

Union Home Minister inaugurated Hornbill festival

PIB
Kohima, Dec. 2

Addressing the inaugural function of the festival, the Union Minister said that the annual Hornbill Festival is one of the spectacular event showcasing the rich ancient culture and civilization of the people of Nagaland. It powerfully demonstrates the cultural diversity and civilizational unity of the people. How each tribe is proudly unique their cultural richness and yet there is an overwhelming sense of unity among all. This spectacular demonstration of unity in diversity in what India is all about. At the Hornbill festival I get a glimpse of the Indian spirit of happy peaceful co-existence of the multiplicities. He also mentioned his visit to the Hornbill Festival last year and was so overwhelmed with the celebration that he was compelled to attend this festival again this year also. Expressing his gratitude to the Government of Nagaland for expanding similar festivals to other parts of the State where Mini Hornbill festivals are celebrated from time to time. It will vastly enhance the popular participation in it and enlarge the arc of happiness. Home Minister Rajnath Singh also thank the State Government for this initiating like such events in other parts of India including the national capital. That will help the countrymen to understand the cultural richness of the Nagas. Folk songs and dances are essential ingredients of the traditional Naga culture. Oral tradition is kept alive through songs and folk tales and very often, romantic and historical themes are sung and stories of famous ancestors told. Seasonal songs, which describe various activities done in a particular agricultural season and war dances are also an intrinsic art form in Nagaland. Home minister said it is a festival that offers unique opportunity not only to the different tribes of the State to interact with each other and exhibit their cultural heritage but also with those from the neighbouring and other States in the true spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat". Given the rich cultural heritage of Nagaland, Government of India has rightly established the North Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre at Dimapur, Nagaland. The North Eastern Council (NEC) has also funded the infrastructure for the Margaret Shishak School of Music at Patkai Christian College, Dimapur. You all will be happy to learn that NEC is building a North Eastern Cultural and Information Centre in Delhi. The proposed

centre would showcase rich history, culture, heritage and cuisine of the eight States in the North East. It will also establish facilities for promotion of tourism, a Common Facility Centre, Library, Knowledge and Resource Centre in the National Capital. This Centre would facilitate dissemination of knowledge about the rich cultural heritage of the North East. He also mentioned the importance of how the powerful forces of modern technology, economy and trade are shaping the new world and the new world order. Old templates of geopolitics are crumbling to the emerging new and somewhat uncertain templates of geo-economics largely driven by modern technologies. Even the old political ideas and beliefs are being given new meaning by these forces of change. The Hon'ble Home Ministersaid that the forces of change are inevitable and will not wait for anyone. We have to be prepared for it. If we are prepared for it, we will shape the future according to our wish. If we are not prepared for it, we will be shaped by these forces, may be even against our wish. The challenge of the day is to grasp and master these forces. India is geared to grasp and master these forces. The main driver of this is our youth. Our challenge is to make them capable enough to be the master of our better tomorrow. Nearly half the Indian population is young. Similar is the demographic profile of Nagaland. While we are all rightly proud of our rich and glorious past, we also have to create conditions conducive for our rich future. Nearly 50% of Nagaland population is below 25 years. It is they who will shape the future of India including the future of Nagaland. We have to create conditions where their creative and entrepreneurial potential is unleashed to the optimum. Expressing his happiness that Nagaland State is going to get its first Medical College under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with a sanctioned 3000 crores for the purpose, NEC has also funded setting of a North East Regional Multi Disciplinary Paramedical Institute, Dimapur at a cost of 4981.31 lakhs. Besides, over the years Government of India has executed a large number of other projects in Nagaland leading her to the path of forward and all round development. While we must celebrate the past at the Hornbill, we should also celebrate the present and the future with several festivals of skills and creativity of our youth. Nagaland is geographically located at

a vantage point. It is the gateway to the South-East Asia. North-East is the pivot of our Government's 'Act East' policy. Today, we are at the best of relations with our neighbour Myanmar. On the bedrock of our shared cultural and civilizational linkages with Myanmar, we have also a large spectrum of shared interests. Government of India is determined to build and improve our connectivity and engagement with South-East Asia. Today, India and ASEAN are partners in growth. The story of this growth will be written by our youths of the North-East region. Central government has opened a bright new chapter in the growth story of North-East region. It is heartening to know that development of a four-lane road, the main artery from Dimapur to the State Capital Kohima, which was promised by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, is in full swing and it will be completed soon. With remarkable restoration of peace, North-East is emerging as a favoured destination of businesses and tourists. I am happy to know that the police and the tourism department of Nagaland Government have started the Tourist Police. I am sure it will help lift Nagaland to another level where visitors from outside will go back with a lot of happy stories of the state and the region. Mr Singh further said, for the last few years, India is making faster progress in all socio-economic sectors and the country has emerged as the fastest growing major economy in the world with the current ranking being sixth. We are expected to be one of the top three economic powers of the world in next 10-15 years. India has recently overtaken the economy of France and is soon expecting to exceed the GDP of United Kingdom. Government of India has taken various initiatives to further accelerate the economic growth. Steps are also being taken for speeding development of North-Eastern Region, including Nagaland. We believe that nation can prosper only when all the States develop at a faster pace. Nagaland has suffered for a long time. On the 56th Anniversary of the State, I call upon all my friends of this State to take long strides for the rapid economic growth of the country as well as that of Nagaland and make all of us proud Indians to be contributors in making India a world power. As we celebrate Christmas in a few weeks and march on to the New Year 2019, I wish it brings lasting peace as well as an opportunity to let the past behind and look forward for a brighter future that would help all young Naga boys and girls realize their aspirations of a better life.

NITI forum for North East to meet on Tuesday

Agency
Guwahati, Dec 2

The second meeting of the 'NITI Forum for North East' will be held here on Tuesday and will focus on issues pertaining to five critical sectors, including tourism, bamboo and dairy. Vice Chairman, NITI AAYOG, Rajiv Kumar will chair the meeting while Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jitendra Singh will co-chair it, an official statement said. The meeting will mainly focus on issues pertaining to five critical sectors - tourism, bamboo, dairy, fisheries and tea, it said. The 'NITI Forum for North East' was constituted in February 2018 to periodically review development status in the North Eastern region. The forum is tasked to identify various constraints in the way of accelerated, inclusive and sustainable economic growth in the Northeast and to recommend suitable interventions for

addressing identified constraints, the statement said. Members of the forum include secretaries of various central ministries, chief secretaries of all eight Northeastern states, senior government officials and experts from various fields. It emerged that infrastructure, horticulture, bamboo, tourism, food processing, education, livelihoods, health in Northeastern region were areas critical for the development of the region, the statement said. Decisions taken at the meeting have since been carried forward by various government departments and other stakeholders. Besides members of the forum, a number of experts from the government, industry and academia have also been invited to make the discussions more meaningful. The forum's first meeting was held on April 10, 2018 in Agartala where a broad spectrum of issues were discussed.

Srinagar experiences coldest night of season

Agency
Srinagar, Dec 2

Srinagar experienced the coldest night of the season so far on Sunday as cold conditions tightened its grip over the state with the minimum temperature settling below the freezing point across the valley and Ladakh region. Srinagar recorded the minimum temperature of minus 2.4 degrees Celsius, an official of the Meteorological Department here said. He said the city experienced the coldest night of this winter so far. The lowest the city had recorded this season was on November 7 when the night temperature settled at a low of minus 2.2 degrees Celsius. The official said the minimum temperature settled below the freezing point across the valley last night. He said Pahalgam health resort, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath

yatra in south Kashmir, registered a low of minus 5.1 degrees Celsius. Pahalgam was the coldest recorded place in the valley. The famous ski-resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir recorded a minimum of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius, he said. The official said Kokernag in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 0.8 degree Celsius, while the mercury in the nearby Qazigund settled at minus 1.8 degree Celsius. He said the mercury in Kupwara, in north Kashmir, settled at a low of minus 2.4 degrees Celsius. Leh, in Ladakh region of the state, recorded a low of minus 9.3 degrees Celsius, while nearby Kargil registered a minimum of minus 9 degrees Celsius. Leh was the coldest recorded place in Jammu and Kashmir. The MET Office has forecast mainly dry weather for the week ahead.

Th. Radheshyam attends the 11th International Tourism Conference in Italy



Imphal, Dec. 2

Education, Labour & Employment Minister Thokchom Radheshyam attended the 11th International Tourism Conference on "Innovations & Opportunities in Global Tourism" in Palermo, (Sicily), Italy as a Special Guest. The conference yesterday which began on November 28, 2018. The conference was jointly organized by the Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress & UET, Italy. Speaking at the conference Th. Radheshyam spoke on the cultural and educational tourism with special emphasis on Manipur. He said Manipur has a huge potential of tourism which has not been explored to its full potential. The Minister expressed his

desire to develop the State into one of the most important tourist destination which will enhance the socio-economic development of the State. The Minister stated that one of the basic aims of the conference was to understand the importance of tourism and hospitality education and to necessitate human resource development through formal education and skill-building. He said that tourism being one of the major aspects, the State Government introduced tourism as one of the disciplines under the Vocationalisation of Higher Education under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA). Under this scheme 12 trades in collaboration with 14 industrial partners have also been introduced

in 29 Government colleges and 11 Government-aided colleges of the state, he added. About the conference, it may be mentioned that the conference will provide key knowledge in various fields of tourism industry. The conference also discussed on issues related with sustainability development, marketing and branding, contemporary practices and promotes human resource development. During the visit the Minister also met the President of the Sicilian Parliament, Mr. Gianfranco Micciché and his Cabinet Minister, the Mayor of Cefalù - the oldest city of Sicily, the Vice Chancellors of University of Palermo and Pegaso. The conference was attended by Experts, Educators and officials of Institutions.

AR conducts awareness drive on world AIDS day

IT News
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On the occasion of World AIDS Day on 01 December 2018, Mantripukhari Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) conducted an insightful awareness drive on HIV AIDS at Leishamba Mahikol School.



The awareness drive included a lecture on HIV AIDS followed by discussion which was attended by over 100 boarding students and teachers of the school. The students were informed on various causes and symptoms of AIDS and preventive measures that need to be taken to check the ailment. The students

were also sensitised that AIDS is not a social stigma and does not spread by just touching. The AIDS affected persons need to be provided due human compassion and medical attention to overcome the mental stress due to the

disease. The students and teachers expressed their appreciation towards the Assam Rifles for having organised an intuitive awareness drive on such a sensitive issue of AIDS and betterment of the entire society.

RBI likely to keep interest rate unchanged on Dec 5

Agency
New Delhi, Dec 2

The Reserve Bank is likely to maintain status-quo on interest rate in the upcoming monetary policy review on December 5 despite moderation in economic growth and easing inflation, opined experts. After back-to-back hikes since June, the RBI had kept interest rates unchanged in the previous policy review in October,

surprising markets that had expected a rate hike to support the tumbling rupee and combat inflationary pressures from high oil prices. The repo rate, at which RBI lends to other banks, was left unchanged at 6.50 per cent. The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Urjit Patel, will meet for three days starting December 3 for the fifth bi-monthly

monetary policy review of the current financial year. The MPC's decision will be announced in the afternoon of December 5. Since the previous policy announcement, rupee has appreciated against the US dollar and moved above the psychologically crucial mark of 70. Global crude oil prices too have softened significantly, slipping below USD 60 per barrel from USD 86.

However, India's economic growth slowed to 7.1 per cent in the September quarter after peaking to an over two-year high in the first three months of this fiscal, as consumption demand moderated and farm sector displayed signs of weakness. The growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in July-September is the lowest in three quarters but better than 6.3 per cent

in the same period of the previous year. The Indian economy had grown by 8.2 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year that began in April, according to data released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Kotak Research said the MPC in its last policy had estimated inflation at 3.9-4.5 per cent in the second half of the fiscal and 4.8 per cent in first quarter of next year.