

NOTES

MoU between IIT-Guwahati, RGU

GUWAHATI, JULY 5 /-/- A MoU between IIT-Guwahati (G) and Royal Global University (RGU) here was signed in the areas of faculty support, joint submission of collaborative projects, joint organisation of seminars, symposia and workshops. The MoU, for summer and winter training/internship, facilitating visitors of IIT-G to visit RGU, guidance in university administration, infrastructure development and sports promotion, was signed on Wednesday. An RGU press release said here today. The MoU facilitates faculty members of IIT-G to act as resource persons for portions of RGU courses of a few identified courses of RGU, consideration of selection of a few RGU students to do their final year projects at IIT-G, the release said. Development of RGU infrastructure such as laboratories, equipment, library, internship programme for IIT-G students at IIT-G, holding of inter-university friendly matches in selected sports are the other understandings, it said. The MoU aims to boost the academic ambience and performance of the Royal Global University in Assam, it added. (PTT)

Trial run in a stretch of East West Metro successful

KOLKATA, JULY 5 /-/- The first trial run in a section of the city's East West Metro route has passed off without any glitch, an official said here today. With the successful trial run, commercial service in the 3 km stretch between Salt Lake Sector V to the Stadium is likely to commence soon. The East West Metro route is 16.6 km long from Sector V in Salt Lake City to Howrah Maidan across the river Hooghly. The first of the five rakes to be used for commercial service in the first phase went through a glitch-free trial run on the stretch on Wednesday. East West Metro director (rolling stock) Anup Kumar Kundu today said, "Rake, tracks, third rail connection and several other components were checked during the first run and were found to be flawless, he said. "This is one of the fastest trial runs among metro lines in the country with only 2.5 months having been taken from receiving a rake to putting it on trial run," Kundu said. While the Metro authorities have received two state-of-the-art coaches from the manufacturer, one more is expected to reach here within a few days, he said. "The other two rakes are likely to reach within a month or two," he said. Metro Railway general manager Ajay Vijayvargya had earlier said passenger services from Sector V to Salt Lake Stadium, which is part of Phase I of East West Metro, are likely to be introduced by Durga Puja in October this year. Construction work from the Stadium to Phoolbagan will be complete by March 2019, after which this part will be handed



over to the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) for trials, he said. Vijayvargya had said work was progressing very well and the entire project is likely to be completed within two years. The East West Metro project of Kolkata Metro Railway Corporation Ltd (KMRC) has been witness to prolonged delays for various reasons from clearances to land acquisition issues. Completion of construction of tunnels under river Hooghly in June 2017 was a major milestone for the project, which will have a 10.8 km underground corridor while the rest would be elevated section. The first phase of the Kolkata Metro in the North-South route was commenced commercially on October 24, 1984. (PTI)

Gherao at Jadavpur Varsity over admission procedure

KOLKATA, JULY 5 /-/- The members of a students' union at Jadavpur University have gheraoed Vice-Chancellor Suranjan Das and other executive committee members in protest against the institute's decision to scrap admission tests in six humanities subjects. The university on Wednesday announced that it would admit undergraduate students in English, Comparative Literature, Bengali, History, Political Science and Philosophy only on the basis of their board marks, reversing its last week's decision to hold entrance tests. The move has led to fresh turmoil in the university, with the members of arts faculty students' union staging a sit-in before the offices of Das and other executive panel officials since 6pm on Wednesday. The vice-chancellor, however, said he failed to understand the reason behind the protest. "We have been confined in our offices for over 50 hours by a handful of students, who fail to under-

stand that the decision to scrap the entrance test was taken by the executive council. I, as the V-C, will have to abide by the decision," he told PTI. The gherao is taking a toll on his health, Das claimed. "While talking about democratic movement, the students are infringing on our freedom to spend time with family. The gherao is affecting my health as I am unable to follow certain guidelines by my doctor. On Wednesday, they stopped me twice from leaving the campus." Das, however, asserted that he would not seek police help to disperse the students. "I will never call the police. Instead, I will wait for them to see reason in this whole agitation. Why can't they move court instead of gheraoing us," Das said. Countering the vice-chancellor's argument, Somasree Chowdhury, the chairperson of Arts Faculty Students' Union (AFSU), said the JU administration had been "frequently changing its stand" on matters of admission. "They (JU authorities) are toying with the future of 17,000 candidates who have filled up forms for admission to different streams. There is no way we can accept this. We will continue our sit-in till the university restores the previous procedure of holding entrance tests," she said. The executive council's decision was prompted by the views expressed by West Bengal education minister Partha Chatterjee by to have "uniform admission system" in all state-run universities, Chowdhury alleged. Chatterjee had said last November that the university should admit students on the basis of marks obtained in board exams. JU Registrar Chiranjib Bhattacharya, after announcing the decision to scrap entrance tests, told reporters on Wednesday that the council's move comes in the wake of "displeasure" among a section of teachers over its previous decision to involve external experts in the admission pro-

cedure. "There was little possibility of conducting entrance tests after addressing the concerns of our teachers, given the little time we have in hand," Pro-V-C Pradip Ghosh, who was also present at press meet, said. "In view of the uncertainties faced by thousands of candidates, we decided to go by the marks criterion for this year," Ghosh added. Education Minister Partha Chatterjee said on Wednesday that the admission procedure in all subjects should be similar, but left for the respective institutions to take the final call on the issue. Criticising the executive council's decision, a spokesman of Jadavpur University Teachers' Association told PTI that admitting students based on their marks may "lower the academic standard" of JU arts faculty. "We will have to admit candidates without proper evaluation of their writing abilities. This is a departure from the time-tested procedure," he said. (PTI)

Wanted Maoist surrenders

CHATRA, JULY 5 /-/- A CPI(Maoist) leader wanted by Jharkhand and Bihar Police in connection with various cases of murder, loot and abduction surrendered in Chatra district on Wednesday, a senior police officer said on Wednesday. Sanjay Yadav alias Bhagwati Yadav, a sub-commander of CPI(Maoist) surrendered before the superintendent of police, Akhilesh B Beriari and CRPF's 190 battalion commander, Pawan Kumar Basan in the district headquarters town, the officer said. Yadav was active in Bihar and Jharkhand for last two decades. He was allegedly involved in the attack on former BJP president M Venkaiah Naidu's chopper, which was set on fire soon after it had made an emergency landing in Pararia village of Gaya district on January 2005, the officer said. Addressing the newsmen, the SP said Yadav was fed up of Naxal activities and decided to surrender to join the mainstream of the society. Yadav was wanted by Bihar and Jharkhand police in connection with various Naxal related violence cases including murder, loot and abduction, the SP added. (PTI)

Peoples Liberation Army delegation visits Eastern Command

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KOLKATA, JULY 5 /-/- A ten member Chinese delegation visited Headquarters Eastern Command, Kolkata on Wednesday. The delegation was led by Lt Gen Liu Xiaowu, deputy commander of Western Theatre Command of PLA. Before arriving at Kolkata, the team has visited New Delhi, Agra and Sukhna. The visit is a positive step towards enhancing the bilateral defence cooperation mechanism between the two countries which would help in maintaining peace and stability along the LAC. The delegation visited Headquarters Eastern Command at Fort William where they interacted with Lt Gen Sunil Srivastava, Chief of Staff, EC, and other officers. The delegation was conducted around in Fort William and later taken on a visit to Victoria Memorial prior to their departure from Kolkata.

SC directs CBI SIT to file final reports on Manipur encounter cases

NEW DELHI, JULY 5 /-/- The Supreme Court today directed the CBI to file the final reports in four cases of alleged fake encounters by the Army, Assam Rifles and the police in Manipur in the appropriate cases by July 27. A bench of Justices Madan B Lokur, and U Lalit issued the direction after the CBI's Special Investigating Team (SIT) told the court that they have completed their probe in four cases and the final reports were in the process of being finalised. The apex court also directed that two officers of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Senior Superintendent of Police Mahesh Bhardwaj and Deputy Superintendent of Police Ravi Singh, be made members of the SIT, which would probe the remaining encounter cases. The court, which is hearing a PIL seeking a probe into as many as 1,528 cases of extra-judicial killings in Manipur, had on July 1 last year constituted an SIT and ordered lodging of FIRs and probe into the cases of alleged extra-judicial killings in Manipur. The bench also expressed its concern over the lack of adequate staff in NHRC and observed that the officers of the commission were "hopelessly overworked". It asked Additional Solicitor General Maninder Singh, appearing for the SIT to urgently take up with the Centre the matter relating to the commission's staff strength, so that functioning of the commission is not affected. (PTI)

Oppn sponsored Jharkhand bandh evokes mixed response

RANCHI, JULY 5 /-/- A dawn-to-dusk Jharkhand bandh called by the JMM and supported by other opposition parties to protest amendments in the Land Acquisition Act evoked mixed response in the state today. The bandh has been called by the principal Opposition Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and supported by the Congress, the RJD and the JVM (Prajaantik) of former chief minister Babul Marandi. There is no report of any untoward incident in the state during the bandh. Additional Director General of Police R K Malik told PTI. Asked how many bandh supporters have been arrested, he said the figures were yet to come in. The bandh has been called against amendments in the 2013 Land Acquisition Act through a bill passed in the Jharkhand Assembly in August, 2017. The bill had done away with the impact assessment clause to allow government-sponsored developmental projects. The coming together of all opposition parties for the bandh could be seen as signs of unity among non-BJP parties ahead of Lok Sabha polls. Dumka Sub Divisional Officer (SDO) Rakesh Kumar said 800 bandh supporters have been taken into custody. The bandh had partial impact in Lohardaga with long distance buses and trucks remaining off the road, according to police sources. Garwah district also saw a mixed response with 240 bandh supporters being taken into custody, according to police sources. Tight security arrangements have been made across Jharkhand in view of the bandh. (PTI)

Missionaries of Charity employee held for 'selling' baby

RANCHI, JULY 5 /-/- A woman staffer has been arrested and two others, including a sister-in-charge, detained for allegedly selling a child born to an inmate of a shelter home, run by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity at jail road here, a police officer said. Anima Indwar, a woman employee of Nirmal Hriday, was apprehended based on a complaint filed by Rupa Verma, the chairperson of Ranchi unit of Child Welfare Committee Kotwali police station officer-in-charge Shyamandan Mandal said. "One person was apprehended on Wednesday in connection with the shelter home case. Another arrest is also likely. We are investigating into the allegations," Mandal said. In her complaint, Verma said that a couple from Uttar Pradesh's Shrawasthi Shyamandan Mandal approached the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) after Nirmal Hriday allegedly took away the child it had earlier given them on May 14. The couple apparently told Verma that they paid Rs 1.2 lakh on May 1 to get the boy's custody. Talking to PTI, the chairperson of Ranchi CWC said, "The UP-based family claimed that Anima Indwar, who handed over the child to them on May 14, had called them up on July 1 and asked them to visit the shelter home for completing certain formalities. When the child was brought to the home, Indwar took the boy away," Verma also clarified that Indwar had called up the couple a day after the CWC carried out a surprise check at Nirmal Hriday, which provides shelter to unwed mothers, and seized important documents. "The couple, with no help in sight, knocked on my door for help. The boy is in custody of CWC at present," she said, claiming that a baby-selling racket has been operating from the shelter home for some time. (PTI)

Winged guests arrive at Bhitarkanika Park for nesting

KENDRAPARA, JULY 5 /-/- With the onset of the monsoon season, residential water birds have begun thronging Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha's Kendrapara district, a forest official said. The winged species visit the park in thousands during this time of the year for nesting and breeding. "The water birds, including migratory birds of the wetland in small groups. The arrival of local migrant birds has re-established Bhitarkanika as a prominent heronry (breeding ground) of the state, said Prasanna Kumar Acharya, divisional forest officer, Rajnagar Mangrove Wildlife forest division. The nesting season was only get larger when the monsoon picks up pace, he said. "There will be larger gathering of the migrant species at Bagagahana heronry inside the park, in the days to come. The birds build nests, lay eggs and rear their young in mangrove trees. Their sojourn usually lasts for three to four months, after which they embark on their homeward journey," he explained. Around 10,000 local resident water birds have so far made their way to the dense mangrove cover in Bagagahana, Acharya said. (PTI)



RJD leaders Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap with senior party leaders lighting the lamp during inauguration of 22nd foundation day of Rashtriya Janata Dal in Patna on Thursday. —UNI PHOTO

Ahead of meet with Rahul state Cong torn between opposing views

KOLKATA, JULY 5 /-/- Ahead of its crucial meeting with party president Rahul Gandhi tomorrow, the Congress in West Bengal seems to be torn between two sections of leaders — one that is keen on a tie-up with the TMC and the other with the CPM. The task seems to be cut out for the Congress chief as party leaders in the state unit continue to remain divided over the choice of an alliance partner in their fight against the BJP in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Officially the July 6 meeting has been called to discuss organisational matters, but the issues of poaching of Congress MLAs by Trinamool Congress (TMC) and formation of alliance, either with the TMC or the CPM, are likely to come up for deliberations, a senior state Congress leader said on the condition of anonymity. A report prepared by state general secretary Om Prakash Mishra, on behalf of the West

Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC), and sent to the central leadership has recommended joining hands with the CPM for the Parliamentary election. However, a section of party MPs and MLAs feels aligning with the TMC would be the best way to win the maximum number of seats in 2019. Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury, Congress MP from Malda South and the brother of former Congress stalwart ABA Ghani Khan Chowdhury, along with TMC secretary-general Partha Chatterjee at his residence on June 26, the day BJP president Amit Shah held a rally in Purulia. Khan Chowdhury had said he held talks with Chatterjee on the possibilities of forming a grand alliance in the state. State president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and other leaders of the party, however, feel aligning with the TMC in Bengal will amount to "committing suicide" for the Congress

in the state. Mishra, who was one of the main propagators of the Congress-Left Front tie-up in 2016 Assembly polls, has proposed a 21-step approach in his report to defeat the "TMC-BJP nexus", in partnership with the CPM-led Left Front. "While preparing the report I spoke to all secular and Left parties of the state. I have cited reasons to show that the TMC paved way for the BJP in Bengal by weakening the Congress and the Left. The report has been sent to Rahul Gandhi, Gaurav Gogoi (AICC in charge of West Bengal) and Adhir Chowdhury (state Congress president)," Mishra told PTI. Mishra said the report mainly focuses on the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, but it also provides a long-term plan for 2021 assembly elections. "We should not forget that although the Congress and Left Front alliance failed to come to power in 2016, it bagged nearly 39 per cent votes" he said. The 21-point re-

port by Mishra has also proposed a political front, which will coordinate and decide detailed plans, programmes and activities, including setting up of "central office point" in various parts of the state. The Congress and Left political parties will be asked to join the front, along with non-BJP political parties, organisations, trade unions, civil society bodies and prominent citizens from various walks of life, Mishra said in his report. A dedicated website, FB Page and Twitter handle of the political front has to be maintained by the members and joint agitation and other political programmes need to be organised from time to time, he suggested in the report. The state general secretary also stressed the importance of creating a strong base for the "political front" across the state by October 2018, with at least 50,000 volunteers, and sought deliberations among non-BJP

non-TMC political parties to finalise the list of Lok Sabha candidates by January 2019. A senior Congress leader said aligning with the TMC would not be beneficial for the Congress politically. State Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the party had suffered badly in the past for forging an alliance with the TMC in Bengal. "If you see the statistics, when we had an alliance with the TMC, the party had to make heavy sacrifice. And in return, the TMC tried to weaken our party organization, be it by poaching our elected representatives or by letting loose a reign of terror on us," he told PTI. Senior Congress MP from Bengal, Pradip Bhattacharya, agreed that there are divergent views over the issue of coalition formation and it was for the party high command to take a final call on the matter. A senior Congress leader from the central leadership,