

## Class XII exam begins today; over 28000 students are appearing at 118 center across the state

IT News  
Imphal, April 7:

Class XII examination conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary education Manipur (COHSEM) for the year 2022 begins today.

As per information from the Council, as many as 28,400 students are appearing at different streams – Arts, Science and Commerce at 118 examination centers across the state.

A total of 4168 male students and 4035 female students are appearing in Arts stream; In Science stream a total of 9958 male students and 9671 female students are appearing in Science stream while a total of 304 male students and 264 female students are appearing in Commerce stream.

That is the total number of



female exam candidates is 13,970, while that of male candidates is 14,430. In the regular category, the number of students to appear is 27,983; private 214 and casual cum subject improvement is 201.

The number of students who are differently abled is 18.

Examination starts at 10 am and ends at 1 pm.

Last year the number of students appeared in the Council examination was

31,136, as per information from COHSEM. That means the number of students this year has been reduced.

COHSEM said that all exam centres have been directed to implement precau-

tionary measures and maintain COVID appropriate behavior during the exam time.

118 officer in charge and 118 Supervisor are taking up extreme precautionary measures to ensure that the students do not use unfair means of any kinds. In addition, the COSHEM has also designated flying squad to check the examination center.

Besides, students' bodies have also assisted the Council to make sure that the examination is conducted in fair manner.

On the other hand, police are seen deployed at some of the examination center as there has been a warning from UG group ASUK against the use of any unfair means. The outlaws have also imposed curfew in the 100 meter periphery of the examination center.

## Congress staged protest against price hike of Petrol and Diesel



IT News  
Imphal April 7:

Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) today staged a protest demonstration at Keishampat Leimajam Leikai Community hall against the Price hike in petroleum products. The protest is a part of the nationwide protest by AICC. Various placards denouncing the BJP government were used during the protest.

MPCC President K. Meghachandra, who led the protest while speaking to the

media person said that petroleum products- Petrol and diesel have been increased 14 times in 16 days. He said the increase in petroleum products is an indirect taxes impost to the common people.

"The BJP government across India is presenting breakfast gift to every citizen the price hike of petroleum products", said K. Meghachandra.

He added that to the increase of the price of petrol and diesel there has been a direct or indirect increase to the price of essential commodities. Price

of pharmaceutical goods has been increased to 800 times in last One month. Moreover, fertilizer rate has been increased and the toll tax has also been doubled.

The trust of the people in the BJP government has been reduced by their actions.

"The Congress party demands immediate reduction of the petrol and diesel price", the MPCC president, K. Meghachandra said.

Other MPCC leaders also attended the protest demonstration.

## Three day training programme on 'Self employment and scientific piggery' begins

IT News  
Imphal, April 7:

Three day training programme on 'Self employment and scientific piggery' was held at the premises of the Keithellakpam Piggery Farm at Luker Mamang Leikai in Imphal West district today.

The training programme was organised by Keithellakpam Piggery Farm with the initiative of its Pigi Keithellakpam who own the Piggery Farm at Luker village.

Head Dr. Th. Ranadhir Singh of Department of animal sciences, Central Agricultural University (CAU) Eroisemba and politician Thousaojam Brinda were present during the inaugurak function of the training programme.

Later Head Dr. Ranadhir Singh of CAU shared his motivational talk on housing, sanitation and feeding management for a profitable pig production.

In his deliberation, Dr. Ranadhir said that piggery in Manipur has a good opportunity considering its potential in the state as ninety-nine percent of the population here are meat eaters.

"So we've enough potential in piggery if one seriously takes up the matter," he said.

Highlighting the importance of taking up piggery and its value added products as an income earning profession, he also informed that fifty percent of the country's pig population is available in the northeast.

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## The Editorial: CM N. Biren's promises on corruption should be proved with action

The N. Biren Singh 2.0 government has sent a strong message to wipe out all forms of corruption, not only once but at almost all occasions after the formation of the new government. Such an announcement gives hope to thousands and thousands of common people particularly the educated youths, who had once lost faith in the government. The notion of getting a government job without bribing or without requesting to the Ministers or Commissioners or Director finally has been eradicated from the minds of the educated youths.

Well, it will be next to impossible to clean the chronic corrupt practice overnight. But if the leader of the state is committed to making the state free from corruption, then today is the best time to begin. A single initiative will certainly make the people believe that Chief Minister N. Biren Singh is the true leader of the state who has always thought for the welfare of the downtrodden common people.

The perception about getting a government job is possible only by payment or under the blessing of those in the government will be wiped out by action of the government under the supervision of the Chief Minister. An announcement without action will not make the public believe to the Chief Minister; neither the government will be able to win the heart of the people nor the people will support him. However, everyone knows that 'action speaks louder', and the need of the hour is 'action' and not a simple announcement to win the sentiment of the people. This first month of the N. Biren Singh 2.0 government is an opportunity given to the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh to prove to the people of his state about his seriousness in tackling the chronic issue of corruption.

Just a couple of days back, the Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur have conducted recruitment test for appointing Supervisors, Inspectors, Garde IV post. There are rumours spreading around about some rich family having close relationship with the Government authority bribing huge amount of money. There are also rumours that the Minister in charge as well as the Commissioner and the Director of the Social Welfare department had already prepared a list even before conducting the recruitment test. These are rumours, but there is a saying that – "the leaves of the tree don't move without a breeze". Let's hope those are rumours and let us also pray that such thing don't happen this time as IT IS A MATTER OF PRESTIGE for Chief Minister N. Biren Singh.

The recruitment of various posts at Social Welfare department is just an example. There are many recruitment exam conducted by the government for various departments and the result of the test still are not declared. And the same rumours about the list of selected candidates, already in the hand of the department authority. These kinds of rumours happen because the wind is blowing and the leaves cannot remain silent.

Let's hope the Chief Minister tackle the issue of corruption with extreme seriousness and by doing justice to the appointment of vacant post on merit basis of the candidates. For that, the answer script should be made available to all the candidates and the marks obtain should also be made public.

## Trinamool Congress worried at AAP's expansion plans in Bengal and North East

### Arvind Kejriwal earning more National support as Mamata is bogged in State

By Ashis Biswas  
New Delhi, April 7:

In the fight for the pole position among regional outfits, the Aam Admi Party (AAP) led by Mr Arvind Kejriwal has opened up a sizable lead over early front runner Trinamool Congress (TMC). What's worse for TMC Chief Mamata Banerjee, present trends do not favour her party. The energetic Chief Minister of Bengal is getting increasingly bogged down in a quagmire of bruising inquiries and legal battles against myriad central crime - investigation agencies.

Until recently, the attitude of the TMC towards the AAP was patronizingly avuncular. It was enthusiastically supportive

of the latter's creditable performance in North India against the mighty Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Chief Minister of Bengal always addressed her younger Delhi counterpart in generous terms during their common anti-BJP campaign. Mr Kejriwal also played her loyal younger brother's role to perfection — until he chose to become more attentive to the aspirations of the majority community.

In recent times there has occurred a subtle change in the mutually complementary relationship between Delhi and Kolkata after the results of five State Assembly elections were declared on March 10. The AAP carved out an impressive victory over its older and much

bigger rivals the BJP and the Congress in Punjab. It emphatically emerged as the lead runner among regional opposition parties.

The first decisive fallout of these elections has occurred within the opposition: relations between the TMC and the AAP suddenly changed from a state of happy brotherhood to competition.

In the run up to the Assembly elections, there was a consensus among media analysts/observers that in terms of the intensity and consistency of their anti-BJP campaigns, the TMC was the undisputed leader of regional parties. The result from Punjab has forced a resetting of such assumptions.

However, it was not just its decisive victory in Punjab alone that changed the earlier alignment within the opposition. Other smaller factors too, had diminished the TMC's dominant narrative among opposition parties.

The TMC had contested the Assembly polls in Goa. It had not fought the elections in all five states. However, it had participated in a major way in recent civic polls and some by-elections in Tripura, hoping to win some support among Bengali voters in the Northeast. Both in Tripura and Goa it carried out a high-octane, expensive political campaign for weeks. TMC leaders camped in both states for weeks often using helicopters and staying in

the best local hotels. They spared no costs in arranging meetings, rallies, putting up mega-size posters etc.

The Bengal Chief Minister visited Goa herself while her nephew MP Abhishek Banerjee spent several days in both states.

The AAP also contested the Goa elections, but its campaign was visibly quieter and low key in comparison with the efforts made by the TMC. Yet, the March 10 outcome showed that it had won two seats in the house of 40 and a good percentage of votes, while the TMC drew a blank!

Post elections, senior Bengal TMC leaders, congratulated the AAP for its Punjab victory. But they spoke far more about

the BJP's decline, than Mr Kejriwal's success. They studiously avoided comparisons with the markedly better results achieved by the AAP.

A senior TMC leader told this writer, 'The biggest takeaway from Punjab is that the BJP and Congress national parties both, were trounced and a regional party won. The broad message is more important than which regional party has come first — in any case the TMC did not fight everywhere.'

His reticence provided a strong confirmation of reports that the TMC had not really relished the AAP's success.

Certain comments made by AAP leaders during their campaign in Goa told their own story. They faced an accusa-

tion that the only purpose of outstation regional parties (read the TMC or AAP) fighting in Goa polls was to cut into the anti BJP Congress votes and help the former. AAP leaders countered by questioning the TMC's decision: 'Why was the TMC putting up its candidates all of a sudden, with no local base or any preparation? Elections are not fought in such a manner'.

This annoyed the Bengal-based TMC leaders no end. Only the final outcome, revealing that in Goa the AAP had done much better, has kept them quiet, albeit sullenly, for now. But TMC insiders admit, clearly the old chummy days are over!

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# Millions of youths lost chances, or became overage

## Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



The past two years of the Covid pandemic troubled people in different ways. Some lost their jobs, some lost their business, and many others lost opportunities to shape their careers. One the one hand, eligible candidates could not appear in competitive exams, and on the other hand, lakhs of candidates became overage too. Now these youths are frustrated and confused. During this period in Haryana, the youth who wanted to join the army became overage or ineligible to apply for the jobs. The number of such youths who became overage for military recruitments is more than two lakhs. Apart from this, everything came to a standstill for two full years, due to which 10 thousand youth were deprived of recruitment in the state. Now these youth are desperate. It is obvious that there will be millions of such youth in other states too who may have been overaged for not only the army but for many other competitive exams too and are now worried. The concerned departments and ministries should do some planning for them so that such youths do not get discouraged or lose hope. According to the Center for Monitoring Indian Economy, between September and December 2021, the number of unemployed in the country was 31.8 million, most of whom were below 29 years of age.

In the year 2020, 29.3 million youth were unemployed at the time of lockdown. These figures are of those youths who kept applying here and there in search of work. There are about 12.5 million unemployed youth who have become frustrated due to lack of work and do not apply anywhere. By including these too, the figure of unemployed youth reaches above 45 million. Rajasthan has the highest number of unemployed in the country, where 6.5 million people are unemployed, including about 2.1 million graduates. Bihar is at number two, where about 3.9 million youth are unemployed. Uttar Pradesh is at number three in this list with 284.1 million unemployed. With the onset of the third wave of Covid, the unemployment rate in India started increasing once again. The unemployment rate in the country stood at 7.9 per cent in December 2021, while it was 7 per cent in November 2021. In December 2021, the unemployment rate in urban areas reached 9.3 per cent.

It is estimated that more than 80 percent of employers search for new employees on social media. According to Jobcast, 93 percent of employers use LinkedIn for new hires. Similarly, 66 percent of employers use Facebook for this, and 54 percent use Twitter. Talking about job seekers, only 36 percent of people are on LinkedIn, 40 percent are on Twitter, and the highest 83 percent are on Facebook. LinkedIn has also started its Hindi service and for this the company has promoted the service through newspapers and radio. Clearly, LinkedIn is now looking for Hindi-speaking users, as companies around the world are looking for Indian talent and they see a lot of potential in India. Through social media, such people easily get jobs, whose profile is good, as well as whose name has been referred to by many people. It also makes it clear that job seekers should not post content that defames their image on their social media.

## All the same



By: Vijay GarG

When something unequal is forced into place as an ideally equal arrangement, there is either childlike unawareness or careful calculation behind it. It is difficult to gauge the level of innocence behind the planning of the Common University Entrance Test for admission into college. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led government's declared aim of a level playing field is indeed laudable. But in the pursuit of this noble goal, the government has not only taken over teachers' functions, it has also, by centralizing the admission test, tried to eliminate the variety among educational institutions that is desirable in a dynamic learning environment. Excellence does not come of regimentation; it is achieved through free play of the intellect and of the different talents of students and their teachers. But the CUET's equality is only nominal. Questions will be set from the Class XII syllabus of the National Council of Education Research and Training, which is followed by schools under the Central Board of Secondary Education and some state boards. This puts students from other boards at a disadvantage. They feel the need for private tuitions, for which children and their parents are willing to drop classes in school. Are tuition houses meant to tie up the loose ends left by the government? Coaching institutions seem to be better informed than teachers, since they are offering schools special classes with model questions already formulated.

In this set-up, not only would school-leaving examinations be devalued but learning in school would also become a utilitarian activity. Schools with the NCERT syllabus would become more prized. Besides, the government's innocence would lead to more divisiveness. Most children from underprivileged and rural backgrounds would be left out of the race for private coaching; the greatest sufferers are likely to be girls. The school closure during Covid has hurt huge numbers of these children; many are unable to return to class. The CUET would put a further hurdle before this segment of students already suffering from the government's insistence on digital lessons and susceptible to the early vocational learning stream of the National Education Policy. It is intriguing how the government in its idealistic innocence succeeds in furthering divisions in every sphere. This is beside its effort to strait-jacket all thinking — otherwise a centralized test for university admission would not have been necessary.

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# Relevance of Surya Puja and Chhath Vrat

The Holy Purans deal with several types of stories related to Suryopasana (worship of Sun). The Sun is called the soul of the world in the Vedas. In the Vedic period, the Sun was considered to be the creator of the entire universe. The meaning of Surya is - all inspiring.

In "Rigveda", the world's oldest scripture, there is a detailed description of the worship of the Sun for the salvation of sins. Like fire, He is considered to be the sustainer and direct deity of the world. There are 14 hymns available in this Holy book about the Sun. In the 49th hymn, Suryadev has been invoked to wish for wealth. According to the 50th hymn, "Rising this day, O rich in friends, ascending to the loftier heaven, Surya remove my heart's disease, take from me this my yellow hue."

In Yajurveda, by saying "Chaksho Suryo Jayar", the Sun is considered to be God's eye. In the Chandogya Upanishad, the Sun is described as Pranavand the benefit of getting a son has been told on his meditation. The Koshitiki Brahman describes the worship of the Sun by offering water and sandalwood with Ardhya. Along with this, there is also a mention of Sun worship in various other literatures. The famous "Surya Shatakam" was composed by Mayur, the court poet of the sixth century ruler Harshavardhan.

Historically, the tradition of Surya worship was prevalent even in the Nav-prastara era i.e. 8000-9000 BC. This inspiration of worship came from India to West Asia, Egypt, Greece and Rome. The Sun is a beacon of radiant energy, without which the creation is impossible to imagine. In the scriptures, the Sun is given credit for removing poison. Curing of mental diseases, leprosy, blindness has also been discussed in the Upanishads and Sanskrit literature by praising the Sun. The source of Surya's powers is his wives Usha and Pratyusha. In fact, ChhathMahaparva is the combined worship of thesetwo powers along with the Sun. We bow jointly to our

adored God and Goddess by paying obeisance to the last ray of the Sun (Pratyusha) in the evening and the first ray of the sun (Usha) in the morning. The worship of mother power holds its own important place in the core of Indian culture. The value of maternal power can be seen in all the traditions of Shaivism, Vaishnav and Buddhist.

Archaeological evidence of the worship of "Matri Shakti" dates back to the early period of the development of civilization. The ritual of worship of Matridevi related to Sun may have started in the Kushan period (1st century AD) or even earlier. In the excavation, a number of soup-shaped paved clay water-courses have been found during the Kushan period. The idol of Matridevi and Deeya (lamps) were also used in this. From the Gupta period to the Pal Period, the adjustment of the two powers of the Sun, Usha and Pratyusha, is found in the sculptures.

The Surya chariot with four horses was conceived in early AD; but from the Gupta period, the idol of Surya with seven horses was made. The statue depicts a crown on the head of the Sun, a lotus flower in both hands, a coil in the ear, armor in the chest and foot-to-knee high boots. Two female on either side, male figures, chariots attached to seven or four horses and the charioteer Arun are also shown. The female figures are the two wives of the Sun (Shakti)- Usha and Pratyusha (Prabha and Chhaya). Pingal (Fire) and Dand (in place of Skand) are in standing on right and left side respectively. Pingal holds a pen and an inkpot in his hand and Dandis equipped with a pendulum. In iconography, Indian artists clearly incorporated into sculpture all those traditions that had been in vogue for centuries.

Every year the adoration of Sun



By: Er. Prabhat Kishore

is performed on the Shastithi (sixth day) of Shukla Paksha in the month of Kartik and Chaitra and is popularly known as "Chhath". What is the similarity between Sun and Chhath? Why Surya Puja is called Chhath Puja? There are

many stories in this regard in Vedas, Purans, Upanishads, Mahabharat and other scriptures. These stories are related to the Gods of different times. Due to lack of uniformity between them, it is difficult to come to the conclusion that which story is fictional and which is true. The form of Lord Surya has emerged from the word "Om" or Brahma.

The folk festival is a mirror of the cultural heritage of every state; be it Ganapati Puja in Maharashtra, Bihu in Assam, Onam in Kerala, Pongal in Tamil Nadu or Lohri in Punjab. Similarly, one of the folk festivals of Magadh (now Bihar and surrounding regions) is "Chhath" in which purity, faith and reverence are at their culmination. It is performed as an essential responsibility of the public life of the State. This is the reason that now Chhath has been taken out of the purview of the festival and is called Mahaparv.

In this great festival, Lord Surya is worshipped for world peace, family happiness and prosperity. The Chhath Parv has become worldwide; and apart from Indian subcontinent, now this festival is also held in countries like Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Surinam, America, Trinidad and Indonesia. The oral and moral characters of the Gita are visible in this Mahaparvaand in this sense, this Mahaparva has become a symbol of culture by taking the form of personal faith and reverence.

Known by names like Surya Shashti, Prathar Shashti, Dala Shashti and Chhath Vrat, this great festival has a tradition of worshipping both the Astachalagami Surya (the setting sun) as well as Udiyanam

Surya (the rising sun) respectively on the sixth and seventh day of the Shukla Paksh of Kartik and Chaitra month. It ignores the saying that everyone bows to the rising sun. So, the first inspiration from Chhath festival is that even if there is a shadow of sorrow on one's internalization or externalization, then one should continue with it. This tradition of Surya worship is a cultural heritage of thousands of years.

ChhathVrat is a four-day long festival, which are considered very spiritual. Purity, cleanliness and following the Vidhi-Vidhans (rules) are the first condition of this festival. There is a general opinion that if the wishes are fulfilled by this festival, then any mistake has to face the consequences too. Therefore, as much as the devotees have faith in this festival, there is also the fear that no mistake may be made.

This Vrat begins with a Nahay-Khai, in which devotees take bath in the rivers or other water bodies. Then pumpkin curry and rice (may be accompanied by other dishes) made from rock salt is eaten. On the second day, i.e. on Kharna (Lohanda), pure ghee linen bread along with Kheer (prepared with sugarcane juice or jiggery) are offered as Prasad. The third day is the Sandhya Ardhya to the setting Sun. The second Paran Ardhya is offered to the rising sun on the last or fourth day. Vratists standing in water, soups laden with Puja items kept nearby and crowds of devotees to help the fasts - together makes the atmosphere devotional.

Among the many fasts observed in the Sanatan Dharma, Chhath is the only such fast in which we worship the deity (Sun) whom we see every day directly and who is the promulgator of life on this earth. This most eco-friendly festival promotes casteless society and is the symbol of equality, fraternity, unity, and integrity.

(The author is a technocrat & academician. He holds Master in Engineering from M.N. Regional Engineering College, Allahabad/Prayagraj)

# The Kashmir Files and 1921 Puzha Muthal Puzha Vare - Two Movies an Agony and Horror

Movies can depict ideas and also help people change their views and vision on issues that have been haunting the human conscience for years. And history gives us space to recollect, recompose and relive as there are plenty of leaflets of events which have got engraved into the collective consciousness of human lives with discomfort, disregard and wounds of agony and perils. All you need to do is to tear the pages of anguish from the already fading book of history and try to magnify them to clarity and for a better vision. The Kashmir Files is one such effort- a leaflet in the form of a film which began to itch the already settled wounds once again, forcing the collective minds of the country to wake up and excavate the truth of a genocide which remained buried under the heap of deliberately stitched fantasies, that we often celebrate in the name of secularism. The film has broken box-office records and a large chunk of the population watched it with horror and dismay. History also brings out bitter realities unearthing them unexpectedly. Nobody, except for those who were part of the persecution, would know the reality in detail. Pressing thousands of people from the most beautiful state of Jammu and Kashmir to flee in exodus for the most disagreeable reason was the undeniable truth. History reveals for itself figuring the hidden facts for the rest of the world from antiquity. Now no mechanism, however strong it is, holds the power to wipe the tears of some hapless people who were thrown out of their land for the reason they did

not resonate with the exclusivist thoughts of their neighbors. Fanning flames into the level of an ethnic cleansing that took place in a country which is the largest secular democratic republic with an absolute flavor of constitutional morality is the reality. Fueling and grueling a Hindu - Muslim chasm in the Kashmir valley, the genocide and the exodus of uncountable families of the pandits into the wilderness of India still remain an unpleasant memory.

The God's Own Country, Kerala also had its Kashmir moment long back. It was in 1921 Kerala witnessed similar episode of genocide and ethnic cleansing and barbarity. Malayalam film star Prithviraj Sukumaran had the harshest of social media attacks for his choosing the biopic on Vairankunnathu

Kunjahammed Haji, one of the key controversial figures in the infamous Moplah rebellion of 1921 in Kerala. The state witnessed hundreds of Hindus being butchered behind the veil of the celebrated Khilafat movement. The movie was

to be directed by Aashiq Abu with Prithviraj in the lead role purposefully trying to whitewash the Haji element of atrocities. A genocide that was spearheaded by Kunjahammed Haji led to the massacre of thousands of Hindus, forcefully converting many and those who refused to accept thrown into wells and mud-filled alive. The movie wanted Haji to be projected as a humanitarian, propagating Hindu-Muslim unity while the real history was far from what the movie desperately wanted to project him as. In the movie, a par-

ticular community in the locality was unethically supporting the British and the Haji's efforts were to be projected as a rebellion against the colonial ways of the British, and hesubsequently established a Malayala Nadu (land of malayalis) for some time. So undoubtedly the biopic painted the Haji a superhero, a freedom fighter with no parallels. The violence, started against the Hindus on 20 August 1921 in the Malabar region and lasted almost for four months killing thousands and displacing many. Forcing to apostatize the beliefs of some people was the main demand and the region witnessed one-sided cruelty establishing a Khilafat Raj crowning a king who set to kill in abundance for the reason somebody in the area did not agree with the betrayal of their country and faith. Unprepared to withstand the heat of opposition from the masses, the movie was later withdrawn.

While supporting the Khilafat movement, Gandhi believed that he was standing for gaining the love and respect of Muslims, who indeed, he thought, would fight to gain the country's freedom with indubitable spirit. A campaign that gained momentum in India defending the Caliph of Turkey, who was feared to be stripped off his powers after the first world war; and Gandhi being made to believe that the campaign would follow his non-violent means but turned outrageous and a killing mission.

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# India logs 1,033 new COVID-19 case

Agency  
New Delhi, April 7:

With 1,033 new coronavirus infections being reported in a day, India's total tally of COVID-19 cases rose to 4,30,31,958, while the active cases dipped to 11,639, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

The death toll climbed to 52,530 with 43 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprise 0.03 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate remained at 98.76 per cent, the ministry said.

A reduction of 232 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a

span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded as 0.21 per cent and the weekly positivity rate as 0.22 per cent, according to the ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,24,98,789 while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.21 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 185.20 crore.

India's COVID-19 tally 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 Octo-

ber 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and 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.

The 43 new fatalities include 32 from Kerala.

A total of 5,21,530 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,47,800 from Maharashtra, 68,228 from Kerala, 40,056 from Karnataka, 38,025 from Tamil Nadu, 26,155 from Delhi, 23,497 from Uttar Pradesh and 21,200 from West Bengal.

India reported its first case of the XE variant of the coronavirus disease from Mumbai on Wednesday. According to the BMC officials, the individual who tested posi-

tive for the XE variant was a fully vaccinated 50-year-old woman with no comorbidity and asymptomatic. She had come from South Africa on February 10 and had no prior travel history. On arrival, she had tested negative for the virus.

However, Maharashtra health minister Rajesh Tope on Thursday told news agency ANI that the health department has not yet received any confirmation regarding the variant and hence the department can't confirm it.

The XE variant was first detected in the UK. Meanwhile, several countries worldwide including China, UK, Italy, France, South Korea are witnessing a surge in the cases.

# Assam Rifles foils cross border smuggling of Narcotics



IT News  
Imphal, April 7:

Tengnoupal Battalion under the aegis of IGAR (South) in a joint operation with Tengnoupal Police foiled cross border smuggling of narcotics in Tengnoupal on April 5.

Based on specific input, a joint team of Assam Rifles and Tengnoupal Police intercepted a vehicle at Police check post.

On thorough search of the vehicle, 2.29 kg brown sugar in 55 soap cases concealed in the dashboard of

the vehicle was recovered. The seized narcotics were assessed to be worth Rs 4.58 Crores.

The recovered items along with the drug peddler were handed over to Tengnoupal Police Station for further investigation.

# IAF Commanders' Conference on the Theme "Optimising Human Resources"



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed the IAF Commanders at Air Headquarters, New Delhi.

IT Correspondent  
Mumbai, April 7:

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, inaugurated the Air Force Commanders' Conference (AFCC) based on the theme 'Optimising human resources' at Air Headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday.

The conference was attended by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, Defence Secretary Dr. Ajay Kumar, along with senior commanders of the Indian Air Force, an official statement said.

Speaking on the occasion, Singh said that the topics being discussed in AFCC were relevant and contemporary in the present context, and covered the entire canvas of issues/challenges that are being faced

by the Nation.

Singh said that he was happy to observe that the directions given by higher authorities were comprehensively being discussed in the conference and would be the guiding light for all future courses of action. He also referred to the challenges being faced in the Northern and Western borders and expressed satisfaction with the way Indian Armed Forces have been responding to emerging situations.

He praised the Indian Air Force's evacuation effort in Operation Ganga, an operation to evacuate the Indian citizens amidst the recent Russian-Ukraine strife. The current geopolitical situation has again highlighted the need for indigenization, he added.

On the occasion Singh launched the "Mehtar Baba Competition-II", aimed at developing technology for a "Swarm Drone-based system to detect Foreign Objects on Aircraft Operating Surfaces". This technology seeks to provide a boost to the growing indigenous drone industry.

The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhary, in his address asked the commanders to be ready to meet all challenges and enhance their capabilities for responding in multiple domains at short notice. He also emphasized the need for conserving assets, optimally utilizing resources, and the need for nationalism to enhance National Security.

During the three-day con-

ference, the Air Force Commanders will discuss important issues related to future challenges in a Hi-tech and evolving operational scenario. The focus will be on the conduct of operations smartly and efficiently. Mitigation of threats posed by drones will also be brainstormed during the conference.

India - Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise

In another development, the 9th Edition of India - Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise being held since March 25, at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh in Himachal Pradesh was concluded on Wednesday.

Over the past two weeks, Special Forces contingents from India and Kyrgyzstan shared their expertise and best practices of tactics, techniques, and procedures to counter existing and emergent threats across the entire spectrum of conflict. Combat shooting, sniping, survival in mountains, hostage rescue drills, and unarmed combat were practiced extensively during the Exercise.

Besides sharing special skills and techniques between participating Special Forces contingents, the joint training further strengthened the existing bond between India and Kyrgyzstan that has fostered over years of mutual respect for strategic autonomy, democratic values, and zero tolerance for terrorism.

# Prabhari Officers' meeting held



IT News  
CCpur, April 7:

The first meeting of District level coordination team and all Sub-Divisional Development Monitoring Mission Prabhari Officers along with district Level Officers and SDOs/BDOs of Churachandpur district was held at the Conference Hall of DC's office here yesterday. H. Gyan Prakash, IAS, Special Secretary (Home) and Prabhari Officer for Churachandpur presided the meeting.

It may be mentioned here that with the aim of ensuring development reaches every person and every village, the State

Government has initiated Sub-Division Development Monitoring Mission. Prabhari Officer for each Sub-Division has been designated from among IAS, IFS, MCS, MFS officers.

In today's meeting, various DLOs made power-point presentation highlighting the concerned departments' achievements. PPT presentations were made by the district's PHED, Health department, ADC, Social Welfare, Horticulture, Agriculture, Fishery, CAF&PD, PWD, Power/MSPDCL, Forest, DRDA and Police Depts. The role of Prabhari Officer - to monitor and streamline development works in the Sub-Di-

vision - and thrust where they can chip in towards the realisation of the aims was also discussed.

Gyan Prakash urged all concerned to compile complete data of beneficiaries under various schemes of different departments and work sincerely for the success of the mission.

Besides, installation of biometrics and use of e-office by all DLOs and SDOs were also discussed in the meeting.

Apart from the Prabhari Officers and DLOs, the meeting was attended by Pawan Yadav, Deputy Commissioner, Churachandpur and Shivanand Surve, SP, Cpur.

Contd. from Page 2

# The Kashmir Files and 1921 Puzha Muthal....

Though the Haji's beatification remained an unsuccessful dream in the Ashiq Abu movie, another movie in the line of The Kashmir Files began to take shape by famous Malayalam director Ali Akbar. His movie '1921 Puzha Muthal Puzha Vare' is scheduled to show the atrocities run on the Hindus by Kunjahammed Haji and his henchmen. Ali Akbar was a Wazim Rizvi, converting to Hinduism with his family. He did this condemning the disrespectful reactions by some on the tragic death of the Chief of Defense Staff General Bipin Rawat in the chopper crash. He said he was unable to patch up with the level of intolerance in the religion that he followed. Gandhi, who believed that India's freedom was not pos-

sible without Hindu-Muslim unity, supported the Khilafat movement, unable to understand the undercurrent of mistrust and discontent that some in the movement cherished while slitting the throats of their innocent neighbors. Ali Akbar - now named Ramasimhan is all set to release the movie next September which he developed with the partnership of the public.

The period between 1899 to 1991 was a period of political instability in India. The country had four prime ministers in this period and this was evident for a tumultuous democratic complexity that the country had been through. Probably the exodus and the social extermination of a section of the society from heaven on the earth did not get much at-

tention as the Doordarshan, run by the government, depicted the beauty of the valley to houseful audiences conveniently covering the blood stain on the canyons. Vivek Agnihotri's daring enterprise has created a whirlwind of emotions. People watching the movie reacted piercingly to the plight that the Kashmiri pandits suffered and held the political leadership of the country and the state responsible for the predicament. Historical inscriptions reveal the fact that the freedom movement by the Moplahs in the Malabar region of Kerala had done nothing serious to harm the British. The aggressor took the situation as an opportunity to prowl on the innocent people across the region

and vent their fury. No doubt, certain jihadi elements of the Malabar region today began to demand a particular state on religious lines chiseling the present Malabar out of the Kerala State where a particular community is the majority. Lessons in history never end. The Ali Akbar movie would also speak the truth loudly to an audience, who would come out wiping tears and imprecations haunted by paranoia. Constitutional morality would grin for its own meaninglessness and from the fading pages of history, we can hear the lamentations of truth, struggling to find light and send waves of shudder once again to our collective consciousness.

(The writer is a Freelance Journalist/ Social Worker)

# GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT TASK FORCE DIVISION

## COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Dated, Imphal, the 5th April, 2022

On behalf of the Governor of Manipur, The Executive Engineer, Task Force Division, Water Resources Department, Manipur, invites item rate tender through open tender from eligible contractor for 10 (ten) nos. of works at a total estimated cost of Rs. 407.61 lakh under Task Force Division jurisdiction.

The tendering officer is Executive Engineer, Task Force Division, Water Resources Department, Manipur. The Tender details and documents shall be available from 08/04/2022 to 28/04/2022 at the office of the Executive Engineer, Task Force Division, Lamphel, W.R.D., Manipur.

Bid Submission Start date	11-04-2022	
Bid Submission End date	29-04-2022	
Date of opening of Bid	02-05-2022	Till the end.
Time -	11:00 a.m.	
Venue -	Office of the Executive Engineer, Task Force Division (Lamphel), Water Resources Department, Manipur.	

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Task Force Division,  
Water Resource Department, Manipur  
Lamphel



# Budget Session of Parliament concludes day ahead of schedule as LS, RS adjourn indefinitely

Agency  
New Delhi, April 7:

The Budget Session of Parliament concluded on Thursday, a day ahead of schedule with both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha witnessing spirited debates and fewer disruptions.

The Budget Session had begun on 31 January with the address of President Ram Nath Kovind to the joint sitting of both the Houses. It was followed by the presentation of the Union Budget by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

on February 1.

The first part of the Budget Session concluded on February 11 when Parliament went into recess to examine the budget papers.

The session resumed on March 14 and concluded on Thursday, a day ahead of schedule after completion of the budgetary process and passage of key bills such as the Delhi Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill and the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill.

The total productivity of the eighth session of the 17th Lok Sabha was 129 per

cent, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said, noting that the House had 27 sittings.

The Rajya Sabha lost nearly nine-and-a-half hours due to disruptions and forced adjournments, but made up for the lost time by sitting extra for nine hours and 16 minutes, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said.

The productivity of the House during the Budget Session was 99.8 per cent. If only the House had functioned for 10 more minutes, the productivity would have been 100 per cent, Naidu said.

The Lok Sabha passed 12 bills, including the Finance Bill, Delhi Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill, The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill.

The Rajya Sabha passed 11 bills including six appropriation bills and Finance Bills that were returned.

The Lok Sabha also had short duration discussions on climate change, the situation in Ukraine and the need to promote sports in India.

# STDCM lauds Rajya Sabha MP Sanajaoba Leishemba

IT News  
Imphal 7 April:

Scheduled Tribe Demand Committee of Manipur, the Committee (STDCM) demanded Meitei/Meitei has lauded the Rajya Sabha MP

Sanajaoba Leishemba for bringing up the issue for inclusion of the Meitei/Meitei Community to the list of Schedule Tribe under the constitution of India.

A statement said that the committee has handed over

the recommendation letter to the Union government in 29 May 2013, the union government replied to bring document which required in the recommendation, but the Manipur government haven't take any positive step.

# Royal Rider Manipur condoles the demise of its member

IT News  
Imphal, April 7:

Royal Rider Manipur condoles the demise of their member Tekhellaibam Tony. The RRM pay tribute to its

departed member by observing half-mast of their organisation flag and also observed a two minute silence as a mark of respect for the departed soul.

Late Takhellaibam Tony is

one of the Executive Member of Royal Rider Manipur. The Royal Rider Manipur Clubs enhance their heartfelt condolence to his bereaved family and friend lamenting the irreparable loss.

# Ensure Disaster alerts reach Remote Areas timely; Engage all Agencies: Amit Shah

Agency  
New Delhi, April 7:

Agencies involved in disaster management should ensure that alerts generated for calamities should timely reach the remotest panchayat location in the country and organisations like NCC, women groups and home guards should be brought on board for this task, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday. He asked the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), the federal agency to train and undertake operations during such emergencies, to take a leadership role in this context so that whenever such an emergency strikes, a trained personnel can work as a "stop gap arrangement" till professional rescuers reach the spot.

He was speaking while inaugurating a two-day 'annual conference on capacity building for disaster response 2022' being held in Delhi. The meeting has been organised by the NDRF with representatives of various central and state disaster response forces and other related agencies participating. The NDRF should make sure that the alerts generated for an impending disaster reach the intended location, village and panchayat in time, he said.

The minister said special focus should be given to cases of lightning strikes where time is less and it should be ensured that accurate alert reaches the intended village and its inhabitants. "We have made many apps (mobile applications) for a variety of disasters but a

definite mechanism should be made so that the alerts reach in time to the remotest location," Shah said.

For this, the minister said, volunteers of the NCC (national cadet corps), NSS (national service scheme), home guards, women self help groups should be involved in the disaster management protocol. The literature and training module should also be prepared in local languages, he said.

The information about the disaster has to percolate down correctly and for this we also need to have professional expertise, he added. "This will ensure that a trained personnel will be present at the remotest level where a disaster strike and that person will work as a stop gap arrangement till the NDRF or state disaster re-

sponse force arrives," he said.

He said the NDRF along with their state counterparts should ensure that no village or city is left where youngsters are trained in basic disaster rescue and relief tasks. Shah said the period between the years 2000 and 2022 has been a "golden period" in the context of disaster management in India.

Before 1990, there was no thought or planning as to how to save lives during disasters but the plans used to be relief centred, he said. "With the coordinated work of different agencies over the last 20 years or so, we can better save lives," he said.

Due to our better planning, the loss of lives during disasters like cyclones has gone down drastically, Shah said.

# Contd. from Page 1 Three day training programme on 'Self employment and scientific....



At the same time, the people involved in the piggery also need to face the challenges of their diseases, he added. Earlier Thounaojam Brinda who recently contested in the state assembly election from Yaikul Assembly constituency also spoke on the

occasion. Regarding the hosting of the training programme, 30 year old Pipi said, the need of the hour is to share my experiences in taking up piggery as a profession and learn from more others for a sustainable

development in the state. About 50 energetic youths including some females from Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Kakching, Senapati, Ukhrul districts are taking part in the three day training programme.

## Sports

# Priyanka Devi strike hands India victory against Egypt

Agency  
Zarqa, April 7:

Priyanka Devi scored the solitary goal as the Indian women's football team registered a 1-0 win over lower-ranked Egypt in the first friendly at the Prince Mohammed Stadium on Wednesday.

It was Priyanka's first-ever goal for the Blue Tigers against 95th ranked Egypt.

The first half began with the Indian side pressing hard to seize the initiative. Captain Ashalata Devi tried to earn an early lead in the 18th minute via her shot from distance but Anju, who latched on to the ball, missed the chance.

Couple of minutes later, Manisha almost scored the first for the night through Dalima's pass from the right but was collected by the Egyptian custodian.

Before the opposition could settle into the game, a sudden strike by Priyanka in the 30th minute gave India the early lead, and remained the only goal of the match.

Dalima managed to pass the ball to Priyanka after Manisha essayed a brilliant cross from the left and eventually, the young midfielder



found the back of the net. The half time score therefore read 1-0 in favour of India.

The second half was played out on similar lines with India creating more chances, as head coach Thomas Dennerby made his first change at the restart, replacing forward Renu with Pyari Xaxa.

Ten minutes after the resumption, Pyari came close to scoring in the 53rd minute as she got on the end of a cross from Manisha with an excellent run, but the shot was saved by the keeper.

Couple of more substitutions followed as Sandhiya

came on in place of Anju Tamang, and Soumya and Ratanbala were introduced in place of Grace and Priyanka Devi respectively.

The prolific captain Engy Ahmed Sayed tried her luck from close range before the hour-mark, but Sowmya stood tall to deny her confidently. Hayam Abdellatif had the final effort for Egypt in the dying minutes of the game but her effort landed safely into Sowmya's gloves.

The last change was made by Dennerby at the final minutes of the regulation time when Manisha was replaced by Mariyammal.

# PV Sindhu, K Srikanth storm into quarters of Korea Open

Agency  
Suncheon, April 7:

Ace Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth progressed to the quarterfinals but Lakshya Sen was ousted after losing his second round match at the Korea Open Super 500 badminton tournament in Suncheon on Thursday.

World number seven Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medalist, got the better of world number 26 Japan's Aya Ohori 21-15 21-10 in a lop-sided contest to take her head-to-head count against the Japanese to an overwhelming 12-0.

The third seeded Indian will next face familiar foe in Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunphan, whom she had defeated in the final of the Swiss Open last month.

The former world champion, who has claimed two Super 300 titles this season at Syed Modi International and Swiss Open, enjoys a 16-1 lead in 17 meetings against the world number 11 Thai.

World championship silver medalist Srikanth saw off Israel's Mishla Zilberman 21-18 21-6 to set up a clash with local hope and former world no 1 Son Wan ho.

# Kolkata Knight Riders beat Mumbai Indians by 5 wickets



Agency  
Pune, April 7:

Premier pacer Pat Cummins starred with the bat like never before, equalling the record for the fastest fifty in the IPL, including amassing 35 in an over, as Kolkata Knight Riders crushed Mumbai Indians by five wickets on Wednesday.

Cummins blazed away to his fifty in just 14 balls, joining KL Rahul on the top of the leaderboard, while opener Venkatesh Iyer batted through the innings for his unbeaten 41-ball 50, as KKR completed a chase of 162 with as many as four overs to spare.

It was unbelievable stuff from Cummins as KKR, needing 35 from 30 balls, got them all in just six deliveries with the Australian Test captain hitting six sixes and four boundaries in his 15-ball 56.

Daniel Sans bore the brunt of Cummins' onslaught the most, conceding 35 runs in the 16th over, which sealed it for

KKR. Together with Iyer, Cummins, who came in at number six, shared 61 runs in just 2.1 overs to overhaul MI's total of 161 for four.

MI, thus, slumped to their third defeat in as many matches.

KKR made a sedate start reaching 16 off the first four overs. The wickets of Ajinkya Rahane and skipper Shreyas Iyer made life difficult for KKR as they slumped to 35 for two in the sixth over.

Sam Billings made 17 off 12 balls before he was dismissed by Murugan Ashwin.

Iyer, on the other hand, went about his business in his own way and kept the scoreboard ticking.

While Iyer stood firm at one end, wickets kept tumbling from the other as Nitish Rana failed once again, caught at deep midwicket by Sans off Ashwin.

Andre Russell played a five-ball 11-run knock before he left Iyer stranded, top-edging a Tymal Mills short delivery to Dewald Brevis.

Cummins then took the attack to the opposition and struck Mills for a boundary and a six of consecutive balls.

Having conceded 23 runs in the final over when MI bat-

ted, Cummins clobbered the MI bowlers to all parts of the ground to take KKR home in a grand fashion.

Earlier, veteran Kieron Pollard complemented Suryakumar Yadav's brisk half-century by amassing 23 runs in the last over to propel MI after KKR kept things tight for a major part of their innings.

After an 83-run fourth-wicket stand between Suryakumar Yadav (52) and Tilak Varma (38 not out), Pollard (22 not out) smashed the world's premier fast bowler Pat Cummins for three sixes to end MI's innings on a high.

Opting to bowl first on a fresh pitch with plenty of grass, KKR's opening bowlers used the conditions to perfection as pacer Umesh Yadav (1/25) and debutant Rasikh Salam (0/18) relied on back of length deliveries to trouble MI's opening duo of skipper Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan.

Umesh and Cummins (2/49) picked up early wickets to reduce MI to 55 for three.

Umesh looked more threatening of the two as he consistently tested the high-profile MI opening batters with his probing length, producing a fantastic first over which yielded just one run.