

WEATHER GUWAHATI
LOCAL FORECAST:
 Partly cloudy sky. Dense fog/mist in the morning. Maximum and Minimum temperatures will be around 28°C & 14°C respectively on Monday, 8th December 2014.
TEMPERATURE:
 Max 27.0° C
 Min 15.9° C

Extortionist held
STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – One Jiaur Rahman (33) of Rangiya was today arrested by City Police in connection with an extortion case. Rahman had demanded money in the name of the banned ULFA, police said.



Noted Assamese film actress Prastuti Parashor taking part in a mass awareness programme 'Run for Lungs' organised by Cipla Respiratory in Guwahati on Sunday. – UB Photos

Run for Lungs organised

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – A mass awareness rally 'Run for Lungs' was organised by Cipla Respiratory as part of the 'Breathfree campaign' today. The run was conducted at GS Road starting at Bhangagarh via Ganeshguri and back to Bhangagarh. The objective of organizing the rally was to make people aware of the benefits of running for the improvement of lung health, a press release said. Popular actress Prastuti Parashor attended the run for promoting the cause. Expressed her solidarity for the cause, she said, "The root causes for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases (COPD) are smoking and pollution, and our own lifestyle has been greatly affected by both. Hence we should try avoiding both and have physical activities like jogging/walking in our lives." Cipla Respiratory had earlier organized an open lung check-up canopy activity followed by free medicine distribution at the Guwahati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) on the World COPD Day on November 19.

Manufacturing technology meet from Dec 12

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT-G) is organising the fifth International and 26th All India Manufacturing Technology, Design and Research (AIMTDR) conference from December 12 to 14. The theme of the fifth AIMTDR conference is 'Enhancing Manufacturing through Newer Scientific Concepts' and aims to bring together scientists, technocrats and industrialist for the development of manufacturing sector. It is for the first time that this conference is being organized in the North-east. The AIMTDR conferences focus on solving various core issues related to

the manufacturing sector in the country. The first AIMTDR was held in 1967 at Jadavpur University and since then it is held once in every two years. It gained the status of an international event in 2006. The 5th AIMTDR conference will witness global participation, apart from industry leaders and will be attended by a significant number of young participants. A total of 423 papers will be presented in the proceedings of the conference. A number of industries which have sponsored the conference will also be exhibiting their products and technology at the conference. The conference topics include Materials Processing, Advance Manufac-

turing Technology, Rapid Response Manufacturing, Machine Tools, Surface Engineering, Manufacturing Modelling Simulation and Automation, Industrial Engineering, Green and Sustainable Manufacturing and Metrology. Twenty-five speakers of international repute will address the gathering in the conference. Notable among them are Prof. Kornel F. Ehmann from Northwestern University, USA; Prof. Hong Hocheng from National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan; Prof. Marc Madou from University of California, Canada; and Prof. M. Rahman from Singapore. Scientist from DRDO, BARC and CSIR will also be present and deliv-

er invited talks. Prof. Amitabha Ghosh, former Director of IIT Kharagpur will be the chief guest of the conference. The names of the winners of life time achievement awards will be announced during the conference. One award will be from 'Academia' and the other from 'Industry'. In addition, a number of 'excellent paper awards' will also be handed out. NERIST Itanagar, NIT Meghalaya and CIT Kokrajhar have also rendered their helping hand in organizing the conference. Indian Welding Society is also having the academic association and WizIQ will carry out online coverage of the proceedings of the conference.

NE India-S Korea direct cultural exchange

Efforts on to set up parallel track

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – Taking its efforts to establish a parallel-track of direct cultural engagement and diplomacy between the creative communities of South Korea and North East India further ahead, The Academy of Electronic Arts, has come up with another creative venture in the form of an online catalogue of the Arts & Culture Roadshow 2014, that saw 10 artists and 5 curatorial professionals from South Korea travel through some parts of North East India.

This catalogue marks one more step in a process that we have been working upon for almost 2 years now, to establish a parallel-track of direct cultural engagement and diplomacy between South Korea and North East India," said a functionary of the Academy adding that Roadshow visit itself seeded many direct linkages between the visitors from South Korea and those they met in North East India. The Academy has already set up an experimental Research & Innovation Ashram at Rukmini Nagar to give a new meaning to creative urges. "We now also hope and expect that this catalogue will open up many more windows of understanding, cooperation, exchange, and collaboration for North East India into the future with both South Korea and also the rest of the world," said the functionary.



Poet Prem Narayan Nath and Anupama Basumatary, releasing a book 'Atmohakh' written by Bivarani Talukdar, at Guwahati Press Club on Sunday. – UB Photos

Swahid Diwas

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – Nominati Students' Union, an AASU unit, is organising 'Swahid Diwas' on December 9 and 10 at Samuhik Bhawan, Sector-II here with a series of literary and cultural competitions including chess, recitation, drawing and essay among the students, a Union press release stated. Other programmes include Rabha Sangeet, Jyoti Sangeet, Bhupendra Sangeet, dances etc.

One arrested

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – One Om Prakash Sinha (26) was arrested from the Guwahati Railway Station today for carrying an unlicensed factory-made pistol. He had bought the pistol in Bihar, the officer-in-charge of GRP Station said, adding Sinha hails from Tripura.



Om Prakash Sinha after being arrested by GRP at the Guwahati Railway Station on Sunday. – UB Photos

Fight against leprosy in State tea gardens far from satisfactory

SANJOY RAY

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – Even after years have passed since the fight against leprosy was launched in India, tea gardens of Assam continue to be a picture of Government's hollow intervention methods. Today, when hygiene and cleanliness have become the buzzwords the tea garden communities continue to remain at the receiving end of health complications like leprosy and tuberculosis, both contagious in nature. So much so that ignorance level about the bacteria (leprosy) is still high among the tea garden community and therefore the high prevalence rate. For, poor sanitation and lack of bare minimum sense of hygiene is what these people are living with for ages in Assam, especially in tea gardens located in districts like Dibrugarh, Tinsukia and Sivasagar. "The concept of alienation or segregation of the affected patient was never there and that is why the disease spreads in a big manner in tea gardens. Medically too, early detection is what we are stressing on. However, low level of awareness among the tea garden community remains a serious problem," said Dr Nayan Das, Joint Director of Health Services (Leprosy) told this correspondent. "As per a latest directive of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the tea garden managements will be asked to give a serious thought on this. We have plans to organize awareness programmes in a phased manner and even convince the tea garden managements to improve the living condition," Dr Das said. Experts believe that the age-old congested and closely-attached 'Lines' (housing colonies for the tea garden labourers) with no provision for proper sanitation or basic hygiene continue to make the community a most vulnerable lot. Although the State is going to make nearly 200 reconstructive surgeries in the cur-

rent financial year under the National Leprosy Eradication Programme, ensuring proper living conditions for the tea garden workers is far from being satisfactory. A tea garden leader said that the elderly and the children appear to be the most susceptible to the bacteria. "The problem with the elderly is grave as they tend to hide the complications out of fear and ignorance and this leads to spreading of the disease." The State, in the year 2013-14, has detected 1,048 new cases of leprosy, of which 97 were child cases. The figure stood at 1,147 in 2012-13 during which 106 child cases were reported. Senior officials of the Health department said apart from improving the housing facility of the tea garden officers, it is equally important to improve the health infrastructure of areas that covers these vulnerable tea garden population. The existing infrastructure in Habjan Block Primary Health Centre in Tinsukia district stands as a glaring example of the Government's indifferent attitude towards the problem. "In a block that is supposed to cover over 60 tea gardens, there is no provision for a vehicle for health workers (leprosy) even if that means visiting several miles to detect cases of leprosy. Further there are only two non-medical assistants posted at the Block PHC, which makes effective health surveillance a far cry. The problem therefore continues to persist," a Health department official said requesting anonymity. This in spite of the fact that Habjan PHC arguably covers a population of nearly 4.80 lakh, the highest under any PHC in the entire State. Health experts working in this field said, "There is also a tendency among the affected population to hide the problem, which is basically due to ignorance and the fear of being identified and isolated. Isolation or segregation is certainly

not a solution but awareness is a must. We therefore are trying to involve village heads and tea garden leaders in various advocacy programmes." "Once we detect such cases through the help of our on field health workers, we reach out to them. We immediately survey those living in the vicinity to find out if it has affected anyone else in the surroundings," a Health department official said. Reeta Tanthi (28) of Betjan Tea Estate in Tinsukia district who is undergoing treatment for the disease, said, "I am getting better. The patches are fading and it does not itch the way it used to. I will soon be able to go to work. Due to the patches on my cheeks and ears, I had to hide my face with a shawl even in summer." A local leader of Daisajan tea estate, which has reported the highest leprosy cases in Tinsukia, said, "Neither the Government nor the tea management gives importance to health problems. From what they get, it is hard to afford a proper house and other basic needs. People including women still defecate in open (tea gardens) and go to work in the same place the very next morning. "They (Government) have constructed some open structures, which are not worth using," he said. Like Tinsukia, tea gardens of Dibrugarh and Sivasagar too feature among those hit by the bacteria the most, the reasons being common. "The incubation period of the germ is very long. It may even take three years to show up. It eventually reduces the immunity level among the affected ones. We are going all out to make people aware about hygiene which is completely missing in tea gardens. People are not ready to see cleanliness as a major determinant for health problems. Until that is infused, the problem will continue to haunt the tea garden population," a senior health official of Dibrugarh added.

Educational symposium held

GUWAHATI, Dec 7 – Under the auspices of 'Bio-Tech' Hub' of Tihu College, a premier higher educational institute of a greater Tihu area, an educational symposium was recently organised on the subject 'The role of Micro-organism in the healthy state of plants and animals'. This was stated in a press release here. Dr Narayan Chandra Talukdar, Director, 'Institute of Studies of Advanced Science and Technology' delivered a lecture on the subject in the presence of a large number of

teachers and students of the college including Dr Narayan Ch Barman, co-ordinator of 'Bio-Tech Hub'. The seminar was conducted by Dr Kishore Kr Talukdar, principal of the college. **Yoga coaching camp:** A five-day long yoga coaching camp under the aegis of Sewa Bharati Purbanchal Uttar Assam Yoga division and Nachik Yogavidya Gurukul in association with North Guwahati Yoga Nilayam and Sankardev Bidya Niketon, Tihu, was concluded recently on Tihu Hari-Mandir premises, a press release

stated here. Jogacharjya Arupiyoti Das imparted training to the students. Besides, he also imparted yoga training to the students of Bargaon Mathurapur, Ranakuchi Naboday Vidyapith, Tihu Girls High School and the music school of Ghopa. Participating in the camp Rubul Mishra, Barpeta district Jogapramukh, explained elaborately the history of yoga education, its usefulness and its publicity in the rural areas. The general public praised the organisers for their initiative.



Litterateur Nani Gopal Mahanta speaking at a lecture programme 'Asom Samprotik Itihash aru Dr Bhupen Hazarika', organised by Sangskritik Mohasabha, Kamrup (M) Committee at the Guwahati Press Club on Sunday. – UB Photos