

## High Court dismisses Miscellaneous Case filed by Manipur Lokayukta

### The HC Judge made critical observations on the partisan conduct of the Manipur Lokayukta

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 28:

In a significant ruling, the Manipur High Court has dismissed a case filed by Manipur Lokayukta bearing No. MC (WP(C)) No. 346 of 2022 against N. Sarat Singh, Managing Director, MSPCL and Th. Bimol Singh as Principal Respondents to vacate, set aside, modify and not to extend any further an interim order dated 29.09.2022 passed in W.P (C) No. 833 of 2022. The judgment was passed by the Mr. Justice M.V. Muralidharan in a judgment and order dated 19.12.2022.

The matter relates to a Complaint filed before the Manipur Lokayukta by one, Shri Ng. Ibotombi Singh, of Oinam Bazar Makha, P.O. & P.S. Nambol, Bishnupur District, Manipur against N. Sarat Singh, Managing

Director, MSPCL and two others. The Complaint alleges that there were unauthorized change in scope of work and supply, non-execution of 17 km of 33 kV line and sending end bay but incurred expenditure for the said works and supply implying embezzlement and misappropriation of public fund in respect of "Installation of 2x5 MVA, 33/11 kV sub-station along with associated 33 kV line and related civil works at Sugnu in Thoubal District on turn-key basis". A Complaint Case No. 5 of 2022 was taken up by Manipur Lokayukta against the said complaint and subsequently MSPCL was directed to produce necessary documents on the basis of the Complaint. During the course of examination, it has come to know that the alleged complaint relating to

construction of associated 33 kV line for the said turn-key project was completed on 14-08-2015. Therefore, having elapsed more than 7 years, it has become an issue which cannot be looked into by the Manipur Lokayukta and accordingly, Power Department was appraised. Subsequently, Power Department, Government of Manipur after obtaining the approval of the Competent Authority informed the Manipur Lokayukta that the subject of the complaint being barred by the provision of section 53 of the Manipur Lokayukta Act, request was made for not proceeding with the proposed inquiry.

However, Manipur Lokayukta without appreciating the stand of the Manipur Government, passed an order on 23/9/2022 directing to make available

all the documents by 10-10-2022 and also directed the Administrative Secretary, Power Department Govt. of Manipur and Dy. Secretary (Power) to be present before the Manipur Lokayukta on 10-10-2022.

In the Judgment order dated 19.12.2022 passed in respect of MC (WP(C)) No. 346 of 2022, the Manipur High Court made critical observations on the conduct of the Manipur Lokayukta, that irrespective of the actual state of affairs which may not be disputed about the completion of the project in the month of August, 2015 the Manipur Lokayukta was not appreciating the stand of the Government and have been insisting on making inquiry which otherwise is outside its jurisdiction thereby making it clear that Manipur Lokayukta has become an instrument at the

hand of few persons who indulge in making complaints on surmises and information provided against the official documents and records. The Manipur High Court denounced such actions which indicate personal interest on part of Manipur Lokayukta which is the inquiring authority. The Judgment further remarked that such partisan attitude of the Manipur Lokayukta has necessitated intervention of this Court to prevent systematic harassment in the name of investigation and inquiry at the behest of vested interested individuals, thereby restoring the faith of the general public including officials working in Government establishment manning the essential service. It was also observed that no productive work was executed in the Company/ Department while attending

to such inquiry and investigation filed by the vested interested persons.

The judgment further observed that the Manipur High Court, as rightly argued by Mr. HS Paonam, the learned senior counsel for the principal respondents and as could be seen from the available records produced by both the parties, viewed that Manipur Lokayukta without appreciating the stand of the Government, insisted on personal appearance of the officers concerned under the guise of inquiry which prima facie is outside its jurisdiction. Therefore, the Court, upon appreciating the submissions put forth by the learned counsels of both the sides granted interim stay of the order dated 23/9/2022 passed by Manipur Lokayukta.

Further, the court

observed that on perusal of the file produced by Manipur Lokayukta in respect of Complaint Case No. 5 of 2022, it was found that Ngangom Ibotombi Singh filed the Complaint before the Manipur Lokayukta on 31/8/2022 which is beyond the period of seven years as per Section 53 of the Manipur Lokayukta Act, 2014 and hence barred by limitation.

Therefore, the Manipur High Court observed that there is no valid ground to vacate and/or modify the interim order dated 29/9/2022. As such, the court found no merit in MC (WP(C)) No. 346 of 2022 and accordingly dismissed it. The court further made absolute the interim order date 29/9/2022 passed in W.P (C) No. 833 of 2022 till the disposal of the writ petition.

## Speaker Th Satyabrata wishes on New Year

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 28:

Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly Thokchom Satyabrata Singh wishes the people of the state on the occasion of New Year.

2022 has passed and has become a part of history. "2023" – A year everyone is journeying to where cherished dreams are in their grandest way possible.

So with the year 2023 just beginning, I wish all the people of Manipur a Very Happy New Year and looking forward in each and every one's life good health, prosperity and success, all happily fulfilled in the year ahead, it said.

## MIC condoles

IT News  
Imphal, Dec 28:

Chief Information Commissioner of Manipur Information Commission, O Sunil Singh in a press release condoles the untimely demise of Chungkham Birendra Singh (Retd. IAS).

All the officers and staff of the Manipur Information Commission including former State Chief Information Commissioner Th. Ibobi Singh expresses their deep condolence on the demise of Birendra Singh. A 2 minutes silence was observed in respect of the departed soul.

The press release added, "Many of us at the Manipur Information Commission know him personally and he was well-loved among our staff. He will be really missed. At this hour of sorrow, we extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family of the departed soul."

## Notification G.S.R 901(E) issued to ease in the sale and purchase of registered vehicles through dealers

PIB  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has issued a notification G.S.R 901(E) on 22 December 2022 to promote ease of doing business and transparency in the sale and purchase of registered vehicles through dealers.

The pre-owned car market in India has been gradually gaining ground. In recent years, the advent of online marketplaces, which are involved in buying and selling of pre-owned vehicles has further given a boost to this market.

In the current ecosystem, many issues were being faced viz. during transfer of vehicle to subsequent

transferee, disputes in regard to third party damage liabilities, difficulty in determination of defaulter etc.

MoRTH has now amended Chapter III of Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 to build a comprehensive regulatory ecosystem for the pre-owned car market.

The key provisions of the proposed rules are as follows:

1. An authorization certificate for the dealers of registered vehicles has been introduced to identify the authenticity of a dealer.
2. Furthermore, the procedure for intimation of delivery of vehicle between the registered owner and the dealer has been detailed.
3. The powers and re-

sponsibilities of a dealer in possession of registered vehicles have also been clarified.

4. Dealers have been empowered to apply for renewal of registration certificate/ renewal of certificate of fitness, duplicate registration certificate, NOC, transfer of ownership, of motor vehicles in their possession.

5. As a regulatory measure, maintenance of an electronic vehicle trip register has been mandated which would contain details of the trip undertaken viz. trip purpose, driver, time, mileage etc.

These rules will aid in recognizing and empowering intermediaries / dealers of registered vehicles as well as provide adequate safeguards against fraudulent activities to the selling or purchasing of such vehicles.

## Chinese are combing through Black Market for Made-in-India drugs as Covid spreads unchecked

Courtesy: CNN News18  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

China, known for its notoriety along the Line of Actual Control, is now looking up to Indian drugs as medical crisis driven by Covid-19 has hit the country hard. Even as the Indian medicines have not been approved by the Chinese government and selling them is a punishable offence, residents have turned to the black market for generic coronavirus drugs. A new wave of the unprecedented pandemic outbreak that has ramped up the demand for limited supplies of approved antivirals in China.

According to *The South China Morning Post*, China approved two Covid-19 antivirals this year – Pfizer's Paxlovid and Azvudine, an HIV drug from Chinese firm Genuine Biotech. But both are only available in certain hospitals.

Their limited supply and steep price have driven many Chinese to opt for cheaper but

illegally imported generic drugs from India. Topics like "anti-Covid Indian generic drugs sold at 1,000 yuan (US\$144) per box" have been trending on Chinese social media platform Weibo, with users exchanging messages and tips on ways to get hold of the medicines, the report stated.

Another online portal, *Tencent News*, stated that four kinds of generic anti-Covid drugs from India are being "sold illegally in the Chinese market" – under the brand names Primovir, Paxista, Molnurat and Molnatris.

While Paxlovid is priced at 2,980 yuan per box, a box of Indian-made drugs can be bought for 530 to 1,600 yuan. Primovir and Paxista are generic versions of Paxlovid, while Molnurat and Molnatris are generics for Merck's molnupiravir, the report mentioned.

Dr Suneela Garg, Lancet Commission member, told CNN News18, "Virus sees no

border. We have to be watchful. The government has launched immediate measures. We need transparency from China, and be very cautious and focus on vaccination. We have some BF.7 cases in India. We have to be careful and watchful. I am hopeful we will not have a fourth wave."

Across China, an acute shortage of medicine, videos of people crowding hospitals, and long lines outside crematoriums and funeral homes marked a stark contrast with the seven deaths reported by the government last week. On December 20, the health authorities explained that only deaths caused by coronavirus-induced pneumonia and respiratory failure would be attributed to Covid.

Aside from general comments about coordinating Covid prevention measures, Xi Jinping has remained silent. He has said nothing directly about the recent surge in cases.

contd. on page 4

## AR apprehended an active cadre of NSCN (K-YA) from Mon district

IT News  
Kohima (Nagaland), Dec 28:

Mokokchung Battalion of IGAR (N) apprehended an active NSCN (K-YA) cadre from Mon District, Nagaland on late night of 26 Dec 2022. Based on specific input from reliable source, a team of the AR along with a Police representative established a Mobile Vehicle Check Post at secluded locations between Wakching - Shiong Road Junction.

The team intercepted the cadre traveling by a motorcycle and subsequently ap-

prehended while he was trying to flee. The apprehended cadre of NSCN (K-YA) has been identified as Self Style Sergeant Wangli Konyak alias Pongai, a resident of Shiong village, Mon District who was involved in extortion and anti-national activities in the area. The individual was found in possession of weapon, ammunition, communication equipment and other miscellaneous items. The apprehended individual along with recovered stores have been handed over to Mon Police Station for further investigations.



# নমস্কেতচ

# গুণেন্দ্রনাথ

# NK SANAJAOBA

## 86th (MARIPHUTARUK) SUBA MAPOK KUMON

## SARUK YABIYU

30 December 2022 at Lamyamba Shanglen, Konung Lampak, Imphal

## NK SANAJAOBA MEMORIAL TRUST

অৰ্ধে লিখা দেৱা

ধাৰা কোৱাই লোনবানি

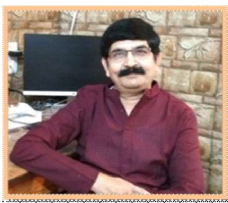
পাঁচৰি মিলেন হেনোমাইব

পোহিৰ ত কখনিব

নাৰোৱা মাৰ নাৰোৱাব

নিৰা তো নাৰোৱা

## Covid is now back in India



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

In view of the sudden rise in coronavirus cases in the United States, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Brazil, etc, India is now gearing up to combat the potential outbreak in the country. China has been witnessing a massive surge in the number of COVID-19 cases, especially after it dismantled its strict 'zero-COVID' policy. According to the Union Health Ministry, COVID-19 cases in India are increasing with a slight margin. The country has recorded 227 new coronavirus infections, while the active cases increased to 3,424. Since many people are vaccinated, this virus is now concentrating on the throat and the nose and replicating fast and transmitting also very fast. It reveals the fact that the poor adherence to safety protocols is driving the surge. The rise in COVID-19 cases has mirrored the pattern of the worst days of the crisis. The reckless and selfish behaviour witnessed around the country has drawn much ire. Why do some people dodge their responsibility in these difficult times? Medical experts have flagged that many people not wearing masks and violating social distancing norms have contributed to the sudden spurt in novel coronavirus cases. A large number of people going out of their homes, either not wearing a mask or wearing it only on their chin. This has spread infection and that is one of the reasons we are seeing a spike in cases in the last several days. The laxity in not wearing masks, congregating in numbers, holding large functions and going out even for non-essential activities have all played their part in promoting the surge. We have also seen that in the number of political meetings and rallies being organised, with elections being held at the block, local body and assembly levels.

The pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of a lot of people, and for those who live alone it is a cause of worry. The age-old mantra "prevention is better than cure" is the solution in hand and is especially important for those who taught us the same, the senior citizens of our society. The elderly is at a greater risk against COVID 19, and those with pre-existing problems are the most vulnerable. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the interconnected nature of our world – and that no one is safe until everyone is safe. It is also observed that the younger population mostly starting to go out, posting pictures on social media about sitting at a cafe or a restaurant, which quite a dangerous trend is. The reasons for the sharp rise in cases could be mainly attributed to the severe decline in compliance of COVID-appropriate behaviour, especially in the use of masks and social distancing. The risks of getting COVID-19 are higher in crowded and inadequately ventilated spaces where infected people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. The worst thing that we see is even wearing a mask, even if the bus is crowded, not more than 50% of the people will be found wearing a mask. Even on the roads, in a crowded place many do not wear a mask and even though they stand close to each other.

Let us maintain "physical distancing" keeping at least 1 meter. This distance helps to avoid direct contact with respiratory droplets produced by coughing or sneezing. Until a vaccine against COVID-19 is available to everyone, we have to continue to do the hard, albeit tedious, work of keeping ourselves safe and healthy—by wearing facial coverings, keeping our social distance, practicing good hand hygiene, and staying home. People must celebrate festivals, Birthday, Wedding Anniversaries at their homes, as this would help in breaking the Covid-19 chain and preventing a fresh wave of the pandemic. Let us make sure that we are well sanitized and follow all the necessary steps before you approach an elderly person to help. Wearing a mask, washing hands and maintaining distance are a must if one wants to protect oneself. Don't we that if you are careless, walking out without a mask, then we are putting ourselves, our family, our children, the elderly in trouble. ? This is the time that we have to show the true value of our education and listen to experts and behave responsibly. Your sanitizer and your mask are like your shield. Why not to use it.?

## Catastrophes of Road Mishap

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

Every year the lives of approximately 1.3 million people are cut short as a result of a road traffic crash. Between 20 and 50 million more people suffer non-fatal injuries, with many incurring a disability as a result of their injury. Road traffic injuries cause considerable economic losses to individuals, their families, and to nations as a whole. These losses arise from the cost of treatment as well as lost productivity for those killed or disabled by their injuries, and for family members who need to take time off work or school to care for the injured. Road traffic crashes cost most countries 3% of their gross domestic product. With numerous forms of transport on the road, drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, passengers, and pedestrians can end up being involved in road accidents. Different vehicles and circumstances can cause a number of accident types. For instance, truck accidents have increased by 52% in the United States since 2009 and 74% of all passenger fatalities in road accidents involved large trucks. Due to their sheer size, trucks can cause devastating injuries and considerable property damage. Common truck accidents include jackknifing, tire blowouts, rollovers, rear-ending, and losing loads due to improperly loaded freight. Other common types of accidents on the road include: Car accidents; Motorcycle accidents; Coach accidents; Accidents involving cyclists; Accidents involving pedestrians; Accidents involving uninsured drivers; Accidents that happen because of things like fallen trees, flying debris, and animals crossing the road and Hit and run accidents.

The number of people killed in road accidents in India saw a spike in 2021 after a 13 per cent drop in 2020. The number of people killed in road accidents in 2021 was the highest in the past five years. Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu reported the highest number of people losing their lives in road accidents in 2021. In 2021, 153,972 people lost their lives in road accidents in the country. In pandemic-hit 2020, the number of people killed in road accidents stood at 131,714, which was lower than the 151,113, 151,417, and 147,913 deaths in 2019, 2018, and 2017, respectively. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, told Rajya Sabha in a reply. In 2021, Uttar Pradesh reported the highest number of road accident deaths at 21,227, followed by Tamil Nadu (15,384), Maharashtra (13,528), Madhya Pradesh (12,057), Karnataka (10,038) Andhra Pradesh (8,186), Bihar (7,660), Telangana (7,557), Gujarat (7,452), and West Bengal (5,800). In Manipur too on Wednesday the 21st December 2022 the School bus (MN01/2119) was carrying students and staff of Yairipok Thambalnu Higher Secondary School and headed to Khoupum for an annual excursion, ended in a tragedy after the bus carrying school students met with an accident at Longsai Part-3 (Tubung) under Khoupum Police Station in Noney district, leaving nine dead, including seven students a teacher and a warden. Around 35 are said to be injured. The tragic incident, which occurred around 11.10 am, also claimed the lives of a teacher and a warden. Not only this, in recent past reports of death tolls were seen in local media due to road accidents in various parts of Manipur.

Tamil Nadu reported 16,869 accidents on national highways in 2021. The number of pedestrians killed in road accidents during the year stood at 3,647, the highest during 2018–2021. Though Uttar Pradesh continued to report the highest number of road accident deaths among the States, Tamil Nadu remained in the second or third position during 2017–2021. "Over-speeding is the biggest factor causing the maximum number of accidents and deaths in the State," according to findings. While industry representatives reckon that increased travel in the post-Covid era could have led to a higher number of accidents and deaths, FIR data received from various States/UTs pointed out that road fatalities occurred due to multiple causes such as over speeding, use of mobile phone, drunken driving/consumption of alcohol and drug, driving on wrong side/ lane discipline, jumping red light, non-use of safety devices, vehicular condition, weather, road condition, etc.

In a recent interaction, RC Bhargava, Chairman of Maruti Suzuki India, pointed out that poor vehicle fitness regimes and driving errors are the major causes of accidents. A lot of accidents happen on the road due to the failure of some

systems in the vehicles, and there is no law or regulation to ensure vehicles on the road are compliant with safety features. Also, there is no strong focus on driver training and the licensing process like in other countries. Meanwhile, the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry has taken several initiatives to reduce road accidents. It has implemented an electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR) application, a central repository for reporting, management, and analysis of road accident data, to undertake timely interventions for improving road safety across the country. The Ministry has sanctioned a Centre of Excellence for Road Safety at IIT-Madras with the basic aim of creating an intelligent and safe transportation system, planning data-driven road safety initiatives, conducting human factor research in road safety, and sharing knowledge with the stakeholders.

Whether it's an accident involving a truck, a car or a motorcycle, there are various causes that could cause the road accident. Here are some of the most common causes:-

**Speeding:** Even though there have been countless awareness campaigns about speeding for decades, speeding is still one of the most common causes of road accidents. Many drivers ignore speed limits or fail to slow down in bad weather conditions, putting both themselves and others at risk. For instance, the faster you drive, the shorter your reaction time is. Therefore, you're more likely to cause an accident.

**Reckless Driving:** Reckless driving isn't just about speeding. If you change lanes too quickly or erratically, drive too closely to another vehicle, or fail to be considerate to other drivers, your reckless behavior could result in an accident.

**Distraction:** Drivers shouldn't get easily distracted, but many drivers continue to eat or use their phones while driving. That not only means they're distracted and therefore more likely to cause an accident. It also means they won't be driving as well because they'll only be using one hand. And anything that involves taking your eyes off the road, even for a moment, puts you at more risk of being involved in a road accident.

**Driving While Drowsy:** Many road accidents happen because driv-

ers are too tired. You need to be alert and have your eyes on the road at all times to ensure your safety and others.

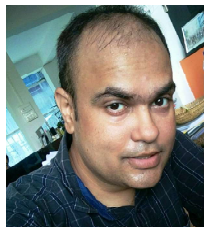
When people drive for long hours without rest, drive while taking prescription medication that states they shouldn't drive, or are generally fatigued from not getting enough sleep, road accidents are more likely to happen.

No one can prevent accidents from happening when they're the fault of someone or something else. However, you can ensure you are a careful and responsible driver to avoid causing an accident. But of course, every driver should be doing that. To help remedy the aftermath of an accident, you first need to seek medical treatment as soon as you can. Even if you don't appear to have any serious injuries, you could have internal injuries or a concussion, so it's important to see a doctor. You then need to contact your insurance company. You should also contact an accident lawyer to help you gain compensation. For example, if a truck hits your car and the accident is not your fault, a truck accident lawyer can help you to take legal action to gain damages for covering medical expenses, loss of earnings, and property damage. You could gain compensation for pain and suffering, too.

Road accidents cannot be stopped despite providing the best possible roads and intersections; however there are ways to reduce the impact of road accidents on road users and the vehicles plying on the road. By suitable traffic engineering and management the accident rate can be reduced with scarce resources. For this reason systematic study of traffic accidents are required to be carried out. Proper investigation of the cause of accident will help to propose preventive measures in terms of design and control. The unconditional remedy of reducing this problem is to stop the excessive flow of population. The excessive population is the main cause of making our country crippled. Road accident should be declared as the national disaster and prompt and effective actions are much needed to mitigate this problem. The more the delay to take actions, the more death tolls to be brought.

(Writer can be reached at: [sjgugeshwor7@gmail.com](mailto:sjgugeshwor7@gmail.com))

## The Question of Frontier Nagaland - Revisiting the Formation of Federal Units in India through a Constitutional Process



Dr. Aniruddha Babar

"Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated"

~ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Before independence, India was divided into 565 princely states. These indigenous princely states believed in independent governance, which was the biggest obstacle in building a strong India.

At this time India had three types of states (1) Territories of British India,

(2) 'Princely states' and the colonial territories of France and Portugal.

After the Indian independence; 562 princely states had nodded to join the Indian Confederation except Hyderabad, Junagadh, Bhopal and Kashmir.

Since the Indian independence the boundaries of the Indian states keep on changing year by year.

From 565 princely states and 17 provinces before partition, to 14 states and 6 Union Territories following the Reorganisation of States in 1956 to 29 states and 7 union territories in 2014, now after the bifurcation of Jammu & Kashmir to 28 states and 9 Union Territories after it.

In the 1950s, the nature of demands for a new state was based on the 'identity' aspect under federal governance; but at present, the focus has shifted to 'regional development', particularly to the aspects of socio-cultural, economic and political opportunities. Moreover, it is also focusing on several other dimensions such as administrative accountability, economic development, stable political order and participation of all communities of the concerned state as per the constitutional mandate.

The main objective of adopting the federal structure in Indian polity was to promote cultural homogeneity and improved federal governance in all the Indian states. However, the unequal development between the states, regions within the state and lack of socio-economic and political opportunities in society has directly challenged federalism in India. This complex situation has opened the door for the 'concerned entities' to fight against the discrimination. Therefore, the separation, creation or alteration of a state has great importance. Political movement for the separate state of the Frontier Nagaland is undoubtedly have been resulted out of the broken federal structure as well as fractured governance in the context of the State of Nagaland which completely failed to give guaranteed constitutional justice to people living in the Eastern region of the state.

Before the Constitution came into being, there was also a huge debate over the use of the terms 'federal' and 'union' in the Constituent Assembly. The debate continued between the Union Constitution Committee under the chairmanship of the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the Drafting Committee chaired by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Finally, the word 'union' was incorporated in the Indian Constitution as per Ambedkar's suggestion. The 'Union of States' implies a federal constitution based on a dual polity, he clarified because; the Federal Constitution can provide the expression of regional goals and national objectives. It also aims to accommodate various aspirations and sovereign interests of different provinces with ethnic groups and linguistic characteristics.

In 1953, the States Reorganisation Committee (SRC) was established to look after the issues of reorganization of states in India. It recommended some basic principles of reorganizing of the states as preservation and strengthening of unity and security of India, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, financial and administrative efficiency and the successful working of the 5-Year Plans.

Continuing with the constitutional discourse, it is good to be re-

minded that one of special features of the Union of India is that the union is indestructible but the power conferred on Parliament includes the power to form a new state or union territory by uniting a part of any State or Union territory to other State or Union territory. The identity of States can be altered or even expunged by the Parliament. The Constituent Assembly declined a motion in concluding stages to designate India as 'Federation of States'.

Article 1 of the Constitution defines India, that is, Bharat as a 'Union of States'. The reasons behind this made clear by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly. Ambedkar said the Indian Federation was a "Union" because it was inseparable, and no State had the right to withdraw from the Indian Union. He said "The Drafting Committee wanted to make it clear that while India was going to be a federation, the federation was not the product of an agreement between states to join the federation, and that since the federation was not the consequence of an agreement, no State had the right to withdraw from the federation. The Union is a federation because it is indestructible. Although for the con-

venience of administration, the country and people can be divided into different States, the country is an integral whole, its people a single people living under a single imperium coming from a single source. The Americans had to wage a civil war in order to make sure that their federation was indestructible and the States had no right of secession. The Drafting Committee was of the opinion that it was better to make it clear at the outset than to avoid speculation or dispute".

Article 2 of The Constitution Of India speaks about Admission or establishment of new States; Parliament may by law admit into the Union, or establish, new States on such terms and conditions, as it thinks fit.

Article 3 of Indian Constitution addresses the topic of 'Formation of new States and alteration of areas, boundaries or names of existing States'. It says; Parliament may by law

a) form a new State by separation of territory from any State or by uniting two or more States or parts of States or by uniting any territory to a part of any State;

b) increase the area of any State;

contd. on page 3

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

can be sent to our e-mail: [imphaltimes@gmail.com](mailto:imphaltimes@gmail.com).

For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-3590330 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.



# 250 million Corbevax, Covaxin in stock, ready for dispatch

Agency  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

Around 250 million Covid vaccine manufactured by two major Hyderabad-based units – Biological E and Bharat Biotech – are ready for dispatch in the market as soon as orders are received. Nearly 200 million Corbevax vaccine of Biological E and 50 million of Bharat Biotech's Covaxin are stockpiled at the moment.

"We have approximately 20 crore (200 million) doses that are fully tested and ready for supply, and as when we receive orders. Additionally, we manufactured 20 crore doses equivalent of the anti-

gen which will help us ramp up the manufacturing of the Corbevax finished product quickly," executive vice president (manufacturing) of Biological E Vikram Paradkar was quoted as saying by news agency PTL.

Paradkar added that his company manufactured a total of 30 crore jabs of Corbevax and supplied around 10 crore doses in March. The additional supplies can be started within eight weeks after the next batch orders are received at a rate of 10 crore doses per month.

Corbevax was produced in collaboration with Texas Children's Hospital Centre for Vaccine Development

and Baylor College of Medicine. This vaccine was introduced on August 8 as a precautionary dose for children between 12 and 15 age group against the Coronavirus after the recommendations from the Covid-19 working group of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation.

Similarly, around 50 million Bharat Biotech's Covaxin are available in the form of vials, whereas around 200 million doses are kept as drug substance. The vaccine was indigenously developed along with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute of Virology (NIV).

# Chanda Kochhar fails to get relief from the Court in ICICI-Videocon loan case

By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai, Dec 28:

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday refused to grant urgent hearing of the petition filed by former Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ICICI Bank Chanda Kochhar and her husband Deepak Kochhar challenging their arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in a multi-crore ICICI-Videocon loan case.

Chanda Kochhar, Deepak Kochhar and Videocon Group Chairman Venugopal Dhoot are in CBI Custody in Mumbai in connection with a case of cheating and irregularities in loan of Rs.3,250 crore granted in 2012 to the Videocon Group by the ICICI which became a non-performing asset for the Bank.

The Kochhar couple was arrested on December 23 by CBI in New Delhi and produced before a Special CBI Court in Mumbai on December 25. Dhoot was arrested in Mumbai on December 27 and produced before the court.

On Tuesday the petition was mentioned before a vacation bench comprising of Justices Madhav Jamdar and SG Chagla. But the bench refused to grant urgent hearing, stating that a petition seeking quashing of a remand order and FIR did not have any pressing urgency. It asked Advocate Kushal Mor, who appeared for the Kochhars, to approach the regular court for bail.

Advocate Mor contended that the arrest of Kochhars was illegal on two grounds: First, the CBI had not obtained proper sanction which is mandatory under Section 17A of the Pre-



Former MD and CEO of ICICI Bank Chanda Kochhar, her husband Deepak Kochhar and Videocon Group Chairman Venugopal Dhoot

vention of Corruption Act 2018 for arresting a public servant. Second, the arrest had been carried out 4 years after registration of the FIR, which was a violation of Section 41A of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973.

Mor requested the Court to urgently hear the matter for quashing the remand order and to release Kochhars till the petition is finally heard. The bench however, refused to hear the plea.

The Bench asked Mor to approach the regular benches once High Court reopens after the winter break (January 02,2023).

The CBI had named the Kochhars and Dhoot, along with companies-M/S Nupower Renewables Limited (NRL) managed by Deepak Kochhar, M/S Supreme Energy Private Limited (SEPL), Videocon International Electronics Ltd and Videocon Industries Limited, managed by Dhoot, as accused in the FIR registered on January 24, 2019 under Indian Penal Code sections related to criminal conspiracy and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. As per the CBI, there was a quid pro between ICICI and Videocon in the loans sanctioned which in turn benefitted the M/ S Nupower Renewables

Limited (NRL) managed by Deepak Kochhar

The credit facilities to the tune of Rs 3,250 crore sanctioned by ICICI to the companies of Videocon Group were in violation of the Banking Regulation Act, RBI guidelines and credit policy of the bank.

**Timeline**

**October 2016:** The RBI investigates the loan irregularities at ICICI Bank, but doesn't find any irregularity. **March 2018:** A whistleblower complains against the bank alleging a delay in recognising issues in 31 loan accounts. The CBI internally questions Deepak Kochhar.

**April 2018:** The ICICI Bank board supports Chanda Kochhar. The CBI's Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFO) seeks the approval of the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs to probe the Videocon loan case.

**May/ June 2018:** The whistleblower makes fresh allegations against Chanda Kochhar. ICICI Bank launches an independent probe led by retired judge B N Srikrishna. Kochhar proceeds on indefinite leave. **July 2018:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) asks Kochhar to submit her reply to the show-cause no-

tice issued by it. **October 2018:** Chanda Kochhar submits her resignation and steps down as the MD and CEO of ICICI Bank, after board approves her request of early retirement.

**January 2019:** On January 22, 2019, the CBI files an FIR against Chanda Kochhar, Deepak Kochhar and Venugopal Dhoot. A probe by ICICI Bank also finds that Chanda Kochhar violated the bank's code of conduct while sanctioning these loans. The board decides to treat her stepping away from the bank as "termination for cause".

**January 27, 2019** Sudhanshu Dhar Mishra, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Banking and Securities Fraud Cell of CBI, Delhi, who had signed FIR against Chanda Kochhar, Deepak Kochhar and Venugopal Dhoot in connection with ICICI-Videocon case is transferred to CBI's Economic Offences Branch in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

**February 2019:** The CBI issues a lookout notice against Chanda Kochhar. **January 2020:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) attaches assets worth Rs 78 crore of the Kochhar family. **September 2020:** The ED arrests Deepak Kochhar in the money-laundering case. **November 2020:** The ED files a charge sheet against Chanda Kochhar. **March 2021:** Deepak Kochhar is released on a personal bond of Rs 3 lakh. **May 2022:** The CBI files an FIR against Chanda Kochhar. **December 23, 2022:** The CBI arrests Chanda Kochhar and her husband Deepak Kochhar. **December 26:** The CBI arrests Venugopal Dhoot.

# Active Covid cases in India now at 3,468

Agency  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

India reported 188 new covid cases and zero deaths in the last 24 hours, the health ministry's covid bulletin showed on Wednesday. Total active cases stood at 3468, taking the trajectory of total number of covid cases to 4.46 crore, while total deaths in the last three years of the pandemic stood at 53066.

Karnataka reported 1248 active cases while Kerala recorded 1358 active cases. Maharashtra has 162 active cases, Odisha 89 cases, Rajasthan with 83 cases, Tamil Nadu has 55 active cases; Uttar Pradesh 50 and West Bengal has 53 active cases so far.

The country has conducted over 1,34,995 tests in the last 24

hours taking the total trajectory of covid testing to 91.01 crore so far.

Under the covid vaccination drive, more than 220.07 crore vaccine doses have been administered to the people across the country so far. In the last 24 hours, around 90,529 vaccine doses were administered.

Meanwhile, INSACOG under the supervision of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) is keeping a close watch on covid situation in the country and continue to do constant genome sequencing to track any new variant.

Besides, surveillance at the hospital level is also going on to monitor Influenza-like illness (ILI) & SARI cases.

Amid a surge in covid cases in China and other countries,

health minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday reviewed covid response mock drill at the central government-run Safdarjung Hospital in the national capital to check preparedness of hospital authorities to deal with increase in coronavirus cases.

"I recently reviewed the covid-19 status, preparedness, prevention and its management with State Health Ministers. Mock drills are being conducted across the country today to review the preparedness for management of covid-19, for which clinical readiness at hospitals is crucial. Government as well as private hospitals are undertaking mock drills today. State health ministers are reviewing the drills in their respective states," Mandaviya said.

Contd. from Page 2

# The Question of Frontier Nagaland - Revisiting the Formation of Federal....

- c) diminish the area of any State;
- d) alter the boundaries of any State;
- e) alter the name of any State;

Provided that no Bill for the purpose shall be introduced in either House of Parliament except on the recommendation of the President and unless, where the proposal contained in the Bill affects the area, boundaries or name of any of the States, the Bill has been referred by the President to the Legislature of that State for expressing its views thereon within such period as may be specified in the reference or within such further period as the President may allow and the period so specified or allowed has expired Explanation I In this article, in clauses (a) to (e), State includes a Union territory, but in the proviso, State does not include a Union territory Explanation II The power conferred on Parliament by clause (a) includes the power to form a new State or Union territory by uniting a part of any State or Union territory to any other State or Union territory.

The objective seems to have been to grant an opportunity to the State legislature to express its view within the stipulated time period. If the State Legislature fails to avail itself of the opportunity such failure would not invalidate the introduction of the Bill (Babul Parante v. State of Bombay). There is nothing in the proviso to indicate that Parliament must accept or act upon the view of

the State Legislature. Indeed State Legislature's may express totally divergent views. All that is contemplated is that the Parliament should have before it the views of the State Legislature to the proposals contained in the Bill and then be free to deal with the bill in any manner it thinks fit and following the usual practice and procedure prescribed by and under the rules of business. What is to be referred to the State Legislature is the proposal contained in the Bill. It is not necessary that every time an amendment of the proposal contained in the bill is moved and accepted, a fresh reference should be made to the State Legislature.

Parliament has been vested with the exclusive power of admitting or establishing new states, increasing or diminishing the area of an existing State or altering its boundaries, the legislature or legislatures of the States concerned having only the right to an expression of views on the proposals. For making such territorial adjustments it is not necessary even to invoke the provisions governing constitutional amendments.

Article 3(a) enables Parliament to form a new State and this can be done either by the separation of the territory from any state or by uniting two or more States or parts of States, or by uniting any territory to a part of any state. There can be no doubt that foreign territory which after the acquisition becomes a part of the territory of

India under Article 1 (3) (c) is included in the last clause of Article 3 (a). Thus Article 3(a) deals with the problem of the formation of a new state and indicates the modes by which a new state can be formed.

Article 3 (b) provides that a law may be passed to increase the area of any State. This increase may be incidental to the reorganization of States under Article 3 (b) may have been taken out from the area of any state may also be the result of adding to any state any part of the territory specified in Article 1 (3) (C). Article 3 (d) refers to the alteration of the boundaries of any State and such alterations would be the consequence of any of the adjustments specified in Article 3 (a), (b), (c). Article 3 (e) refers to the alteration of the name of any State.

In R.C. Poudyal & Ors. v. Union of India, Article was discussed and it was observed: "It cannot be predicted that the article confers on Parliament an unreviewable and unfettered power immune from judicial scrutiny. The power is limited by the fundamentals of the Indian constitutionalism and those terms and conditions which the Parliament may deem fit to impose, cannot be inconsistent and irreconcilable with the foundational principles of the Constitution and cannot violate or subvert the constitutional scheme. The validity of a statute is to be tested by the constitutional power of the Legislature at the time of

its enactment by that Legislature, and if thus tested, it is beyond the legislative power, it is not rendered valid."

Article 4 states that any law referred to in Article 2 or Article 3 shall contain such provisions as required to amend the 1st Schedule and IV Schedule in order to give effect to the provisions of the law and may also contain such specific, incidental and consequential provisions as the provisions may be considered necessary by the Parliament may deem necessary. Article 4 allows for consequential changes to the First Schedule (names of the States in the Union of India) and the Fourth Schedule (number of seats allocated by each State to the Rajya Sabha). It also notes that it does not consider a constitutional amendment under Article 368. It also states that no law existing States or creating a new State will be considered a constitutional amendment. It is in line with the previous provisions of the requirement, of a simple majority in Parliament and suggests full control of the Union over the territories of the individual States of the Union.

The Frontier Nagaland Movement- a decades old political movement of the Eastern Naga people for a separate state has now reached a very crucial moment. Government of the Union may fulfill the demand for a separate state by granting it either complete state or Union Territory. I do not see any third option, nor do I see any need for the union government to in-

vent any third option to give justice to the people of Eastern Nagaland. The rights of the people needs to be protected in the spirit of constitutionalism which in fact derive its mandate from the core of the democracy that is 'WE THE PEOPLE OF INDIA'.

Constitutionally speaking, the destiny of Eastern Nagas will be well protected either in full-fledged State or Union Territory. Any other experiment like what was done in case of Meghalaya by granting it Autonomous State within the state of the then Assam will cause further constitutional disaster as Assam Reorganization (Meghalaya) Act, 1969 itself proves the illusive and illusory nature (refer Sec. 36,59,60,61,67,68,70 of the said Act) of the arrangement which did not last even for a year.

On 11 September 1968 the Government of India announced a scheme for constituting an autonomous state within the state of Assam comprising certain areas specified in Part 'A' of the table appended to paragraph 20 (titled as 'Tribal Areas of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. Accordingly, the Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act of 1969 was enacted for the formation of an Autonomous State. The Act came into effect on 2 April 1970, with the Autonomous State having a 37-member legislature in accordance with the Sixth Schedule to the Indian constitution.

Constitutional history of this one and only experiment

teaches us that its constitutionality and constitutional validity can be found in the 'Sixth Schedule' of the Constitution of India. Entire region of the then tribal region of Meghalaya was a part of sixth schedule which Naga people denied in totality in the past. Autonomous State of Meghalaya was made possible because Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Garo Hills have been put under the protection of Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India. Autonomous State experiment can be made constitutionally possible in case of all those regions under sixth schedule, but it is certainly not possible in the case of state of Nagaland which is a result of Art. 371 A that originally resulted out of 16 Point Agreement. Therefore, the logical and constitutional conclusion of frontier Nagaland movement will either be in full-fledged state or Union Territory not in any ancillary experiment as was done in case of Meghalaya.

It is said that the Constitu-

tion is the supreme law of the land. The Parliament is a body empowered to make laws for the welfare of the people, but in doing so, the Hon'ble Government of the Union, Members of the Parliament need to ensure that the legislation that is presented and enacted does not derogate from the constitution and, above all, does not have to be in breach of the basic structure of the constitution of India.

The valid concerns and demands of the Eastern Naga people are fully redressable under well-defined constitutional mechanism and the processes. Union Government need not resort to any 'extraordinary' measures to fortify the rights and interests of the Eastern Nagas where regular measures in their absolute capacity are fully available to be executed to achieve the 'desired' results.

(The author is a Professor, Political Science, Teso College, Dimapur-797115, Nagaland)

## Mark Sheet and Certificate lost

I, the undersigned, Thokchom Prem Singh, has lost my original certificate for my Class-X Examination, issued by the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM), bearing Roll No. 28340 of 1998 and also my original Mark Sheet of my Class 12 Exam, issued by the Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur (COHSEM), bearing Roll No. 17244 of 2001 on the way between Singamei to Paona Bazar on December 15, 2022.

Finders are requested to hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-  
Thokchom Prem Singh  
Contact No. 8787813513

# Government starts joint inspection of drug manufacturing units across the country to ensure high quality of medicines

Agency  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has started conducting joint inspections of identified Drug Manufacturing Units along with State Drugs Control Administration as per a risk-based approach. This was started under the direction of Union Minister

of Health and Family Welfare Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya. The Joint Inspections are being conducted all over the country as per the Standard Operating Procedures. A Committee of two Joint Drugs Controllers has been constituted at CDSCO Headquarters to monitor the process of inspection, reporting, and subsequent action so as to ensure

compliance with the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Rules thereunder.

AIR correspondent reports that the Health Ministry said this will ensure high standards of quality compliance with respect to drugs manufactured in the country. An action plan for nationwide inspection of manufacturing units that are identified to be at risk of manufacturing Not of

Standard Quality Drugs was made prior to carrying out inspections. The objective of drug regulation is to ensure the safety, efficacy, and quality of the drugs available in the country. The drug control administration is required to ensure that manufacturing units comply with Drugs and Cosmetics Act, especially to the requirements of Good Manufacturing Practices.

# Government will not breach its limits, neither should judiciary, says Kiren Rijiju

Agency  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said that the government will not try to encroach upon the powers of other wings and the judiciary should also remain within its limits, reported *Bar and Bench* on Tuesday.

The Bharatiya Janata Party made the remarks on Monday while speaking at the 16th National Conference of Akhil Bharatiya Adhivakta Parishad on the topic, "New challenges and opportunities in front of the Indian judicial system".

"We [government] will not breach our limits and judiciary should also be in the constitutional limits and then news media will not get masala," Rijiju said. "But if you breach then you give them [media] fodder."

The minister's remarks came amid a tussle between the government and the judiciary on the process of making judicial appointments in the country. The Opposition has also alleged that the Centre is trying to control the judiciary by introducing a new system of appointing judges in the High Court and the Supreme Court.

"You hear that there is friction between executive and judiciary and that the government is trying to take the judiciary under its grab," the politician said, reported *Bar and Bench*. "Some political parties make such statements and at times news channels do it to keep masala in the news. But PM Modi has always said that the Constitution is the most sacred book and the country will run by the Constitution."

The minister, however, remarked that judges are answerable to the public. The Lok Sabha MP said he had told the judges that after every five years, lawmakers have to go before the public, which examines their work. He also pointed out that judges are not part of such an exercise.

"So whatever a judge does is not open to public voting but indeed there is public scrutiny," Rijiju said. "We are working for the public and those who are working in judiciary must also think that in some way or other they are also answerable to the public."

Last week, the BJP leader had told Parliament that the government has received various representations on the

lack of transparency, objectivity and social diversity in the collegium system of appointment of Supreme Court and High Court judges.

Rijiju had said that the Centre had introduced the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act in 2014 with the objective to make appointments to the Supreme Court and High Courts "more broad-based, transparent, ac-

countable and bringing objectivity in the system".

The National Judicial Appointments Commission had proposed to make judicial appointments through a body comprising of the chief justice, two senior Supreme Court judges, the law minister and two other eminent persons nominated by the chief justice, the prime minister and the leader of the Opposition.

# Nagaland is most peaceful state in country: CM Neiphiu Rio

Agency  
Kohima, Dec 28:

Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio has stated that the year 2022 has been good for the state as the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) declared it as the "most peaceful" state in the country.

"The NCRB declared that Nagaland is the most peaceful state in the country," said Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio.

The Nagaland chief minister said that the Naga politi-

cal issue was the only matter that could not be resolved in 2022.

He expressed hope that the Naga issue will come to a logical conclusion soon.

"I hope the new year of 2023 will also be a peaceful and fruitful year," the Nagaland chief minister said.

These remarks from the Nagaland chief minister came at a time when the state is gearing up for the assembly elections.

Assembly elections in Nagaland is slated to be held early next year.

# Hailstorm in parts of Assam damages over 4,400 houses

Agency  
Dibrugarh/Tinsukia, Dec 28:

A massive hailstorm swept through several areas of upper Assam, damaging nearly 4,500 houses in four districts, officials said on Tuesday.

According to an Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) report, a total of 4,483 houses were damaged across 132 villages in Dibrugarh, Charaideo, Sivasagar and Tinsukia districts.

Almost 18,000 people have been affected, and the families hit by the hailstorm were supplied with tarpaulin sheets, it said.

The severe hailstorm lashed the upper Assam areas late on Monday and early Tuesday, an official of the Dibrugarh district administration told PTI.

The ASDMA report said 4,481 houses were partially damaged, while two structures were completely destroyed.

A total of 3,009 houses were damaged in Charaideo, followed by Dibrugarh (1,232), Sivasagar (220) and Tinsukia



(22), it said.

Several schools have also suffered damages along with crops in large areas of agricultural land in the hailstorm, a rare phenomenon in this part of the state during the winter season, officials said.

"Have instructed officials to make a detailed assessment of the damages caused. Government is extending all possible help to all those affected by it," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma tweeted.

Meanwhile, the Regional Meteorological Centre in Guwahati issued a 'Yellow Alert' for the entire northeastern region, and said thunderstorms and lightning with hail are very

likely to occur at isolated places over the seven states.

The RMC, in a bulletin, said light snow is also "very likely" to occur at isolated places in the upper reaches of Arunachal Pradesh during the next 24 hours.

"Light to moderate rain is very likely at a few places over the rest of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura," it said.

The bulletin, however, noted that night temperatures did not witness a large change over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura during the last 24 hours.

Contd. from Page 1

# Chinese are combing through Black...

For now, experts said, both the censors and the propaganda officials appear to be scrambling to figure out what to do. "I don't think I've seen a planned or orchestrated propaganda plan coming out. It's more because the general direction has changed, so the propaganda has to follow suit suddenly," Fang Kecheng, an assistant professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong who studies China's propaganda, was quoted by *The New York Times*. One major test will come when the virus spreads to smaller, rural areas with insufficient medical resources, he said.

In dire situation, the Chinese residents have devised methods to bypass the censorship. According to *The South China Morning Post*, under China's drug administration

law, medicines marketed abroad but not approved in China are no longer identified as counterfeit, but those involved in their distribution still face administrative penalties for illegal imports without a licence.

Some e-commerce platforms have put the generics up for sale under "euphemistic labels to bypass keyword censorship", the report stated. Public health experts and doctors in China have warned of the potential risks and urged people not to buy medicines from illegal channels, including unlicensed salespersons on messaging app WeChat.

"Marketing queries are coming to (Indian) drug makers asking for quotes on ibuprofen and paracetamol," Sahil Munjal, chairman of the Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of In-

dia (Pharmexcil), was quoted as saying by *Reuters* last week. "Ibuprofen and paracetamol are facing a shortage in China at the moment, they are high in demand," he added.

India's foreign ministry said the country, one of the biggest makers of generic medicines in the world, was ready to help China.

"We are keeping an eye on the Covid situation in China," foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at a regular news briefing. "We have always helped other countries as the pharmacy of the world."

India's pharma exports to China accounted for just 1.4% of its overall exports in 2021/22, according to Pharmexcil's latest annual report. The United States remains India's largest destination for drugs exports.

# Sports

# Hope FIFA WC atmosphere can somehow be translated into India, our goal is to qualify for Paris Olympics: India Football captain Loitongbam Ashalata Devi

Agency  
New Delhi, Dec 28:

India women's football team skipper Loitongbam Ashalata Devi is currently on cloud nine, and the reason is she just lived one of her dreams.

Devi, also the captain of the Indian Women's League side Gokulam Kerala, is considered one of the finest defenders in Asia. The 29-year-old has recently witnessed one of the greatest FIFA World Cup finals live at the stadium in Doha.

Speaking to IANS, she shared her experience in Qatar and how was her interaction with Morocco's star Achraf Hakimi.

**Excerpts of the interview:**  
**Q: How was your experience at the FIFA World Cup?**

A: I cannot explain it in words, it is something that everyone should experience. It is unreal and it was one of my dreams which has come

true. Ever since I started watching football, it was my dream to watch a World Cup final. The atmosphere was fantastic, I have never experienced something like this ever before.

Seeing Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappe playing so up close was out of this world. There is so much that I learned just by watching them and that is something that I would like to add to my game. This also has to be one of the best football matches I have ever seen.

I hope that this atmosphere can somehow be translated into India also when we take the field. Football as a whole has a lot of scope to grow in India. I would like to thank Adidas and Abhishek Sharma's 'Athletes Today' for fulfilling one of my dreams.

**Q: How was your interaction with Morocco's star Achraf Hakimi?**

A: Achraf Hakimi is a great



player; I have been watching him and tracking his style of game for a long time now. His control, skills, the way he controls himself on and off the field is something I wish to imbibe in myself. Morocco had a dream run in the world cup and played as a unit, my interaction with him was in depth and I learnt so many

things from him. He had some great advice for me.

**Q: You also met Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone, how was that experience?**

A: It was great meeting them, Ranveer, Deepika and I are all brand ambassadors for Adidas, we met each other during the world cup finals

and had a great chat with them. They were very keen to listen to the growth of Indian football. I have been a huge fan of their acting talent and I was surprised they knew so much about me. It was great fun watching the finals with them.

**Q: What is your upcoming schedule?**

A: Right now, the focus is shifted to the Indian Women's League where I play for Gokulam Kerala FC. We go into the tournament as defending champions and hope to retain our title. We are a great bunch of players at Gokulam Kerala FC and have been playing really well.

The owners, coaches, staff all are great and really supportive which helps us grow. We were also very close to playing the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) tournament and becoming the first women's team to have done that from India but due to unforeseen circumstances that dream couldn't be realized. We will work hard and make sure that this time the dream becomes a reality.

**Q: Olympic Qualifiers are also around the corner. How is the preparation going for that?**

A: The Tokyo Olympics was a heartbreak for us, as we

lost on the berth to qualify for the third round of the 2020 Olympic qualifiers on goal difference after being held to a 3-3 draw by Myanmar. This time around we do not want to leave it to the last game and are training hard. The goal is to qualify for the Paris Olympics, the entire team is motivated and will put all their efforts to achieve it.

**Q: You recently signed up with Athletes Today as an exclusive management agency, what role do you think a professional agency plays in the life of a sportsperson?**

A: Yes, I have signed with Abhishek Sharma's 'Athletes Today'. They are a great management agency, and it is because of them and Adidas that I got an opportunity to watch the World Cup 3rd place and finals live. I cannot thank them enough, as an agency they understand the dynamics of the players needs and not only that, but they also make your dreams come true.