

'Twenty six today'

IT News
Imphal, May 22

The number of Novel coronavirus positive cases reaches 26 today with the addition of one more positive detected late yesterday evening at VRDL, RIMS here in Imphal. The number of active Coronavirus cases is 24. A press statement by the Additional Director of Health department, who is also the spokesperson of the department said that the 26th positive case was detected from a 22 years old male with symptom of stuffy nose who return from Delhi by road. He has been shifted at RIMS COVID care center.

Hidden pistol recovered; drug peddler nabbed

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Imphal, May 22:

Combined team of Bishnupur Police and 13 Dogra Regiment recovered a hidden 9 mm pistol along with four round of live round in a magazine while conducting search operation at Kamong Mayai Leikai at around 5.30 am today. On the other hand team of Thoubal district police nabbed a woman drug peddler from Sawombung Keithel at around 3 pm of May 20 along with 2,690 Kg of opium. The drug peddler has been identified as Philangam Zimik (43) W/o Shanrengam Zimik of Ramva Lambui Village. The arrested woman along with the seized drugs were handed over to the Lamlai police station for further investigation.

RIMS Director suggests strict adherence to guidelines to stop spread of COVID 19

Imphal, May 22:

From zero to 23 fresh COVID 19 cases within a span of few days in Manipur has made the government specially health practitioners and support staff do a review of the preparedness and the challenges ahead. All the new cases were detected from people who came back from other states and thousands of people will be arriving by train and buses within the next few days. Dr Ahanthem Santa, Director, Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) said the virus which we are dealing now is a tricky one, it attacks most of the vital parts of the body. As more people are coming into the state pressure on health practitioners has increased manifold and Dr Santa felt that the virus can spread in community if we don't take precautions now. There is demand for more tests now. Dr Santa said it may difficult to do faster method like 'pooling test' as it may be counter productive. If there is a positive result then separate tests have to be done all over

again for all 25 samples. It takes more time he added. Most of the microbiologists working in ICMR, Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) and other states feel that the samples may be too diluted to detect any positive cases. That may be the reason it is still not included in ICMR latest guidelines published on May 18 last he added. When the result is negative, the person is sent for home quarantine. This phase is important as the person, family and neighbourhood should be aware of the 'protocol' to be followed strictly during home quarantine period he said. There is also chance of False NEGATIVE in test results. Dr Santa said people should know about the incubation period and if a person gets infected today it doesn't mean that test will be positive tomorrow. So there is always small risk of community transmission. The victims will be elder peoples, asthmatic patients, obese people, heart disease patient, diabetic patient, CKD

(kidney patients). When there are more COVID patients in hospital, all other patients like heart attacks, strokes, dialysis patients, cancer patients, fracture, elective surgery, even CS are likely to be sidelined he added. All diagnostic Radiology, X ray, CT scan, USG will be affected as people are likely to hesitate to undergo test/scan with same equipment in the same room he said. The effect can be traumatic as after 11 new positive cases were found at JNIMS, the JNIMS emergency ward was almost empty. People are scared even to go to hospital he said. The planning for the next 14 days is important. A small state like Manipur can't manage large numbers of COVID patients and the plan is to "flatten the curve" he said. It is to buy time and space for the health practitioners to prepare for more patients while managing the patient. The incoming people from other states can be managed in a time frame he said. He said if evacuations were done under a controlled situation

doctors, nurses, paramedical staff and officials can manage the work load. The process may take over six months or maybe sooner if we find a cure for it he added. Manipur government has also started massive preparations for reception, transportation, quarantine of strand, people. Separate place of transponder, strict implementation of guidelines and other measures. State consultation committee headed by Chief Minister, N Biren Singh is monitoring the situation. Ministers, MLAs, Director RIMS, Director JNIMS, Chief Secretary and other government officials are also members of the Committee. The committee takes expert opinions from the members and executes the works. Dr Santa said most of the important issues were also pointed out to the Committee. RIMS has already treated a patient with serious health issues and is now looking after COVID-19 patients in its centre. OPDs are also functioning with limited intake of patients.

Sonia Gandhi chairs opposition meeting on migrants' crisis

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, May 22

Congress President Sonia Gandhi began a meeting via video conferencing, with nearly 17 opposition leaders to discuss the coronavirus crisis and the large movement of migrant labourers to their native states, on Friday. NCP chief Sharad Pawar, JMM leader Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, DMK leader MK Stalin, CPI-M's Sitaram Yechury, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray were part of the meeting. West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who accompanied Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his aerial survey of the areas affected by cyclone Amphan in the state, was scheduled to attend the videoconference, after her tour.

The focus of meeting was on coronavirus crisis with an emphasis on the "tremendous difficulties" faced by migrant labourers returning to their homes in different states. It also discussed the prolonged lock out and its adverse effect on economy, loss of employment, falling growth rate etc. The Opposition has already criticised the PM's 20 trillion relief package, to stabilise economy, following coronavirus pandemic. Rendered jobless due to the coronavirus-induced

lockdown, which began on March 25, and desperate to get home, thousands of migrant workers across the country have been marching on the state highways to their native places on foot, on bicycles or packed into trucks. Notably, many of them have lost their lives in accidents in different parts of the country, a statement issued by the Congress party said. The Opposition has been criticising the Centre over its handling of the migrant crisis. The Congress and other opposition parties have also attacked the Centre for allowing BJP-ruled states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat to amend labour laws to lure foreign investors and to strip workers of their basic rights. Last week, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was seen interacting with a group of migrants in the national capital. Later, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman attacked the Congress leader and called the stint as nothing but 'dramabazi'. "I am urging the opposition party very politely, folding my hands and requesting them here. We must all come together and help migrant labourers in this crisis," Sitharaman stated. She also appealed to Sonia Gandhi with 'folded hands' to speak about migrant workers more responsibly.

Industries Minister Biswajit chairs MFICL Board of Directors meeting manufacturing of hand sanitizers by MFICL proposed

Imphal, May 22:

Trade, Commerce and Industries Minister Thongam Biswajit Singh chaired the 64th Meeting of the Board of Directors Manipur Food Industries Corporation Ltd today at the Conference Hall of his New Secretariat office. Considering the present COVID-19 pandemic, manufacturing of hand Sanitizers by MFICL with assistance of MSME-TC was also discussed during the meeting. During the Meeting, Shri Biswajit, who is also the chairman of the MFICL,

highlighted the need of reviving pharmaceutical companies in the State and setting up of a power sub-station at the proposed site for Mega Food Park with cooperation of the Manipur State Power Company Ltd. Several other agendas discussed during the meeting included proposal of clusters under National Honey Mission, including one cluster each at Ukhrul and Jiribam districts. Proposals discussed for new programmes to be taken up by the MFICL during the current fiscal year include at least three Food Processing Common Facility Centre

(CFC) under MSE-CDP, convergence with MGNREGS for lemongrass and citronella plantation and processing and bulk purchase of lemongrass and citronella oil by MFICL. Other agendas discussed included Project Management Consultant (PMC), Allotment of land plots in the Mega Food Park, Fixation of development fee and maintenance fee amount of plots on lease for the Manipur Mega Food Park. Regarding repairing of cold storage in Food Park, Nilakuthi, it was highlighted that there are five normal cold storage chambers and a deep

freezer of 60 MT capacity each and a blast. Two chambers of cold storage and main electrical fittings have been repaired and two cold storage chambers have been made fully functional now and it has been resolved that the cold storage facility shall be made open for public use at rates fixed by the company on recommendation of committee constituted by the government. The meeting was attended by Addl. Chief Secretary (Textiles, Commerce & Industries) Shri Suhel Akhtar and board members of the MFICL.

Lifting and distribution of PDS Rice completed for May in IE District

IT News
Imphal, May 21

PDS rice allocated for the month of May continues to be lifted from several godown in the State. The lifted rice were under the scheme of National Food Security Act (NFSA), Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) and Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS). With the lifting of 645.30 quintal of rice under OMSS and 1828.05 quintal under PMGKAY for Andro Assembly Constituency on Thursday, lifting of rice allocated for the month of May, 2020 is completed for Imphal East district. It is also reported that, 28.67 quintal of Dal under Non NFSA and 82.84 quintal of Dal under PMGKAY for the month of April, 2020 was also lifted today for Kshetrigao AC in Imphal East district. In respect of Tamenglong district, 845.50 quintal of rice under OMSS and 113.77 quintal of PMGKAY-Dal (for the month of April) for Tamei AC was lifted from FCI and FCS godown, Sangaiaprou respectively. 827.12.340 quintal of rice under

PMGKAY for Tamei AC (Tousem Sub-division) was also lifted from FCI godown, Jiribam. In Imphal West district, 1935.7 quintal of rice under NFSA (AAY & PHH) for Lamshang AC and 90.58 quintal of Dal for the district were lifted today while, 2012.85 quintal of rice under PMGKAY was distributed in Patsoi Assembly Constituency. In Thoubal district too, 753.55 quintal of rice under PMGKAY, 151.90 quintal under OMSS and 105.70 quintal of Dal was lifted for Lilong AC. The following quantities of Dal was also lifted today, 104.20 quintal for Thoubal AC, 99.30 for Wangkhem AC, 97.87 quintal for Heirok AC, 108.59 quintal for Wangjing Tenthia AC and 114.80 quintal for Khangabok AC. The District Administration of Thoubal district has distributed 53 quintal of rice under OMSS to Govt. Children Home, Charangpat, Observation Home, Samaram, Open Shelter Home, Wangbal & Phouden, Children Home, Wangmataba, Children Home for Mentally ill, Sabaltongba & Langathel and Specialised Adoption Agency, Langathel.

BJP stages 'Maharashtra Bachao Andolan'

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, May 22:

BJP staged 'Maharashtra Bachao Andolan' (Save Maharashtra agitation), as a protest against the Shiv Sena-headed Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government 'alleged failure to contain the horrific spread of COVID-19, through out the state, on Friday. Former chief minister and present leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnis along with former minister Vinod Tawde and Mumbai BJP president Mangal Prabhat Lodha held protest at the state party office in Nariman point, in South Mumbai holding

placards and sporting black face mask and black ribbon. Another BJP MLA Ashish Shelar, accompanied by party workers, was at a party office in the suburbs where they staged a "dharna" holding placards with messages critical of the MVA government over its handling of the COVID-19 crisis in Maharashtra which has recorded over 30,000 cases so far. The BJP had given a call for "Maharashtra Bachao" agitation asking party workers to protest against the government outside their homes adhering to social distancing norms amid the coronavirus-enforced lockdown.

BJP had also urged people to stand in balcony wearing black dress holding placards to denounce Maharashtra Government for the "mess" over Coronavirus, increasing number of deaths, including the deaths of policemen, doctors, health workers and "inadequate" facilities offered by the state government. In districts like Wardha, Yavatmal, the BJP workers also burnt cotton, as a mark of resentment against inadequate remunerative prices offered by the state government under monopoly procurement scheme. The agitations were also held in various districts and talukas by BJP workers who

submitted memorandums to tehsildars listing out their demands. BJP claimed that the state government has failed to contain the Coronavirus pandemic. While there was a need to conduct over 10,000 tests per day, the administration was conducting hardly 4000 to 5000 tests per day and total administration was in a mess. Meanwhile, the Congress, the Shiv Sena and the NCP - all constituents of the ruling coalition - hit back at the BJP on their social media platforms. State Congress spokesman Sachin Sawant wondered how the BJP can think of politics at the

time of a crisis when doctors, nurses, police and the administration are fighting an enemy called coronavirus. "Ahmedabad till Thursday had recorded 9,449 positive cases and 619 deaths. Will the BJP do a 'Gujarat Bachao andolan' and ask for the President's rule in the state," he asked. NCP leaders used the hashtag MaharashtratradrohiBJP (Maharashtra treacherous BJP) to hit out at the opposition party. The Shiv Sena, in an editorial in its mouthpiece "Saamana", said the BJP's agitation against the Thackeray-led government at the time of a health crisis will boomerang on the opposition party.

★ Editorial

Tending to the trivialities in time

The entire world is getting preoccupied with the battle against the raging Covid-19 pandemic which has been eluding a definite cure to this day despite the best efforts of the best minds and unlimited resources combined with cutting edge technology at the disposal of the experts.

With the battlefield expanding with each passing day, our little state has joined the fray and today, the rising sense of insecurity and concern amongst the public is getting more intense and vocal. On the other hand, there are reports of increasing pressure on the health workers due to the lack of manpower and equipments to handle the increasingly worsening situation in the state.

Till date more than 11,000 Manipuris who were stranded in various parts of the country have returned and are being quarantined at various designated centres for a mandatory 14 day period. About 40,000 more are estimated to be on the wait for their turn to return to the state. These are certainly trying times, both for the common public as well as the administration. And though certain oversights and loopholes are expected to emerge, there are more serious and deliberate sounding blunders committed which has come to light that reeks of opportunism and self-serving motives.

The state government, with all the pressing tasks at hand might be tempted to brush these 'petty instances' as insignificant and does not warrant immediate attention, but the fact of the matter remains that such 'petty' irregularities and opportunistic behavior by those in positions of power and influence or are close to one is seen as an act of disdain and disrespect for the common public, especially in these difficult times when the common people are looking up to the leaders for succour and reassurance. And when such petty matters are left unattended, it can culminate into an issue which could spiral out of control sooner than anyone can expect.

There also remains the unfortunate practice of elected representatives to portray themselves as the provider of favours to the people when in actuality, it is their sworn duty, a position they begged for with folded hands and pleadings from the very people they are ruling over rather than serving. The need of the hour which should be considered as important if not more, as keeping the people safe from the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic is to provide a sense of fairness and empathy of the uncertainties and psychological challenges of the common public. Addressing any grievance, however trivial it might seem at the very onset should help in preventing issues from blowing up and adding to the crisis. Drawing up and implementing a uniform procedures and system across the state will ensure greater transparency and speedy operations and will also go a long way in assuaging the concerns of the public especially in rural and remote areas where the feeling of inequality in providing the basic requirements and other assistances by the state authorities still runs strong.

The mark of a true leader is to display the ability to rise over petty politics and individual concerns and commit to the good of the people. This is the perfect opportunity to shine, and the people are expectant.

Letter to the editor

COVID-19 recovered couple appreciates for extending help

We (husband and wife) from Manipur living in Delhi would like to thank you for your kind help offered during Covid-19 infection. We would like to thank Mr. Lokhon and Shyamkishor Ningombam from "The Delhi Manipuri Society", Punam Rani Wangkhem of Indian National Congress General Secretary Mahila Manipur, and TNAI Manipur Branch for their great help during such hard time. We also would like to clear the wrong information published in the previous news dated on 12 May 2020 Imphal Times that Mr. Lokhon and Shyamkishor Ningombam are from "The Delhi Manipuri Society" but wrongly mentioned as representatives from Manipur Students' Association Delhi (MSAD). Members from The Delhi Manipuri Society worked tirelessly to admit us at LNJP Hospital, helped monetary help of Rs. 10,000 and they helped to send any essential items inside the hospital during the lockdown period. We are now completely free from Covid-19 and we have been released from the hospital after the second round of negative confirmation. Ch. Geetarani & L. Biren.

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Has COVID-19 wrecked world economy ?

By - Marina Seyie Narendra

Concerns over the spread of the COVID-19 virus have translated into an economic slowdown. The world economy will go into recession with a predicted loss of trillions of dollars of global income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's a serious trouble for developing countries with the likely exception of India and China, according to a latest UN trade report. The coronavirus pandemic is set to leave 170 countries with lower GDP per capita by the end of the year, but the projection may be actually a more optimistic picture than reality produces. One of the reason is that the America is constituting less than 5 percent of the world's population. Americans generate and earn more than 20 percent of the world's total income. America is the world's largest national economy and leading global trader but worse part is that they are badly affected due to Corona Virus. India is on the verge of an unprecedented economic catastrophe as the humanitarian disaster from the Covid-19 pandemic unfolds. The sheer scale of disruption from the ongoing national lockdown to contain the outbreak is unprecedented in Indian history. The greater part of the non-agricultural work force will have no livelihood for the duration of the lockdown and it may continue beyond May 2020. In the absence of massive public intervention, there will be widespread increases in poverty. The macroeconomic concern now is to stabilise an economy that is in free fall, which requires measures to sustain some

demand as well as to ensure supplies. Restrictions on movement of people, goods and services, and containment measures such as factory closures have cut manufacturing and domestic demand sharply all over the world. The impact have also seen on business travel and tourism, supply chains, commodities which has lower confidence in growing. Following the pandemic, the shortage of manpower led to a rise in the daily wages of labourers, as they were able to market themselves to the highest bidder. Negative impacts of the coronavirus disease are mainly borne by people working specific industries, such as restaurants, hotels, transportation companies, movie theaters and tourism. Infrastructure investment will not directly absorb many workers who worked in the industries mostly impacted by the disease.

There is need of all countries to introspect and re-evaluate their supply chains to become less dependent on China. The world is opening its wallet to fight the effects of the coronavirus outbreak. The United States unveiled a \$2 trillion rescue package. European countries have announced their own spending blitz, and Japan approved a nearly \$1 trillion economic stimulus plan. The Indian government has announced a \$22.6 billion stimulus plan to directly aid poorer communities affected by the coronavirus lockdown. The Asian Development Bank has assured India \$2.2 billion in its fight against the Covid - 19 pandemic. The International Monetary Fund recently announced the "Great

Lockdown" recession will drag global GDP lower by 3% in 2020, but its managing director now thinks the gloomy outlook could be too positive. A look back at history can help us consider the economic effects of public health emergencies and how best to manage them. In doing so, however, it is important to remember that past pandemics were far more deadly than coronavirus, which has a relatively low death rate. A fully-funded health system is key to fighting both virus and stemming the economic impact. Following points of concern can be looked into to overcome present crisis:-

1. Strengthening health systems financially:-

- (a) Full funding for core public health measures such as case-finding, testing, contact tracing, collecting data, and communication and information campaigns.
- (b) Strong financial supporting for health systems to ensure that health workers are paid their salaries, and health facilities have the reliable funding and need to purchase essential medical supplies.
- (c) The removal of financial barriers to provide free testing and care for coronavirus patients regardless of insurances.
- (d) Need to have more number of medical colleges and Hi-Tech hospitals.
- (e) Need to establish more number of research laboratories.
- (f) Requirements of Hi-Tech ambulances for speedy transfer of patients without endangering lives.
- (g) Sharing of case studies of patients between states and

countries.

(h) Mandatory to have medical treatment cashless cards for every citizen. Premiums of poor can be funded by government whereas middle and rich class can purchase themselves.

2. Strengthening the world's economies:-

- (a) Prioritized help for emerging markets and developing economies which are hard hit by the crisis.
- (b) Emergency financing to the countries running out of lively stock.
- (c) Eased debt obligations for the IMF's poorest members through the Catastrophe Containment Relief Trust.
- (d) Need promote economic growth of state or country through innovation. We must have national policies that promote innovation to ensure that there will be enough prosperity to carry on into the next generation.
- (e) Countries have to aggressively reach out own skilled labourers to reduce dependency on other countries. We have to make it more difficult for foreign entrepreneurs to come to and stay in India.
- (f) Eradicate illiteracy by compulsory education system for every citizen and also providing skills for various job options to eradicate employment.
- (g) Lower interest rates – reduce the cost of borrowing and increase consumer spending and investment.
- (h) Increased real wages – if nominal wages grow above inflation then consumers have more disposable to spend.

"It's a cup of my Tea" International Tea Day (21st May)

By - Mandakini
MA Sociology, Jamia Millia
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A house without tea is merely a home, yes this is true and one can't deny the fact and the love for tea one has. It is therapeutic and rejuvenating. From the moment one wakes up the very first thing

friend and an honest companion. May 21, is observed annually as International Tea Day according to the United Nations. The concerning resolution was adopted on December 21, 2019 and calls on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to lead the observance of the day.

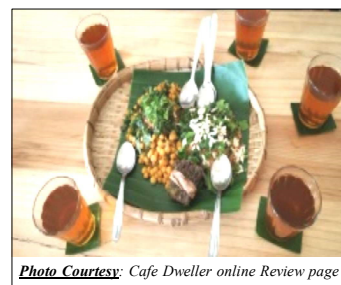


Photo Courtesy: Cafe Dweller online Review page

that strikes is having a cup of "Tea". It gives an immense happiness and certain joy in that one sips. "There is nothing quite like a freshly brewed pot of tea to get you going in the morning." Today, as we celebrate the International Tea Day, we can't agree more to this thoughts. For many of us, tea is like a morning ritual, for some a reason of bond and for some it's life. While all tea lovers share a different bond with their favourite flavour, mug, timing and so on, additionally from hectic schedule in office till late night overtime, a tea remains one's best

International Tea Day aims to raise awareness of the long history and the deep cultural and economic significance of tea around the world. The goal of the day is to promote and foster collective actions to implement activities in favour of the sustainable production and consumption of tea and raise awareness of its importance in fighting hunger and poverty.

In Manipur, culture of tea has always remained from hindered decade. Geographically one of the states producing tea in the country and adds quite a huge margin in state's revenue. Workers process leaves plucked from wild full-grown tea trees growing in the forest of southern Manipur. Sipping Saugri (Roselle Plant), Lemongrass & Hei-mang (Wild

Varnish Tree, I actually have to Google it), brings back childhood memories of growing up in Manipur. Traditional herbal healers in the state believe the fruits have antioxidant, antiviral, antibacterial and digestive properties. Another drink which takes me down memory lane is Nong-mang-kha (Basak plant). It is a herbal remedy, traditionally known for antiviral and antibacterial properties, a herbal treatment for cold, cough and more. So what all you get is using naturally and locally grown ingredients, and no added colour, flavour or preservatives and what more needed to be stay healthy in quarantine.

I also remember accompanying my Dad in work place during my stay in Imphal, as a goodwill gesture people used to give away some money as a cultural impression and they used statements like "Cha thaknabagi paisa ne" (its a money to accommodate a cup of tea, that metaphorically kind of a thanks giving!) See, the lives of tea everywhere. To be precise; to be a Teaholic is a meditation that not only keeps one super active but makes one connected to each other.

I still can't resist myself accommodating few stock from online portal on Teas & edibles from Manipur which brings back old good memories and a touch of belonging.

I can't end this writing without appreciating a youngster from Manipur Elizabeth Yambem (to name a few), I remember reading an article on entrepreneurship. Elizabeth has quit her cushy job in abroad and tries her hands on local tea chains. She sticks to her vision of a sustainable venture, as; Dweller Teas (a local tea chain) is not just health conscious, but also environment conscious. They use bamboo trays with banana leaves for service and paper products for takeaways. Also, they mostly employ homemakers to uplift and empower them. Her gamble on local produce has fared well, as her start-



Photo Courtesy: www.forestpick.com

up today is shipping tea not just within the state, but also outside. She believes there's a lot more to be done to expand their reach and achieve the right growth.

She is indeed stage setting new goals and examples for young entrepreneurs from Manipur to sustain and look forward and carrying the legacy and keeping the culture alive!