

CM pays surprise visit to JNIMS & RIMS to check preparedness of tackling COVID-19; state to procure 20 ventilators

IT News
Imphal, March 21

A day after visiting Kwairambandh Keithel area, Paona Keithel and Thangal Keithel area to sensitize the public on the impact of pandemic Coronavirus across the globe, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today paid a surprise visit to Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS) and Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) to check the preparedness being taken up for fighting the pandemic COVID-19.

Even as no positive case has been found in the state of Manipur, the Chief Minister expressed satisfaction to the way that both the authorities of the hospitals have been preparing to fight the disease if it reaches Manipur. At both JNIMS and RIMS the chief Minister inquired about the requirement of preparing to face the pandemic. JNIMS at present has prepared to open 30 bedded isolation wards while RIMS is all set to open 40 bedded isolation wards in addition to the existing one. The shortage of Ventilators was min concern for both the hospitals.



Talking to the Chief Minister RIMS Director Shanta brief the Chief Minister regarding the measures being taken up by the hospital and incidentally, the Chief Minister was informed that he reached the institution only some few minutes after the Director RIMS, MS and other head of department had concluded a meeting for tackling the pandemic COVID-19. "I am happy that the RIMS authority is taking this issue with extreme seriousness", Chief Minister said talking to media persons.

Regarding shortage of ventilators, RIMS director Shanta said that some months back RIMS had order 76 ventilators and it still is not dispatching. As of now, there are 20 stock available at some of the pharmaceutical companies as informed by the RIMS authority and Chief Minister without delay told the authority to procure the 20 ventilators without delay. "Let's buy those 20 ventilators as soon as possible and keep 10 at JNIMS and the remaining 10 at RIMS", Biren said.

He added that even though the state still has not found any positive case it is the need of the hour to prepare whatever we can.

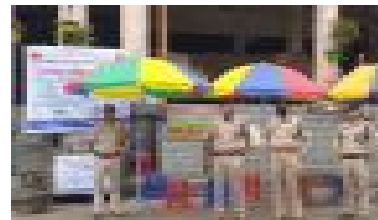
Regarding those who entered the state either through air route or land route, the Chief Minister said that they will be kept under quarantined at the respective route that they entered.

"We have set up quarantined facilities at Airport road for those coming by air and at Mao for those coming to that side and also at Jiribam and Moreh".

Police, IMC clean and surrounding of Khwairambandh Ima Keithel

IT News
Imphal, March 21

It was all about taking up precautionary measures, but for the first time in the history of Manipur, IMC authority showed extreme seriousness in keeping the Khwairambandh Keithel area zero garbage zone. Police too extended all support to the IMC authority and even help clean the surrounding. Breaching powder and Phenyl were sprinkled at the drainage and surrounding areas and the IMC authority clean almost all garbage piled up in and around the Khwairambandh area for weeks. What is more interesting is the co-operation showed by the Keithel ladies who have always criticized and opposed any such announcement by the earlier government.



The Chief Minister while talking to the vendor ladies yesterday seem disbelief that he would receive so much support from the Keithel ladies in the fight against COVID 19. "You don't need to shut all shops selling essential items, our government has no such order, what we appealed is to restrain mass gathering at the shop as well as to provide hand sanitizers", N. Biren said.

For those daily wage earners who live on hand to mouth at Khwairambandh Keithel, the government is planning to add compensation to their account, Chief Minister said while talking to some of the concern citizens.

He also appealed to people not to be panic as there is no shortage of food grain and the government is planning to distribute it at their doorsteps.

Janta Curfew to come into force from 7 AM to 9 PM tomorrow

Agency
New Delhi March 21

A 14 hours long Janta curfew is scheduled to come into force from tomorrow 7 am. Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed to all the fellow countrymen though a televised address to the nation

on 19th March, to contribute their bit in breaking the chain of spread of novel coronavirus by following this novel method of social distancing.

Prime Minister also asked the citizens to thank those involved in the fight against virus tomorrow at 5 pm for

minutes by clapping and ringing bells.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hailed the efforts of people from various walks of life that have come together to support the initiative of Janata Curfew tomorrow to contain the spread of corona virus Covid 19.

Mary Kom breaks quarantine protocol amid coronavirus scare

Agency
New Delhi March 21

Amid panic over a possibility of community transmission of novel coronavirus, it has now come to fore that ace boxer and Rajya Sabha MP Mary Kom broke the 14-day quarantine protocol which has been put in place by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the governments across the world. Mary Kom, who had competed in the Asia-Oceania Olympic qualifiers in Amman, Jordan, had returned home March 13 and was supposed to be in self-isolation for a minimum of 14 days amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

However, on March 18, she attended the breakfast hosted by President Ram Nath Kovind at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. In one of the four pictures tweeted by the official Twitter handle of President of India, Mary Kom can be seen with other Member of Parliaments. "President Kovind hosted Members of Parliament from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan for breakfast at Rashtrapati Bhavan this morning," read the caption of the photos. On the same day, BJP lawmaker Dushyant Singh, who came in contact with infected Bollywood singer Kanika Kapoor, was also there at the President's House. Singh is now in self-quarantine.



Boxing coach Santiago Nieva had on Friday told Agency that the members of the Indian boxing contingent, who participated in Jordan, are all under the mandatory 14-day quarantine. "10 days we had planned but now it becomes 14 days. So

after 10 days I am working on a training programme which I will send them. After this period they can start on that. If this is not solved within two weeks then we will have to continue like this as best as we can," Nieva had said.

Mary Kom has, also admitted that she attended the President's event. In a statement, she said: "I am home since I came back from Jordan. I only attended the President's event and did not meet Dushyant or shake hands with. My quarantine after Jordan ends but I'm going to be at home only for the next 3-4 days."

President Kovind is himself likely to undergo coronavirus test as he also met Singh when he attended the party.

Tetso College in Dimapur set up its first-ever virtual Campus; online classes open

IT News
Dimapur, March 21

When the entire world was suffering silently under the dark shadow of death, academic institutions all over India and the world were closing down due to the threat of CoronaVirus, one college in a distant part of northeast India in the state of Nagaland shifted its entire campus online with a positive intention to continue learning and also to take learning and teaching to a whole new level for students and faculty members.

Tetso College in Dimapur, Nagaland set up its first-ever virtual Campus in digital world via Google Hangouts Meet. The courageous move comes within 48 hours after the state government on March 16 declared to close down all educational institutions in the state as a preventive measure to fight the novel coronavirus pandemic. The example of virtual campus in the ever evolving digital world set up by Tetso College will inspire not only other colleges in Nagaland or northeast region but also academic institutions in different parts of India.

Naga Republic day

IT News
Imphal March 21

The Naga Student Federation this year is celebrating its republic day in a curtailed yet symbolic manner, due to the covid 19 pandemic.

The students; body pay homage to all who had laid down their lives in the service of the nation.

The Federation, in a statement expressed serious concern to the ever widening divide in our Naga society today.

"We can ill afford this during this critical juncture of our long political journey which has been sustained with blood, sweat and tears beyond borders by all Nagas. At this critical phase, the NSF appreciates the NSCN -IM and the NNPG and all political groups' dynamic leadership for all the contributions they have made towards furthering

the Naga cause," the statement said.

That said, the palpable differences in ideology and approach between the groups have been doing the Naga society much harm than good despite all that they've achieved on different negotiating tables. It is the collective aspiration of the Naga youth and student community, for both the negotiating groups to shed their differences and come on a common platform, to find the best possible path and solution for the Nagas in the present

political circumstances, without losing the unique political history of the Nagas for a lasting peace in the region. We sincerely appeal the political groups to forge a unified front in the interest of those who will inherit the out come of the political negotiation.

India's Covid-19 count rises to 258, ICMR changes testing norms

IT News
New Delhi March 21

Twenty-two fresh Covid-19 cases were reported in India on Saturday, taking the total number of people infected by the Sars-Cov-2 virus in the country to 258 even as the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) issued guidelines for a new testing strategy for effective tracking of patients.

Himachal Pradesh (two cases) and Madhya Pradesh (four cases) are the newest entrants to the list of affected places. At present,

infections have been found in 22 states and Union Territories.

On Saturday, Kerala reported the highest increase, with 12 new cases. Of these, seven cases involved Indians and five foreign nationals, according to the health ministry data.

Kerala was followed by Delhi, which recorded nine cases, taking the total count in the city-state to 26.

On Friday, India saw the sharpest increase in the number of Covid-19 cases on a single day, with a total of 63 cases being confirmed

within 24 hours by the health ministry.

So far, four people — one each in Delhi, Karnataka, Punjab and Maharashtra — have died of the viral infection with flu-like symptoms.

The ministry's data also shows that one person with the disease has "migrated". This case involved a 44-year-old Delhi man, according to officials. He returned from Singapore in February, travelled to Canada in March, later gave a sample for testing in Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia hospital and

took a flight back to Singapore before the test returned positive.

India reported its first Covid-19 case on January 30, the same day the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the disease a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Two more cases were reported in the next couple of days; all three were medical students from Wuhan, the Chinese city believed to be the epicentre of the outbreak, who returned to their hometown in Kerala. All three have recovered.

After a lull, cases of Covid-19 surfaced again in early March — the first one in the national capital — and the number of cases increased ever since.

ICMR has so far tested 15,404 samples from across the country. The numbers are likely to go up with the apex medical research body revising its testing criteria on Friday.

It now includes direct or close contacts of anyone who tested positive even if they do not have symptoms and all hospitalised cases of severe acute respiratory

infections. All India Institute of Medical Sciences director Randeep Guleria, who chairs the ICMR expert committee on testing criteria of Covid-19, said: "With the numbers rising, we have changed the case definition of people being tested to include asymptomatic contacts of positive treating Covid-19 and SARI cases. Now all pneumonia patients must also be notified to NCDC or IDSP so that they can be tested for Covid-19 for community transmission surveillance."

Editorial

Saturday, March 21, 2020

COVID-19 scare finally turns out a blessing for Khwairamband Keithel

Pandemic coronavirus issue has indeed haunted people across the world. Every country across the globe have taken up extra measures to avoid the spread of virus by framing their policy. India is no exception, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led NDA government is taking up extra measures to avoid the spread of the disease through various means and advice all states and Union Territories to take up extra measures in addition to the health advisory from the concern department. The pandemic COVID-19 is becoming a serious issue of the world and recent measures being taken up by the state government of Manipur need to be appreciated. Even though the kind of precautionary measures sees some loophole, the effort needs to be appreciated by one and all. At this crucial hour criticism is not a good idea instead, people who felt that more measures need to be taken up should suggest through proper channel. After all the Chief Minister of Manipur had already opens his door to welcome any constructive suggestion to fight the disease. Well it is the blessing of the almighty that Manipur still have no positive case of person infected by the disease.

Now what we in the Imphal Times would like to suggest is to conduct mass testing of blood sample as there are possibilities of persons with the virus as WHO had stated person with the virus showed symptoms after 14 days. Those screen at Imphal Airport or any land route entry need to be quarantined for at least 14 days by distancing him or her from people, be it his or her family members.

When schools and colleges have been shut down till March 31 and when offices are advised to reduce staff attendance and when all sort of gathering in connection with festival or rituals have been directed to stop, what worried to almost all the people of the state is the suffocated Khwairambandh Keithel, which is being run by elderly women. According to WHO elderly people are easily attack by the dreaded virus and as a matter of fact people who have some idea of the virus have been appealing the government to focus at this area.

It was lucky for the people of the state that, Chief Minister himself visited the market areas of Imphal particularly the surroundings of the Khwairambandh Keithel instead of sending his staffs.

He was there yesterday to do something for avoiding the spread of virus but one never expected that the vendor lady will be convinced to shut down the Keithel for at least 3 days.

COVID scare indeed turn out to be another blessing for the people of the state as well as the fate of the historic Khwairambandh Ima Keithel.

Chief Minister himself notice the irresponsible attitude of both the MAHUD and the IMC authority. The filth garbage piling up in and around the Khwairambandh Ima Keithel and the irregular traffic parking system and the failed drainage were not simple make up complaints to defame his government. The Chief Minister had known that as he had seen it.

A day after his visit and after the vendor ladies extended their co-operation to his government to shut down the Keithel for three days, IMC and MAHUD today started cleaning the surroundings of the Khwairambandh Keithel. Police team were also encouraged with the kind of support they received from the public. City Police OC along with his higher officials, the Additional SP, SDP traffic all were seen engaging in their work - but this time it was about keeping the surroundings of Khwairambandh Ima Keithel. The city police OC collected dozens of Phenyl bottles and Bleaching powders to kill any sort of virus or bacteria or say any worms that have the potential of affecting people. Today we saw Khwairambandh Keithel area and its periphery clean. But what is expected is to continue the kind of activities even after issue of coronavirus is over.

This newspaper suggest Chief Minister N. Biren Singh to visit Khwairambandh Keithel at least once in a week if possible, or at least once in two weeks to personally find out whether the complaints from the public are true or not. Let's hope the COVID-19 scare change Manipur by making it the most clean city in the world.

Majuli bans all water transport to reduce coronavirus threat

Courtesy NN
Majuli, March 21

The district administration of Majuli in Assam has prohibited plying of ferries, country boats or any other means of water transport (except emergency services) connecting Majuli with effect from Saturday.

This has been done to reduce the risk of coronavirus outbreak in the district. A notification also stated that in

case of medical emergency, the patient or family members may contact the the district administration or the district disaster management authority. The notification further stated that boat ambulances will continue to ply during this period.

Any violation in this regard will be prosecuted under DDMA Act 2008, epidemic Disaster Act, 1887 and other relevant orders and rules including Section 188 of Indian Penal Code (IPC).

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By- TS Haokip

The Manipur Government's decision to assist victims of #ChahatBurning with Rs. 3 Lakhs per household would surely be appreciated by all had the amount so sanctioned was meant to build toilets and bathrooms only. Sadly, the amount is the total assistance to be provided to each household including costs for building house, toilet, bathroom and buying necessary items like clothes, furnitures and utensils.

The cost of building a house is flexibly calculated depending on the beneficiaries. It is interesting that Government spent tens of Lakhs for the construction of its offices but deemed it sufficient for Rs 3 Lakhs to meet the expenditures for building a house for a family with an average 5 persons. We are not aware of the rationale and method of calculation as to how the amount was arrived at, but it is without doubt insufficient to meet even half of the cost for constructing a simple livable house. While the task of restoring Chahsat will require sincere efforts of different measures from the Government, apart from building houses, it has failed to meet even basic requirements of rehabilitation; providing a house.

Who will rebuild Chahsat village?



It is only pertinent to ask if the Government has made any arrangements; as to where, what and how the homeless villagers sleep, eat and live all these while. The expenditure per household before their house is built, which will take 5 to 6 months, will comfortably be above Rs. 1 lakh. Now the Government's decision of releasing 50% of Rs. 3 Lakhs will only be enough for 'day to day' expenses until the house is built. Then, who will build the houses for the villagers of Chahsat? Since the Manipur Government, apart from the Kamjong and Sampui Tangkhul villagers, is responsible for the complete wipe out of Chahsat, in spite of the presence of a Police station, whose personnel were just mute spectators if not supporters

of the arson, it is the Government's duty to rebuild Chahsat. Rebuilding Chahsat will require sincere initiatives to reconcile the two communities; Tangkhuls and Kukis. This process will require unconditional apologies from the erring communities for the burning of Chahsat village. Blaming the proverbial third person- 'unknown person', as done by the Government in its Press statement will not resolve the issue. It has in fact emboldened the perpetrators even to the extent of justifying the arson.

While the absence of 'condemnation to the incident and show of solidarity to the homeless' from valley based organizations speaks the general attitude of the valley towards incident in the Hills

even in times of losses, many people even from other states feel and share the pain of the villagers by way of voluntary contributions of foods, clothes and medicines. Social responsibility among communities is voluntary and depends on one's principle and concern for humanity as a whole and as such the same is not binding to any one for that matter. But the Government on the hand should not excuse itself from its prime duties; of working for the people.

The Govt. should ensure that the villagers have a house over their roof at the earliest and must acknowledge with actions that restoration of Chahsat village should not only be about building houses. Restoring the faith and trust of the people on the Government and ensuring their safety and protection, which was not accomplished with the presence of both State and Central SFs and ensuring the award of befitting and exemplary punishment to perpetrators of the crime should be of paramount importance. The Government should uphold its profound responsibility as representative of all the people of Manipur irrespective of the community one belongs to, through its actions.

Kidney patients are more vulnerable to COVID-19 infections

PIB
New Delhi, March 21

The COVID-19 pandemic is throwing up unique challenges for health systems. It presents particular challenges for patients who receive regular haemodialysis. These patients with damaged kidneys, also known as uremic patients, are particularly vulnerable to infection and may exhibit greater variations in clinical symptoms and infectivity.

"Unlike other at-risk individuals, these patients do not have the ability to stay at home and not interact with others. Despite the high risk they face, they must travel to dialysis centers 2-3 times every week. This significantly increases the risk of transmission of infection to patients themselves, family members, medical staff and facility workers, and all others," says Prof. Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director, George Institute for Global Health India and President of the International Society of

Nephrology. The involvement of kidney in COVID-19 infection seems to be frequent. When the infection is severe, it becomes an independent predictor of mortality. In a paper entitled 'The Novel Coronavirus 2019 epidemic and the Kidneys', written by an expert group of nephrologists from around the world including China, it has been pointed out that all family members living with dialysis patients must follow the precautions and regulations given to patients to prevent person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 within the family. The precautions include body temperature measurement, good personal hygiene, handwashing, and prompt reporting of potentially sick people. The results of the study have been published in the Journal Kidney International.

The management of patients on dialysis who have been suspected to have been in contact with COVID-19 should be carried out according to strict protocols to

Management of patients on dialysis must be according to strict protocols to minimize risk
Guidelines available on International Society of Nephrology website

minimize risk to other patients and healthcare personnel taking care of these patients," said Prof. Jha. These guidelines have been made available on the International Society of Nephrology website.

As per earlier reports of SARS and MERS-CoV infections, acute kidney injury (AKI) had developed in 5 to 15 percent cases and about 60 to 90 percent of those cases reported mortality. In the case of patients with COVID-19 infection, preliminary reports suggested a lower incidence (3 to 9 percent) of AKI; but later reports indicate a higher frequency of kidney abnormalities. A study of 59

patients with COVID-19 found that about two-thirds of patients developed a massive leak of protein in urine during their stay in hospital.

It is recommended that persons with potential COVID-19 risk must be given the same supportive care as given to critically ill patients. Supportive care includes bed rest, nutritional and fluid support, maintenance of blood pressure and oxygenation, prevention and treatment of complications by providing organ support, maintaining hemodynamic stability, and preventing secondary infection.

PM reviews COVID-19 strategy with all states; calls for citizens participation to combat challenge

Agency
News Delhi March 21

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emphasized the need for the Centre and all States working together as the threat of the Corona virus pandemic is common for all states.

Interacting with Chief Ministers of all the states through video conferencing to discuss measures to combat Novel Corona virus, Mr Modi said, no stone should be left unturned in the common endeavors to fight COVID-19. He asked Chief Ministers to ensure that all necessary steps are taken and all advisories are followed to ensure safety of citizens in the country at large. He said that while participation of citizens is necessary to combat the challenge, but panic needs to be avoided. Mr Modi said, the next three to four weeks are crucial in efforts to contain spread of the virus and the most important measure for containment is social distancing. He requested Chief Ministers to ensure its effective implementation.

The Prime Minister also appreciated the steps taken by the states and thanked them for sharing their experiences and giving



suggestions. He hailed the efforts of people from various walks of life that have come together to support the initiative of Janata Curfew this Sunday to contain the spread of corona virus Covid-19.

Prime Minister has said that every Indian should be vigilant in view of COVID-19 outbreak. In his address to the nation, Mr Modi gave nine calls urging everyone to avoid stepping out of homes until it is absolutely essential. He said, those over the age of sixty should remain inside their homes for the coming few weeks.

The Prime Minister urged citizens to follow 'Janata Curfew' on 22nd March, from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M., wherein no one apart from those

involved with essential services is supposed to venture out of home. He said that the success of such a people's movement and the experiences gained from it will prepare us for the challenges ahead. He added that the efforts of the people on Sunday, would be a symbol of their restraint and determination to perform duty in the national interest.

Prime Minister Modi said, on that day at 5 P.M. from homes, everybody should express gratitude to those working round the clock to keep the nation healthy by standing in the balconies and at the doors of their houses and clap or ring bells for five minutes as a show of appreciation. Highlighting the stress on the hospitals, the Prime Minister urged everyone to avoid routine check ups during this time and to extend the date of surgeries scheduled, wherever feasible. He also asked everyone to be compassionate and not to cut the wages of those working in homes, support staff, drivers and gardeners. Urging people not to indulge in panic buying, Mr Modi stressed that the country has enough food and ration supplies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has

hailed the efforts of people from various walks of life that have come together to support the initiative of Janata Curfew this Sunday to contain the spread of corona virus Covid 19. Influencers and achievers from various fields and several organisations have come out in support of the Janata Curfew and have urged the nation to come together to make it effective. They include actors Shahrukh Khan, Shahid Kapoor, Madhuri Dixit and actor-politician Kamal Haasan, cricketer Kevin Pietersen and TDP Chief Chandrababu Naidu. Celebrities such as Amitabh Bachchan, Karan Johar, Akshay Kumar and Hrithik Roshan also took to social media to applaud Prime Minister's statement on Janata curfew.

Meanwhile, in Himachal Pradesh, plying of all kinds of buses will be suspended on Sunday to make the Janta Curfew a success. Announcing this in Shimla yesterday, the State Chief Minister, Jai Ram Thakur said that keeping in view of the Janata Curfew all the Inter-State Contract Carriage would be suspended from the midnight of 21st March 2020 till further orders.