

## Nation-wide cleanliness survey begins

**Imphal, Jan 4:** A nation-wide cleanliness survey 'Swachh Survekshan' commenced today. The survey will be conducted in over 4,000 cities and with the population of more than 40 crores to evaluate the achievements in the cleanliness level in urban areas. The survey will run till 10th of March this year. Municipal Councils and corporations of Manipur have also launched hectic preparation in the run up under the supervision of MAHUD department. In his last 'Mann Ki Baat' programme on All India Radio, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had urged the youth to come forward and contribute to the survey so that their cities do not lag behind in survey rankings. Mr Modi had said, the survey would be done by assessing the parameters like management to curb open defecation, transportation facilities to collect garbage, scientific ways of processing the waste and others.

## 177 sportspersons failed dope tests in 2 years

**New Delhi, Jan 4:** Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore informed the Rajya Sabha in a written reply today that 177 sportspersons failed dope tests in the two years preceding last year. Giving break up, he said 110 sportspersons failed dope test in 2015 and 67 in 2016.

## Another rape accused shot dead; UNLF claims hand

**IT News**

**Imphal, Jan 4:** Unidentified person shot dead a person identified as Loukrakpam Sananingthem Singh age 37 years, son of L. Inaobi of Lamshang Makha laikai at Lamshang Khunou area under Lamshang police station at around 11 am today. The person is alleged to have been involved in the raping of a married lady at around 8 pm of April 26, 2015. Proscribed group United National Liberation Front (UNLF) claimed responsibility of the shooting. The deceased Loukrakpam Sananingthem Singh runs a bamboo business at Lamshang area. The dead body was found lying inside his vehicle, which he use to ferry bamboo. A police team who rushed the spot found the dead body lying. 6 empty cases of bullets were recovered near the dead body. The deceased Loukrakpam



Sananingthem was arrested in connection with the rape case and was detained in police custody till May 4 of 2015. But he was released after some days.

This is the first strike to rapist by proscribed group UNLF in 2018. The group had already warned capital punishment to all those involved in rape crime and had even awarded

capital punishment to its own members.

In 2008, February middle week, the rebel group claimed killing of two of its former members for indulging in rape crime. Salam Biren alias Mangal and Heikrujam Mono were killed at Khordak in Bishenpur district on February 13, 2008 on charge of rape case.

Last year, the rebel group had claimed responsibility for shooting of one Irom Bobo, who was accused of raping a 12 years old minor girl. The shooting took place on July 29 of 2017. On August 8, 2017, another rape accused identified as Sandam Bhogen (42) son of Sandam Bheiga of Sairem Khul, Imphal West was shot at around 2 pm at Tera Khamnam Leirak along Sagolband road while he was returning after appearing at POCO court. Bhogen was the accused in a minor rape case which occurred on December 3, 2013 at Sairem Khul Mayai Leikai.

## Union Cabinet approves Indo-Myanmar agreement on land border crossing

**New Delhi, Jan 4:** Union Cabinet has approved the Agreement between India and Myanmar on Land Border Crossing. The Agreement will facilitate regulation and harmonization of already existing free movement rights for people ordinarily residing in the border areas of both countries.

It will also facilitate movement of people on the basis of valid passports and visas which will enhance economic and social interaction between the two countries. The Agreement is an enabling arrangement for

movement of people across India-Myanmar border. It is expected to provide connectivity and enhance interaction of the people of North Eastern States of India with the people of Myanmar. It would give a boost to the economy of the North East and allow us to leverage our geographical connections with Myanmar to boost trade and people to people ties. The Agreement will safeguard the traditional rights of the largely tribal communities residing along the border which are accustomed to free movement across the land border.

## 65 per cent of population to be covered by FM transmitters soon: Govt

**New Delhi, Jan 4:** The government today said, 65 per cent of the country's population will be covered by FM transmitters soon. Replying to questions in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Rajyavardhan Rathore said, now 52 per cent of the population is covered by FM transmitters.

He said 57 All India Radio towers are shared with private broadcasters on rental basis. Informing this in the Lok Sabha, she said, the revenue from sharing of AIR/DD towers during 2016-17 was

about 41 crore rupees. Replying to supplementaries, Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani said, as of now at 32 places BSNL/MTNL are using Prasar Bharati infrastructure on rental basis. Meanwhile, Government has ruled out any proposal to start a special Gyan Darshan channel for tribal people. In a written reply in the Lok Sabha today, Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani said, Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan does not have a dedicated educational channel.

## 1.9 cr names in Assam's 1st draft NRC

**Agency**

**Guwahati, Jan 4:** Assam early on Monday released the first draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) containing 19 million (1.9 crore) names out of the state's 32.9 million population. The Centre said that it was examining the reasons behind the exclusion of names in the first draft.

"The matter is still under examination. The reason behind certain names not being there in the first draft is being examined. But we are firm on taking action if people or families are unable to furnish the requisite evidence. No person who is a genuine case will be left out. So they should not

worry if their name has not figured in this list," said a senior central government official, requesting anonymity.

Experts urged people to be patient with the process even as the first draft was released amid tight security cover of 45,000 paramilitary and state police personnel. With Assam being pivotal to the BJP's growth strategy in the northeast, the Sarbananda Sonowal government is leaving no stone unturned to ensure the smooth execution of the NRC project.

**3 MPs, Assam House Speaker names missing**

Top ULFA rebel leader Paresh Baruah's name figured in the

first draft of the NRC. However, three MPs from Assam's main opposition party AIUDF, including Dubri's Badruddin Ajmal and Karingan's Radhey Shyam could not make it to the first draft of the NRC, a News 18 report stated.

"My entire family's name is missing from the first draft. Does this mean that the MPs and MLAs of Assam are also Bangladeshi?" Ajmal asked. His colleague Radhey Shyam added, "I am from the Hindu community and my name still doesn't feature on the list..."

Talking about the non-inclusion of several names in the first list, Registrar General of India Sailesh said, "There is no need to panic

as there is ample time. The process is going on. Substantial progress has been made, but still lot of work needs to be done."

A top official, however, said that there is no need for anyone to panic and that the rest of the names are in various stages of verification. Praful Mohanta of AGP told News18, "It is a historic moment. But there are problems. Even the Speaker of the House's name is missing from the NRC. But this is a draft and the problems will be solved in the future drafts." AGP has further said that it will oppose any move to grant citizenship to Bangladeshi Hindus by amending the Citizenship Amendment Bill.

## Poumai Naga organizes grand reception for Chief Minister N. Biren and team on 'Poumai Thouni' festival

**IT News**

**Imphal, Jan 4:** Poumai Naga, one of the major ethnic community of Senapati district is all set to organize a grand reception programme for Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and his colleague on occasion of the 'Poumai Thouni' the oldest customary festival of the Paomai Naga on January 5.

The reception programme is scheduled at Thingba Khunou in Senapati district. Besides, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, Works Minister Th. Bishwajit Singh, Tribal Affairs Minister N. Kayisu and PHED Minister L. Dikho are also attending the reception programme.

The Poumai Naga is a very old Naga tribe settled in trans-border of Manipur and Nagaland. The generic term "Pou" is the name of the ancestor and "mai" means "people". Thus, his descendants are known the Poumai Naga.

Poumai Naga has a rich cultural heritage having many customary festivals like Thounii, Taitounii, Loukanii, Rounii, Daonii, Khunii, Paonii/Paoki, Laonii, Donii, etc. celebrated on different occasions at village and regional levels. Thounii is one of the oldest and the most popular customary festivals of the Poumai Naga Tribe. It is celebrated on 5th of January every year with much gusto, pomp and gaiety.

Thounii has multifaceted meanings and significances. The name of the festival derives from the word 'Thouniikhoh' which is the first month of the year. The word "Thou" means "new"; "nii" means "festival". Therefore, it can be translated as "New year festival or the festival of dawn". It is celebrated after storing up paddy and all kinds of food grains and crops. The

festival is an occasion of thanksgiving to our deity for good harvest and good health. One of the reasons why Thounii is considered the biggest and grandest festival is because of the attribution of pleasant climate, availability of abundant foods, drinks and festive mood of the people. Thounii also marks the initiation of a new village settlement after considering the various aspects and observation of omens, dreams, signs, divinations, etc.

In the past, Thounii celebration lasted for five days commencing from 18th to 22nd of Thouniikhoh. The first day of the festival is known 'SHAA'. The day was marked as the preparation day for the festival. The house, village surrounding, street, public park, etc. were cleaned, repaired and set in order for public gathering. The prepared rice beer vessels for the feast were tasted and blessed on this day. In the evening the family members sat down together and baked bread on a flat stone and were mixed with sesame cream for better taste.

The second day of the festival is known 'CHIZIYU' means the sanctification of house. All animals for consumption during the feast were slaughtered and divided among relatives and neighbours. Libation and Oblation were performed at the corner of the house called Rii (family altar) by head of the family with cooked meat and rice beer served on plantain leaf to the family deity as thanksgiving for the bountiful harvest. The guests, sisters and relatives from the neighbouring villages arrived in the evening and the feast of eating and drinking began by lighting bonfire in public ground. The third day is known 'SHEPAO' means sent off the

guest. The brothers presented cooked meat to newly married sisters which were offered to her husband's relatives. The guests, sisters and relatives who attended the festival were dropped off till the village boundary. The youth played and participated in traditional games and dances during the day time and re-gathered in the evening at public park for drinks, singing, dancing, narrating stories of heroic deeds of forefathers, history of origin, migration and listened to the exhortation of the elders.

The fourth day is known 'NIIDAI' means day four of the festival. The menfolk went around the village whooping in full traditional attires and the whole villagers came to the public ground in the evening with their rice beer and food stuffs. The youth collected firewood and made bonfire at night where the villagers gathered and shared their foods and drinks with one another. Eating, drinking, merriment and various cultural events continued.

The fifth day is known 'NIINGOUTO' means the last day of the festival. On this day, the village menfolk went to the jungle to chase and catch a particular bird called 'Seitu' with bare hands. No weapons like gun, bow, arrow, spear or catapult, etc. were used while catching this bird. The one who caught the bird was considered the lucky man of the year. He beheaded the bird and body was then thrown to the group which torn into pieces and shared among the group members and the members who did not get the flesh piece were shared the feathers and stained blood on their pole. As they returned, they went around the village in whoop, signifying victory over the adversary and later the pole

were erected at the village gate. When no bird was caught on the first day, hunting continued the next day till the bird is caught. Thus, the festival came to an end. Thounii heralds the coming of spring and reminds the farmers to go back to work in the fields.

Poumai Naga was one of the oldest Naga tribes with a glorious past. They were amongst the most advanced communities who played the lead roles in promoting economic activities before they came into contact with modern civilization. They were a self-reliant, self-dependent and self-sufficient people who produced food-grains for their annual needs. They also produced salt, chilly, rice, crops, grains, potteries, crockeries, clothes and tools, etc. and even exported to the neighbouring villages and communities as economic activities and the articles were named after the tribe known as Pouli (Pot), Pouvo (Pig), Poupou (Spade), Pouri (Axe), Poupou (Spear), Pouyao (Rice bear), Pouraokhao (Bread), Pouhih (Rainproof), Pouai (Salt), Pousoushi (Chilly), Poubao (Barn), Pourou (Bakkt), Pouro (Carrier), Pouzha (Mat), Pouii (Basket).

With the coming of christianity, modern education, science and technology the traditional technologies and cultural practices of Poumai Naga are vanishing out which the younger generations could not get the opportunity to see the richness of our culture. In view of reviving and promoting the traditional technologies and practices, there shall be exhibition-cum-sales of Poumai handicrafts, handlooms, food products, exposition and demonstration of cultural events during the festival.