

State govt constitute local level task force to fight Covid-19 pandemic

IT News
Imphal, May 20:

Realizing the importance of local level volunteers to the fight against the Covid 19 pandemic, the government of Manipur has constituted various local level volunteers from representative of various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non Government Organisations (NGOs) to fight the Covid 19 pandemic.

According to a government order, Village/Ward/Gram Sabha (whichever applicable) Level Task Force will be constituted with 6-10 members. Villages in the remote areas with less than 150 houses should be clubbed together to form a Joint Task Force of about 200 households. The selection of the members and constitution of the Task Force will be notified by the Deputy Commissioner concerned after due consultation with the MLA of the constituency, reputed CSO/NGO active in the area and the local club(s).

The order said that the task force would be provided with PPE kit, sanitizers, masks etc. by

the Health Department through the Deputy Commissioner/Chief Medical Officers by the government. It said that Each Task Force will be provided mobility support at the rate of Rupees 1000/- per day.

Claims for the above amount are to be made through the Deputy Commissioner which will be sanctioned by the Relief and Disaster Management Department.

The task force should ensure that Covid Appropriate Behaviour is followed by everyone, including whenever shops or vegetable vendors are allowed to open. They should also ensure that persons in Home Isolation or Quarantine or in Micro Containment area do not come out of their houses.

The task force should also Assist the government medical team in contact tracing and monitoring the health of those in Home Isolation.

Carrying out of IEC activities on various Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and protocols adopted by the government and persuade the locals to adopt and abide by it among other.

Covid-19 self test kit to give results in 15 minutes, ICMR cautions against 'indiscriminate use'

Courtesy: Indian Express
Kolkata, May 20:

The Indian Council of Medical Research on Wednesday gave its nod to rapid antigen kits that can be used to conduct Covid-19 tests at home. The kits are likely to reduce the burden on laboratories where samples have been piling up as states have ramped up testing to contain and combat the virus. The test kit has been priced at Rs 250.

Following the launch, the nodal body has issued guidelines regarding who can use these kits and how, warning that people should not use them "indiscriminately".

Who can use the kits?
The ICMR has made it clear that only symptomatic individuals and immediate contacts of people who have tested positive at a laboratory should use the home test kits. "Indiscriminate testing is not advised," the top medical

body said. "All individuals who test positive may be considered as true positives and no repeat testing is required... All symptomatic individuals who test negative by RAT should get themselves immediately tested by RTPCR," the ICMR said in its guidelines.

How does one use it?
As of May 20, ICMR has only approved CoviSelf, a test kit manufactured by Pune-based Mylab Discovery Solutions. The kit comes with a user manual, a pouch containing a nasal swab, a pre-filled extraction tube, and one test card.

For the test, users will have to download the Mylab app on their mobile phones, where the credentials have to be filled. Without touching the swab head, one needs to insert it inside both the nostrils to up to 2-3 centimetres. Then, one has to roll the swab five times inside each nostril.

Voice of Imphal Times

Covid Vaccination : From 4805 to 8240 in the following day is a good sign

IT Desk
Imhal, May 20:

Imphal Times has been closely monitoring the speed of the Covid-19 vaccination programme from the beginning in the state of Manipur. This newspaper has also been closely watching on the reason behind the slow progress in the vaccination programme despite the fact that there are some doses left with the state. The vaccination drive which began from Jan 16 could only jabbed to just around 5000 people per day on an average and latter was able to increase to around 6000 people.

As of May 18 the average number of people vaccinated was just around 6000 people per day even as the Covishield doses at stock with the government concern department was 1,29,925. On the very day the third base vaccination programme for

age between 18 to 44 was cancelled as the chart released from the state health department shows zero record. Even though vaccination for age above 45 years, health workers and other frontline workers took place.

The good news is that the state health authority somehow manage to increase the vaccination by around double on May 19. As per record made available to media the number of people between age 18 to 44 was 4319 on May 19. And the total number of people vaccinated on the day was recorded as 8240 – a double times from May 18 report. This certainly showed that the lapses or the loophole in the vaccination has been found out and there is reason to expect that the number of vaccination may increase to more as long as the vaccine are available.

Assuming no wastage of the covishield doses, the total

doses left with the state should be 1,21,505. Instead of taking months the authority should accelerate the vaccination drive as vaccine shortage will be make up by the central authority. As according to the PIB report, Nearly 2.00 crore (1,97,70,555) doses vaccine are still available with all the States and union territory.

This showed that the center is everytime ready to sent all require vaccines if the state use all its resources to vaccinate the people. This is being stated as almost all competent authority has agreed vaccination as the only alternative to remain safe from Covid-19, and completion of the mass vaccination is the only way that can protect the people.

Imphal Times suggests the government to speed up the vaccination drive as it has been prove that the state can do it if desire.

NEGVAC sets new guidelines for Covid-19 vaccination

IT News
Imphal, May 20:

Accepting the new recommendations of NEGVAC, the union government on Wednesday has deferred the coronavirus vaccination by three months after the recovery from the illness.

In its recommendation, the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 (NEGVAC) had advised to give a gap of at least three months between the time the patient being cured of the virus and the vaccination.

The union home ministry, in a statement, said, "Persons with

any other serious illness requiring hospitalization or ICU care to also wait for 4-8 weeks before getting the vaccine."

The central government has recently also increased the time-frame between two doses to 12-16 weeks from 8-6 weeks earlier.

The ministry in its statement also said that if infected after the first dose, the second dose will be deferred by three months after clinical recovery from Covid-19.

This three months' gap is also for those Covid-19 patients who have been given convalescent plasma, from the date of discharge from the hospital.

Similarly, it also said, the persons with any other serious general illness requiring hospitalization or ICU care should also wait for 4-8 weeks before getting the Covid-19 vaccine.

Recommendations that are accepted also states that an individual can donate blood after 14 days of either receipt of COVID-19 vaccine or testing RT-PCR negative, if suffering from COVID-19 disease.

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all lactating women. And, there is no requirement for screening of the vaccine recipients by rapid antigen test (RAT) prior to COVID-19 vaccination, said the

government in a statement while accepting the recommendations.

Regarding COVID-19 Vaccination of pregnant women, the matter is under discussion and further deliberation by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI), it added.

According to the statement, the government has communicated the same with all states and Union Territories. And, these recommendations have been based on the evolving situation of the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging global scientific evidence and experience.

More than 1.97 crore doses still available with States/UTs to be administered

PIB
New Delhi, May 20:

Vaccination is an integral pillar of the comprehensive strategy of Government of India for containment and management of the pandemic, along with Test, Track, Treat and COVID Appropriate Behaviour. As part of the nationwide vaccination drive, Government of India has been supporting the States and UTs by providing them COVID Vaccines free of cost.

Govt. of India has also been facilitating direct procurement of vaccines by the States/UTs.

Implementation of the Liberalized and Accelerated Phase 3 Strategy of Covid-19 Vaccination has started from 1st May 2021. Under the Strategy, in every month 50% of the total Central Drugs Laboratory (CDL) cleared vaccine doses of any manufacturer would be procured by Govt. of India. It would continue to make these doses available to the State Govts totally free of cost as was being done earlier.

Government of India has so far provided, both through the free of cost category and

through direct state procurement category, more than 21 crore vaccine doses (21,07,31,130) to States/UTs. Of this, the total consumption (including wastages) is 19,09,60,575 doses (as per data available at 8 AM today).

Nearly 2.00 crore (1,97,70,555) COVID Vaccine doses are still available with the States/UTs to be administered.

Furthermore, nearly 26 lakh (25,98,760) vaccine doses are in the pipeline and will be received by the States/UTs within the next 3 days.

Cyclone Tauktae: 37 Dead, 38 Still Missing From Barge P305, Search And Rescue Operations Underway

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, May 20:

The bodies of 37 crew members of Accommodation Barge P-305, which sank, about 35 miles off Mumbai on May 17, were retrieved by the Indian Navy's Search and Rescue (SAR) operations team, even as 38 crew members remained missing as of Thursday morning evening.

As the cyclone "Tauktae" intensified in the Arabian sea, the ill-fated barge P-305 sank, due to ingress of water, on Monday evening in an extremely severe cyclonic storm with winds of 80-90 knots, wave heights of 6-8 meters, torrential rains and almost zero visibility. Being an accommodation barge, it had no engine to power it. It hit one of the oil rigs in the vicinity and resultantly the water gushed into

it. The barge P-305, Drill Ship "Sagar Bhushan", "Support Station 3" and "GAL Constructor" were engaged in oil exploration work by the ONGC. However, they were drifted off the "Heera Oil Fields" of ONGC in the Bombay High area. While P 305 sank, others were steadiy by the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard in the joint operation.

The bodies of the dead crew members were retrieved by Navy's ships-INS Kochi, Kolkata, Beas, Betwa, and Teg and aircraft- P8I maritime surveillance aircraft, Chetak, and Seeking helicopters, involved in the SAR operations. 188 stranded crew members were rescued. The survivors included 186 crew members of "barge P-305", and two crew members from Tug

"Varapradha", a Defence Spokesman Commander Mehul Karnik told the "Imphal Times".

The survivors were visibly jaded and worn out after the trauma of being adrift in turbulent waters. Some of them were tossed in the choppy waters for 16 to 18 hours. They thanked the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard.

INS Kochi which entered the Mumbai harbour on Wednesday, to disembark 125 survivors and mortal remains of four crew members, was immediately sailed out in the evening again to continue the search effort. INS Kolkata entered Mumbai harbour on Wednesday night and disembarked the survivors rescued from barge P-305 and Tug "Varapradha" as well as the mortal remains of 18 crew members recovered during the

operation.

On completion of its operations off Gujarat coast, INS Talwar has also been diverted to conjoin the other three naval ships searching for the missing crew of barge P-305, off Mumbai.

INS Talwar was the 'On Scene Coordinator' off Gujarat coast and assisted "Support Station 3" and Drill Ship "Sagar Bhushan", which are now being safely towed back to Mumbai by ONGC support vessels. Food and water to the 300 odd crew members of these vessels were also provided by the naval helicopters from Mumbai, earlier in the day. Commander Mehul Karnik added.

Probe instituted
In the meanwhile, the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has set up a high-level committee to enquire into the

sequence of events leading to the stranding of ONGC vessels in the cyclone. The committee will comprise the Director-General of Shipping Amitabh Kumar, Director General of Hydrocarbons S.C.L. Das, and Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence Nazli Jafri Shayan.

The committee will also look into whether the warnings issued by Meteorological Department and other statutory authorities were adequately considered and acted upon. Also, whether the Standard Operating Procedures for securing the vessels and dealing with disaster management were adequately followed. Lapses and gaps in the systems leading to the stranding and drifting of the vessels will be probed and a report will be submitted within a month.

Kangleipak Calendar Board observed 13th Foundation Day

IT News
Imphal, May 20:

The Kangleipak Calendar Board today observed its 13th Foundation Day at its Head Office located at Laishram Leirak, Lamphel DC Road, Imphal West District.

In connection with the Foundation Day observance, the Board greets people of all communities in the state.

A statement by Soraisam Sanjit Secretary General of the Kangleipak Calendar Board says that the Foundation day was observed by organising a simple function attended by the office bearers of the Board and also by maintaining Covid-19 SOPs. He appealed people to stand together to fight this pandemic.

IMA Condole

IT News
Imphal, May 20:

Indian Medical Association, Manipur State Branch deeply condole by the sudden and untimely demise of one of Indian Medical Association most legendary figure, Padma Shree Dr Krishan Kumar Aggarwal, past Secretary General and National President of IMA after battling COVID 19 for long. In honor of the departed soul, IMA Manipur State Branch observed a two minutes silence in an emergency meeting held on May 18, 2021

A Gist of the Lecture series on Hum Jitenge: Positivity Unlimited

Covid Response Team (CRT)

Background: Amidst the challenge posed by Covid-19 to Indian society and to spread positivity in the society, Covid Response Team (CRT), an initiative of civil society with multiple stakeholders including religious, spiritual, business, philanthropic and social organizations organized a lecture series titled "Positivity Unlimited," which started from 11th May onwards and culminated on 15th May.

In this lecture series, key figures in Indian society addressed the nation to create positivity to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. Lt Gen Gurmit Singh (Retd.), Convenor, Covid Response Team, confided that the programme which lasted for over 30 minutes by each lecture covers possible responses on different aspects of life ranging from spirituality, dharmic course, and mental health to enhancing physical strength. He stated that "Imbibing confidence in the society by setting aside fear, hopelessness, helplessness, and negativity, motivating people to brace up for a long haul with huge societal changes after Covid 19 is the idea behind 'Positivity Unlimited' lecture series".

The speakers are – (1) Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev, (2) Pujya Muni Shri Pramansagar, (3) Sri Sri Ravishankar, (4) Shri Azim Premji, (5) Pujaneeya Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswati, (6) Sonal Mansingh (Padma Vibhushan), (7) Acharya Vidyasagar, (8) Pujyashri Mahant Sant Gnyan Dev Singh (Shri Panchaayati Akhada-Nirmal), (9) Nivedita Bhide, (10) Pujaneeya Sarsangchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Dr. Mohan Bhagwat delivered the concluding lecture series on 15th May.

DAY ONE: 11th May 2021
Sadguru and Munishri Pramansagarji delivered the address on the inaugural day of the lecture series. In it, the two spiritual leaders stated that Bharat would win the battle against Covid-19 with positivity, strong mind, and steady resolve. They called upon the Bharatiya society to keep a strong resolve and avoid panic, fear, frustration, and anger to win the battle against Covid-19. Both the spiritual leaders expressed confidence that Bharatiya society has the resilience to meet any challenge, including the present one. They emphasized that the most important thing to do right now is to maintain a positive attitude.

Addressing the nation, Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev Ji said, "... panics, frustration, fear, anger, none of these things are going to help us because this is not a time for grandstanding. This is not a time to point fingers at each other. This is time to stand up, not even as one nation, but as one humanity." He further added, "It's very important for all of us to continue our work to the extent possible because crippling the whole activity in the country or the world is not the answer because that's going to take a much bigger toll on us. So it's very important to what extent, whatever the nature of work we are doing, to what extent we can keep it on without coming close to people, without getting infected, (this) is a fundamental responsibility."

"This is a time to dig and dig yourself deep into the roots of the culture which has invested so heavily into inner well-being. At least the Indians should set the example. No matter what happens in our lives. We will stay peaceful. We will come through any situation thrown to us, either by earthly whiteness or the aliens. We will come out of it successfully. This is something we need to demonstrate

to the world. In many ways, the world is looking towards India for this," said Sadguru.

In his address, Pujya Jain Munishree Pramansagar said, "I want to give a message to the people having Covid-19 infection that the first and the foremost thing is to have a strong resolve that they would come out of it. Getting this disease doesn't mean that one is going to die. Have a strong and steady resolve, and you would be able to defeat this disease in no time."

"Have a spiritual insight and tell yourself that this is a physical disease and not related to your mind. There are many treatments for if your body is ailing, but there is no treatment for an ailing mind deep. So don't let this physical disease overpower your mind," he further said

"Nothing can happen to a person with a strong mind. I agree that no one is immortal, but we don't have to die just like that. People get scared when they test Covid positive. They think that they are not going to make it. Along with the patient, the family members also start panicking - this panic results in a mess. The patient and the family members should have patience. A disease has come, but it will go away also. You can see that most of the infected people are coming out of it safely. The death rate is only around 1.5 percent. The second wave is scarier but what needs to be done is to maintain caution and be alert," emphasised Jain Munishree Pramansagarji.

DAY TWO: 12th May 2021
On 12th May 2021, the second day of 'Hum Jitenge-Positivity Unlimited' lecture series, the luminaries who have gained eminence and recognition in different walks of life addressed the nation while calling for compassion Sewa express confidence that Bharat would come out as a winner is against the pandemic. The Speakers who delivered the lecture are – Sri Sri Ravishankar, Shri Azim Premji, and Nivedita Bhide.

In their deliberations, Sri Sri Ravishankar, Padmashree Nivedita Bhide, and Shri Azim Premji called upon Bharatiya society to meet the challenge posed by the pandemic by standing unitedly with a focus on compassion and service to the society.

In his address, Sri Sri Ravishankar said, "The need of the hour is patience. Today everyone in society has a responsibility from a social and psychological perspective. To carry forward this responsibility, we need to invoke patience and be in high spirits. If we are high spirited, that pall of gloom will vanish, and this is the time to invoke this positive spirit." He further continued, "We need to display compassion as there is a lot of suffering around, which can be done by doing service to others. Whatever we can do as a 'sew' for others, we should do it... this is the biggest test of human life. At least at this time, we all have to awaken our devotion to God. We have to move forward knowing that God is there and he will give us strength, and he is giving us strength". He also drew the attention, stating that "We should avoid negative mentality and negative things. Negative things should be reduced as much as possible, and every person should try to lighten the environment around which seems quite messed up. Certainly, we will come out of this crisis as the winner. Whenever any force tries to suppress us, we have become stronger, and we have grown further. Just remember, this is the time to express compassion. Express your inner compassion and awaken faith in God. Pay attention to Yoga-practice and Ayurveda, also pay attention to your health. Be ready to

do whatever you can for the good of others. By doing this, our mind would be able to avoid negativity."

In her address, social activist and Padmashree Nivedita Bhide, Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari said, "Initially the second wave of COVID came with an unexpected speed, and hence it took us some time to gear up, but now we can see that at the level of institutions, government as well as society, we have organised ourselves well to meet this challenge. It is important during this challenging time to retain our positivity, engage in creative pursuits together as a family, and most importantly do the 'Sewa (service)' work. If you can do nothing else, you can at least take care of the COVID-affected family in your neighbourhood. If you can't do even that, then you can at least pray with a resolve for the wellbeing of all. This would create positive vibrations all around and would help a great deal in creating an atmosphere of positivity." She underscored the need for meeting the challenges collectively in solidarity, stating that "We are not an ordinary nation. We have faced many challenges in the past and met them successfully, and we will meet this present challenge also successfully."

Azim Premji, in his address, noted, "In this situation, the country must come together as one. We must drop all our differences, understanding that this situation requires unity of action. Together, we are stronger, divided we continue to struggle. While wishing wellbeing and strength, he also draws the attention that "We have to be focused on the plight of the most vulnerable. All of my actions must give vulnerable the priority they deserve. I can only urge everyone to come together and do everything we can and more because the hour demands it. I wish all of you safety and strength."

DAY THREE: 13th May 2021
Spiritual Guru Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswati and eminent artist Sonal Mansingh gave the deliverance on the third day. In their respective lecture, they called upon the Bharatiya society to maintain confidence in itself. They said that "we should share around us more and positive thoughts as this would help win in the war against COVID 19."

Pujya Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswati said in his address that, "today we are facing a crisis due to pandemic in the world. A year ago, this problem came to Bharat. At that time, this crisis was overcome by hard work, cooperation, and

society's sympathy. Now the same crisis has struck again, but this time it is much more grave. But we should be able to overcome this crisis also. To overcome this crisis, we should pray and remember what Sankat Mochak Hanuman Ji said in Valmiki Ramayana. Hanuman Ji says there is sorrow, there is a crisis, yet whatever the situation is, do not give up; keep trying. No matter the crisis, if we work hard with confidence, we will get the results and be successful. In the last year's crisis, people speaking different languages and people from different states worked together, and the result was also very favorable. Two kinds of efforts are necessary to overcome the present challenge - One is to pray and practice virtue, and the second is to go for medical treatment to heal oneself. But at the same time, patience and confidence also have an important place in the present scheme of things. If there is patience and confidence, we can come out of it, no matter the crisis. There is a need for personal faith, as well as to create a positive environment at the collective level."

Eminent artist and Padmavibhushan awardee Sonal Mansingh, while sharing her personal experiences in her address, said she had recently suffered from COVID 19. Still, she overcame it with positive thoughts, patience, self-confidence, and prayer that drove away from the despair. "There is a need to create an atmosphere of boundless hope and positivity in the society so that no one is despaired or disappointed. For this, we may support creative pursuits, and we should have a feeling of gratitude in mind. We are all fighting this war, and we will get victory in it. But for this, we have to make sure that we do not consider ourselves helpless; we must stay away from anger, frustration, disappointment, share positive thoughts, and support others to create an atmosphere of positivity at the collective level in society."

DAY FOUR: 14th May 2021
On the fourth day of the series, Sadhvi Rihimbhara Ji, Vatsalya Gram, and Sant Gyan Dev Singh Ji, Shri Panchayati Akhara -Nirmal called upon the Bharatiya society to invoke the rich spiritual tradition of India and thus awaken its inner strength to overcome the Corona crisis. They said that instead of feeling helpless in unfavorable conditions, this challenge could be overcome only by taking a resolve with a strong mind.

Sadhvi Ritambhara Ji said in her address, "The strength of a society

is tested under adverse circumstances. In these adverse circumstances, while our entire country is struggling with a strange pandemic, this is the time when we have to awaken our inner strength. The biggest mountains can be moved by courage and determination. When the river flows, it can convert big rocks into sand. Therefore, feeling helpless in this challenging situation wouldn't resolve the crisis; you have to awaken your inner strength to meet this challenge."

She said that every crisis has a solution, but it comes to you only when you trust yourself and your God. With this trust and belief, we will overcome this epidemic. "I want to request all Indians that instead of accusing others, everyone should awaken their self-confidence, self-restraint, and self-determination. Amid all these circumstances, if our power is used only in negative thinking, then the ability to do and to think of something new will vanish."

Sant Gyan Devis Maharaj said in his address, "There is no need to panic. It is not only Bharat, but the whole world is going through a transition phase. Nothing is unchanged in this world. If sadness has arrived, it will not stay for long, and it would go away as it has come. So, there is no need to panic. If anyone gets infected, he should think about God, read Gita, read Gurubani. Keep your body healthy, your mind healthy. If you have won your mind, you have won over the world. If your mind is healthy, you will be healthy, and there will be no effect on you."

He said that all the advice which doctors give during this pandemic has always been an integral part of the Bharatiya lifestyle for ages. We can all stay healthy by following our rich cultural and spiritual traditions. Therefore, the need for the hour is to identify these rich traditions and follow them in our lives.

DAY FIVE: 15th May 2021
RSS Sarsangchalak Dr. Mohan Bhagwat addressed the nation on the 5th and final day. With determination, alertness, patience, and collective efforts, the corona crisis will definitely be conquered - Dr. Mohan Bhagwat Ji.

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat Ji, in his address to the nation, urged that Bharatiya would overcome the Corona crisis with determination, persistent efforts, and patience. He reiterated that this is not the time for the blame game; the need for the hour is 'all sections of the society will have

to make collective efforts together to overcome this crisis.' He expresses this in his address on the fifth and last day of the lecture series, "Hum Jitenge - Positivity Unlimited." Further, he said that if everyone works together as a team, we can move ahead at a much faster pace due to this collective effort. This is the time when we need to forget all our differences, and we have to work together. After the first wave of Corona, we were caught off guard, and now there is talk of a third wave being in the offing. All this had a profound impact on the economy, employment, education, etc. There may be a further impact on the economy in the coming days, so we have to prepare for it from now onwards. There is no need to panic because of such discussions as these are future challenges, and this would help us prepare in time to meet the challenges that we are likely to face.

He also set forth that we should engage in service work with patience and discipline while keeping ourselves alert, active, and healthy. Efforts should be made to make beds, oxygen, etc., available to the patients of Corona in hospitals. People can assist and support organizations engaged in service work. People should care about the families around them who are facing economic difficulties.

"Do not sit idle at home, learn something new, increase communication and dialogues within the family," he implored and also to consistently remember the lines –

"Success is not final; Failure is not fatal.

The courage to continue is the only thing that matters."

Dr. Bhagwat sums up by articulating that "Bharat is an ancient nation and has overcome many crises in the past. This time also we will win. For this, we have to keep the Corona out of our body while our mind should be full of positivity. In such a challenging situation, one shouldn't despair but rather resolve to fight and win this battle. Humanity has overcome many such obstructions in the past and has kept on moving ahead, and it would continue to do so".

Conclusion:
The full lectures were broadcasted and relayed to people across the country and the world through a string of over 100 news portals and many important media platforms to enhance the reach and bring about positivity. The Doordarshan National and Sudarshan News also broadcasted the 5-Day lecture series.

Bees are the lifeline of life on earth



By: Er. Prabhat Kishore

"If the bees disappeared from the surface of the globe the man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man." - Albert Einstein.

World Bee Day is celebrated every year on 20th May. This day is intended to generate awareness about importance of Beekeeping activities in increasing yield of various agricultural and horticultural products and providing income and employment support.

Beekeeping activities are being carried out by farmers in rural areas under Integrated Farming System (IFS). Honeybees are one of the best pollinators which enhances the yields

and quality of produce of various crops such as fruits, vegetables, pulses, oil seeds, etc. through pollination support. They are vital for the preservation of ecological balance and biodiversity in nature. By sucking on the nectar of flowering plants, bees spread pollen to other plants and help with the fertilization process. About 85% of plants exist because of bees and one-third of all food we eat depends on pollinators. Bees pollinate nearly 70 to 100 types of crops.

Beekeeping provides income and employment to the rural people by way of increasing yield of various crops along with providing honey & other beekeeping products, such as - bees wax, propolis, pollen, royal jelly, comb honey, bee venom, etc. which have great importance in human life. Therefore, honeybees/beekeeping is being treated as one of the most important 5th input for sustainable development of agriculture/horticulture.

Keeping in view the importance of beekeeping, GOI has approved a central sector scheme "National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM)" (100% funded by Central Govern-

ment) for overall promotion and development of scientific beekeeping in mission mode to achieve the goal of "Sweet Revolution" in the country. The Mission will have 3 sub-schemes/Mini Missions (MMs)- MM-I, MM-II, MM-III.

Under MM-I, thrust will be given on production & productivity improvement of various crops through pollination assisted by adoption of scientific beekeeping. Integrated Beekeeping Development Centers (IBDC), honey testing labs, bee disease diagnostic & treatment labs, Apitherapy centers and other infrastructure will be set up. This will also include development of nucleus stock & bee breeders, Custom hiring centers, digitization/online registration & insurance, promotion of bee friendly plants/flora/bee gardens, involvement & empowerment of women etc.

MM-II will concentrate on post-harvest management of beekeeping/beekeeping products including collection, processing, storage, trading, branding, marketing, value addition, packaging, etc. with a thrust to requisite infrastructure facility for these activities. MM-III will be responsible

for Research & Technology generation for different Regions/States/Agro-Climate and Socio-Economic conditions.

GOI has approved Rs 500 Crore for beekeeping initiatives under AtmaNirbhar Bharat programme for NBHM for 3 years (2021 to 2023). National Bee Board (NBB) has been designated as a Nodal Agency for overall development/promotion of scientific beekeeping in the country.

The main theme of celebrating World Bee Day this year will be "Save Bees", because saving the bees leads to saving the plants & food and ultimately life on the earth. Having usage of honey & other beekeeping products in daily life, their importance in human health and dependency of world agriculture/horticulture on bees as pollinators, mass-scale awareness campaigns are being organized by various departments & institutions. Beekeeping helps in prosperity of farmers, healthy people & strong nation and all citizens must give their support for preservation of this life saving creature.

(The author is a technocrat & academician)

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