gogoi as Joint Secretaries. The open session witnessed strong solidarity from various indigenous organizations. Prominent student and youth leaders—including Uday Shankar Mohan (President, All Assam Motok Yuba Chatra Parishad), Raju Chutia (General Secretary, All Assam Chutia Students' Union), Mahendra Dihingia (President, Ahom Jatiya Gana Mancha), and Debajit Dutta (President, Sangrami Yuba Chatra Parishad)—collectively appealed to the people of Assam to launch a vigorous movement against the continuous neglect of the state's ethnic groups. The meeting was also attended by distinguished guests, including Sivasagar District Sahitya Sabha Secretary Manoj Kumar Gogoi, ATASU Secretary Tapan Chetia, and Ahom Sena Secretary Anjan Gogoi.

Contd. From Page 1 - - - - -

3 Railway Stations of NFR to...

75 stations to be inaugurated in the nation tomorrow.

Majbat station in Assam becomes the second station after Haibargaon, among the 50 stations identified in the state, to be inaugurated under this ambitious scheme. The inauguration is part of a nationwide event covering the 75 redeveloped stations, where inclusion of Majbat, Jalpaiguri Road &Haldibari stations, constructed at a project cost of approximately Rs. 10.19 crore, Rs. 34.80 crore&Rs. 26 crore (approx.) respectively, indicates the beginning of a new transformation phase for rail infrastructure in the region.

Unlike other inaugurations, this day carries special significance as it showcases the PM's unwavering focus on transforming grassroots infrastructure and bridging regional gaps through modern connectivity. The redevelopment of three stations is symbolic not only of technological and architectural upliftment but also depicts the government's intent to bring NE India into the fold of rapid national development. It is a proud moment for NFR as well as Assam and Bengal, as it leads the state's participation in one of the Indian Railways' most ambitious station redevelopment initiatives.

The selection of Majbat, Jalpaiguri Road &Haldibari stations that are to be inaugurated under ABSS reflects its strategic importance and the successful execution of the project with a clear vision for passenger-centric modernization. With its upgraded amenities, improved accessibility and cultural aesthetics, the stations sets a benchmark for the remaining stations of the zone to be lined up for redevelopment. As the Prime Minister inaugurates this gateway to a modern rail experience, the three stations emerges not just as stations but as a symbol of progress, pride and promise for the people of Assam, Bengal and the entire Northeast, informed by CPRO of NFR Kapinjal Kishore Sharma.

Entrepreneurship Development...

under Chief Minister's Atmanirbhar Asom Abhijan (CMAAA) 2.0 today.

The programme was attended by Additional District Commissioner Smt. Nitisha Bora, who encouraged beneficiaries to utilise the scheme effectively and establish successful self-employment ventures. Today's training was conducted for the Veterinary and Fisheries sector, with the participation of 380 beneficiaries.

The EDP is being conducted in phases from 6 to 28 July 2026 for 1,963 beneficiaries who have received the first instalment of Rs 75,000 under CMAAA 2.0. The training equips participants with essential entrepreneurial skills and is mandatory for availing the second instalment of Rs 25,000. The programme is being coordinated by DICC Morigaon in collaboration with the concerned line departments.

Dr. Prakash Kotoky to Receive...

souvenir, and cultural performances, all while maintaining high qualitative standards. To foster the mental and cognitive development of students, state-level competitions will commence at 9:00 AM. These include a "Drawing" competition of the participants' choice in three categories up to Class 12; a solo creative dance competition based on Assamese songs in two categories up to Class 12; a group creative dance competition in one category; and a music competition in one category up to Class 6. Talented students are requested to confirm their participation by July 23. Furthermore, the prestigious "Sivasagar Samaj Ratna" award will be conferred upon Dr. Prakash Kotoky—a revered educator to many conscious citizens of the erstwhile Sivasagar district, a widely recognized and respected pioneer for his contributions to public and social life, and the retired Principal of Sivasagar College (currently Sivasagar University). The award will be presented during a solemn open session at 2:00 PM on Saturday, July 25, 2026, which will be presided over by Prem Gogoi, President of the District Sanskritik Mahasabha. It is to be noted that the competitions will resume concurrently from 3:30 PM on the same day. The open session will witness the presence of several dignitaries, including Pabitra Kumar Sarma, President of the Central Committee of Sanskritik Mahasabha Assam; Guest of Honor Mridul Yadav, District Commissioner; Distinguished Guest Papori Chetia, Superintendent of Police; and Dr. Samiran Bora, Inspector of Schools. Dr. Sabyasachi Mahanta, President of the Sivasagar Press Club, noted essayist, and Principal of Gargaon College, will deliver the keynote address as the chief speaker. For more details, interested individuals can contact: 8486709555, 9365911056, or 9101173014. To make all the programs a resounding success, Celebration Committee President Dr. P.P. Chetia (Prabuddha Prasad Chetia), Working Presidents Khairuddin Ahmed and Dr. Bonti Borgohain Bhuyan, and General Secretary Trailokya Dutta have earnestly requested everyone's presence and cooperation.

Contd. From Page 1 - - - - -

Guv visits Manohari Tea...

the Governor visited the tea factory and inaugurated the Tea Tasting and Tourist Lounge, which is expected to showcase the rich legacy of Assam tea and offer visitors an opportunity to gain deeper insights into the traditions and history of the tea industry.

During his visit to the factory, the Governor also enquired about the different varieties of tea being produced at the estate and was briefed on the processing methods involved in their manufacture.

Massive Fire Breaks Out in...

stack of paddy straw belonging to Dhanjit Pathak was also reduced to ashes. On receiving the information, a team from the Fire and Emergency Services rushed to the spot and managed to bring the fire under control before it could spread to nearby areas.

The tragic incident claimed the life of Ajit Pathak's pregnant cow, which succumbed to severe burn injuries. His calf and a heifer also sustained serious burns. Meanwhile, two cows and a heifer belonging to Dhanjit Pathak were also injured in the fire.

DC Nagaon Assesses Locked-down...

the labourers to hold intimate, face-to-face interactions with the affected families. During his extensive dialogue with numerous distressed workers and local residents, DC Sharma urged the community to maintain patience and fortitude during this challenging period. He assured the gathering that the district administration is actively taking all necessary steps to resolve the current deadlock and promised that all available govt. welfare schemes, relief packages, and support measures would reach the affected families in a timely and efficient manner.

Aside from evaluating the labor crisis, the District Commissioner also inspected several key locations across the plantation area, including the historically and spiritually significant Shilkhurung Shiva Than and the Bandurga Temple. During this segment of his visit, DC Sharma took stock of the structural damages inflicted upon the temple premises by wild elephants that had strayed out from the nearby Jakhalabandha forest reserve a few days ago, assuring locals that the administration would look into the necessary restoration efforts.

Cachar's Guardian Minister Krishnendu Paul ...

development works across the district.

The review focused on some of the district's most important road infrastructure projects, including the Capital Point to Rangirkhari Road, Silchar Flyover, Road up to the Interstate Bus Terminus (ISBT) and the Birbal Bazar to Silchar Medical College & Hospital Road. Officials presented detailed progress reports, while the ministers reviewed the status of execution, identified existing bottlenecks, and directed the implementing agencies to ensure that pending works are completed within the stipulated timeframe.

The meeting also discussed the progress of several other ongoing road development projects across Cachar, with emphasis on improving connectivity, easing traffic movement and ensuring better public convenience.

Among those present were District Commissioner, Cachar, Rahul Kumar Gupta, IAS, Executive Director, NHIDCL, Nirman Kishan Jambhulkar, along with senior officers from NHIDCL, PWD, PHED, the District Administration and other line departments.

Later, speaking to media persons, Minister Kaushik Rai said that the Capital Point to Rangirkhari Road, presently under NHIDCL will be transferred to the Assam Public Works Department (PWD) for complete reconstruction. He said the PWD will prepare a fresh estimate and undertake the reconstruction of the road after following all prescribed government procedures, including removal of the existing damaged surface and laying of a new bituminous road. The Minister further stated that heavy vehicles will no longer be permitted to ply on the Capital Point to Rangirkhari stretch and said necessary directions have already been issued to the Additional Superintendent of Police, Cachar for enforcement of the restriction in the interest of public safety and smooth traffic movement.

He also informed that the Rangirkhari to Sonabarighat Road, which is presently under NHIDCL will first undergo construction of a proper drainage system. After completion of the drainage work, the road will also be handed over to the State PWD for future maintenance and development. Addressing concerns over the vulnerable Birbal Bazar to Silchar Medical College & Hospital Road, Minister Kaushik Rai said that around 45 per cent of the land acquisition process has already been completed. He expressed confidence that construction of the new road would begin before August 21.

Meanwhile, he said the contractor has been instructed to immediately undertake repair and maintenance of the critical 1.9 kilometre stretch starting Friday to improve the road condition until the permanent construction commences.

To minimise traffic congestion along this busy corridor, the Minister said the Police Department has been directed to deploy traffic personnel round the clock in three eight hour shifts ensuring uninterrupted traffic regulation in the area during the repair period.

Guardian Minister Krishnendu Paul also reiterated the State Government's commitment to ensuring that all major infrastructure projects in Cachar progress without unnecessary delay and are completed within the prescribed timelines so that their benefits reach the people at the earliest.

This was stated in a press release issued by the Regional Office of Information & Public Relations, Barak Valley Zone, Silchar, Assam.

Road Accident

young man has deeply saddened the region. Bijon Bayan, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Assam Jatiyatabadi Yuva Chatra Parishad, Rajiv Bayan, General Secretary of the Bajali District Committee, Nipal Das, Adviser of the Bhawanipur Regional Committee, Saurabh Kalita, President, Parag Das, General Secretary, along with several social and cultural organizations of the Bhawanipur area, expressed profound grief over his passing.

Orang Girl's Mysterious Death...

suffering from prolonged illness and the family was facing acute financial hardship.

Family sources stated that Neha had shifted to a rented accommodation near Kali Mandir in Silpukhuri about four months ago. On the evening of July 13, she reportedly spoke with her mother over the telephone for nearly an hour and appeared to be in a cheerful and normal frame of mind.

However, reports that a party had continued at the rented premises till late at night and that the landlord discovered Neha's body hanging on the morning of July 14 have raised serious questions. The family has rejected the theory of suicide and alleged that the young woman may have been murdered under suspicious circumstances.

After a post-mortem examination at the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), Neha's body was brought to her native village late on Tuesday night, triggering scenes of grief and anguish among family members, relatives and local residents.

The incident has drawn sharp reactions from various organisations, including the Udalguri District Koch-Rajbongshi Sanmilani, the All Koch Rajbongshi Students' Union (AKRASU), the Udalguri District Koch-Rajbongshi Women's Association, the Orang Regional AKRASU, the Orang Regional Koch Rajbongshi Sanmilani, the Orang Journalists' Association, the Orang Press Guild and the Orang Satadal Sahitya Sabha. These organisations have demanded that the owner of the rented house and all those who allegedly attended the late-night gathering be brought under the ambit of investigation. They also sought the immediate release of the post-mortem report and called upon the authorities to conduct a transparent and impartial inquiry to ascertain the exact circumstances leading to Neha's death.

Tree Plantation Drive...

carried out along the roadside stretch from Khejuritol to Namti Chariali in Sivasagar district. It began with an environmental awareness meeting highlighting the importance of environmental conservation. The meeting was chaired by Brikshabandhu Samaj President Rashid Ali. The formal inauguration of the tree plantation programme was conducted by Dharmaranjan Gogoi, Principal of Nilakshi Memorial Academy, who delivered an inspiring speech on the significance of tree plantation and environmental protection.

Among those present were Devyani Saikia Gogoi, Assistant Secretary of the Sivasagar Zila Sahitya Sabha; retired Forest Officer Girin Kumar Gogoi; retired teacher Nandeswar Saikia; Pawan Gogoi; and Dronakanta Barua.

The programme was also attended by Brikshabandhu Samaj Chief Advisor Dilip Gogoi, Secretary Ajay Chutia, Namti Press Club Secretary Jiaruddin Ahmed, social workers Sadananda Gogoi, Hariprasad Gogoi, Khagen Hazarika, Dinesh Gogoi, Anima Gogoi, Mandira Gogoi, Kailash Gogoi, Shashibhushan Saikia, Shyamal Borthakur, and Biswajit Arandhara, along with many other prominent residents of the area. Each participant planted a sapling as part of the initiative. The programme received an enthusiastic response and was widely appreciated by the environmentally conscious people of the region.

Governor attends Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra Mahotsav in Dibrugarh

Guwahati, July 16: Assam Governor Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya attended the Jagannath Rath Yatra



Mahotsav organised by Shri Shri Jagannath Cultural Trust in Dibrugarh and extended his heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the devotees on the auspicious occasion.

Conveying his greetings, Governor Shri Acharya said, "Rath Yatra is a timeless symbol of India's rich cultural heritage, spiritual values, social harmony and inclusiveness. The divine journey of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra inspires people to uphold the ideals of compassion, selfless service and dedication towards the welfare of society."

Hailing the efforts of Shri Shri Jagannath Cultural Trust, the Governor lauded the organisation for

promoting cultural awareness, social service and communal harmony in Dibrugarh and elsewhere. He also called upon the youth to preserve India's cultural heritage while embracing modernity and urged citizens to make cleanliness, environmental conservation and social responsibility an integral part of their lives.

Praying for the blessings of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra, the Governor wished for peace, prosperity, good health and progress for the people of Assam and the nation.

Dibru Folk Culture Centre Concludes Ten-Day Folk Musical Instrument Training Workshop:: Renowned Dhol Maestro P M Saikia Participates as Resource Person

M Hashim Ali correspondent Dibrugarh, July 16: With the objective of inspiring the younger generation to appreciate Assam's rich folk culture and traditional musical instruments, the Dibru Folk Culture Centre, as in previous years, organized a ten-day summer training workshop on folk musical instruments during the summer vacation.

The workshop focused particularly on the Dhol Oja Chaap, Pepa, flute, Nagara, and Veena. A large number of students from the region enthusiastically participated in the programme. The workshop was conducted under the guidance of experienced folk musician Jiten Das, who served as the chief instructor. In addition, renowned musician Bhadra Kanta Das of Guwahati and distinguished Dhol Oja Pabitra Madhab Saikia of Jorhat, who is also an adviser to the Bihu Suraksha Samiti, attended as resource persons. During the workshop, Oja Pabitra

Madhab Saikia provided the participants with comprehensive

a Gandharva Vadya. Referring to the mythological origin of

hold the dhol in deep respect and devotion". Among

same occasion, the trainees formally received the traditional



theoretical and practical training on the Dhol Oja Chaap and its various techniques. Speaking at the valedictory function, which was conducted by folk culture exponent and President of the Dibru Folk Culture Centre Jiten Das, Oja Pabitra Madhab Saikia highlighted the spiritual and mythological significance of the dhol. He said that the dhol is not merely an ordinary musical instrument but is actually a "Gandharva Vadya". He pointed out that although many people mistakenly refer to it as a "Deva Vadya", according to classical tradition it is correctly regarded as

the instrument, he narrated that the dhol was created by Lord Shiva on Mount Kailash, after which Lord Brahma brought it to Earth, leading to its widespread use among mankind. Emphasizing the values required of a true artist, Oja Saikia said that purity and devotion are essential. He remarked: "Just as one bathes in the morning, purifies oneself, and lights a lamp before God, the dhol too must be treated with reverence. It should never be touched in an impure state or without taking a bath. One must always

those present at the programme were adviser of the Dibru Folk Culture Centre, journalist and young writer Ratul Burhagohain; noted cultural activist Bharati Duwara Barua; Assistant Secretary of the Dibrugarh Sahitya Sabha, Minakshi Das Barua; Dinesh Borgohain, Kamala Neog, Niten Chetia of the Bihu Suraksha Samiti; teacher Panchi Das; and several other distinguished personalities from the region. Invited guests distributed certificates to the students who successfully completed the training programme. On the

'Guru Seva' from Oja Pabitra Madhab Saikia. The Dibru Folk Culture Centre also accorded him a special felicitation in recognition of his contributions. Those present expressed the view that, in today's increasingly mechanized age, the Centre's initiative is truly commendable, as it helps create awareness among the younger generation about the history, performance techniques, and cultural significance of Assam's traditional folk musical instruments while fostering a sense of responsibility towards preserving the state's rich folk heritage.

Udita Rani Bora Emerges 'Best of the Best' at Nagaon District Yogasana Championship

Safiqur Rahman, Nagaon, July 16: The 28th Nagaon District Yogasana Sports Championship, organised by the Nagaon District Yoga Association under the Assam Yoga Association, concluded successfully after a two-day programme held on July 11 and 12 at the MY Bharat State Yoga Centre, Nagaon.

More than 200 participants from different

Jukti Nandan Saikia and Tanushree Bora were named the best Sub-Junior boys' and girls' players respectively, while Sannidhya Samir Hazarika and Jaishnu Bezbaruah jointly received the Best Emerging Player Award.

The closing ceremony was attended by Nagaon Zila Parishad President Geetanjali Hazarika as the chief guest along with several



parts of the district competed in various events, including Yogasana, Artistic Solo, Artistic Pair, Rhythmic Pair and Free Flow Yoga across multiple age categories.

Udita Rani Bora of Teliapahukata emerged as the overall "Best of the Best", winning gold medals in all five disciplines in her category.

distinguished guests. Winners were presented with trophies and certificates.

The championship also served as the selection trial for the 29th Inter-District Yogasana Sports Championship, where the Nagaon district team will represent the district.

Assam Gorkha Sammelan Condoles Demise of Padma Shri Awardee Geeta Upadhyay

Tapan Sen Gupta, Correspondent, Dhekiajuli, July 16: The Assam Gorkha Sammelan has expressed profound grief over the demise of eminent litterateur, educationist and translator Geeta Upadhyay, whose passing has been described as an irreparable loss to Assam's literary and cultural landscape.

In a condolence message, Assam Gorkha Sammelan president Krishna Bhujel, working president Prem Sharma and chief general secretary Laxmi Chettri paid rich tributes to the Padma Shri and Sahitya Akademi award-winning author. They stated that Upadhyay's contributions transcended literature and significantly enriched the fields of education, language and culture in Assam.

The Sammelan leaders noted that the demise of the noted writer, who was also an Assam Government literary pensioner and recipient of the prestigious Sati Sadhani Award for 2026, has created a void that would be difficult to fill. They said her remarkable literary creations, ideals and dedication towards the promotion of literature and culture would continue to inspire future generations.

Expressing their heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, the leaders prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Geeta Upadhyay, a resident of Tezpur in Sonitpur district, passed away at the age of 87 on the night of July 13 due to age-related ailments, bringing an end to an illustrious literary journey that left an indelible mark on Assam's cultural heritage.



SHAKTI -A Primordial cosmic energy

Whenever we hear the term Shakti, what thought prevails in our minds?

Shakti is of various forms....a universal power which binds us to the cosmic gateways. Now the next question that arises is where is this Shakti prevalent....is it something extraordinary or something normal which resides in each and every one of us?

If we dig into the historical realms of our country there are evidences that even if we may deny the fact of "SHAKTI" or "GOD" we can never deny the fact of the POWER which is present in every Human Being, may it be male or female. As a student if we understand the Laws of NEWTON-it has been said that Energy can neither be created nor destroyed: meaning whatever goes into this universe remains in this universe which tells us though immortalization is not a perseverant act it is one of the most talked topics by some authors. As a book reader myself I have been keen on having the curiosity about the fact that Is SHAKTI OR GOD real?

From the coast to the Atlantis we have genuinely heard about the NAME AMISH TRIPATHI; who in his books write about the modern form of love story between SHIVA and his divine being or better half Sati or Parvati as we call in her various forms.

So the main point of my article is that may it be Sati or Parvati or our modern generation's girls who are empowered are the NINE forms of DURGA i.e Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Kat yayani, Kalaratri, Mahagauri, Siddhidatri. and beyond these nine forms she is also celebrated in various regional and highly omniscious manifestations such as MAHISASURAMARDINI(the slayer of the buffalo demon), Kali(the ultimate destroyer of ignorance)and Jagadhdatri (The mother of the world). One name many forms as we say another question which arises is Can girls alone empower over the world? Or is Shakti enough for the girls alone. The answer to this question is NO. Even MAA KAALI needed her SHIVA to suppress her anger. Like-

wise Parvati needed er shiva and now modern generation women too need empowered



men who will help them to strengthen their SHAKTI. In the midst of MEN VS WOMEN we have forgotten about our deity's and how they used to rule centuries ago. In different yugas may it be SATYA, TRETA, DVAPARA OR KALI (The age of VICE) we have seen that there has been forms of greatness divines who have emerged and helped in killing the darkness present.

As of today's generation: The Streams we choose may it be science, commerce or Arts the belief still remains the same: The empowerment of SHAKTI, the cosmic energies remain the same irrelevant of any yugas or Dharma's.

Thus, may our belief strengthen and The Shakti inside everyone of us remain constant and that truth may always avail over "darkness".

BY-TANUJEETA KASHYAP (RUBEE)