

## Sikkim launches free cervical cancer vaccination programme

SUJAL PRADHAN

**GANGTOK, JULY 31**—/ The Sikkim Government on Monday launched a project to provide free cervical cancer vaccination for young girls in the state. The programme was launched simultaneously in all schools. With this Sikkim is first state to start cervical vaccination; before this

second dose.

Health Secretary Vishal Chauhan said: "We today launched the HPV vaccine which will be administered across all the schools of the state government. We are trying to cover 32,000 girl children in the first phase."  
The expenditures for this cause would be met from the state exchequer. The



The launch of the programme - Shekhar Khawas

Punjab has launched the programme as a pilot project only in two districts.  
The programme was launched during the day at Deorali Girls Senior Secondary School. Named 'launching of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination', the programme was attended by Chief Secretary A. K. Shrivastava.  
The Chief Secretary congratulated the department on the launch of the vaccination and urged the gathering not to be sceptical about the vaccine. He assured that he would also attend the launch of the

government would provide Quadrivalent HPV vaccines with disposable syringes.  
Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer occurring in the state and has taken a toll of 25 till now. The target age group for the vaccination is from nine years to less than 14 years. The initial one week of vaccination will cover all schools and educational institutes. The focus of the second week will be on drop-out children or children who do not go to schools, along with distribution of the HPV vaccination certificate.

## Names of members of same family missing in NRC final draft

GUWAHATI, JULY 31

Exclusion of names of family members in the final draft of the NRC published in Assam on Monday has emerged as a major concern for many among the over four million applicants whose names do not figure in it.  
Many of them whose names did not figure in the final draft of the NRC have pointed out that they had submitted the same set of documents as their family members to establish their legacy date, but were left out.  
Prominent personalities in Barak Valley whose names are missing from the draft include Archana Paul, the wife of BJP MLA from Cachar Dilip Paul, former Congress MLA Ataur Rahman Mazharbhuiya and AIUDD's Cachar unit president Samimul Islam and family.  
Congress MLA from Karimganj (N) Kamalchandra De Purkayastha said while it is true that claims, objections and corrections can be made, exclusion of the names of some family members is "very unfair" and the NRC process has caused "immense harassment" to the poor.  
"The draft is full of errors and is aimed at harassing people, particularly the poor who mostly work as daily wage

earners and lack the necessary resources to travel to NRC Seva Kendras", Purkayastha said.  
Forty-year-old Saira Begum, who hails from Bilasipara but works as a domestic help in Guwahati, said that her name along with that of her daughter has appeared in the draft but excludes the name of her husband, who was declared as the head of the family during application and that of her two sons.  
"We were shocked to find that his name is missing from the draft. My husband and sons have to now go again to the village where they had applied to get their names included.  
Our documents were the same and in fact I had to establish my marriage to my husband," she said.  
Congress leader Bobbeeta Sharma pointed out that at least those names of people for whom there was no doubt should not have been left out.  
"The names of many, both common and prominent personalities have been left out and that is why we have a huge excluded list of 40 lakh. My husband's name was missing from the first list and has been included in the final draft but with spelling mistakes. These are

irritants," she said.  
The work has been done carelessly and should not have happened in such an important matter, she added.  
The head of Bengali department of Cotton State University, Prasanta Chakraborty said that the names of his two elder brothers have been included in the final draft but those of their wives and children are missing.  
"Names of my family - mine, my wife and my son's names were in the first list. The names of my brothers in the final draft but the names of other family members are missing though we have the same legacy," he said.  
"This is probably due to lack of competence of the people working at the ground level and maybe also due to the pressure under which they had to work to complete the draft within the stipulated period, he added.  
There are many more who are facing the same plight and are now waiting for the authorities to inform them of the reason behind the omission of their names.  
The next step will be to file their claim in another prescribed form. These claims will be finally disposed of after proper hearing, officials said. PTI

## Students' body calls for extension of NRC to other NE states

SHILLONG, JULY 31

While Assam's neighbours are on their toes to thwart possible infiltration of people who were left out of the NRC final draft, a prominent students' body of the region has called for extending the citizens' register to the other north-eastern states.  
Lauding the Assam government for its achievement in preparing the draft NRC, the North East Students' Organisation (NESO), an umbrella body of students of all the north-eastern states, has demanded that the exercise be extended to the other states in the region as well as they too faced the problem of illegal immigration.  
NESO chairman Samuel Jyrwa said on Monday: "The NRC was one of the demands after the Assam Accord. Now we desire that it should be extended to all the north-eastern states."  
He added that the other north-eastern states also suffered due to illegal immigration.

"We have seen the quantum of rejections (people left out of the NRC final draft) in Assam and the states in the north-east are extremely cautious lest these people run for refuge from Assam," Jyrwa said.  
The Meghalaya government held a high-level meeting to take stock of the situation along its border with Assam, officials said.  
Meghalaya's influential Khasi Students Union (KSU) called upon the traditional bodies and village elders to detect and report any spill-over incidents.  
KSU president L. Margang said, "Those rejected from Assam will certainly now use Meghalaya as a refuge. Unlike Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, who have the Inner Line Permit (ILP) provisions, Meghalaya does not have such facilities to detect influx."  
The Arunachal Pradesh government has issued advisories to the police department to maintain a strict vigil on all the check-gates of

the state and carry out frisking of dubious people.  
As Arunachal shares an 804-km boundary with Assam, the state government is apprehensive that many people from that state may try to sneak in, fearing deportation.  
"All the check-gates have been put on a high alert and the security personnel have been asked to go for rigorous checking of all those entering the state," senior Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Tusar Taba said.  
The Mizoram government did not sound any security alerts in view of the publication of the final draft of the NRC in Assam, a senior state police official said.  
Nagaland, which shares one of the longest borders with Assam, has also been kept on high alert. The Nagaland police has deployed additional forces in the border areas, including Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) units, Chief Secretary Temjen Toy said.

Six districts of the state - Kohima, Dimapur, Mokokchung, Wokha, Mon and Longleng - shared the border with Assam, he said, adding, "We are keeping a close watch on any possibilities of influx."  
The Opposition CPI-M said it was against the revision of the NRC in Tripura, while the ruling BJP said it did not see any possibility of Assam's NRC revision affecting Tripura's demographic balance.  
State CPI-M secretary Bijan Dhar said his party opposed the NRC revision in Tripura, adding that he had earlier clarified their stand on the issue.  
In Manipur, police are on the lookout for bamboo structures over the Barak river, which could be used by the immigrants to cross over to the state.  
Chief Minister N Biren Singh told reporters, "Vigilance along the Barak river, which flows in Jiribam district, has been enhanced and the police have been directed to cross-check suspicious individuals." PTI

## SDF to launch campaign for 2019 assembly polls

SUJAL PRADHAN

**GANGTOK, JULY 31**—/ The ruling Sikkim Democratic Front on Tuesday in a party meeting decided to launch for the assembly elections in 2019, highly placed sources in the SDF said. The decision was taken at a meeting of the central executive committee of the party under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, held at the Indira Bye Pass office of the party. Chamling asked legislators of the party to join the on-going door-to-door campaigns in their respective constituencies together with panchayat members of the party. He asked for feedbacks from party workers on the response to various government policies initiated at the village level by the SDF government.  
The Chief Minister also asked MLAs of the party and panchayat leaders to prepare within a month lists of families which had not got any government job. On Monday, addressing a state-level panchayat meeting, the Chief Minister announced a 'one family, one policy'. The Chief Minister said at the meeting that educated youths who had completed their secondary and higher secondary-level studies or had gone into higher education and had not still got jobs would get jobs in different government departments. The meeting also saw a discussion on whether opposition leader P. S. Golay can fight an upcoming 2019 general and the legal provisions on the issue.

## SKM goes on an activity overdrive

BOI CORRESPONDENT

**GANGTOK, JULY 31**—/ The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha had a field day on Monday, with a bagful of activities in East and West Sikkim, as revealed in a release issued by the Press Secretary of the party Ranjana Pradhan.  
Beginning with former BJP zilla president and candidate Pranita Thatal of Rumtek Matram formally joining SKM in the presence of party acting president Kangma Nima Lepcha, there was a flag hoisting programme at Soreng, a door-to-door campaign at Namthang Ratselpani and a public interaction at Gnathang Machong and a constituency-level meeting at Tadong.  
Joining the party Pranita said SKM was the only party working for the development of Sikkim. Lepcha expressed satisfaction at the recent



spate in people joining SKM.  
At Soreng, 18 houses hoisted the SKM flag at Oeng and Kharkabazar villages in Soreng Chakung constituency in the presence of party leader Binod Basnet. At Namthang Ratselpani, a number of ward level committees were formed during the day in a door-to-door visit at Chota

Ruchang ward.  
At Gnathang Machong, SKM zilla president Bhutia visited Bhagawati Thekawang ward and interacted with local people who narrated their grievances concerning the village. The team held a short meeting in the newly opened party office at Linkey East Sikkim.  
A constituency-level

## Centre okays 4-lane highway along Indo-Bhutan border

NIKASHI

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal has agreed in-principle to construct a four-lane highway along the Indo-Bhutan border. "The new connectivity would bring in revolutionary changes not only in connectivity, but also in trade and commerce of the areas," Sonowal said on Saturday. After getting clearance from the Ministry of Forest and Environment, the construction work for the 264-km long highway, encompassing four districts of the state, will start full throttle.  
Arunachal seeks Centre's help on road projects  
ITANAGAR: Arunachal Pradesh has sought intervention of the Union Transport Ministry for early completion of the Potin-Pangin stretch of the Trans-Arunachal Highway and various other road projects in the state. The Trans-Arunachal Highway covers 1,559 km and extends from Twang in western part to Kamubari in the east. (PTI)

## Tibet an 'inalienable part' of China: Premier Li asserts in visit to the plateau

**BEIJING, JULY 31**—/ Tibet has been an "inalienable part" of China since ancient times, Premier Li Keqiang has asserted as he hoped that religious groups in the sensitive region will continue to safeguard national unity and promote social harmony, the state media reported on Sunday. Disclosing details of Li's previously unannounced visit to the remote Himalayan region, Xinhua news agency reported that during his visit from July 25 to July 27 to Nyingchi, Shannan, and Lhasa, Li talked with officials and residents and visited the famed Jokhang Temple and the upcoming Lhasa-Nyingchi section of the Sichuan-Tibet railway.  
Li hoped that Tibet can stick to strategies and policies of the ruling Communist Party of China to achieve development and prosperity, safeguard national unity, enhance solidarity among ethnic groups, promote social and economic development, and maintain lasting peace and stability in Tibet.  
While visiting Jokhang Temple, a renowned temple for Tibetan Buddhism in Lhasa, Li said Tibet has been an "inalienable part of China ever since ancient times and he hoped that religious circles will continue to make contributions in safeguarding national unity and promoting ethnic solidarity as well as social harmony," apparently referring to the pro-Dalai Lama sentiments in the sensitive region.  
Development is key to increasing people's wealth and achieving prosperity in southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, the premier said, adding that people's livelihood should be improved through sustainable development, which should be based on actual conditions of Tibet.  
He said that the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is the "water tower" of China and Asia, where ecological conservation should be strengthened to support sustainable development in the whole country.  
At the construction site of the Lhasa-Nyingchi section of the Sichuan-Tibet railway, Li stressed the importance of the project to the development of Tibet and to ecological protection. At present, infrastructure development in the country's central and western regions is relatively weak, and promoting effective investments to improve weak links will not only narrow the gap in regional development but also be helpful for the country to cope with economic downturn, he said. (PTI)

## Nirmal Chhetri plays for home town club FC Melli

SUJAL PRADHAN

**GANGTOK, JULY 31**—/ Indian international footballer Nirmal Chhetri has started his debut match in the Independence Day football tournament at Melli Bazaar ground, South Sikkim, last Saturday. Nirmal had roped in fellow ISL and I-League footballers Sanju Pradhan, Bikash Jaimi, Uttam Singh and Kim Tshering Lepcha for the first ever match of his club. The remaining players were from local footballers from Melli constituency.  
The sight of star footballers of Sikkim and country playing before them in a competitive match energized the local crowd. Speaking with media, Nirmal said that he had started the FC Melli in his home



The FC Melli team - EOJ Photo

town last year but could not make much progress as the Melli bazaar ground was under construction.  
The Independence Day football tournament was making a comeback at Melli after a gap of some years and we thought of making a debut for FC Melli with this tournament before the local spectators. It was a wonderful beginning and the crowd was excited to see us play," said Nirmal.  
"I took the initiative of forming the FC Melli as I want to give back to my home town and society. I grew up playing football here. The club is for promotion and development of local players and would not be limited to playing Independence Cup tournament only," said Nirmal. Nirmal added FC Melli would have the maximum number of players from Melli constituency and the remaining players from rest of Sikkim and neighbouring Darjeeling hills.