1.

The ERD Foundation, Guwahati has adopted karate champion Rajveer Singha who received the India Book of Records certificate for writing the maximum number of hand-written letters to the prime minister of India on various social issues.

Mahbubul Hoque, Chairman of ERDF and Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology Meghalaya (USTM) said that the Foundation would take responsibility for all future education expenses of the karate champion and felicitated the athlete on Saturday at a ceremony at the university campus.

Rajveer Singha, a resident of Pandu, Guwahati, has written more than 60 letters to the Prime Minister of India addressing problems such as corruption, poverty, education, health, and women's safety. He has been writing letters to the Prime Minister for the last few months and is committed to continue doing so. The India Book of Records has recognized and appreciated his efforts through the certificate.

2. In India, nature friendly products are believed to be a high price product, but with their innovation and design they have been able to make it highly affordable. Assam based ICS Innovation have been working with bamboo, wood, water hyacinth, pine needles and many other nature friendly materials and converting them to creative masterpieces. The company is committed to provide premium quality products at a very reasonable price point and within the stipulated time period. Within a year, the company has outperformed its competitors in terms of supply, quality and revenue. Now-a-days where most of the startups are backed by funding, ICS Innovation being boot strapped is able to generate profits from the very first day. From home décor to corporate gifting, and from Jewellries to creative installations they are excelling in their fields.

Saumik & Barnali, both being from a creative background, left corporate jobs and chose their passion as a profession. They have PSUs, Govt. Departments, Ministries, MNCs and Defense Forces as their esteemed clientele. Their products are extremely popular in India as well as in Countries like Dubai, Qatar, Spain, London, Australia and the US. Both have been awarded with entrepreneurship awards and inspiring business awards. The company envisions sustainable solutions for everyone…everyday

3.

The Grade IV staff of the Assam Government has been redesignated as Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS). Recently, the Personnel Department issued a notification in order to enable multi-tasking, where an employee performs a job hitherto performed by different Grade IV employees. The Grade IV posts that are recognized as MTS are Chaparsi, Peon, Peon-cum-Chowkidar, Mali, Laboratory attendant, Boatman, Porter, Helper to Mechanic, Paniwala, Helper to Electrician, Laboratory Bearer, Hostel Cook, Manual assistant, Cook, Liftman, Jarikarak, Process Sever, Vicera Cutter, Khalasi, Monument Attendant, Handyman, Reading Room Watcher, Cleaner, Peon-cum-Chowkidar, Jugali, Unit Boy, Studio Boy, Regular Mazdoor, DES, Aya, Skill helper, Dak Runner, Dufty, Khansama, Assistant Operator, Semen Carrier, Bull Attendant, Animal Attendant, Instrument Keeper, Bhandari, Ghat Helper, Water Carrier, Time Keeper, Plate Gummer, Plate Washer, Store Helper, Workshop Helper, and Library Bearer. The notification also clearly mentioned the new duties of the Grade IV, or now MTS, staff. Now they will be engaged with (a) the physical maintenance of records in the office; (b) general cleanliness and upkeep of the office; (c) the carrying of files and other papers within the building; (d) photocopying and sending of faxes. (e) Other non-clerical work in the office (f) Assisting in routine office work like diaries and dispatch, including on the computer (g) Delivery of dak (outside the building) (h) Watch and ward duties (i) Opening and closing of rooms (j) Cleaning of rooms (k) Dusting of furniture (l) Cleaning of buildings, fixtures, etc. (m)

Driving of vehicles if in possession of a valid driving licence (n) Upkeep of parks, lawns, potted plants, etc. (o) Any other work assigned by the superior authority (p) Engaged in need-based IT work, including computerization, e-files, etc. However, the notification said that the Grade IV posts and duties are only illustrative and not exhaustive, and departments may add to the list of posts and duties of similar nature ordinarily performed by the staff at this level.

4.

To ensure that trained teachers impart basic education to children of tea garden workers, the State Government will appoint two TET teachers in each LP school in the tea garden areas.

The government is committed to the welfare of the tea tribe community. There are 419 LP schools in the tea garden areas. These schools are run by the management of the tea gardens. If the children of the tea garden areas are not imparted proper basic education, they are likely to face problems in learning in higher classes. Hence, the government has decided to appoint 2 TET teachers in each of the 419 LP schools.

There are already 2-3 teachers in each of these LP schools. They have been recruited by the tea garden management. When the government appoints 2 TET teachers in each school, it does not mean that the tea garden management will dismiss the existing teachers. It has also come to the notice of the government that the tea garden management is paying a meager salary to these teachers. The management will now have to pay a decent salary to these teachers." In addition, the government will also sanction building grant for these LP schools and provide benches, desks, school uniform and mid-day meal. Steps will also be taken to train the existing teachers

5.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma reallocated the portfolios of two ministers and took over the Department of Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture, except the directorates of Library and Museum and Archaeology

As per an official notification, cabinet ministers Jogen Mohan heading the portfolios of Revenue and Disaster Management and Hill Areas Development, and Nandita Gorlosa with the portfolios of Power, Cooperation, Mines and Minerals, Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture (except for Directorates of Library and Museum) have been given additional charges.

The portfolio of Mines and Minerals was taken from Nandita Gorlosa and handed to Jogen Mohan while continuing his current responsibilities. Nandita Gorlosa, on the other hand, was given additional responsibility for the department of sports and youth welfare. It also stated that Nandita Gorlosa would be in charge of the Directorate of Archeology, which falls under the department of Indigenous and Tribal Faith and Culture.

It needs mention here that the department of Sports and Youth welfare was under CM Sarma himself, which has now been handed over to cabinet minister Nandita Gorlosa.

6.

As a part of the initiative to make the country tuberculosis-free by 2025, the National Health Mission Assam has taken proactive steps to free the state from the disease. Special initiatives regarding the same will be undertaken at the primary, secondary, and tertiary health institutions in the state. The first point of contact for diagnosis and treatment at the community level is the Community Health Officers (CHOs), who have been sensitized through

training in all the Health & Wellness Centres (HWCs) to provide all TB services (diagnosis, detection, and treatment). State-of-the-art diagnostic tools for TB diagnosis, namely TrueNaat/ CBNAAT, are now available in all the district hospitals and most of the block-level health facilities in the state. The Intermediate Reference Laboratory (IRL) has been actively operationalized in GMCH for most of the latest diagnostic methods of TB detection at no cost. Through this centre, advanced TB cases can be detected, followed by proper management through medicines. The Zonal Task Force (ZTF) meeting of the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) for medical colleges in the North East Region was held on Monday. Dr. M. S. Lakshmi Priya, Mission Director of NHM Assam, attended the meeting as the chief guest. She highlighted the role of primary, secondary, and tertiary care health institutions for TB notification. She further emphasized not only increasing TB case notification but also extensively implementing TB preventative therapy (TPT) towards a TB-free Assam. Through a community-based approach, NHM Assam is actively working to build the capacity of carers at all levels, including providing support for community-based research. In comparison to 38097 notified TB patients in the year 2021, Assam has been able to achieve 47984 notified and treated TB cases in 2022. In 2023, the state plans to notify and treat more than 60,000 TB cases. NHM Assam also appealed to the people to come forward and avail the diagnosis and treatment facilities regarding TB that are available at all levels of health institutions.

7. Speaking on the sidelines of flagging off the first Vande Bharat Express of Northeast, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Sunday stated that 59 railway stations of the region will be made world-class.

Work for projects worth Rs 70,000 crores are to be done in the Northeast.

Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that Rs 11,000 crores have been allotted for the development projects in the Northeast.

8.

In a major boost towards commitment to eliminate Tuberculosis in the State, the Health and Family Welfare Department, Assam was conferred the National Award for reduction in TB cases in 2 districts under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Govt of India recently

Bongaigaon District was awarded Silver for 40% reduction in TB cases while Kokrajhar District was awarded Bronze for 20% reduction in TB cases respectively in the Sub National Certification for the year 2023.

The award was conferred at the One World TB Summit held at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh launched by Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

Team Assam has been relentlessly working towards elimination of TB in the State. It is mentionable here that recently Former Governor of Assam, Prof. Jagadish Mukhi had adopted 10 TB patients, Chief Minister of Assam, Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma had adopted five TB patients and Health Minister of Assam, Keshab Mahanta had adopted four TB patients as part of the Nikshay Mitra Campaign under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA).

It is noteworthy here that the State had diagnosed total 47,926 TB Patients in the year 2022 with 88% success rate.

9.

Poem *Topanito Teu Mok Khedi Phurisil*, which is being recreated as a song by musician and

composer Joi Barua, was released on Monday.

'Topanito Teu Mok Khedi Phurisil' is one of the most-acclaimed poems written by Jnanpith Award winner late Nilmani Phookan.

The famous poem was taken up for a musical metamorphosis by Raul Kaushik Nath Foundation as part of its 'Monkobita' initiative.

"To restructure 'Topanito….' musically was quite a task but it was Joi Barua who has beautifully rendered it into a masterpiece. Joi Barua's composition reflects his efforts to understand the poet's thoughts behind this poem, which is a brief and to-the-point abstract piece of work," the RKNF said.

The music of the song was composed by Joi Barua using various metaphors from the original poem. Singer Shankuraj Konwar was roped in for additional vocals and piano.

10.

With an aim to improve nutritional outcomes and economic opportunities for women from socio-economically disadvantaged families in Assam, USAID Advancing Nutrition is implementing a two-year USAID-supported multi-sectoral nutrition project in three districts – Tinuskia, Goalpara and Barpeta – of Assam.

The project prioritises the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders from the government, private sector, community-based organisations, institutions and community to build strategic alliances around goals and develop synergies to address malnutrition in the state by promoting increased agricultural productivity that enables women to operate and increase

their incomes as well as increase the availability, accessibility and consumption of safe, nutritious food.

The status of nutrition in Assam

The latest National Family Health Survey reported that 35 percent of children under the age of five are stunted (too short for their age) and 22 percent are wasted (too thin for their height). Approaches to address malnutrition may focus on women's empowerment and transformation of the food system and to increase the availability, accessibility, and consumption of safe, nutritious foods.

Building strategic alliances

In July 2022, the project signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Assam State Rural Livelihood Mission (ASRLM). The established partnership supported the identification of community cadres and beneficiaries from the Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

Adopting a cascade training model, the training was conducted on agriculture for a nutrition training module, focusing on improved aquaculture and horticulture practices. The trainings were implemented by USAID Advancing Nutrition's local implementing partner, SeSTA (Seven Sisters Development Assistance) to the community cadres who will continue imparting the knowledge to selected women beneficiaries from SHGs in the region.

An MoU was also signed with WorldFish, a consortium member of the International Agricultural Research Centres, to provide capacity-strengthening support on improved aquaculture practices.

Partnerships with the Department of Agriculture and Horticulture and Department of Fisheries of the Assam Government were sought for thematic expertise and overall guidance relating to horticulture and aquaculture approaches to ensure the inclusion of women beneficiaries in their existing networks to improve economic opportunities.

Engagement with the private sector, particularly tea management committees and Farmer Producer Companies/Organisations was essential to strengthen the linkages between women farmers in the WSHGs and increase access to markets for selected commodities.