

Manipur Cabinet expands by inducting 6 more cabinet ministers



IT News
Imphal, April 16:

The BJP led government headed by Chief Minister N Biren Singh today expanded its ministry by inducting six more ministers to the state Cabinet today. Now the BJP

led Manipur government have field all the Ministerial berth reaching the total number of cabinet Minister to 12 including the Chief Minister. Of the 6 Ministers inducted today, five are from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and one from the ally Naga People's

Front (NPF).

The six ministers were administered the oath of office and secrecy by Manipur Governor La Ganesan at Raj Bhavan here in Imphal.

The six Ministers inducted today and administered oath are Latpao Haokip from Tengenpou Assembly Constituency, a minister in the previous BJP government, and Th Basanta Singh from Nambol Assembly Constituency, a former IPS officer and son of former Union minister Chaoba Singh. Dr Sapam Ranjan Singh from Konhoujam Assembly Constituency, L Susindro Meitei from Khurai Assembly Constituency, and H Dingo Singh from Sekmai Assembly Constituency.

From NPF, Kasim Vasum from Chingai Assembly Constituency was sworn in as a minister, it said. NPF now have 2 Ministers in the BJP led government. 10 ministers are

from BJP.

The Cabinet expansion comes within a month of N Biren Singh-led government retaining the power in the state for the second consecutive term.

Earlier N. Biren Singh was unanimously elected as BJP legislative party leader and was sworn in as the chief minister of Manipur for a second time at the Raj Bhavan in Imphal on March 21, along with Thongam Biswajit Singh, Yumnam Khemchand Singh, Govindas Konthoujam, Nemcha Kipgen, all from the BJP, and Awngbow Newmai from NPF.

Mention may be made that even as Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had wanted to expand the ministry, it has to be done only today as the central leaders gave approval only yesterday. It was also reported that Organisation secretary of the BJP Dr. Sambit Patra arrived here in Imphal along with a sealed envelope containing the names of the ministers approved by the central leadership. That means the Chief Minister has no direct hand to the expansion of his ministry. All was done as per decision of the central leaderships.

In the swearing in ceremony held at Raj Bhavan today several leaders of the BJP as well as the Union MoS for External Affairs Dr. RK Ranjan, State BJP President A Sharda Devi, Dr. Sambit Patra, RS MP Leishemba Sanajaoba, other cabinet ministers including the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, Th. Bishwajit, Awangbow Newmai, Y. Khemchand, Govindas Konthoujam, Nemcha Kipgen and other top government officials were present.

Media to boycott Govt. if pending Advt Bills are not cleared

IT News
Imphal, April 16:

Media in Manipur have decided to boycott news related to the Manipur government, ruling political party BJP Manipur Pradesh and Opposition Manipur Pradesh Congress (INC) over non clearance of advertisement bills. A joint meeting of publishers, members of Editors Guild Manipur (EGM), Manipur Hill Journalists Union (MHJU) and All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU), which is supporting the movement, was held at Manipur Press Club on April 15, 2022 and has given all three parties till 23rd of the April 2022 to clear all pending advertisement bills.

A joint press release by EGM and AMWJU said, "In case of the two political parties, the bills pertain to election advertisement of the just concluded 12th Manipur State

Assembly Election. Bills running into lakhs of both the parties, mostly outsourced to external advertisement agencies, remain unpaid even as the election process has ended and government installed. The meeting resolved to appeal both the Presidents of BJP Manipur Pradesh and MPCC to clear the bills by 23rd April 2022 or face boycott."

In case of Manipur government, bills running into nearly Rs.10 crores have been lying unpaid for several years. The issue was raised by the media fraternity on 27 November 2021 through a memorandum to the then IPR Minister. An assurance from Chief Minister and strict instruction to his Ministries led to suspension of any form of agitation and the media fraternity waited. A meeting with the Chief Secretary of Manipur also resulted in further assurance to clear all bills by 31st March 2022.

However, nearly 5 months since the issue was raised, except for around 10% of pending bills, no further payment have been forthcoming, the statement added.

Media houses already reeling under the impact of COVID 19 pandemic and shrinking market have been accommodative to the government's problems. The joint meeting set 4 pm of 23rd April 2022 as the deadline for clearance of the bills failing which a meeting is being convened on the same day to discuss the method and details of the boycott.

It further said, "Notwithstanding the strong stand taken by the meeting, those attending the meeting express hope that both the political parties and the government will be sympathetic to the appeal of the media and avoid any confrontation which is not the purpose of the resolution."

HAC Chairman MLA Dinganglung Gangmei inspects developmental works in Noney

IT News
Noney, April 16:

Chairman Hill Areas Committee (HAC) Manipur and MLA Nungba AC Dinganglung Gangmei (Dipu) today visited the Noney District Headquarters in order to oversee developmental works being taken up

in and around the district headquarters' campus.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Noney S. Khapudang, SP Noney, Additional SP Noney, District Level Officers, Sub-Divisional Officers and other related officials of Noney District accompanied him in the inspection.

Manipur Hockey AGM held

IT News
Imphal, April 16:

The Annual General Body Meeting of Manipur Hockey for the year 2020-21 was held today at Khuman Lampak Hockey Stadium, Imphal with presence of its Executive Board Members, Life Members, Representatives of District Hockey Units, and also the affiliated Club representatives.

The Meeting was presided over by Basudev Singh, President of Manipur Hockey, while its Life President Ksh Thoba Singh, General Secretary Neken, and Treasurer N. Ranjit Singh were on the dais.

The Meeting passed the audited statement of accounts presented by the Treasurer, and the activities report for the year 2020-21 presented by the General Secretary. Certain amendments to the existing Constitution of Manipur Hockey have also been effected on the lines and pattern of Hockey India.

In the amended Constitution, the Executive Board of Manipur Hockey will have 11 (eleven) elected members namely: one president, two vice presidents (one male and one female), one General Secretary, one Treasurer, two Joint Secretaries (one male and one female), and four Executive

Members. Besides the 11 members, there will be one Life President, one Chief Executive Officer, one Technical Director, four athlete representatives (2 males and 2 females), Six Associate Vice Presidents, & five Associate Joint Secretaries.

During the meeting, the representatives of affiliated Hockey Clubs submitted suggestions for improvement of the working of Manipur Hockey. The suggestions were received for further discussion in the next meeting. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the Chief Executive Officer of Manipur Hockey.

Narendrajit Singh: The Unsung Hero of Manipur in the war of 1857

By: Anandita Singh
New Delhi, April 16:

Today, 2nd of Baisakh marks the 203rd Birth anniversary of Narendrajit Singh of Manipur- the patriot who fought British for more than 2 decades without respite. We pay tribute to one of the most remarkable heroes of the freedom struggle who fought alongside the nation in the war of 1857 and led armies in Cachar region of Assam

War of 1857: planning and execution

Imperialist schools of thought believe that the war of 1857 was a merely a series of isolated 'revolt' or 'mutiny' in which the kings and queens participated only for their kingdoms and their territory; excerpts from the correspondence of Capt. Robt. Stewart, (*Superintendent of Cachar*) paint a very different picture by clearly mentioning the circulation of Chapati and Lotus flowers throughout the country. Thus, acknowledging that the nationwide planning for the war reached as far as Cachar and Chittagong. At Haridwar

Kumbh of 1855, culture, strategy and weaponshook hands and vowed to expel British from Indian soil. The confluence of Kumbh, meticulously planned the first war of Indian Independence of 1857. The myth of isolated uprisings in the country that has been propagated through years and generations, crumbles when we put historical evidences under a wholistic lens. Under the circumstance of a lack of collective identity, goal and a strong concept of 'nation', it would not have been practically possible to mobilize people from Delhi to Chittagong towards one common goal.

The Indians recruited in the British Army who were awakened by the call for action knew that the moment they defy orders of the British, they will lose their job, their livelihood, and eventually their lives. Such diligent were their planning that the messages of war were conveyed via lotus flowers and chapatis to the farthest and remotest corner of the country and such strong was the urge of self-determination among the people that they agreed to risk everything based on just one



message because there was an inextinguishable fire in their hearts- the fire called 'Swara' that fueled their passion for *Swaraj*.

Role of Narendrajit Singh in the fight for Independence

Narendrajit Singh, a Prince of the Manipur royal family was patriotically active in his own capacity in Cachar. He was born on 2nd Baisakh, 1741 Saka (1819) to Chourjit Singh; the ruling king of eastern Cachar. Narendrajit was a vigilante and

observed the British interference in his kingdom very closely. The bottled-up resentment of the unwanted and unwelcomed intrusion took physical form in 1834 when his elder brother Tirhubanjit Singh led a battle against the British and the subservient Manipur Kings who were bowing to the whims of foreigners and was mercilessly killed during the same. Narendrajit Singh followed the footsteps of his brother and joined the move-

ment until he was captured in 1841 and sent to Decca jail. He was kept under surveillance in Decca for 10 years and was later released in 1851. During this period, the prince got acquainted to the then Indian politics along with the resources, capabilities and strategies of the British. All this injustice towards his people taught him that until and unless a united Indian power confronted the British, their rule in India would not end. Hence, after the war of 1857 was

planned at Kumbh, and Narendrajit Singh received intel, he began his endeavor to blow strikes on the British empire. According to his plan, he helped 6 other Princes of Manipur in escaping the British jails on 10th January 1858. After being released from Decca jail, Narendrajit Singh was living in Cachar where he also mobilized the people of Manipur and Cachar alike. His influence was so great that when the British instructed the king of Manipur to dispatch 400 troops to fight alongside them in 1857 and the King also agreed under pressure, the common people and the soldiers of Manipur refused to join the British serving troops. Based on the guidance of Narendrajit Singh they had two arguments for rejecting the British offer- a) they believed in the brotherhood of Indians and recognized the power of patriotism b) they believed that it was sinful to fight for the foreigners who had encroached upon their territory.

Landmark in North-east:

Cachar
Historians have also conventionally left out the north-east

of India while documenting the war of 1857. But like the rest of the country, the fire of *Swara* was ablaze among the people here. A major chapter in this history was that of *Cachar* where platoons of freedom fighters from different regions converged and collectively fought the British under the leadership of Narendrajit Singh. Today, Cachar is a district located in Southern Assam. In 1857, it was a region that was a part of the British occupied domains of India and a very important administrative center. There is no second opinion about the fact that this above-mentioned movement towards Cachar began from *Chattagram or Chittagong hills* (currently situated in Bangladesh, south of Indian state of Tripura) by the awakened members of *34th native infantry*, on 18th November 1857. Till date, there is no official documentation of the names or even the exact number of soldiers that took part in this war for Independence; some historians believe the number was 300 while others argue that the number was nearly 400-450.

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Married life or vehicles – both run with harmony

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Marriage is a legal and social contract between a man and a woman to live together for life. However, every couple is not fortunate enough to stay happily

forever. Sometimes the bond is broken by the men, and in some cases women derail the matrimonial vehicle. The laws of the country are often more in favor of women, because of this many times men get harassed and there is no one to listen to them or support them. About 80 thousand such men who have suffered from mental torture from their spouse are members of an organization called Save Indian Family Foundation. The organization provides legal and social consultation to its members. In the case of excesses, steps like protests or demonstrations are also initiated by the organization. According to the organization, in the year 2020, more than one and a half lakh suicide cases came to the notice of the police in the country. In these cases of suicide, the number of suicide cases by men stood at 1.8 lakh. To attract the attention of the government and lawmakers, Save Indian Family Foundation is organizing a conference in Hyderabad this weekend to discuss a 'matrimonial strike' on behalf of the members. The organization is also running a campaign in this regard on social media.

While the marriage goes on in harmony, motor vehicles also need energy adjustments to run smoothly on the roads. Till now, petrol and diesel have been the main fuels for running motor engines. But due to some reasons such as carbon emissions, climate change, air pollution and fuel shortage, new energy options are now being worked out around the world. Rather say that the world has already turned to electric vehicles. These include both two wheeler and four wheel vehicles. In our country, charging stations are being set up for these vehicles on the highways and in the city areas, so that the batteries can be charged quickly or changed on the way. Japan based Honda Motor Company is busy preparing something big for electric vehicles (EV). The company will spend around 4.8 lakh crore rupees in the next ten years on research and development (R&D) activities related to these vehicles. Honda is aiming to introduce more than 30 models of electric vehicles by 2030.

Japanese automobile companies have been the world leaders, but over the years they have been facing stiff competition from auto companies in the US and Europe, especially from innovative brands like Tesla. Sales of electric vehicles, especially battery-operated cars, increased in the US, Europe, China and around the world last year. Booking of EV cars is happening so fast that companies have started taking full amount from customers as advance. This also does not mean that vehicles running on petrol and diesel will go out of fashion. Not so, but yes, the number of EV fans is increasing day by day. Industry watchers believe that the current year will prove to be important from the point of view of EVs. The International Energy Agency is hopeful about the increase in EV sales. There are not many e-cars in India yet, but EV scooters, bikes and autos have definitely started running on the roads.

Good initiative of University Grant Commission (UGC)



By: Vijay Garg

From the colleges which are recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the relevant agencies of the Government of India, from the academic session 2022-23, students at diploma, undergraduate and post graduate level can pursue degrees in two subjects simultaneously. UGC says that this will improve the skills of the students. Both degrees can be taken simultaneously with classes, one online and one offline, or both online. UGC has issued guidelines for this.

The university has been given the freedom to adopt it or not. In which subjects two degrees can be taken simultaneously, it will depend on the different institutions. With this, a student will get freedom to take degree in two subjects simultaneously in science and history or science itself. If one wants, one can take a degree in B.Com and Science simultaneously. If someone is studying offline degree in both the subjects from the same university, then it has to be seen that their classes are not held at the same time. In such a situation, the student can study one subject in the morning and the other in the evening shift.

The UGC guidelines also allow two institutes to study in this matter. But it will be suitable only if both the institutions are close by. There has been no change in the eligibility conditions and university rules for two simultaneous degrees. UGC says that this initiative has been taken under the new education policy. Its purpose is to hone their skills by giving them the opportunity to study in different disciplines. This will improve the chances of such students getting employment. But there are many questions regarding this. First, getting a degree in the same subject does not reduce the academic pressure. In such a situation, will a student be able to bear the pressure of degree from two subjects simultaneously? The second question is related to the level of education. Many companies, surveys have revealed that in India even a small number of educated students do not have the ability to get employment. Therefore, with the initiative of two degrees simultaneously, an initiative has to be taken to improve the quality of education. Another problem is the declining interest in higher education. UGC and other government agencies should also take note of this. With this, efforts will have to be intensified for more and more universities of the country to make their place in the international rankings. That is, a comprehensive thinking is needed in this matter, so that the country's status in higher education is better.

Face yoga is a natural, alternative option that uses a variety of massage and exercises to target your face, neck, and shoulders.

This beauty trend has grown in popularity in the past few years with various face yoga methods making an appearance on our social media feeds.

Face yoga relaxes, tones and gives a natural boost to the skin, while simultaneously resetting your facial muscle.

When you regularly do facial exercises, the blood circulation increases to that area and that tightens your skin and brings a glow to your face.

When your facial muscles are put to use with face yoga, it stretches the 57 face and neck muscles to tone, firm and boost circulation, for a youthful appearance.

Facial yoga can be extremely beneficial for those who want glowing, youthful skin.

1. Make A Fish Face:

This pose stretches the neck region and helps tone the jawline and chin.

Fish Face exercise is the easiest and the best way to ensure a firmer looking skin.

Fill your mouth up with as much air as possible. Puff up your cheeks to accommodate more air.

Now, shift the air from one side to the other with as much speed as possible. Practise this for a couple of minutes every day to achieve glowing skin and fuller cheeks.

Alternatively Softly close your lips and then draw your cheeks inwards as much as possible, making a 'fish face' look. Try smiling while

Facial Yoga for Beauty

holding this posture for about 15 seconds and then withdraw. Repeat this exercise for about next five minutes

For wrinkle-free facial skin, try this yoga "asana" along with Pranayama. Stand straight and place feet and legs wide apart. Cover face with palms and breathe deeply and quickly for 10 counts. Then while continuing breathing, rub the face with the fingers, starting from the chin and going to the forehead. Include the area around the eyes. This helps to make the skin smooth, firm and radiant.

2. Forehead:

Do you know that frowning is an exercise for the forehead? Frown as much as possible, pulling the eyebrows towards one another. Then lift the eyebrows as far as possible. While doing this, open your eyes as much as you can. Relax them and repeat 5 times.

Anti-ageing Facial Yoga For Forehead:

Place both hands on the forehead facing inwards and spread all of the fingers out between the eyebrows and hairline. Now Gently sweep the fingers outwards across the forehead, applying light pressure to tighten the skin.

Relax and repeat 10 times.

3. Eyes:

This not only benefits the skin around the eyes, but the eyes itself.



By: Shahnaz Husain

They have much relevance nowadays, for people who are glued to computer and television screens for long periods. Keeping your head still, move only the eyes up and down ten times. Then move them from one side to the other ten times. Then, roll the eyes, first clockwise and then anticlockwise, for a total of ten times.

Widen your eyes as big as you can for your best surprised face. Hold this expression as long as you can—even until your eyes start to water! After, relax your face and repeat.

Look upwards and raise your eyebrows at the same time. Then gently close your eyelids, while still looking up.

Since our eyelids have the tendency to droop with age, this stretching exercise can help keep them firm.

4. Neck:

Sitting straight, tilt the head back and look at the ceiling. Keeping the mouth closed, do a chewing movement, while still looking up. Repeat the chewing movement 15 to 20 times. Then pucker lips and stretch the lips forward, as if you are trying to kiss the ceiling. Do this 10 times. Relax and repeat 5 to 6 times.

Still sitting upright and tilting the head back, with mouth closed, move the lower lip over the upper lip as far as possible. Hold it for a count of 5.

Relax and repeat 5 times.

Sit upright and open the mouth wide open, drop the lower jaw and push it forward, holding it for a count of 10. Come back to the starting position and repeat it 5 times.

5. Lips:

Pucker the lips and try to bring the corners of the mouth together as much as possible. Hold for a count of 5. Relax and repeat 5 times.

Then, keeping lips closed, smile as broadly as possible. Hold for 5 counts and then relax and repeat. The lips should be kept closed during this exercise.

6. Cheeks:

With the lips closed, smile in a relaxed way and then suck in your cheeks towards the teeth. Hold it for a count of 10, then relax and repeat 10 times.

Next, smile as widely as possible, keeping the lips closed. Try to make the corners of the lips go towards the ears, as far as possible. Then, wrinkle your nose. Keep to a count of 5. Relax and repeat.

Keeping your teeth and lips closed, blow air under your top lip and

Keep it there for 10 counts, then move the air to your left cheek, hold for 10 counts, then to your lower lip for 10 counts and then to your right cheek for 10 counts. Relax and repeat 5 times.

I will advise you to do facial yoga consistently for 20-30 minutes, seven times a week, changes may start to be noticeable in four to six weeks

(The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India)

Caution to Convergence: Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar

By: Arjun Ram Meghwal

We are at Amrit Kaal's doorstep that lies ahead for the next 25 years when the Nation will witness the independence century. The ongoing Amrit Mahotsava provides the blueprint for the trajectory of the Nation. The forefathers laid down their concrete vision that resulted in our progress so far. In this Mammoth exercise of Building New India, the inspiration farsighted & meticulous approach of Dr. BR Ambedkar in multiple domains will always remain as a guiding light. His 131st Birth Anniversary is an apt moment to recall his holistic role as a nation builder and take reaffirmation and inspiration to his ideal in our individual & collective sphere.

Dr. Ambedkar greatly pioneered as an institution builder, and the present-day constitutional setup reverberates his wisdom. He was the most valuable speaker in constitution Assembly debates with the highest share of 7.5 % of wordcount, whereas Nehru stood with only 2.14 %. The RBI found its genesis in his thesis "The Problem of Rupee-Its Origin & Solution". As a labor member of Viceroy's Executive Council, he was instrumental in shaping the water, power & Labour welfare policies. The management of water resources through institutions in the form of the central water commission, Central Technical Power Board, and Integrated water resources Management through establishing river valley authorities, among others, are vital interventions that shaped the will for optimally utilizing the available pool of natural resource. He majorly contributed to developing a federal finance system among the centre & states for progressively raising their economic level & without jeopardizing their interest.

He was a reasoned voice of the depressed class and staunch advocates of labor rights. As a labor leader, he advocated for 'fair condition of life of labor' instead of 'Fair Condition of Work.' Other welfare measures such as reduction in work-

ing hours to 48 hours per week, provisions of overtime & paid leave, Fixation & protection of Minimum wage, labor welfare fund, and acknowledgment of trade unions were taken spiritedly. The abolition of serfdom of agricultural tenants, abolition of the Khoti System in land tenure, and strong opposition to the Industrial Dispute Bill 1938 for ensuring workers' rights to strike were prompt measures during his role as a legislator in the Bombay assembly.

Dr. Ambedkar was very much conscious of the progressive role of women in modern society and advocated for ensuring voting rights for women immediately after independence as part of universal adult suffrage. It is pertinent to note that the US, UK and other western countries took more than a century to extend voting rights to women. In Hindu Code Bill, He advocated for conferring adoption & inheritance rights to women. For facilitating their active participation in the economic workforce, he ensured the provisions of 'equal pay for equal work' irrespective of sex & intervened in lifting the ban on women working underground in coal mines. He remains an instrumental figure in institutionalizing these strong fundamentals that now women are leaving no stone unturned and making the Nation proud on every possible front.

During the concluding speech in the constitution assembly on 25th November 1949, Dr. Ambedkar felt a sense of satisfaction on obtaining political equality through one man, one vote & one value. Still, he cautioned about the upcoming contradiction due to existing differences in values on social & economic fronts. However, in the past eight years, the initiative taken by the Modi government is eliminating those contradictions, and the Nation is moving closer to the vision of Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar. The Mantra of "Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas-Sabka Vishwas & Sabka Prayas" en-

sures the inclusivity of people standing in the last mile and convergence of the government's multi-directional efforts for uplifting and nurturing their unbound potential.

The Nehru government's delay from the one-year deadline for constituting the OBC commission & indifferent attitude towards this inaction was among the four reasons that led to the Nehru Cabinet's resignation in 1951. The Modi government's intervention to extend Constitutional status to OBC Commission in 2018 & Subsequent 105th Constitutional Amendment for allowing states to identify the socially & educationally backward class are steps toward building a just society.

The historical records clearly show the difference between Ambedkar & Nehru on various accounts. Ambedkar opposed foreign policy regarding taking the J&K matter to UNO, Mismanagement of affairs with Pakistan, the plight of Hindus of eastern Bengal, & high military expenditure. On 26 August 1954 during his speech in Rajyasabha, Ambedkar criticised the Fundamental law in Nehruvian foreign policy which was obliging other nation and putting nationalist concerns at stake. He was particularly aggrieved by the government's silence that led to china's invasion in Lhasa, Tibet and atrocities against Buddhist. India had lost its buffer state & china's threat looming large on India territories. Ambedkar, from Planning Stage itself, opposed the special status provision to J&K. The Nation had to pay a heavy toll to these mismanagements in the forms of subsequent war with the neighbouring country and deprivation of innocent people of J&K from the mainstream development programs. The abrogation of article 370 & 35A of the constitution paved the way for sharing the fruits of development with the people J&K. He criticized the extra-territorial loyalty of the communist and cautioned their duality in the cause of national

progress.

The idea to observe "Samajik Nayay Pakhwada" from the BJP foundation day express symbiotic allegiance to the ideals of Ambedkar. The government programs are resulting towards bringing positive changes and facilitating ease of lives of everyone & disadvantaged and down trodden section particularly. The development of Panch Tirtha, Dr. Ambedkar International Centre & Implementation of pro-poor welfare schemes such as standup, Start-up, Mudra & Venture Capital Fund, Building Eklavya Model residential school, PM Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Yojana, PM Kisan, PMFBY, PM Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana, Ujjwala Aushmaan Bharat among others are increasing people's living standards. The revamped Post Metric scholarship scheme facilitates higher education for four crores SC students. The four labor codes - the Code on Wages, Industrial Relations Code, Social Security Code, and the Occupational Safety, Health, and Working Conditions Code have been formulated, focusing on the fair condition of life of workers. The National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property, Lucknow, under the Ministry of culture, is undertaking a project to preserve the personal belonging of Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar. These belonging will be showcased at the proposed Research centre & Museum at Chincholi in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Now, the 131st Birth Anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, let's mark this moment by immersing ourselves in the realm of the imagination framed by our forefathers and unsung heroes. Let our action tread towards building a just society and scale new heights for the Nation so that outcome resonates globally with the symphony of our beloved Nation.

(The author is a Union Minister of State for Culture & Parliamentary Affairs and Member of Parliament, Bikaner)

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Marginal uptick in India's daily Covid cases with 975 fresh infections, 4 deaths

Agency
New Delhi, April 16:

India logged 975 new Coronavirus infections on Saturday as against 949 on the previous day, while the active cases rose to 11,366 according to the Union Health Ministry data. An increase of 133 cases has been recorded in the active cases after a month-long downward trend. The active cases comprise 0.03 per cent of the total infections.

Since Monday, India has logged over 4,700 new cases. (861 on Monday, 796 on Tuesday, 1,088 on Wednesday, 1,007 on Thursday and 949 on Friday).

The death toll climbed to 5,21,747 with four new fatalities, the data said. Haryana, Maharashtra, Mizoram and Odisha reported one death each as per health ministry.

The number of people who have recovered from the disease surged to 42,507,834 with nearly 800 new recoveries. The

national Covid recovery rate remained at 98.76 per cent, while the case fatality rate was recorded as 1.21 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 186.38 crore. 6.8 Lakh doses were administered in the last 24 hours, of which, over 23,500 were booster doses for adults under the age of 60 and 1.97 Lakh doses (both 1st and 2nd) were administered to children between 12-14 age group.

India's Coronavirus tally of confirmed cases had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20, surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

The country crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23 last year.

14 kids among 53 hospitalised with Covid in Delhi, most children have comorbidities

Agency
New Delhi, April 16:

Around 14 kids infected with Covid have been hospitalised in Delhi as of Saturday morning. Most of the kids admitted to the hospital are comorbid.

Twelve of them have been admitted to Delhi's Kalawati Saran hospital.

There are around 53 cases of hospitalisation due to Covid. Though, the number of coronavirus-infected people in hospitals has not increased.

On Friday, Delhi recorded 366 Covid cases

with a positivity rate of 3.95 per cent. The national capital has been witnessing an uptick in coronavirus cases over the last few days. Though the Delhi government has maintained that there is no cause of concern.

The Delhi Directorate of Education issued guidelines for students on Friday, saying closure of schools is the last option.

"Closing schools would be the last option. Partial closure would be implemented if required," said Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

After good performance in Manipur, NPP eyes Nagaland election in 2023

Courtesy: NE Now
Shillong, April 16:

Following a better performance in the recent Manipur Assembly election, the National People's Party (NPP) is now eyeing Nagaland.

"We are working the undercurrent. Our poll-related activities will be visible from September-October period," New Indian Express quoted NPP Nagaland state president Andrew Ahoto Sema as saying.

"The Centre pumped so much money into Nagaland. However, we are yet to have a basic public infrastructure. People are lying low but they see good scope for them in the NPP because it is a sleeping lion," Sema said.

In Manipur, the NPP had upstaged the Congress to become the principal opposition party.

Meghalaya chief minister Conrad Sangma-led NPP had



won two seats in the 2018 Nagaland polls but suffered a jolt soon after when both MLAs jumped ship.

With the state bracing for the elections again, the NPP has started the groundwork.

Sema said that it has been for nearly 20 years that the people of Nagaland are wait-

ing to see the change that the CM Neipheu Rio had spoken about.

He said the party was grooming potential workers to make them election-ready.

The NPP leader claimed the party also received feelers from some MLAs of ruling parties who were willing to join it.

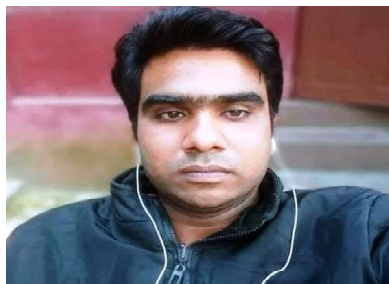
PEC demands punishment to Bangladesh scribe killers

IT Correspondent
Geneva, April 16:

Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the global body for media safety and rights, condemns the murder of Bangladeshi journalist Mohiuddin Sarker Nayeem (28) and demands exemplary punishments to the perpetrators. In an earlier statement, the PEC expressed its serious concern over the sharp rise in journalists killed across the world this year.

Mentionable is that Cumilla-based journalist Mohiuddin was shot dead by suspected drug smugglers on 14 April 2022. His family members claimed that Mohiuddin used to report about the drug trafficking in his locality. The Bangladesh police forces received a lot of inputs from Mohiuddin about the movement of drug peddlers.

Son of a retired policeman, Mohiuddin was associated



with the local Bengali newspaper 'Dainik Cumilla Dak' and for some time he also worked for Ananda television news channel. He was targeted by gunmen at Pachora area near to Hyderabadnagar on Wednesday midnight and later succumbed to injuries in the hospital.

"So far in 2022, globally we have lost 45 journalists to assassinations. This is a dramatic rise

and very worrying as the number of journalists killed last year was only 79. The war in Ukraine, the conflict triggered by Russia, has claimed 15 victims among media workers and over 20 journalists sustained injuries. On the other hand, Mexico witnesses the murder of 9 journalists till date," said PEC president Blaise Lempem.

PEC's south Asia representative Nava Thakuria lamented

that a young Bengali scribe had to lose his life on the eve of Bangladesh New Year. Local journalists have demonstrated their anger against the murder in front of Cumilla Press Club on Friday demanding exemplary punishment to the killers. Lately, four individuals have been arrested by the police suspecting their involvement with Mohiuddin's cold-blooded murder.

Bangladesh's eastern neighbour Myanmar has also lost one journalist (Pu Tui Dim) to military atrocities, where as its western neighbour India (Rohit Kumar Biswal, Sudhir Saini and Juned Khan Pathan) and also Pakistan (Hasnain Shah, Murtaza Shar and Athar Mateen) witnessed the murder of three scribes each since 1 January 2022. However, other south Asian nations like Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet (China) Sri Lanka and Maldives have evaded any murder of media workers till date this year.

AR organises Recruitment Rally Awareness Camp

IT News
Imphal, April 16:

Churachandpur Battalion under the aegis of IGAR(S) organised a recruitment rally awareness camp at Aina, Churachandpur district on

April 14. The camp was organised to spread awareness amongst the youths and locals about Assam Rifles Meritorious Sports Person Recruitment Rally 2022. During the interaction, youths were encour-

aged to explore career opportunities in Armed Forces.

Village authorities and local Youth Association members attended the event and expressed their gratitude for such informative events.

Nagaland govt bans "mass casual leave" protest of doctors

Agency
Kohima, April 16:

The Nagaland government has refused to grant leave to protesting doctors of the state, reports said.

The doctors have declared a three-day "mass casual leave" next week in support of their demand for an increase in the retirement age from 60 years to 62 years.

According to reports, the Nagaland government has de-

cided not to approve any casual leave to the doctors.

In an order, Nagaland Chief Secretary J Alam said no one shall be granted casual leave from April 18 to 20, when the Nagaland In-Service Doctors Association (NIDA) has called a mass casual leave.

The development comes after a meeting on Thursday between the Chief Secretary and the leaders of the NIDA (Nagaland In-Service Doctors' Association).

An official statement said that Nagaland Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1968, prohibits government servants from participating or abetting any form of strike, including mass casual leave.

"There is no statutory provision empowering the employees to go on strike. The Supreme Court has also in several judgments agreed that going on strike is a grave misconduct under the Conduct Rules and should be dealt with, in accordance with the law," the statement said.

Two Long-Distance Trains Came on the Same Track in Mumbai

No Casualty Was Reported in the Mishap

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, April 16:

In a freak accident, two long-distance trains on the Central Railway came on the same track and hit each other at a crossing between Dadar and Matunga, resulting in the derailment of three bogies of one of the trains on late Friday night.

The Dadar-Puducherry Chalukya Express was entering on DOWN fast line from platform 7 of the Dadar Terminus, when the CSMT-Gadag Express (Mumbai-Gadag (Karnataka), which departed around 9.30 pm, dashed it from the rear side on a crossing, the official said. As a result, three bogies of the Puducherry Chalukya Express were derailed, Central Railway (CR) chief spokesperson Shivaji Sutar said.

The Gadag Express was



The damaged bogies of the Puducherry Express. (Right): stranded passengers at Dadar Terminus.

given a red signal, yet the train did not stop and rammed into the Puducherry Chalukya Express. There have been no injuries. A high-level inquiry committee has been set up to probe the in-

cident, a senior railway official said.

Due to the accident, the overhead wires between the local and outstation train services. The fast local trains were

moved on the slow track. The passengers in both trains reportedly heard some loud sounds, along with sparks on the overhead electric wires.

This was the second derailment on the Central Rail-

way section this month. Earlier, the Lokmanya Tilak-Jaynagar Express (Pawan Express) had derailed near Nashik in Maharashtra on April 3, 2022.

The Mumbai Rail Pravasi Sangh (MRPS) blamed the railway officials for the accident saying that although tracks No 5 and 6 are reserved for local trains, they are being used for mail and express trains by the railways. The mail and express trains should be run strictly on tracks No 3 and 4, MRPS President Madhu Kotian and General Secretary Siddhesh Desai said in a statement. Besides, it should be investigated why an Anti-Collision Technology failed and the guilty officers should be punished, they demanded.

A few years back, when Ram Naik was the railway minister, the Mumbai Rail

Vikas Corporation was set up jointly by the Union and state government to deal with pending railway projects in Mumbai and adjoining areas, since the commuter load is tremendous. However, most of the projects are moving at a very slow speed. The process of even the land transfer is also yet to be completed for most of the projects, Desai said.

In the meanwhile, the incidents of the trains coming on the same track continue to occur occasionally on both Central and Western railway lines. On June 20, 2012, the local trains running in opposite directions had come on the same track near Bhayander on the Western Railway. A similar incident was reported on October 24, 2016, at Churchgate. Luckily due to the presence of the mind of the motormen, the major mishaps were averted.

AR conducts Security Coordination Meet

IT News
Imphal, April 16:

Churachandpur Battalion under the aegis of IGAR(South) organised a security coordination meet at Hengkot village, CCPU district yesterday.

The meet witnessed a healthy participation of village authorities & local youths. The meet provided the platform for discussion of various career opportunities for the youth and the need to insulate them from drug menace. During the meet locals were sensitized and updated on current security situation existing in the area and encouraged to align their efforts towards a common goal of peace and prosperity in the region.

8 killed as storm lashes parts of upper Assam

Agency
Dibrugarh, April 16:

At least eight people were killed and several houses were damaged when a thunderstorm lashed upper Assam's Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts on Friday evening.

According to reports, five people were killed in the Tingkong area under the Dibrugarh district.

The deceased have been identified as Annie Kujur (27), L. Kumari Bhengra (35), Labanya Horo (12) and Monica Dhan (18) and Rupeswar Koch (45).

They were cleaning a graveyard and took shelter under the bamboo trees due to sudden windstorms and rain.

Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), Dibrugarh district project officer, Deepjyoti Hatikakoti said, "As per reports, at least five people were killed in thunderstorms in Tingkong re-



enue village in Dibrugarh district on Friday evening after a strong storm-lashed and uprooted trees in the area. As per government rules, compensation should be given to the deceased family".

On the other hand, 3 people were killed in the Tinsukia district after a heavy storm hit the area.

The deceased have been identified as Rina Thapa (35), Rahul Hajong (25) and Tukeswar Sonowal under Margherita revenue circle.

Tinsukia Additional Deputy Commissioner Dipu Kumar Deka said, "Three people were reportedly killed at Margherita revenue circle in

Tinsukia district on Friday evening after big trees uprooted and fell on them."

He said, "Many damages were reported from Margherita circle. Several houses and property were damaged during the storm. The people were taken refuge in schools and government offices."

Less than 40% in 15-18 age group fully vaccinated against Covid in 10 States, UTs

Agency
New Delhi, April 16:

Less than 40 per cent of those eligible in the 15-18 years age group have been administered both the doses of COVID-19 vaccine in 10 states and union territories with Meghalaya being the last in the list with 10 per cent, according to government data.

Ahead of Meghalaya is Nagaland, which has inoculated 18.7 per cent of the targeted beneficiaries in this category, and Manipur (24.6 per cent), the data as on April 15 showed.

Arunachal Pradesh has

vaccinated 28.9 per cent of the adolescents in the 15-18 years age group followed by Jharkhand at 30.7 per cent, Bihar 35.2 per cent, Assam 36.4 per cent, Punjab 37 per cent and Chandigarh 37.1 per cent.

Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu have vaccinated 38.2 per cent. Andhra Pradesh is at the top with 102.9 per cent of the target population in the age group of 15-18 years being fully vaccinated.

Andhra Pradesh is followed by Jammu and Kashmir with 83.6 per cent and Himachal Pradesh (80.8 per cent). In Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra,

Mizoram, Puducherry, Tripura and Lakshadweep, the percentage was below 50 per cent.

The national average of second dose coverage in the 15-18 years age group is 54.3 per cent, the data showed. An estimated 7,40,57,000 adolescents are there in the country in this age-group. India opened up vaccination for the 15-18 years age-group on January 3.

The vaccine option against COVID-19 for children in this age group is Covaxin. The cumulative vaccine doses administered in the country has exceeded 186.3 crore as per provisional reports till 7 am.

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Narendrajit Singh: The Unsung Hero of Manipur

The 34th Native Infantry of Chittagong

As per records, the movement of 34th Native Infantry started on 18th November 1857, at 9-10pm when the guards posted at the collector's office began firing rounds and thereafter released prisoners from the Chittagong jail. These released prisoners too joined the movement for independence.

Simultaneously, the British army was attacked by the Indians from where surplus arms and ammunitions were procured. Thereafter, as planned, they attacked the treasury and collected Rs. 2,78,267 and resumed their march in two separate branches- one towards Tripura and another towards Cachar via Lushai hills. Lt. Ross in his reports mentions that 34th Native Infantry had used careful strategy and split their platoon into smaller segments and took the forest route to reach Cachar. The branch that had taken the Aizwal-Silchar route to reach Cachar, were helped by local Lushai chiefs (who were also known as Sailo) from the Lushai Hills (in present day Mizoram). The British had assumed that Indian patriots could be bought off with money and thus Capt. Stewart had a failed attempt of luring the local chiefs to his side by promising Rs 50/- to them for every Indian soldier fighting against British that they killed or captured (to put this in perspective, at that time gold price was Rs 2 per Tola - 10 grams). This offer was accompanied by a stern warning that the freedom fighters must not be helped. Contrary to what Capt. Stewart must have expected, the Lushai chiefs and common people alike, helped them in whatever capacity they could. The branch moving towards Tripura was led by Rajabali Khan and had to take shelter in the hilly areas of Comilla (Presently a border town in the Chittagong division of Bangladesh) after having been intercepted at Tripura by the British. This was the period where these soldiers of Indian soil faced the most difficulties. Their ration stockade had been destroyed during the skirmish at Tripura, they had been isolated in the thick jungles leading to Cachar where they had to sustain themselves in adverse situations but they were

helped by local people despite the British warnings. Thus, after having been replenished, the troops moved upward from Comilla to Latu (currently a town in the Karamong district of Assam sharing border with Bangladesh). At Latu, their movement was intercepted by Captain Byng who confronted them along with 150 soldiers. A battle was fought at Latu on 19th December 1857 and marked a major victory for the freedom fighters as they were able to kill Capt. Byng and crush his platoon. C. E. Buckland records that after this battle the winning party motivated the troops of Capt. Byng to renounce the British service and join the movement.

Combined Attack

When the 34th Native Infantry heard of Narendrajit Singh and his leadership, they decided to join hands with him and unite their forces. Hence, after the battle of Latu on 19th December 1857, they entered Cachar on 20th December and met Narendrajit Singh and his followers. They launched a combined attack on the British at Binnakandi (currently a town in Cachar district of southern Assam).

As the freedom fighters had strategized well, they could engage with the British at several fronts; this collective launch of attack by them gave a tough time to the British at Cachar, Mohanpur, Binnakandi, Latu, Jalingah, Govindnagar, and parts of Manipur. The leader of the movement; Narendrajit Singh was injured during the battle of Binnakandi on 12th January 1858 by the British troops of Sylhet light Infantry led by Lt. Ross. Narendrajit Singh was then carried into the jungles of Manipur from where the king of Manipur Chandra Kirti Singh had managed to shift Narendrajit Singh to the royal palace despite the British pressure on 2nd February 1858. The king was totally against surrendering his kin to the British; they engaged in a series of back and forth over the custody of Narendrajit Singh, but eventually the British got the upper hand and Chandra Kirti Singh had to surrender him on 25th April 1858. After a show of trial, the British decided to send the leader of 1857 to Andaman for life transportation on 25th June

1858.

Conclusion

Narendrajit was an exceptional leader and patriot who despite being banished from his own land and suffering 10 years of wrongful captivity (From 1841 to 1851) managed to have sharp a sense of judgement, observation and leadership. He could mobilize people, inspire them, and take them on the rightful path of freedom which is probably why the British tried to keep him as far away from his people as possible. Despite being in Decca jail for ten years, he never lost sight of what his country needed. To prevent any further influence of Narendrajit Singh on the people, the British had to send him to Andaman as he was able to keep the fight going on for much longer period than the British had expected and the leaders of North of India could sustain. Narendrajit Singh is a name that disappears from the British records after 1858 but his name today is engraved in our history as one of the greatest freedom fighters; his relics (including royal cloth, garland, Paduka (Footwear), Shankh (Conch Shell) and a handwritten copy of Bhagwad Gita) have been preserved and revered by his descendant Shri Birendrajit Singh in Agartala, Tripura which are displayed only once every year on Narendrajit Singh's Birth Anniversary. The troops of 34th native Infantry that left Chittagong had no clue of Narendrajit Singh until 19th December and yet they fought proudly under his leadership in Cachar and Binnakandi because they believed that this Prince of Manipur could lead them to victory... and he did. This is not the story of some unsung heroes, this the legend of people whose names have been conveniently omitted from the process of documentation, and thereof from our history. The warriors of 34th native Infantry, the Lushai chiefs and every single individual who contributed in the freedom struggle are the spark of Swaraj that lights our lives up till today.

(Anandita Singh is a researcher at Centre for North East Studies. She has extensive study of socio-political & cultural dynamics of the pre-colonial & colonial period in East of Bharat)

India's 'Warm' Vaccine candidate effective against Delta, Omicron Variants in Mice: Study

Agency
New Delhi, April 16:

A heat-stable COVID-19 vaccine that is being developed in India and does not need cold chain storage has generated strong antibody response against coronavirus variants, including Delta and Omicron, according to a study on mice. The vaccine candidate, by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru and biotech start-up company Mynvax, uses a part of the viral spike protein called the receptor-binding domain (RBD), which allows the virus to connect with the host cell to infect it.

The team, including researchers from Australia's Com-

monwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), noted that most vaccines require refrigeration to remain effective. The heat-tolerant COVID-19 vaccine candidate can be stored at 37 degrees Celsius for four weeks and at 100 degrees Celsius for up to 90 minutes. In comparison, the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India, must be kept between 2-8 degrees Celsius and the Pfizer preventive requires specialised cold storage at minus 70 degrees Celsius.

The latest study, published recently in the journal Viruses, assessed vaccinated mice sera (blood samples) for efficacy against key coronavirus vari-

ants, including Delta and Omicron. The study found that mice immunised with different formulations of the vaccine elicit high titres (unit to measure amount or concentration) of antibodies that neutralise SARS-CoV-2 variants VIC31 (reference strain), Delta and Omicron variants of coronavirus. Compared to VIC31, there was an average 14.4-fold reduction in neutralisation against the Omicron variant for one formulation of the Mynvax vaccine and a 16.5-fold reduction for another formulation.

The corresponding values for reduction in neutralisation against Delta variant were 2.5 and 3, according to the researchers. The average 14.4- or

16.5-fold reduction in neutralisation against Omicron BA.1.1 for the monomeric and trimeric formulations, respectively, compares favourably with equivalent reductions observed with leading COVID-19 vaccines, the authors of the study noted.

Our findings suggest that monomeric formulations are suitable for upcoming Phase I human clinical trials and there is potential for increasing the efficacy with vaccine matching to improve the responses against emerging variants, they wrote in the journal. Monomeric and trimeric formulations refer to different shapes and combinations that can be used to develop the vaccine.

Sports

I-League: RoundGlass Punjab FC continue winning streak with 1-0 win over TRAU FC

Agency
Kolkata, April 15:

RoundGlass Punjab FC registered their fourth win in a row in the I-League 2021-22 season after defeating Manipuri outfit TRAU FC by 1-0 at the Naitahi Stadium, here on Friday.

Striker Kurtis Guthrie scored the decisive goal of the game in the 35th minute. With this win, Punjab FC regained third position on the league's standings and now stands four points behind table toppers Gokulam Kerala FC and two behind Mohammedan SC.

The first half kicked off with Punjab FC on the front foot, with Freddy Lallawmawma testing the keeper as early as the third minute. Five minutes later, Maheson Singh drove towards goal and fired in an effort that went just wide of the post.

The pressure continued to mount on the TRAU defence as Guthrie's shot on the turn was narrowly off target in the 21st minute, and the Englishman almost got on the end of a headed pass inside the penalty box from Travis Major, only to be denied by a last-second intervention.



With ten minutes to play in the first half, Guthrie opened the scoring as Punjab FC's dominance bore fruit. The ball was won high up the pitch and laid off to Joseba Beitia, who produced an inperfect cross from the right flank for Guthrie to calmly head home and take his scoring tally for the season to double figures.

Guthrie almost doubled his tally in the 41st minute after getting his head to a cross from the left side but was denied by rival custodian Amrit Gope. At the break, the

scoreline read 1-0 in favour of RoundGlass Punjab FC.

The club picked up from where it left off in the second half, with Freddy's curling effort from the edge of the penalty area flying just over the crossbar in the 48th minute. Five minutes later, he again won the ball close to the opposition goal and unleashed a drive that stung Gope's palms once more.

TRAU looked to catch RoundGlass Punjab on the break on a couple of occasions, and goalkeeper Jaspreet Singh had to be alert to keep out a shot from

Bishorjit Meitei in the 68th minute. Substitutes Rupert Nongrum and Aphaoba Singh were brought on as well, with the former being denied his third goal in three games in the 88th minute, as his shot from six yards out was saved.

In the end, the match drew to a close with the scoreline reading 1-0 in favour of RoundGlass Punjab FC. In their next match, the club will face table toppers Gokulam Kerala FC on April 19, which will be the final game for both teams in the league's first phase.