

Voting underway for 2nd phase of Gujarat assembly elections

AIR Ahmedabad, Dec 14: Polling is underway for the second and final phase of Assembly elections in Gujarat. Of the total 182 constituencies, 93 in North and Central Gujarat are going to polls in this phase. Polling, which began at 8 in the morning, has been peaceful so far and it will continue till 5 in the evening. Three-tier security arrangement is in place to ensure the smooth conduct of polls.

More than 100 companies of paramilitary forces, apart from state police, have been deployed. The fate of 851 candidates will be decided in this phase. Prominent candidates include Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel who is contesting from Mahesana, Alpesh Thakor, who is the Congress candidate from Radhanpur, and Jignesh Mewani, who is an independent candidate from Vadgam. Leader of Congress

Legislative Party Mohansinh Rathva is contesting from the tribal constituency of Chhota Udaipur. Meanwhile, re-polling is being held in two booths of Jamjodhpur constituency, two of Una and one each of Nijjar and Umargam which went to polls in the first phase last week. Repolling was necessitated due to technical snags in EVMS. The counting of votes will take place on Monday along with Himachal Pradesh.

Chief Minister Zeliang moved Four-Point Resolution on Naga political issue in Assembly today

By Oken Jeet Sandjam Kohima, Dec 14 (NEPS): Nagaland Chief Minister TR Zeliang has moved a resolution on the Naga political issue in the Assembly today. The Four-Point Resolution on the Naga political issue moved by the Chief Minister, who is the leader of the House, in the Assembly today, urged the Government of India to take "emergent

and extraordinary steps" to usher in an "honorable and acceptable" solution to the Naga political issue well before the General Elections to the 13th Nagaland Legislative Assembly scheduled in March, 2018. It also urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) not to announce before the General Elections to the 13th Nagaland Legislative Assembly until the

"Government of India arrives at an honorable and acceptable solution to the Naga political issue in order to enable all Nagas to enjoy their due democracy and other rights and function as a more empowered electorate during the elections that may be held after the solution." It also called upon civil societies, tribal hohos, church and other organizations concerned, to

cooperate with the vision of the Government in this regard, and also further called upon all "political parties and Independent parties and Independent candidates" to implement the demand for "solution before elections" in the field, whenever necessary, so that "utmost unity is displayed before the Government of India and the Election Commission of India."

Organic Farming training



IT News Imphal, Dec 14: Regional Centre of Organic Farming Started 2 days training programme on Organic Farming for Extension officers and field functionaries at RCOF Imphal today. Dr. V. Pandey welcomed all the participants in the program. The program is inaugurated by Dr. H. Beerkumar Singh, Principal Scientist and in charge NEIST CSIR Imphal centre. In his inaugural address Dr. Sigh focused the need of

bioresource conservation through adoption of Organic Farming in Manipur. While Dr. Pandey said that organic farming is the only way to conserve our soil, land and water resources. Besides organic products also fetch premium price to Farmers for their crop. The program is attended by 20 Extension officers from deptt. Of horticulture and soil conservation govt. Of Manipur. Dr. Sachin Kumar presented vote of thanks.

PPFA slams Ulfa (I) for murder of common people

By: Thakuria Navajyoti

Guwahati, Dec 14: Patriotic People's Front Assam (PPFA) has condemned the United Liberation Front Asom (Independent) for killing common people and then terming them as spies to the security forces. The forum argues that it was an old trick of the militant outfit to murder someone first and then brand him/her as a secret agent to the government agency. It may be noted that the Ulfa (Independent), led by Abhijit Asom and Paresh Asom, owned up the responsibility for the killing of Anteswar Mahanta (46), a local in Tinsukia district of eastern Assam with his son Karun (25), a former student activist. The armed rebels belonged to the Ulfa(I) went to Mahanta's residence at Simalguri village on Monday evening and

attacked him with indiscriminate firings, which also injured his son. Both were taken to a nearby hospital, but they succumbed to injuries. By then the militants fled taking advantage of the darkness. Mahanta, a village defence party head, was reportedly instrumental in anti-terroriem campaigns, whereas his son was a former local leader of All Assam Students Union (AASU), who recently got married. But an emailed statement issued by the Ulfa (I) publicity secretary Arunodoy Asom claimed that both of them "were operating as spies for the Assam police & Indian Army". "The Ulfa leaders are habituated with lying since long back. When the same group killed journalist Kamala Saikia in 1991 at a Sivsagar

village, also termed him as a spy to justify their crime. Who can forget the brutal murders of Rashmi Bora, Sanjoy Ghosh, Girish Dev Chowdhury etc by the same outfit also terming them as spies. So the people of Assam must not forget the misdeeds of the militants," said a statement issued by the PPFA. The forum, while urging the State chief minister (also in

charge of home portfolio) Sarbananda Sonowal to take a serious note of the killings, appeals to the people to raise voices against all kinds of violence. It has also fervently requested the mainstream media not to glamorize the killings in the name of "revolutionary journalism". Endorsed by Nirode K Baroah, Rupam Barua, Ranen Kumar Goswami, Nava Thakuria, Jagadindra

Raichoudhury, Pramod Kalita, Kishor Giri, Nani Gopal Mahanta, Ravindra Nath, Nayan Prasad, Jahnabi Goswami, Namrata Dutta, Smriti Divya Barua, Mridul Kumar Chakrabarty, Anup Sama, Ravishankar Ravi, Rajib Chowdhury, Ujjal Saikia, Subhra Kinkor Goswami, Biswajit Nath, Indranil Kalita, Utpal Sarma, Sabyasachi Sharma etc from the PPFA

Culture, connectivity and commerce will shape India's ties with ASEAN - Ravi Shankar Prasad

Agency New Delhi, Dec 14: Culture, connectivity and commerce will shape India's relations with the ASEAN bloc, Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said on Wednesday. Addressing a function in New Delhi to celebrate 50 years of ASEAN and 25 years of India-ASEAN Partnership, Prasad, the IT and law minister, said the ASEAN countries proudly flaunt their cultural moorings rooted in ancient India. He said the 3 Cs — Culture, Connectivity and Commerce — will shape the country's ties with the ASEAN bloc. The importance New Delhi attaches to ASEAN is evident from the fact that leaders of all the ten ASEAN member

nations will attend country's next Republic Day celebrations, he said. Addressing the gathering, Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju said the Home Ministry has started opening various channels on the borders to foster relations with neighbours, particularly in Eastern and North-Eastern Region (NER), an official release said. The Land Ports Authority of India has taken up expansion of the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Moreh in Manipur for expansion of trade with Myanmar, India's gateway to the ASEAN, and it will be inaugurated soon, he said. Rijiju said the ICP in Agartala on Bangladesh border has started and few more ICPs

besides land customs stations and border haats will be set up. Rijiju said East India and the NER are rich in minerals and natural resources. He said many will be surprised to learn that Dibrugarh contributed more to the government's revenues than the country's commercial capital, Mumbai. Myanmar has the third highest Indian diaspora, next only to Nepal and the US, he said. Rijiju said East Asia and South East Asia stretching from Japan and China and upto India is emerging as the world's next economic powerhouse. India cannot be delineated from South East Asia and East Asia, he said.


Culture, connectivity and commerce will shape India's ties with ASEAN: Ravi Shankar Prasad

By: Dinesh C Sharma Kohima, Dec 13: Rising temperature, erratic rainfall and occurrence of moderate drought are beginning to impact food production in Nagaland. In order to meet the challenge of climate change, the state is now turning to its forgotten resource — traditional food crops which can withstand higher temperatures and water-stressed conditions. The hilly state has initiated steps to revive traditional rice as well as millet varieties which over the years gave way to high yielding crop varieties for various reasons. Though farmers are not growing traditional varieties for sustenance, they are still the custodian of knowledge about them. In wake of climate change, these varieties will be promoted among farmers, as they are the best bet for adapting to changing climate. The biological diversity of rice in the state is tremendous — 867 traditional 'land races' of rice have been identified by the State Agriculture Research Station (SARS) at Mokokchung. These rice varieties are broadly categorized as glutinous, brown and aromatic, and most

of them are grown under the jhum or shifting cultivation system practiced by different Naga tribes in the state. The state government has initiated a project called "gene pool conservation of indigenous rice varieties under traditional integrated rotational farming system for promoting livelihood and food security as climate change adaptation strategy." The Rs. 24 crore project will be supported by the National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change. It will be implemented in one village in each selected block in five districts — Tuensang, Wokha, Zunheboto, Mokokchung and Kohima — over the next three years. All rice production systems are exposed to heat stress but rainfed uplands are particularly vulnerable to temperature rise. Heat stress leads to stunting, affecting yields. In addition, warmer climate leads to introduction of new diseases and insects. "Farmers need new varieties which are drought and heat resistant. Traditional rice and millet varieties can do just this, as they can grow even in marginalised lands, are highly diverse in terms of pest

resistance, yield, time of cultivation and maturity and water requirement," Dr D.K. Chetri, Joint Director, SARS, told India Science Wire on the sidelines of a media workshop on climate change here. "Nagaland is not adequately equipped to current climate change impacts. The state has a large existing adaptation deficit which is a priority of early action. Therefore, there is a need for developing processes for community led adaptation that are rooted in local institutions," he added. Under the projects, field gene banks will be developed for conservation and research of promising varieties, and seed exchange programme will be initiated with the involvement of communities engaged in both jhum and terrace cultivation. Selected promising seeds varieties will then be disseminated to farmers across the state. Rice is staple food of Nagaland with about 86% of the cultivable area in the state under jhum and terrace rice cultivation systems. Traditional rice varieties are grown in altitude ranging from 300 to 2500 meters. But of late, farmers are shifting to cash crops putting cereal

production under stress. High intensity farming of rice and pulses, promoted under several schemes, has not been sustainable. Climate change has added a new stress factor. In the last 100 years, Nagaland has experienced increase in average annual temperature from 1.4 degree to 1.6 degree. "The projected increase in average annual temperature is 1.6 degree to 1.8 degree between 2021 and 2050," pointed out Dellirose M Sakhrie, secretary of the state Department of Science and Technology. The rainfall is also expected to increase in intensity by 20%. The number of extreme dry and extreme wet days will increase during 2021-2050. Dr Chetri said farming practices in the state would have to be modified with changing climate, in order to ensure food and nutritional security of people. The workshop was organised by the Centre for Media Studies, the Department of Science and Technology, the Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme, along with the Nagaland Climate Change Cell. (Courtesy: The Hindu)



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