

Global campaign on Biodiversity for Everyone's Life launched from North East India

IT News
Imphal, Sept 19,

A global campaign on 'Biodiversity for Everyone's Life' was launched from Imphal, Manipur in the presence of a large number of policymakers, civil society, scientists and students. The campaign which was released in the form of a 60 seconds documentary featuring Olympian and Five times world boxing champion Mary Kom, Governor of Manipur, Dr Najma Heptulla and environmentalist, Dr Dinabandhu Sahoo.

The main aim of this programme was to create awareness and sensitise the masses about the biodiversity and its benefits to the common people. The Manipur Governor, Dr Najma Heptulla and Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly, Y. Khenchand Singh, launched the campaign on 'Biodiversity for Everyone's Life', an initiative of Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD), a National Institute of Department of Biotechnology, Govt of India, at Imphal on Tuesday.

In his welcome address, Prof Dinabandhu Sahoo, Director IBSD, remarked how the biodiversity of the region was declining at an alarming rate and how due to climate change and over exploitation, the lives and livelihoods of



the people of this region were in danger. Due to rapid industrialization, unplanned urbanization and increase in human activities, average global temperature has increased by 0.74°C during the last 100 years. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the temperature could rise by 1.6-4.3°C by 2100. At the same time, global mean sea level rose between 12-27 cms during the last century. These changes have caused huge loss in biodiversity, affecting the entire world, from low lying areas to the vast polar regions.

At least 40% of the world economy and 80% of the needs of the people are derived from biological resources. More

than 700 species that are facing extinction are being hit hard by climate change. Therefore, there is an urgent need to join hands to make combined efforts to save our biodiversity. Biodiversity positively impacts human health in a number of ways, with the bioeconomy expected to contribute to 2.7% of global GDP by 2030. There are 34 global biodiversity hotspots in the world, out of which Four are in India namely: (1) the Western Ghats, (2) the Eastern Himalayas, (3) Indo-Burma and (4) Andaman and Nicobar Islands, said Sahoo.

The Speaker while addressing the gathering lauded this initiative and promised to sensitive the policymakers about the importance of

biodiversity and promised all help at his level. In her address, Dr Najma Heptulla, Governor of Manipur, expressed the timeliness of this campaign and also gave practical advice on the importance of planting of native tree species for increasing the biodiversity of plants and animals.

During the inaugural function, IBSD also felicitated the Governor who was recently conferred the outstanding Parliamentarian Award. The Speaker was also felicitated for his outstanding contribution to public service. Sahoo also urged everyone to spread the campaign through the YouTube video that is entitled 'Biodiversity for Everyone's Life'.

Trails of rampant & skilled robbery in DHQ areas left many clueless & haunted

Courtesy: Hornbill
Senapati, Sept. 19

With no public outcry or culprits apprehended till Today, a long trail of organised theft for cash and gold has emerged with many left clueless and unaware. Present scenario reported from sources informed that these burglary cases are now under the radar of the civil bodies and police where complaints were received and efforts to nab those involved in full swing. Information received by Hills Hornbill Express has also confirmed that burglary of houses and escaping with cash money after vandalizing were reported from different DHQ area villages including Taphou Naga, Emeshiipho, Town/Bazaar areas, Katomai

Zingsho, Mao Taphou, Katomai, Saklim, Rikhumai Taphou, jail complex colony, District council and other places.

The said crime is well planned and professional as all incidents indicated same modus operandi of entering the targeted houses from backside of the houses after removing window grills and unlocking backdoors after carefully screening the absence of house owners or elders or detecting presence of only children in the house. Here, the criminal would lock the front door from inside and vandalize the house to hunt specifically for "cash money and golds" before leaving through the back door. Despite alarming of house owners and neighbours, the

perpetrator would escape easily as the front door is meticulously locked before the crime kicks off said one of the victim from Emeshiipho village whose house was looted Rs.8000 with some ornaments. Rikhumai taphou has been worst hit with as many as 10 incidents recorded. Not enough, town areas has been repeatedly inflicted with theft and burglary cases but those culprits are on happy hunting as those involved remained evasive. As for those involved in the crime who are still scot free, a mass awareness of the public against such crimes is need of the hour and more efforts expected from different law enforcement agencies backed by proper public support and vital informations.

Assam Rifles organises Mega Pension Adalat

IT News
Imphal, Sept 19,

Assam Rifles Ex-servicemen Mega Pension Adalat for the Ex-servicemen of Manipur was conducted under the aegis of IGAR (South) at Haflong Hall, Mantripukhri, Imphal, yesterday. The event elicited participation from more than 500 Assam Rifles Ex-servicemen including World War II veterans, widows and their dependants from all the districts of the State. The aim of the pension adalat was to address the pension related grievances and also strengthen bonds and acknowledge the contribution of veterans made for the country during the prime of their lives. The occasion was graced by Brig Amit/Kabthiyal, SM, Commander, 9 Sector Assam Rifles as the Chief Guest along with other Assam



Rifles officials. Speaking on the occasion the Chief Guest exhorted the State Government Departments, Banks and other civil agencies to render maximum support to the veterans who had dedicated their lives to protect the nation.

A team of officials from HQ DG Assam Rifles, Shillong resolved more than 350 grievances during the pension adalat and Pension Revision Orders to the effect were distributed. In

addition a number of stalls were also setup to provide various facilities including CSD, medical assistance, banking, Aadhaar and PAN Card Registration etc. The event was followed by lunch for all participants. The band of Assam Rifles which was in attendance certainly brought back the memories of old times. The Ex-servicemen, widow and their dependants thanked HQ IGAR (South) for organising the event.

Education, healthcare can win global war on poverty: Goalkeepers report

Courtesy IT
New Delhi, Sept 19,

One billion people worldwide have come out of poverty since 2000, but rapid population growth in the poorest countries, particularly in Africa, threatens to slow or even reverse the decline, according to The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Goalkeepers: The Stories Behind the Data, 2018, released Tuesday.

Investing in health and education of young people can unlock productivity and innovation, create opportunities and cut poverty, leading to a "third wave" of poverty reduction in Africa — after the first and second waves in China and India.

The report says China, India and Ethiopia have achieved "historic growth" over the past 30 years despite being once considered hopeless at cutting poverty. Ethiopia, which was once the global poster child for famine, is projected to almost eliminate extreme poverty by year 2050.

"We believe — and history proves — that poor countries can chart a new course by investing in their young people. If young people are healthy, educated, and productive, there are more people to do the kind of innovative work that stimulates rapid growth," write Bill and Melinda Gates in the introduction.

"India has already shown tremendous progress on this front. We are no longer home to the largest number of poor people in the world. In fact, the number of extremely poor falls by 44 people a minute, according to World Poverty Clock," said Nachiket Mor, national director, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation India. With the population in Africa

projected to nearly double by 2050, even halving the percentage of poor in the continent would result in the number of poor people staying the same. Investments in health and education in sub-Saharan Africa could increase the gross domestic product by more than 90% by 2050.

Learning milestones

While India has pushed back poverty and pushed up primary school enrolment to 97%, it needs a clearer strategy to improve outcomes to ensure children acquire the skills needed to succeed, said the report, which tracks 18 data points from the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including child and maternal deaths, stunting, access to contraceptives, HIV, malaria, extreme poverty, financial inclusion, sanitation. "Early school years are very important for cognitive development, and if children below the age of five are malnourished and education is of poor quality, they are likely to miss development opportunities. Quality education must give them the competence and confidence to meet the changing skill requirements in the new world. They must have the skills that make them competent to migrate between jobs, as the world no longer works in silos," said Dr Srinath Reddy, president, Public Health Foundation of India. Innovations such as grouping students based on what they know, rather than by age or grade, and providing personalised instruction in an online environment help improve performance on tests. According to the Annual Status of Education Report, only a quarter of Class 3 students can read and understand a short story or subtract two-digit numbers.

Making foundational learning by Class 3 a priority is needed to excel, as exemplified by Vietnam, where foundational skills in maths and reading in primary school led to students outperforming peers from wealthy countries like the UK and the US on international tests (the US's GDP per capita is 27 times that of Vietnam's), writes Ashish Dhawan, chairman, Central Square Foundation, a Delhi-based think-tank.

Health for all

A person can never reach his or her potential without quality education and healthcare. "Catastrophic illnesses push 60 million people into poverty in India, and by providing — 5 lakh hospitalisation cover under Ayushman Bharat, at least 40 million will come out of poverty," said Dileep Mavlinkar, director, Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar. While vaccines are lowering deaths from diarrhoea and pneumonia, bed nets have prevented more than 500 million cases of malaria, according to the

report. "It [Goalkeepers report] is also an opportunity for us to look at the positive strides we have made in India, and while we continue on this trajectory, how we can also share our lessons and experiences and leverage them to support other developing economies, and help them enable and mainstream those in need," said Mor.

Apart from education, this year's report examines three other topics: family planning to empower women to choose when, with whom, and how many children they will have; HIV modelling for what Zimbabwe's HIV epidemic might look in 2050; and doubling agricultural productivity in Ghana to create jobs and cut poverty by half. "If we invest in human capital today, young people wearing sandals in the poorest, fastest growing countries will be riding bicycles tomorrow — and inventing cheaper, cleaner, safer cars next week. That's good for everyone," write Bill and Melinda Gates in the report.

Congress to meet CAG to demand probe into Rafale deal

Agency
New Delhi, Sept 19,

Seeking to step up its attack on the Narendra Modi government over the Rafale deal, the Congress will raise the issue with the CAG on Wednesday and demand a thorough probe into the matter, party sources said. They said top Congress leaders will meet the Comptroller and Auditor General Wednesday morning on the issue. The Congress has alleged

corruption in the deal to buy 36 Rafale fighter jets from France's Dassault Aviation. It has alleged that the Modi government has caused a loss of over Rs 41,000 crore to the exchequer by paying a higher price for the aircraft than what was negotiated by the UPA. Earlier in the day, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the CAG and CVC are bound by their constitutional duty to look at the entire deal and all its papers - whether or not somebody moves them.

"Congress Party at an appropriate time also intends to move an appropriate petition before CVC and CAG to expeditiously and quickly adhere to their constitutional duties," he said. The Congress has asked why the government was not setting up a joint parliamentary committee to probe the fighter jet deal. Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman, however, rejected the demand saying all the details on it have already been placed before Parliament.

Kerala nun rape case: Accused Bishop questioned

Agency
Kochi, Sept 19

Franco Mullakkal, the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Jalandhar, will be questioned by Kerala police on Tuesday in connection with the rape case filed against him by a nun. A five-member police team has arrived at the Crime Branch (CID) office in Tripunthara, on the outskirts of Kochi, and the Bishop is expected to arrive by 11am. The security around the

The Bishop was summoned in connection with the probe into allegations of rape by a nun amid mounting pressure for action against him and continuing protests by Missionaries of Jesus nuns and officials of various churches for the past 10 days in Kochi.

office has been stepped up. In a setback to the Bishop on Tuesday, the Kerala High Court deferred till September 25 hearing on his petition for anticipatory bail. In his bail plea, the Bishop had said he had been implicated for taking action against the nun. The Bishop had been summoned in connection with the probe into allegations of rape by a nun amid mounting pressure for action against him and continuing protests by Missionaries of Jesus nuns and officials of various churches for the past 10 days in Kochi. The day after he received the summons and following mounting pressure and growing protests, the Bishop stepped down and handed over charge of the Diocese to a deputy.

In June, a 43-year-old nun, also a mother superior, had

complained to the police that Mullakkal, 54, had raped her 13 times between 2014 and 2016. The nun is a member of the Missionaries of Jesus congregation based in Punjab which runs two convents in Kerala. She also wrote to Vatican's India Ambassador accusing church officials, including Pope Francis, of ignoring her complaints. Calling Mullakkal a predator, she alleged at least 20 nuns were forced to leave the congregation due to his sexual advances. "Bishop Franco had always an eagle's eye on few other sisters of the Missionaries of Jesus congregation. Whichever sister he felt attracted to, he tried to put them in his trap by force or taking advantage of their weaknesses," she alleged. Mullakkal has rejected all allegations, calling them a conspiracy against the church.

Congress to meet CAG