

CM opens Annual Tribal Cultural Festival; Heritage Park worth Rs. 90 crore at Keibul Lamjao in the offing



IT News
Imphal, May 11,

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has said that the State Government has sent a proposal to the Centre for setting up a Heritage Park worth Rs. 90 crore at Keibul Lamjao in Bishnupur district. The Park having heritage structures of all the communities of the State would serve as a permanent venue for the annual Manipur Sangai Festival, he added. The Chief Minister was speaking as the Chief Guest at the inaugural function of the two-day Annual State Level Tribal Cultural Festival organised by Tribal Research Institute (TRI), Government of Manipur under the aegis of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India under the theme, 'Tribal Culture for Peace and Unity'.

N. Biren also said that the festival should be organised in a more grandeur manner at an open space at a suitable time from the next year. Stating that the State Government is willing to sanction the additional fund for the festival, the Chief Minister also asked the Tribal Research Institute to co-ordinate with the State Government to upgrade the festival from next year so that it may become more meaningful and magnificent. He also contended that every event or activity should be executed/organised in such a manner so as to serve its intended purpose. N. Biren Singh said that the new Government has been keeping all its promises made to the public so far, and the State has seen lots of positive changes in the past one year with hill-valley ties becoming more cordial.

On the other hand, the State has also been able to retain peace and tranquillity up to a large extent of late, however some anti-social elements have also been making constant efforts to destabilize the situation, he said.

Maintaining that every man is mortal, the Chief Minister observed that no solution can be brought by killing each other.

Urging the people of the State to go ahead together with the Government towards advancement, the Chief Minister expressed hope that Manipur would see a transformation soon if the

Government continues to fulfil the needs of the public through its noble missions like 'Go to Village' for some more years.

With the launching of the mission, all the high ranking officials including Administrative Secretaries and Heads of Departments have started working in the field, he observed. The Chief Minister also said that no village would be left out under the mission.

Tribal Affairs and Hills Minister N. Kayisii, who graced the function as president, said that every community should preserve its culture and identity. He also thanked the participants belonging to different tribal communities for taking part in the festival despite their busy chores because of the onset of farming season at hill areas.

Earlier, the Chief Minister declared the festival open and rung the inaugural gong to mark the beginning of the two-day festival that will conclude tomorrow.

Public Health Engineering (PHE) Minister Losii Dikho, Hill Area Committee (HAC) Chairman T.T. Haokip and Outer Manipur Parliamentary Constituency MP Thangso Baite also graced the function as guests of honour.

Manipur Pollution Control Board Chairman and Oinam AC MLA L. Radhakishore and MLAs Y. Surchandra and S. Bira and Chairmen of different ADCs and Members also attended the festival.

Presentation of colourful tribal cultural dances, folk songs and tribal cuisines were the main highlights of the festival.

SC asks chief justices of all HCs to form anti-sexual harassment panels in all courts

Agency
New Delhi, May 11,

The Supreme Court today asked chief justices or acting chief justices of all high courts to set up anti-sexual harassment committees in courts across the country within two months in accordance with a 2013 law. It also requested Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal of

the Delhi High Court to constitute the panel in the high court and in all district courts in the national capital within a week. A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra was hearing a writ petition filed by a woman lawyer against the advocates and some members of Delhi Bar Association alleging assault at the Tis Hazari district court complex in Delhi.

Disposing of the petition, the bench asked them to amicably settle their disputes. The court also directed that advocates from both sides should not be arrested in connection with the two cross FIRs filed by them against each other. The apex court asked the crime branch of Delhi Police to investigate the two cross-complaints. It also transferred the trials, arising

from the two cross FIRs, to the Patiala House district court in New Delhi and asked the Bar leaders not to interfere with the administration of justice. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013 requires every workplace to set up committees to probe sexual harassment complaints.

More objection comes on oil exploration works; urges immediate intervention by the Commerce and Industries Minister

IT News
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The ongoing oil exploration being underway at various part of the state faces objection from various organisations in the state. Several environment activists while opposing the oil exploration had submitted memorandums to the Commerce and Industries Minister of the government of India urging him for immediate intervention as the consequences could be a disaster for the state. One more organisation based at Thoubal district called the 'Youths Action Committee for Protection of Indigenous People' (YACPIP) also

submitted memorandum to the Commerce and Industries Minister Th. Bishwajit for immediate intervention of the oil exploration work.

The organisation alleged that the Oil India Limited started the 2D seismic data collection in Manipur without obtaining the Environment Clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

This is being alleged as per the information from the said Ministry's Regional office at Shillong.

Obtaining of the Environment Clearance the ultimate responsibility is the Government of Manipur, the organisation said while adding that the liability for failure in

obtaining the Environment Clearance will fall upon the Government of Manipur.

The memorandum submitted to the Minister also stressed on the need for seeking free Prior and Informed Consent of the Indigenous People as it is mandatory to implement any developmental projects as Indigenous people are dominantly inhabited in the state of Manipur.

However, this was not taken in any developmental projects in Manipur which results in the violation of Rights of the Indigenous People as per the United Nation Rights of the Indigenous People, 2007.

The organisation also stated that as per their source around 20 to 25 mine Bombs have

been blasted beneath the ground for the Oil exploration work in Jiribam without obtaining prior permission from the Directorate General of Mines Safety, which is mandatory.

"... this is a clear violation of law of the land and such high handedness by the Oil India Limited is Highly condemnable and also the government of Manipur for allowing the same", the organisation stated in the memorandum.

The organisation urged the Government of Manipur, India and the Oil India Limited to stop all form of Oil exploration and extraction of Natural resources from the Indigenous People's land immediately in the best interest of the people.

SSUM slams Manipur Govt. alleging protection of rapist MLA

IT News
Imphal, May 11,

Socialist Students' Union of Manipur, (SSUM) slammed the state government headed by the BJP alleging protection of a rapist MLA. In a press statement, the student union said that such a protection has defamed the Prime Minister's ambitious campaign - Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, which was launched on January 22, 2015. The student body points MLA of Sekmai Assembly constituency as an example of how the government has been concealing crime committed against women by MLAs.

The student body said that as per the clause 4, section 375 of the Indian Penal Code rape is defined in an appropriate ways no matter it is as per her consent or not. The clause 4 of the section said that "With her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband, and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married". As per the definition provided in the clause 4 of the IPC it stands true that the case of Sekmai Assembly constituency is a case of rape, the SSUM added. Moreover after the 2012 New Delhi Rape case, both the

houses of Parliament have amended the Indian Penal Code, Indian Evidence Act and the Code of Criminal Procedure regarding to all clauses and sections related to sexual harassment case. The SSUM said that the way the government is protecting the Sekmai Assembly Constituency MLA will not be tolerated.

On the other hand the students' body also expressed serious concerns to the Tanga Gang rape case. It said that the rapist involved are being protected by high level politicians. SSUM said that when investigated it has been found that the politician

giving protection to the rapist is not the MLA of Thanga Assembly constituency. It said it is time that people find out who is the politician supporting and protecting the rapist of the minor girl from thanga area. The SSUM also blamed the BJP led government questioning why they are silent when it comes to matters related to crime against women and children. The students' body while demanding immediate action against the Sekmai MLA and the BJP leader from Thanga Assembly constituency said that the matter will be brought up to the notice of the Prime Minister.

Indonesian volcano erupts, sparking evacuations

Agency
Jakarta, May 11,

Indonesian villagers living in the shadow of one of the world's most active volcanoes fled to safety today as the crater erupted, sending a cascade of ash and smoke some 5,000 metres (16,400 feet) into the sky.

The government ordered residents living within a five-kilometre (three-mile) radius of Mount Merapi on Java island to leave as ash covered surrounding communities and even reached parts of Yogyakarta, Indonesia's

cultural capital some 30 kms away. Officials have shuttered the city's international airport with eight flights cancelled following the early morning eruption, which began about 7:30 am local time.

It was not clear how many residents living around Merapi had left for local shelters, but around 12,000 people live in its immediate vicinity.

Some 120 people who were hiking on the mountain when the eruption happened are safe, the government said.

Merapi previously erupted in 2010, forcing 280,000 people to flee and killing more than 300 in what is considered its most powerful eruption since 1930. But officials said today's eruption was much less serious and a result of pressure buildup inside the crater.

"This kind of eruption is not dangerous and could happen anytime to any active volcano," national disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement. The volcano's alert status was unchanged.

The Southeast Asian archipelago of more than 17,000 islands and islets — and nearly 130 active volcanoes — is situated on the Pacific "Ring of Fire", a vast zone of geological instability where the collision of tectonic plates causes frequent quakes and major volcanic activity.

India celebrates National Technology Day commemorating the successful testing of nuclear bombs in Pokhran

Agency
New Delhi, May 11,

National Technology Day is being celebrated in the country today. On this day in 1998, India successfully tested its nuclear bombs in Pokhran, Rajasthan. Remembering the Pokhran Nuclear test in his recent Mann ki Baat programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said, Lord Buddha had shown the world that the power of inner strength is necessary for peace. In reference to the 20th

anniversary of Pokhran Test this year, Mr Modi asked the younger generations to imbibe the mantra of Jai-Vigyan given by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for enhancing the might and the power of India, to build a modern India, a powerful India and a self-reliant India.

In a series of tweets, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has talked about the 1998 tests in detail. She dedicated the National Technology Day to country's scientists, technicians and leadership who made India a nuclear

weapon state. India conducted five underground nuclear tests at Pokhran test range in Rajasthan, on 11th and 13th of May in 1998.

The tests were conducted under the leadership of Former President Dr A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, who was then DRDO Chief, and Dr R Chidambaram, then Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission. A team of more than 100 scientists, technicians and soldiers were involved in the successfully conducted tests.

President Ram Nath Kovind

has said the government is pursuing technology solutions for clean energy and meeting the challenges of water availability. Addressing the National Technology Day celebration in New Delhi, Mr Kovind said, an effort to fight pollution needs a force multiplier in the form of technology and explore new frontiers.

The President said, India's goal towards technology-based society will be achieved through technology while recalling the 20th anniversary of Pokhran nuclear tests,

which demonstrated India's capacity as a nuclear weapon state as well as a responsible technology power.

He remembered his predecessor, the former President, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, who led the dedicated scientific team that made preparations for the Pokhran tests and the leadership and courage of the then Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

He also emphasized on the need of more young women to enter the technology and innovation space.