1.

Assam has witnessed a massive footfall of over one crore domestic travellers in 2022-23, following a surge in tourists' interest in visiting the state.

In the year 2022-23, the state recorded at least 1,00,12,195 domestic tourists from the entire country.

Assam witnessed visitor footfall of 17 lakh during 2021-22, and 13.5 lakh during 2020-21, according to data provided by the state government.

The state, mainly known as the gateway to the North East, is well connected to the rest of the country with road, railways and airways and offers spiritual, wildlife, river and adventure tourism.

Earlier, in April 2023, Assam Chief Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, announced that the state has recorded a staggering 575 per cent growth in tourist arrivals in the financial year 2022–2023.

The state welcomed over 1 crore tourists during this period, making it a significant milestone for Assam's tourism industry.

This announcement comes after Sarma inaugurated a 200-room resort developed by the Mayfair Group in Sonapur, near Guwahati, which will boost tourism infrastructure in the state.

2.

In a bid to uplift the Adivasi community, the Assam government has extended an open invitation to the Adivasi Kalyan Parishad, urging them to work together for the upliftment of the Adivasi society.

The government has implemented a reservation policy in medical colleges, reserving 30 seats for deserving candidates from these communities.

This progressive initiative aims to provide greater access to quality education and enhance opportunities for Adivasi and Tea tribe students to pursue medical careers.

Furthermore, the government has expressed its intention to introduce a 3 per cent reservation quota for Adivasi and Tea tribes in all government jobs.

This move aims to promote inclusivity and create a level playing field for individuals belonging to these communities.

By offering equitable opportunities in employment, the government hopes to empower Adivasi and Tea tribes by ensuring their rightful representation across various sectors.

It’s a positive first step, as the government takes proactive steps to ensure the overall development of marginalised populations. The government strives to develop a more inclusive society in which every person has an equal opportunity to prosper and flourish by promoting collaboration and adopting laws that address fundamental inequities.

3.

Rs. 4 lakh fixed deposit for each surrendered Adivasi cadre

The fixed deposit will be made on or before August 15, 2023, and the cadres will be able to avail a loan of Rs. 3 lakh from the deposit to start their own businesses or pursue other ventures. The government will also provide counseling services to support the cadres during their transition to civilian life. Additionally, a monthly stipend of Rs. 6,000 will be given to each cadre for the next three years to cover their daily expenses.

4.

The full bench of the High Court of Meghalaya on Thursday once again expressed its unhappiness over the abject failure of the administration and the police in taking appropriate steps to arrest the illegal mining of coal in the state.
During a hearing on a PIL on the coal illegalities, the court took cognizance of the apparent threat received by the petitioner and requested the Assam DGP to take appropriate steps to ensure the safety and security of the petitioners, their family members and lawyers representing such petitioners.

5.

Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), one of the leading Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in India, has achieved a significant milestone as it has been upgraded from Schedule B to Schedule A by the Government of India. This elevation in status was officially notified by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on July 4th, 2023. The upgradation acknowledges NRL’s robust financial performance, operational efficiency, and its valuable contribution to the economic development of the Northeast region. NRL stands as one of the top 20 CPSEs in India in terms of sales revenue and profitability. Recognized as a high-performing model refinery among Indian PSU refineries, NRL boasts exceptional figures in distillate yield, specific energy consumption, and gross refining margin. Additionally, NRL has made its mark

globally by exporting petroleum products to neighboring countries, actively supporting the Act East Policy of the Government of India. As the largest refinery in Northeast India, NRL currently operates with a capacity of 3 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA). However, the company is embarking on an ambitious mega refinery expansion project that aims to triple its refining capacity to 9 MMTPA. Simultaneously, NRL is also laying a trans-national crude oil pipeline from Paradip in Odisha. These endeavors, along with NRL's ongoing investments of Rs. 35,000 crores in the region, stand as significant contributions to the oil and gas sector. The upgrade to Schedule A status will enable NRL to pursue the coveted Navratna status, granting the company increased financial autonomy. This newfound independence will empower NRL to undertake larger and more complex projects, and make expedited decisions regarding joint ventures, strategic partnerships, and special-purpose vehicles for strategic growth. Moreover, the upgradation to Schedule A represents a significant boost for NRL's commitment to achieving net-zero goals. NRL is poised to play a critical role in the ongoing energy transition mission within the oil and gas sector in India. Numaligarh Refinery Limited's upgradation to Schedule A CPSE status marks a major milestone in its journey. With enhanced financial autonomy, NRL is poised to drive economic development, undertake ambitious projects, and actively contribute to the energy transition in the Northeast region of India.

6.

In an attempt to reduce human error and improve safety along elephant corridors in Assam and North Bengal, the NFR is tapping into its network of optic fibre cables (OFCs) to deploy an artificial intelligence-driven elephant intrusion detection system (IDS).

The IDS works by detecting variations in the optical signals transmitted through the OFCs when elephants move on or alongside railway tracks, causing vibrations. The NFR's AI

software can identify these changes and immediately alert control offices, station masters, gatekeepers, and loco pilots.

The AI software has been trained to identify movement signatures of all mammals, including humans. The NFR had rolled it out on a pilot basis last year along 11 elephant corridors spanning 70 km in Assam's Lumding and Alipurduar divisions, where no elephant-related accidents have occurred. NFR is now implementing the IDS along the remaining 75 corridors, including Deepor Beel. Each installation costs around Rs 3 crore for an 80 km section.

The railway authorities hope that once the system is in place, trains will be able to operate more efficiently. Trains are required to maintain a speed of 30 kmph in elephant corridors, which can be challenging for loco pilots, especially at night when locating elephants becomes more difficult due to forest cover and natural camouflage

7.

The Assam Legislative Assembly has taken steps to discuss parliamentary democracy at the grassroots level to properly implement the parliamentary provisions of the Constitution. The powers and authority given to Panchayat Representatives by the Constitution should be exercised properly. There will be a panchayat meeting. It will be held on July 8 at the Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra. The first conference was held in Dibrugarh, and this will be the second after that. The Panchayat representatives and MLAs from six districts, namely Darrang, Nalbari, Kamrup, Kamrup (M), Morigaon, and Nagaon, will be participating. A total of 1213 delegates will participate. The Governor Gulab Chand Kataria will be inaugurating the Panchayat conference

8.

In its drive to plant one crore sapling having commercial value, Assam government has identified SHG members, Anganwadi workers and helpers, ASHA workers, police including VDPs and battalions, tea gardens, educational institutions and government offices as target groups.

9.

Many districts of the state have not yet submitted the utilization certificates (UCs) of rehabilitation grants (RG) released by the government during the floods last year. Some of the districts have submitted erroneous UCs. It is not known if the district administrations that have not yet submitted their UCs have utilized the amount or not. Meanwhile, the Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Department has already released rehabilitation grants to people in the flood-affected districts that have submitted error-free UCs. The department has asked the erring district administrations to submit the UCs first to get the rehabilitation grants for this year released. The R&DM Department releases rehabilitation grants from the SDRF (State Disaster Response Fund).

10.

The Assam State Primary Teachers' Association (ASPTA) moved the Union Ministry of Education, Department of Education, to allow contractual teachers' to apply for the National Award for Teachers for the year 2023.

In this connection, the online registration for self-nomination by the teachers is open till July 15 on the website of the Government of India, https://nationalawardstoteachers.education.gov.in. But it is open to regular teachers' only, although there are contractual teachers under SSA (Samagra Shiksha Assam), they are

serving as regular teachers in all fields. The State Government has already signed contracts with contractual teachers for sixty years.