

# Editorial

Monday, November 27, 2017

## A ditch to Technology

Our state, though nestled on the far fringe of the country with unfriendly hilly terrain to welcome visitors, does not lag much behind in terms of awareness and utilization of available technological developments, and one thing which the people of the state has taken to with gusto, more out of necessity rather than convenience is the information technology or, simply put- IT.

The advent of this amazing technology has indeed changed the way the public view things. People can now understand a broader perspective of all issues and hence, can form their own informed judgement. The curiosity and inquisitiveness of the people has also been aroused, leading to a more scientific temper of mind that questions various beliefs. It has also undoubtedly brought the world closer, thereby easing the frustrations of having to deal with the difficulties of communication and transport, or that inextricable feeling of being sidelined. While IT is not the panacea to the shortcomings of the society, it is indeed a game-changing aspect, and can be utilized to even effect in our state.

Take for instance the protracted problem of distributing, and more importantly, that of collecting bills for various public facilities being provided by the Government. How many of us have really seen a water bill in the last decade or so? And who should we inquire about any matter relating to any Government Department in the state.

The obvious solution in this time and age is to Google, which is possible only if and when the information and details are made available by the Government. And when online stores are successfully functioning despite the initial concerns regarding the safety of the payment methods, such fears has been proven unfounded. The whole concept of implementing IT in Governance, as envisaged in the NeGP (National eGovernance Project) Vision, to "Make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man" should be made functional, with additional services included as required to facilitate generation of revenue for the state. A fully functional Common Service Centre (CSC) implemented under the NeGP formulated by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeIT) are Information and Communication Technology enabled front end service delivery points at the village level for delivery of Government, Financial, Social and Private Sector services in the areas of Agriculture, health, education, entertainment, FMCG products, banking, insurance, pension, utility payments etc.

The big question is: are these centers functioning as required, or are they just formalities to make up the numbers in the report sheet of the Government? What steps have the Government taken up to create awareness amongst the public so as to educate them, and ultimately enable them to access the services provided at these centers? It is clearly evident that there need a lot to be done before such supposedly beneficial services reach the public and make their lives that little more convenient. A concerted proactive approach to create awareness and to educate the mass on the development activities and services should be carried out to ensure that such beneficial and positive steps are not wasted.

### Registration notice

An association under the name and style of "WEASIA SOCIETY" Kaching Bazar has been formed. The newly formed association will be registered under the Manipur Societies Registration Act, 1989. If anybody want to object to the registration of the association may object with him six (6) days from the date of publication of this notice. No complain will be entertained after the due date.

Sd/-  
Ningombam Rocky  
Secretary  
"WEASIA SOCIETY"  
Kaching

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## National and International News

# Indonesia raises Bali volcano alert to highest level

**Reuters**  
**Denpasar, Nov. 27:** Indonesia raised its warning for Bali's Mount Agung volcano to the top level four alert on Monday, closed the holiday island's airport and told residents near the summit to immediately evacuate, warning of the "imminent" risk of a larger eruption. Bali's airport was closed for 24 hours, disrupting 445 flights and some 59,000 passengers, due to the eruption warning and the presence of volcanic ash from Agung. TV footage showed cold lava flows (lahar) at a number of locations on the mountainside. Lahar carrying mud and large boulders can destroy houses, bridges and roads in its path. "Plumes of smoke are occasionally accompanied by explosive eruptions and the sound of weak blasts that can be heard up to 12 km (7 miles) from the peak," the Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) said in a statement. "The potential for a larger eruption is imminent," it said, referring to the visibility of the glow from magma at Agung's summit overnight. Residents were warned to

"immediately evacuate" a danger zone that circles Agung in a radius of 8-10 km (5-6 miles). Agung rises majestically over eastern Bali to a height of just over 3,000 metres (9,800 feet). Agung's last eruption in 1963 left more than 1,000 people dead and razed several villages. "I'm not worried (but) my friends in Russia are a little bit worried," said a Russian tourist, who only wanted to be identified as Dmitry, at an observation post in Rendang in Bali's east. Bali, famous for its surf, beaches and temples, attracted nearly 5 million visitors last year, and its international airport serves as a transport hub for the chain of islands in Indonesia's eastern archipelago. Tourism business has slumped in Bali since September when Agung's volcanic tremors began to increase. "An anticipation of the possibility and imminent risk of disaster, PVMBG (the Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation Centre) raised Mount Agung alert level from three to four," it said in a statement. **Travellers stranded** According to the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre in nearby Darwin, Australia, there is "ash confirmed on the ground at Denpasar Airport" as

well as ash at FL300 (which refers to flight level at 30,000 feet) in the vicinity of the volcano. Bali's I Gusti Ngurah Rai airport, which is about 60 km (40 miles) from the volcano, will be closed for 24 hours, according to a statement from its operator. It said a total of 445 flights — 196 international and 249 domestic — and 59,000 passengers had been affected. Five alternative airports have been prepared for airlines to divert inbound flights, such as airports in neighboring provinces, the statement said. Bali airport's official website showed flights operated by Singapore Airlines, Sriwijaya, Garuda Indonesia, Malaysia Airlines and Jetstar had been cancelled. "It is a little bit frustrating because I checked the internet...everything was on schedule, now I am standing here everything was closed," said Jan Nicolai from Germany at Bali's airport. Television footage showed hundreds of holidaymakers camped inside the airport terminal, some sleeping on their bags, others using mobile telephones. "We have been here (in Bali) for three days we are about to leave

today, but just found out our flights have been cancelled. We have got no information because the gates, the check-ins have been closed indefinitely," said Carlo Oben from Los Angeles. A transport ministry spokesman said the main airport on the neighbouring island of Lombok had reopened after "no volcanic ash was detected". Airlines avoid flying when volcanic ash is present because it can cause significant damage to aircraft engines, leading to possible engine failure, and can clog fuel and cooling systems and hamper pilot visibility. In June 1982, a British Airways 747 suffered severe damage and had all four engines flame out after encountering ash from Mount Galunggung in Indonesia. It descended to 12,000 feet before being able to restart some engines and make an emergency landing in Jakarta. The alert level on Agung had been raised to the maximum in September, but was lowered in October when seismic activity calmed. However, volcanologists now say the volcano has entered a new phase with magma now visible and meaning a greater risk of a large eruption.

## Bengaluru woman claims to be Jayalalithaa's biological daughter, wants DNA test

**TOI**  
**Chennai, Nov. 27:** The Supreme Court will hear on Monday a writ petition filed by a woman who claims to be the biological daughter of former Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa. The woman has sought DNA test to establish her claim. Jayalalithaa was a spinster and the present petition from Amrutha alias Manjula, which also seeks a direction for

exhuming the body buried on the shores of Marina Beach, is bound to create ripples across the state. The Bengaluru-based woman along with two elder cousins, LS Lalitha and Ranjani Ravindranatha, has sought Supreme Court intervention as her efforts to meet Jayalalithaa during her life time went in vain as V Sasikala's family allegedly prevented her from meeting the leader. She was also not allowed to attend her burial ceremony.

She submitted that she had made representations to President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, CBI judges of the Apex court, but still could not get any justice. Now she is seeking redressal from the court. Explaining her relationship, Amrutha said her adoptive mother Shylaja, sister of Jayalalithaa, died in 2015. Adoptive father Sarathy died on March 20 this year. She said she was born in Mysalpora on

August 14, 1980, where Shylaja was residing. According to her, she grew up as Shylaja's daughter and it was only after the death of Jayalalithaa that she came to know the true story through her cousins (co-petitioners in the case) and close family members. She asserted that it was decided by the family members that her birth from the unmarried mother would be kept as a secret.

## Ivanka Trump to attend GES in India tomorrow

**PTI**  
**Washington, Nov 27:** Ivanka Trump, the advisor and daughter of US President Donald Trump, has said the Global Entrepreneurship Summit co-hosted by India and America is a testament to their growing economic and security partnership. Ivanka will be leading a delegation of senior Trump administration officials and entrepreneurs at the three-day Summit in Hyderabad beginning tomorrow. To be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, more than 1200 young entrepreneurs, a majority of whom are women, from 127 countries would attend the summit.

In addition some 300 investors and ecosystem supporters are also attending the mega event. The world's largest gathering of young entrepreneurs is being co-hosted by India and the United States. It is "a testament to the strong friendship between our two people and the growing economic and security partnership between our two nations," Ivanka Trump told reporters during a preview of her India visit. Ivanka, 36, has travelled to India before, but this is her maiden trip to the country as a senior presidential advisor. Accompanied by several top administrations official, a large number of Indian Americans are part of her delegation, which numbers 350 from 38 states. Prime Minister Modi had personally

invited Ivanka to participate in the GES, which is being held in India for the first time, when he travelled to the US in June. This year's summit theme, 'Women First, Prosperity for All', demonstrates the Trump administration's commitment to the principle that when women are economically empowered, their communities and countries thrive, she told reporters last week. Five per cent of entrepreneurs at GES are 30 years or younger. The youngest entrepreneur is 13 and the oldest entrepreneur is 84. Ivanka said she aims for this summit to serve as an open and collaborative environment for the exchange of ideas, to broaden networks, and to empower

entrepreneurs to take their ideas and passion to the next level. "The US and India will continue to work together to increase economic opportunities and inclusive growth. I very much look forward to my visit and to seeing Prime Minister Modi and Foreign Minister Swaraj once again," she said. The summit would also be the first major engagement of the new American Ambassador to India, Ken Juster. "Amazing first week in India! Thanks so much for the warm welcome. Looking forward to exploring this fascinating country. Excited to begin my journey in Hyderabad at the Global Entrepreneurship Summit!" he tweeted last week.

## Tobacco use rises in Assam, Tripura, says report

**PTI**  
**Guwahati, Nov 27:** Tobacco use has increased in Assam, Tripura and Manipur against an overall decline in the country between 2009-2017, according to the regional report of the second round of Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2016-17 of North Eastern states. Assam and Tripura also recorded the most significant increase in chewing of smoke-less tobacco when it has declined from 25.9 per cent to 21.4 per cent in the country, according to the report. It decreased significantly in Sikkim and rose moderately in Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland. When all the states have shown a significant decline to second-hand smoke (SHS) exposure at workplace, it has increased in

Assam by 3 per cent, said the report. The report highlights that the overall tobacco use prevalence in India has declined from 34.6 per cent to 28.6 per cent between 2009-10 and 2016-17 except for Assam and Tripura where it increased considerably, and marginally in Manipur. In Assam, tobacco use increased from 39.3 per cent to 48.2 per cent, Tripura from 55.9 per cent to 64.5 per cent and marginally in Manipur from 54.1 to 55.1 per cent when all other states have shown a decline with Sikkim registering a remarkable fall from 41.6 to 17.9 per cent. Smoking prevalence in the country has decreased from 14 to 10.7 per cent except for Tripura with 0.4 per cent increase, while all NE states have shown decrease with most significant decline in Nagaland from 31.5 to 13.2 per cent and Sikkim 26.4 to 10.9 per cent, the report revealed.

Exposure to SHS at public places has improved across the region with a sharp decline in Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland though slightly above the national average. The initiation age has declined, which means more people began using tobacco at an earlier age in three states — Arunachal, Nagaland and Sikkim — from 17.5 in 2009-2010 to 15.9 in 2016-17. The initiation age has increased in the other five NE states with the most significant being Manipur from 19.1 years to 20.8 years. The report pointed out that while smoking product promotion has declined nationally and in the region, except in Mizoram where both bids and cigarettes promotion has increased, bidi promotion has increased in Nagaland alone. Pack warnings have elicited an increased response to quit among

cigarette and bidi smokers and chewers nationally and in the region. GATS is a global standard for systematically monitoring adult tobacco use (smoking and smokeless) and tracking key tobacco control indicators, according to the report. The study is based on a household survey of persons 15 years of age and older conducted in all 30 states of the country and two Union Territories. "Findings from GATS have added substantially to the knowledge about tobacco use in the north-eastern states and will be a valuable source of information for strengthening tobacco control policies and prevention programmes in Assam and our region," said Assam Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at the report release programme.