

Brief News

MU playground closed

IT News
Imphal, May 12:
In a press statement released by Prof W. Chandrabu Registrar Manipur University state that in view of the prevailing situation of the COVID-19 pandemic and as a precautionary measure all the playgrounds of the University campus will be closed as well as non essential visitors will be strictly restricted within the Manipur University campus until further notification.

Cattle vaccinated

IT News
Imphal, May 12:
A cattle vaccination programme was conducted at Imphal West Students Club (IWSC) in association with veterinary hospital Khumbong at two different places of the club area. A press statement released by the Secretary of IWSC Atom Samarendra states that the vaccination programme is for saving the lives of cattles from the dreaded diseases of cattle namely Haemorrhagic Septicaemia and Black quarter. Around 110 cattles including calves were vaccinated during the programme.

Coronavirus prevention: Can using a mask help in eliminating COVID-19 infection?

Agency
New Delhi, May 12:
Using masks to stop community transmission? While there is no doubt that using masks may help prevent Coronavirus transmission, the impact of the pandemic could have been eliminated if enough people wore masks while venturing out, the Indian Express reported citing a new study by researchers from universities in Arizona, Harvard and Sydney. It said that in a city like New York, if 70 per cent people had worn a professional mask, the outbreak could have been eliminated from the city while the similar results would have been achieved if 80 per cent people across the United States had used masks daily.
If not professional masks, low-quality homemade masks are also expected to lead to a significant decline in transmission.

152 stranded students and families left Shillong for Imphal

IT News
Shillong, May 12:
The Shillong Manipuri students Union (SMSU) have helped 152 stranded students and families from different parts of Shillong to return to Imphal, Manipur via Bus from NH2 (Dimapur – Imphal) road due to Covid-19 lockdown in Meghalaya.
A press statement released by Chongtham Thangamba Meetei-President, Shillong Manipuri students Union (SMSU) states that the Union has arranged Hand Sanitizers and drinking water bottles for all the

students and the families including the bus drivers and the Conductors. The Union requested the Govt. officials of Manipur to arrange proper screening, testing and quarantine facilities with proper norms and procedures identified by the Government of India for all the individuals to prevent the State from being affected by the Covid-19 virus. The Union expresses unhappiness with the decisions of the Cabinet meeting held recently by the Government of Manipur about the issues of stranded people living

One more passenger ship reaches Mumbai

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, May 12:
A passenger ship “Seven Seas Voyager” reached Mumbai from Abu Dhabi, after voyage of 11 days, carrying 170 stranded Indian crew members and was anchored at inner anchorage of Mumbai Port Trust (MPT) on Monday.
On arrival in Mumbai, the crew members of “Seven Seas Voyager” were welcomed by MPT officials and office bearers of the National Union of Seafarers of India (NSUI) by giving them floral bouquets.
The medical tests are being carried out on board the ship and the crew members will be allowed to sign off, after three days if they are asymptomatic to COVID-19. They will stay put on board the vessel, till such time their reports are received. If they are asymptomatic, they will be issued e-passes by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, so that they can move

anywhere in India and reach their homes. If they test positive they will be admitted to hospital as per routine practice.
“Seven Seas Voyager” built in 2003, sails under the flag of Bahamas. This is the second ship to land in Mumbai after “MS Marella Discovery” (with a flag of Malta), landed in Mumbai on 23 April carrying 146 Indian sailors.
Over 15,000 Indian seafarers onboard cargo vessels and another 25,000 sailors on cruise ships are still stranded across the globe. Those who have finished their contract, have been accommodated onboard their ships. Some of those who have signed off from their ships are held up in hotels abroad. Also some seafarers are stuck within India due to the lockdown.
The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has issued notification on 21 April, streamlining the standard operating procedure (SOP) for sign-on and sign-off for the Indian seafarers, paving the way for their repatriation. As per the notification, the seafarers are required to intimate their travel and contact history for the last 28 days to the ship owner/Robotic Process Automation (RPA) agency by e-mail as per the procedure laid down by the Director General of Shipping (DGS). Then they will be examined by DGS approved medical examiner. They will also be screened based on their travel history for the last 28 days and if found asymptomatic, will be proceeded for sign-on. Similarly those whose contracts have expired and are due for sign-off, will have to go through the same procedure and the local authority will have to make arrangements to quarantine them as per prevailing system.
5 AI pilots test negative for COVID-19 after re-tests

AI's Delhi office sealed for 2 days after a staffer tests positive

IT Correspondent
Mumbai/Delhi, May 12:
All the five Air India pilots who had tested positive for coronavirus on Sunday, have now tested negative, after re-test the results of which came on Monday evening, brining in a sense of great relief for the pilots.
Then the new results were obtained after a re-test was conducted on the positive cases under Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the airline. The re-test results of an engineer and a technician, who too had tested positive were awaited and as such they continue to be isolated, pending test results.
The pilots had tested positive during the pre-flight COVID-19 test which is carried out 72 hours before

they are rostered for flight duties. However, the Air India management as well as pilots' association was not convinced with the first test results and therefore, a second test was conducted. The association had also opined that the faulty test kit might have created this confusion.
“These five pilots had flown last on April 18 to China and hadn't flown anywhere since then. Therefore, we had reasonable doubt over the first test results. Our questioning of these pilots further reaffirmed that the first positive test could be because of a faulty kit. Hence the second test was conducted,” an AI official said.
Air India, which is operating special flights under the “Vande Bharat Mission” to evacuate

Indians stranded in foreign countries, have asked its pilots to undertake coronavirus test before they operate such flights. Touted to be the largest evacuation exercise in the world, national carrier Air India is in the process of flying back nearly 15,000 citizens aboard 64 flights from 12 nations.
In another development, AI's office in Delhi has been closed for two days after a staff member tested positive for COVID-19. As such everyone, including the Chairman and Managing Director Pradeep Singh Kharola, will work from home. Recently, the Aviation Ministry's headquarter was also sealed after one of its employees who had attended office on April 15, tested positive for COVID-19.

PM Modi to address the nation today at 8 pm; Total COVID-19 cases cross 70,000-mark

Agency
New Delhi, May 12:
Total Coronavirus cases in India has crossed the 70,000-mark while COVID-19 death toll is near 2300 in the country. As per the data shared by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the total number of COVID-19 cases in India now are 70,756, with 46,008 active cases and 22,454 cured/discharged patients. As many as 2,293 people have died and one

also be started after May 17. The Global hunt for coronavirus COVID-19 vaccine is on even as large parts of the world is battling a war against the highly contagious disease. Total confirmed coronavirus cases around the world are 41,75,284. So far, 2,85,971 people have died due to COVID-19, according to Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center data.
The recovery rate in the country stands at 31 per cent, Health Ministry official said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hinted that lockdown may be extended beyond May 17. However, there may be some more relaxations to some states. Meanwhile, Indian Railways has resumed passenger train operations on select routes. Talks are going on as to whether domestic flight service will

Citizens and NRIs from the US, Canada, Australia and Other Countries Stranded in NE India

Several Americans, Canadians, Australians and other nationals including NRIs and work visa holders, have been stranded in the northeastern states

By Dr. Vijita Ningombam
Imphal, May 12:
The Government of India has facilitated the return of Indian citizens stranded in other countries by sending repatriation flights abroad.
Foreign nationals, NRIs and visa holders stranded in India have been able to book tickets on these flights to their outbound legs to return to their home countries.
However, several foreign nationals, who are stranded in the northeastern states of India feel that the government has been indifferent to their plight.
Most of these repatriation flights by India and other nations focused on west, south and northern part

of India, leaving those in the east, especially in the northeastern states helpless during these tough times.
Several Americans, Canadians, Australians and other nationals including NRIs and work visa holders, have been stranded in the northeastern states since the entire country was put under a complete lockdown on March 24 because of COVID-19, and the wait to return to their homes and their jobs abroad seems never ending.
The mainstream media even during normal circumstances does not cover news from the northeast and none so far have mentioned about those stranded in this corner of the country.
Some have had to travel for days (more than 50 hours) by road to reach Delhi to get on to the repatriation flights arranged by their countries, while others with family, small children and health problems couldn't consider the long hours on the road.
“One flight from Guwahati to Delhi for all of us irrespective of which country we belong to and irrespective of our current locations will be enough to evacuate us from the northeast,” said Devaz, from Canada currently stuck in Manipur.
Others stranded in Manipur have also mentioned that, even though it'll take them around 13 hours to drive from Imphal city to Guwahati,

they agree to reach in time for the evacuation flight if the government agrees on arranging one.
“If the government is not providing help because our numbers are small, there are others stuck in Kolkata, Siliguri and also in Sikkim, so if a connecting flight is arranged from Guwahati-Kolkata-Delhi, I believe the flight will be full,” said an Australian citizen stranded in Shillong who did not want to be identified.
Anup, from the United States currently stranded in Sikkim added, “When other nations began their repatriation efforts in India, there were no efforts put forward by the Indian Government in this part of

Indiato facilitate easy transfer of passengers to the airport (for e.g. e-passes and safe passage letters took their own sweet time or were denied).”
Without any help so far and crossing 50 days since the lockdown began, the stresses and problems are only getting worse.
-Jobs are at stake. Some have already lost their jobs or had pay-cuts due to their long stay outside the country.
-For those who have lost their jobs, they are missing the opportunity to apply for another job to be able to pay their bills.
-Work-visas are expiring and without a re-entry visa, their future that they worked so hard for will be spoilt.
-Legal permanent residents are worried about exceeding their time limit of staying abroad and losing their status.
-Leases for their cars and houses are ending.
-There is risk to their homes from theft, weather and maintenance issues because of the extended period of stay.
-Medical appointments being missed.
-Children unable to attend online classes arranged by their schools abroad due to the time difference. It is hard to keep them awake at night in IST to be able to attend their classes.
-Long stay in hotels is putting a big hole in their pockets.

★ Editorial

Adversity to opportunity

Diversity of beliefs, religion, traditions, customs, language and cultures presents diverse opportunities and impediments the world over. What differentiates a progressive culture or government from one steeped in tradition and blind beliefs is the way difficulties and drawbacks are perceived, and addressed. The most developed countries in the world, at the best of times still have to grapple with myriad issues and internal conflicts which are social, political and fiscal in nature. The world has yet to witness or experience a perfect government, and indeed, governing is a thankless job. What keeps prominent personalities relentlessly pursuing the top posts of a country are the inducements and privileges in various forms that comes with the posts. It would be wishful thinking if we are to believe that leaders of the developed nations or states are above reproach; guided only by their altruistic beliefs and zeal. After certain permutations and combinations of the existing political and economic atmosphere, everything boils down to just a few basic factors that determines the level of efficacy of a government- readiness to usher in changes no matter how radical or unpopular such a move might appear initially, ability to reach out and stay connected with the masses through its various agencies, the political determination backed by action for curbing corruption, despotism and nepotism as well as the humility to respect and give space for other machineries such as the law and media to carry out their roles in the society without any restraint or suspicion of unwarranted influence.

China, the most populous country in the world beset with the accompanying problems of overpopulation and underemployment, after a long struggle, realised the opportunities presented by its inherent shortcomings and shifted focus from an agrarian economy to one with optimum utilization of the abundantly available manpower for production and manufacturing to become the largest economy, surpassing the USA in the process. Thailand, a small south-east Asian country has managed to utilize its agrarian economy to become the largest exporter of rice in the world, and coupled with the proactive development of tourist facilities, have managed to earn 10 percent of its GDP from the tourism sector alone, resulting in keeping rate of unemployment to less than 1 percent.

Cut to the present India, and by extension, our very state with the sobriquet " mani gee leipak"- loosely translated as 'land of jewels'. There is no denying that we are proud of our rich culture, customs and traditions and we would go to any length to protect and preserve them. We almost always refer to our 'glorious' past and 'developed' heritage at the drop of a hat. There is a sneaking feeling that we are becoming more than 'proud', that we have acquired a certain air of 'haughtiness' of a past we are unsure if we still deserve. It is time to introspect and reflect on the deviations, to own up our mistakes and review our moral and social standing. Everyone of us have a stake in making earnest efforts to make this state work and progress. It would be sheer foolishness to try and push each other off the boat as that will only result everybody getting capsized.

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Repeated Challenges to People's Chief Minister

By: Sh. Ajit

Do you think Shri N Biren is people's Chief Minister? Do you know Manipur's Chief Minister is one of the best politicians in India considering his endeavor to minimize the gaps between hill and plain people? Do you not take the BJP-led Government as the best Government delivering good governance, free from evils and corrupt practices? There may be hundred and one questions in some wild critic's mind. There may crop up thousands of answers ranging from strong YESs to outright NOs. I would like to express my opinion that Shri N Biren speaks what he means. On the basis of this opinion of Shri N Biren who never tells lies and who has good heart to safeguard the 'oneness of Manipur', I am disappointed to note some challenges to Chief Minister's personal endeavor.

One will not forget the central team that came to Manipur to inspect the boundary pillars of Manipur when there was tension between Manipur and Myanmar. DC Chandel reported to the people of Manipur that Myanmar crossed International boundary and erected a new boundary pillar on the soil of Manipur. The Government of Manipur could not do anything because of the fact that boundary issues are in the hands of the Central Government. The inspecting team after hearing arguments of political leaders, civil society leaders and some historians said it would come back to Manipur with necessary documents. The team changed their stands when they reached Imphal and again at Delhi. The Government of India said that

there was no boundary dispute with Myanmar. Did people of Manipur believe what the messengers from Delhi said? Whatever people have in their minds about India's stand on Manipur international boundary is against the Chief Minister's agenda of oneness of Manipur. People's memory may be short, as the popular saying goes, but they do not forget everything.

There were many instances of confusion over the outcome of so called Naga Peace Talk, practically the talk is between NSCN (IM) whom the GOI gave undue importance believing that taming NSCN (IM) would mean the End of Insurgent History in India and Government of India who consider insurgency in North East as manifestation of tribalism. When the Naga Peace Talk nearly comes to a logical conclusion, both the parties come to realize that the entire peace process has been based on certain logical fallacies. Respecting Uniqueness of the Naga as people is not equal to recognizing NSCN (IM) as sole representative of the group of people collectively called Naga whose identity is not defined historically, sociologically or culturally as evident from claims and counter-claims over the identities of smaller Manipuri tribes.

On the other hand, NSCN (IM) is, as India realized, not the mother of North East insurgent groups. Many North East insurgent groups are not even foster children of NSCN (IM) and so also in Nagaland. So the logical conclusion cannot be drawn easily as expected earlier. The road leading to Naga integration, in Muivah's word Nagalim, is not smooth and is against the historical development of North East. Pan Naga Body and even the Naga

Council in States outside Nagaland are bitterly opposed by neighboring States. Government of India, at the end point of Peace Talk, gives the responsibility of convincing the Naga neighbors for everything that had been agreed between GOI and NSCN (IM) and other Nagaland groups for that matter. To an ordinary Manipuri who loves Manipur and likes to see always oneness of Manipur that was shaped over a long periods of history, the belief is that People's Chief Minister will represent his historical pride and aspiration.

So Chief Minister seemingly has a strong challenge in acting in the tune of ordinary Manipuri. Even the power brokers and opportunists who are loitering around the corridors of power in the State will not forgive any Chief Minister who acts against the historically evolved Manipuri interest. To the people of Manipur rapprochement does not mean rapprochement with NSCN (IM) who killed, tortured, humiliated the entire people of Manipur and they have a clear stand that anti-NSCN(IM) does not mean anti-Naga at any cost. In short, formation of Naga Territorial Council in Manipur, establishment of Pan Naga Body and any other arrangement that would lower the dignity of Manipur's Assembly are challenges to a good Chief Minister who is in public mind.

The NSCN (IM) after getting sanction from GOI

tried to talk with several individuals and CSOs of neighboring States to win their hearts. The collective leaders of NSCN (IM) now remember the cultural and historical relations with the Meitei while talking with some of CSO leaders from Manipur. They try to press the soft corner button as if the group is representative of all the hill peoples of Manipur. Government of Manipur should address the problems of the people for whom NSCN (IM) is not the sole representative. The problems of the people in Manipur which are social and economic in nature are different from those of NSCN (IM). To the people's Chief Minister, the challenge is to differentiate these two sets of problems.

The Government of India sometimes recognizes the presence of NSCN (IM) legally or politically for getting certain political goals and denies saying anything about their presence. The two recent incidents around the issues of 'undeclared' NSCN (IM) camps in Manipur reminds the people of several such incidents right from the NSCN (IM) Captain's misbehavior to the unconditional release of NSCN (IM) cadres. To those Manipuris who believe ethnic groups in the State cannot be neighbors of the State, Manipur's neighbors are the States and countries. Ethnic groups are peoples living the State. The challenge to the Chief Minister's idea of Oneness of Manipur is convincing these ethnic groups that they are but our citizens as much as Alimuddin, Saiza, Haokhongmang, Rishang, Koireng, Achou are.

How important is rural-urban migration?

By: Marina Seyie Narendra
Dieze colony, Chumukedima, district Dimapur, Nagaland

A migrant worker is a person who either migrates within their home state or country to pursue work. Migrant workers usually do not have the intention to stay permanently in the region in which they work. In other words migrant workers is the movement of persons from their home State to another State for the purpose of employment.

Migrant workers are considered as one of the major forces of development in our country. They contribute to economic progress and development of both receiving and sending states. Young girls and women are singled out in families to be migrant workers because they don't have a viable alternative role to fulfil in the local village. If they go to work in the urban centres as domestic workers they can send home money to provide help for their younger siblings. There are different types of migration such as counter-urbanization, emigration,

immigration, internal migration, international migration and rural-urban migration.

Domestic migrant workers have been estimated to be about 4.2 million. These workers range from full-time to part-time workers, temporary or permanent workers. They are typically employed for remuneration in cash or kind in any household through any agency or directly to do the household work but do not include any member of the family of an employer. Rural-urban migration may be reduced by interventions which increase cultivatable land, equalize land or income distribution or decrease fertility. On the other hand, migration appears to be stimulated by interventions which increase access to cities, commercialize agriculture, strengthen rural-urban integration, raise education and skill levels or increase rural inequalities. However, in labour migration it is possible to identify two types of migrants: highly skilled labour and unskilled low wage labour (including illegal or forced immigrants).

Why is migration necessary?

-Migration is important for the transfer of manpower and skills and provides the needed knowledge and innovation for global growth.

What are the cause of migrant workers?

- Unemployment opportunities
- Uneven developments
- Family debt
- Poverty
- Peer pressure
- Landholding system
- Fragmentations of land
- Large family size
- Natural calamities

What are the effects of labor migration in the community?

- Improved health and nutrition status
- Increased purchasing power
- diversified consumption capacity of family members

What are the benefits of migrant workers?

-Filling skills gaps:

filling existing contracts and taking on more work through new skills and talent.

-Knowledge sharing:

increasing access to international knowledge and supporting the upskilling of co-workers.

-Expansion into new markets:

strengthening contacts in international markets and local networks through new language skills and cultural awareness.

-Enrichment from different cultures:

creating a more diverse workforce with varied experience and ways of working.

How can we improve migration of workers?

- Protect the human rights of all migrants.
- Reduce the costs of labour migration.
- Eliminate migrant exploitation including human trafficking.
- Address the plight of stranded migrants.
- Improve public perceptions of migrants.
- Integrate migration into the development agenda.