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R.N.I. Regn. No. ASSENG/2013/54236

# THE ASSAM JYOTI

REGD. NO. 54236/13 : GUWAHATI / NAGAON : FRIDAY, 9 JANUARY, 2026 : RS. 5.00

VOL. NO. XIV, ISSUE NO. 38

## CM Himanta Biswa Sarma distributes cheques under MMUA, launches projects in Bokakhat

**Arindam Bapanash, Bokakhat :** Assam Chief Minister Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday formally launched the cheque distribution programme under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan at a special event held at the Bokakhat Public Playground. Under the scheme, financial assistance cheques were distributed to 27,166 women beneficiaries of the Bokakhat Legislative Assembly constituency, aiming to promote women entrepreneurship and economic self-reliance. During the programme, the Chief Minister also virtually inaugurated 22 ambitious development projects worth Rs. 64,583.28 lakh, covering multiple key departments including Public

Works (Roads), Public Works (Buildings), Irrigation, Health & Family Welfare, and Animal Husbandry & Veterinary. Among the major highlights was the inauguration of the newly constructed and aesthetically designed Public Works Department Inspection Bungalow, located at the heart of Bokakhat town, reflecting the region's heritage and modern infrastructure development. The event commenced with a welcome address by Cabinet Minister and Bokakhat MLA Atul Bora. Several dignitaries were present on the occasion, including Kaziranga MP Kamakhy Prasad Tasa, Cabinet Minister Ajanta Neog, Sarupathar MLA Biswajit Phukan, Dergaon MLA



Bhabendra Nath Bharali, Golaghat District Commissioner Pulak Mahanta, Bokakhat Municipal Board Chairperson Ratneswar Baruah, along with senior officials and leaders of the

Asom Gana Parishad and Gana Shakti. The programme marked a significant step towards inclusive development, women empowerment, and infrastructure growth in the Bokakhat region.

## Chandubi festival concludes; focus on conservation and unity

**Deepshikha Nath, Chhaygon :** The five-day-long 16th Chandubi Festival, held from January 1 to January 5, concluded today on its fifth and final day with a traditional bonfire, marking the end of celebrations rooted in indigenous culture and environmental awareness.

Throughout the festival,

the Chandubi festival grounds resonated with the sounds of traditional instruments such as madal, kham-peti, dhol, pepa and gogona, drawing large crowds each day. Set against mist-covered skies, the Chandubi wetland presented a captivating sight as blooming water lilies added a pink hue to the

beel, enhancing its natural charm.

Festival-goers participated in cultural programmes, enjoyed indigenous cuisine, and took boat rides on Chandubi Beel, celebrating in close harmony with nature. The festival was jointly organised by the Barduar-Bholagaon Anchalik Rabha Students' Union and the Chandubi Festival Celebration Committee, with support from the Borduwar-Bholagaon Regional Mahila Parishad and the Regional Sixth Schedule Demand Committee.

The cultural performances and a felicitation ceremony. Green Oscar award-winning biologist and leader of the Hargila conservation movement, Dr Purnima see page 10

## Literary Award "Bandhu-Chaki" for 2026 Conferred on Eminent Poet Dr. Pranoy Phukan



**M Hashim Ali, Dibrugarh :** The eminent poet Dr. Pranoy Phukan was today conferred the "Bandhu-Chaki Literary Award for the year 2026." The award was presented by the Bandhu-Chaki Literary Organisation at a solemn function held at Bordoloi Bhawan of the Duliajan Sahitya Sabha. The award comprises a gamosa, a cheleng (traditional shawl), a citation, and a bundle of books. Renowned poet and translator Hiten Sharma formally handed over the award to Dr. Phukan. While speaking on the occasion, Sharma said, "The significance of the organic connection see page 10

নববর্ষ আৰু ভোগলী বিহুৰ শুভেচ্ছাৰে...  
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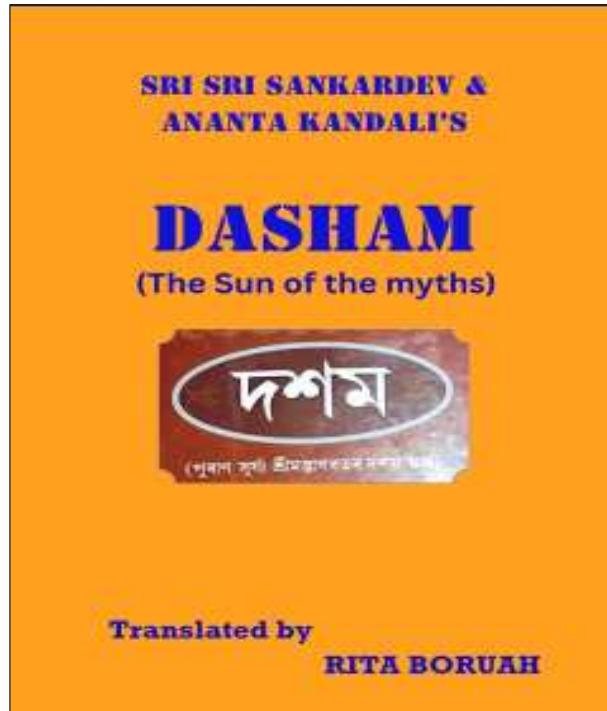
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ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ আৰু কেয়াৰ

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## Srimadvagawata

### Dasham, the tenth canto

### Part-24



The act of destroying the cart:  
Dulari (An Assamese metre).

Having heard all this, he began to tell the king  
One day they arranged the festival of the child's 'Alteration of limbs'.

To Nandas home  
All the milk-maids came  
And played as many as musical instruments.  
The Brahmins read the Vedic hymns to God  
Yoshoda bathed her son In enormous pleasure having no end

The Brahmins blessed with well-wishes ,  
The milk-maids sang and pleasantly fed.  
Seeing her son asleep,  
Yoshoda laid Him under the cart,  
And she fed as many as the Brajas assembled.  
So she did not hear the cry of Madhava  
To take breast - milk,  
When crying Krishna's feet struck at the cart  
It's yoke and bar and the circle broke in a jerk.  
The pitchers of milk and ghee fell down in jerking  
To see all this Yoshoda,Nanda and the milk-maids were astonishing.

How did the cart turned out, they asked  
The children replied that it happened by the strike of Krishna"feet.  
Having heard it nobody believed in  
None of them knew the gallantry of endless semen virile

### Part-25

Sobi (An Assamese metre):  
Seeing Krishna crying,Yoshoda took Him with enormous love in her lap  
With Brahmana's spell of safety, she fed Him manna of her breast.  
The gallent milkmen turned the cart and kept the pitchers up  
Nanda performed worship by the Brahmanas  
Thinking over welfare of his son,offered to them oblations.  
The Brahmanas read the hymns of the Vedas  
And blessed Nanda to stay blessed with his son.  
The foretells of the Brahmanas were not in vain,  
Then Nanda adorned all as much as they deserved

Rita Boruah  
99545-94823

## Journalist killed in Bangladesh, PEC demands thorough probe

**Geneva:** Bangladesh, engulfed with political unrest while heading for its national election on 12 February 2026, recorded the murder of journalist Rana Pratap Bairagi, who incidentally becomes the first journo-victim across the world this year. The global media safety and rights body Press Emblem Campaign (PEC) strongly condemned the shooting down of Bairagi (45) and demanded a thorough probe to identify the culprits for punishment under the law. "Local media reports stated that Bairagi, a resident of Arua village in Jessor locality of south Bangladesh, was fatally shot in his head by three miscreants on 5 January 2026. The editor of a Bengali newspaper titled Dainik BD Khabar was

found dead at Kopalia Bazar with his throat also slit. Son of a Hindu schoolteacher in Keshabpur upazila, Bairagi also ran an ice-making factory in Kopalia market. Blaise Lempen, president of PEC (<https://www.pressempile.ch/pec-news>) has urged Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, head of the interim government in Dhaka, to take interest in delivering justice to the bereaved family. "PEC's south and southeast Asian representative Nava Thakuria informed that the Muslim majority nation has lately drawn international media attention for recent socio-political turmoil, where many religious minority families were attacked by radical elements across the coun-



try of over 170 million people. Last year, the south Asian country also witnessed the murder of five media professionals namely Assaduzzaman Tuhin (Dainik Pratidiner Kagoj), Bibhuranjan Sarkar (Ajker Patrika), Wahed-uz-Zaman Bulu (Dainik Ajker Kagoj), Khandahar Shah Alam (Dainik Matrijagat) and Imdadul Haque Milon (Bartaman Somoy).

## AC Electric Bus Service Launched Between Biswanath Chariali and Tezpur



**Biswanath:** A new air-conditioned electric bus service which will be connecting Biswanath Chariali and Tezpur was formally inaugurated on Monday. The service has been introduced under the Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) with the aim of providing comfortable, efficient and environmentally friendly travel for commuters. The electric bus service was flagged off by ASTC Chairman Pallab Lochan Das in the presence of several dignitaries at a special programme held at the Automated Testing Station (ATS) premises in Biswanath Chariali. Addressing the gathering before the inauguration, Mr Das said the new service had been started keeping in mind the growing need for better and more reliable transport facilities for the people of the district. He stated that the introduction of air-conditioned electric

buses would not only make daily travel more convenient but also play an important role in reducing air pollution. "This service is a step towards cleaner and greener public transport in Assam. Electric buses help lower carbon emissions and contribute to environmental protection," he said. The inaugural programme was conducted by ASTC Managing Director Chinmay Prakash Phukan, who explained the objectives of the new service. Biswanath Chariali Municipal Board Chairperson Amarjyoti Borthakur, ASTC Vice-Chairman

Pranabjyoti Lahkar, and Biswanath District Commissioner Lakshinandan Chaharia also addressed the gathering and highlighted the importance of improved transport links between Biswanath Chariali and Tezpur. They mentioned that the new bus service would benefit office-goers, students and daily commuters who travel frequently between the two towns. Local people welcomed the initiative and expressed hope that more such modern and eco-friendly transport services would be introduced in the district in the coming days.

# Books, Fairs and the Bright Horizon of Assame Literature

■ Lalit Nath  
Itakhola, Sonitpur

Among the invaluable treasures of human life, books hold a unique place. Books are repositories of knowledge, foundations of thought, and mirrors of civilisation. Since ancient times, humanity has been recording experiences, ideas and knowledge in written form through books. Books inspire us to learn from the past, understand the present and dream about the future. They serve not only as sources of knowledge but also as cultural artefacts, well-springs of inspiration and symbols of intellectual achievement.

The form of books has evolved from the clay tablets of Mesopotamia to the papyrus scrolls of Egypt, yet their core purpose remains unchanged, the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. In the vast world of knowledge, a book is like a window. Through books, we glimpse a nation's history, civilisation, culture, philosophy, customs, festivals and traditions. Ancient texts such as the Vedas, Vedanta, Gita, Bible, Iliad, Odyssey, War and Peace, Das Kapital, and Divine Comedy are not merely scriptural, religious, or literary treasures, they have enriched our society's moral, spiritual and cultural life. This tradition of books is deeply intertwined with the history of human civilisation. "One of the finest mediums for bringing the tradition and grandeur of books to the masses is the book fair. These events go beyond mere exhibitions and sales, through interactions between readers and authors, discussions, seminars and cultural programmes, they instil love and respect for books in the younger generation. Thus, book fairs are the vibrant arenas that keep the legacy of books alive.

After Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press around 1450, books proliferated widely in Europe. The first international book fair was held in Frankfurt, Germany, during the 15th-16th centuries. Later, a full-fledged fair took place in Leipzig in 1927. After World War II, the modern Frankfurt Book Fair resumed in 1949 and has since become the world's largest, held annually in October with participation from over 100 countries. It serves as a hub for the book trade and cultural exchange.

In India, book fairs began modestly towards the end of the colonial era through small exhibitions. The first major milestone was the fair organised by the National Book Trust in New Delhi's Pragati Maidan in 1972, inaugurated by then-President V.V. Giri. Later, the 1976 International Book Fair in Kolkata earned recognition as Asia's largest. "Assam too boasts a glorious history of book fairs. They have played a pivotal role in illuminating Assamese literature, publishing and book-loving communities, occupying a special place in the state's cultural life. These fairs are not mere platforms for buying and selling books but vital spaces for author-reader interactions, intellectual discourse and the promotion of Assamese language and literature.

Assam's first notable book fair was held in Dibrugarh in 1972. The second followed in 1978 at Nehru Bali in Nowgong district, organised by Bhaskar Prakashan. In 1984, the Guwahati Book Fair at Judges Field injected new momentum into the movement. From 1987, the Assam Publication Parishad began organising the Guwahati Book Fair independently, turning it into an annual event. The Parishad has played a key role in republishing rare books and promoting Assamese literature through these fairs.

For years, Guwahati hosted two separate fairs, the 'Guwahati Book Fair' by the Assam Publication Parishad and the 'North-East Book Fair' by the All Assam Publishers and Booksellers Association. Both generated immense enthusiasm among book lovers, though the dual events occasionally caused confusion.

In a historic decision in 2021, the two fairs merged into the unified 'Assam Book Fair', jointly organised by the Assam Publication Parishad and the All Assam Publishers and Booksellers Association. This unification has made the event larger, richer and more popular. Even amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the first joint fair was a resounding success, with increasing participation, visitor numbers and sales each subsequent year.

The 2025-2026 Assam Book Fair has transformed into a vibrant festival. Against the backdrop of the Assam government's declaration of 2025 as the 'Year



of Books', this edition holds special significance. Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the fair on December 24, 2025, at the Veterinary College Field in Khanapara, Guwahati. The 14-day event runs until January 6, 2026.

This year features over 135 stalls, with publishers from Assam as well as Delhi-Haryana, Kolkata, Mumbai and Hyderabad. A vast collection of books in Assamese, Hindi, English, Bengali and other languages has captivated book enthusiasts.

During the inauguration, the Chief Minister honoured 818 young writers with the 'Young Writer Honour', presenting each with a cash award of Rs 25,000. This initiative has encouraged the youth to engage in literary pursuits. Other highlights include a multilingual poets' meet, new book launches, discussion circles, and cultural programmes. Building on last year's sales exceeding Rs 6 crore, organisers aim to surpass that record this time. From the very first day, massive crowds of book lovers have turned the fair into a festive celebration.

As part of the 'Year of Books', district-level fairs have also been held in Bongaigaon, Lakhimpur, Nalbari, Jorhat, Tinsukia, Silchar and Mangaldoi, spreading the reading culture statewide and boosting local publishers.

The Assam Book Fair is more than a marketplace for books, it is a living reflection of Assamese language and literature, a bridge transmitting knowledge across generations and a cherished tradition. Its future is exceedingly bright. In the first week of the 2025-2026 fair alone, thousands

of book lovers have braved the winter fog, with sales exceeding Rs 2 crore. Books on iconic singer Zubeen Garg's life and songs have gained immense popularity, attracting younger readers. Naming the main stage after Zubeen Garg exemplifies beautiful cultural synergy.

Even in the digital age, Assamese readers' enthusiasm for printed books remains evident. The government has harmonised tradition and modernity through digitisation of rare Assamese manuscripts, translation programmes and digital libraries. District-level fairs have extended the reading culture to rural areas.

Book fairs will continue as spaces for cultural convergence, while digital media brings knowledge to the world. The emergence of young writers, government patronage and readers' heartfelt enthusiasm have given Assamese literature a new dimension. The touch and fragrance of printed books still live in the hearts of Assamese readers.

Although e-books and audiobooks have opened global access, printed books remain bearers of cultural heritage, offering unparalleled joy in personal collections. The massive turnout and crore-level sales at book fairs prove that both mediums complement each other, propelling Assamese literature forward. This synergy will truly make the future of Assamese books prosperous and enduring. If we maintain balance between depth and breadth, Assamese literary tradition will not only remain vibrant but shine on the global stage.

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# The Silent Epidemic

## Rising Heart Disease Among Young Adults and the Price of an Unhealthy Lifestyle

■ Heramba Nath

There was a time when heart disease was regarded as an ailment that waited patiently for the greying of hair and the slowing of pace—a disease of old age that arrived after decades of living. It appeared like a distant shadow that touched only those who had weathered many seasons of life. But the twenty-first century has rewritten the calendar of illness, altering assumptions that once shaped medical understanding, social expectations, and individual behaviour. The heart, once symbolic of youth, vitality, and endurance, has begun to wither far too early. It is no longer a disease of the sixties; it has become an affliction of the thirties. What once signified the twilight of vitality now strikes at the dawn of adulthood.“ This change is neither accidental nor simply statistical; it is deeply symbolic of a more profound disorder in the rhythm of modern existence. The human heartbeat, which once pulsed in synchrony with the natural cycles of rest, labour, nourishment, and emotional balance, is now entangled in a lifestyle that runs counter to its biology. In cities where concrete replaces open fields, where air vibrates with the hum of machines rather than the silence of dawn, and where ambition races without rest, the heart is quietly pleading for mercy long before its time.

Across hospitals, cardiology units, emergency wards, and intensive care rooms, a disturbing pattern has emerged—young adults arriving with the symptoms once reserved for the elderly: chest discomfort, irregular pulse, alarming shortness of breath, severe fatigue, and, in many tragic cases, a silent collapse. Many arrive too late—victims of cardiac arrest before they have even crossed their prime earning years. These are no longer isolated stories of rare misfortune; they are the rising echoes of a silent epidemic spreading through the corridors of contemporary life. The heart, which nature crafted as a resilient organ capable of carrying a human being through long decades, is collapsing under a lifestyle that moves faster than the body can bear.

The roots of this crisis do not lie solely in heredity or fate. They lie in choices—daily, ordinary, yet destructive choices that have be-

come the signature of modern living. Today, life begins not with the warmth of sunrise or the natural rhythm of waking, but with the shrill alarm of a smartphone. The morning meal, once a cornerstone of health, is replaced by hurried gulps of caffeine. The commute, once a chance to walk, is now replaced by hours of sitting. Modern occupations demand long periods of immobility—eyes strained before screens, shoulders hunched, and the spine compressed. Physical activity has transformed from a natural part of daily living into an optional task, one that many never attempt.

Food—once fresh, seasonal, and prepared with care—has been swallowed by a culture of convenience. Meals are frequently high in preservatives, salts, sugars, trans fats, and chemical additives. What appears appetising on the surface often hides a destructive chemistry beneath. Rest, which once came as naturally as breathing, has become a scarce luxury. Sleep is sacrificed to deadlines, digital distractions, and social pressures. The body, which requires cycles of repair and renewal, is now pushed through fatigue, treated like a machine rather than a living organism.“ The result is devastating. Doctors increasingly observe that young adults are showing symptoms that would have been shocking a generation ago—rising blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol levels, insulin resistance, obesity, fatty liver disease, and early-stage diabetes. These conditions act silently, damaging arteries, weakening the heart, and disrupting metabolic patterns long before symptoms appear. What makes the South Asian population particularly vulnerable is its genetic predisposition to abdominal fat accumulation, insulin resistance, and a lower threshold for cardiac risk. Yet even this genetic sensitivity becomes lethal only when combined with lifestyle triggers. Genes may load the gun, but lifestyle pulls the trigger.

The tragedy is intensified by the illusion of invincibility that youth fosters. A young individual experiencing mild chest tightness may dismiss it as acidity. Breathlessness may be explained away as tiredness. Fatigue becomes normalised. Headaches become routine. Sleepless nights are worn as badges of productivity. Many ignore their symptoms because they believe heart disease belongs

to their parents’ generation, not their own. And in a shocking number of cases, the first and only symptom is sudden death. Families lose breadwinners overnight; societies lose contributors in their prime; children lose parents who should have lived decades longer. Behind each such loss lies a pattern of neglect, denial, and misplaced priorities.

Stress, once an occasional visitor in human life, has now become a permanent resident. It is perhaps the most unacknowledged killer of our age. The human nervous system was never designed to operate under chronic tension, yet modern routines demand continuous alertness. Deadlines, competition, financial burdens, insecurity, comparison, and the unending quest for achievement have created a generation that exists in perpetual fight-or-flight mode. Cortisol, the primary stress hormone, remains elevated for far too long, disrupting metabolism, increasing inflammation, disturbing appetite, and damaging arteries. This invisible biochemical storm harms the heart more than most people realise.

The digital age promised convenience, efficiency, and connection. Instead, it has chained humanity to a rhythm of notifications, messages, alerts, updates, and pressures that follow individuals into every moment of their day. The mind remains perpetually stimulated, never finding silence. Sleep becomes fragmented as blue light disturbs hormonal cycles. Even at rest, minds remain restless. Peace of mind has been lost, and the heart—deprived of calm, deprived of silence—struggles to maintain its delicate rhythm.

Addictions, too, have woven themselves into the architecture of modern living. Smoking, despite decades of awareness campaigns, continues to lure young adults with its deceptive glamour. Every puff constricts arteries, builds plaque, and damages the lining of blood vessels. Alcohol, normalised through social culture, disrupts heart rhythm, weakens heart muscle, and contributes to long-term metabolic imbalance. New threats have emerged as well. Energy drinks loaded with stimulants, bodybuilding supplements of unknown quality, recreational drugs, and artificially sweetened beverages add layers of danger. Many young individuals have collapsed on treadmills

or office floors after consuming combinations of stimulants that force the heart to beat beyond its natural capacity.

The cost of this crisis extends beyond hospitals and personal suffering. It strikes at the core of families, workplaces, communities, and nations. A heart attack at thirty-five is not merely a medical event—it is the abrupt interruption of a life that had responsibilities, promises, and dreams. It is the loss of a parent, the grief of a spouse, the financial collapse of a household, the emotional trauma of children, and the economic setback of a society. Productivity drops. National healthcare burdens climb. The human cost is incalculable. A nation's future rests on the strength and vitality of its youth. If the youth become victims of premature disease, the nation's foundations weaken.

Reversing this silent epidemic requires more than medical intervention; it requires a cultural transformation. Society must redefine the meaning of success. For too long, success has been equated with exhaustion, sleepless nights, relentless work, financial gain, and the abandonment of personal well-being. Individuals proudly proclaim how little they sleep, how hard they work, how busy they are. But the heart does not recognise this misguided pride. It only recognises the imbalance that slowly destroys it.

Health must return to the centre of human priorities. Regular health check-ups must become a normal part of adulthood. Simple screenings—blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, ECG, and basic cardiac markers—can detect silent dangers long before they turn fatal. Awareness must lead to discipline, not temporary concern. Families should cultivate conversations around health, sleep, nutrition, and emotional well-being, not merely marks, income, or status.

A shift in routine can achieve miracles. Walking more, sitting less, eating natural foods, drinking adequate water, sleeping on time, stretching the body, breathing deeply, and disconnecting from digital screens before bedtime—these simple habits have the power to restore what modernity has stolen. The heart, when cared for, responds quickly. It rewards discipline with endurance. It rewards balance with longevity.

see page 9



# 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 নিৰিশোমে অসমত স্থায়ীভাৱে বসবাস কৰা শিক্ষার্থী

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

## উদ্দেশ্য

- শিক্ষার্থীসকলক অধ্যয়ন সামগ্ৰী, কিতাপ, পৃষ্ঠিকৰ খাদ্য আদি ক্ৰয় কৰাৰ দিশত সহায়তা
- শিক্ষার্থীসকলৰ আঞ্চলিক মানসিক স্থান্ত্ৰি আৰু মনোবল বৃক্ষি
- দৰিদ্ৰ পৰিয়াল আৰু প্ৰান্তৰালৰ শিক্ষার্থীৰ মাজত বিদ্যালয় ত্যাগৰ প্ৰণালীত হুস

- হাইস্কুল শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষা/ দশম শ্ৰেণী শিক্ষান্ত পৰীক্ষাত সামগ্ৰিকভাৱে উত্তীৰ্ণ হাৰ বৃক্ষি
- চৰকাৰী/ প্ৰাদেশীকৃত আৰু আদৰ্শ বিদ্যালয়সমূহত নামতত্ত্ব বৃক্ষি

## উপকৃত শিক্ষার্থী

৪.৪ লাখ +

# Why Book Fairs Need Young Readers

■ **Satyabrat Borah**

Imagine walking into a bustling book fair, the air thick with the scent of fresh pages, stalls overflowing with colorful covers, and voices buzzing about favorite stories. It's meant to be a celebration of words, ideas, and imagination. But what if fewer and fewer people show up? What if the crowds thin out year after year? Suddenly, that vibrant event starts to feel hollow. Without a steady stream of passionate readers, especially from the younger generation, organizing a book fair begins to lose its true purpose.

Book fairs are more than just places to sell books. They are cultural gatherings where authors meet fans, publishers discover new talents, and communities bond over shared love for literature. In places like India's Guwahati or Assam Book Fair, these events have long been highlights of the year, drawing families, students, and book lovers together. Yet, in recent times, a quiet concern has emerged: young people are drifting away from books. They skim headlines on phones, scroll through endless feeds, and watch quick videos, but deep, sustained reading feels like a relic of the past. If this trend continues, book fairs risk becoming mere commercial ventures, stripped of their soul.

The numbers tell a worrying story. Globally and in India, leisure reading among youth is on the decline. Surveys show that while literacy rates climb, the habit of reading for pleasure is slipping. In India, adults reportedly spend impressive time reading—around 10 hours a week on average, one of the highest globally—but much of this is tied to work or education, not pure enjoyment. Among the young, the picture darkens. Studies indicate that only a fraction of teenagers and young adults pick up books regularly outside of school requirements. Social media platforms, with their bite-sized content, have reshaped attention spans. Short reels and posts deliver instant gratification, making the slow reward of turning pages in a novel seem less appealing.

This shift isn't just about preference; it has real consequences. Deep reading builds empathy, critical thinking, and focus—skills that fragmented online consumption often skimps on. When young people turn primarily to screens for information and enter-

tainment, they miss out on the immersive worlds that books offer. Sure, there are bright spots. Communities like BookTok on TikTok have sparked interest in certain titles, boosting sales for young adult fiction and self-help books. Viral recommendations can turn an obscure novel into a bestseller overnight. But even here, the engagement is often superficial: quick reviews, summaries, or aesthetic photos rather than full, thoughtful dives into the text.

In regions like Assam, efforts are underway to push back against this tide. The state government declared 2025 the "Year of Books," a bold move to revive reading culture. Book fairs expanded to multiple cities, with the flagship Guwahati event running for days at a grand venue. Record sales—nearly 7 crore rupees—and huge crowds showed enthusiasm, especially with initiatives like honoring young writers and providing book allowances for employees. Families flocked to stalls, children explored picture books, and publishers reported brisk business. These steps highlight how book fairs can reignite interest when supported thoughtfully. They bring books within reach, host discussions, and create excitement around literature.

Still, the core challenge remains: pulling the younger generation back in. Many teens admit they rarely read for fun, citing lack of time or interest sparked by digital distractions. Parents and educators notice it too—home libraries gather dust while screens glow late into the night. Without addressing this at the roots, book fairs might attract older loyalists but struggle to inspire new ones. Publishers could end up focusing on safe, high-selling genres, while diverse voices and challenging works fade.

So, how do we turn this around? It starts small, in homes and schools. Parents reading aloud to children, even as they grow older, fosters lifelong habits. Schools can carve out time for free reading, without assignments attached, and build inviting libraries. Communities might host casual book clubs where teens discuss graphic novels, fantasy series, or trending picks from social media. Leveraging the positives of digital tools—apps for ebooks, online forums—can bridge the gap, easing the transition to physical books.

Book fairs themselves hold immense potential as catalysts. They are festive, accessible, and social. Imagine more interactive zones: author chats tailored to

youth, workshops on creating comics, or tie-ins with popular online trends. Discounts for students, free entry for school groups, and collaborations with influencers could draw crowds. In Assam's recent fairs, the energy from national publishers and local talents showed what's possible when events feel inclusive and exciting.

Ultimately, book fairs thrive on readers, and readers thrive on book fairs. They feed each other in a beautiful cycle. If we neglect growing that readership, especially among the young who will carry the torch forward, these beloved events could dim. But with deliberate effort—from governments, families, schools, and the industry—we can nurture a revival. Books have the power to transform lives, offering escape, insight, and connection in ways screens often can't match. In a world overflowing with noise, the quiet magic of reading deserves protection.

Let's commit to it. Pick up a book today, share it with someone young, and visit the next fair with fresh eyes. The flame of reading isn't out—it's just waiting for more of us to fan it back to life. When readers multiply, book fairs won't just survive; they'll flourish as the heartbeats of our cultural landscape.

## Preparations Underway for 95th Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha Conference at Jamugurihat

**Jamugurihat:** Extensive preparations are underway for the 95th Annual Conference of the Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha to be held at the Jyoti-Bishnu site of the Dhalaibil-Chaibari area in Jamugurihat from February 6 to 8, 2026. Activities are progressing with collective enthusiasm from the local population ahead of the three-day event at Dhalaibil area of Jamugurihat. The annual conference, regarded as one of the most significant socio-religious gatherings in Assam, is expected to draw lakhs of devotees from different parts of the state. In a bid to ensure a smooth and memorable experience of the attendees, locals in Jamuguri have come together in large numbers, contributing voluntary labour and resources. Naduar constituency MLA and Executive President of the Reception Committee, Padma Hazarika, has been personally overseeing the preparations. He has been conducting frequent review meetings with 39 sub-committees formed to manage various aspects of the event, including accommodation, sanitation, security, food, and cultural programmes. Padma Hazarika has stated that special care is being taken that no inconvenience is caused to the devotees and guests visiting the conference. Further, Prabhakar Barman, Presi-

dent of the Reception Committee, along with a senior member Bipul Bora has appealed people from all walks of life to extend their sincere cooperation to organize the Annual Conference of the Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha successfully. They have also expressed optimism that with the collective effort and public support, the conference will be conducted in a grand and orderly manner. Naduar MLA Padma Hazarika while speaking on the developments said, "All preparations are moving forward at a good pace. The atmosphere here is charged with devotion and anticipation as the historic event draws closer. Lakhs of devotees are expected to visit Jamugurihat on January 6, 7, and 8. As of today, we can confidently say that the reception committee is fully prepared to welcome devotees from across the state. Traditional materials like thatch and bamboo have been used in preparing the temporary camps (shibirs). There is great enthusiasm, not only among people from Sonitpur district, but also among supporters and volunteers from other districts who have come forward to contribute. Our sub-committees have been working tirelessly to ensure the event runs smoothly, and we are very hopeful of conducting a successful and well-organized session."

# Behind the Mask of Reality

■ **Asik Ahmed**

Have you ever observed that the reality behind what we see is totally different? Everything that our eyes perceive is not true. Nowadays, people have adopted a business-centric mindset, where the primary focus is on monetary gains rather than holistic wealth maximization and sustainable profit growth. The painful truth behind human reality is that what people represent among people may not be real, but it influences people. Because in the reality of human behaviour, most people are trying to fulfill their targets and gain their own advantage by speaking sweetly. After fulfilling their target, they have no concern for others and break our trust. That is why trusting someone is not easy, as what they promise in words, their actions act opposite, yet they want to become commitment people. In fact, people are selfish. Every person wears two faces. People show off many things, but they have another thinking in their head. Yet people often try to hide their reality; otherwise, it may influence people and create barriers in their business, no matter whether it is ethi-

cal or not. Even when people know the reality of what is going on, they try to manage it through money power and holding political power in their hands to protect those secret disclosure identities. Everywhere, generally, people show they are right to present their arguments and their points, even when they are not providing customer satisfaction, but they feel it very hard to accept the reality behind it. It is true that people become judges of others but want to be advocates for themselves. We know and understand so many things that are happening in our society, but it is very hard to tell the reality of anything, because after saying it, the outcomes are unimaginable, as it is most challenging. Although we are neither happy nor comfortable, whether it is rich capacity of business, services, or anything related to society, yet we should accept that we must endure silently, without showing our discomfort or questioning, like a blind person. In today's world, everything is business and converted into products because everything is marketable and focusing on money, and slowly becoming materialistic, where humanity goes out from the head. We

love to live for others, but they often don't consider us as part of their own family. Even when we treat them as our own, they frequently fail to understand our feelings. In fact, if there is no willingness in the heart, excuses are enough. People give time only to those people to whom they want to give. Often, people use excuses to keep themselves distant from others. When we give too much priority and keep running after someone, they think of us like a dog or a cat and consider us valueless. Only those people truly help us who give us value and understand how much we desire to achieve something even after our failure. Around us, no one wants our better future. Most of the time, people don't want to show the reality of achieving something because people don't like success and don't want to move forward, rather than feeling zealous, except the same real person. It is true that no one can truly help in our struggle, yet people have the ability to show the path. Sometimes we are completely alone, with no one beside us. When we ask someone for help, they might misunderstand and think we are dependent only on their sympathy. Alarmingly, if you ask 10 people

for help, you won't easily get it from all of them, but you can easily get advice from all 10. Money seems to have more value than emotions because people often don't value feelings. The untold reality of human behaviour is that many people have self-ego and pride in their education and reputation and don't care for others. They have no empathetic value but just live like machines. Actually, only those people can understand the pain and value of hardworking who have achieved something after failing many attempts—that is how painful life is. That is why first success builds ego, but second success builds character. Not everyone's life is at the same level. Only those who have risen from a poor background to a higher level can truly understand the feelings of others, as they have overcome many challenges. Those born with every comfort, opportunity, and development from the beginning, however, have not faced such struggles and pain; therefore, they cannot fully understand or imagine what others feel. The pain behind the mask of society is so intense because there are many hidden truths of human life beyond the surface—the harsh reality.

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## During Magh Bihu, No Community Fishing in Wetlands of Kaziranga

**Kaziranga:** This Bhogali Bihu, locals residing near the Kaziranga National Park have to put aside their fishing rods as the Gauhati High Court has imposed a ban on fishing in the wetlands in the periphery of the park. Community fishing during Magh Bihu, which falls in the mid of January, has been an ageless tradition mainly among Assamese community and other indigenous tribes of the state. Just days ahead of the festival, the decision of the court has received a mixed response with locals opined that their tradition for centuries has been unfairly targeted. The park authorities reasoned out that the wetlands surrounding the park are now part of the protected area of Kaziranga National Park and any such activity will violate the laid law.

To make the locals understand the matter a meeting was held under the joint supervision of Golaghat district and Kaliabor subdivision officials. Fishing in the wetlands near the national park used to be a common practice. However, these wetlands are now part of the protected area of Kaziranga National Park. Any such activity here is considered illegal under conservation laws," Sonali Ghosh, the field officer of Kaziranga National Park and the

Tiger Reserve said., Kaziranga, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is home to a rich biodiversity, including the rare one-horned rhinoceros, tigers, elephants, and a wide variety of bird species. The wetlands play a major role in the in balancing the fragile ecosystem of the park. With the Bhogali Bihu festival approaching, the local community faces the challenge of adapting their celebrations in line with the new regulations.



## Travel Literature Award of the Writers' Conclave Presented to Eminent Writer

**M Hashim Ali, Dibrugarh :** Eminent litterateur and educationist, and literary pensioner of the Govt of Assam, Dr. Bharati Dutta has been conferred the Biju Deka Memorial Travel Literature Award by the All Assam Writers' Conclave Committee. The writer, whose popular travelogues *Memories of a European Journey* and *At Home and Abroad* have earned wide acclaim, has had a large number of her travel-related writings published in various newspapers and journals. The award was presented to her on 4 January during the 30th Kaliabor Session and Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Writers' Conclave held at Kaliabor. The open session was attended by the Governor of Chhattisgarh, Ramen Deka, and Assam Government Cabinet Minister Keshab Mahanta, along with other distinguished personalities. The award-giving ceremony was also attended by the President of Asam Sahitya Sabha, Dr. Basanta Kumar Goswami, and the General Secretary Debajit Bora. The award includes a memento, ceremonial shawl, citation, and a cash prize.



## International Me-Dam-Me-Phi 2026 to be celebrated with global participation



**Sibsagar :** The historic town of Sivasagar is set to host the International Me-Dam-Me-Phi 2026 from January 30 to February 1 at Boarding Field, Sivasagar, marking a grand celebration dedicated to the immortal ancestors (Dam-Phi-Me) and the timeless legacy of the Tai-Ahom civilization. The three-day international event will bring together scholars, cultural ambassadors, youth organizations, women leaders, athletes, and international Tai representatives from Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos, making it one of the most comprehensive cultural and intellectual congregations in recent times. The programme will commence on January 30 with ceremonial flag hoisting and moidam tarpan, followed by a drawing competition for students, an

international academic conclave on Tai resurgence in the context of India's Act East Policy, an all Assam heritage quiz, an all Assam debate competition, and a start-up and entrepreneur summit focusing on innovation. A major highlight of the event will be the national-level marathon race on January 31, organized under the supervision of the Assam Olympic Association, with a prize pool of over Rs 2.5 lakh. The same day will also feature the traditional Me-Dam-Me-Phi rituals, a grand cultural procession themed on harmony, and an open session graced by Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chief Minister of Assam, along with ministers, legislators, and international delegates. The evening will witness a historic drama on freedom fighter

Gomdhar Konwar, reflecting the rich literary and cultural heritage of Assam. On February 1, a women's convention will be held under the aegis of the Mahila Samittee, Sivasagar District Tai Ahom Students' Union, which will be graced by Sangeeta Barooah Pichoraty, President of Press Club of India. This will be followed by the prize distribution and valedictory function, to be graced by Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, along with several Union and State leaders, intellectuals, and representatives of leading socio-cultural organizations. The valedictory celebrations will conclude with a grand cultural evening, featuring popular Assamese artiste Achurjya Borpatra as the main attraction. The organizers stated that International Me-Dam-Me-Phi 2026 aims to reinforce cultural unity, honour ancestral heritage, and strengthen people-to-people connections across South and Southeast Asia, while inspiring the younger generation to engage with history, culture, identity, and innovation.

## 53rd foundation day of Assam Nepali Sahitya Sabha (ANSS) observed in Udaguri



**Tangla :** The 53rd foundation day of the Assam Nepali Sahitya Sabha (ANSS), a premier literary organization representing the Nepali-speaking community of Assam, was observed at Tarapati Upadhyaya Sahitya Bhawan in Udaguri on January 4. The programme began with the hoisting of the ANSS flag by its President, Dr Chintamoni Sarmah. Floral tributes were paid to eminent literary and cultural icons including Dr Bhupen Hazarika, Zubeen Garg, Bihoram Boro, Bodofa UN

Brahma, Tarapati Upadhyaya, Haribhakta Katuwal, and Chandra Mohan Chhetri. The tribute ceremony was led by Tilak Sarmah, Secretary General of the central committee of ANSS. The open session, presided over by Dr Chintamoni Sarmah, was addressed by Assam Cabinet Minister Charan Boro, along with BTC MCLAs Nandalal Rana Magar and Ajay Kumar Hazarika, among others. The guests were formally welcomed by members of the Mahila Prakosth of the Udaguri district committee of ANSS through a choral presentation. Earlier, the third executive meeting of the organization was held on January 3 and continued on the morning of January 4. The celebrations concluded with a multilingual poets' meet, where 76 poets representing different languages recited their compositions.

## Preparations underway for 10th Barnam national drama festival at Biswanath Chariali

**Biswanath Chariali :** The 10th Barnam Mrinalini Sharma National Drama Festival will be organized with a four-day long programme from January 9 to 12 by Barnam, a leading theatre group of Biswanath Chariali with financial assistance from the Ministry of Culture, New Delhi, at Kamalakanta Natya Samaj Kshetra, here. The ceremony will be inaugurated by the family of Naren Sharma, the main patron of the festival on day one. A total of ten plays will be staged by the theatre groups from various parts of the country including Punjab, Delhi, West Bengal, Silchar, Morigaon, Bihpuriya, Dhemaji, and Biswanath Chariali during the four days of the festival. Cultural University of Punjab, Bathinda, will stage 'The Great Raja Master Drama Company,' 'Ram Vijay' (Ankia Nat) will be staged by Barnam, 'Chor' by Bhabikale, Silchar, 'Tritiya Prahar' by Anushilan, Bihpuriya, 'Phalghudhara' by Shailepik, Biswanath, 'Meghmallar' by Mridangam, West Bengal, 'Out Damned Spot!' by Nirvana Arts Foundation, New Delhi, 'Ami Meye' by Jugagni, West Bengal, 'Tadanta' by Lalilang, Morigaon, while Vidya the Living Theatre, Dhemaji, will stage 'Shukurmani.' During the second, third, and fourth day of the festival, the stage will be opened by Jyoti Chitraban Chairperson Vidya Sagar, JNV Biswanath Principal Dev Prasad Verma, and social worker Snigdha Goswami, respectively. Coinciding with the ceremony, this year's 'Kalyan Kumar Barnam Bandhab Samman 2026' will be conferred on noted actor Chitta Saikia while seven eminent theatre personalities from different parts of Assam, namely Rajiv Kro, Kripal Kalita, Pabitra Barua, Jyoti Prasad Bhuyan, Kishor Chakraborty, Biplab Bora, and Asim Kumar Nath will be conferred with Nat Sainik awards. A symposium on 'Relevance of mobile theatre in present times and its future' will be held in collaboration with Biswanath College of Education on January 10 which will be attended by Hillol Kumar Pathak, Atul Majumdar, Rantu Sharma, and Mrinmoy Bhuyan. A book of children's plays will also be released by noted dramatist Pankaj Jyoti Bhuyan on the occasion on January 9.



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The modern narrative that glorifies restlessness must change. Late nights are not a sign of ambition. Working till collapse is not a symbol of strength. Living on stimulants is not a mark of success. A civilisation that exhausts itself in the race for material gain eventually loses the very energy that sustains its growth. The irony of this age is stark—people chase wealth to live well, yet destroy the heart that makes life possible.

A healthy heartbeat is one of the purest rhythms in nature. It beats faithfully, continuously, offering life every second without seeking recognition. It is the quiet poetry inside the human body. To protect it is to protect the grace of being alive. Young adults must rediscover the sacred relationship between existence and inner balance. A steady heartbeat reflects not only physical wellness but emotional and spiritual grounding.

Statistics reveal an alarming truth. A significant proportion of heart attacks in India now occur in individuals below fifty. Rural India, once presumed to be protected by active lifestyles, is no longer immune. The spread of processed foods, smoking, alcohol, reduced physical labour, and

exposure to digital stress has blurred the urban-rural divide. A nationwide awareness is necessary. Schools should teach health literacy. Workplaces should implement wellness programmes. Public policies must encourage walking paths, cycling routes, parks, open spaces, and recreational infrastructure.

Personal responsibility remains the strongest defence. No medication or machine can compensate for poor choices. The formula for a healthy heart is clear—movement, moderation, mindfulness, and mercy towards one's own body. A balanced diet, routine exercise, abstinence from smoking, limited alcohol, sufficient sleep, emotional regulation, and annual check-ups form the true foundation of cardiac protection.

Emotional health is equally essential. Anxiety, loneliness, and digital dependency are eroding the mental well-being of millions. The generation that scrolls endlessly through screens often feels more isolated than ever. The absence of stillness, reflection, and soulful conversation has turned life into a continuous performance. The heart mirrors this chaos. It beats irregularly, under

pressure, silently pleading for rest. Silence must be reclaimed not as emptiness but as healing.

Culture shapes behaviour. Films, advertisements, influencers, and social media often glorify overindulgence, sleeplessness, and reckless habits. Alcohol is portrayed as glamour. Smoking is shown as independence. Unhealthy dietary trends are passed off as convenience. These narratives must be replaced with healthier storytelling. Society should celebrate those who maintain balance, cultivate discipline, eat consciously, and protect their well-being.

Public institutions have a moral duty. Affordable diagnostic centres, accessible mental health services, taxation on harmful ingredients, warning labels on unhealthy foods, and training programmes for stress management can transform public health. Mental wellness and cardiac health are deeply interconnected. A peaceful mind supports a healthy heart.

Beyond all policy and advice lies a larger truth. A civilisation that rushes faster than its heartbeat will eventually collapse under the weight of its own imbalance. Human life is not meant to

be a relentless pursuit of achievements but a harmonious blend of body, mind, and spirit. When rest is seen as weakness and exhaustion as success, humanity loses its wisdom. The rise of heart disease among the young is not only a medical crisis—it is a profound moral reminder.

Each heartbeat symbolises resilience and mortality. It is fragile yet enduring. To care for the heart is to honour life itself. The growing threat to young hearts is not just a medical concern but a reflection of how far society has drifted from natural living. The remedy lies in awareness, self-discipline, emotional balance, and simplicity. A generation that learns to pause, breathe, walk, eat consciously, sleep well, and live intentionally will rediscover the essence of life that modernity has obscured.

The heart beats as a constant reminder that life is a rhythm, not a race. Its silence is death. Its rhythm is life. The choices before this generation are simple yet profound—balance or burnout, awareness or apathy, vitality or vulnerability. The time has come to listen to the quiet, faithful rhythm within. That sound—the heartbeat—is the purest music of existence. To protect it is not merely health; it is wisdom.

## Two leopard cubs rescued from Greenwood tea estate in Dibrugarh



**Dibrugarh :** Two leopard cubs left behind by their mother were rescued by the locals of Greenwood tea estate in eastern Assam's Dibrugarh on Tuesday morning. Forest officials took both the cubs in their custody and conducted their health examination. "At around 10.30 am, the manager of Greenwood tea estate informed us about the recovery of two leopard cubs in the tea garden area. We immediately went and took both the cubs into our custody. Their health conditions look good. The manager told us the cubs were lying in the drain of the tea garden, from where locals rescued them," said a forest official of Dibrugarh. He said, "The mother left them there and went in search of food. Both the cubs are two and half months old. In the evening, we will leave them at the place from where they were recovered, so that their mother can find them."

## Asomi Bhogali Mela 2026 to be held in Tezpur from January 9

**Tezpur :** As per information received from the District Mission Management Unit (DMMU), Sonitpur, the Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM) under the Department of Panchayat & Rural Development, Government of Assam, will organize Asomi Bhogali Mela 2026 at the Collegiate Field, Tezpur, from January 9 to January 11, 2026. The mela aims to provide a dedicated marketing platform to Self Help Group (SHG) members of Sonitpur

district, enabling them to showcase and sell their products ahead of the Magh Bihu festivities. Around 30 stalls will be set up during the three-day event, displaying a wide range of SHG-produced goods, traditional items, and rural livelihood products. Asomi Bhogali Mela 2026 seeks to promote rural entrepreneurship, empower women-led SHGs, and encourage the public to support locally-made products, thereby contributing to the strengthening of the rural economy.

## Awareness bike rally marks National Road Safety Month in Sivasagar

**Sibsagar :** As part of the observance of National Road Safety Month, an awareness bike rally was organized in Sivasagar town on Tuesday under the joint initiative of the Sivasagar District Road Safety Committee and the Office of the District Transport Officer. The rally was aimed at creating public awareness to prevent road accidents and promote safe driving practices. The awareness rally was flagged off from in front of the District Transport Officer's office in the presence of Additional Su-

perintendents of Police Prakash Medhi and Moidul Islam, Assistant Commissioner Ganesh Chandra Baro, and District Transport Officer Hirak Jyoti Deka. During the rally, emphasis was laid on the importance of wearing helmets while riding motorcycles, using seat belts in four-wheelers, avoiding overspeeding, and strictly refraining from driving under the influence of alcohol. The participants also disseminated key messages related to adherence to traffic rules and responsible behaviour on roads.

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### Chandubi festival concludes; focus on

Devi Barman, and Adi Sathi awardee and regional panchayat member Jitul Rabha were felicitated for their contributions on the fourth day of the festival. Addressing the gathering, Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council Chairman Sonaram Rabha stated that protecting Chandubi remains a major responsibility of the Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council. He said the festival, now in its 16th year, was initiated to preserve the wetland in its natural green form and has since played a significant role in conserving the region's biodiversity.

All Rabha Students' Union President Motilal Rabha described Chandubi as a prominent tourism destination and stressed that the government must take greater responsibility for its protection. He reiterated the demand for Sixth Schedule status in Rabha Hasong, asserting that such a framework would safeguard the interests of all communities living in the area.

BJP executive member Hitesh Kalita said the Chandubi protection movement began through the festival 16 years ago and emphasised that the wetland must be safeguarded by keeping it free from political interference. Highlighting tourism as a major global industry, he said Chandubi holds immense potential as a tourism hub if developed responsibly.

Speaking on environmental conservation, Dr Purnima Devi Barman said humans are an inseparable part of nature and must respect its rules. She called for environmental education from an early age and urged people to stop using plastic due to its harmful impact on both health and the environment. "On the first day the festival commenced with the hoisting of the flag by Bichitra Rabha, President of the Chandubi Festival Celebration Committee. The event Chandubi Festival 2026 was formally inaugurated by Tonkeshwar Rabha, Chief Executive Member of the Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council (RHAC). The exhibition gate at Langabura was inaugurated by noted social worker Manoj Rabha.

The Chand Sadagar Memorial Stage was inaugurated by eminent actress Asha Bordoloi, while the traditional indigenous sports events were inaugurated by Ajit Rabha, Member of the Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council. The traditional food fair was inaugurated by Nayanjyoti Das, Forest Range Officer, Loharghat, and the trade fair by Kangkanjyoti Kaushik, Forest Range Officer, Kulsu.

A public meeting held in the afternoon, presided over by Satyajit Rabha, witnessed the release of the festival souvenir Lakeya, edited by Khanindra Barnil, recipient of the Young Writer Award. The souvenir was released by Anup Kumar Medhi, State Executive Member of the BJP, who extended his best wishes for the success of the festival. He described Chandubi Lake as a matter of pride not only for Palashbari but for Assam and the world, adding that the souvenir would help people gain deeper knowledge about the lake. During another book release session, Hemanga Thakuria, MLA, attended as the chief guest and described Chandubi Lake as one of the world's historically significant lakes, as it was formed due to the 1897 earthquake. He emphasised the need to promote Chandubi Lake and preserve its surrounding ecology and cultural heritage. Addressing the gathering, Tonkeshwar Rabha, CEM of RHAC spoke about the biodiversity of Chandubi Lake and its social and economic significance. He appreciated the festival committee for promoting the lake but stressed the need for further efforts in its conservation and promotion. Among others present were folk culture researcher Bhupin Rabha, Rabha leaders Dhananjay Rabha, Ramakanta Rabha, Nripen Rabha, former President of Palasbari Sahitya Sabha Mayaram Das, sports organiser Sukumar Medhi, and several other dignitaries. Cultural programmes featuring traditional dance, music, and performances by Rabha, Bodo, and other indigenous communities were also held.

### Literary Award "Bandhu-Chaki" for

between the timeless and time itself is what keeps a poet relevant for all ages." Accepting the award, Dr. Pranoy Phukan remarked, "The primary responsibility of a poet is to speak the truth through poetry. The era of obscurity in poetry has passed." The programme was compered by poet Meera Dutta, while the felicitation address was delivered by noted thinker and writer Dr. Satyakam Barthakur, who observed, "Poetry represents the transformed world.

The event, presided over by poet and playwright Nilkantha Saikia, also witnessed the presentation of the "Bandhu-Chaki Award 2026" to three selected poets—Biswajit Saikia, Dhiman Barman, and Monalisa Sharma chosen from a poetry competition organised by Bandhu-Chaki to discover poetic talent irrespective of age. Following the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, the programme commenced with a poetry recitation by twelve reciters led by eminent elocutionist Rijumoni Saikia Tamuli, with support from Rina Gogoi. In his welcome address, Uday Kumar Sharma, President of Bandhu-Chaki, stated, "Poetry is the pursuit of life through artistic discipline. The language of poetry is the mother tongue of humanity." In the presence of several distinguished writers and poets, a 'Poetry Adda' held in the evening featured readings of three selected poems by the award-winning poets. Many poetry lovers and eminent writers participated in the session, conducted by Bhanu Mazumdar, where Chamsul Barik, Dr. Chitrijit Saikia, Pranjal Pratim Bora, Seema Gogoi, and Manasi Gogoi discussed their favourite poems written by others. The programme concluded with a joint recitation by six children.

## Love or Illusion?

■ Shamnur Alom

What is illusion? Illusion or infatuation is a fleeting emotion, feeling, or a misconception. It is often triggered by a person's physical appearance, social status, or other external factors. This emotion arrives swiftly and vanishes just as quickly when circumstances change. In such a state, people tend to ignore reality and remain trapped within an imaginary concept. Once they confront the truth, this illusion shatters.

The word "Love" is deeply rooted in the human mind as a beautiful emotion; however, it has a dark and destructive side. Love can be an obsession or an illusion that obstructs the path of peace and progress in human life. This emotion, termed 'love,' acts as a catastrophic 'disease' for both boys and girls, destroying their self-respect, time, life, and future.

In reality, there is no such thing as love; rather, it diminishes the thinking capacity of young people and forces them to wander in an unrealistic world. After falling in love, many youths drift away from their goals and duties. They begin to believe that this emotion is everything in life and that everything else is secondary. In search of this imaginary happiness, they ignore the challenges of real life.

In the name of love, many relationships violate social norms or family consent. As a result, individuals face social humiliation, become estranged from their families, and lose their dignity. The precious time meant for education is lost within these relationships. If focus is shifted toward love during the years of career-building, the future becomes bleak. Many talented students destroy their prospects due to such misguided decisions.

Getting involved in these relationships creates a constant need for energy and emotional investment. Consequently, young people waste their study time talking, meeting, and managing emotional conflicts like anger or resentment. Furthermore, after a breakup, they often suffer from intense mental stress unnecessarily. They spend a significant amount of time trying to recover from this trauma. Some fall into depression and choose destructive paths like drugs, or even resort to extreme measures like suicide. These incidents are not uncommon; evidence can be found easily by opening any newspaper or social media. As a result, life loses its meaning and is completely destroyed.

When the youth are immersed in this illusion, the progress of society comes to a standstill. If the future citizens of the country become aimless, how can society move forward? Therefore, love is an illusion, and one should be aware of its harmful aspects.

To escape its catastrophic effects, the youth must learn to think with logic instead of emotion. A healthy and strong society can only be built if maximum importance is given to education, career, and personal goals. Instead of ruining life by falling for the infatuation of false love, the most important thing is to focus on building one's own life.

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### Obituary: Deben Chandra Nath

A founder teacher of Monai Jaisiddhi High School, a socially active personality of Jamuguri-Bamunbari area here, Deben Chandra Nath passed away on Sunday night at around 9 pm. He was rushed to a private nursing home here due to a stroke on December 29. Following his critical condition, he was shifted to Guwahati's Nemcare Hospital on December 31 and then taken to Tezpur Medical College & Hospital. He was discharged from the hospital on Sunday and taken home. However, he passed away at night at the age of 69.



খাদ্য, বাজার বিভাগ  
অসম চৰকাৰ

খাদ্য, বাজার বিভাগ আৰু প্ৰাহ্লাদক পৰিয়ালৰ বিভাগ

**খাদ্য সুৰক্ষাৰ পৰা  
পৰিপুষ্টিৰ নিশ্চিতলৈ**

**অন্ন মেৰা দিন**

১ - ১০ জানুৱাৰী

ড়. হিমন্ত বিশ্ব শৰ্মা  
মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী, অসম

◆ ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় খাদ্য সুৰক্ষা আইনৰ অধীনস্থ পৰিয়ালৰ বাবে ◆

বিনামূলীয়া চাউলৰ লগতে বজাৰতকৈ সুলভ মূল্যত খাদ্য-সামগ্ৰী

**‘প্ৰধানমন্ত্ৰী গৰীব কল্যাণ অন্ন যোজনা’ৰ অধীনত বিনামূলীয়া চাউল**

- ◆ ‘অন্ত্যোদয়ী অন্ন যোজনা’ৰ অধীনস্থ প্ৰতিটো পৰিয়াললৈ প্ৰতিমাহে ৩৫ কিলোগ্ৰামকৈ চাউল
- ◆ অগ্রাধিকাৰপ্ৰাপ্ত পৰিয়ালৰ প্ৰতিগৰাকী ব্যক্তিলৈ প্ৰতিমাহে ৫ কিলোগ্ৰামকৈ চাউল

প্ৰতিমাহে প্ৰতিটো পৰিয়াললৈ ১ কিলোগ্ৰামকৈ বজাৰতকৈ সুলভ মূল্যত খাদ্য-সামগ্ৰী

পূৰ্বৰ নিৰ্ধাৰিত মূল্য	জানুৱাৰী ২০২৬ ব পৰা নিৰ্ধাৰিত মূল্য			
 মচুৰ দাইল ৩৫ টকা (প্ৰতি কিলো)	 চেনি ৩৮ টকা (প্ৰতি কিলো)	 মচুৰ দাইল ৬০ টকা (প্ৰতি কিলো)	 চেনি ৩০ টকা (প্ৰতি কিলো)	 নিমখ ১০ টকা (প্ৰতি কিলো)

**উপকৃত হোৱা পৰিয়ালৰ সংখ্যা ৭০ লাখৰো অধিক**

**সুলভ মূল্যৰ দোকানীৰ কৰণীয়**

- ▶ অন্ন সেৱা দিন সম্পর্কে ব্যাপক প্ৰচাৰ আৰু সজাগতা সৃষ্টি কৰা
- ▶ অন্ন সেৱা দিনৰ প্ৰতিটো দিনত দিনজোৰাকৈ দোকান খোলা বৰ্তা
- ▶ হিতাধিকাৰীয়ে লাভ কৰা সামগ্ৰীৰ বিপৰীতে e-POS মেচিনৰ বৰ্চিনৰ বৰ্চিন প্ৰদান কৰা

**হিতাধিকাৰীলৈ আহান**

- ▶ নিৰ্ধাৰিত মূল্যতকৈ কোনো কাৰণতেই অধিক টকা পৰিশোধ নকৰিব
- ▶ প্ৰতিটো সামগ্ৰীৰ বাবে পৃথক পৃথককৈ e-POS মেচিনৰ জৰিয়তে বায়া'মেট্ৰিক প্ৰামাণীকৰণ জৰুৰী
- ▶ সামগ্ৰী সংগ্ৰহৰ বিপৰীতে e-POS মেচিন সৃষ্টি বৰ্চিন প্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ নাপাইবিব



যিকোনো অভিযোগৰ কেছত জিলা/সমৰ্জিলা/মহকুমাৰ বিভাগীয় কাৰ্যালয় অথবা টোল ফুল নথৰ:  
১৮০০-৩৪৫-৩৬১১ আৰু ১৯৬৭ (BSNL প্ৰাহ্লক)ত যোগাযোগ কৰক

তথ্য আৰু জনসংযোগ সঞ্চালকালয়, অসমৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰচাৰিত

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অসম বাৰ্তা ছাৰক্ষা হৰি কৰিবলৈ ৭৬৩৬৮৩৪৯৪৩ ত Assam লিখি বাট্টএপ কৰক

Janasanyog RO no 3865/25/9-January-26

# Empowering Rural Women Through Entrepreneurship

**EDII Trained Rural Women supported by Accenture (Vocal for Local Exhibition) Shine at Chandubi Mela.**



**Sunil Das, Chandubi** : The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad proudly announces the successful engagements of its trained rural women entrepreneurs at the renowned Chandubi Mela, held from 1st January 2026 to 05th January 2026. Supported by Accenture, with the theme "Vocal for Local" resonated strongly as women showcased their vibrant products, attracting significant footfall and boosting local sales.

Over the course of the festival, the EDII stall witnessed an impressive footfall of visitors, highlighting the growing interest in local handicrafts, Agro -

food products, and Handloom made traditional attires by these talented women. The initiative, aimed at empowering women and promoting self-sustainability through entrepreneurship, aligns perfectly with the vision of uplifting local artisans and fostering community engagement.

The impact of the event was remarkable, resulting in impressive sales providing a tremendous boost to the participating women entrepreneurs. With diverse offerings including handmade crafts, Agro-Food produces, and traditional Handloom attire, the stall became a focal point for attendees eager to support local businesses

and discover authentic regional products. "This event exemplifies the power of community support and entrepreneurship. The enthusiasm from the visitors and the sales generated are testaments to the hard work and talent of our women entrepreneurs," said Ratan Guha, Project Manager at EDII, NERO, Guwahati. "With the support of Accenture, we are fostering a culture of self-reliance among women who are ready to break barriers and create their own opportunities."

EDII's involvement with support from Accenture has been pivotal in providing mentorship, skill development training, and resources to these women, empowering them to become successful business owners. By promoting their products at prestigious platforms like Chandubi Mela, the initiative reinforces the importance of embracing local craftsmanship and supporting grassroots entrepreneurship.

## Carcass of Royal Bengal Tigress recovered in Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve



**Bokakhat** : The carcass of a Royal Bengal Tigress was recovered from the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve on Sunday morning. According to sources, forest personnel under the Bagori range of the national park were on routine patrol inside the forest

when they spotted the carcass of an approximately 8 to 10-year-old tigress lying in the area of the West Bimoli forest camp. The matter was immediately reported to senior forest officials. As per the guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), a post-mortem examination was conducted by a veterinary doctor in the presence of the park's divisional forest officer and range officials. After the post-mortem, it was confirmed that the tigress died due to injuries sustained in a fight with another tiger. For further examination, some body parts of the dead tigress will be collected and sent to a forensic laboratory by the park authorities.

## Nagaon Lions Club marks Melvin Jones' birth month with meal drive

**Nagaon** : On the occasion of the birth month of Melvin Jones, the founder and guiding figure of the Lions Club and a thinker dedicated to the upliftment of people of all religions and castes, the Nagaon Lions Club organized a meal distribution programme for the poor and destitute on Tuesday. Under this noble initiative, meals, sweet packets, and bottles of drinking water were distributed among many needy people present in front of Panchmukhi Hanuman Temple, Jagannath Temple, and Gurusthan by the club members.



# FINE DINE

Taste of Assam

**ভাত**

**মাছ, মাংস, পর্যায়, পুরি, রুটি**

- 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)**