

# 17 dead in Myanmar jade mine landslide

Agency  
Yangon, May 5,

A landslide at a jade mine in northern Myanmar has killed 17 people, local authorities said on Friday, in the latest disaster to hit the murky multi-billion dollar industry.

Myanmar is the world's top producer of the near-translucent green gem in trade fueled by demand from neighbouring China.

But the poorly regulated industry is notorious for its

links to cronies from Myanmar's former junta and for the dangers it poses to those who scabble across a moonscape of environmental destruction hoping to strike it rich.

The accident early Friday occurred in a mining compound near Wak Khar village in Kachin State's Hpakant township, the epicentre of the perilous work. "A wall of rock fell after people tried to dig for jade under it," local administrative officer

Daw Nilar Myint told agency. "We have now found 17 dead bodies and we have sent nine survivors to hospital," she added.

A second source involved in the rescue and recovery process confirmed the death toll.

A number of deadly landslides has struck the area around Hpakant in recent years, with one major incident in November 2015 leaving more than 100 dead. Several other smaller

accidents have killed or injured scores more.

The victims are often itinerant workers or impoverished local residents who see little profit from the industry and are left to scour the mining areas for pieces of jade left behind by giant industrial diggers.

The NGO Global Witness said the industry was worth some \$31 billion in 2014 alone, with much of the funds not reaching state coffers.

Myanmar's northernmost state of Kachin is rich in resources but a source of long running conflict, which intensified in 2011 after a ceasefire between ethnic insurgents and the government broke down. Thousands of people have fled their home in recent weeks after a renewed bout of clashes, according to the United Nations.

# Supreme Court, govt clash in open court over appointment of judges

Agency  
New Delhi, May 5,

The Supreme Court and the Centre sparred on Friday over the delay in filling up the growing vacancies in high courts, with the apex court blaming the problem on the government and the latter pointing fingers at the SC collegium.

A bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta, while hearing a transfer plea of a litigant from Manipur, pulled up the Centre for not clearing the names recommended by the SC collegium for appointment as judges, causing undue harassment to litigants.

The high courts face vacancies of nearly 38% of their sanctioned posts, but the problem is more acute in the states of Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur. The SC in these states have to do with only two judges and, as a result, litigants have no forum to challenge orders of a single judge bench. The litigants are left with no option but to approach the SC for transfer of their appeal to the Gauhati HC for adjudication. Termining it "an unfortunate situation", the SC had issued notice to the Centre on April 17. But it was in for a surprise on Friday when the government

blamed the collegium for not recommending a sufficient number of names for appointment as judges in HCs. "Why is the collegium recommending fewer names when there are so many vacancies in high courts?" asked attorney general K K Venugopal. The bench, however, pointed to the delay on part of the Centre in clearing the names recommended by the collegium. It directed the Centre to file an affidavit giving the information and adjourned the hearing. The AG also argued that it was the collegium that needed to take a broad view and recommend more names to fill up the vacancies.

## Guess Column

# Is this a Human Nature? Are we Dumb, Deaf and Mute?

By-Natacha Urikhinbam

Union Ministers, MPs, and others members of the legislative assembly, why are you silent? We have been hardly surviving since the past many years, facing several kinds of violence from the male members of our society. Hundreds of women have been brutally raped and also murdered. Why are you mute? Is it because you have nothing to do with us anymore? As you have already achieved the position which you have pursued for to have become the lawmaking personality by the mandate of the people including the fair gender as we are, is not it your political responsibility to secure and protect us from the clutches of monstrosities committed against us by the lust hungry male chauvinist? Are you done with us on consideration that we belong to the weakly community as a whole? I strongly believe that it is a "BIG YES". And if that is the case then shameless falls on you and strength gained by us to live with a reactive feat every time incidents of atrocities are broadcasted and informed of.

As a nineteen years old girl and the citizen of Manipur, I am extremely terrified and not at all feeling secured about what is happening around here in our state. I have come up with a pictorial presentation of some heinous cases occurred to our women and children without any fault of theirs.

From many such cases, one of the most inhuman cases was about the death of a girl namely Ms. Thongam Nirupama, D/o. (Late) Mr. Thongam Jeet of Singjamei Kha Naorem Leikai, who was found at Hararou Sagolmang, Imphal East of Khundrakpam constituency and under Pangei Police Station, on the 23rd of April 2018 at around 2 p.m. Her decayed body remains was found with her belongings gathered around her.

And one of the most ironical response and an unacceptable conduct from the elected representative of the said constituency the Hon'ble Shri. Karam Shyam, Cabinet Minister, is to remain silent on this issue sans any intervention to bring to the light the truth of the case. His silence has already proven the extent to how much he cares about us a fair sex community. We have not seen any positive determination to investigate the case in their minds.

Human skull, that too for a

woman, that too for a young girl! Is it not an issue? Rape has become a culture. Rape is truly political. So, every political party must devise a commitment, a commitment of making us feel safe and sound. Until then our state would stand stock still and would deprive us of our own existence as we are making us the show case of one's lust and offensive depravity.

Then here comes the media of our state other than Imphal Free Press (IFP), Poknapam, People's Chronicle and Huiyen Lanpao, which have highlighted the issue before the public domain in the early hour when the incident came to light. Nor any discussions were done in any local news channel. Questionable fact is to whether any effective investigation has been plunged into by the state police for bringing out a logical conclusion of the case. Is it not worth an investigation to the core?

Sadly, the entire people of Manipur have become numb and deaf as they have turned to a blind eye leaving the dead remains of the said girl lie where she was placed. We have heard about the incident but unable to see any positive actions. Is it not a priority to save our society? Is it not our duty to save this society for us and the coming generations? Is it not a priority of the Government to save our sisters and daughters? Are we still waiting for all women and children to be gone without any traces of their existence? Can the society exist without the presence of women and children? Would my security as a teenage girl and others like me be put in the doldrum of insecurity and deprived my rights to enjoy my girlhood. I have taken up this courage to write to you not because I wanted to but because I am compelled to and hope that my expression is a result of a deep crisis of insecurity faced by many of the girls like me.

Not a single day is safe for us. It creates a chaos in my head to step out of my house afraid of what might happen to me in the next moment. I believe many teen girls like me in the state may feel or experience the same as me. If this whole scenario does not cease to exist and continue this way then how are we suppose to take a peaceful breath in this brutal society filled with inhuman characters.

Recently we are also aware of the Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance enacted by the Government of India on 22nd April 2018.

Will these new law solve the issue and if yes, I may have the chance of having a playful stint of my teenage. The reason I am bringing this up because of a question ringing in my head. What about those women who does not come under these categories? What have you planned for them? To the Intellectuals of Manipur: Do you think you are guiding the generation of Manipur? If Yes, then are you guiding us the way to Hell or to heaven? Do you really think that you are fit to call yourself as intellectuals? Are you comfortable to just sit and watch what is happening before your eyes? If Yes, are you really enjoying the game played?

Last but not the least table work is not enough dear intellectuals. Let's get back to the basics.

Finally to the people of Manipur, why are you voiceless? Are you waiting for your turn to go through the same fate as gone through by unfortunate victims? Are you happy watching your daughters, from your very own soil, being raped, tortured and killed? Are you willing to survive without us? Are we born to be raped? Are we born to be killed? Are we born to be harassed? Do you think we are happy? Do you think we are protected in the state? Or are you going to stay silent and blame us that it is our KARMA? You know what: you are making us half-dead.

Not least of all to the male folks of Manipur: Let's remember that there won't be any progress in a society without the active participation of women. Uplift women and protect them. Encourage women. Respect women. Appreciate women. Value women.

Lastly, I would like to conclude by saying that I am extremely thankful to the unique Civil Society Organizations who is demanding justice for the victims. I still choose to hope that things will change for women in my state because of the relentless work done by different individuals and organizations working for the betterment of women in the society. I believe individuals and organizations working towards emancipation of women will multiply knowing that women are precious and vital to our society. At the end of the day, we are all humans. (Ms. Natacha Urikhinbam is a 2nd Semester graduate student at the DM College of Arts)

## 50 live crocodiles from Malaysia seized at London airport

Agency  
London, May 5,

British officials have seized an illegal shipment of 50 live crocodiles at London's Heathrow Airport. The UK Border Force said that the year-old juvenile saltwater crocodiles were found crammed into five boxes coming from Malaysia.

They were bound for a farm in Cambridgeshire, eastern England, where they were to be bred for their meat.

Grant Miller, head of the national Border Force Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) at Heathrow said the animals had not been packed in accordance with international regulations, making the importation illegal. Each box only had room for four crocodiles but 10 had been packed into each one.

## Sports News

## Inter Gc/Bn (Ops) CRPF Hockey Tournament concludes



IT News  
Imphal, May 5,

Inter Gc/Bn (Ops) CRPF Hockey Tournament organized by 109 Bn CRPF concluded on yesterday at Mongsangei Makha Leikai ground. The tournament started on May in which eight teams drawn from 32, 69, 86, 87, 109, 143, 173 Bns & Group Centre CRPF participated. The final match was played between 69 Bn and 109 Bn in which 69 Bn emerged as winner by a margin of 3 - 2 goals in a closely contested

match. Shri Vinod Kumar, Commandant graced the closing function as the Chief Guest which was attended by officers and all ranks of Imphal based CRPF Units and prominent figures and sports lovers of the locality. Constable Y. Ropen Singh of 69 Bn was adjudged as the best player and Constable Ramendra Koch of 143 Bn the best goal keeper of the tournament. Cash prizes, trophies and medallion were distributed to the winners, runners up and best players.

## 16-year-old raped, burnt alive in Jharkhand; 14 arrested

Agency  
Ranchi, May 5,

Fourteen accused were arrested by the police on Saturday in the rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl in Chatra district's Rajatenduwa village. Four accused are still at large. The accused forcibly took the minor girl, who was on her way to attend a relative's marriage ceremony, to a nearby forest and raped her. IGP Ashish Batra said, "A local village panchayat was

convened which found the accused guilty. The village leaders then levied a Rs 50,000 fine on the culprits. Irked by the verdict, the accused got into an altercation with the panchayat members and the family members of the girl. Later, they rushed to the girl's house and set it ablaze. The girl was burned to death in the fire."

The accused subsequently fled the village. Police are conducting raids to nab those who are still

absconding. Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das, meanwhile, strongly condemned the incident. In a statement, Das said he was shocked over the gruesome incident and added that there was no place in the society for such ghastly acts. Asserting that the culprits would not be spared, the chief minister ordered the officials to arrest those involved in the incident and initiate stringent action against them.

## HRD Ministry launches major initiative for online professional development of 1.5 million higher education faculty

Agency  
New Delhi, May 5,

Human Resource Development Ministry has launched a major and unique initiative of online professional development of

1.5 million higher education faculty using the Massive Open Online Courses platform SWAYAM. Our correspondent reports that, in the first phase, 75 discipline-specific National Resource Centres (NRCs) have been identified.

National Resource Centres are tasked to prepare online training material with focus on new and emerging trends, pedagogical improvements and methodologies for transacting revised curriculum. Under the initiative, all in-service teachers, irrespective of their subject and seniority will have an enabling

opportunity to keep abreast of the latest developments in their disciplines through the online refresher course. Faculty can benefit from this initiative as it is highly flexible and can be done at one's own pace and time. A varied set of institutions such as Central, State and Open Universities, National Institutes for Technical Teachers Training, IITs, IIITs, NITs and other have been notified as NRCs. These NRCs will cover wide-ranging disciplines of Social Sciences, Sciences, Engineering and Technology and other disciplines.

## Dakota aircraft joins IAF again

Agency  
New Delhi, May 5,

A restored Dakota aircraft has joined the Indian Air Force more than four decades after the fleet was phased out following an illustrious service record. The Dakota DC-3 VP 905 was formally inducted at a grand ceremony held at Hindan air force station last evening. The aircraft was accepted by Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal B S Dhanoa from the Rajya Sabha MP Rajeev Chandrasekhar in February this year. The aircraft was flown back to India from UK by a joint

crew of IAF and Reflight Airways. During its journey, the aircraft flew a total of 9750 km and made enroute halts in France, Italy, Greece, Jordan, Bahrain and Oman.

An official release said, this historic flight across seven countries, was a commemoration of the service provided by this venerable aircraft to the nation.

The Dakota popularly known as the Gooney Bird was the first major transport aircraft inducted in the fledgling Indian Air Force. It was at the forefront of operations from 1947 to 1971.