

## Manipur varsity row: Former CM Ibobi slams VC Pandey's order

**IMPHAL, SEPT 3 /-** Taking a dig at Manipur University vice-chancellor AP Pandey, who ordered a ban on two associations at the institute, former Manipur chief minister O Ibobi Singh sought to know Monday if the HRD ministry was consulted before the issuance of the notification.

The senior Congress leader also asked Pandey to clarify if he has received orders to reinjoin office as vice chancellor on September 1. Pandey, who was sent on leave on August 2 over allegations of irregularities, issued a notice Saturday to announce that he has resumed his charges.

In the statement, he also said that "Manipur University Teachers Association (MUTA) and Manipur University Staff Association (MUSA) were hereby being banned with immediate effect as the Manipur University Act 2005 does not have provisions for existence of employees' bodies". The students, teachers and staff members, who had demanded the V-C's removal

for over three months now over alleged financial and administrative irregularities, threatened to intensify their protests Sunday if action was not taken against him. The agitators had called off their 85-day-long agitation on August 23 after signing an agreement with the HRD ministry, which formed a fact-finding committee last month to look into their allegations. The state government, too, had requested the agitators on several occasions to have faith in the HRD committee. Ibobi

toiled reporters Monday that both the state and the central governments had made "mockery of the issue". "When the institute was made a central university during the UPA rule, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and former Congress president Sonia Gandhi assured the state that every burden would be borne by the Centre," he said. In a related development, assistant registrar Tonsin Marring wrote to Manipur DGP Sunday, asking him to ensure that no untoward incident takes place at the institute or its vicinity in view of the fresh threats issued by the agitators. Academic activities resumed at Manipur University on August 24, following the suspension of the strike which lasted for almost three months. In statement, the protesters said Sunday that they would not allow Pandey to enter the university and claimed that the notification issued by him was "null and void". No state government official, however, could be contacted for their reaction on the matter. (PTI)

## Progressive Doctor's Association (Dental) holds 5th annual conference



**KOLKATA SEPT 3 /-** Progressive Doctor's Association (Dental) held their 5th annual conference at Dr. R. Ahmed Dental College, Kolkata.

A seminar was organized where dental surgeons across the state expressed their views on current scenario in dental fraternity. Besides, constructive feedbacks were held on solving various issues to provide

Apollo service to the patients. Various delegates including Dr. Niramal Majhi, Dr. Ajay Chakraborty (DHS), Dr. Pradip Mitra (DME), Dr. Raju Biswas, Dr. Jayan kr. Giri, Dr. Bimalendu Saha, Dr. Pradip Kr. Giri, Dr. Debashish Halder (ADHS, Dental), Dr. Amal Chakraborty, Dr. Partha pratim Chowdhury Graced this occasion by their eminent presence. (EOIC)

## Chairman, Railway Board visits Chakradharpur Division of SER



Ashwani Lohani, Chairman, Railway Board inaugurating an ambulance at Chakradharpur on Monday—EOI Photo

**KOLKATA, SEPT 3 /-** Ashwani Lohani, chairman, Railway Board and Ex-Officio, the Principal Secretary to the Govt of India visited Chakradharpur Division of South Eastern Railway. During his visit, Lohani inspected Noamundi Loading Siding and overruled the Rapid Loading System (RLS). CRB also met a host of gangmen at Noamundi and distributed Safety kits (e.g. raincoats, helmets, shoes etc.) to the gangmen as precautions to their works in the rail lines. Chairman, Railway Board visited Dangooposi, Chaibasa and Chakradharpur stations

and met with every segment of staff to have their experience and the facilities and amenities provided for them.

Lohani, Chairman, Railway Board inspected CCTV Rooms, Waiting Halls, Running rooms etc. at Chakradharpur station. Lohani also met the MP and MLA of Chakradharpur Division. Representatives of Trade Unions etc. Lohani held a high level meeting with the Additional General Manager, SER, Anirban Dutta, Divisional railway Manager, Chakradharpur, Chhatrasal Singh and other senior railway officers. The

## Nagaland requires Rs 800 cr for flood restoration work: Official

**KOIHMA, SEPT 3 /-** The Nagaland government requires around Rs 800 crore immediately for the restoration of the damages caused by landslides and flash flood during this monsoon season, a top state government official said Monday. Home and State Disaster Management Authority secretary, Rowan Mor said the unprecedented series of disaster in Nagaland has affected at least 13.19 per cent of the total population of the state and severely affected 48,821 families in 532 villages while an area of 5408.57 acres agricultural sector have also been impacted.

Mor said that the series of disasters during this monsoon season have disrupted the roads in multiple locations, rendered many people homeless and damaged agriculture. The state capital Kohima and the districts of Tuensang, Kiphire and Phek have been severely affected, he said.

The three districts of Tuensang, Kiphire and Phek were cut off from the rest of the state for about 15 days since the rains became incessant from the July 26, he said adding that about 359 locations of roads have been totally cut off sending the state into an SOS situation. Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority (NSDMA) and the department of Food and Civil Supplies in collaboration with the Indian Air Force made numerous sorties to these districts to airdrop essential supplies. Because of the disaster incidents, 12 lives lost and more than 3000 families have been displaced while properties worth crores of rupees were damaged, he informed. With the rigorous efforts of the concerned departments, roads have been cleared to some extent and essential commodities are being reached to interior areas including Kiphire district by road, he said. Union Minister of State for Home, Kiran Rijiju had arrived in Dimapur on August 5 to survey and to assess the situation. However, inclement weather did not allow him to take an aerial survey of the situation and therefore, he recommended that a team to visit Nagaland from the September 4 to September 7 to make an on-the-spot assessment of the monsoon damages, the officer added. (PTI)

## Drop in bird count at Bhitarkanika Park in Odisha

**KENDRAPARA, SEPT 3 /-** The number of migratory birds, which through the mangrove belts of Bhitarkanika National Park for annual nesting, has dropped this year, much to the worry of the forest officials. Although the visit of local birds in large numbers established Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara district as one of the prominent heronries of the state, the number of monsoon visitors has plummeted this time. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Rajnagar Mangrove (wildlife) Forest Division, Prasanna Kumar Acharya, said Monday.

"The annual headcount drive, conducted between August 23 and 30, also showed that the seasonal birds skipped Bagagahana heronry at the park, one of their preferred destinations, for Mathadia wetlands," he said. Bagagahana played host to hardly a few hundreds of monsoon birds while the nearby Mathadia wetlands were abuzz with activities of the winged species. Acharya said.

"Lack of human interference, ideal climatic condition, cool breeze and the river system has always attracted the birds towards Bagagahana. The department is planning to entrust ornithologists with the task of studying the factors for their disinclination towards Bagagahana," the DFO added. Altogether 91,224 birds were counted at the seasonal birds heronry in Mathadia, of which 39,780 were adults and 51,444 were chicks. Around 20,000 nests were spotted on 1,511 trestops, according to the latest census report.

Last year, 1,04,490 monsoon birds were sighted at the park, including 60,578 chicks. Around 22,000 nests were spotted atop 3,413 tall trees.

"The newfound birds' habitat Mathadia is spread across an acre in the dense mangrove forest of the national park. It is surrounded by water bodies that add to the scenic beauty of the place. There is ample food in the area, crisscrossed by innumerable water inlets and nullahs," the DFO added. (PTI)

## Odisha Assembly monsoon session beginning today

**BHUBANESWAR, SEPT 3 /-** Opposition parties of Odisha, the Congress and the BJP, Monday said they will raise issues such as unemployment, corruption and farmers' problems in the monsoon session of the Odisha Assembly beginning Tuesday.

The ruling BJD also said it would highlight Mahanadi and Polavaram issues in the session which has become significant as speculation is rife that the Lok Sabha and the state assembly polls would be held ahead of their schedule in April next year. The Congress has already identified issues like non-payment of insurance money to farmers, the BJD's efforts to set up a Vidhan Parishad without taking Opposition parties into confi-

dence, while the BJP would raise issues such as percentage commission in government offices, farmers' problems and alleged hijacking of central schemes by the state government.

"We will raise unemployment problem in a big way in the assembly and also shortage of drinking water. We will also force the government to address them on a priority basis," leader of opposition Narasinha Mishra of the Congress said. He said the Opposition would also seek clarifications from the government on issues relating to the setting up of Lokayukta in the state, rampant corruption in government schemes and issues of doctors and teachers. BJP MLA Pradip Purohit said the state government claimed that it

has stopped the practice of percentage commission, but it has been going on. "We will also raise the issue of farmer suicides in the assembly," Purohit said. The ruling BJD said the state government is ready to face the House.

"We will raise the issues relating to Mahanadi and Polavaram, drastic cut in the central assistance and the Centre's gross apathy towards Odisha," parliamentary affairs minister BK Arunkha said.

Arunkha indicated that a resolution on the setting up of the Vidhan Parishad would be moved in the Assembly during the monsoon session. Six bills are scheduled to be tabled in the monsoon session which will continue till September 20. (PTI)

## Search continues for missing family in Assam

**GUWAHATI, SEPT 3 /-** An Army team Monday searched the Dikhow river for the five members of a family who went missing after their vehicle fell into the river in Sivasagar district, a Defence release said. A team of 14 divers of Army Special Forces unit under the Spear Corps based at Dimapur in Nagaland started the search operation in the early hours on Monday, it said. Personnel of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and local villagers are also assisting the Army in the search operation at Dechial village in Sivasagar District. "The search could not locate the car due to difficult conditions posed to divers," it added. Heavy current of the river was hampering the rescue personnel to locate the exact area where the vehicle fell into the river, sources said. An eight-member team of Indian Navy with their special equipment has also arrived from Vishakhapatnam on the request of the state government to search for the missing five-member family, official sources said. Five members of a family are missing after their vehicle fell into a river in Sivasagar district of upper Assam Saturday evening.

The family was travelling from Sivasagar to Guwahati when their vehicle plunged into the Dikhow River after breaking a dyke at Gaurisagar Dikhowmukh, the sources said. They five were identified as Haren Bora, his wife Phnu Bora, daughters Simpi Bora and Mumni Bora, and mother Ponu Bora. (PTI)

## State Notes

### Chit fund scam accused held for misbehaving with woman

**BHUBANESWAR, SEPT 3 /-** An aide of a chit fund operator, earlier accused in scam, has been arrested on charges of misbehaving with a woman and beating up her son, police said Monday. The personnel of Kharavela Nagar Police Station arrested Subhakar Nayak from his flat near Bhubaneswar Railway Station on Monday, they said. On Sunday, the woman had lodged a complaint against Nayak. In her complaint, she said that Nayak has been harassing her for a long time. On Sunday, Nayak visited her house and misbehaved with her. Besides, he also beat up her son. The complainant had said that she was staying with her son as her husband was away. Police had registered a case against Nayak who had dismissed the allegations. (PTI)

### Nine persons arrested, 546 kg of ganja seized

**MALKANGIRI, SEPT 3 /-** Nine persons have been arrested for allegedly smuggling ganja and over 546 kg of the contraband seized from them in Odisha's Malkangiri district, a senior police officer said Monday. The nine accused persons, all from neighbouring Nabarangpur district, were carrying the ganja in slings when they were nabbed on Sunday, the officer said. Acting on a tip-off, police personnel launched an operation and spotted the smugglers near the banks of a river at Kaudiguda. Malkangiri superintendent of police Jagmohan Meena said. Seeing the policemen, the ganja smugglers tried to flee and nine of them were nabbed, he said. The accused persons had procured the contraband from Chitradakonda area and were on their way to Nabarangpur to sell the contraband at a higher price, he said. Efforts are on to arrest the others involved in the racket, the SP said. (PTI)

### Body of woman found with throats slit

**LAKHISARAI, SEPT 3 /-** A woman has been found dead with her throat slit at a forest area in Bihar's Lakhsarai district, police said Monday. The deceased, identified as Basanti Devi (25), was a resident of Rajaghat Kol village in the district, sub-divisional police officer Manish Kumar said. Her husband, Umesh Paswan, is currently lodged in jail in connection with a criminal case, he said. "The reason behind the killing was yet to be ascertained. The police are investigating the matter from all angles," the SDO said, adding that the body has been sent to sadar hospital for post mortem. (PTI)

### Two members of arms-smuggling racket held in Manipur

**IMPHAL, SEPT 3 /-** Two members of an arms-smuggling racket have been arrested at Manipur's Churachandpur district during a search operation, a police officer said. The two accused, who were arrested Saturday, confessed to have brought arms from Behrang village at the border Myanmar to Churachandpur town via Singnat, the sub-divisional headquarters of the district, he said. Based on their statements, police raided a storage vault at Sumchinum village in Churachandpur and seized two rifles and several magazines, the officer said, adding that more details in the case would be available after further investigation. (PTI)

## ER organises food safety awareness camp



Bimala Rao, president and other members of Eastern Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (ERWVO) at the Seminar on Food Safety organized by Eastern Railway at Belvedere Park, Kolkata, on Monday wherein Dr. S. Mallik, additional Chief Medical Director and other Senior Doctors of Eastern railway spoke on preservation of food—EOI Photo

**KOLKATA, SEPT 3 /-** Eastern Railway organized a Food Safety Awareness Camp at Belvedere Park, Kolkata on Monday attended by Bimala Rao, president, Eastern Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (ERWVO) and other members of ERWVO.

Dr. S. Mallik, addl chief medical director, Eastern Railway and other senior doctors of Eastern Railway conducted the awareness building programme comprising of seminars and workshops. Seminar was organized on monitoring of food safety to explain in detail various types of food hazards including physical, chemical, biological and allergen contamination.

Workshop and demonstration were also organized to provide a hand on experience on different types of food contamination and preservation of food materials. (EOIC)

## Member (Traction), Railway Board visits ER



Ghanshyam Singh, Member (Traction), Railway Board in a high-level meeting on Railway Electrification, safety, punctuality and administration of asset failure at ER headquarters on Monday morning. He had useful meeting with all electrical dept. officers of Eastern Railway, South Eastern Railway & Metro Railway in presence of Harindra Rao, General Manager and Suchitto Kumar Das, Additional General Manager, Eastern Railway—EOI Photo

**KOLKATA, SEPT 3 /-** Ghanshyam Singh, Member (Traction) Railway Board visited Eastern Railway (ER), on Monday morning. During the visit, Singh had useful discussion with Harindra Rao, General Manager, Eastern Railway and other principal officers of Eastern Railway. Later, Singh had a meeting with all senior officers of electrical department of Eastern Railway, South Eastern Railway, Metro Railway and railway electrifications.

He reviewed the progress of work concerning to electrification in Eastern

Railway, South Eastern Railway and Metro Railway projects and directed all concerned to pull all efforts to complete the Railway electrification projects in targeted time. Singh emphasized that railway electrification is being monitored by minister and is a priority item for the railways. Indian Railways is marching ahead for more and more electrification of various sections throughout the Indian Railways. All zones have geared up for rapid electrification work to save energy and fuel consumption and to

have more dependable energy efficient movement of the mail/express and local trains. He reviewed the progress of each and every ongoing project of Eastern Railway, South Eastern Railway and Metro Railway.

Later, Singh held a meeting with Harindra Rao, General Manager in presence of Suchitto Kumar Das, addl general manager and other principal heads of departments of Eastern Railway and all senior officers of Eastern Railway, South Eastern Railway and Metro Railway. (EOIC)