

## High School Head master suspended for hijacking mid-day meal; Cooks protest at Jiribam

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 11:

One head master of a government High School located in Kakching district has been suspended for looting the mid-day meal of the students.

As per source, the Head Master of Sora High School in Kakching district identified as Azad Khan deliberately hijacked the mid-day meal by not providing it to the students of the school.

Based on a complaint in connection with the hijacking of mid-day meal, a team of the Education (S) department paid inspection visit to the school on December 6, 2022. When inquired the team found that mid-day meal was not served to the



students. Further inquiry conducted by the team by questioning the teachers also revealed that no mid-day meal has been served to the students. The source also said that

the Head Master of the school Azad Khan also failed to show relevant documents when asked.

The source said that the over failure to serve mid day meal to stu-

dents the Head Master has been suspended under Sub rule 1 of Rule 10 of Central Services and Classification Control and Appeal Rule, 1965.

Meanwhile, All Jiribam Cook Association had staged a sit-in-protest in front of Congress bhavan Jiribam today demanding increase of their honorarium.

The Mid-day Meal Workers' and helpers appealed to the authority concerned to increase their honorarium on the basis of rupees twenty-four thousand per month and to give pension of rupees six thousand per month as well as appealed to regularise the mid-day meal workers'.

Speaking on the sideline of the protest All Jiribam Cook Association, president L. Sandhya Rani said the cook were appointed on the honorarium of rupees five hundred and later it was increased to rupees one thousand which does not meet the requirements of mid-day meal workers in this era of inflation. She also appealed to authority concern to increase the honorarium as earliest. So as to meet their basic needs.

## CM and others greets people on Nupilal Numit, 2022

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 11:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and his cabinet colleagues today greet the people of the state on occasion of the Nupi Lal Numit which is celebrating tomorrow in commemoration to the brave 'Imas' (Mothers) of the State who had fought in the 'Nupi Lai' against the exploitive might of the British imperialists.

On December 12, 1939, our brave 'Imas' came to the forefront revolting against the British imperialists calling for immediate stoppage of rice export which had triggered an artificial famine in the State. Thus, every year, we observe December 12 as 'Nupilal Numit' as a tribute to the courage, sacrifice and patriotism of the women of Manipur.

In his message the Chief Minister said that today, our womenfolk continue to not only play a vital and active role in social issues but they are also leading from the forefront in every possible field including arts &

culture, sports, public administration, medicine and entrepreneurship, among others. Kunjarani Devi, Mary Kom, Saikhom Mirabai Chanu, Pukhrambam Sushila Chanu, Linthoi Chanambam are a few of our sports-women who have shone bright in the international stage and demonstrated the courage and strength of our women.

Th. Basanta Kumar Singh, Minister, Education/Law & Legislative Affairs, Manipur in his message said that Nupi Lal in Manipur is one of the important movements in the history of Manipuri women. It sowed the new seeds of economic and political reforms for a new Manipur.

All over the world Manipuri women have been known for their valor, skill and active involvement in many social, economic, political and cultural activities. They are the role models as a mother, wife, daughter, sister and a daughter-in-law. In the earlier days they had shown their might in bringing about justice in the state, the education minister said.

## Apunba Khoriroolgee Malemgee Lup distributes awards

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 11:

The Apunba Khoriroolgee Malemgee Lup organised award Presentation function today at Lamyamba Shanglein Konung Mamang, Imphal East.

Former rebel leader RK Sanayaima attended the function as Chief Guest while President of the Malemgee Lup, W. Amuchou Meitei presided over it. Kh. Kanta of Lakhipur Cachar who is the V.P. Manipur Short Story Society India, Swapan Koijam, V.P.



Manipur Sahitya Parishad Assam and L. Memo, Writer and Critic also attended as guest of honours. The Apunba Khoriroolgee

Malemgee Lup presented Wakma Title to Pukhrambam Biren Singh and "Khoriroolgee Leichan Mana" to Chongtham (o) Subadhani Devi.

## While Imphal City still lacks facilities of even a regular city, Imphal Smart City Mission is not smart enough so far

By- Rajkumar Bobichand  
Imphal, Dec 11:

The much-hyped "Smart City" has become a buzzword for anyone involved in governing a city with the dispensation of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government in India since 2014. Currently, the term is used as a catch-all for various different city development initiatives and concepts by even party workers besides, leaders and ministers.

However, "Smart City" remains opaque and relatively-ill-defined though ministers, mayors, department officials, even blue collar city employees have heard of the concept and are starting to realise its potential for cities large and small.

According to IoT World, a smart city is a municipality that uses information and communication technologies (ICT) to increase operational efficiency, share information with the public and improve both the quality of government services and citizen welfare.

The main goal of a smart city is to optimise city functions and promote economic growth while also improving the quality of life for citizens by using smart technologies and data analysis. The value lies in how this technology is used rather than simply how much technology is available.

A city's smartness is determined using a set of characteristics, including: An infrastructure based around technology, Environmental initia-

tives, Effective and highly functional public transportation, Confident and progressive city plans, People able to live and work within the city, using its resources.

It will be knowledgeable to mentions some cities across the world which are leading the path to creating fully smart cities - Barcelona, Spain; Columbus, Ohio, USA; Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Hong Kong, China; Kansas City, Missouri, USA; London, England; Melbourne, Australia; New York City, New York, USA; Reykjavik, Iceland; San Diego, California, USA; Singapore; Tokyo, Japan; Toronto, Canada; Vienna, Austria.

The city state of Singapore is considered to be one of the front-runners in the race to creating fully smart cities, with IoT cameras monitoring the cleanliness of public spaces, crowd density and the movement of registered vehicles. Singapore also has systems to monitor energy use, waste management and water use in real time. In addition, there is autonomous vehicle testing and a monitoring system to ensure the health and wellbeing of senior citizens.

Business Dictionary defines that a smart city is a developed urban area that creates sustainable economic development and high quality of life by excelling in multiple key areas; economy, mobility, environment, people, living, and government.

International Institute of Management Development, Switzerland

popularly known as IMD defines a Smart City as an urban area that has become more efficient and/or more environmentally friendly and/or more socially inclusive through the use of digital technologies. The goal of a Smart City is to improve its attractiveness to citizens and/or businesses by enhancing and/or adding city services.


Meanwhile it won't be wrong to say that members of the general public of Manipur don't know what a smart city is though they might have come across it in the news.

Unfortunately, in this context, the Manipur Urban Development Agency (MAHUD) under the Smart City Mission is set to undertake a Citizen Perception Survey, 2022 since the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MAHUA), Government of India (GOI) launched the Citizen Perception Survey, 2022 of the Ease of Living Index assessment on November 9.

The MAHUD has launched the Citizen Perception Survey, 2022 with the objective of capturing the perception of citizens on the quality of life in their city. The MAHUD's task of undertaking the survey is said to help enhance Manipur's position in the Ease of Living Index which will record suggestions and opinions from the public related to situations around the quality of life in the state.

In 2019, Manipur was ranked 91 out of 111 cities, improving to 50 out of 111 cities of India the following year, i.e. in 2020.

contd. on page 3



ভূপালীন ত্রিংশত ত্রিংশ, ২০২২  
**NUPEELAL DAY, 2022**  
নুপীলাল নীংশিং নুমিং, ২০২২

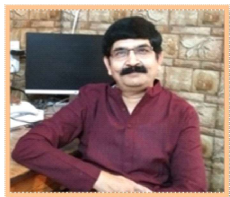
“লৈবাকী লুরবা তানফমদা  
ঈচঙ খৌনা লাহ্লেংখিবী ইমাশিং,  
মখৌয়না পায়রম্বা ইরমদম নুংশিবগী মৈরা অদুদি  
নুমিং থানা লৈরিবমথে  
মুংনাইদনা লৈহৌরগনি।”

মণিপুর লৈঙাক্কা পাঙথোকচরিবা  
নুপীলাল নীংশিং থৌরম অসিদা  
ঈরোচা পুন্মক্কা যাওবিরনবা নোল্লকচরি।

মফমঃ নুপীলাল মেমোরিয়েল কমপ্লেক্স, ইম্ফাল অমসুং  
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মতমঃ অয়ুক পুং ৯:০০

Issued in public interest by  
সহকারী সচিব, তথ্য ও জনসংযোগ  
Directorate of Information & Public Relations, Manipur

# An animal's eyes have the power to speak a great language



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

We celebrated International Animal Rights Day on 10<sup>th</sup> December as it throws light on the reality of animal abuse across the world. The day unites all those people fighting against animal cruelty. Hunting and killing of animals has become a form of recreation. Murdering humans is considered a crime. But killing and wiping out an entire genre is hardly given consideration. Like forests, wildlife is also a national resource, which not only helps us in

maintaining the ecological balance but is also beneficial from economic, recreational and aesthetic points of view. It was a time when human interference was minimum the number of wild animals was quite high and there was no problem of their protection or conservation. But, with the expansion of agriculture, settlement, industrial and other developmental activities and mainly due to greed of man, the number of wild animals are gradually decreasing day by day. We must understand that the wildlife is a precious gift God has given to this planet. The term 'wildlife' not only caters to wild animals but also takes into account all undomesticated life forms including birds, insects, plants, fungi and even microscopic organisms. For maintaining a healthy ecological balance on this earth, animals, plants and marine species are as important as humans. Hunting has tradition and the support of very powerful people on its side and with their influence hunting has been left untouched by legislation - the Protection of Animals Act only covers captive and domestic animals. High officials, who are supposed to be the guardians of law, often abuse their powers to shield the rich and powerful. Our country is unique in having a significant number of tigers in the wild, in spite of growing population and resource extraction pressures on their habitat. We should know that we are not just animals, but that we belong to the same family tree as other mammals, that our physiology and bodily processes are just like theirs, and that our mental processes too are from the same general pattern. The protection of the national animal has been a significant achievement till now. Hope this continues and leads to a significant rise in the coming years. Among animals, some are fewer in number than the others. If proper care and security are extended to them, the rare animals would survive. Only the future can tell whether national animal will survive to maintain the much-needed ecological balance.

Tigers play a large role in sustaining the biodiversity of forests, in maintaining healthy ecology, habitat conservation and the livelihoods of rural communities. The tiger population has decreased in the states of Telengana & Andhra Pradesh. The destruction of forest coverage by Maoists may be one of the reasons for this decrease. Wild tiger deaths were also reported from Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Kerala, Karnataka and Uttarakhand. During the first six months of the year, 30 deaths were reported. The protection of the national animal has been a significant achievement till now. Hope this continues and leads to a significant rise in the coming years. Let us be thankful to the animal life in all its multifarious forms, to value and preserve humankind's relationship with the animal kingdom and most importantly to acknowledge the various indispensable life-sustaining roles animals play in our lives-of-being our pets, our friends and companions. If we delay now, it might be too late.

## Sunday Poetry

### The Dark Street

By - Irom Calvin

The long and silent street,  
That I have walked  
To reach my destination.  
Has took me to a place  
Where everything is dark,  
Calm and peace.  
Not sure what to do next,  
I decided to step back.  
Suddenly a light flashed,  
Behind me.  
Indicating hope,  
Trust and faith.  
I decided to step forward.  
Surprisingly,  
I found my dreams and goals  
That I have been waiting,  
For a very long period of time.  
This taught me a lesson.  
Not to step back in life,  
And not to lose hope.  
Because someday  
A light will shine in our life.

# Mountains are water towers of our planet



By: N. Munal Meitei

International Mountain Day is celebrated on 11 December since 2002 with this year's theme 'Women move mountains'. Manipur being with 90% hills have the relevance to celebrate this unique day as the livelihoods of both the two terrains are more or less same. This day gives an opportunity to recognise the rights of the mountain women and promotes their social justice, gender equality, livelihood and resilience.

Women play an inextricable role in environmental protection, social and economic development in mountain regions. They are the primary managers of mountain resources, artisans, guardians of biodiversity, keepers of traditional knowledge, custodians of local culture and experts in traditional medicine.

Increasing climate variability, coupled with poor economy and resources become scarce, men have no choice but to migrate to lowland cities. Women are often left to manage families but with little capacity and knowledge. Mountain women have therefore taken the throes of all family burdens.

Almost half the human population depends on mountains for water, food and energy. Mountain farming

has been a model for centuries as are inherently 'green' and low-carbon footprint. Of the 20 plant species that supply 80% of the world's food, six are diversified and originated in mountains: maize, potatoes, barley, sorghum, tomatoes and apples.

Mountains are early indicators of climate change and as global climate continue to warm, mountain people - some of the world's hungriest and poorest - face greater struggles to survive. Climate-induced disasters, combined with political, economic and social marginalization, increase the vulnerability of mountain peoples to food shortages and extreme poverty. Currently, about 329 million mountain people, is estimated to be vulnerable to food insecurity and most of the mountain farming production are for family consumption, playing a key role in ensuring household food security.

Covering around 27% of the earth's land surface and supporting 22% of the world's populations, mountains are the water towers of the planet providing 60-80% of the world's freshwater. Freshwater from mountains is fundamental for global food security, used for irrigation in many lowland regions.

Mountains are ubiquitous and 90% of the world's mountain dwellers live in developing countries, where a vast majority lives below the poverty line and 1 out of 3 faces the threat of food insecurity. Mountains not only provide sustenance and well-being to 915 million global people but also indirectly benefit billions living downstream.

Mountains are places of tourism

and cultural trails. Mountain tourism accounts for about 18% of the global tourism industry. Mountain populations have unique and valuable local knowledge, tradition and cultural practices that can contribute to effective land management strategies and climate adaptation. Yet mountains are starker under threat from climate change, deforestation, land degradation, overexploitation and natural disasters, affecting both for the mountain communities and the rest of the world.

Mountains have a key role to play in providing renewable energy, especially through hydro power, solar power, wind power and biogas. Hydro power currently provides around a fifth of all electricity worldwide and some countries rely 100% of their requirements.

Mountains are one of the oldest nature's pristine structures, stolid and regal they stand against the sky, of such a size that they can catch entire countryside in their shadow, and turn back the ravages of storms against their unflinching sides. They are the source of recreation and resource, with stones of green dressed slopes to enthusiasts, and to those brave enough to delve into their stony sides.

Traditional medicines and many forms of handicrafts that spring up from the minds of mountain people that were kept un-taught for centuries towered the edifices into their legacies. Mountains are necessary for the health and well-being of the flora and fauna that call them their home.

The world's mountains encompass some of the most spectacular landscapes, a wide variety of eco-

systems, a great diversity of species and distinctive human communities. Mountains support about one quarter of world's terrestrial biodiversity with nearly half of the world's biodiversity 'hotspots'. Genetic diversity is higher in mountains regions. When mountain communities disintegrate, the entire cultures and languages disappear.

Mountains have acted as refuges from environmental changes or competing species, and they often represent sites of in situ speciation. Due to global warming species that are endemic in these areas can become "trapped" and will disappear as their habitat is reduced.

Mountain ranges are the primary depository for air pollutants. Changes in the precipitation patterns and rising temperatures result in reducing the water holding capacity of the mountain range. Habitat degradation caused by massive deforestation results in soil erosion, landslides, flooding and food insecurity. With this change in habitat, rare species of plants and animals can face extinction.

This day can be celebrated in the cascade ways to discover the hiding beauties, hiking along the trails and enjoying the mountain nature in all its glory and untouched wilderness. However, mountains are hugely vulnerable to the natural and anthropogenic threats which degrade mountain ecosystem and services and the livelihoods of billions of peoples. Therefore with coming of this Day, let's join hand to save the mountains and hills for the human survival.

(The author is an Environmentalist, Email-nmunal@yahoo.in)

# India @ 75 – A Contemporary Approach

(Book Extract)

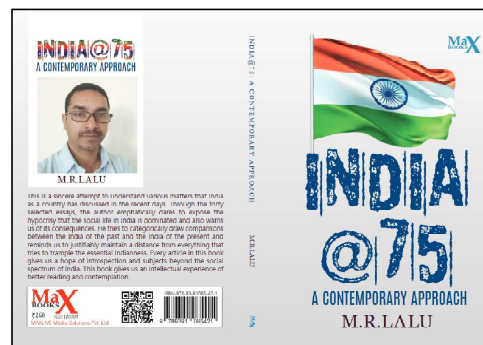
*"The land where humanity has attained its highest towards gentleness, generosity, purity and calmness is India. Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life, and I wish that each one of you will have the same dream in your minds, and stop not till you have realised the dream."* Almost in tune with what Swami Vivekananda envisioned a century ago, India @ 75 has witnessed a country's collective aspiration simmering for greater heights with exemplary democratic principles strengthening its inner core. The festivities of the 75<sup>th</sup> Independence Day this year were tantamount to what the soul of the country has been reflective for years. A greater resurgence or what we technically call the Atmanirbharta has been intelligently illuminating every inch of its landscape and totally reminiscent of its glory of the past with every individual advocating and espousing it.

Centuries of invasions and the scars that they brought to the collective psyche get revamped in every generation. Probably, as a country, we were successful in glorifying the brutality that the invasion had on this land and the invaders are still eulogised to be heroes. At present, the majoritarianism which is aggressively blamed and debated across the country has mostly been an output of the historical brutalities and the rejections and denials that followed in an independent India, deliberately concealing the struggles and hardships to counter the invasions. A new generation, ignorant of the historicity of the bravery that its ancestors fought against the brutal invading force is natural to dig deeper into the concealed realities and excavate the debris of its lost identity. To understand India, it is necessary to go beyond the politically discovered concept the

'union of states' and embrace the cultural ethos that are enshrined in the soul of the country, and avoiding which, not only the present generation, but the generations to come would also remain confused and incompetent to sublimate the rigidity with which we distorted the idea that India represents.

The complexity that India's multiculturalism offers is genuinely visible and the essence of its spiritual wisdom seems to be fading but slowly, without being able to bring a convincing flavour to the platter of India's religious concomitance. Seeing India as a world teacher amidst the modern tumult of a universal disorder was first conceived by Swami Vivekananda; who, throughout his deliberations in India and abroad had spoken about the potentiality that India held in terms of delivering a spiritual solace.

An impending threat is menacingly visible on India's political horizon which needs urgent attention. With its population crossing 1.3 billion, India would be battling to balance itself between democracy and a theocracy that it might be slowly inching towards. While democracy provides the citizens with the essential freedom to flourish as a social being, theocracy dictates terms holding on to the theatrics of radicalization. Signs to this effect of growing disagreement and dissatisfaction is evident and efforts to cobble together the differences without patching them up resolutely for mere electoral gains is obviously throwing the country on to the brim of a scuffle. This is dangerous. India needs to plan not only for the tomorrow but also for the decades to come. The impelling threat is to keep the landscape united without being axed once again on religious lines. The basic tenets of India's spiritual wellbeing are based on diverse and pluralistic social engineering that it, from the ages of



the sages, propagated with clarity and humility. Despite the belittling of the idea that India represents from different global platforms and some deliberate attempts from India too; there seems to be a spiritual essence emanating from the core of Indianness that keeps strengthening the country inexorably.

Though India's baby steps towards progress have been unsteady, its national energy has been unparalleled and stable pushing an infant state from the clutches of cultural devaluation and denigration. Shaking the impact of the colonial influence was not that easy. Surprisingly, even today we could not successfully emancipate our country from the colonial blow.

The policies forcefully disseminated by Lord Macaulay have definitely chiselled a genus out of Indians who represent the white-man's wisdom and are unapologetically argumentative on its efficacy even today. We can find them everywhere among the academics, the media fraternity, the politicians, the judiciary, and the intellectuals and also among social critics.

India as of today is a complex democracy. On one side its aspirational worldview is gaining

momentum and on the other we are pulled by the pinching realities of illiteracy, inequality, corruption and the contradictions and conflicts of religious hypocrisy. The question that often penetrates into the collective psyche of Indians is that; how long shall we live a life of contradictions? Does this country have the energy to defend its inner conflicts? A regime change in India since 2014 was a result of an aspirational shift by the Indian voters from a system of institutionalised corruption. All sectors of social life in the country received indomitable challenges but considerable moves in the direction of reforms followed. India, towards its centenary is an aspirational India and its quest is to accomplish big things and the Amrit Kaal will be a period of an aspirational India's rise to greater global significance. As India marches towards its centenary, Himalayan challenges await us.

(Article published here is an extract from the book that the author M.R. LALU had published with the title INDIA @ 75 – A CONTEMPORARY APPROACH from Kerala.

The book contains essays analysing various factors that India as a multicultural entity represents and the impact of India's rise as a significant global power.)

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

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# 1st Finance & Central Bank Deputies Meeting under the G20 Presidency of India scheduled in Bengaluru on Tuesday

**PIB**  
New Delhi, Dec 11:

The first G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies (FCBD) meeting is scheduled to be held during 13-15 December 2022 in Bengaluru. This meeting, which will mark the start of discussions on the Finance Track agenda under the Indian G20 Presidency, will be hosted jointly by the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India.

The G20 Finance Track, led by Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of G20 countries, focuses on

economic and financial issues. It provides an effective forum for global economic discourse and policy coordination. The First Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting will be held during 23-25 February 2023 in Bengaluru.

Hon'ble Prime Minister said in his address at the Bali G20 Summit that the need today is that the benefits of development are universal and all-inclusive. Ministry of Finance has imbibed this idea in the G20 Finance Track agenda. He has also given us a vision that India will strive

to ensure that the G20 acts as a global "prime mover" to envision new ideas and accelerate collective action over the next one year.

The upcoming meeting of G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies will be co-chaired by Mr Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and Dr Michael D. Patra, Deputy Governor of RBI. Their counterparts from G20 member countries, and from several other countries and international organisations invited by India, will participate in the two-day meeting.

The G20 Finance Track discusses key issues of relevance for the global economy, encompassing the global economic outlook, the international financial architecture, infrastructure development and financing, sustainable finance, global health, international taxation and financial sector issues, including financial inclusion.

In the Bengaluru meeting, discussions will focus on the agenda for the Finance Track under the Indian G20 Presidency. This includes reorienting international financial institutions to meet

the shared global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, financing cities of tomorrow, managing global debt vulnerabilities, advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains, financing for climate action and SDGs, a globally coordinated approach to unbacked crypto assets and advancing the international taxation agenda.

On the sidelines of the meeting, a panel discussion will be held on 'Strengthening Multilateral Development Banks to Address Shared Global Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. A seminar on the 'Role of Central Banks in Green Financing' will also be held.

The Indian G20 Presidency's theme of 'One Earth One Family One Future' will guide the G0 Finance Track discussions. Approximately 40 meetings of the Finance Track will be held in several locations in India, which include meetings of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors. The discussions in the G20 Finance Track will ultimately be reflected in the G20 Leaders' Declaration.

India has assumed the G20 Presidency at a time of multiple challenges, which include scarring from the COVID-19 pandemic, sharpened geopolitical tensions, rising food and energy security

concerns, growing debt distress, inflationary pressures, and monetary tightening, among others. A key role of the G20 is to provide guidance in dealing with such challenges.

During India's G20 Presidency, supporting the countries most in need and reflecting the concerns and aspirations of developing countries will be at the forefront of the G20's efforts. The Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India will steer the G20 Finance Track agenda in an inclusive manner aimed at addressing the global economic needs of today as well as preparing for a better tomorrow.

## No extra credits for India as easing of inflation threat a global phenomenon

*Falling oil prices, end to dollar among factors responsible for improvement*

By K Raveendran

Inflation is showing signs of softening, providing much-needed relief to the government as well as the managers of the economy, not to speak of the common man, whose household budgets have been under a squeeze in view of skyrocketing prices. The improvement is reflected in the latest rate hike by the Reserve Bank, which is by a lower margin of 35 basis points compared to the three previous instances of 50 each. So far so good. But the important point not to be missed is that the reversing trend is in keeping with a global trend rather than any spectacular success that can be credited to only India.

Inflation the world over has begun to decline, which is primarily attributed to falling oil prices as well improvements in supply chain, which had been one of the biggest casualties of the pandemic era. Though the central banks are still a long way off their comfort zone inflation level of 2 percent, they have been largely successful in taming the problem, with rate increases and other appropriate policy

mechanism. They have been aided by some very favourable developments in the energy sector.

King dollar, which has been on a rampage, and a scourge for most other currencies, notably those in the emerging markets, including India, has finally relented and is down 5 percent from its October level. This has changed the directions of money flows, reflecting in proportionate improvement in the performance equities as well as other investment products.

Although the Reserve Bank continues to swear by uncertainties in the global economy, with core inflation still indicating stickiness and medium-term outlook remaining exposed to global developments and weather, it has indicated a continuation of the policy of "withdrawal of accommodation".

RBI has revised upwards the retail inflation forecast marginally to 6.6 percent and 5.9 percent for the third quarter and fourth quarter respectively and hopes to bring down CPI inflation to 5 percent and 5.4 percent in the first and second quarter of next year.

Simultaneously, there has

been an improvement in the foreign exchange situation. According to RBI, forex reserves have increased for the fourth straight week, with valuations greatly benefiting from the fall in dollar vis-à-vis other major currencies. The reserves stood at \$561.16 billion by the first week of December, enough to pay for almost nine months' import requirements.

India is, however, better placed in these respects than Europe, where double digit inflation and soaring cost of living are giving a tough time to consumers in the whole continent. Despite the onset of festival shopping season, retail sales are down and consumer confidence has plummeted to levels lower than where they were at the peak of the pandemic.

In contrast, retail demand in India is consistently increasing and the effect of inflation seems to be cooling off for the sector. A recent CII event was told that in this respect India is much better than the rest of the world. Particularly, demand in rural India is picking up and there is a lot of value-seeking behaviour, according to FMCG major ITC.

According to reports, India's factory activity expanded at its fastest pace in three months in November.

The Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index, compiled by S&P Global, rose to 55.7 last month compared with 55.3 in October, marking the 17th successive month of expansion in manufacturing production across India. Robust demand, particularly for consumer and intermediate goods, and marketing pushed the new orders sub-index to a three-month high, while input prices rose at the slowest pace in 26 months providing some relief for manufacturers, and also benefiting end-consumers with selling prices increasing at the shallowest rate since February, S&P pointed out.

Although overall economic growth slowed to 6.3 per cent in the previous quarter, compared to 13.5 per cent growth reported in the previous three months. There has been an improvement in overall business confidence. Reflecting the positive sentiment, employment also rose at the quickest rate since January 2020 barring October. (IPA Service)

**Contd. from Page 1**

## While Imphal City still lacks facilities.....

MAHUD commissioner, M Joy on December 7 told the media at City Convention Centre, Palace Compound in Imphal East that the 'Ease of Living Index' aims to evaluate the quality of life and the impact of various initiatives for urban development. It provides a comprehensive understanding of participating cities across India based on the quality of life, economic ability of a city and its sustainability and resilience.

The feedback of citizens received through Cyber-Physical System (CPS) will help in improving urban governance through participatory planning and will further aid in formulating better policies for the citizens, Joy added.

Commissioner said a city awareness programme, as part of the multi-pronged approach, is being conducted to promote the survey among citizens at the city level. Media is also one of the seven activities the city has to undertake to create awareness of the survey.

Here, it is pertinent to raise three questions – Why the awareness programme on smart city has not been done in the last six years since the inception of Imphal smart city mission in November 2016 at the last part of the then Chief Minister Okram Ibobi's Congress Government? Will the Citizen Perception Survey 2022 through CPS get right feedback from citizens who don't understand what a smart city is? How much the city awareness programme which is being conducted help the citizens understand in the short time when the survey is already underway?

Apparently, there is a gulf of difference between the global understanding of "smart city" and what we are experiencing in Imphal Smart City Mission.

As part of the Manipur Government's Imphal Smart City Mission, the MAHUD also announced plans for underground parking at Nupi Keithel Number 2 at Paona Bazar side for about 350 two-wheelers parking allocation besides intelligent traffic light system, emergency call system at 10 places of the city, cycle riding, and streets for people.

Under the Street for People, two pilot projects have been taken up for two street developments. The two pilot projects will take up commercial space and periphery of the city – one between BT Park and Johnstone High School (com-

mercial area) and another at Nongpokthong connecting till Ananda Higher Secondary School at Old Checkon in Imphal East. The Street for People pilot project budget estimate is Rs. 18 crore and it is planned to be completed by June 2023.

It is also said that Nongpokthong Torban will be extended till Minuthong and also Nupi Keithel-Mall Road, which will be condemned by people through social media for naming the Thangal Road in Khwairamband Keithel as Mall Road, will extend to Khuyathong road.

To address the parking problem in Imphal city, it is said that MAHUD is initiating two solutions for the parking system in large scale and mini scale. In the pilot project, four areas have been identified on a rotary basis at Ima Keithel (near the temporary market side), Nagamapal (near Kasturi), Nongpokthong (near Sanjenthong) and near Secure Building complex which can accommodate 42 cars and 70 two-wheelers parking. In large scale, MAHUD has identified two places in multi-level car parking basis at Gandhi Avenue (near quarter) and at Old Power House (Keishampat).

Moreover, according to [www.smartcities.gov.in](http://www.smartcities.gov.in) the completed projects for Imphal Smart City Mission as on December 9, 2022 are Kanglea Rejuvenation Program KREP; West Riverfront landscape green Phase I; Development Mall Road Phase I; and West Riverfront landscape green phase 1 (Part) (Resectioning work along western bank of river between Sanjenthong bridge to Minuthong, 1600 m from Sanjenthong).

The Imphal Smart City Mission Projects under Work Order Stage are Nongpok Thong (Bridge) of Kanglea; 24x7 Water Supply Power-Smart Grids and Water Supply lines; Nongpok Thong (Bridge) of Kanglea (the same project name mentioned twice with different impacts); Tombishina Market; Integrated Command and Control Centre (Urban Transport); and Development of Integrated Control & Command Centre building project (IT Connectivity and Digitalization).

Meanwhile the Imphal Smart City Mission Projects at Tender Stage are App-based systems for cycle pick and go; Emergency Incident Alert and Response Management System (EARS); Mobile Based KNFB Reader App for Visually Challenged; Area Based Emergency Incident Alert and Response System – ICEIARS; Area Based Smart Security Management System – ABSSMS; Automatic Number Plate Recognition using Cameras (ANPR); E-Challan Application for traffic rule violations, parking violation etc; Imphal City Digital Road Guidance System (ICDRGS); Imphal City Unified Communication, Collaboration and Information Sharing Cloud Platform – ICUCISIP; Safe Imphal-Amobile app for 24x7 safety of citizen and tourists; Smart Traffic Light Management (STLM); and Implementation of GIS Based Property Tax Module.

However, according to Government of India, the purpose of the Smart Cities Mission is to drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of people by enabling local area development and harnessing technology, especially technology that leads to Smart.

In simplest way, a smart city is a city that uses technology to provide services and solve city problems. A smart city does things like improve transportation and accessibility, improve social services, promote sustainability, and give its citizens a voice. The main goals of a smart city are to improve policy efficiency, effective and smart management of wastes and reduce inconvenience, improve social and economic quality, and maximize social inclusion.

While Imphal City still lacks the structures, facilities and services of even a regular city, most of the projects at all stages of the Imphal Smart City Mission appear to be isolatory, which is not a character of a smart city. It is a common sense that all the structures, facilities and services in a smart city have to be interconnected, coordinated and holistic in nature as well as sustainable using the most modern information and communication technologies. The structures, facilities and services also have to drive economic growth and improve the quality life of people. More importantly, indications of full functionality of public transportation and economic growth are not evident as yet. Now the pertinent question persists – How smart is Imphal Smart City Mission? In Short, Imphal Smart City Mission is not smart enough so far.

## Securing a better future



By Vijay GarG

While the world has made tremendous progress materially, it has lagged with respect to moral and spiritual development. But the latter is just as important as the former, and in any case in order for society to get the optimum use of the material gains positive and morally upright behaviour and attitudes are essential.

In today's world declining of moral values, especially amongst children, attitudes and behaviour are issues of great concern in many

societies and no doubt this has a strong correlation with rising crime levels, corruption and the other social evils which are threatening societal stability and harmony. The reasons for this unfortunate trend are many and finding solutions in an increasingly complex human environment is by no means an easy task. Add to it, two years of pandemic. But arresting this attitudinal and moral decline is an imperative if societal cohesion, peace and stability are to be maintained.

However, the best approach towards tackling this problem is to ensure that children are raised in the proper manner and are exposed to a healthy environment because this early training has a substantial effect on their attitudes and moral values as adults. And this is where parents and teachers play a key role because these are the people that children are exposed to most of the time, becoming their first

role models and mentors.

Unfortunately in today's world there is an increase of broken homes coupled with domestic violence, abuse, etc, and obviously an increasing number of children are raised in an unstable, and in extreme cases, a frightening environment. In addition, in order to cope with financial obligations and cost of living increasingly both parents have to work and as such many children are left without proper parental supervision making them vulnerable and susceptible to the many negative influences in society.

Of course one of the areas where many negative attitudes and behaviour injurious to the young mind are transmitted is through the electronic medium and concerns have been and are being expressed about the increasing violence, vulgarity, lewd music, pornography that are shown on television programmes and other electronic media. This is a headache for many parents because

of technological advances it is very difficult to monitor and restrict what children view via the electronic media.

In today's society where academic achievement and performance is at prominence, the importance of character building seems to have been forgotten. We acknowledge kids' achievements more than we acknowledge their characters. We are more engrossed in finding out our kids' academic performance than in imbuing them with positive values, which will build their character, and which can enable them to make the right choices in their future lives. To counterbalance against something harmful and destructive from the environment the child may experience, instilling good human virtues and moral values is of paramount importance. And, early age is an ideal time to do so. The onus lies with the parents and the teachers.

# Prime Minister Launches a Rs 75000 crore Developmental Projects in Vidarbha

By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai: Dec 11:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a 520 km long first phase of the Hindu Hruday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg connecting Nagpur and Shirdi, along with other projects on Sunday.

This highway when completed, will directly connect 10 districts of Maharashtra and will indirectly connect 14 other districts and will drastically reduce the travel time between Nagpur and Mumbai. The 701 Km expressway is one of India's longest expressways being built at a cost of about Rs 55,000 crore.

The prime minister also virtually launched 10 other projects which will cumulatively cost Rs 75,000 crore. The projects include: a) AIMS, Nagpur (Rs 1,575 crore), b) Nagpur Institute of One Health (to boost the country's health research), c) ICMR facility to enhance research on haemoglobinopathies at Chandrapur, d) the Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), at Chandrapur, e) Nag River Pollution Abatement project under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) at Nagpur, f) the inauguration of the Nagpur Metro rail phase I (Rs 8650 crore), and foundation laying ceremony of the Nagpur Metro rail phase II (Rs 6700 crore).

The projects included: g) inauguration of the Nagpur-Bilaspur (Chhatisgarh) Vande Bharat Express train (the travel time from Nagpur to Bilaspur will be reduced to 5 hours 30 mins from 7-8 hours), h) the foundation laying ceremony of the re-development of Nagpur and Ajni railway stations, i) inauguration of the Government Maintenance Depot (locomotive maintenance depot) at Ajni in Nagpur and j) the inauguration of the Kohli-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi mingling with students and commuters while travelling by Nagpur Metro. (Photo credit: CMO)

Narkhed section of the Nagpur-Ajini third line project.

Prime Minister took a ride in the Nagpur Metro from Freedom Park Metro Station and interacted with students, those from the start up sector, and citizens from other walks of life. He also played a 'Dhol' during the visit to launch of the Vande Bharat.

In his nearly 45 minutes long speech Modi referred to these projects as 11 stars in the development of Nagpur and adjoining areas. He emphasized on infrastructural development and quoted the example of other countries which could develop only because of faster infrastructural growth. He gave the example of South Korea, Gulf countries and Singapore in this regard. The Singapore which was once a fishing island has today become a major economic centre, he added.

Narrating how the lopsided administration leads to the delay in implementation of the projects, he quoted example of the Gosikhurd Dam on the Wainganga River near Pauni in Bhandara district, which was completed in 2017 only after the NDA Government came to power. Meanwhile the cost of the project escalated up to Rs 18,000 crore from Rs 4,000 crore in the last three decades.

No infrastructural work can

proceed if those implementing it are insensitive about the project.

Even today 100 districts in the country require infrastructural push so that tribals will benefit and will refrain from indulging in violence, Modi said.

Modi recalled a host of schemes like PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, Kisan Credit Card Scheme, Janadhar Yojana, Ayushman Yojana, a loan facility for street vendors etc introduced by the Union Government and claimed that "all inclusive" approach has led to all round development in the last eight years. "Sthayi Vikas, Sthayi Samadhan" (Steady development, Steady Satisfaction) should be our motto Modi said and added that the BJP won in the recent Gujarat Assembly election, only because of this avowed objective. He urged the opposition that instead of short measures, the welfare of the country should be its aim. With this they can win any number of elections, he added.

In a veiled reference he lambasted opposition parties for adopting short term approach to usurp power and swindle the tax payers' money. He criticised previous governments for corruption and vote bank politics. "They weakened the economy by overspending Modi said and urged people to remain away from such

selfish political leaders.

Modi arrived in Nagpur on Sunday morning, where he was received by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis.

Modi was slated to inaugurate the Mopa International Airport in Goa on Sunday evening. The airport has been developed at a cost of around Rs 2,870 crore. The foundation stone of this airport was laid by the Prime Minister in November 2016. The airport has been built on the theme of sustainable infrastructure and has solar power plant, green buildings, and LED lights on the runway, among other such facilities.

The prime minister will also inaugurate three National Ayush Institutes which have been developed at a total cost of about Rs 970 crore. He will also address the valedictory function of 9th World Ayurveda Congress (WAC) and Arogya Expo in Goa. The event is witnessing active participation of more than 400 overseas delegates representing over 50 countries, international students, and various other stakeholders of Ayurveda. The theme of this year's edition of WAC is "Ayurveda for One Heal".

# Himachal Pradesh govt formation: Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu takes oath as new CM of state, Mukesh Agnihotri as his deputy

Agency  
Shimla, Dec 11:

Senior Congress leader and former Himachal Pradesh unit chief Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu took oath as the new Chief Minister of the state today. Mukesh Agnihotri, who served as the leader of the opposition in previous regime, took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister.

The oath-taking ceremony started at 1.30 pm at the Ridge in Shimla.

Confirming his oath-taking ceremony, "I invite all to be the part of my swearing in ceremony today at 1.30, Ridge, Shimla. I look forward all to grace the occasion as this win is dedicated to the people of Himachal Pradesh. Seeking the blessings and best wishes Jai Hind Jai Himachal."

Congress leader Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu takes oath as Himachal Pradesh CM, in presence of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and party leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, in Shimla today. "He has been a 'Sewadar', he should serve the people of the state," says her mother.

Sukhu receives Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot at Sanjauli helipad. "This is a victory that belongs to the people of Himachal Pradesh. This is an example of what emerges when the Congress party fights unitedly," says Kharge.

After reaching Shimla, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot says, "This is a new beginning for Congress as well as the people of Himachal Pradesh. Rahul Gandhi's yatra against inflation, unemployment, will become stronger from Himachal."

Rajasthan Congress leader Sachin Pilot arrives in Shimla



While her son Vikramaditya Singh said, "People of Himachal have reposed their faith in us, we need to fulfill our promises and work together. We respect the decision of top-brass of the party."

**People in attendance**

Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu receives his mother Sansar Devi at Sanjauli helipad, ahead of his swearing-in ceremony in Shimla today. "He has been a 'Sewadar', he should serve the people of the state," says her mother.

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Rajasthan Congress leader Sachin Pilot arrives in Shimla

to attend the ceremony. "I believe that Sukhu will be able to deliver all the promises given by Cong. The people of Himachal Pradesh always supported Congress. We will work together for the development of the state," he says.

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and the party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra arrive at Sanjauli helipad to attend the oath-taking ceremony.

Congress leaders Bhupesh Baghel and BS Hooda are also in attendance at the swearing-in ceremony.

Sukhu is a grassroots politician who has risen from the ranks and has wide organisational experience in the hill state. A four-time MLA, Sukhu, 58, is a former chief of Congress in the state and has been part of NSUI and Youth Congress.

He was the party's state unit president from 2013 to 2019 and spoke his mind even if it was not to the liking of the party's tall leader Virbhada Singh, a six-time Chief Minister. Sukhu has been in favour of promoting and grooming younger Congress leaders in Himachal Pradesh.

## Sports

# Morocco down Portugal to become first ever African World Cup semi-finalists; France beats England to advance to the World Cup semifinals

Semi-finals		
	Argentina	Wed, 14 Dec 12:30 am
	Croatia	
	France	Thu, 15 Dec 12:30 am
	Morocco	

Agency  
Doha Dec 11:

Morocco became the first African nation to reach the World Cup semi-finals as Youssef En-Nesyri's first-half goal sealed a tense 1-0 victory over Portugal on Saturday at Al Thumama Stadium.

The Atlas Lions, also the first Arab team to make the last four, added Portugal to their list of European scalps with a resolute second-half performance.

Cristiano Ronaldo has likely played his last World Cup match after making an influential appearance as a second-half substitute, failing to score his first knockout-phase goal at the tournament before departing down the tunnel in tears.

Morocco took a 42nd-minute lead through En-Nesyri's header as they came on strongly late in the first pe-

riod.

Portugal piled on the pressure after the break but an injury-hit Morocco, without three of their four first-choice defenders once skipper Romain Saiss was forced off, hung on despite being reduced to 10 men in added time.

"We came up against a really great Portugal team. We're drawing on all we have, we still have guys injured. I told the guys before the match we had to write history for Africa. I'm very, very happy," Regragui said.

The partisan crowd undoubtedly helped the North Africans over the line, although Portugal struggled to create many clear-cut chances as they lost a World Cup quarter-final for the first time.

"I think it wasn't fair for us to lose, but that's football," said Portugal coach Fernando Santos.

"We're upset because we thought we could reach the final and win the final as well."

Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo was sent on early in the second half by Santos but could not rescue the Euro 2016 winners.

Instead, it was another famous day for Morocco, after

previous upset wins over Belgium and Spain, on penalties, in Qatar.

Walid Regragui's men will face England or holders France in the semi-finals at Al Bayt Stadium on Wednesday.

Morocco will believe they can topple either of those sides, having still only conceded once at this World Cup.

Portugal enjoyed the majority of possession in the opening half-hour, but Joao Felix's fifth-minute diving header, saved by goalkeeper Yassine Bounou, was the closest either side came to an early goal.

Morocco always looked dangerous, though, and Selim Amallah ballooned a shot over and Sofiane Boufal curled straight at Diogo Costa for the Africans.

It was no surprise when Morocco did forge ahead shortly before the interval.

Portuguese goalkeeper Costa came for a cross from left-back Yahya Attiat-Allah he was never going to get to and Sevilla striker En-Nesyri did the rest with a towering header.

Portugal almost equalised seconds later in spectacular fashion when Bruno



Harry Kane of England reacts after missing a penalty against Hugo Lloris of France during the World Cup quarterfinal match between England and France.

Fernandes crashed a bouncing ball from the right-hand side of the box against the cross-bar.

A crazy few minutes before half-time also saw Attiat-Allah, only playing in place of the injured Nussair Mazraoui, blaze wide after another rapid counter.

Morocco almost doubled their advantage four minutes after the restart as Costa just about managed to prevent

Hakim Ziyech's free-kick from the right from flying all the way in.

Santos wasted little time in summoning for his captain, sending on Ronaldo and Joao Cancelo in the 51st minute.

Morocco, already without injured defenders Mazraoui and Nayef Aguerd, were dealt another blow when Saiss was stretchered off.

Portugal started to lay siege to the opposition goal

and Fernandes came close to levelling again when he fired narrowly over from the edge of the box.

Morocco were largely keeping Portugal at bay, but Bounou had to be at his best to tip over Felix's drive with eight minutes remaining.

In another match, France is heading back to the World Cup semifinals in back-to-back tournaments after a thrilling and nerve-racking 2-1 quarterfinal victory over England.

It was a battle of the titans. Both teams made the semifinals of the last World Cup in Russia four years ago. France is the defending champion and had sparked in Qatar behind a bevy of stars including Kylian Mbappe who leads the tournament with five goals (he was mostly silenced in this contest).

It was France which scored first. In the 17th minute, Antoine Griezmann (playing in his 72nd straight game) passed to Aurélien Tchouaméni who delivered a blistering strike from far outside the box to silence England 1-0.

England's super striker and team captain Harry Kane leveled the game at 1-1 in the

54th minute with a penalty kick strike. It was his 53rd goal for England - tying him with Wayne Rooney as the top all-time scorers for their country.

France bounced back in the 78th minute. Griezmann sent another pass into the box and Olivier Giroud soared up to deliver a header beyond the outstretched arms of the English keeper. The goal adds to Giroud's all-time scoring lead for France.

In the 84th minute, England missed a golden chance to even the game again. Harry Kane lined up for his second penalty kick of the game - but this time he struck it high above the cross bar.

England controlled possession for the entire game. They had more passes, more crosses and twice as many shots. But it mattered not for France. No defending world champions had gone beyond the quarterfinals this century until today.

The road for France won't get any easier. The French play Morocco on Wednesday's semifinal. Morocco has mowed down European opponents this tournament and is the first African team to play in a World Cup semifinal.