

BJP's National observers sent to take opinions in connection with the uproar against Chief Minister N. Biren Singh continue meeting the state BJP functionaries

IT News
Imphal, July 24

The thin red line between some group of BJP legislatures and the Chief Minister is becoming clearer even as the four BJP Ministers in the coalition government denied any such moved after the BJP Central leaders sent National Vice President of BJP Bajajaynt Pande and former Union Minister Manoj Sinha to take

State paralyses due to total lockdown

IT News
Imphal, July 24:

Almost all streets in all districts of the state including Imphal city bear deserted look after the state government announced total lockdown from 2 pm today for 7 more days. The announcement comes after the state cabinet hold a meeting and discuss the present trend of the COVID-19 pandemic which is spreading at huge number at Thoubal district and later even at major health service centers including RIMS and JNIMS. Almost all shops in all district headquarters remain shuts, no pedestrians were seen on the road, other than essential service almost all streets in Imphal and other district headquarters were empty with less no vehicles, vegetable vendors open at various colony were also not seen today as the district administrators took extreme measures to enforce the lockdown. This is the second time that the state enforced extreme form of lockdown after the situation due to COVID-19 become serious by even spreading to people who have no travel history.

opinion of the state BJP functionaries including the legislature.

The two National BJP representative who arrived here in the state yesterday and have been staying at Hotel Classic Grande have taken opinion of almost all BJP functionaries including the newly elected President of the BJP Manipur Pradesh Saikhom Tikendrajit Singh. The two leaders also met former President of the State BJP Thounaojam Chaoba among others. BJP legislatures including the 4 Ministers who had met the national observers includes deputy Speaker K. Robindro, MLA S. Rajen, H. Dingo, L. Sushindro, Dr. S. Ranjan, Vungzangin valte, L. Ramshwor, L. Radhakishore, N. Indrajit amasung Dr. Radheshyam Yumnam, a source told Imphal Times.

The National BJP observers are taking the opinion of the state party functionaries and the legislature as some BJP legislature has urged for change of the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh. Whether N.

Biren Singh remain or not will be decided by the report of the two National representatives who is expected to leave on Saturday. Meanwhile, some senior BJP workers and sympathizers expressed dissatisfaction to the present war for power instead of rolling their heads to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

"They could have fight when the COVID-19 crisis has been settled, but fighting for power at this critical time is unfortunate not only for the BJP but also for the people of the state state", a one time former secretary of the BJYM told Imphal Times.

He said that any attempt to change the leadership in the government at this crucial time may bring hard time to the BJP.

He said that the disunity among the elected BJP leaders is one problem that has to be seriously analyzed by the National leaders. The number that they get in the 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly election was not

enough to form the government. And everyone knows that it was the wisdom of some top BJP leaders the managed to form the government even though opposition congress has more elected members.

He further added that the support of the Naga Peoples' Front (NPF) to the BJP led government here in the state when it is not even a partner of the BJP led NDA government in the center and when it is posing as opposition

at Nagaland state Assembly should be a matter that needs to be pondered. NPP which has a similar number is a partner of the BJP led NDA government at the center and it will not be a problem for the party to go hand-in-hand no

matter who is the Chief Minister from the BJP. But when it comes to the NPF, it is difficult to imagine that the party will continue its support to the BJP led coalition government as they are free to make its own decision.

Battle for power seems more concern then War against COVID-19 Pandemic for BJP led coalition government

IT News
Imphal, July 24:

There seems to be no dearth for battle of power among the people's representatives of the BJP led coalition in the state of Manipur even as the people face extreme hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To some peoples' representatives who have been elected to govern the state for the welfare of the state, fight for power leaving aside the present crisis due to invasion by novel coronavirus seems

to be more important to them. Ministers who had abstained from attending the cabinet meeting held on July 22 and also foundation stone laying function of Manipur water supply project by the Prime Minister of India on the ground that they have been under home quarantined also violated the SOPs framed by the state government to contain the virus, in their lust for power. Source said that Works Minister Th. Bishwajit, who had abstained from both the important government meeting as he have been

under home quarantined after returning from New Delhi on July 21 today went to Hotel Classic Grande and met National Vice President of BJP Bajajaynt Pande and former Union Minister Manoj Sinha who had arrived here in Imphal yesterday to take the opinion of the BJP legislatures and the party functionaries after a serious demand has been put for change of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh. Education Minister Th. Radheshyam, Agriculture Minister V. Hankhanlian and Social Welfare Minister

Nemcha Kipgen who have also gone to New Delhi along with works minister Th. Bishwajit and abstained from both the cabinet meeting of July 22 and foundation stone laying function of water supply scheme by Prime Minister yesterday on the similar ground of undergoing Home quarantined also met the two national BJP leaders who have been here in Imphal to take opinions of the state BJP leaders and legislature on the demand for change of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh.

Doubling of farmers' income by 2022 in NE Region Achievable: VC, CAU

IT News
Imphal, July 24:

Press Information Bureau and ROB Imphal today hosted a webinar on the impact of Government of India's Atmanirbhar Package on Agriculture. Inaugurating the seminar, S N Pradhan, ADG, PIB and ROB Imphal said that Atmanirbhar package has substantial financial allocation for agriculture sector and the number of policy initiatives taken have the potential to fully transform the lives of millions of farmers in the country. Pradhan said that it is now essential to take all the information related to these reforms to the people through the media so that the farmers and the society can completely benefit from the initiatives.

Introducing Dr M Premjit Singh, Vice Chancellor, Central Agriculture University, Imphal, Shri Pradhan said that Dr Singh is a much respected authority in the field of agriculture research who was honoured with The Young Scientist award in 1992 by DST, New Delhi for his research project "Studies on bee pollination of oilseed crops". Dr. Singh has undertaken six research projects funded by external agencies. In his keynote address, Dr Premjit said that the vision of Prime Minister for doubling of farmers income by 2022 can be achieved in the North Eastern states by giving location centric scientific solutions to the farmers. Dr Premjit said that farmers of the region have to move towards double cropping of rice as good

varieties have already been developed and demonstrated. He advocated using high technologies for multiplying incomes in horticulture, animal husbandry and fisheries. He said that the return of migrant labourers to the region due to Covid pandemic can be used as a boon if we shift to new agriculture practices and involve people in agro processing. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. A. Sundari, Director, Green Biotech Eco-solutions said that private sector has a huge role to play in multiplying farmers' income and government's recent initiatives will go a long way in helping entrepreneurs like her expand their business and thus help more and more farmers. Abhishek Dayal, Director, PIB, Imphal summed up the

discussion saying that the central government through Atmanirbhar Package has ensured huge capital infusion to ensure that agriculture does not suffer during the economically uncertain times. Major reforms have been announced in agriculture marketing to ensure that the sector benefits from market forces and farmers can realise best price for their labour. He said that it is time that media and agriculture entrepreneurs and professionals work together to educate the people about these measures. He thanked the participants for actively participating in the webinar. The regional offices and bureaus of PIB and BOC in Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, mediapersons and agripreneurs attended the webinar.

VDF stage protest in front of Moreh PS

IT News
Imphal, July 24:

VDF Welfare Association of Tengenpoual district today staged protest in front of Moreh Police Station demanding to fulfill the charter of demand that they submitted to the government of Manipur. Speaking to reporters

spokesperson of the Association N. Nanao said that as the VDF also equally performed duty like other police personnel the government should consider payment of salary to the VDF in par with the police personnel. The VDF have been demanding pay increment since the last few years.

CPCB issues fresh guidelines on disposal of COVID-19 waste

Agency
New Delhi, July 24:

Central Pollution Control Board, CPCB has issued fresh guidelines on disposal of COVID-19 waste. It has directed that masks and gloves used by everyone, whether infected or not, should be cut and kept in paper bags for minimum 72 hours before disposing of them.

The CPCB also directed commercial establishments shopping malls, institutions and offices to follow the same procedure with discarded protective personal equipment, PPE from general public.

It asked to ensure that general solid waste and biomedical waste generated from quarantine centres and quarantine homes is not mixed and they should be collected separately. It added that leftover food,

empty juice bottles or tetra packs, empty water bottles, packaging material, and any other items, generated or handled by COVID-19 patient should be collected along with other general solid waste in bags securely tied for handing over to waste collectors.

The CPCB also recommended use of bio-degradable or non-disposable cutlery to minimize waste generation.

It directed that isolation wards, including temporary healthcare facilities like rail coaches, must keep separate colour coded bins to maintain segregation of waste and use a dedicated bin to collect and store COVID-19 waste and keep it separately.

From COVID-19 isolation wards, used PPEs such as goggles, face-shield, splash proof apron, plastic coveralls, hazmat suits, nitrile gloves must be collected into a red bag.

Mumbai, Pune to help test vaccine efficacy: SII

By Raju Vernekar
Pune, July 24:

The Serum Institute of India (SII), Pune, which is in the process of developing COVID-19 cure vaccine in collaboration with Oxford University and AstraZeneca, has decided to conduct clinical trials on 4,000 to 5,000 people in Pune and Mumbai by the end of next month. A number of trial sites across both Mumbai and Pune have shortlisted, as these cities have many hotspots, which will help us understand the efficacy of the vaccine, SII

chief executive Adar Poonawalla said and added that the company aims to commence the crucial phase-III of the trials of the vaccine titled as "Covishield" in India by August after getting the necessary permissions from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).

"The Indian regulatory authorities have aided us in fast-tracking approvals keeping in mind the requisite guidelines of safety and efficacy. We do not want to rush and would focus only on delivering a viable and effective product for the

masses, he said. Adar Poonawalla said the company aims to manufacture 300 million to 400 million doses by the year-end, following the success of initial and licensure trials. As part of the agreement with "AstraZeneca", SII can manufacture 1 billion doses for India and nearly 70 low and middle income countries. There are no challenges in the manufacturing of the vaccine doses and the company will be starting by making 60-70 million doses per day. He had earlier explained that

the Covid-19 vaccine project is a USD 200 million bet, wherein it is investing in production even as the vaccine goes through the trials process, so as to ensure that it can introduce a large volume of the vaccines in the market as soon as the license is received. However, if this candidate fails, the company will lose the money. Adar's father and company chairman Cyrus Poonawalla had on Tuesday said SII is aiming to sell the vaccine for under Rs 1,000 per dose in India. Oxford University has

reported satisfactory progress from the vaccines test results and is conducting bigger field tests in the UK. In India, it has chosen SII as manufacturing partner, which has to conduct field trials before getting the final nod to ensure they are safe and effective for Indians. DCGI has already given permission to another company-Bharat Biotech to conduct human clinical trials and BB has already began trials in different parts of the country including AIIMS, New Delhi.

★ Editorial

The limitation on Free Speech

Before the coming of the internet, when newspapers, Television, Theatre, Public Meeting, and Cinemas are medium of commenting to the act of any government machinery or political parties or say to any individual, the first action received was a legal notice under defamation or sedition laws. Those days only a few people can comment on critical ways, and those few people happened to be prominent figures and laws hardly find evidence to prove their criticism as derogatory, seditious or defamatory. Maybe the actors of those days presented their criticism after a thorough knowledge of the law of this land.

Right to freedom of speech and expression is guaranteed to all the citizens of the country under Article 19 (1)(a) on the condition that this freedom of speech and expression shall not affect the operation of any existing law, or prevent the State from making any law or affect interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India as well as the security of the State. The free speech and expression are also limited when it affects friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or concerning contempt of court.

Now after the coming of the internet and invention of social networking software which makes every individual irrespective of their status or educational qualification or ages now get connected. Any idea of any individual is today seen uploaded by almost all people who access the social networking site particularly the 'Facebook'. To control this medium, the government amended the Information Technology Act, 2000 in 2008 and get assent from the President on February 5, 2009. Section of the amended IT act sanctioned authority the government machinery to punish any person who sends, information that is grossly offensive or has menacing character; or any information which he knows to be false, but to cause annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred or ill will, persistently by making use of such computer resource or a communication device.

This section 66 A of the IT act was however struck down in 2015 by a division bench of Supreme Court relating to restrictions on online speech, as unconstitutional on grounds of violating the freedom of speech guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India. The Court further held that the Section was not saved by being a 'reasonable restriction' on the freedom of speech under Article 19(2).

However, a news report appeared in The Hindu newspaper that said that on January 7, 2019, said that the 66A of the IT Act already struck down by the Supreme Court was found to be still in use.

The Supreme Court expressed shocked on hearing that authorities still continue to book people under the now extinct and draconian provision even after three years after it struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act as unconstitutional.

But still then there are laws that stated the whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.



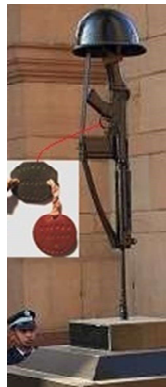
By-Kamal Baruah

The harsh winter fell up to minus 60 degrees Celsius in the mountain peaks of Drass thus both sides had to abandon frontline posts when temperatures plunged. At the beginning of May 1999, local Shepherd who tends and rears sheep in the Suru River Valley, reported Indian Army of Pakistani intrusion. Thousands of irregular troops supported by Northern Light Infantry from Gilgit-Baltistan skilled in high-altitude warfare had loitered over the dreadful winter. Enemy in secret established positions at 18,000 feet above sea level that commanded a view of the major supply route to troops stationed at Siachen, the world's highest battlefield.

Immediately, Army sent patrolling soldiers at LAC but enemy captured and tortured five of them to death. Pakistan did war crimes violating Geneva Convention and started heavy shelling on ammunition dumped in Kargil and sending infiltrators through Kaksar, Drass and Mushkoh sectors. India detected incursion but Pakistan went sideline for the involvement of Kashmiri militants. Their aim was to cut our supplies by inflicting heavy losses on troops and pressurizing India into negotiating a settlement of the Kashmir dispute on Pakistani terms. Their generals were negating Indian response for being nuclear-armed Pakistan. Army had no option but to prompt counteroffensive.

Dog Tag hangs Rifle's Trigger

It's no use of bringing wounded soldier from the battle field as he suffered fatal injury but my friend saw me, smiled and said his last words "I knew you'll come"



IAF upped the ante by surveying low flying helicopters at flushing out infiltrators from remote Kargil-Drass-Batalik sectors. Incidentally a MiG-27 found technical snag on board while ejecting Pilot Flt Lt Nachiketa was taken POW followed by Sqn Ldr Ahuja killed in action with MiG-21. Two days later another Mi-17 went down with four aircrew killed. India did not show aggressive against enemy however the minimal use of air-to-ground strikes under Op Safed Sagar did not materialize. It was a futile attempt to keep infiltrators sending back. As young air warrior, we hadn't seen such situation at HQ TC. We were at breakfast and heard Passive Air Defence siren. We realized that the war had begun. Soldiers fell in by the side of the Flag House for war formation. There was an announcement at short briefing. On May 31, PM Vajpayee had to declare war like situation (Op Vijay) thereby all establishments fell under PAD. We were in Combatant dress with boots & anklets and our kit bags were awaited for Flash Signals with impatience for clearance of a movement.

Soon a pair of Dog Tags (a corrosion resistant metal used in war for identification of dead or wounded soldier) issued by SWO, we were aerodynamically lifted by MI-8 to unknown destination. The AN-32 was playing hide and seek with clouds before landing at ALG. The major offensive accompanied by air strikes to free the crucial Srinagar Leh NH from Pakistani threat. Enemy again sent mutilated bodies of six soldiers of Jat Regiment and continued shelling intensified. People at border village left their yaks, cows and goats to the care of God.

India got enraged and went on offensive with the Bofors Guns inflicting huge casualties inside territories of Skardu in Baltistan. While MiG and Mirage bombarded the Tiger Hills, Army begun recapturing Kargil and we were busy with WT sending Morse signals inside Ops room. Crucial Tololing peak gained control followed by Point 5140, 5060, 5100 of Tiger Hills. It recaptured Drass from intruders and key peaks Jubar Heights in Batalik. The nation declares Operation Vijay a success after Pak pulled out. Kargil conflict officially came to an end on 26 July. India hadn't expected Kargil flared into a war someday. It led to defeat

and another embarrassment after 50 years of Indo Pak War 1971. The misadventure of Pakistan General Musharraf who orchestrated the infiltration of troops and terrorists into Indian Territory was thwarted by the courage of Indian military. The bygone era of heroism has slowly been omitted. Soldier might get wounded, broken but they always stand tall out of fear. 500 brave hearts laid their lives with nearly 4000 of enemy also killed. Recapturing the tiger hill with the tricolor and the jingle "Yeh dil mange more" was possible with the extraordinary air effort and tactical innovation. The Kargil said the supreme sacrifice of Indian soldiers who faced off with barbaric enemy for protecting its territorial integrity. Two decades after nuclear-armed neighbours fought in the hills of Kargil, the disputed region continues to be on edge. The burials are lying in lines identified by Dog Tags inside front pocket. The other Tag kept in charge of the burial for record keeping. There is a saying in war "it's no use of bringing wounded soldier from the battle field as he suffered fatal injury but my friend saw me, smiled and said his last words "I knew you'll come".

The wall of heroes at Kargil War Memorial Drass reads "beneath this earth young warrior's sleep". The Bayonet-Rifle is on its barrel capped by a helmet of an unknown soldier. The familiar Dog Tag hangs from the rifle's trigger. As the bugler played the last tune, the guards performed the Shok Salami Shastra while placing the floral wreath in honor of fallen soldiers. How do I pay tribute to my fallen friend today?

(The writer is a former Air Warrior)

Chassad and the Question of Justice

(A critical comment on Chassad burning, efforts in re-building, and the idea of Justice)



By-Janghaolun Haokin

Amidst the lockdown, the monsoon, and the political instability that has been on the show in Manipur, the rebuilding of Chassad, a village in Kamjong District of Manipur, has been on progress thanks to the government, various CSOs, and other concerned individuals and groups. Chassad has now about half of its houses re-built after the village was completely devastated roughly four months ago.

What happened to Chassad?

The whole village was burnt and ransacked on 16 March 2020 by miscreants from their neighbouring village who were reportedly backed by armed rebels. Videos covering the incident were circulated and it went viral on social media in no time with people giving various comments on the video without anything they could do to lessen the tensions. In the videos, the miscreants can be seen armed with stones, firewood, catapult, knife and pointed spears; a large group of men screaming and shouting in mockery and anger as they pelted stones at the houses while some others were setting the houses on

fire. In another video, the rebels can be seen in military camouflage with firearms joining the miscreants in burning the village.

The burnings reportedly started at around 08:00 hrs, and by late afternoon, the whole village of almost two hundred households was already reduced to ashes. The houses were levelled by the fire and everything that the villagers owned were turned into ashes including many two and four wheeler vehicles, and the lone educational institution, Lhingkim Memorial Academy was also not spared as can be seen from the photos and videos that circulated. It is also important to note that the 42nd Assam Rifles and the State Police Forces have stations in close proximity to the village.

The struggle of the people

That fateful day, the villagers of Chassad had faced unimaginable terror. The thought of helplessly watching their homes turning to ashes and at the same time having to run for their lives must have been mentally and emotionally devastating. On that day, most of the people of Chassad, excepting those who took shelter with the Assam Rifles, men and women and young and old were given no choice but to fare through the jungle in order to avoid any uncertain dangers to their lives

the miscreants may cause them.

Any effort therefore to bring out how much the people of Chassad had suffered on that day and after would still remain an understatement. In fact, though reliefs and aides have been constantly provided, the people are still faced with various hardships. They have been devoid of basic mental, emotional, and physical needs to which the flooding of temporary makeshift tents and the difficulty in various others stands proof. There are even reports that suspect some people to be psychologically adversely affected by the sudden and unprecedented terror being inflicted upon them.

Efforts in re-building

As aforementioned, construction of prefabricated houses has been ongoing for the Chassad villagers. Apart from it, the government has also provided financial assistance and necessary items as food, clothing, and tents. The CSOs too, on their part have been toiling hard towards re-building and offering humanitarian service to the villagers. Also praiseworthy is the public who has been generously donating reliefs in cash and kinds for the people of Chassad.

Furthermore, one may also note the overall concern of the like-minded and bright-minded individuals and groups, who had joined visionary hands for the society to raise voices for the people of Chassad, and for

humanity and justice, irrespective of community origin. Efforts such as this are the bedrock of social harmony that can re-build the village and its people in re-shaping their mental and emotional state towards their social outlook. However, we are yet to strive harder to bring in more people into expanding our mentalities and broadening our mindsets beyond communal lines.

The idea of Justice

Unfortunately, though much has been done by everyone concerned, the idea of justice until so far sadly remains a far cry. In fact, the barbaric incident will remain entangled in the hearts of the villagers of Chassad and nothing can rightly do justice to it. It will remain as a nightmare, and will remain a day of sorrow and mourning for the people.

But what is baffling towards the striving for justice is the inaction towards the miscreants. Until today, the state and its administration hasn't raised a single question about the culprits before the laws of the state. One therefore may wonder "what is the idea of justice" of the government. Does the government believe that the compensation and Justice are terms that are interchangeable or of the same nature? It is also to be remarked that the incident has greatly caused and questioned the government in its policy and ability. What then is the government's answer towards such sensitive questions that can be detrimental to the overall governance policies?

Interestingly, in the photos and videos that circulated in social media, the culprits can be easily identified, and their inhuman acts of brutality and arson are plainly evident. The popular question is now why the government does not bring them into justice. Or one may go further and point the government of any lapse in the administration towards equal treatment before the law for all its citizens. But to a right thinking person, the law remains the same, irrespective of any virtue by community origin, birth, status, rank or any other kinds of relationships. In fact, justice must be for all and it must be known that it is a natural Human Right which must never be, in any way under any circumstances, compromised.

Subsequently, the government needs to be wise enough to understand that their actions and inactions in matters relating to granting Justice is of crucial significance as it will but remain a lesson to learn for the people. The government has every right to choose whether to stand with Justice and therefore grant justice or turn a blind-eye to the grave violations of law and order and the necessity and urgency to granting justice by bringing the culprits before the law. The government must know that this choice will automatically determine the kind of image that the government wants to build and the subsequent excellence or mediocrity in governance.

Re-building hopes and societal harmony

Albeit the efforts taken up by the government and the commendable role of the CSOs and individuals; the people of Chassad are yet to wake up to Justice. The honour and integrity as human beings and as citizens of the state are yet to be restored. In fact, until the culprits are booked and brought under the law, one can never say that Justice has been served to the people of Chassad in particular and to humanity as a whole.

As a result, just as Helen Keller, a political activist, had stated "Until the great mass of people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained", we therefore, as responsible citizens, and as like-minded, and bright-minded individuals, and as visionaries for peace and harmony of our land, have to come together and raise our voices for the people of Chassad, for our aspirations of societal harmony, and most of all for Humanity, so that Justice be granted its rightful place and honour.

It is an earnest plea therefore, that we must come together, regardless of our community origin, and stand together as we strive towards a shared vision and common goal of well-being and societal harmony for all.

Let's say #JusticeforChassad

(The writer is a Human Rights Activist and General Secretary, International Human Rights Association (IHRA), Manipur State)

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Government still day dreaming for Tousem Sub Division

By- Ringbam Kamei

The long time negligence of the government in maintaining all weather road linking Tousem Sub-divisional range with neighbouring districts (Tamenglong and Jiribam), despite repeated demands put forth by various civil society organisations (CSOs), questions our very concept of nationhood and ongoing development process. It is a known fact that proper road connectivity is the dire needs to enhance livelihood as essential commodities are being acquired through it. In case of Tousem, non-performance of the government in



addressing the plight of the common people, is detected once again.

There had been a shortage of medicine for the ailing hospital patients at primary health center (PHC) of Tousem due to the prevailing

lockdown as per battling against Covid-19. The demand was put into place to arrange medicines at the earliest possible time and accordingly medicine loaded-vehicle was sent from Tamenglong. However, it

failed to reach its destination due to dilapidated condition of the road between Azuram and Tousem. In order to contain the dire needs of the patients, Tousem Village Authority took up the

charge by sending volunteers on payment basis, to shift medicines from Azuram to Tousem.

It is also pertinent to include in the realm, the deplorable road connectivity from Kaiphundi to Tousem, as it interlinked Jiribam which is the lifeline of Tousem range. The government is, once again, reminded to look into the matter and execute necessary action so that denizens retain normalcy in terms of livelihood.

It is also of the view that adequate amount of medicines should be maintained in PHC, so that diseases like malaria, diarrhea, dysentery, etc., which are prone in our area could be timely curbed.

Govt imposes restrictions on public procurement from countries sharing land border with India on security ground

Agency
New Delhi, July 24:

Government has imposed restrictions on public procurement from the countries which share a land border with India to strengthen the defence and national security.

The Department of Expenditure in a detailed Order said the Government has amended the General Financial Rules 2017 to enable imposition of restrictions on bidders from countries which share a land border with India on grounds of defence of India, or matters directly or indirectly related thereto including national security.

As per the order, any bidder from such countries sharing a land border with India will be eligible to bid in any procurement whether of goods, services including consultancy services and non-consultancy services or works including turnkey projects only if the bidder is registered with the competent authority.

The competent authority for registration will be the registration committee constituted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, DPIIT.

Political clearance from the External Affairs Ministry and security clearance from the Home Ministry will also be

mandatory.

The order also takes into its ambit public sector banks and financial institutions, Autonomous Bodies, Central Public Sector Enterprises and Public Private Partnership projects receiving financial support from the government or its undertakings.

The Central government has also written to State Chief Secretaries for the implementation of this Order in procurement by them and their undertakings.

The Finance Minister said the relaxation has been provided in certain limited cases, including for procurement of medical supplies for containment of COVID-19 global pandemic till December this year.

The Ministry said the new provisions will apply to all new tenders. In respect of tenders already invited, if the first stage of evaluation of qualifications has not been completed, bidders who are not registered under the new Order will be treated as not qualified.

If this stage has been crossed, ordinarily the tenders will be cancelled and the process started de novo.

The Order will also apply to other forms of public procurement. The Ministry said it does not apply to procurement by the private sector.

Regular Court sitting to be suspended; urgent matter to take up through Video conferencing

IT News

Imphal, July 24:

The regular court sitting for both the High Court and District Courts/Tribunals will be suspended till 31.07.2020, but will take up urgent matters through video conferencing. A notification in the regard has been issued by the Registrar General of the Manipur High Court yesterday.

Even as regular court sitting for both the High Court and District Courts/Tribunals shall remain suspended. However, all Courts in Manipur including the High Court will take up urgent motion cases through video conferencing, the notification said.

It added that the court proceedings shall be done through video conferencing facility as per Notification No. 55 dated 08.04.2020 issued by the High Court. However, in case video conferencing is not possible due to any reason, physical court may be conducted by maintaining strict covid-19 protocol and social distancing on permission.

The notification has been directed by the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court in continuation of and in partial modification of earlier Notification No. 71 issued by the High Court of Manipur to combat the pandemic spread of Novel Corona virus (COVID 19) and in compliance of the directions passed by the Supreme Court of India vide Order dated 23.03.2020 in SMWC No. 3/2020: "IN RE - CONGNIZANCE FOR EXTENSION OF LIMITATION" and Order dated 06.04.2020 in SMWC No. 5/2020: "IN RE - GUIDELINES FOR COURT FUNCTIONING THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCING DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC" and considering extension of the ongoing LOCKDOWN upto 31.07.2020 as declared by the Government of India on 29.06.2020; and subsequently by the Government of

Manipur on 23.07.2020 extending complete lockdown till 31.07.2020, and after discussing with the Judges, Advocate General, Senior and other Members of the Bar and other stake holders, and suggestions of High Court Bar Association, Manipur and All Manipur Bar Association.

The notification further added that in partial Modification of Notification No.55, the video conferencing software will be "Jitsi Meet". For desktop and laptop, users can join Jitsi Meet video conferencing by simply opening the link sent by the Court end through any browser, e.g., chrome, firefox, etc.

For mobile phone users, "Jitsi Meet" app has to be downloaded and installed from "Play Store" or "App Store" and has to click the link sent by the Court end.

For the High Court, filing of fresh matters will be accepted email only at hcmefiling@gmail.com by sending notification for e-filing which is under process. Hard copies have to be submitted to the Registry after restrictions are relaxed. Any urgent listing for the day or filing of other application/ documents, etc., mention by application is to be made

before the Registry and it will be placed before the Chief Justice for appropriate order, the notification by the Registrar General added. For the District Courts/Tribunals, fresh urgent cases will be accepted by email and hard copies shall be submitted later on after restrictions are relaxed. Urgent application can be moved with the permission of the Presiding Judge.

Counsel/Parties shall file an undertaking to the effect that necessary court fees, sworn affidavit and other documents be submitted after restrictions are relaxed.

As far as possible, petition/ application filed through email filing shall not exceed 15-20 pages along with important annexures/ documents. Complete set shall be submitted later on after restrictions are relaxed. The notification further added that all urgent motion matters as above will be listed before the appropriate Bench as assigned by the Chief Justice.

In case of District Courts/ Tribunals, mention is to be made before the Presiding Judge. In case the Advocates need to enter court complexes for any reason, strict social distancing and other covid-19 protocol to be maintained.

Litigants and other officials relating to a case can enter court premises only with prior permission of the Court Presiding Judicial Officer.

The directives by the Chief Justice of Manipur High Court also stated that the District & Sessions Judges and Presiding Officers may work out modalities for proper functioning of their respective Courts in consultation with the members of Bar and other stake holders, as may be necessary.

Wearing of mask at all time is compulsory in all Court complexes of Manipur. Strict adherence to covid-19 protocol is a must.

On the other hand Normal training programmes of Manipur Judicial Academy which require physical attendance shall remain suspended till 31.07.2020. However, online training programmes shall be continued during lockdown period without fail, the notification added.

In view of the hardship faced by the common people during the covid-19 pandemic, Manipur State Legal Services Authority shall take up urgent legal services activities at all level, as may be possible.

Pending cases fixed for

hearing on day-to-day basis up to 31.07.2020 shall be adjourned to subsequent dates in respect of High Court and District Courts.

The interim orders granted by the High Court for a specified date in pending cases shall be extended till next date of effective hearing. The interim orders granted by the District Courts/Tribunals in pending cases for a specified date shall be extended till next date of effective hearing.

Similar arrangements shall be made by all the respective Juvenile Justice Boards of the districts.

In view of suspension of regular Court work till 31.07.2020, limitation for any Court proceeding shall not run with effect from 15.03.2020 until further order in pursuance of order dated 23.03.2020 in SMWC No. 3/2020 IN RE CONGNIZANCE FOR EXTENSION OF LIMITATION passed by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Attendance of employees in the High Court and the District Courts/Tribunals including digitization and scanning project shall remain suspended. However, officers from Superintendent and above shall make themselves available for urgent official works.

AR contributes in Go Green Initiative



IT News
Imphal, July 24:

Mantripukhri and Keithelmanbi Battalion of 9

Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of HQ IGAR (South) organised Tree Plantation Drives at Yaingangpokpi Company Operating Base (COB) and Andro Company Operating Base (COB) respectively on 23rd Jul 2020.

The Tree Plantation drives were organised with an aim to raise awareness about the importance of healthy green environment amongst the troops. The event commenced with an informative lecture on importance of trees to control the global warming.

The battalions planted a total of 465 saplings of multiple varieties mostly fruit, flower bearing and other saplings. The battalions had a dual aim of Environment Protection and Soil Conservation and also ensuring that it contributes its efforts towards making the society clean and green.

Rise in gender inequalities in media during COVID-19: IFJ

IT News
New Delhi, July 23:

The Indian Journalists Union joins the International Federation of Journalists and its Gender Council's call to media organisations and trade unions to make gender equality a priority in their response to the pandemic and demand concrete steps to provide their female colleagues with decent working conditions.

This follows a new survey by the IFJ wherein "more than half of women journalists have experienced increased gender inequalities due to COVID-19, in the industry, with devastating consequences on their conciliation of work and

private life (62%), work responsibilities (46%) and salaries (27%).

The survey conducted among 558 women journalists, among whom 66% were union members in 52 countries also revealed that as a result of the pandemic:

- Over ¾ of respondents saw their level of stress increase, half of them pointing at multiple tasks as the main cause;
- More than half of the respondents said their health had been affected which resulted for almost ¾ of them in sleeping problems;
- Only 4 in 10 women journalists claimed they received protective equipment from their employers;

- More than half of the respondents claim unions have not developed any specific strategies to tackle gender inequalities during the pandemic;
- 60% said their industry had provided some form of protocol for teleworking;
- More than ¾ of respondents said the level of harassment (including online) and bullying have not increased during the crisis;
- A third of respondents claimed they worked "mainly from home" and another third has worked mainly in the office. 15% worked mostly in the field;
- Respondents listed diverse reasons as causes of stress including working in isolation,

bullying from bosses, family caring and home schooling, domestic tensions, increased workload and the usual tight deadlines, long working hours, psychological impact of COVID coverage, fear of job loss.

Respondents made concrete recommendations for improving teleworking protocols such as the need for employers to provide adequate working equipment including bandwidth, define working hours and breaks, and understand reality of working from home while caring for children.

Over 2/3 of respondents pointed at the negative impact of media funding cuts on the

industry's gender strategies. Respondents denounced the focus on profit and competition which would exclude work on gender and change media priorities and the most precarious situation of women which make them most affected by social plans and paid less.

Overall, most respondents agreed that the best strategies to achieve a gender equal new normal were economic in nature: more funding, better salaries, more opportunities for career advancements.

Read full survey results: https://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/user_upload/full_results_survey.pdf

Assam Rifles recovers contraband items



IT News
Imphal, July 24:

Troops of Assam Rifles under the aegis of HQ IGAR (South) recovers forty cartons of Foreign Cigarettes and Betel Nuts from Choktong-Rilram Centre road in Tengnoupal District on Wednesday. A release said that at around 08:00 AM, of the day troops of Assam Rifles established a Mobile Vehicle Check Post on Choktong-Rilram Centre road. Troops of Assam Rifles noticed three Kenbo bikes carrying cartons travelling

towards Rilram Centre. On seeing the Security Forces, the individuals fled into the jungle. On pursuing them, troops found more cartons hidden inside the jungle. On carrying out a thorough search of the area, forty cartons of Foreign Cigarettes worth Rupees 60 lakhs and 55 Kilograms of Betel Nuts worth Rupees 1.32 lakhs were found hidden in the jungles. The recovered items have been handed over to Custom Office, Pallel for further investigations.

Poppy husk seized

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, July 24:

One person was arrested and the poppy husk weighing nearly 8 kgs worth Rs 3.20 lakh was seized by the APMC Police after conducting a raid on a hideout at Kopri Village in Navi Mumbai on Thursday. During routine patrolling DCP Pankaj Dahane and ACP Vinayak Vasta came across a youth who was moving suspiciously. After his search, the police came across a pouch containing the poppy husk weighing about 312 gram. On interrogation, the accused whose name was given as Sunil Balwanta Rambishnoi, directed the police to a hide out.

During the search of the place, the police came across the larger quantity (7 kgs 690 grams) of poppy husk. The drug was seized and a panchama was carried out. The value of the seized poppy husk was stated to be around Rs 3.20 lakh. The operation was carried out by a team comprising API G Devade, Archana Karkhile,

Sanjay Thakur, Vinayak Gaikwad and Archana Pawar. On 15 July the Mumbai Police had arrested two persons and had seized 2.75 kg Mephedrone worth Rs 1.10 crore from Kurla in Mumbai. The accused Dilshad Abdul Kalam Khan (30), and Imran Kamaluddin Shaikh (25) were booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. Similarly in February this year, the 10.5 kilograms of Mephedrone worth around Rs 4.2 crore in the international market, was seized by the Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Maharashtra police after raiding a factory - Shree Alfa Chemicals located in Dive village of Purandar taluka in Pune district. Two persons were arrested involved in the racket. ATS Maharashtra has continued the crackdown on drug manufacturers and traffickers as a large number of youngsters in the state have been affected due to the growing addiction of narcotic drugs.

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Imphal Times is an English evening daily published in Imphal. The newspaper bearing RNI No. MANENG / 2013/51092 also runs a web page www.imphaltimes.com and is also the first news organization to launch Android App in the state of Manipur. We also have a team to promote our news content through Social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.

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As generating revenue is now become compulsory to run our news organization we need your support. Your little contribution by subscribing our newspaper and by advertising for promotion of your products or business will help us serve you more.

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Israeli scientists to visit India to develop Covid-19 testing technologies

IT Correspondent
New Delhi, July 24:

A senior delegation from Israel's Directorate of Defence Research and Development will visit shortly visit India, to develop new and rapid coronavirus tests in cooperation with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The Israeli delegation will work with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi and will coordinate with DRDO officials. The joint project is led by PM Narendra Modi's Principal Scientific Advisor K Vijay Raghavan and

Israel's Directorate of Defence Research and Development's Head Dani Gold.

The delegation plans to test four different technologies for detecting coronavirus: sound waves, breathalyzers based on terahertz waves, isothermic identification and checking polyamino acids. The first phase of testing of these technologies was done in Israel and the last stage will now be carried out in India. The Israeli team would be in India for about a week and a half, official sources here said. The Israeli and Indian scientists will carry out 4,000 to 5,000 tests of each technology in India to

determine if they can work. The Israeli team will also bring aid packages to India on the flight, including sanitising and disinfection equipment to protect medical staff, along with ventilators, which received special authorization to be sent out of Israel. The new technologies are meant to allow for rapid coronavirus testing, in some cases in a matter of minutes. One of the them is a new COVID-19 test that uses polyamino acids to produce a result in 30 minutes. Real-time testing is expected to allow the economy to open again.

A second, inexpensive biochemical test can be used at home and gives a result in 30 minutes. The third technology uses artificial intelligence to listen to a person's voice and determine if he or she has first stage COVID-19. It plays on the fact COVID-19 attacks the respiratory system. One could even do the diagnosis through a cell phone. The fourth method is a breath analyser. One can breathe into a tube...then the tube will be put into a machine which uses terahertz radio frequencies and an algorithm to tell if the person who breathed has the virus.

Flood situation remains grim in Assam, Bihar

Agency
New Delhi, July 24:

No respite from the flood situation in Assam and Bihar; nearly 28 lakh people affected in 26 districts in Assam. In Assam, over 2300 villages are submerged in flood water. 28 lakh people are reeling under the wave of floods in 26 districts. Surging water disrupted road, embankments, culverts, bridges and some places touched the rooftop of houses.

Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal visited Rangia and Darrang on Thursday. Along with floods, land erosion also took serious turn at several places. Over one lakh hectare of crop areas are submerged in the flooding. Rescue and relief measures



are in full swing in the state. In Bihar, eight lakh people in ten districts have been impacted by the floods. Incessant rains in catchment areas of Gandak, Bagmati and Adhwara rivers have aggravated the flood situation in Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, East and West Champaran. 426 panchayats spread over

64 blocks of these districts are affected by the flood waters. The rivers are flowing above danger levels, thereby posing threat to the embankments. Breaching of Champaran and Saran Embankments has deteriorated the situation submerging the low lying areas of the affected districts. Train movements

on Darbhanga- Samastipur rail section of East - Central Railway has been suspended. According to the MeT department, heavy rainfall is expected in the next 24 hours in the catchment areas of rivers flowing into Bihar from Nepal as well as several districts in north Bihar. Relief and rescue operations are in full swing and 21 teams of NDRF and SDRF have been pressed into service. Following this, forty thousand people have been shifted to safer places and 15 thousand affected people have taken shelter in 28 relief camps. Bihar government has announced an assistance of rupees six thousand to each flood affected family. 192 community kitchens are being run by the respective district administration.

Sports News

Jordan Henderson wins 2020 FWA Footballer of the Year award

Agency
New Delhi, July 24

Liverpool's Premier League title winning captain Jordan Henderson was named England's Footballer of the Year on Friday in the annual vote of the Football Writers' Association (FWA).

Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne, Manchester United's Marcus Rashford and Liverpool pair Virgil van Dijk and Sadio Mane made up the rest of the top five.

The 30-year-old Henderson has been central to Liverpool's success under Jurgen Klopp through his leadership and tireless midfield work. "As grateful as I am I don't feel like I can accept this on my own. I don't feel like anything I've achieved this season or in fact during my whole career has been done on my own," said Henderson.

"I owe a lot to so many different people - but none more so than my current team mates - who have just been incredible and deserve this every bit as much as I do," he said. Henderson has played in 30 of Liverpool's league matches

so far this season and scored four goals.

Two other Liverpool players - right back Trent Alexander-Arnold and goalkeeper Alisson Becker - also received votes.

"I accept it on behalf of this whole squad, because without them I'm not in a position to be receiving this honour. These lads have made me a better player - a better leader and a better person," added Henderson.

"If anything I hope those who voted for me did so partly to recognise the entire team's contribution." The Footballer of the Year trophy has been awarded since 1948 when Stanley Matthews was its first recipient.

Other players who received votes from FWA members included Raheem Sterling (Manchester City), Aaron Wan-Bissaka (Manchester United), Sergio Agüero (Manchester City), Adama Traore (Wolverhampton Wanderers), Danny Ings (Southampton), Jack Grealish (Aston Villa) and Leicester City pair James Maddison and Jonny Evans.

IPL 2020 set to start on September 19, final on November 8: Brijesh Patel

Agency
New Delhi, July 24:

The eagerly-awaited Indian Premier League will start on September 19 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with the final slated on November 8, IPL Chairman Brijesh Patel told PTI on Friday.

While the event's Governing Council will meet next week to chalk out the final details and approve the schedule, it is understood that the BCCI has informally intimated the franchises about the plan.

"The GC will meet shortly but we have finalised the schedule. It will run from September 19 to November 8. We expect the government approval to come through. It is a full 51-day IPL," Patel confirmed the development after PTI reported the dates on Thursday.

The IPL has been made possible by the ICC's decision to postpone the October-November T20 World Cup in Australia owing to the COVID-19 pandemic due to which the host country expressed its inability to conduct the event. Patel said that the Standard Operating Procedure to combat

the COVID-19 threat is being prepared and the BCCI will formally write to the Emirates Cricket Board. "We are making the SOP and it will be ready in a few days. To allow crowd or not depends on the UAE government. Anyway social distancing has to be maintained. We have left it for their government to decide on that. Will also be writing to the UAE board formally," Patel said.

There are three grounds available in the UAE - Dubai International Stadium, Sheikh Zayed Stadium (Abu Dhabi) and the Sharjah ground.

It is learnt that the BCCI will be renting the grounds of the ICC Academy for training of the teams.

The ICC Academy has two full-sized cricket grounds along with 38 turf pitches, 6 indoor pitches, a 5700 square foot outdoor conditioning area along with physiotherapy and medicine centre. As per the current health protocol in Dubai, there is no need to be in quarantine if people are carrying a negative COVID-19 test report, but if they are not, they will have to undergo a test.

While there was speculation that the IPL will start from September 26, the BCCI decided to advance it by a week in order to ensure that the Indian team's tour of Australia is not jeopardised.

"The Indian team will have a mandatory quarantine of 14 days as per the Australian government rules. A delay would have sent the plans haywire," a BCCI official said on conditions of anonymity.

"The best part is that 51 days is not at all a curtailed period and broadcasters will be happy with full seven-week window," he added.

While the original schedule had five double-headers, Patel said the new one will feature around 12 double-headers which means two matches each on both Saturdays and Sundays. The Indians are set to play a four-match Test series against Australia starting December 3 in Brisbane after the IPL.

It is expected that with each and every team needing at least a month's time to train, the IPL franchises will be leaving base by August 20 which gives them exactly four weeks time to prepare.

National Broadcasting Day being observed today

AIR
Imphal, July 24:

Today is National Broadcasting Day. On this day in 1927, the first ever radio broadcast in the country went on air from the Bombay Station under a private company, the Indian Broadcasting Company. Prasar Bharati CEO Shashi Shekhar Vempati has extended his greetings to the entire broadcasting community in India on the occasion.

Talking exclusively to AIR News, Mr Vempati said Radio and Broadcasting have a very long history and legacy which is older than independent India itself. He said Broadcasting has played a very crucial role over the decades. He stated that the power of speech and freedom of expression are something very unique because India is the largest democracy. He stressed that a strong symbol of that freedom of expression is broadcasting as a medium. In her message, Principal DG, All India Radio, Ira Joshi said, radio has been effective and credible medium of knowledge, information and entertainment and also played crucial role in protecting Indian culture and traditions. She said radio has also played effective role during the Corona pandemic.