

'27 today'

IT News

Imphal, May 23:

The number of Novel coronavirus positive cases reaches 27 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 25 today.

A press statement by the Additional Director of Health department, who is also the spokesperson of the department said that the 27th positive case was detected from a 26 years old male from Imphal west who return from Chennai on May 10 and reached Jiribam on May 13. His sample was collected on May 19, the statement added. He is being undergoing treatment at RIMS.

Air India gears up for domestic flights from Monday

Agency

New Delhi, May 23:

Air India has started booking for domestic flights. The airline will operate more than 8000 domestic flights each week for the next three months starting 25th May. Civil Aviation Ministry has said that a minimum and maximum fare for three months has been set for the domestic flight services.

AIR correspondent reports that after a two-month gap air travel in the country will reopen on Monday.

Air India will operate a total of 8,428 flights each week for the next three months from 25th May to 25th August. The government has allowed one-third of the operations beginning Monday and has set limits on fares which will be applicable for three months. The fares are capped according to seven sector classes, which have been divided according to approximate flight times. Under the new air fare regulations, the cheapest domestic flight ticket will be for 2,000 rupees while the most expensive will be for 18,600 rupees.

ICMR scaling up Covid-19 testing facilities

Agency

New Delhi, May 23:

Indian Council of Medical Research, ICMR said that a total one lakh 15 thousand 364 samples of corona virus infection were tested in the last 24 hours. With this, figure of total number of tests reached to 28 lakh 34 thousand 798 in the country.

Meanwhile, ICMR is continuously scaling up its testing facilities for Covid-19 by giving approval to government and private laboratories.

Legitimacy to the granting of Lhukhosei Zou on bail by Justice A. Noutuneshwari questioned

IT News

Imphal, May 23:

The granting of bail to the former chairman of ADC Chandel, Lhukhosei Zou, who was arrested with a huge consignment of drugs, by the Special Judge of ND & PS Aribam Noutuneshwari, has been seriously questioned from various legal practitioners as well as the investigation officer of the case.

Zou was released on bail on Medical ground on May 21 by the same court. While hearing the bail, justice A. Noutuneshwari was quoted as saying "Everyone is innocent until one is proven

guilty. Hence ADC, the undertrial prisoner is innocent to me until proven guilty." In her Facebook post Thounaojam Brinda Devi, Additional Superintendent of Police, Nab, who is also the Investigation Officer of the case wrote that Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act carries the reverse burden of proof with a culpable mental state of the accused. He is presumed to be guilty consequent to the recovery of contraband from him, and it is for the accused to establish his innocence unlike the normal rule of criminal jurisprudence that

an accused is presumed to be innocent unless proved guilty. But that does not absolve the prosecution from establishing a prima facie case only whereafter the burden shifts to the accused. And she further wrote that drugs seized from his possession are prima facie case (*prima facie case haibabu mashadei phabani drug mayandoh*).

Talking to Imphal Times a legal practitioner said that the granting of bail on Medical ground to Lhokhosei Zou for undergoing treatment of Cholecystectomy as unreasonable as such

treatment or surgery can be done while in custody.

"Emergency or extraordinary surgery or treatment are arranged in the government hospital even at this time of COVID-19 pandemic and similar can be arranged for the drug kingpin", a legal practitioner told Imphal Times in state of anonymity.

Mentioned may be made that in 2018, Zou was released on bail under similar circumstances and disappeared from the hospital. He was pronounced as proclaimed absconder until he surrendered in the court in 2020.

66 dead in Pakistan plane crash

Agency

New Delhi, May 23:

At least 66 people were killed when a Pakistan International Airlines plane with 99 people on board crashed into a densely populated residential area near the Jinnah International Airport here on Friday, officials said. Flight PK-8303 from Lahore was about to land in Karachi when it crashed at the Jinnah Garden area near Model Colony in Malir, minutes before its landing, they said. The PIA Airbus A320 carrying 91 passengers and eight crew members has crashed-landed into the Jinnah Housing Society located near the airport, a spokesperson of the national carrier said.

Thick black smoke rose from the accident scene of devastation in the Model Colony area. Earlier, a PIA spokesperson and many media reports said that there were 107 people on board the aircraft. Sindh health officials said 66 dead bodies have been recovered from the crash site.

It is, however, unclear if the deceased were all on board the flight or include residents of the area as well where the crash took place. Sindh Health Minister Azra Pechuho said there are two survivors including President of the Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood. He called up his mother to inform her of his well-being. Faisal Edhi of the Edhi Welfare Trust said that around 25 to 30 residents whose houses were damaged by the plane have also been taken to the hospital, mostly with burn wounds.

The aircraft wings during the crash landing hit the houses in the residential colony before crashing down. "At least 25 houses have been damaged in this incident," Edhi said. According to a PIA official, the captain informed the air traffic control that he was having problems with the landing gear before the aircraft disappeared from the radar. Thick black smoke rose from a scene of devastation in the Model Colony area.

Govt revises advisory to use Hydroxychloroquine

Agency

New Delhi, May 23:

Indian Council of Medical Research, ICMR has said that consuming the anti-malarial drug-Hydroxychloroquine reduces the chances of getting infected with corona virus. ICMR has issued the revised advisory on the use of Hydroxychloroquine. The Joint Monitoring Group including experts from top research bodies and hospitals reviewed the prophylactic use of Hydroxychloroquine in the context of expanding it to healthcare and other front line workers deployed in non-Covid and Covid areas, respectively.

The National Task force constituted by ICMR for Covid-19, also reviewed the use of Hydroxychloroquine for prophylaxis of corona virus infection for high risk population based on the

emerging evidence on its safety and efficacy. AIR correspondent reports that investigation done by three central government hospitals in New Delhi indicates that those healthcare workers who have taken Hydroxychloroquine were less likely to develop corona infection compared to those who were not taking it.

A study of 334 healthcare workers at AIIMS, New Delhi also showed that those taking Hydroxychloroquine had lower incidence of covid-19 infection. Based on the available evidence, it has been suggested that Hydroxychloroquine is relatively safe and has some beneficial effect. ICMR recommended that the drug has to be given under strict medical supervision with an informed consent. It has also been advised to consult with a physician for any adverse effect of this drug.

Haomee says no kukiland in Kangleipak

IT News

Imphal, May 23:

Federation of Haomee today said that the effort for establishing a separate territory for Kuki in Kangleipak under the shadow of a foreign base rebel group KNO/KNA, which is ensuing suspension of operation with the government should stop immediately. The organization also urged both the government of Manipur and India to cease the suspension of operation with the outfit. The Federation of Haomee said this reacting to a statement given by the Defence Secretary of the KNF/KNO Thongsei Haokip on May 18, 2020 on the 33rd Raising Day of KNF. The Defence Secretary reportedly stated that the government of India has approved for formation of a separate Kukiland in Kangleipak by July 2020. The organization urged the

government of Manipur to clarify regarding the statement at the earliest.

The Haomee further said that, the Tribal forum Manipur on May 17 had submitted a written appeal to the Chief Minister stating that the area of Chibu under Behang in the Indo-Myanmar where the Department of tourism, gov. of Manipur is constructing Chandrakiti Memorial Park was not the area of Meitei King but comes under the area of the Lushai Chief. The Tribal Forum also urged to take out the memorial stone of King Chandrakiti from the area, Haomee said. The Haomee said that the Chibu stone inscription cannot be taken out as it is preserved under the Manipur Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains Act, 1976.

The Haomee urged the Chief Minister to take the matter with extreme seriousness.

Booking of tickets for 200 Trains which are being introduced wef 01st June, in full swing

New Delhi, May 23 (PIB):

Ministry of Railways (MoR) in consultation with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has decided that train services on Indian Railways shall be further partially restored w.e.f from 01st June 2020.

Indian Railways will start operations of 200 daily passenger trains across the country. These trains shall run from 1 June 2020 and booking of all these trains commenced from 21 May 2020. These special services shall be in addition to the existing Shramik special trains being run since 01st May

and Special AC trains (30 trains) being run since 12th May 2020.

Online Booking of tickets for these trains is being done through IRCTC website or through Mobile App. Indian Railways has also allowed booking of reservation tickets through the reservation counters, Common Service Centers (CSCs) and Ticketing agents yesterday i.e. 21st May 2020.

Booking of tickets for these trains started from 21st May and as on 22nd May 2020 at 20:14 hours, all the 200 trains were available in system for booking and 652644 online tickets were booked for these trains having 1413277 passengers.

Will consider proposal for news bulletins on Community Radio; Plan to increase number of Community Radios soon: Javadekar

PIB

New Delhi, May 23:

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Prakash Javadekar had said that he was eager to raise air time for advertisements to 12 minutes from 7 minutes on Community Radios currently to bring them at par with TV channels. The Minister was addressing listeners of all Community Radio stations in a unique initiative by way of a simultaneous broadcast on Thursday.

Javadekar said that while 75% of the expenditure during setting-up of Community Radio stations is borne by the Ministry and that comprises a major expenditure, daily operations' expenditure is borne by the Station. The Minister pointed out that currently Community Radio

stations are allowed air time of 7 minutes per hour for advertisements while the same is 12 minutes for TV channels. He added he was eager to give equal time to all radio stations so that there is no need for them to seek funds and that local advertisements can be relayed more on community stations.

In his opening remarks, the Minister said Community Radio is a community in itself. Termining them 'agents of change', he said that the stations reach out to millions of people every day, and that the Ministry will come out with a plan to increase the number of such Stations soon.

Exhorting people to keep up their fight against Coronavirus, the Minister said that we will drive it away the way we have driven away other diseases. However, he

highlighted that we have a new normal, one that consists of 4 steps viz, staying at home as much as possible, frequent washing of hands, wearing face mask in public and social distancing.

Speaking on the dilemma between the challenges of social distancing and economic activity, the Minister re-iterated the mantra of "Jaan Bhi Jahaan Bhi" and said that while restrictions are continuing in Containment Zones, economic activities are starting up in Green Zones.

The Minister touched on the key demand of Community Radio of broadcasting news on their channels. He assured that he will consider allowing news broadcast on Community Radio the same way it is done on FM channels. He prodded such stations to play key role

in combating fake news menace by taking note of such news in circulation and verify it through local sources to act on it. He invited Stations to share it with All India Radio also, so that the reach of the truth can be amplified. He added that the Ministry has created a Fact

Community Radio is a third tier of Radio broadcasting along with Public Radio (All India Radio) and Private Radio Broadcasting (FM). It is a low power FM Radio station, focused on local issues, owned and managed by community itself, for the benefit of the community, in a radius of 10-15 Kms.

Community Radios, in India, started after the first policy for Community Radios was notified in the year 2002. This policy allowed only Educational Institutions to set up Community Radios. This policy was broad-based in 2006, when grass-roots organizations like NGOs, KVVs and other not-for-profit organizations were also allowed to set up Community Radios in India. Today, India has 290 operational Community Radio Stations. These Community radio station covers approximately 90 million peoples in the country, where other media presence is very limited. The broadcast made by these CRSs are in local language and dialect, so it has more impact on the community.

Check Cell under PIB and the Community Radio can complement the role of Fact Check Cell.

Speaking about Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package recently unveiled by the Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Shri Javadekar said it was a

comprehensive package which included reforms for various sectors including agriculture and industry, and that package is aimed at reducing imports and increasing exports. He added that the package has been received well and people are happy with the stimulus.

★ Editorial

Preparing for the inevitable change

As the world is struggling to find a solution to the present pandemic which is not likely to subside anytime soon, the way of life we have been accustomed to just a few months ago seem like a distant past, and the only effective means of preventing the dreaded scourge from spreading uncontrollably is to observe social distancing and maintain personal hygiene as of now.

This new social constraints have posed a very paradoxical problem for the society which is still struggling for a new order or system that follows and complements the natural laws and not based on anthropocentric views and beliefs which has contributed, if only in part, to the current crisis. There is an urgent and inevitable need for humans to change our old way of life, and change, in any form or magnitude has always been difficult and chaotic. The first or most basic step should be the acceptance that we are being forced to change our way of life and we need to embrace the truth. This acceptance and psychological preparedness will go a long way in making the transition or evolution smoother and better. We are indeed evolving as a society in the manner and system under which we have been living our lives. We are also evolving as individuals in that we are now required to be more responsible of our actions and behaviours, both socially and otherwise as our actions and habits will have a greater impact on others around us. We are already witnessing a change in how a few organisations and companies are conducting their business by reducing office goers and making employees work from home. Several big businesses plan to let much of their staff work from home permanently, even after the pandemic.

Working from home could become the new normal — at least for some. Mark Zuckerberg said as many as 50% of Facebook (FB) employees could be working remotely within the next five to 10 years. Twitter (TWTR) will allow some of its workforce to continue working from home “forever,” if they choose. French automaker PSA announced a “new era of agility,” in which its non-production staff will work remotely from now on. PSA, which makes Peugeot, Citroën, DS, Opel and Vauxhall, said the new work-from-home plans will be implemented in the summer. Box (BOX) CEO Aaron Levie wrote in a blog post that the cloud-storage company’s nearly 2,000 employees are free to work “from anywhere” until the end of 2020. Online tutorial and academic websites are having a whale of a time right now, and there is a perceptible shift in a number of parents considering online and home education for their wards even after the present pandemic is over. These emerging changes are opportunities anyone can make use of.

However, government, both at the centre and the state should be pragmatic enough to grasp the moment and build a base for entrepreneurs in the state to enable first mover advantage in these emerging fields as these changes are swift and uncertain. But in the frantic rush, we need to make sure that a large number of people in the state are still living in areas where basic infrastructures and facilities to enable them to enjoy the technological progress are still lacking. The leaders must do the needful without further delay if we are to step into the new world as equals.

COVID-19 does not spread through burial of dead bodies: High Court

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, May 23:

The Bombay High Court on Friday dismissed pleas by residents seeking cancellation of permission given by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to bury bodies of COVID-19 victims at Bandra (West) Kabaristan located in North West Mumbai.

Disposing of the petition filed by Pradeep Gandhi and others, a division bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice S S Shinde, passed a ruling through videoconference, in which it observed that there was no scientific data to support the claim that COVID-19 can spread through dead bodies and that the BMC had all the authority to demarcate the cemetery. The court said that the case was fit for ‘exemplary costs’ but avoided to impose it on petitioners due to a pandemic situation and said that the plea was filed in panic.

The petition was filed by the petitioner, through advocate D P Singh in the Bombay high court on April 14. When it came for hearing on 27 April, the court refused to grant an interim relief to the petitioners and also directed the BMC to remove locks put up on the gates of the cemetery ground by local residents with the help of Police on 13 April, protesting against the burial of dead body at the cemetery. After HC refused relief, the petitioners moved Supreme Court with a special leave petition and the apex court on 4 May returned the petition to the HC with instructions that the petition be disposed of within two weeks.

The residents had claimed that permitting the use of the burial ground in Bandra (West) to bury COVID-19 victims will lead to community spread. They had claimed that the burial ground is located in the heart of Bandra (West), next to their residences, and as per the revised

circular issued by BMC on 30 March 2020, COVID-19 patients cannot be buried near residential areas. On 13 April, a body was brought for burial at the cemetery. However, after the residents protested, the authorities did not bury the body.

The petitioners had pointed out that the burial ground shared a common wall with a residential area near G7 multiplex on V P Varde Marg off Turner Road. However, advocate Pratap Nimbalkar appearing for Kabaristan Trustees, had opposed the plea and said that due process was followed before disposing of the bodies and that the petitioners had not placed any scientific reasoning to show that COVID-19 spreads through dead bodies.

On 19 May, a senior counsel for BMC, Anil Sakhare, also opposed the petitioners’ argument and submitted an affidavit in reply saying burial of the victims cannot lead to spread

of virus in adjoining areas. The BMC reply stated, “It is well established and declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) that Covid-19 virus is not “air borne” and hence transmission of the virus to other people staying in the vicinity of the burial ground is highly impossible.”

“The transmission cannot happen unless people in the locality come in direct contact with the body brought for burial or cremation. Direct contact of people staying in the locality with a body is impossible, as it is wrapped in plastic by hospital staff before handing it over to relatives for the last rites”, the BMC stated.

The court accepted BMC’s submissions and asked it to strictly follow WHO and Central government guidelines on burial of COVID-19 positive bodies and said that the civic body can add or delete demarcated cemeteries as per the law and guidelines.

Maharashtra govt takes 80% beds in private hospitals, caps treatment charges

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, May 23:

In a crack down on private hospitals, the Maharashtra government took control of over 80 per cent beds in private hospitals and also capped treatment charges for COVID-19 and other illnesses in these hospitals on Friday.

Amid reports of hospitals in Maharashtra refusing admission to coronavirus patients and overcharging, the Maharashtra government issued orders for taking control of 80 per cent beds in private hospitals and nursing homes in the state.

Private hospitals will now have 20 per cent beds for which they are allowed to charge their own rates, while 100 per cent of the ICU beds and 80 per cent

others will be regulated by the Maharashtra government. The price capping will stay in effect till 31 August, 2020.

With the new order by the state government, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will have access to additional 417 ICU beds for Covid-19 patients and 538 for non-Covid at government rates. Nearly 2,624 beds for Covid-19 patients and 3,020 beds for non-Covid will now be available in 33 hospitals.

The BMC also stated that the 1,000-bed quarantine facility for Covid-19 patients at MMRDA, Bandra in North West Mumbai, will be functional with 56 beds from 24 May onwards. A set of 56 beds will be added every subsequent day. “The Asian Heart Institute” which is located close to this facility will be dove-tailed as ICU for the facility, till the time the 200-bed ICU facility being set up becomes fully functional.

BMC Municipal Commissioner I.S. Chahal said an additional pool of 2,000 Covid beds is being created in the next three days at ward officer level. For every 100 beds in the ward, there will be 20 ICUs. Chahal said this will spruce up bed availability by utilising the ‘80:20’ order applicable to all other hospitals, nursing homes, clinics in the BMC area. The BMC’s order also mentions that testing for Covid suspected patients to be ramped up substantially and BMC Municipal Commissioner will himself be visiting laboratories for the same.

There have been cases in the past where coronavirus positive patients died due to lack of beds in Covid-dedicated hospitals, late hospitalisation or delayed treatment for the deadly infection.

As coronavirus cases continue to rise unabated in Mumbai, the state government has deputed IAS officers to major hospitals in the city for effective management of the outbreak. An IAS officer each has been deputed to KEM, Nair, Sion, JJ-GT-St George and BMC’s Peripheral hospitals for effective management of the outbreak.

The duties set for these IAS officers holding charge of the hospitals involve: Immediate

setting up of war room in each government hospital, CCTV live view of all ICU beds and COVID-19 wards, ensuring attendance of doctors, nurses and paramedicals, especially late night and early morning.

Real time data upload every 30 minutes on Bed Management dashboard, strict implementation of discharge policy (to ensure no patient overstays once tested

negative), to provide unique ID code to each bed are the other stipulations. Dashboards to allot beds with bed number on call to 1916, to ensure quality food packets to patients and their relatives (by ensuring daily stocking of food/biscuits in canteens through NGOs which are put in place) and to ensure cleanliness and upkeep and minor maintenance are the other issues.

International Day of Biodiversity 2020



By: Shri M. Asnikumar Singh

‘We share a special relationship with the earth. Betraying it for our own selfish motives amounts to the biggest sin.’

In December 2000 the United Nations adopted 22nd of May as International Day for Biological Diversity. This day is often overlooked and it is understandable as people are busy trying to outdo each other in this age of rapid development and growth.

But growth at what cost? The current trend and trajectory of developmental practices will have serious consequences for the diversity not just of the region but for the globe as a whole.

Biological diversity of a region ensures natural sustainability of all life forms within the region. There is a saying ‘we are what we make of ourselves’. Our state is blessed with numerous bio resources and I would not be wrong if I say the state’s biological and economic future depends on it.

The statement might seem oxymoronic at first but it is true. There is a greater need to utilise the state’s resources in a bio economic context (this is not going to be easy but it is certainly possible).

This would not only ensure better reliance on ourselves but also reduce economic dependence on others. However it would be completely futile and meaningless if the strategy we follow in utilising our bio resources is not sustainable for the long run because it is the children and the younger generations we worry for.

We have two options; either to rely on the outside world for economic avenues or utilise our own bio resources to sustain our people. The latter strategy would be sensible choice even though it won’t be easy and would certainly come with accountability on our part. And this particular strategy augurs well for our state which is blessed with enormous bio resources.

But it is certainly better than being dependent and indebted to the outside world.

The current circumstances has shown the whole world that nothing in life ought to be taken for granted. Also, it has face planted us with the harsh reality that the world is a better place when we do not fiddle with its aesthetic and spiritual originality. An example is seeing dolphins in Venice when the world shut down in the face of the Coronavirus.

Environmentally ethical and sustainable techniques of earth’s bio resources should always be our top priority. It is our duty and responsibility as elders to leave an environmentally sustainable future for our children.

(Writer is an Environmentalist and who is also State Vice President of BJP Manipur State Unit)

Mukesh Ambani’s “Reliance Jio” raises Rs 67,194.75 crore amid lockdown

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, May 23:

In less than four weeks, Reliance Jio has struck deals with leading technology giants and private equity firms including Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity and General Atlantic, raising Rs 67,194.75 crore.

According to official sources, on 17 May, Reliance Jio sold a 1.34 per cent to General Atlantic for Rs 6,598.38 crore, while American private equity giant “Silver Lake Partners” bought 1 per cent stake in Jio for Rs 5,655.75 crore. Besides “Facebook” purchased a 9.9 per cent stake in Reliance Jio for Rs 43,574 crore.

COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the global economy but could not stop Reliance Industries Chairman & Managing Director Mukesh Ambani in raising, Rs 67,194.75

crore from technology leaders and investors.

The details of the deal are: **Facebook:** Menlo Park-headquartered “Facebook” purchased a 9.9 per cent stake in Reliance Jio for Rs 43,574 crore. The deal announced in April will help Mark Zuckerberg-owned social media giant place a firm foothold in India. The deal that valued Jio at Rs 4.62 lakh crore (65.95 billion) was Facebook’s biggest since 2014, when it bought WhatsApp for USD 22 billion. Jio in return can significantly cut debt of Reliance conglomerate.

Silver Lake Partners: Less than two weeks later, private equity giant Silver Lake Partners bought 1 per cent stake in Jio for Rs 5,655.75 crore. The deal with the American firm takes the telecom enterprise’s value at Rs 5.15 lakh crore - a 12.5 per cent premium to the value indicated by the social media network.

Vista Equity: US-based private equity firm Vista Equity Partners picked up a 2.32 per cent stake in Jio for Rs 11,367 crore. The firm that runs the world’s largest tech-focused fund. This investment valued Jio Platforms at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of Rs 5.16 lakh crore. Vista’s investment is at a 12.5 per cent premium over the deal with Facebook. The deal marks Jio’s status as a next-generation software and platform company.

General Atlantic: On 17 May, Reliance Jio sold a 1.34 per cent to New York-based “General Atlantic”, a private equity firm, for Rs 6,598.38 crore. The deal is General Atlantic’s largest investment in Asia. “This investment values Jio Platforms at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of Rs 5.16 lakh crore. General Atlantic’s investment will translate into a 1.34 per cent equity stake in Jio Platforms on a fully diluted basis,” the company said in a statement. General Atlantic is a leading global growth equity firm with a 40-year track record of investing in the technology, consumer, financial services and healthcare sectors.

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