

Forest and Environment Minister Th. Debendra Singh today released the "Manipur Environment Calendar 2016" at his office chamber at Old Secretariat office.



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## Case registered

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** Twisting the case of a suspected accused being let free after settling the matter as according to customary laws for the murder of 5 year old minor girl who was found dead on December 25 at Maram Kavanam Village, a regular case under FIR No. 22/12/2015, U/S6/PCSO Act 376/302 IPC have been registered on Suo-Moto at Mao PS. The said case have been registered on a written complaint lodged by SI Timothy of Mao PS with OC Mao PS against the sexual assault and murdered of Late Helina (4) d/o Kaluba of Maram Village by one David (21) s/o Ngounirang @ Chrang of Maram Kavanam Village under Mao PS after reports about the incident has been highlighted through local media. Mentioned may be made that Imphal Times and some of the daily evening paper had reported the matter in its yesterday issue on how a suspected accused has been let free after he was caught by villagers for allegedly killing the minor girl after being rape. The villagers reportedly set free with some form of punishment as according to the customary law of the villagers. As of now no persons in the connection has been arrested or picked up for questioning.

## Girl abducted

ANI

**Gurgaon, Dec. 28:** A girl was kidnapped in broad day-light outside her college in Gurgaon today. The police has begun its probe into the matter and is examining the CCTV footage of the college. "Around 9:30 in the morning, we got information in the control room that a girl was kidnapped. We are investigating the matter and will also examine the CCTV footage. Till now, no details are known," Assistant Commissioner of Police Anil Kumar said.

## Ibobi Ministry likely to reshuffle; High command approves

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** In view of the silent protest among congress legislators and the simmering tensions over depriving ministerial rights to some of the congress MLAs who deserves the post, Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh in consultation with State Congress President is likely to reshuffle his ministry in the coming 2/3 weeks from now. Source close to Imphal Times revealed that Chief Minister Okram Ibobi and Congress President Gaikhangam had consulted with the high command of AICC and both

now had approval for reshuffle of the Ministry. The source however, did not disclose on which congress minister will be replaced by whom. Congress party is now having absolute majority in the 60 members 10 Manipur Legislative Assembly after the five MSPC MLAs had merged to the party in April last year and another congress MLA won the by-election at Hiyanglam Assembly constituency after the sitting Trinamool Congress MLA expired in August 2014. Now the total strength of Congress in the

house is 48 excluding the Speaker who is supposed to belong to no political parties even though he was elected as congress candidate. Some of the senior MLAs who earlier had enjoyed the ministerial berth has been excluded from the ministry and new faces has been inducted by the Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh in his third term. Since then simmering tension created chaos in the Ibobi ministry, but the veteran politician who succeeded to hold the Chief Minister seat for three consecutive terms managed to put every potential

descendents under his whims with additional powers from the 10<sup>th</sup> Schedule legislation. But the recent defeat of both the congress candidates in the by-election of Thongju and Thangmeiband Assembly constituencies has been a serious matter of both state and central Congress leader. With the rumours about some incumbent Congress MLAs likely to join the BJP, the Ibobi administration finally left with no choice but to reshuffle the Ministry by replacing some of the Ministers by other congress MLAs.

## KCP MC calls General strike on January 8

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** Armed group KCP-MC (Liberation) has called 12 hours general strike on January 8 next year blaming RIMS authority of misusing and utilising a gang to cover the scams of question leaked to the recently held recruitment exam for staff nurse. The out in a press statement categorically stated their stand to the scam

and stated that if justice is not done then there is no going back. Pointing fingers to the group which is urging the RIMS authority to announce the recruitment result, the outfit said that the gang is misusing the name of the KCP-MC. The press statement also appealed to relook the history of KCP-MC if one really like to know the truth about the party that RIMS is utilising.

## Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee observes 131st Foundation day

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** Manipur Pradesh Congress Party observed the 131st Foundation of the Indian National Congress here at Congress Bhavan BT Road. The observance function was attended by Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh, Congress president

Gaikhangam and other Ministers, MLAs, Congress works and Frontal organization.

The Indian national congress was established on December 28, 1885. Speaker on the occasion highlighted on how the INC played its role in restoring independence of the country from the British Colonial regime. As usual MPCC president hoisted the tri colour flag of the party at its office complex.

Tributes were also paid to the leader of the INC as a mark tribute to them. Speakers on the occasion highlighted on how the congress leaders had struggled hard to restored the freedom of the country and establishing democracy in the country.

At new Delhi, the 131st Foundation Day was observed with its president Sonia Gandhi hoisting the party flag at the AICC headquarters.

All the top leaders of the party including Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, senior leaders Salman Khurshid, Anand Sharma, Sheila Dikshit, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Manish Tewari were present on the occasion.

## 3 villagers sustained bullet injury at police firing

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** 3 villagers were reportedly injured in indiscriminate police firing in Ukhrul district. According to source, an alternation occurred between the villagers of Somrei Village and some police personals of 4<sup>th</sup> IRB of Somrei Post attached with the ABCI Company at Somrei Village, Ukhrul District at around 6pm of December 27. Earlier, police personnel of 4<sup>th</sup> IRB picked up one Anando, aged 50, s/o Lungsum of Somrei Village about 8/9 kms from Nongpok Sekmai Police Station. On hearing the news of Anando being picked up by the 4<sup>th</sup> IRB personals, villagers of Somrei stormed the 4<sup>th</sup> IRB Somrei Post. Consequently, 4<sup>th</sup> IRB personals posted at the post opened fire to control the

mob in which 3 persons sustained bullet injuries, source said.

The injured persons have been identified as (1) Simreiwon, aged 33, w/o (L) Wungsum of Somrei Village, (2) Ngalingam Tangkhul, aged 18, s/o (L) Aching Tangkhul of Somrei Village and (3) Ngasanghor, aged (30), s/o Samsong of Somrei Village. Simreiwon sustained bullet injury at her abdomen and currently she is being at the ICU of Shija Hospital, Langol. Meanwhile both Ngalingam Tangkhul and Ngasanghor are being admitted at the casualty ward of RIMS. Ngalingam Tangkhul sustained bullet injury on the right side arm where Ngasanghor sustained bullet injury on the right side hand. Further report is being awaited.

## Softball Tournament

IT News

**Imphal, Dec 28:** 2 days Manipur University Softball Tournament 2015-2016 for both Men and Women organized by DM College of Science, Imphal has kicked off today at the Dhanamanjuri Sports Complex, DM College of Science, Imphal. Ng Brajakumar Singh, Principal of DM College of Commerce, Imphal was chaired as the Chief Guest. P Ranabir Singh, Principal of

DM College of Science, Imphal was chaired as the President of today's opening function.

Three teams of men and four teams of women from different colleges are participating in the tournament.

In the opening match, women team from MU and Birmangol college is being played while in the 2<sup>nd</sup> match, men team from Birmangol college and DMC Sc will be played.

## Assam Minister calls Smriti Irani PM's second wife

Agency

**Guwahati, Dec. 28:** On Sunday, senior Congress leader of Assam Nilamoni Sen Deka stirred controversy by referring Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Smriti Irani as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's second wife. On Sunday, Deka made obnoxious comment about Union Minister Smriti Irani. These remarks were made by former state's agricultural minister at a public gathering in Assam's Nalbari district.

Taking a strong exception to such derogatory remarks, BJP's Assam unit chief and Union sports minister Sarbananda Sonowal has asked Congress chairperson Sonia Gandhi to apologize in front of the people of the country for her partymen's act against women. He was later slammed by BJP leaders including party general secretary Ram Madhav. "Chief minister Tarun Gogoi should immediately take action", said Sonowal.

## NO to 'Free Basics (by Facebook)', YES to 'Net Neutrality'

By : Ringu Pebam

"What Facebook wants is our less fortunate brothers and sisters should be able to poke each other and play Candy Crush, but not be able to look up a fact on Google, or learn something on Youtube or Khan Academy, or sell their produce on a commodity market, or even search for a job on Naukri."

- Mahesh Murthy, net-neutrality activist

Net neutrality means that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites. To put it in simple terms, anyone from anywhere around the world should be able to access or provide services and content on the internet without any discrimination.

Internet.org is a partnership between Facebook and six other companies (Samsung, Ericsson, MediaTek, Opera Software, Nokia and Qualcomm) that planned to bring affordable access to selected Internet services to less developed countries. It was launched in August 2013,

and faced a global backlash! Facebook's role as gatekeeper in determining what websites people can access was criticised for violating net neutrality. An Indian journalist, in his reply to Mark Zuckerberg's article defending Internet.org in India, criticized Internet.org as "being just a Facebook proxy targeting India's poor" as it provides restricted Internet access to Reliance Telecom's subscribers in India.

Internet.org is now repackaged with a different name called "Free Basics". Facebook launched the "Free Basics" initiative in India in February this year by partnering with Reliance Communications. RCom offers the Free Basics service under a 'Freenet' button on mobile phones. It started with free access to select 33 websites across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Goa. This was subsequently increased to 80 websites.

Net neutrality is basically towards democracy, against monopoly, where Internet.org/Free Basics is exactly

opposite. Facebook have been at the receiving end from net neutrality supporters.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has asked Reliance Communications to suspend its Free Basics service this month. Few weeks back, the TRAI had issued a consultation paper on differential pricing for data services, where it had asked if telecom operators should be allowed to have different pricing for accessing different websites, applications and platforms. TRAI said some service providers were offering differential data tariff with free or discounted tariffs to certain contents of certain websites, applications or platforms. TRAI has invited comments till 31st December 2015.

In the last few days, from billboards (in metro cities) to YouTube ads, from two-page newspaper ads (in national newspapers), to 'Send a Mail to TRAI to Save Free Basics' campaign where they ask Facebook users to send signed emails to the TRAI in support of the campaign, Mark Zuckerberg & Co. have been aggressively trying to get their message of 'Free Basics' across to people.

Facebook users were repeatedly shown a misleading petition by Facebook on top of their pages, and in the form of notification (or friends who have signed up the petition), without being told both sides of the story, and thinking they were doing something for a noble cause, and not to further Facebook's business strategy, many have clicked 'yes' and submitted. Later many realized that they were conned into doing have since said no. For all those who have signed up via Facebook to support the online campaign of 'Free Basics' but want to reverse their decision, can do so in the web addresses given in the end of this writeup.

Facebook calls Free Basics "a service offered on mobile devices that provides free access to a set of useful websites on the internet". So, Facebook is going to decide what 'useful websites' are? Now, the question is, can one trust Facebook's discretion? And more importantly, should one? After all, this would potentially decide what millions of users who get internet access for the first time will have access to. (Contd. on page 2)