

# THE ASSAM JYOTI

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## PM flags off Vande Bharat sleeper train; CM Dr. Sarma attends the ceremony

**Under NDA government there has been an intensive focus on improvement of railway infrastructure in Assam: CM**



**Dispur :** Adding a new milestone in rail connectivity for the Northeast, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off India's first Vande Bharat sleeper train from Malda, as Assam Governor Shri Lakshman Prasad Acharya and Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma attended the flag off ceremony virtually from

Kamakhya Railway station here. It may be noted that the high speed Vande Bharat sleeper train will run between Kamakhya Station in Assam and Howrah in West Bengal. It is India's first Vande Bharat sleeper train, marking a remarkable achievement for the region and for Indian Railways. The 16-coach

rake comprises 11 AC 3-Tier coaches, four AC 2-Tier coaches and one First AC coach, with a total passenger capacity of 823 passengers (AC 3-Tier: 611, AC 2-Tier: 188, First AC: 24). The train will cover the distance of 972 km between Guwahati and Kolkata in 14 hours. The train is *see page 10*

## CM Sarma distributes seed capital to over 36,000 women in Palasbari



**Abhijit Kalita, Guwahati:** Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday distributed seed capital cheques to a total of 36,051 women beneficiaries of Palasbari LAC under the Chief Minister's Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan (MMUA). The cheque distribution programme was held at Palasbari R B HS &

MP School playground at Mirza in Kamrup district and witnessed a massive gathering. "Under the MMUA scheme, seed capital has been distributed to 20,65,365 women entrepreneurs across 85 Assembly constituencies in the State, aimed at promoting women-led enterprises and *see page 10*

self-reliance." After the cheque distribution, the Chief Minister addressed the media and spoke on various development-related issues concerning the region. He highlighted that special attention is being given to reviving South Kamrup's traditional Eri and Muga silk industries. Dr Sarma stated that the government is actively reviewing measures to improve seed quality and ensure the long-term sustainability of the indigenous silk sector. "The Chief Minister also spoke about the proposed Palasbari township development, stating that planned urban growth would create new opportunities and *see page 10*

## 'Gaanor Din' Celebrated in Barpeta Honouring Musician Diganta Bharati

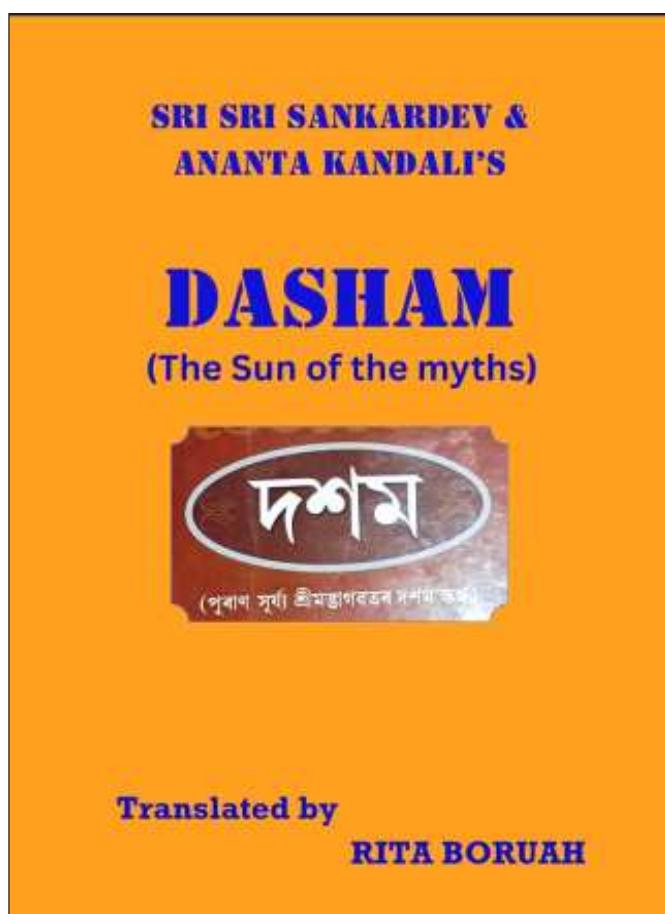


**Barpeta:** Assam's Barpeta witnessed vibrant cultural fervor on Tuesday as Gaanor Din was celebrated to mark the birthday of renowned music director, lyricist, composer and singer *see page 10*

## Two rhino calves released back into Kaziranga

**Bokakhat :** Two rhino calves were released back into Kaziranga National Park on Tuesday. The two calves were rescued from the park in 2020 and 2021. The male rhino calves had been *see page 10*

**Pad**  
(An Assamese metre)



Having not found her son, Yoshoda cried aloud,  
As losing her calf a cow moos.  
Tumbling on earth, she beat her, breast  
" Now you have been sucking my breast  
Where from the god of death came  
and took you away ?  
Whom will I call as Krishna  
O my son, the shining of my home  
What have You done with me?  
The arrow of Your grief pierces me!  
Who has taken my son away?  
Why have I not died?"  
Thus she beats her breast on earth!  
Having seen the state of Yoshoda,  
The milk maid's "began to cry  
Having not seen Krishna.  
Tears burnt their faces, they had no peace and  
happiness  
Calling Krishna aloud, they cried by looking at  
Yoshoda.  
Let us stop the matter of yearning  
And see what happened with the demon already.  
As he was flying with Krishna  
He could not bear the weight of Krishna  
And losing all strength, he stopped in the middle  
of the sky,  
It seemed a mountain was kept on his shoulder  
Unable to throw Him away, he began to shriek  
Krishna caught him tight by his neck.  
Feeling restless, his soul went out  
Void of sense, the demon Chakrabat fell down at  
Braja.

**Rita Boruah**  
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## Six new books released at Burhadia Book Fair in Chamata, Nalbari

**Nalbari** : "Rejection should never be treated as defeat; it can become the force that sharpens creativity," said popular author and young novelist Neelim Akash Kashyap while addressing writers, publishers and readers at the Burhadia Book Fair at Chamata in Nalbari on Saturday night. Despite the bone-chilling Magh cold, the fair remained lively till midnight, drawing hundreds of visitors and emerging as a vibrant platform for literary exchange and cultural engagement. The writers-publishers-readers interaction, held on Saturday night at the Gaurikanta Talukdar stage of the Burhadia Bookfair, continuing in the Chamata Pathakpara Namghar premises, saw enthusiastic participation from book lovers. The session was inaugurated by senior journalist and 'Asom Times' editor-in-chief M. Mahibur Rahman. Addressing the gathering, popular young author Neelim Akash Kashyap dismissed the notion that established publishers avoid new writers, stating that rejection of a manuscript does not

mean rejection of the writer. He urged young authors to view rejection as a guide for refining creativity and emphasised sustained practice and professionalism as essential to meaningful literary work. Munin Borkotoky Award-winning short story writer and Chamata native Papari Barman highlighted the importance of stories rooted in local life and folk traditions. The session was moderated by poet and educationist Dr. Binay Kumar Mazumdar, with several noted literary figures participating in the discussion. The programme also witnessed the release of six books, including the 'Padma Puranor Asomiya Saransh: Sati Beula' by 80-year-old author Nirupama Devi, 'Kavyanubhav' by journalist Pradeep Kumar Barman, 'Ausir Sesh Pohor' by Nibedita Dimple, and three other titles by Sonotora Devi. Organising committee president Ganesh Barman said, public response to the fair has been encouraging, with strong attendance and promising book sales despite the harsh winter, stated a press release.

## Eviction Drive in East Karbi Anglong Targets 350 Bighas of Encroached Irrigation Land

**Karbi Anglong** : A major eviction drive has been launched by authorities in Assam's East Karbi Anglong aiming to free 350 bighas of government irrigation land in the Bakulia area from encroachers. The eviction drive targets over 2000 families residing in more than 750 houses. As per reports, many residents have already vacated the land following eviction notices issued to them by the authorities. The drive, which began early on Tuesday, is being conducted peacefully so far. Over 500 police personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order at the site and prevent any untoward incident during the eviction. Reportedly, forces from both Karbi Anglong and East Karbi Anglong, with the Superintendent of Police are directly monitoring the situ-

ation. The operation is supervised by the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) with an aim to reclaim government land designated for irrigation purposes that have been encroached upon over time. Further reports suggest that a large number of residents had voluntarily cleared their occupied portions ahead of the scheduled eviction, contributing to the orderly conduct of the exercise. People were informed in advance through official eviction notices. This allowed them time to make alternative arrangements for themselves. KAAC Chief Executive Member (CEM) Tuliram Ronghang has declared that this will be the largest eviction operation in the region, aimed at clearing encroachments by non-Karbi and illegal settlers from VGR-PGR land.

## Veteran social worker Bacha Lal Gupta passes away at 84 in Hojai

**Hojai** : Well-known Ayurveda expert, businessman, writer, poet, and social worker Bacha Lal Gupta passed away at the age of 84 on Sunday at his residence in Lalpatty in Hojai, creating a wave of grief among his well-wishers and family members. Gupta was known for his soft speech, friendly nature, religious values, and frankness.

Along with his business, he was associated with many other institutions. He was a former chairman of the governing body of the local Marwari Hindi Prathamik Vidyalaya and a former member of the governing body of Rashtrabhasha Hindi High School. As an Ayurveda expert, he used to provide his services free of cost.

# Pradip Nath : A Life in Art, Cartoon, and Conscience

**(A reflective and deeply human portrait of an artist whose brush and line have consistently engaged with beauty, ethics, and the conscience of society.)**



Pradip Nath, celebrated as one of Assam's most luminous and accomplished artists, illustrators, and cartoonists, was born in the year 1972 in Changsari, a serene and picturesque village nestled in the Kamrup district of Assam. Changsari, with its undulating green fields, meandering streams, and the gentle rhythm of rural life, was more than a mere geographical location—it was a living, breathing classroom for young Pradip. The village unfolded like a painter's palette: the earthy aroma after monsoon rains, the golden shimmer of sunlight across paddy fields, the chorus of birds at dawn, and the whisper of bamboo groves swaying in the wind. The seasonal rhythm of sowing and harvest, the intimate human interactions, and the quiet rituals of village life instilled in him a deep sense of continuity, harmony, and observation. From an early age, Pradip learned to perceive the extraordinary within the ordinary, to discover beauty not only in the visible landscape but in the ephemeral subtleties of human expression and the unspoken poetry of daily existence. He was talented by birth, naturally gifted with an artistic eye and a reflective sensibility. Born to Late Nagen Chandra Nath and Maikan Devi, Pradip inherited a lineage steeped in humility, integrity, and moral fortitude. His father, a man of quiet wisdom and disciplined living, instilled in him the values of responsibility and ethical uprightness, while his mother's nurturing presence offered him patience, love, and moral guidance. The early demise of his father presented young Pradip with responsibilities beyond his years, demanding resilience, self-reliance, and an acute awareness of the fragility and depth of human life. In

## ■ Heramba Nath

contrast, his mother's unwavering support allowed him to navigate this early adversity with compassion and sensitivity. Within this delicate balance of loss, guidance, and emotional nourishment, Pradip cultivated the empathy, attentiveness, and moral consciousness that would later define his artistic philosophy, his professional integrity, and his approach to life itself.

From the earliest years of his childhood, Pradip exhibited a remarkable capacity for observation. Unlike many children preoccupied with fleeting amusements, he lingered over the minute details of life. He noticed the subtle glimmer of sunlight through leaves, the silent conversations etched on villagers' faces, the rhythm of insects in the monsoon rain, and the faint scent of freshly tilled earth. These observations were not merely aesthetic; they were profoundly ethical, teaching him the impermanence of life, the inter-connectedness of all beings, and the quiet rhythms that govern human existence. Drawing and painting became, for him, acts of inquiry and reflection—a means to comprehend the human condition and communicate insights that words alone could not express. These formative experiences cultivated a sensitivity to both visual and emotional subtleties, forming the bedrock of his artistic vision and philosophical depth. Pradip's formal education began at Changsari Lower Primary School, where his extraordinary artistic aptitude soon attracted attention. Teachers and peers alike recognised his ability to capture landscapes, human figures, and imaginative scenes with precision and emotional depth. Even in these early years, Pradip was a loving and devoted student, always showing respect and admiration for his teachers, and eager to learn under their guidance. Early encouragement instilled in him the confidence to pursue art seriously, transforming it from a private passion into a vocation suffused with purpose. His continued education at Changsari High School and Changsari Higher Secondary School saw his fascination with art evolve into an ambitious pursuit of creative excellence.

Throughout his

high school years, he continued to be a caring, attentive student, deeply appreciating and valuing the guidance of his respected teachers. These years were not merely about refining technique—they were a period of moral, philosophical, and aesthetic formation. Pradip immersed himself in literature, music, and local theatre, cultivating a nuanced understanding of human expression and cultural heritage. The synthesis of rural observation, literary engagement, and formal schooling nurtured a sensibility that married technical skill with reflective thought, empathy, and intellectual depth.

Following his secondary education, Pradip pursued higher studies at Saraihat College, before enrolling at the Government College of Art and Crafts, Guwahati, affiliated with Gauhati University. Here, he undertook the rigorous five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in Painting, graduating with distinction in 1996. These years were transformative both technically and philosophically. Pradip immersed himself in classical and modern art, mastering line, composition, form, and colour, while engaging with the ethical, cultural, and intellectual dimensions of artistic practice. He studied Indian traditional techniques alongside European modernist approaches, striving to harmonise technical mastery with creative expression. During this period, he developed a lifelong conviction that art must serve multiple purposes: aesthetic beauty, moral reflection, cultural continuity, and social engagement. For Pradip, true artistry demanded empathy, intellectual curiosity, and an ethical sensibility capable of addressing the human condition. Even as a student, Pradip's instinct for mentorship and education was evident. In 1994, he founded his first art school in Changsari, creating a space where young artists could learn both the technical and ethical dimensions of artistic expression. He personally guided students in brushwork, composition, colour theory, and, critically, in the reflective practice of observing and interpreting life. The school became a hub for experimentation, attracting aspiring artists from surrounding villages who sought not merely to acquire skill, but to cultivate awareness, sensitivity, and social conscience

through art. Over time, Pradip entrusted the school's administration to gifted pupils, confident that they would preserve and honour its guiding philosophy. In 2023, responding to persistent community requests and motivated by his enduring commitment to education, he inaugurated a new art school at Rupkonwar Academy, Changsari, with the support of Principal Abdul Firoz. Through these initiatives, Pradip reinforced his belief that art is not solely an individual pursuit but a shared, transformative endeavour that nurtures talent, fosters cultural literacy, and cultivates moral awareness in the community.

Pradip Nath began his professional career in 1997 as an illustrator for the Assamese daily newspaper Amar Asom, then edited by the eminent litterateur Homen Borgohain. These early years provided rigorous training in both craft and conscience. Working in journalism taught him to distil complex narratives, societal concerns, and public sentiment into immediate, engaging, and thought-provoking visual forms. His illustrations were never mere decoration—they became conduits of empathy, social reflection, and ethical communication. These formative experiences in visual storytelling laid the foundation for a career defined by intellectual rigor, moral reflection, and creative excellence.

From 2001 to 2020, Pradip served as a regular illustrator and cartoonist for Asomiya Pratidin, while also contributing to the weekly Sardin, the monthly Nandini, and the literary magazine Satsori. His creative output flourished during these years, exploring themes of social justice, political turbulence, human suffering, cultural introspection, ethical dilemmas, and the quiet dignity of daily life. His cartoons blended humour with profound empathy, offering critique without alienation. In 2020, he joined The Assam Tribune as a regular illustrator and cartoonist while continuing contributions to Gariyasi, Dainik Asam, and Asom Bani, consolidating his position as one of Assam's foremost visual commentators on society, culture, and human experience.

Pradip's contributions in book and magazine cover design are prodigious. From 1994 to 2026, he designed approximately 1000 covers for

*see page 9*

# Nilmani Phookan: A Pioneer of Imagism in Assamese Poetry

■ Lalit Nath  
Itakhola

Nilmani Phookan stands as one of the foremost figures in modern Assamese poetry, widely recognized as the pioneer of imagism in the language. The foundation of his poetic imagery lies in nature, which he portrays sometimes as serene, tender and meditative and at other times as restless, intense and full of conflict. These contrasting images beautifully reflect the dualities inherent in human life. Through symbols, metaphors and vivid natural scenes, the poet expresses his profound emotions, philosophical insights and the subtle pulsations of the human heart. Having spent his childhood and youth in the aesthetically rich natural surroundings of Dergaon village, nature in Phookan's poetry is never merely a decorative background, it becomes a living companion to human feelings. This deep fusion of nature's beauty with the delicate emotions of the human soul lends his work an exceptional sensitivity and spiritual depth. While nature remains central, images of human beauty, love, rebellion and other experiences also occupy significant space in his poetry. Through meticulous word arrangement and an enchanting, suggestive language style, Nilmani Phookan has given poetic form to the grandeur of nature, thereby enriching Assamese poetry with greater breadth and deeper meaning. Although influences from French and English literature, painting, sculpture and music are clearly present in his work, the highly evocative and image-rich poetic language he developed in his mother tongue remains truly remarkable. The harmonious integration of word choice, symbols, imagery, form, themes and philosophy in his poetry constitutes a profound poetic journey into the truths hidden within the poet's subconscious. Nilmani Phookan's poetic career began in 1963 with the publication of his first collection, *Surya Henu Nami Ahe Ei Nodiyedi*. Over the decades, he produced several landmark works, including *Nirjanatar Shabd* (1965), *Aru Ki Naishabda* (1968), *Japanese Kobita* (1971), *Phuli Thoka Suryamukhi Phultor Phale* (1973), *Golap Aru Kaint* (1975), *Golapi Jamur Lagna*

(1977), *Kobita* (1981), *Nrityarata Prithivi* (1985) and *Sagartalir Shankha* (1994). Later, his comprehensive collection *Sampurna Kobita* (Complete Poems, 2006) preserved the full trajectory of his poetic journey. Apart from his original poetry, Nilmani Phookan made significant contributions as a translator, introducing Assamese readers to world literature through translations of Japanese poetry, Federico García Lorca, Aranyar Gaan, Chinese poetry and more. As an editor, he compiled the important anthology *Kuri Shatikaar Asamiya Kobita* in 1977, which remains a valuable document of contemporary Assamese poetry. Through his essay collections—such as *Lokkalkapdristi*, *Rup-Barna-Bak*, *Shilpa Darshan*, *Bichitra Lekha*, *Bonphul* and *Anwesha*—he brought intellectual depth and expansion to Assamese literary criticism and art theory. The ever-inspiring green enchantment of nature, which has illuminated human consciousness across generations, deeply nourished Phookan's poetry through his meditative contemplation. Drawing from this natural inspiration, he crafted a highly suggestive and image-laden poetic language in Assamese, inaugurating a new poetic movement that blended the brevity of Japanese haiku with the philosophical depth of European poetry. Nilmani Phookan's creative achievement has enriched not only Assamese literature but the wider Indian literary tradition as well. Through the evocative use of natural elements—sun, river, flowers, smoke—he unveils profound philosophical truths of existence. The intimate union of nature with human emotions, the themes of love and separation, the sense of emptiness, death and rebirth form the core of his poetic universe. Influenced by the conciseness and suggestive power of Japanese poetry, his poems remain brief in form yet vast and deep in meaning. His work encompasses a wide range of subjects—from social suffering and the ruins of history to personal experiences and memories—creating a multi-dimensional poetic world. His imagery frequently transports readers directly into the rural landscapes of Assam, where nature becomes the embodiment of life, memory and lived experience. At times, nature serves as a

medium for inner anguish and self-examination. In response to tragedies such as the Nellie massacre, he occasionally abandons imagery for stark, almost bare language to convey the collapse of civilization and humanity. Nilmani Phookan's poetry masterfully weaves together the beauty of nature, personal pain and social-historical consciousness. His imagery reflects a poignant blend of folk culture, ancient simplicity, modern sensibility and profound suggestiveness. Lines such as

*Dhansiri paar hol-ei pothar / athoba jia maas ne jia gosor gondho*" capture the living sensations of village soil, water, and life. Nature here is not just a visual image, but a presence filled with memory. In lines like

*Gadhuli Gopalar piralit bohi...*", nature becomes a medium for inner reflection. Images such as "*Shilor saakor seca shamukiya jui / Nairanjana nodir paani ekanjoli*" evoke spiritual contemplation. In contrast, the lines on the Nellie massacre abandon imagery for stark language;

*Konu nai iyat 'shishu nari briddho*" exposes the moral collapse of civilization and the devastation of humanity. In recognition of his monumental contribution to literature, he received

numerous prestigious awards, including the Raghunath Chaudhuri Award (1972), Sahitya Akademi Award (1981), Jagaddhatri Award (1988), Padma Shri (1990), Assam Valley Literary Award (1997), Sahitya Akademi Fellowship (2002) and finally the highest literary honour of India—the 56th Jnanpith Award in 2021—for his lifetime achievement. He became the third Assamese litterateur to receive this distinction, after Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya and Indira Goswami. On 19 January 2023, at the age of 89, Nilmani Phookan passed away at Gauhati Medical College Hospital. His departure marked an irreparable loss to Assamese literature—a radiant and luminous voice forever silenced. Nevertheless, transcending the boundaries of time, his poetry continues to live eternally. Enriched with profound imagery, evocative language and philosophical vision, Nilmani Phookan's creations will remain a perennial source of inspiration and guidance for future generations of poets and writers. His poetic legacy has firmly established Assamese language and literature on the global stage, ensuring that his creative heritage remains undiminished and immortal forever.

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## AASU Observes Swahid Diwas in Duliajan; Honours Assam Agitation Martyrs

**Duliajan:** The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) on December 18 observed Swahid Diwas in Duliajan, marking 46 years since a tragic police firing during the Assam Agitation that claimed the lives of four student activists. The commemorative programme was held at the entrance of the Oil India Limited (OIL) township, the site where the incident took place in January 1980. The day was dedicated to the memory of Swahid Ajit Neog, Swahid Kumud Deka, Swahid Nripen Bora and Swahid Nagen Deka, who were martyred while participating in a protest rally during the historic movement. A day-long programme was organised under the leadership of Monjil Deka, General Secretary of the Duliajan Regional Students' Union. The observance began with the hoisting of the AASU flag by Kalyan Gogoi, President of the Duliajan Regional Students' Union, followed by a prayer meeting held in a solemn atmosphere. Members of AASU, along with representatives from various social and cultural organisations, gathered to pay homage to the martyrs. A highlight of the event was the participation of the families of the slain students, who joined others in offering their floral tributes at the memorial site. During the ceremony, AASU General Secretary Samiran Phukan formally unveiled statues of the four martyrs, commemorating their sacrifice. Addressing the gathering, Phukan highlighted the historical importance of the Assam Agitation and the sacrifices made by the martyrs for safeguarding the rights and identity of the people of Assam.

# শ্রীধৰ্মপুর্ণি হাঁচৰ্ণি



অসম চৰকাৰ

বহিংবাজ্যত মৃত্যু হোৱা অসমৰ ব্যক্তিৰ  
নশৰ দেহ মৰ্যাদা সহকাৰে স্বৃগহৈলে অনাৰ পদক্ষেপ

আঁচনিখনৰ সতিশ্যে

মুৰা মুৰ  
ৰ ঢেঁশঁ উপলব্ধ



## আবেক্ষণ্যীৰ স্যাত্ যাগাযোগ কৰিবলৈ-



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১১২  
০৩৬১-২৩৮১৫১২

- বহিংবাজ্যত বিশেষ পৰিস্থিতিত মৃত্যু হোৱা অসমৰ স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত  
এই আঁচনি প্ৰযোজ্য হ'ব
- আৰ্থিকভাৱে সবল শ্ৰেণী বা নিজাৰবীয়াকে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিব পৰা লোকৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত এই আঁচনি  
প্ৰযোজ্য নহ'ব
- চিকিৎসাৰ বাবে বহিংবাজ্যালৈ যোৱা বোগীসকলক এই আঁচনিত সামৰি লোৱা নহ'ব
- আঁচনিখন ক'পায়ণত গৃহ আৰু বাজৈনেতিক বিভাগৰ তত্ত্বাৰধানত অসম আৰক্ষীয়ে  
সমন্বয় বক্ষা কৰিব



# Saving Kaziranga : The Elevated Highway That Protects Wildlife

■ **Satyabrat Borah**

Nestled in the floodplains of the mighty Brahmaputra River in Assam, Kaziranga National Park stands as one of India's most precious natural treasures. This UNESCO World Heritage Site spans roughly 430 square kilometers across Nagaon and Golaghat districts, offering a sanctuary to an extraordinary array of wildlife. It shelters the world's largest population of the greater one-horned rhinoceros, with over two thousand of these magnificent creatures roaming its grasslands and wetlands. Beyond rhinos, the park is home to tigers, elephants, wild water buffalo, swamp deer, hog deer, and a dazzling variety of birdlife nearing five hundred species. The landscape itself is a dynamic mosaic of tall grasslands, beels or seasonal wetlands, riverine forests, and scattered elevated patches known as chaporis that serve as refuges during the annual deluges.

Every monsoon, from June through September, heavy rains in the region and upstream in Arunachal Pradesh swell the Brahmaputra, inundating much of the park. Floodwaters can submerge seventy to eighty percent of the area for days or even weeks at a time. While moderate flooding nourishes the ecosystem by replenishing wetlands and depositing nutrient-rich silt, excessive inundation forces animals to seek higher ground. For many species, that means migrating southward across what has long been a perilous barrier: National Highway 715, formerly known as NH-37. This vital roadway connects Guwahati, the state capital, to eastern Assam and beyond, linking towns, industrial hubs, and tourist destinations. Yet for wildlife, it represents a deadly divide.

The highway runs parallel to the park's southern boundary, separating the low-lying floodplains from the forested hills of Karbi Anglong. Animals instinctively follow ancient migratory paths to reach these safer elevations, crossing at nine identified natural corridors where the terrain allows easier passage. During peak flood seasons, herds of hog deer, wild boar, elephants, and even the occasional rhino venture onto the tarmac. Speeding vehicles, often traveling at high speeds day and night, turn these

crossings into tragic encounters. Conservation records paint a heartbreakingly picture of the toll. Over recent years, dozens of large mammals have perished in vehicle collisions near the park. Between 2020 and 2024, at least eighty-two such incidents claimed lives, including endangered hog deer, elephants, and rhinos. The year 2022 saw a particularly grim peak with twenty-two deaths, while flood seasons routinely add to the count as desperate animals attempt to flee rising waters.

These losses extend beyond individual tragedies; they threaten the delicate balance of populations already under pressure from poaching, habitat fragmentation, and climate-driven changes in flood patterns. The highway's two-lane configuration, narrow right-of-way in places, and poor geometric design exacerbate the risks. Heavy traffic, estimated at thousands of passenger car units daily, flows relentlessly, with little regard for the nocturnal or flood-driven movements of wildlife. Drivers, often unaware or unable to react in time, contribute to a cycle of mortality that conservationists have long described as one of the gravest man-made threats to Kaziranga's inhabitants.

Efforts to mitigate this conflict have evolved over time. Authorities have implemented speed restrictions, installed warning signs, and deployed sensor-based cameras in some corridors to monitor vehicle speeds. During severe floods, temporary measures like time-bound traffic regulations aim to create safer windows for crossings. Yet these steps address symptoms rather than the root cause: the physical intersection of a high-volume arterial road with irreplaceable wildlife pathways. The need for a more permanent, structural solution became increasingly evident, prompting discussions among forest officials, highway planners, and environmental experts.

Enter the Kaziranga Elevated Corridor, a groundbreaking initiative that promises to redefine the relationship between infrastructure and conservation in one of India's most biodiverse regions. Approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in October 2025 at an estimated cost of Rs 6,950 crore (with slight variations in reported figures around Rs 6,957 crore), the project encompasses the widen-

ing and upgrading of the 85.67-kilometer Kaliabor-Numaligarh section of NH-715 to four lanes. At its heart lies a 34.5-kilometer elevated corridor specifically designed to span the sensitive stretch adjacent to and through the park's southern boundary.

The elevated structure will rise above the ground, creating a viaduct that allows vehicles to travel uninterrupted while leaving the space beneath open and unobstructed for animal movement. This design draws inspiration from successful wildlife-friendly highways elsewhere in India, such as those in other national parks where overpasses or elevated sections have dramatically reduced roadkill. By covering all nine identified animal corridors, the corridor ensures that elephants can lead their herds, rhinos can wander, and deer can flee floods without ever stepping onto asphalt. The open underpass will maintain natural light, vegetation continuity, and auditory cues, minimizing disruption to migratory behavior.

The project extends beyond the elevated portion. It includes upgrading 30.22 kilometers of existing roadway and constructing approximately 21 kilometers of greenfield bypasses around the towns of Jakhalabandha and Bokakhat. These diversions will reroute through-traffic away from congested urban stretches, further reducing pressure on the park-adjacent highway. The overall alignment integrates with other major routes like NH-127, NH-129, and State Highway-35, promising smoother connectivity between Guwahati, Kaziranga's tourism hubs, and industrial centers like Numaligarh. Travel times will shorten, safety for commuters will improve, and economic opportunities in trade, tourism, and employment will expand. Officials estimate the construction phase alone will generate millions of person-days of direct and indirect jobs, benefiting local communities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi performed the bhoomi pujan or groundbreaking ceremony for the project in January 2026, signaling strong governmental commitment to this dual-purpose endeavor. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has hailed it as a game-changer, a model of human-animal coexistence where development rises literally above conservation needs.

Forest officials emphasize that the corridor will not only curb vehicle-related deaths but also reduce broader human-wildlife conflicts by allowing freer movement and less straying into human settlements.

Of course, such an ambitious undertaking has not been without debate. Some environmental voices have raised concerns about potential ecological impacts during construction, including noise, vibrations, and temporary habitat disturbances that could affect breeding or movement patterns. A few have urged thorough assessments by international bodies like UNESCO to ensure compliance with World Heritage guidelines. Others point to the scale of intervention in a sensitive ecosystem and question long-term effects on soil, hydrology, or microhabitats beneath the structure. Proponents counter that careful planning, wildlife-friendly engineering, and minimal construction windows during non-monsoon periods can mitigate these risks. The project's alignment avoids core zones where possible, and lessons from similar viaducts suggest that once operational, benefits far outweigh temporary disruptions.

As the project moves forward, it embodies a hopeful shift in how India approaches infrastructure in ecologically fragile areas. Kaziranga's animals have survived floods, poachers, and changing climates for generations, but the relentless advance of roads and vehicles posed a modern threat that traditional measures could no longer contain. By elevating the highway, the corridor literally lifts human activity above the natural world, granting wildlife the freedom to follow ancient instincts without paying the ultimate price.

In time, travelers speeding along the new four-lane route may glance down to see herds grazing peacefully or elephants moving unhurriedly toward the hills, safe beneath the shadow of progress. For Kaziranga, this could mark the beginning of a new era where connectivity strengthens rather than severs the bonds of its ecosystem. The elevated corridor stands as more than steel and concrete; it represents a commitment to harmony, ensuring that one of the planet's last great strongholds for the one-horned rhino and countless other species endures for generations to come.

# Karbi Community Celebrate Post-Harvest Festival 'Hacha Kekan' with Traditional Fervour



**Kheroni:** The traditional post-harvest festival of the Karbi community, known as 'Hacha Kekan', was celebrated with great enthusiasm and cultural fervour on Monday night at Kheroni Chari Ali in West Karbi Anglong district. The festival symbolizes the welcoming of Goddess Lakshmi to households after the harvest of paddy and jhum crops. Traditional songs, music and dance performances by Karbi youths

marked the occasion. 'Hacha Kekan', which means the post-harvesting festival, is an old-age tradition of the Karbi tribe. Traditionally, the festival was observed at the village level or even individually by families after harvesting crops from farmlands or hill-based jhum cultivation. Over time, with the objective of showcasing Karbi culture on a broader platform, the Karbi Cultural Society has been making sus-

tained efforts to bring this festival into the public domain. As a result, the celebration of Hacha Kekan is now being organised across various locations in the two hill districts of Karbi Anglong, gradually gaining wider recognition. The festival is characteristically celebrated during nighttime and has recently received appreciation beyond the Karbi community. People from different communities and religions now participate in the celebrations, reflecting communal harmony and cultural inclusivity. The event was organised under the initiative of the BJP ST Morcha at Kheroni. Local artists showcased traditional Karbi folk songs, musical instruments, and dances, creating a festive atmosphere filled with joy and unity.

## Adult Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccination drive launched in Sonitpur



**Tezpur :** The Adult Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccination programme was inaugurated on January 19, at the Sonitpur District Commissioner's Office premises. The important public health initiative was organized under the chairmanship of Tezpur MLA Prithiraj Rava. The programme was attended by District Commissioner Anand Kumar Das, additional district commissioners, senior officials from the Health and Fam-

ily Welfare Department, district health authorities, representatives of UNDP and NHM, heads of various government departments, journalists, and a large number of health workers. The vaccination drive was jointly inaugurated by the MLA and the district commissioner. Addressing the gathering, MLA Prithiraj Rava highlighted the seriousness of Japanese Encephalitis and described vaccination as the most effective and reliable means of prevent-

tion. He urged citizens to overcome fear and misconceptions and to avail the free JE vaccine provided by the government. Emphasizing collective responsibility, he said that vaccination was essential not only for individual safety but also for protecting the wider community. He called upon citizens, social organizations, and local leaders to work together to make Sonitpur a JE-free district. District Commissioner Anand Kumar Das stressed the importance of public awareness, stating that JE is a life-threatening viral disease which mainly spreads through mosquito bites, with higher incidence in rural and agriculture-based areas. He appealed to all eligible citizens between 15 and 65 years of age to participate actively in the vaccination campaign.

# NRL completes world's longest HDD crossing for crude oil pipeline in the Brahmaputra



**Bokakhat :** Numaligarh Refinery Ltd (NRL) has achieved a historic milestone on January 17 under the PNCPL Project with the successful completion of the Brahmaputra River HDD crossing—the world's longest river crossing for a 26-inch crude oil pipeline. NRL announced the successful completion of the Brahmaputra River crossing using advanced Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) technology with intersection methodology, spanning a length of 4,058 meters, marking a significant achievement under the Paradip-Numaligarh Crude Oil Pipeline (PNCPL) Project, a key component of the Numaligarh Refinery Expansion Project (NREP). Despite challenging geographical constraints of accessibility and site conditions, the project teams showcased exceptional technical capability, meticulous planning, and sustained execution to accomplish this significant crossing. NRL stated that the achievement reflected effective teamwork among NRL, EIL, and M/s Trenchless, supported by synchronized actions across various departments, and active support from district administration and public at large.

## Chandubi bird census begins with wide participation



**Deepshikha Nath, Chhayaon :** The annual Chandubi bird census was held on January 12 with the participation of a wide range of experts, researchers, forest officials and local residents. The census witnessed the involvement of specialists from the Assam Bird Monitoring Group, Banyabandhu and AWRRO, along with researchers from the Department of Zoology, Gauhati University. "Forest officials from the Loharghat Range actively took part in the exercise, ensuring smooth coordination and systematic data collection throughout the census period. Local residents from areas surrounding Chandubi, including members of the Navariya community, also joined hands with the experts to support the initiative. The census aims to monitor the population, diversity and distribution of bird species in the Chandubi region, which is well known for its rich avian biodiversity. Participants recorded bird sightings across various locations over several days, contributing valuable data for scientific research and conservation planning. The collaborative effort of scientists, forest personnel and the local community reflects a growing awareness and commitment towards the protection and conservation of Assam's unique birdlife."

# Bajali schoolboy builds fully functional electric model of Chandrayaan-3



**Bajali** : A 15-year-old schoolboy from Bajali district has drawn widespread admiration for his remarkable creativity and innovation after building fully functional electric toy models of Chandrayaan-3, JCB, tractor, dumper, jeep, ship, camera stand made from Bamboo, and several other vehicles using locally available materials such as cardboard boxes. The young innovator, Rahul Talukdar, is a Class 9 student of Swahid Akhendra Uccha Madhyamik Vidyalaya, a government school in Bajali. He is the son of Dipak Talukdar, an e-rickshaw driver, and Kanaklata Talukdar, residents of Doloi Gaon-Halgiri Ghat village in Bajali district. Coming from a financially poor family, Rahul's achievement stands as a powerful example of determination triumphing over

hardship. Despite limited resources, Rahul has shown a deep passion for science, mechanics, and innovation from an early age. His electric models reflect not only creativity but also a sound understanding of basic engineering and electrical principles. Inspired by India's historic Chandrayaan-3 mission and the agricultural and construction machinery he observes in everyday rural life, Rahul transformed simple ideas into impressive working models through self-learning, curiosity, and dedication. He is also interested in playing the Nagara at various programmes and earns money by performing with it. Teachers, classmates, and local residents have praised his work, calling it a matter of pride for Bajali and a shining example of the hidden talent present in rural Assam. His achieve-

ment has renewed discussions on the importance of identifying and nurturing young innovators by providing them with proper guidance, platforms, and financial assistance. Many believe that with the right encouragement and mentorship, Rahul has the potential to become a future engineer or scientist who could contribute meaningfully to the nation. Local residents and educators have appealed to Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma and Education Minister Dr Ranjan Pegu to take note of the young talent and extend necessary support, encouragement, and opportunities so that such rural innovations can be nurtured and showcased on a larger platform. A teacher from the school said, "He is a very curious and hardworking student with a strong interest in science and innovation. Despite limited resources, he has demonstrated exceptional creativity and problem-solving skills. We feel proud of his work and strongly believe that with proper guidance, he can reach a much larger platform and bring pride to Assam and the nation."

## Orang to host grand celebration of 516th Bir Mahabir Chilarai Day

**Orang** : Elaborate preparations are underway in Orang for the grand observance of the 516th Bir Mahabir Chilarai Day, scheduled to be held on January 31 and February 1. The two-day programme is being jointly organized by the Udaguri District Koch-Rajbongshi Sanmilani and the Orang Anchalik Koch-Rajbongshi Sanmilani. One of the main highlights of the celebration will be a spectacular mass Kushaan dance performance by nearly 1,000 young women, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and traditions of the Koch-Rajbongshi community. As part of the preparations, a ceremonial Laikhuta programme was organized on

January 2. Following this, a special general meeting was held on January 18 at the Kalmuni Das Memorial Coordination Field in Bogoribari, named after Late freedom fighter Kalmuni Das. The meeting was attended by advisors, executive members, office bearers from district and regional committees, women's wing representatives, and members associated with the souvenir publication committee. It was presided over by District President Maheshwar Das, while the objectives of the meeting were explained by General Secretary Braj Deka. Detailed discussions were held on the overall preparations for the upcoming celebration.

## Press Meet of Pechhengbar Heritage Held in Bokakhat

Annual Awards of Pechhengbar Heritage Announced



**Arindam Bapanash, Bokakhat** : In connection with Republic Day, one of Bokakhat's prominent social and cultural organisations, Pechhengbar Heritage, has announced the organisation of the 34th edition of "Pechhengbar Eniha-2026" on 28 January. The programme is being organised with the cooperation of New Gaon Yuva Sangha, Bokakhat, and the Kailakhat Natya Mandir Management Committee. As in previous years, seven annual awards and honours of Pechhengbar Heritage will be conferred during the event. "Ahead of the programme, a press conference was held on Sunday afternoon at the Water Resources Department Circuit House, Bokakhat, organised by Pechhengbar Heritage. The press meet was addressed by Rajiv Bora, President of Pechhengbar Heritage; Ratneswar Marang, Chief Secretary; and Advisor and internationally acclaimed film director Anupam Bordoloi. During the press conference, President Rajiv Bora formally announced the details of the 34th "Pechhengbar Eniha-2026" programme along with the list of awardees for the year 2026. The Pechhengbar Heritage Annual Awards-2026 have been announced as follows: "Khagendra Nath Bora Memorial Pechhengbar Heritage Janakantha Award-2026 (Journalism): Senior journalist Bhabananda Kalita of Bokakhat. "Mohini Chetia Memorial Pechhengbar Heritage Prakritibandhu Award-2026 (Nature Conservation): Nature lover Manoj Gogoi of Kaziranga. "Komal Chandra Loing Memorial Pechhengbar Heritage Janaseva Award-2026 (Social Service): Chairman of Assam Duck and Poultry Development Corporation and noted social worker Manoj Saikia. Shukleswar Bharali and Binapani Bharali Memorial Pechhengbar Heritage Lifetime Cultural Achievement Award-2026: Eminent music director of Assam Biman Baruah. Renuprabha Mahanta Memorial Pechhengbar Heritage Dinabandhu Award-2026 (Medical Service): Eminent physician of Bokakhat Dr. Pulin Chandra Borkotoki. Pechhengbar Heritage Sajidur (Papu) Rahman Memorial Cultural Eminence Honour-2026: Nationally acclaimed sculptor, visual artist, actor, playwright and theatre director Mano Bora. Pechhengbar Heritage Sajidur (Papu) Rahman Memorial Young Entrepreneur Award-2026: Emerging businessman of Bokakhat Deba Pratim Bora. "The detailed programme schedule for the event to be held on 28 January was also announced during the press conference. Among others, Hariman Bora, Advisor of Pechhengbar Heritage, was present at the press meet.

Continue from page no 3

eminent Assamese literature, collaborating with celebrated writers including Homen Borgohain, Dr. Hiren Gohain, Dr. Rita Chowdhury, Anuradha Sharma Pujari, and Dr. Arupa Patangia Kalita. Five of these works received the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award, reflecting the synergy between his visual interpretations and literary essence. Each cover is a deliberate, considered composition, translating intricate narratives, themes, and moods into visual language that deepens the reader's engagement with the text. Through these works, Pradip exemplifies a rare ability to bridge literature and visual art, elevating the written word through the power of image.

His versatility extends into animation and telefilms, reflecting his capacity to integrate imagination, technical skill, and cultural storytelling. Notable works include the animated project *Bubu's Dream* (2001) for Doordarshan, Guwahati, inspired by a song by Zubeen Garg, and the telefilm *A Japanese Girl*, directed by Manju Bora for Doordarshan, Delhi. These projects translated literary and musical expression into visual narratives, blending rhythm, symbolism, and ethical reflection. His animation work demonstrates a commitment to creating art that communicates moral and cultural ideas, rather than simply visual spectacle. Pradip has also showcased his work internationally, highlighting both the universality and specificity of his vision. He participated in exhibitions in Moscow, Russia, presenting his paintings to collectors, critics, and enthusiasts, where his integration of traditional Assamese motifs with contemporary techniques garnered admiration. At Cairo University, Egypt, he conducted painting workshops, sharing his philosophy and techniques with students and emerging artists, fostering intercultural dialogue and inspiration. His exhibitions in London further confirmed the global resonance of Assamese art and the universal appeal of his creative philosophy.

Domestically, Pradip's exhibitions at the State Art Gallery, Guwahati have become landmark cultural events. These shows attract critics, art enthusiasts, and distinguished personalities from Assam's literary, musical, and cultural spheres. Among notable attendees have been celebrated musicians Angaraag Mahanta, popularly known as Papon, and Zubeen Garg, whose presence underscores the admiration

## Pradip Nath : A Life in Art, Cartoon, and Conscience

Pradip commands across disciplines. Eminent litterateur Homen Borgohain has also attended, signalling the profound connection between Pradip's art and Assamese literary heritage. Visitors consistently remark on the emotional depth, symbolic resonance, and contemplative quality of his paintings, where every brushstroke, colour, and motif conveys aesthetic beauty alongside ethical and philosophical reflection. Beyond the canvas, Pradip's personal presence is enchanting. He often communicates with a mild smile on his lips, a cute expression on his face, and a gentle, endearing talking style. He is naturally charming, approachable, and exudes warmth, making him instantly beloved by students, colleagues, and admirers alike. Whether teaching, mentoring, exhibiting, or engaging socially, he embodies a rare combination of artistic mastery, moral integrity, and personal charisma that commands respect and admiration.

In recognition of his extraordinary contributions, Pradip Nath was awarded the Tarani Kanta Barman Award in 2022, presented by Bimal Bora, then Cultural Minister of Assam. This award honours his artistic excellence, dedication to nurturing talent, and promotion of Assamese culture nationally and internationally. It stands as both recognition of his mastery and affirmation of his lifelong commitment to art as a moral and cultural enterprise.

Pradip's paintings are distinguished by an expressive and assured brushwork that speaks as much through silence as through colour. His canvases pulse with vibrant hues, yet never descend into mere decoration; each colour is chosen with deliberation, each stroke guided by an inner logic rooted in emotion, ethics, and lived experience. Surrealist elements frequently surface in his compositions, not as stylistic indulgence but as a philosophical language through which he examines the layered realities of human existence. Faces appear contemplative, bodies seem suspended between worlds, and landscapes often blur the boundary between the real and the imagined, reflecting the fragile, uncertain, and deeply vulnerable nature of life itself. Through these visual narratives, Pradip explores themes of human fragility and resilience, the inevitability of mortality, ethical dilemmas that confront society, and the increasingly strained yet inseparable relationship between humans and the natural world.

Among the most recognisable features of his visual language is the recurring motif of three leaves and a branch. This symbol, subtle yet persistent, represents continuity across generations, the quiet resilience of life, and the interconnection between past, present, and future. It suggests growth that is organic rather than forceful, survival rooted in harmony rather than dominance. Equally deliberate is his use of the colour red, which appears across different phases of his work as a signifier of intensity, emotional depth, passion, sacrifice, and vitality. Red in Pradip's art is never ornamental; it is a pulse, a reminder of life's urgency and its moral weight. Together, these motifs lend his paintings a contemplative coherence, inviting viewers to pause, reflect, and engage inwardly rather than merely observe.

As a cartoonist, Pradip Nath demonstrates a rare balance of satire, humour, and empathy. His cartoons do not ridicule for the sake of laughter, nor do they moralise with harshness. Instead, they gently yet firmly expose contradictions within society, politics, and human behaviour. With economy of line and clarity of thought, he addresses contemporary social, political, and cultural issues, provoking reflection without alienation. His humour is humanised, often tinged with compassion, allowing even sharp critique to remain accessible and thought-provoking. Through this visual commentary, he creates a space for dialogue and awareness, reminding readers that humour can be a powerful instrument of truth when guided by conscience.

Underlying all of Pradip's artistic expressions is a deeply held conviction that aesthetic beauty and moral insight are inseparable. For him, art is not an escape from reality but a means of engaging with it more honestly and sensitively. Whether through painting, illustration, or cartoon, his work affirms that visual poetry, ethical questioning, and social responsibility can coexist harmoniously. His art does not shout; it listens, observes, and then speaks with quiet authority, illuminating truths that might otherwise remain unseen.

Through decades of unwavering dedication, Pradip Nath has emerged as one of Assam's most respected and beloved cultural figures. His journey—from the quiet lanes and rural rhythms of Changsari to the demanding worlds of newspapers, literary circles, international exhibitions,

and creative workshops—stands as a testament to the transformative power of talent guided by empathy, moral reflection, and perseverance. He has never severed his roots while reaching outward; instead, he has carried the sensibilities of his birthplace into every sphere he has entered, enriching them with authenticity and cultural depth. His life and work collectively affirm that true artistic success lies not merely in recognition but in sustained integrity and meaningful contribution.

We extend our heartfelt wishes to Pradip Nath for enduring health, creative fulfilment, and personal serenity in the years ahead. May his days continue to be guided by the quiet discipline and inner balance that have long shaped both his life and his art. As time deepens experience, may his vision mature with wisdom, allowing his work to grow ever more contemplative, humane, and resonant with truth. May his integrity, which has remained uncompromised through decades of artistic and professional engagement, continue to stand as a moral compass in a world often tempted by expedience over principle.

May his unwavering dedication to art and education keep inspiring future generations of artists, thinkers, and visual storytellers, encouraging them to pursue creativity not merely as a profession but as a path of responsibility and ethical awareness. Through his mentorship, teaching, and example, may young talents find both confidence and conscience, learning to see the world with sensitivity, empathy, and intellectual honesty. May his art schools, classrooms, illustrations, and canvases continue to function as spaces of learning, reflection, and cultural continuity.

As his work travels beyond geographical and linguistic boundaries, may it further enrich Assam's cultural landscape while also resonating across borders, speaking to universal human experiences through a distinctly local voice. May his visual language continue to bridge generations, disciplines, and cultures, reinforcing the belief that art rooted in authenticity and compassion can illuminate shared truths. In this enduring journey, may Pradip Nath leave behind a legacy not measured solely by awards or recognition, but by the lives he has touched, the minds he has shaped, and the quiet yet lasting imprint of conscience, beauty, and reflective thought that defines his remarkable contribution to art and society.

**From page 1**

## PM flags off Vande Bharat sleeper train; CM Dr. Sarma attends the ceremony

scheduled to depart from Kamakhya at 18:15 hrs, and reach Howrah at 08:15 hrs on the next morning. In the return trip, the train is scheduled to depart from Howrah at 18:20 hrs, and reach Kamakhya at 08:20 hrs the next day. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr. Sarma said that North Eastern Region once considered as periphery, has now been transformed into a centre of importance with improved modes of connectivity. Thanks to the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who brought North East at the centre of all important government priorities, Dr. Sarma stated. The Chief Minister on the occasion also thanked the Prime Minister for flagging off the first Vande Bharat sleeper between Kamakhya and Howrah. Introduction of the train will augur well in revolutionizing the rail connectivity in the region. He expressed hope that the train will definitely further strengthen the bond of friendship and boost cultural and religious tourism of the both the states. Dr. Sarma moreover said that under the NDA government there has been an intensive focus on improvement of the railway infrastructure in Assam and other Northeastern states in recent years. He said that the transport and logistics infrastructure in Assam is crucial for economic development of the region considering Assam's geo-strategic location in the country. He also said that the focus of the Centre can be clearly seen from the series of development activities, ushering a new connectivity revolution in the region. He in this regard also expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister who will also flag off two Amrit Bharat Express Trains from Kaziranga on Sunday. Minister Environment and Forests Chandra Mohan Patowary, Union Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita, MPs Bijuli Kalita Medhi, Pradan Baruah, Bhubaneswar Kalita, MLA Atul Bora, GM NF Railway Chetan Kumar Srivastava and host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion at the Kamakhya Railway station.

## ‘Gaanor Din’ Celebrated in Barpeta

Diganta Bharati. Traditionally held in Guwahati, this year the event was organised in Barpeta as tribute to the artist whose musical creations have inspired generations of listeners across the state. A series of social and cultural activities were held as part of the day-long celebrations. A blood-donation camp, music competitions, and cultural performances BY Assamese singers in the evening were major highlights of the Gaanor Din event. A blood donation camp organized at the Barpeta District Library saw enthusiastic participation from Diganta Bharati himself, along with several prominent artists, local journalists, and social workers, reflecting the event's spirit of social responsibility. A state-level music competition was also organized, focusing on songs by legendary singer Bhupen Hazarika as well as popular numbers from the Diganta Bharati and late cultural artist Zubeen Garg's collaboration. Contestants from different districts of Assam participated in the music competition showcasing their musical talent and paying homage

## CM Sarma distributes seed capital to over 36,000 women in Palasbari

improve infrastructure in the area. “Dr Sarma reiterated the government's commitment to women empowerment through entrepreneurship and said the MMUA scheme has played a key role in economically empowering women across Assam.

## Two rhino calves released back into Kaziranga

separated from their mothers during devastating floods and were rescued from the Mihimukh and Kathori areas of Kohora. They were being reared at the Panbari Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. After being cared for at the centre for the past five years, arrangements were made on Tuesday by the Kaziranga National Park authorities to release the two rhino calves into the park. They were transported from the centre in two large wooden crates and released into the wild. No microchips have been implanted in the bodies of the two rhino calves; instead, they will remain under routine monitoring by forest guards. At present, the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre is also rearing one female rhino calf, several elephants, buffalo calves, and a leopard.

## ‘Hepah’ unveiled in Palasbari



**Deepshikha Nath, Chhayaon :** The autobiographical book ‘Hepah’, authored by writer Hitesh Kalita, was unveiled at a programme held at Rampur in Palasbari LAC on Monday. “Releasing the book, Editor of Niyomiya Barta newspaper Naresh Kalita remarked that articles submitted for publication in newspapers should be rich in facts and present fresh perspectives. He further observed that the various situations and environments one encounters in life play a crucial role in shaping a writer. He stated that society requires leaders not only in politics but also in agriculture, industry and culture. The meeting, anchored by Pritirekha Bhuyan, was also addressed by retired professor Dr Praneshwar Nath and social worker Biswanath Goyary, among others. Several distinguished guests, including senior BJP leader Dinesh Choudhury, senior journalists Anil Kalita and Bimal Sharma, retired Principal Dr Shailendra Narayan Thakuria, Panchayat President Hiran Das, Councillor Anima Das, and Prafulla Kalita, were felicitated with traditional phulam gamochas during the event. “At the end of the programme, author Hitesh Kalita, a software engineer who had returned home after working for a long period in the United States, shared brief reflections on his journey of overcoming childhood struggles and challenges to move towards success.

## Deep Sea

■ Farbi Ahmed, Dibrugarh

You are wrenching my heart Oh Sea!!  
You could nurture me instead  
Why do you choose poignancy over pleasure? When... You  
can be both the nurturer and the ravager!!  
Shallow and deep you are!!  
Dipping my void canvas into Your feet  
Deepen it with florican breed  
Devour the gloom and appease us  
Be the nurturer and not the ravager!!

Mobile : 91014-48289

## Death of Eminent Social Worker Pradip Kumar Baruah

**M Hashim Ali, Dibrugarh :** Pradip Kumar Baruah, originally a resident of Kenduguri No. 2 Bamun Gaon in Jorhat district and presently residing at Amolapatty, Dibrugarh, passed away on the night of January 16 at Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh. He was 78 years old at the time of his death. Baruah had served as the President of the Dibrugarh Art Players Society and the Dibrugarh Amolapatty Durga Puja Committee. He was also a founding member of the Kenduguri Cultural Society in Jorhat. His last rites were performed at Kenduguri No. 2 Bamun Gaon.





# প্ৰেৰণা

## দশম শ্ৰেণীৰ শিক্ষার্থীসকলক জলপানি প্ৰদান



### কোনে আবেদন কৰিব পাৰিব

- অসম ৰাজ্যিক বিদ্যালয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদৰ অধীনৰ হাইস্কুল শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষাৰ পৰীক্ষার্থী
- আদৰ্শ বিদ্যালয়সমূহত অধ্যয়নৰত চি বি এছ ইৰ দশম শ্ৰেণী শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষাৰ পৰীক্ষার্থী
- আধিক অবস্থা নিৰ্বিশেষে অসমত স্থায়ীভাৱে বসবাস কৰা শিক্ষার্থী

২০২৫ চনৰ নবেন্দ্ৰ  
মাহৰ পৰা  
চাৰিমাহৰ বাবে  
মাহিলি ৩০০  
টকাকৈ  
জলপানিৰ ব্যবস্থা

### উদ্দেশ্য

- শিক্ষার্থীসকলক অধ্যয়ন সামগ্ৰী, কিতাপ, পুষ্টিকৰ খাদ্য আদি ক্ৰয় কৰাৰ দিশত সহায়তা
- শিক্ষার্থীসকলৰ আজ্ঞাবিশ্বাস, মানসিক স্থান্ত্ৰিকী আৰু মনোবল বৃক্ষি
- দৰিদ্ৰ পৰিবাল আৰু গ্ৰামাঞ্চলৰ শিক্ষার্থীৰ মাজত বিদ্যালয় ত্যাগৰ প্ৰণয়ন হুস

- হাইস্কুল শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষা/ দশম শ্ৰেণী  
শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষাত সামগ্ৰিকভাৱে উন্নীৰ্ণৰ  
হাৰ বৃক্ষি

- চৰকাৰী/ প্ৰাদেশীকৰণ আৰু আদৰ্শ  
বিদ্যালয়সমূহত নামভৰ্তি বৃক্ষি

উপকৃত  
শিক্ষার্থী  
**৪.৪ লোখ+**

## Young Assamese boy, Asik Ahmed, recognized for excellence, receives the prestigious PADMA SHREE GLOBAL EXCELLENCE AWARD 2026



**Guwahati, Assam:** A youth writer from Assam, Asik Ahmed, has been recognized with a National Award from Jeevan Jagriti Seva Sansthan for his significant contributions to literature, science communication, and media. Ahmed has authored numerous articles in various Assamese newspapers and has also written many contents for various digital news platforms. He has published four books—Samayor Sotat Chintadharar Paribartan, Bibidh Vigyan, Sampratik Shomoy, and Hridoyer Anubhab—reflecting his dedication to spreading knowledge and engaging readers of all ages. In January 2020, he served as a

Science Worker with the Bharat Jan Vigyan Jatha and has been actively associated with the "Science Exhibition on Wheels," an initiative catalyzed and supported by the National Council for Science and Technology, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi. The initiative aimed to raise awareness among students, teachers, and rural communities through interactive demonstrations of scientific principles, low-cost experiments, and explanations of the science behind everyday phenomena. Alongside appearances on media and news channel platforms, he has appeared as a guest in over 29 programs, revealing the science behind his magical activities. It should be mentioned that he has collaborated with the Pub Nalbari Assam Block Aryabhatta Science Centre. Recently, last year, Bharat Jana Vigyan Jatha published his book Bibidh Vigyan. In addition to his writing and science outreach, he has rendered exemplary service in the news media, promoting societal development. Recognizing his sustained efforts over the years, Ahmed was selected to receive this prestigious award in January 2026. The honor highlights his role as a dynamic young writer and communicator, inspiring youth and fostering a culture of curiosity, learning, and innovation across Assam. This PADMA SHREE GLOBAL EXCELLENCE AWARD 2026, in January, is presented in recognition of his outstanding contributions to youth literature and social development through media and science communication.

## Free medical and health check-up camp organised at Barpeta district jail



**Nagaon :** A free medical and health check-up

camp was conducted at Barpeta district jail, under the National AYUSH Mission, Assam, by the Arogya Care Foundation, Nagaon, on Sunday. During the camp, medical check-ups of prisoners were carried out. Free medicines were also distributed and free medical counselling was provided to the inmates. The camp was conducted un-

der the professional guidance of Dr Ainul Haque, Mondia Model Hospital, and Dr Ashadul Ali, Medical & Health Officer, Jail Hospital. The programme was supported by a dedicated team of paramedical staff from the Joint Director of Health Services, who extended active cooperation and assistance throughout the camp.

## Tiger carcass recovered in Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve

**BOKAKHAT:** Another carcass of a tiger has been recovered in the Kaziranga National Park. The body of a female tiger was found in the Kathpura area under the Bagori range. According to preliminary investigation, it is suspected that the female tiger died due to infighting. Following the discovery, KNPTR Director Sonali Ghosh constituted a committee to conduct the post-mortem examination and ensure disposal of the carcass in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).



# FINE DINE

Taste of Assam



**ভাত**

মাছ, মাংস, পর্যায়, পুরি, কুটি

- Chowmin
- Burger
- Chicken Item
- Maggi
- Biryani
- Pasta
- Fried Rice
- Roll
- Mutton Item
- Paneer
- Pakora
- Coffee
- Tea

**A.T. Road, Near Morigaon Bus Stand  
Nagaon (Assam)**