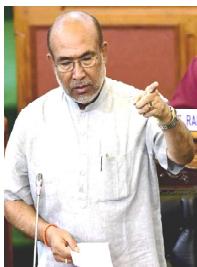


CM appeals for implementation of rule of law for village recognition

IT News
Imphal, August 03:

Leader of the House, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh while informing the House that there are 2,743 revenue villages, appealed to all Bureaucrats to strictly implement the rule of law while giving recognition for new revenue villages. CM was giving his reply to a starred question raised by MLA of Sugu AC, K. Ranjit Singh during a question hour of the ongoing 9th Day of the 2nd session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly.

Further, N. Biren stated that 55 applications seeking for village recognition are received by the Revenue Department. He also mentioned



that land, number of households, approval from Forest Department and District Council recommendation (Hill Areas) are the criteria for recognition of the revenue village.

While replying to a starred question raised by MLA of

Thangmeiband AC, Kh. Joykisan Singh, TA & Hills Minister Letpao Haokip stated that the Union Ministry for Development of Tribal Areas have sanctioned Rs. 40750.273 Lakhs from 2012 till date.

Social Welfare Minister, Heikham Dingo replying to a starred question raised by MLA Thangmeiband AC, Kh. Joykisan Singh informed the house that there are 11,510 Anganwadi Centres in Manipur out of which 9,958 are Main AWC and 1552 Mini AWC. The Minister further mentioned the following criteria of establishing Anganwadi Centres - 1 (one) Anganwadi Centre for Urban/Rural on 400-800 population, Mini Anganwadi Centre on 150-400

population and for tribal/hilly/difficult area, 1 (one) Anganwadi Centre on 300-800 population while for Mini Anganwadi Centre on 150-300 population.

During the Zero Hour, MLA of Khundrakpam AC, Th. Lokeshwar Singh highlighted the report from the newspaper on the woes faced by those people dependent on life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) drugs. Regrading the news report on the arrest of ATSUM leader, Ukhrul AC, MLA Ram Muivah draws the attention of the house by giving suggestion for inviting the ATSUM leaders for open dialogue to apprise them of the steps taken up by the State Government to bring consensus solution.

Manipur Police apprehend two female drug and explosives dealer



IT News
Imphal, August 03:

Manipur Police have apprehended two female drug and explosives dealers in Checkon, Imphal East, and Senapati Bazar, Senapati district.

On Tuesday, a team of Imphal East district police seized 2.70 kg of heroin powder, one mobile phone, an Aadhaar card, and Rs 5,000 from the possession of one Veineichong Khongsai, 36, of Kangchup Geljang, Senapati. She was apprehended on the spot in Checkon, near Tribal Market in Imphal East.

During interrogation, the accused Veineichong revealed that confiscated drugs were brought from Myanmar and she

came to Imphal to transport the same drug to a woman vendor in Senapati, who will then transport the same drug to a non-local.

In the follow-up of the case, The police team apprehended a woman vendor and confiscated the explosive-making materials and other drugs as part of the investigation. She was identified as RK Poukhurou, 50, of Karong, Senapati.

From her possession, police recovered 30 blasting sticks (about 3.775 gm), two packets of detonators containing 20 and 66 detonators, an 18-foot-long cortex wire, 11 paper-wrapped packets containing three detonators, and one cut piece of cortex wire.

She also had 1.30 gm of

opium, 13 gm of heroin powder, two mobile phones, an Aadhaar card, and Rs 5,050 in her possession.

Poukhurou revealed that the seized explosive materials were brought from an unknown official working at a road construction agency in Willong, Senapati, and were sold to prospective buyers, suspected to be UGs, by doubling the price.

He claimed that the explosive items were used by underground outfits in the recent planting of IEDs in various parts of Manipur.

It is highly likely that the explosives will be used to cause disruptions during the upcoming Independence Day celebrations, as well as to target security forces, he added.

Revenue Deficit Grant of Rs. 7,183.42 crore released to 14 States

Total Revenue Deficit Grant released to States so far in current financial year has gone up to Rs. 35,917.08 crore

PIB
New Delhi, August 03:

The Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has on Wednesday released the 5th monthly instalment of Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant (PDRD) Grant of Rs. 7,183.42 crore to 14 States. The grant has been released as per the recommendations of the Fifteenth Finance Commission.

The Fifteenth Finance Commission has recommended a total Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant of Rs. 86,201 crore to 14 States for the financial year 2022-23. The recommended grant is released by the Department of Expenditure to the recommended States in 12 equated monthly instalments. With the release of 5th instalment for the month of August, 2022, the total amount of Revenue Deficit Grants released

S. No.	Name of State	PDRD recommended by FC-XV for the year 2022-23.	5 th installment released for the month of August, 2022.	Total PDRD released to States during 2022-23.
1	Andhra Pradesh	10,549	879.08	4395.42
2	Assam	4,890	407.50	2037.50
3	Himachal Pradesh	9,377	781.42	3907.08
4	Kerala	13,174	1097.83	5489.17
5	Manipur	2,310	192.50	962.50
6	Meghalaya	1,033	86.08	430.42
7	Mizoram	1,615	134.58	672.92
8	Nagaland	4,530	377.50	1887.50
9	Punjab	8,274	689.50	3447.50
10	Rajasthan	4,862	405.17	2025.83
11	Sikkim	440	36.67	183.33
12	Tripura	4,423	368.58	1842.92
13	Uttarakhand	7,137	594.75	2973.75
14	West Bengal	13,587	1132.25	5661.25

to the States in 2022-23 has gone up to Rs. 35,917.08 crore.

The Post Devolution Rev-

enue Deficit Grants are provided to the States under Article 275 of the Constitution. The grants are

released to the States as per the recommendations of the successive Finance Commissions to meet the gap in Revenue Accounts of the States post devolution.

The eligibility of States to receive this grant and the quantum of grant for the period from 2020-21 to 2025-26 was decided by the Fifteenth Finance Commission based on the gap between assessment of revenue and expenditure of the State after taking into account the assessed devolution during this period.

The States who have been recommended Post Devolution Revenue Deficit Grant by the Fifteenth Finance Commission during 2022-23 are : Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Distribution of National Flag for Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

IT News
Pherzawl, August 03:

Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Pherzawl District today received altogether 3226 National Flags from GAD, Govt. of Manipur for the Har Ghar Tiranga (HGT) Campaign. As of yesterday, the Deputy Commissioner handed over 131 National Flags to the ZEO/Pherzawl District for display in Schools during the Independence Week Observation from 11th-17th August 2022.

In his address, the Deputy

Commissioner said the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign aims to encourage the people to bring the national flag into our homes, hoist it and also invoke a sense of ownership/patriotism to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in the spirit of community participation.

He appeals all concerned to hoist the National Flag of India as an act of personal commitment to the nation 75th year of Independence and contribution towards nation-building.

Also, the DC further instructed SDO Tipaimukh/

Vangai and all DLOs to collect the required National Flags from the Office of the DC, Pherzawl during office hours.

A total of 3000 National Flags alone will be distributed in households across the district for the Campaign and 226 National Flags have been earmarked to be hoisted in Anganwadi Buildings, Govt. & Private Schools, Government Offices & Buildings and One Stop Centre. Drawing Competition on Har Ghar Tiranga were also organised in Schools under ZEO, Pherzawl District.

Price rise of essential commodities has led the poor gasping in India

Prime Minister's Har Ghar Tiranga brings no solace to our destitutes

By Sushil Kuttty
New Delhi, August 03:

Destitution, bankruptcy, mass famine! Some rightwing folks desperate to see the back of Joe Biden are predicting this for America. They do not like the President's "dementia" and are not hailing Speaker Nancy Pelosi for taking on the People's Republic of China in its own backyard. One of them has come up with a slogan resurrected from the ashes: "It takes nine meals to anarchy!" He was talking of meals disappearing from the plates. His dire prediction apart, there's no chance of neither anarchy nor mass famine; at least not in India.

And destitution comes only after bankruptcy. More

serious is the fact that while earning to live from paycheck to paycheck, sizable numbers of Indians have nothing left to feed the savings account. Prime minister Narendra Modi's 'jan dhan' accounts, the 'saviours accounts' for people who had never seen the insides of a bank, have nothing to show for their existence. Most of these accounts show only a couple of 100s on the credit side.

The other day, RJD Member of Parliament Dr. Manoj Jha brought alive "Nainsukh Lal" in the Rajya Sabha, and Nainsukh wasn't in good shape, forget great shape. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not present. So, Jha introduced Nainsukh, a security guard who lives in Delhi with

wife and two children. He earns Rs 12,000 a month, of which Rs 4000 goes for rent; Rs 2000 for the children's school fees; Rs 1200 for the cooking fuel, and Rs 3000 for food. The total damages add up to Rs 10,200.

There is not much left with Nainsukh Lal after the Delhi Metro takes what's due. The message of the story: There's a Nainsukh everywhere, in every state, living in poverty and threatened by price rise. Also that Prime Minister Narendra Modi remembers Gujarat's Nainsukh only once every five years; that, when there's another assembly election in Gujarat, which means Nainsukh will be remembered any day before the end of this year.

Fact is, inflation, the high prices of food and fuel, has sucked the life's breath out of Nainsukh Lal though he is still standing. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman shouldn't ever forget Nainsukh, but if anybody escapes her attention, it's yours truly Nainsukh Lal of every state and UT. Sitharaman on Tuesday said India's 7 percent inflation rate compared well with that of "peer" countries, and with that of even the developed nations.

She is of course a vegetarian and wouldn't be concerned with chicken. But the fact is, the price rise is not just about atta and dal, there's also the rise in price of a chicken leg! And how can she overlook the rising price of rice, staple for crores. Not long ago,

the price of atta had shot up. Now, that of rice, too. Apparently, most of the rice produced is heading for Bangladesh.

Compelled to explain, Sitharaman said the government was fighting retail inflation with a "targeted approach", based on "ground-level inputs", an explanation which would fly over Nainsukh Lal's head. The Nainsukhs of Bharat don't want lessons in Economics from Sitharaman, former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh was by far better at it. Price rise is not a Modi era phenomenon, it's how it's handled and explained which makes all the difference.

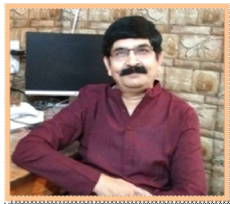
There are Indians who have money to burn on the

cinema and on takeaway pizza, but the countless millions who survive hand to mouth, they live a BPL life. There are tens of thousands of Nainsukhs in every town and city, not counting the rural folk, with a vote each! They can't stomach "global factors are at work", and which "are realities".

And when Sitharaman compares the 2013 prices of tomato, onion, and potato, to give a clean chit to the 2022 prices of tomato, onion and potato, it is beyond their belief. The FM has a poor estimation of the Nainsukhs of India. She's maybe under the impression that they cannot get hold of a calculator, forgetting that computing comes easy to people who have to make every rupee count!

The other day somebody asked why Prime Minister Narendra Modi appeared unable to empathize with those impacted by price rise? The simple answer to that is, the Prime Minister is not a Nainsukh with only school fees, rent and food and fuel prices to think of. The Prime Minister is the head of 'Vasudeva Kutumbakam', and can't be bothered with things a friendly media cannot give a spin to! For now, it's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' for him, with the price of the tricolour jumping to Rs 50 apiece, from Rs 16 apiece a couple of weeks ago. Security guard Nainsukh is supposed to buy and hoist one atop his rented house if he's to be counted a patriot! (IPA Service)

Hand washing - a small action gives you big benefits



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

Hand washing is the second best way to prevent getting an infection. There is a need to increase awareness and understanding about the importance of hand washing with soap as an easy, effective, and affordable way to prevent diseases and save our lives. The habit of proper hand washing is directly linked to one's health especially among school going children. Hands contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in several ways. Experts recommend that people wash their hands for a full 20 seconds

to clean off bacteria. We can stop the spread of killer coronavirus by washing our hands properly.

For hand washing to be more effective it must be accomplished consistently at key times, such as after using the toilet or before contact with food. Habit formation is currently a hot topic in behavior change and the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector. Cold and flu viruses last a surprisingly long time on surfaces: between six and eight hours. Something like the norovirus can live for 24 hours on surfaces. The best time to wash your hands is whenever you think you should be washing your hands. Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

Hand-washing is the No. 1 prevention against spread of infection, inside and outside the hospital setting. It is important in the home, in schools and in every workplace. It is the cornerstone of infection-control practice and education for everyone who works in health care. Every year worldwide, 8.8 million children younger than age 5 die of preventable illnesses. There are many children in the world who do not have access to safe water, or the habit or means to wash their hands properly. It is also observed that when students have access to clean water, soap, and toilet facilities, they are less likely to drop out or miss classes due to illness.

We know that hand washing with soap is the most effective and inexpensive way to prevent diarrheal diseases - reducing incidence by up to 47% - and combined with improved sanitation, this is boosted to 68%. If we do not have immediate access to soap and water then use alcohol-based hand wash if available.

Many diseases are transmitted when we don't wash our hands. Bacterial, viral and fungal infections can be prevented if the hands are washed properly every day. Worm infestation, anemia, malnutrition and diarrhea are the common health hazards caused by unhygienic hands. If there is no hygiene, there is no health.

The introduction of water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in schools, including hand washing with soap, is an entry point for children to understand and then take these good hygiene practices back into their homes and communities."

Hand washing is a small action that can have big benefits. Let us progress towards the goal of maintaining a global profile on the importance of hand hygiene in health care and to 'bring people together' in support of hand hygiene improvement globally. Hand washing might take a few extra minutes, but it's an easy and really effective way to slow the spread of illnesses like the flu and coronavirus from one person to another or just from touching a contaminated surface.

It is a need of the hour to spread the word about hand washing, build sinks and tippy taps, and demonstrate the simplicity and value of clean hands. We need to emphasize the importance of hand washing as a way to prevent disease, the necessity of using soap instead of only water, how everyone's health can benefit from washing their hands, and the key times for hand washing, including before and after eating.

Unending Misery of Women Street Vendors in Imphal

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

The term "street vendor" refers to the person who is engaged in selling goods, wares, foods, groceries or day to day use product in the street, lane, footpath, pavement, public park or any public place having his/her temporary construction which deems suitable for any kind of vending activities to be carried out properly. Street vending is one of the common practices in most of the developing countries of the world where the high rate of growth of urbanization is often coupled with lack of job opportunities among the workforce. Hence, street vending becomes an integral part of urbanization in the developing countries where urban poor not only make their living from the vending sector but also provide goods and services at an affordable price to urban dwellers. However, street vending is perceived negatively because of the congestion resulting out of the ever-increasing number of street vendors working in the sidewalks and streets, creating an intense struggle for space among the vendors and pedestrians. There is always confrontation among the street vendors and city authorities or regulators over space for business, conditions of works, sanitation and licensing. The competition or contradiction among the street vendors and city's authorities led to negotiations with buyers, regulators and also among the vendors themselves. The lack of voice of informal workers is one of the factors affecting hundreds of millions of vending workers around the world. On the other hand, under-representation from the informal women workers also poses a serious problem of gender equality even though the principle of gender equality is widely accepted among the members of a trade union.

There is a rapid increase in the numbers of street vendors in the country due to the lack of opportunities in the rural areas couple with the lack of skills among the labor and shrinking of formal and organized sector employments. Such a trend is also visible in the case of Imphal City where, street vending activities intensified in the early 2000s and increased to around 10000 in numbers at present as reported by one of Secretaries of Urban Street Vendors, Imphal City. It is reported that the average age of the women street vendors of the market is 46 years, where only 3.5 per cent falls in the age group of 20-30 years. Among them, 74.7 per cent are currently married, 22.8 per cent are widow and 2.5 per cent are divorced. More than half of them are illiterates (52.8 per cent), and 4.2 per cent and 7.7 per cent of vendors are higher secondary and graduate passed respectively. On average, daily earning of women street vendors is around 300-1000 rupees. Their earning also depends upon the location of the vending along with the types of the products being sold and season.

Street vendors face different types of conflicts and challenges pertaining to vending zones and also face harassments (100 percent) from different agencies. These problems of the street vendors include various actors such as the urban authorities (Municipality and Town planners), police, the local urban bodies, women licensed vendors, pedestrians, and vendors themselves. In some instances, it was observed that many places around the Khwairamband Keithel where street vendors used to conduct business were cracked down, and eviction is the most common method used by police while handling the street vendors in the city. In order to capture the space for vending, the vendors commonly stay near to their vending spots, which they acquire again, once the police move to another spot. Their return to the vending space is mostly possible by bribing which is also the only method to prevent them from eviction. They collect sum of amount to pay to the police in order to prevent eviction, damaging of commodities or confiscation which is a common sight in the vending spaces of Imphal. Therefore, in most cases, the contribution to bribery is the preferred option in order to avoid such circumstances in their vending activities. There are also instances of conflict between street vendor women and licensed women vendors. However, such conflicts will only lead to havoc in the functioning of the market where both parties will suffer from the consequences. Moreover, such an incident is not only the first one but many times, street vendors were assaulted and meted out atrocities by licensed

women vendors in the past too. Such behavior of the licensed women vendors also creates an atmosphere where any time quarrelling or even fight among them might happen in the market. Such conflicts among licensed women vendors and street vendors will ultimately have a great impact on their livelihoods. This can be solved through negotiation among them. But one of the most important issues with respect to the IMC is the implementation of national street vendors' policy act 2014. The act has not been implemented in the city or state and therefore, town vending committee in the city or the state are yet to be formed. As a result street vendors in the city are facing hardships at the hands of multiple agencies. Earlier, as Imphal Municipal authorities had banned street vendors in the main market complex after 8 am in the morning, tension developed between the vendors and the Municipal authorities backed by police and traffic officials and they are told to vend at Lamphel Supermarket campus after 8 am. This goes against the very logic of the term "street vendor" the very concept.

The lack of financial assistance is also a main stumbling block among street vendors. Since they are mostly illiterate, the formal banking system is beyond their access. Mudra scheme is provided to the licensed women vendors but the street vendors are excluded from the scheme. So, women vendors prefer money-lenders instead of bank even though they are exploited at the hands of the moneylenders. Therefore the state should make arrangement for small credit system to finance the street vendors. One of the main challenges among the women street vendors is their lack of union or representation. Nearly 70-80 per cent of the street vendors of Imphal are without any union or association. Therefore they become helpless when prolonging eviction of the street vendors takes place. One very important aspect of women street vendors in Imphal is being women. They carry out all the household chores and have tried to attain their activity in time before the presence of the police in the vending areas to avoid any damage or eviction. So, they play multiple roles in their life as a wife and vendors. Though, they

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work hard to maintain their families from the meager earning from vending, their vulnerabilities and the insecure nature of their informal vending activities pose serious and high risk in their livelihood activities. With regard to the rehabilitation of street vendors, the state government has got it all wrong as they still go on saying that number of street vendors is more than ten times the number of vending space to be made available in the new market complex in the Tombisana High School complex. One remember that the new market complex at the Tombisana High School site near the Old Assembly was constructed to accommodate some street vendors and vending licensees allotted by corrupt municipal authorities in murky deals.

Women street vendors in Imphal are hard-working women folk in the state. They are trying their best to maintain their family from the little profit they make with their vending activities in addition to their multiple responsibilities of being wife, mother in the home and a vendor in the streets of Imphal. But they are also facing many problems at the hands of multiple agencies. Since the National Street Vendors Policy Act, 2014 is not implemented in the state, they are not protected, secured and vulnerabilities and risks are very high. They are not provided with any proper zone of vending activities in case their vending areas are closed down. Therefore, their means of livelihoods at the heart of Imphal is at stake. On the other hand, due to the lack of financial assistance from the state or bank, they are exploited at the hands of the money-lenders with their exorbitant interest rates. Hence, it should be on the part of the state to recognize them and should be included in the policy framework of the state budget to secure and protect them. Their working environment should be made conducive and decent work place conditions should be made available to them. They can be an asset to the urban system once potential to development is tapped through opportunities. They should be included in the policy for the development of the state; only then sustainable development goals can be achieved.

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Prof. Dr. Yunus: The Meteoric Fall of a Nobel laureate

By: Mashrur Siddique Bhuiyan



Dr. Muhammad Yunus, who was once applauded at home and abroad for his efforts to end poverty, has seen a significant decline in his reputation as a result of his controversial role in Bangladesh on a number of issues, ranging from influencing the World Bank to scrapping the Padma Bridge financing, tax evasion, illegal transfer of donor funds, misuse of power and violating foreign travel regulations. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Prof. Yunus was respected in Bangladesh for receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, despite the fact that his organization was the subject of numerous inquiries and accusations due to its shady organizational structure.

Prof. Yunus founded Grameen Telecom and holds a significant investment in the country's leading mobile network providers (Grameen Telecom). He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2006 for his idea of providing micro-finance loans to millions of rural women through the Grameen Bank.

End up in controversy
Recently, Bangladesh Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) initiated

investigations against Grameen Telecom (GT) and its board of directors in connection with the Tk 3,000 crore money laundering case. The allegations include misappropriation of 5% of the dividend reserved for employees; illegally deducting 6% as lawyers' fees and other charges from the salaries of workers; embezzling more than Tk 45.52 crore from the welfare fund for employees; and laundering Tk 2,977 crore from the company.

The allegations and probes against the Nobel laureate and his organizations are not new. On September 9, 2021, a case was filed under Sections 4, 7, 8, 117, and 234 of the Labour Act by the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments against Dr. Yunus and three others for violating labor laws. He formally apologized for violating the country's labor laws after admitting that a social business firm he set up had broken labor laws.

Besides, a stunning allegation has recently surfaced against Dr. Yunus that he unlawfully settled all the 110 cases filed against him by the Grameen Telecom union of workers and employees, for Tk 250 million. He also courted controversy in 2015 when Bangladesh's revenue authorities summoned him over non-payment of over \$1.51 million in taxes.

Additionally, there are also widespread allegations that Prof. Yunus has illegally transferred funds from foreign donors to various private organizations for his own interests. In a Danish documentary by Tom Heinemann titled "Caught in Micro Debt" in 2010, Yunus and Grameen Bank were accused of diverting

funds worth approximately \$100 million that the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) had provided to the bank for housing loans for the poor in Bangladesh.

Due to the fact that the world community did not pay attention to Prof. Yunus' bad traits, he is well known internationally. In March 2011, Yunus was requested to resign as the bank's CEO, in contravention of the country's retirement laws, which state that the retirement age is 60. Yunus was then 70 years old.

The government invited him to serve as "Advisor Emeritus," but he rejected the offer and sued the government. Finally, he lost the legal battle in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

Unfortunately, then he invited foreign powers, especially America and other international organizations, to regain his position in the Grameen Bank. He pressed the government to change its decision in favour of him by lobbying lawmakers from various European countries, the then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Cherry Blair, spouse of the then British Prime Minister Tony Blair. In a very real sense, a Nobel laureate's plea for the help of multiple foreign countries and organizations to settle his personal issue didn't exactly reflect his patriotism.

Allegations are also rife that Dr. Yunus was behind the World Bank's ugly refusal to fund the Padma Bridge project, the country's largest structure. While withdrawing, the World Bank made a lot of noise about corruption at the highest levels of government. But, later, Bangladesh found it to be a conspiracy when the alleged corruption charges were dismissed by a Canadian court in 2017. The World Bank's then-presi-

dent, Robert Zoellick's, claim that there was no justification for canceling the credit because Bangladesh is one of its partner countries and has never defaulted on a loan in terms of repaying debt a blatant sign that a plot was afoot. Finally, it was learned that Zoellick had been forced to sign the decision to scrap the financing at the eleventh hour on his last working day as WB president.

Prof. Yunus has also been embroiled in controversy when some economists accused him of "sucking blood" from the poor with high-interest rates. When borrowers in the village were unable to make timely payments, debt collectors used coercive and even violent tactics, demanding that they sell their cattle, chickens, and other household goods in order to pay off the microcredit loans. There have been claims of physical abuse and intimidation by debt collectors. In this regard, some argue that people can quickly sink into a cycle of debt with exorbitant rates of interest. Dr. Qazi Kholikuzzaman Ahmad, chairman of PKSF, a body that monitors microfinance, describes microcredit as a 'death trap' for Bangladesh's poor.

contd. on page 3

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

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Monkeypox scare: Health Ministry shares dos and dont's

Agency
New Delhi, August 03:

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), on Wednesday, released a list of dos and dont's for Monkeypox amid an increasing number of Monkeypox cases in India. In a post on its official Twitter handle, the Health Ministry said that anyone can get Monkeypox if they have had prolonged or repeated contact with an infected individual.

Listing the risks and preventive measures for monkeypox, the Health Ministry advised isolation of patients from others, among other measures to avoid the risk of being infected with Monkeypox.

Dos for Monkeypox as mentioned by the Health Ministry

- Isolate infected patients from others
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizers
- When near infected individuals, wear masks and disposable gloves
- Use disinfectants for environmental sanitization

Dont's for Monkeypox as mentioned by the Health Ministry

- Don't share linen, bedding or towels with people who have contracted Monkeypox
- Don't wash soiled linen or laundry of infected persons with those of non-infected individuals
- Don't attend public events if you exhibit symptoms of Monkeypox
- Don't stigmatize groups of people based on misinformation

It may be noted that India has recorded eight cases of Monkeypox so far. A 35-year-old African man, with no recent international travel history, tested positive for the disease on Tuesday, taking

the total number of Monkeypox cases in the national capital to three and country to eight.

"This man (third case) tested positive yesterday for monkeypox, but he is doing fine. Two suspected patients are also currently admitted at the LNJP Hospital's isolation ward for monkeypox cases," an official was quoted as saying by news agency PTI. Authorities have also created isolation rooms for the treatment of Monkeypox patients in Delhi's Safdarjung hospital, RML hospital and Lady Hardinge hospital, officials said, agencies reported.

After a day of decline, India's Covid tally rises to 17,135 infection, 47 deaths

Agency
New Delhi, August 03:

India on Wednesday again reported a considerable rise at 17,135 new Covid infection in last 24 hrs, against 13,734 Covid cases reported on previous day, said Union Health Ministry.

In the same period, the country has reported 47 more Covid deaths, taking the nationwide death toll to 5,26,477. Meanwhile, the active caseload of the country has marginally declined to 1,37,057 cases, accounting for 0.31 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

The recovery of 19,823 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,34,03,610. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.49 per cent.

Meanwhile, India's Daily Positivity rate has marginally

risen to 3.69 per cent, while the Weekly Positivity Rate in the country currently also stands at 4.67 per cent.

Also in the same period, a total of 4,64,919 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 87.63 crore.

As of Wednesday morning, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage exceeded 204.84 crore, achieved via 2,71,69,995 sessions.

Over 3.91 crore adolescents have been administered with a first dose of Covid-19 jab since the beginning of vaccination drive for this age bracket.

According to the ministry, 204.84 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive. 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 October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one crore-mark on December 19. India crossed the grim milestone of 2 crore on May 4, 3 crore on June 23 last year and 4 crore on January 25 this year.

The 47 new fatalities include five from Maharashtra and Rajasthan, four from West Bengal, three each from Chhattisgarh, Delhi and Uttarakhand, two each from Himachal Pradesh, Manipur and Punjab, one each from Chandigarh, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, Pondicherry and Uttar Pradesh.

Additionally, 12 deaths have been reconciled by Kerala.

Mizoram reported 337 fresh COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, the highest single-day spike since March 13, with the state's tally rising to 2,33,137, an official said.

The state reported 357 on March 13.

The number of fresh cases reported on Tuesday was 275 more than the total cases (62) reported on the previous day.

The death toll remained at 710 as no new fatality was reported in the last 24 hours, the official said.

The fresh cases were reported from all the eleven districts with Lunglei registering the highest at 108, followed by Aizawl (99) and Mamit (34), he said.

The number of active cases now stands at 1,197, while 2,31,230 people have recovered from the infection, including 170 on Monday.

Not a token fight, many things can happen: Opposition's vice-presidential candidate Margaret Alva



Agency
New Delhi, August 03:

Opposition candidate for Vice President election Margaret Alva said the upcoming V-P poll is not a token fight and many things could happen, adding that this is a time for change.

When asked about fighting a symbolic fight as numbers are in favour of NDA candidate Jagdeep Dhankar, the parliamentarian told India Today, "I don't think it is a token fight and many things could happen. I am fighting on behalf of 20 parties. We are making a statement that things are not well in Parliament and we do believe that this is a time for change."

She said that there is an 'informal emergency' imposed in the country at present.

Veteran Congress leader said, "You fight your election to place your agenda."

The vice presidential election is slated to be held on August 6 and the results are likely to be announced on the same day. The BJP-led NDA govern-

ment chose former Governor of West Bengal Jagdeep Dhankar as their nominee.

The former Union minister agreed that she is fighting the V-P poll as it is the duty of the Vice President as the Chairman of Rajya Sabha to restore the supremacy of Parliament.

Asked about why she is fighting the election, she said, "Look at the alternative the government has presented. A candidate that has turned Bengal upside down, from seller to the dome. But imagine him in the chair having run that House."

"The past record of what happened in Bengal is something to be worried about," the politician told India Today.

"This election is being fought to uphold the values of the Constitution to which we are all committed. Second, to safeguard the foundations of our democratic institutions, which are under tremendous pressure these days. Third, how free are people today about what to speak," she said.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) has abstained from voting in the upcoming V-P polls. Asked about the same, she said, "Let's see. I still believe that Mamata Banerjee has

spearheaded opposition unity. She is the one who has taken on the BJP openly and one in Bengal despite what they have done in the state. Mamata Banerjee has her own agenda."

"You fight an election on principles, an agenda and placing your point of view before the voters. That's what we are doing as a united opposition," she said.

Talking about her agenda and principles, she said, "For a Parliament, that respects the right of every member who speaks. You have adjournments, suspensions and roles by the majority. In Parliament, elected people come to speak about various issues. Have you seen that happen?"

"The chairman has the primary responsibility to bring the opposition and government together. Price rise has been an issue during this session," Margaret Alva said.

"The members of the Opposition have been demanding a discussion on price rise. Do you know what the government has put on the agenda? The sports in the country. Is that the primary issue that should be discussed or the price rise?", she asked.

Career Guidance

Do not waste time on Internet and social media



Vijay GarG

as we open our eyes frantically searches for our mobile phones to see the notifications on social media. This is true for a majority of us and it is taking a heavy toll on our lives in the long run whether we understand it or not.

We have all become tragic victims of our false imagination surrounding social media and living a toxic myth that spending more time on the internet or social media leads to more productivity in our lives.

The social media platforms are designed to function in such a manner that if one does not exercise self-restraint or self-control, these sites make us hooked on to their never-ending content and one keeps on mindlessly scrolling through them and finally ends up wasting one's precious time, energy and efforts. Sometimes, a mere 10 minutes on social media gets unconsciously translated into hours and hours of wastage of time.

Just imagine that if you are habitual of wasting 2 to 4 hours on social media every day, then, it becomes 1460 hours in a year, roughly equaling to 60 days in a year. This time could have been better utilized in a much better manner rather than frittering it away on browsing useless social media posts which does not effectively contribute in any manner towards our growth, progress or

prosperity in the long run. Digital detoxification is the need of the hour.

Rather than connecting so much with the outside world, it would be beneficial to take a much needed break from social media and connect with our real inner selves. It's time to debate, discuss and discover better ways to judiciously use the internet and social media that it does not become an unwanted bane of our life.

Here are some effective ways which can help you in the short term as well as long run to effectively improve your relationship with technology in a way that spending time on social media and the internet becomes productive and not destructive. Learn to wisely audit your time spent on the internet and social media every day. Observe your habits and routine care. Try to use a time tracker device and then, introspect the number of hours you are regularly sitting in front of a computer screen or your mobile phones or tablets in a week.

Disconnect from the social media sources which are not giving any valuable information and consuming your energy of mind and interfering with your originality of your thoughts and creativity. Maximize your efficiency. Everybody in this world has 24 hours a day. Do not waste your precious time; it can make you feel

disconcerting later on in life.

Wisely using the internet can help you improve your attention and concentration levels in life as well lead to a better healthy lifestyle with increased sleep duration. Internet addiction has a very negative impact on one's anxiety, stress and depression levels. Spending too much time on social media actually hacks the reward system in our brain and distracts us from engaging in real productive activities like exercising, working, socializing and so on.

To prevent yourself from killing your time on the social media, it is helpful to inculcate the habit of scheduling one's time spent on the internet. Rather than going online whenever we are 'free', it would be prudent to fix a particular time slot in your daily routine to log in and surf the world of internet. It has been noticed that many people browse internet or social media out of boredom at work or home.

It is advisable to develop a creative hobby or take breaks from work to take a little stroll in the garden or read a newspaper rather than mindlessly clicking on YouTube links. Wise people often schedule their mealtimes, workouts, travel plans etc. So, why not schedule one's time on the internet too? It certainly requires will-power and determi-

nation but can pay big dividends and help one avoid unwanted distractions. Try spending the saved time with your loved ones instead in real life. Prioritize your time spent on the internet and stop scrolling through someone else's vacation pictures which is of no real value to you. Focus on real priorities of your life.

Spending less time online can also help you overcome your weight gain issues, backaches, neck-pain, headaches and blurred vision problems. Overuse of internet also leads to many psychological issues like anxiety or sleeping disorders. Recently, internet addiction has attracted the attention of psychologists and psychiatrists. So, if in any case, despite putting in your best efforts, if you still feel that you are not able to control your addiction to the internet, then, it is better to consult professional help in dealing with the issue at hand.

No doubt, internet has played an instrumental role in making human lives better, but it has negative implications too. If we want to reap the benefits of internet and social media, it is really imperative to use it wisely. Be real and remember that offline world is more lively and exciting than the offline one. Internet and social media can be your friend or foe depending upon how you tend to use it.

Contd. from Page 2

Prof. Dr. Younus: The Meteoric Fall....

Fall from political ground

When a caretaker administration was supported by the Bangladeshi army in 2007, Dr. Younus mounted a perilous political horse. Although he had never been a part of any democratic movement, his actions during the country's political transition on November 11 had garnered harsh condemnation from different quarters, particularly civil society members. Amazingly, when all political activities were banned in the country, he was allowed to form a political party and start its activities. On February 11, 2007, Dr. Younus sought the support of the countrymen to float a political party to 'reform' the politics of the country. However, the populace resisted his party and his plan to seize power through a behind-the-scenes and shabby deal.

The Nobel Laureate has now taken a clear position by stating that the election will be meaningless if it is not held under a caretaker government, obviously undermining the constitution. It is regrettable that a man of global fame has revealed himself to be a supporter of a political coalition on the subject of owning a bank.

This is unfortunate. Never in the history of the Nobel Prize has a winner exploited the prestige of the award for a personal vendetta.

According to political analysts, if he truly intended to get into politics, he should shed his current mask and declare the formation of a new political party with a clear policy and program to convince the masses. Otherwise, if he continues his current sabotage role against the government of Bangladesh, he will gradually lose his good reputation day by day.

We need to note that the Nobel Prize, which has simply become a modern pseudo-political agenda, can't save him from national and global condemnation like the Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, who has shown little interest in protecting the Rohingya, "the world's most persecuted people". As a responsible citizen, Dr. Younus must comprehend the situation and refrain from any controversy that is against Bangladeshi laws.

(The author is Consultant Palli Pragati Sahayak Samity (PPSS), a Bangladeshi NGO)

Cabinet approves India's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution to be communicated to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

PIB
New Delhi, August 03:

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to be communicated to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The updated NDC seeks to enhance India's contributions towards achievement of the strengthening of global response to the threat of climate change, as agreed under the Paris Agreement. Such action will also help India usher in low emissions growth pathways. It would protect the interests of the country and safeguard its future development needs based on the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC.

India at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, expressed to intensify its climate action by presenting to the world five nectar elements (Panchamrit) of India's climate action. This update to India's existing NDC translates the 'Panchamrit' announced at COP 26 into enhanced climate targets. The update is also a step towards achieving India's long term goal of reaching net-zero by 2070.

Earlier, India submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to UNFCCC on October 2, 2015. The 2015 NDC comprised eight goals; three of these have quantitative targets upto

2030 namely, cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil sources to reach 40%; reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 33 to 35 percent compared to 2005 levels and creation of additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover.

As per the updated NDC, India now stands committed to reduce Emissions Intensity of its GDP by 45 percent by 2030, from 2005 level and achieve about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030. Today's approval, also takes forward the Prime Minister's vision of sustainable lifestyles and climate justice to protect the poor and vulnerable from adverse impacts of climate change. The updated NDC reads "To put forward and further propagate a healthy and sustainable way of living based on traditions and values of conservation and moderation, including through a mass movement for 'LIFE'—'Lifestyle for Environment' as a key to combating climate change". The decision on enhanced NDCs demonstrates India's commitment at the highest level for decoupling of economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions.

India's updated NDC has been prepared after carefully considering our national circumstances and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC). India's updated NDC also reaffirms our commitment to work towards a low carbon

emission pathway, while simultaneously endeavoring to achieve sustainable development goals.

Recognizing that lifestyle has a big role in climate change, the Prime Minister of India, at COP 26, proposed a 'One-World Movement', to the global community. This one word is LIFE...L, I, F, E, i.e. Lifestyle For Environment. The vision of LIFE is to live a lifestyle that is in tune with our planet and does not harm it. India's updated NDC also captures this citizen centric approach to combat climate change.

The updated NDC also represents the framework for India's transition to cleaner energy for the period 2021-2030. The updated framework, together with many other initiatives of the Government, including tax concessions and incentives such as Production Linked Incentive scheme for promotion of manufacturing and adoption of renewable energy, will provide an opportunity for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities and enhancing exports. It will lead to an overall increase in green jobs such as in renewable energy, clean energy industries - in automobiles, manufacturing of low emissions products like Electric Vehicles and super-efficient appliances, and innovative technologies such as green hydrogen, etc. India's updated NDC will be implemented over the period 2021-2030 through programs and schemes of relevant Ministries /departments and with due support from States and Union Territories. The Government has launched many

schemes and programs to scale up India's actions on both adaptation and mitigation. Appropriate measures are being taken under these schemes and programs across many sectors, including water, agriculture, forest, energy and enterprise, sustainable mobility and housing, waste management, circular economy and resource efficiency, etc. As a result of the aforesaid measures, India has progressively continued decoupling of economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions. The Net Zero target by 2030 by Indian Railways alone will lead to a reduction of emissions by 60 million tonnes annually. Similarly, India's massive LED bulb campaign is reducing emissions by 40 million tonnes annually.

India's climate actions have so far been largely financed from domestic resources. However, providing new and additional financial resources as well as transfer of technology to address the global climate change challenge are among the commitments and responsibilities of the developed countries under UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. India will also require its due share from such international financial resources and technological support.

India's NDC does not bind it to any sector specific mitigation obligation or action. India's goal is to reduce overall emission intensity and improve energy efficiency of its economy over time and at the same time protecting the vulnerable sectors of economy and segments of our society.

Supreme Court calls for expert panel to regulate freebies offered during elections

Agency
New Delhi, August 03:

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said there is a need for an apex body consisting of members from the Niti Aayog, the Finance Commission, ruling and opposition parties, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and other stakeholders, to make suggestions on how to control freebies given by political parties during election campaigns.

The Supreme Court was hearing a plea against the practice of political parties promising freebies during elections.

The SC bench, headed by CJI NV Ramana, said the panel is required to determine

the pros and cons of freebies as these have a "significant impact on the economy". The proposed entity would examine how to regulate freebies and submit reports to the Centre, the Election Commission (EC), and the SC.

The court asked the Centre, the EC, senior advocate and Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal, and the petitioners to submit their suggestions within seven days on the composition of the expert body.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, meanwhile, said "mindless" freebies would lead India to an "economic disaster".

As the top court said such a situation had arisen due to the "inaction" of the EC, the

poll body said that its hands were tied by a judgement of the court on freebies. In its response, the three-judge bench said if necessary, it would reconsider the said judgment.

However, as Sibal said in the court that it should be left to Parliament to debate and pass a law on the matter, CJI Ramana pointed out that no political party would stand against freebies.

"Do you think Parliament will debate the issue of freebies? Which political party will debate? No political party would oppose freebies. Everyone wants it. We must think about the tax payers and the country's economy," CJI Ramana said.

Tripura govt clears proposal for 5% DA hike ahead of 2023 polls

Agency
Agartala, August 03:

The cabinet of Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha has cleared a proposal for a 5 per cent hike in dearness allowance for state government employees and pensioners with effect from July 1, Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Sushanta Chowdhury said.

The decision came ahead of the assembly election in the northeastern state due in March next year.

"The council of ministers has approved a proposal for providing 5 per cent DA to its employees despite resource constraints. The government will have to bear an

additional annual burden of ₹ 523.80 crore," he told reporters on Tuesday night.

A total of 1,88,494 people, including 1,04,683 regular employees and 80,855 pensioners, will be benefited.

With this decision, the DA of state government employees has risen from three per cent of their basic pay to eight per cent. But the central government employees are receiving 34 per cent of basic pay as DA and the gap between the central and state government employees remains at 26 per cent.

Tripura Government Employees' Federation (TGEF) welcomed the decision.

"We welcome the decision of the government to

hike DA by 5 per cent but the gap with the central government employees is still too high. We hope the state government will reduce it," TGEF secretary general Samar Roy told PTI.

Chowdhury also said that 200 engineers would be recruited in the Public Works Department through Tripura Public Service Commission.

Engineering students passing out from Civil, Mechanical and Electrical disciplines will be eligible, he said.

Altogether 100 staff nurses, 22 pharmacists and 39 laboratory assistants will also be recruited in the Health Department shortly, the minister added.

Sports

Commonwealth Games 2022 Day 6:

Weightlifter Lovepreet Singh Wins Bronze, Women face Canada in Hockey

Agency
Birmingham, August 03:

India's medalist prospect, Lovepreet Singh secured a bronze in the Men's 109kg event at the ongoing Commonwealth Games on Wednesday. The Indian weightlifter registered national record after he lifted 189kg in the 2nd attempt, but bettered his figures with a successful lift of 192kg in his 3rd attempt of Clean and Jerk category.

The Indian weightlifter Lovepreet Singh ranked second after the conclusion of 'Snatch' category with the successful lift of 143kg in his third attempt. Earlier, he started with successful lifts of 157 kg and 161kg in the 'Snatch' category of Men's 109kg final. Samoa's Jack Huila topped the chart with his 164kg lift in the 3rd attempt of 'Snatch' category.

Meanwhile, the Indian women's hockey team is playing against Canada. In round 2 of the lawn bowls, Indian women's pair of Lovely Choubey and Nayanmoni Saikia won their match 23-6, while Mridul Borghain registered a superb 21-5 win in his men's singles match. On the



other hand, judoka Tulika Maan also entered the semifinal of women's +78kg.

On Tuesday, the women's four lawn bowls team had a superb fifth day in the ongoing event as the country clinched a historic lawn bowls gold in the women's fours event. What followed was a gold from the men's table tennis team. Meanwhile, the mixed badminton team and weightlifter Vikas Thakur (96kg) bagged a silver each. On Wednesday, the likes of boxers Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borghain are also set to hog the limelight. Meanwhile, the Indian women's cricket team

will be in action late night. And if the entertainment is due even after that, it is athletics that will take the stage simultaneously to end the day on a high for the fans.

Lakshya Sen will have to buy that Uttarakhand 'mithai' or bal mithai as it is known for prime minister Narendra Modi when he is invited for the felicitations thrown at the PM house, for the medal winners of the Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2022.

For the victorious Thomas cup squad reception at the PM house last month, the Prime Minister was delighted when

the Indian shuttling sensation Lakshya had presented the 'mithai' which the PM had requested, when he phoned up the squad to congratulate them on that stupendous demolition and decimation of Malaysia, Denmark and the mighty Indonesia 3-0 in the finals.

Lakshya had a great chance of winning two gold medals at the Games which are being held at Birmingham—in mixed team and individual events. However, last night's result meant he has to be satisfied with a silver medal in the team competition. India lost to Malaysia in the final. The individual events starts August 3 and with CWG level not being of very high standards, Lakshya, seeded 2, will have a field day at the Games. There is no real opposition to him till the finals where he should meet the winner of the match between Kidambi Srikanth, the 2021 runners-up of world championships, and the winner of the current holder of world championship, Loh Kean Yew from Singapore.

So, Lakshya will stroll through the field without even breaking a sweat, at least till the semifinals where he may potentially meet Brian Yang of Canada

and that match should be a nice warm up for the Indian ace. Surprisingly I can see only one Malaysian entry in the men's singles draw that of NG Tze Yang. Of course Lee Zhi Jia the all England champion in 2021 had withdrawn from CWG as he wants to play the World Championship which come within two weeks of the CWG. But, with only one entry in the singles draw it also means that the once mighty country, Malaysia is down in the doldrums as far as top level singles badminton talent is concerned.

Now that we have established that Lakshya will most likely meet either Shrikant or Loh in the finals, let us see how this triangular battle may unfold. So, notwithstanding the results of team championships here are my views as far as the individual events are concerned.

Against the world champion Loh, Lakshya has a 3-2 head-to-head advantage. Last time the two clashed was in the finals of the India Open where the Indian prevailed 24-22, 21-17. Lakshya won at the Chinese Masters defeating Loh 21-13, 21-12 and at the French Open 2021 he won 21-17, 21-14.

COUNTRIES				
	AUS	ENG	NZL	CAN
1	42	32	32	106
2	31	34	21	86
3	13	7	6	26
4	11	16	19	46
5	6	5	5	16
6	5	5	4	14
7	3	8	15	26

Loh got the better of Lakshya at the Hylo Open, Germany last year with a score-line of 21-17, 21-14 and at the Dutch open last year 21-16, 21-12.

Loh is probably the fastest moving player currently on the circuit. His court speed is something to be seen in to be believed. He is relentless in attack and can smash from any angle and then in four leaps he is at the net in blink of an eye. But, he has no deception and plays

a simple game, depending mainly in on his speed.

Lakshya, on the other hand, is electrifying in defense, leaping and diving as if there is no tomorrow. He also smashes hard and has great variations on his attacking strokes. He has that slow looping sharp drops, the faster drop delivered with a snap of his wrist, the deep half-smash again played with snap of a wrist and then of course the full blooded hard smash.