

All is set for first phase poll, 173 including 15 women candidates are in the fray

IT News
Imphal, Feb 12:

The list of contesting candidates for Phase-I has been finalized. A total of 173 (one hundred seventy three) candidates are in the fray, out of which 15 (fifteen) are woman candidates, 6 (six) in Imphal West, 2 (two) in Imphal East, 3 (three) in Bishnupur, 3 (three) in Kangpokpi and 1 (one) in Churachandpur. Total number of Independent candidates for Phase-I is 18 (eighteen).

The last date for filing of nomination for the Phase-II is over and total number of candidates who filed nomination is 96 (ninety six). Scrutiny of nominations will be taken up on 14.2.22. List of contesting candidates will be finalised after last date of withdrawal on 16.2.22.

A detailed meeting of Chief Electoral Officer,



Manipur, with the Special Observers, all General Observers, Police Observers and Expenditure Observers was held at CEO's Office yesterday to review the Poll Preparedness. The Observers revealed that they have visited some of the Polling Stations, have visited commissioning halls, strong rooms and counting halls and held

meetings with the District Election Officers and Returning Officers. They expressed satisfaction at the overall preparedness and minor bottlenecks if any are brought to the notice of the concerned for necessary amendment.

Regarding Postal Ballots, 13,274 (thirteen thousand two hundred seventy four) Electronically Transmitted Postal

Ballots (ETPBs) have been transmitted today, to the respective Record Offices for the Service Electors, for Phase-I. For Phase-II, 8667 (eight thousand six hundred and sixty seven) ETPBs will be transmitted to respective Record Offices on 17.2.22.

For Postal Ballots for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), 80+ electors and those from essential services, a total of 6024 (six thousand twenty four) have opted for it in the Phase-I. 2687 (two thousand six hundred eighty seven) electors have opted for Postal Ballots under this category in Phase-II, totalling 8771 (eight thousand seven hundred seventy one), for both Phase-I & Phase-II combined. 195 (one hundred ninety five) polling teams have been constituted for both Phases, for getting these Postal Ballots casted.

FCI truck drivers launch steering-off agitation



IT Correspondent
Jiribam, Feb 12:

The truck drivers of FCI, Jiribam launched steering-off agitation today against the kidnapping of two drivers by the miscreants and seeking the reasons from the FCI authority.

They said, till the drivers were rescued by the security personnel, they have not known what controversy was there with the FCI authority and miscreants that the FCI

good laden truck drivers were kidnapped by them.

They added, until and unless, the FCI authority has not brought negotiation, the drivers will continue their steering-off agitation.

Speaking with the media persons, one of the truck driver raised a question that how could the miscreants had kidnapped the drivers while the vehicles was escorted by security personnel. He added, if the miscreants are able to succeed in kidnapping the

drivers from amidst the escorted vehicle then what was the uses of escorting the vehicles.

The Vice President of All Jiribam Road Transport Driver Union (AJRTDU) Sanasam Pratap lauded the Jiribam District Police and other security personnel for rescued the drivers without any physical harm from the hand of miscreants.

He added, the two rescued drivers will be handover to the family members by the Union today.

Observers and DEO met with candidates' representatives in Imphal East

IT News
Imphal, Feb 12:

In relation to the ensuing 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly General Elections, a meeting highlighting the poll preparedness and the major issues in the poll process was held today at the Panchayat Bhawan of Imphal East DEO Office. Presided by the DEO Kh Diana (IAS), the meeting was attended by General Observers Anil Kumar (IAS), Narbu Wangdi Bhutia (IAS),

K Lalrinzuali (IAS) and Police Observer Deepak Barnwal (IPS).

Returning Officers (ROs) of the all the ten ACs of Imphal East, District Nodal Officers and the authorized representatives of all contesting candidates took part in the meeting.

The observers appealed the candidates to strictly adhere the guidelines of the Model Code of Conduct, and to extend full support in achieving the goal of a 'free,

fair and peaceful election'. They also responded to the queries of the representatives and cleared doubt in certain key issues such as use of flags, expenditure matters, permission for procession/meetings, proper channel and authority to put any complaints up etc.

District SP M Pradip (IPS) appealed all not to take law into their hands when it comes to any issues or conflicts related to elections, and to put it up at the authority con-

cerned. He further assured that the district police will leave no stones unturned to fulfil a peaceful and fair election free from any kind of money or muscle power.

DEO Kh Diana (IAS) appealed all the contesting candidates to the ECI guidelines and to make the ensuing elections a free, fair and peaceful election and make Imphal District be a model for all other Districts when it comes to conduct of successful poll process.

Newly renovated RHTC buildings of RIMS at Bishnupur District inaugurated by RIMS Director



IT News
Imphal, Feb 12:

Prof. A. Santa Singh, Director of Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal inaugurated newly renovated RHTC buildings of RIMS at Bishnupur District today.

During his inaugural speech Prof. A. Santa Singh stated that the newly renovated RHTC will be a better

training center of students. The doctors and students will also get benefited from this newly renovated RHTC while treating the patient and during their trainings.

I thanked the Manipur State Co-operative Union Technical Engineering Cell (MSCUTEC) for timely construction of boundary walls of this center. Now, the doctors and students will feel safe and

secure during their trainings and working in this center due to the newly constructed boundary walls. The director further stated that the facilities like construction of badminton court and development of its campus are in the pipe line. This center will serve more purpose if we convert it as hospital in the long run. The Prof. N. Sanjib Singh, Medical Superintendent, RIMS Hospital appreciated the Director for providing best facilities to the new renovated center. The doctors and students will feel comfortable to work in this environment. He suggested to keep the center neat and clean. Prof. Brogen Singh Akoijam, Dean (Academic) and Head of Department of Community Medicine expressed happiness for renovating and inaugurating the center within a short period of time. A good environment has been created by renovating it.

Faculties members of Community Medicine Department, M. Hemanta Kumar Singh, Civil (Consultant)-I, engineering staffs of RIMS, officials, staffs and students were present in the inauguration program.

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Creative Campaign of the BJP launched

IT News
Imphal, Feb 12:

The Bharatiya Janata Party today launched its Creative Campaign at Hotel Imphal. The launching program was attended by Chief Minister, Nongthombam Biren Singh, Adhikarimayum Sharda Devi, President BJP, Dr. Sambit Patra, National Spokesperson BJP, Thongam Biswajit Singh, Minister and National Executive Member



of the BJP, Vungzagin Valte, Minister and Antas Khan, MLA Lilong AC.

The campaign will highlight the various achievements made by the BJP led govern-

ment in the state.

Dr Sambit Patra spoke about the achievements made by the N Biren Singh led government, like bridging the gap between hill and valley, improvement of roads, implementation of Inner Line Permit System in Manipur, renaming of Mount Harriet as Mount Manipur, improvement of law and order in the state and many others started by the government.

Poll Preparedness: 2nd Randomisation of Poll Personnel held

34 in Fray, 358 Polling Stations, 221362 Electors in 6 ACs of Churachandpur, Pherzawl Districts

IT News
Ccpur, Feb 12:

Poll preparedness in Churachandpur has been going smoothly until now even as the second randomisation of polling personnel was held this evening at DC's office here.

Meanwhile, in order to ensure that nothing is left to chances for the successful conduct of the State Assembly elections, 2022, the District Election Officer/DC Pawan Yadav has convened Nodal Officers' meeting daily wherein problems and progress were

shared and discussed.

Second randomisation of EVMs and VVPATs in respect of Tipaimukh, Thanlon, Henglep, Churachandpur, Saikot and Singhat ACs is slated to be held on February 14 at the Conference Hall of DC's office.

A total of 34 candidates are in the fray for the six ACs. With 8 candidates, 59-Saikot AC has the highest number of candidates. The contesting candidates in this AC are George T. Haokip (NCP), incumbent caretaker Chairman of ADCC Khaipao Haokip (NPP),

Paoliennial Haokip (BJP), sitting MLA T.N Haokip (INC), John H. Pulamte (JD-U), Joshua Thiek (KNA), John MK Thang (Ind) and Karong Onkholer (Ind). Saikot AC has a total of 61442 voters which included 29713 male, 31724 female voters and two transgender voters. The AC has 80 polling stations including one auxiliary PS.

55-Tipaimukh AC is all set for a triangular contest among Dr. Chaltanliem Amo (BJP) the sitting MLA; Ms. Thangthatling Sinate (NPP), the lone woman candidate for

the entire two districts and Ngursanglur Sanate (JD-U). Tipaimukh AC has a total of 18550 voters (9232 male and 9288 female). It has 39 polling stations.

In 56-Thanlon AC, there are six contenders namely Khanthang Tonsing (NPP), sitting MLA Vungzagin Valte (BJP), Lalhlunsang Sungte (Shiv Sena), Thangkhangin (LJP), Thangkhoisei Guite (JD-U) and former Chairman of ADCC Langkhanpau Guite (Ind). In all, there are 17926 voters (8973 male and 8972 female voters). The AC has 41

polling stations.

Likewise, 57-Henglep AC has also six in the fray. They are Letzamang Haokip (BJP), ex-Minister T. Manga Vaiphei (INC), Nehminthang Haokip (NPP), Genneikhip (JD-U), former MLA T. Thangzalam Haokip (Shiv Sena) and Sephu Haokip (Ind). This AC has 31879 voters (15408 male and 16177 female voters). There are 60 polling stations in Henglep AC.

58-Churachandpur AC has seven contenders namely V. Hangkhanlian (BJP) who is also a former Minister and sitting

MLA; H. Mangchinkhup Paite (INC), former editor of *The Lamka Post* Th. Thangzalam (NPP), Dr. Jainson Haokip (KNA), former DGP of Manipur Lallian Mang Khaute (@ LM Khaute (JD-U)),

H. Lianchinthang (LJP) and James Khuma Hauzel (Ind). With 64095 electors, Churachandpur AC has the largest number of voters among the six ACs of Churachandpur and Pherzawl districts. It has 29978 male voters and 34117 female voters. The AC has 82 polling stations.

Prayer is powerful and it can make a difference

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



When I received a call on Facebook Messenger, I did not notice it because I seldom use the Messenger app. Then I saw a message on WhatsApp that renowned global advisor, philanthropist and humanitarian Dr Satish Shikha was in my city Chandigarh and wanted to meet me. He wrote that he wants to see 'the new Narvijay' who has defeated Covid 19. I came to know that while I was battling death in the ICU for many days, Dr Shikha and hundreds of children from his charitable foundation sitting miles away prayed repeatedly for my well being and good health. These days he is traveling around the country and abroad distributing special copper coins filled with positive energy to women under his new initiative - 90 Million Smiles Foundation. He says that children and women have the most positive energy in the world. If positive thoughts are brought to mind while holding the copper coin in a hand for 9 minutes every day and praying for the betterment of all life in the world, this collective positive energy can do wonders on earth. In Hyderabad, his foundation ensures 24 hours free availability of food, education and medicine for underprivileged children. We hugged each other for a while before leaving. It was an amazing experience. Hugging someone is a rare opportunity these pandemic times.

Today if I am able to write this column, the credit also goes to the prayers of all those known and unknown people. The doctor was also saying again and again that you are not saved by us, but God has saved you. It is said that there is great power in prayer. Medicine is necessary for recovery, but prayer does its job, provided it is done in the right way. For this it is not necessary to be religious or you go to any temple, mosque or gurudwara to worship. Everything in and around our lives is filled with energy. Even the food, water, air and our bodies are bundles of energy. Prayer done with a pure mind and clear intention helps in generating good energy. Prayer, faith and positive thoughts strengthen our immunity also, while a negative environment and negative thoughts can make someone sick. There is an increase in spirituality after someone comes out alive from the ICU. Then it is understood that there is some supreme power which runs this world. This daily column is dedicated to that supreme power.

The basis of prayer is faith and dedication. If we consider God as our friend and partner, then most of the problems of life automatically become negligible. You will start feeling that you are under the shadow of some supreme power, which always takes care of you and guides you. Many people pray every day, go to temple, but while praying their mind is immersed in some worry or doubt, which is wrong. Pray with full faith and dedication and leave the result to God, then see how good it feels. Prayer means trusting and communicating with the Supreme Power. On the contrary, meditation means communicating with oneself and understanding oneself better. The simplest prayer can be to be grateful and give thanks for all that you have.

The big change in the India of the twenty first century would be possible only through reforms in the bureaucracy. It is very important to change it with time. Neither Indian Railways nor any other institution can run with the work culture of the fifties. From Europe to America, the bureaucracy of all the developed nations has reformed itself by taking lessons from the private sector.

There will hardly be any country in the world which lives in the contradiction of bureaucracy like India. On the one hand the bureaucracy has to go through reproach, oppression and humiliation from all sides, on the other hand every youth even dreams of joining it. It includes every government institution from government schools, universities to courts. A few days ago in Patna and Allahabad, youths took to the streets in anger for railway recruitment exams and caused huge damage to government property. By the way, his point is also true to some extent that why there is a delay in recruitment in railway jobs? At the same time, these youths also pointed fingers at the examination system of recruitment.

The pain of these young people is justified. The poor and unemployed have been hit the most by the Corona tragedy of the last two years. Even more so in the Hindi region, because people are not able to start even small works here and there is no hope of it in future. But some cracks are clearly visible in this protest as well. He has called the bureaucracy indolent, indifferent, corrupt not knowing what to do. When such an allegation is made, the bureaucracy is not the name of a single person sitting at the top, but an entire institution consisting of several levels of staff officers.

If seen, this charge is applicable at every level. The responsibility of the senior officers is definitely more. But

the posts, which will be recruited under the examination of Railway Recruitment Board, are equally infamous for their worklessness, negligence, indolence. Who does not know that in the railway administration, the maximum number of passengers without ticket, incidents of poisoning, theft, delay, loss of railways belongs to North India and especially in those areas where there have been disturbances. After all, what society is this which is making such citizens who when they are out of the system are ready to ruin and break it and if they reach inside, to save it at any cost. There is also delay in recruitment from the railway administration and some lapses have also happened.

Due to this protest, the railway administration has lost its sleep and is ready in principle for further reforms. The committee has been formed and it is expected that such steps will be taken so that such a situation does not happen in future also. But in the light of such incidents, there is also a need to look at the entire system. This recruitment for thirty five thousand posts was for the youth of the whole country including Assam, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Kashmir to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar. What is the reason that the riots happened only in Allahabad and Patna? In the figures that are coming out, the highest number of unemployed are from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The entire country was affected by the Corona period. But the southern states are fast coming back on track due to their better education system, skills, work culture, whereas in the northern states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, the eyes of the youth are only



By: Vijay Garg

towards government jobs. In cities like Allahabad, Lucknow, Patna, Bhagalpur with ten children living in one room, training in very few resources and working hard especially to improve English, are there so many government jobs left for these youths? Has the education system not reached more than fifty percent in private hands? Are such steps not being taken continuously in the railways?

Not only in the last five years, but over the last twenty years, a lot of activities of the Railways are moving towards the private hands under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model and by many other names, whether it is the maintenance of rest houses or development of stations or production units. Lots of work. In the past, preparations have been made to hand over about a hundred railway routes to private trains. In spite of this, when will this knowledge come in the school, university or society of Hindi states like Uttar Pradesh Bihar that when will you stop giving up hope of a government job on the basis of fake general knowledge and memorizing the spelling of English? Why not learn to do farming, industry or other skill or labour-intensive work?

The serious question is also of bureaucratic reforms. In any case, his crime is no less. Indian bureaucracy is considered to be the most corrupt and comfortable bureaucracy in the world. And the state responsible for this is no less. Although the current government has addressed this problem and implemented some good transparency measures for reforms, they are all more about the use of technology.

Remember there was a time when there were long queues for train tickets. From electricity office to telephone and passport office, work could not be done easily. But the digital technology world of the twenty-first century has done much better to reform or cut

Home Remedies for Thick Eyebrows

Curry leaves are also said to help. Keep curry leaves in hot water and leave it to cool. Then make a paste of the curry leaves and apply on the eyebrows.

You can also apply aloe vera gel. You can take the gel from the aloe vera growing in your house. The

gel obtained from the plant itself is the leaf pulp and is found in the inner portion of the leaves. First wash the leaf well and observe total hygiene while extracting the gel.

Some herbal products for enhancing eye glamour, like helping the growth of eyelashes or eyebrows are also in market. They are clinically tested and contain plant



By: Shahnaz Husain

extracts, like trifala, brahmi, sophora, soya oil, wheat protein, methi seeds and Vitamin E. It not only defines natural looking brows, but also repairs sparse eyebrows and intensifies growth. Ideal for grooming the eyebrows, the formulation increases density and restores growth.

To determine the shape of the eyebrows, sit in front of the mirror and hold a pencil against your nose, going straight up, just above the inner corner of your eye. Where the pencil touches, is where your eyebrow should begin. Then hold the pencil diagonally from the base of the nose towards the outer corner of the eyes, go-

ing just past it. This is the point where it should end. The highest point of the brows should be just above the iris.

While your brows are growing, you can also redefine your brows using an eyebrow pencil. First brush the brows into shape and then make short feathery strokes with the eyebrow pencil. The point of the pencil should be sharp, so that you can make light strokes. Avoid harsh black lines. Follow the direction of hair growth while making the short feathery strokes. Brush the eyebrows again afterwards.

The current trend in eyebrows is the natural looking, thicker eyebrows. Eyebrows with high arches, with medium to thick shape are still ruling fashion trends. The classic curved eyebrows are also popular.

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



Root of bureaucracy

'Civil Service' as a career option



By: Ravindra Kumar Mishra

Central and State Civil Services are considered as one of the best career options and coveted dream for many. Though there are numerous career options available, students are exploring career options that offers job satisfaction, meaningful purpose of life social recognition and appreciable service conditions.

Civil Services have always been considered the best career choice for the wide variety of jobs within its ambit and authority and power invested in it. The civil services offer incomparable opportunity to participate in nation building, cause a change in people's lives, indulge in social welfare and satisfying personal ambitions. Civil Services are considered paragon of great influence and respect.

Article 310 read with article 311 of the Constitution of India offers protective safeguards and unfathomable sense of job security as a civil servant cannot be fired easily, which is an edge over other public or private sector jobs. Secondly, the 7th pay commission recommended salary to these officers at par with those in corporate sector. This is besides excellent perks and subsidies available to civil servants. There is nothing better than this!

Grabbing the civil services requires to know the examination process, which assesses the knowledge of an aspirant in three stages - Preliminary, Mains and Personality test. Civil Services Examinations conducted by the Union and State Public Service Commissions are one of the toughest examinations, as approximately 1% candidates come out with flying colours.

Those aspiring to get into civil services should learn to prepare for union and/or state public service examinations. They must realise that there is no short cut to success, rather is a result of appropriate planning, determined hard work, and learning from failure.

The pre-requisite for aspirants is to know the syllabus which has been defined by the union and state public service commissions separately for preliminary and mains examinations. Preliminary examination intends to filter serious candidates from the mass while mains examination tests the knowledge with sesquipedalian acuity in a subjective format. This needs time and lots of practice that cannot be acquired overnight.

Owing to the extensive syllabus and timeline of the examinations, which take about a year to complete the examinations, it is time consuming! Hence it is important that aspirants have enough reasons to keep themselves ebullient, motivated, and energetic throughout the preparation journey.

Aspirants! General awareness being fundamental, start reading newspapers such as "The Hindu", "The Economic Times" and "The Imphal Times", which should be a mustread! It will help you in keeping a tab over the recent happenings and will also enhance your reading, writing, and comprehending skills. There is no substitute for reading newspapers, at least the editorial part! Monthly magazines like of "Kuruksheetra", "Yojna" and "Down to Earth" must make a place in your reading list.

Reasonable grasp of concepts paves to start by attempting previous year papers in the actual time allowed in examination. Honesty with oneself in evaluation is rewarding all the time. Attempt to accomplish the highest score is preferred to cut off marks, which is dicey and certain to uncertainty. Continuing this process till highest score is surpassed unceasingly in good mock tests can bring the desired score.

(The writer Former Chief Consultant, MHRD, GOI)

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India logs 50,407 new COVID-19 cases, 804 deaths

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 12:

India saw a single day rise of 50,407 coronavirus infections, which took the tally of cases to 4,25,86,544, while the active cases have declined to 6,10,443, according to Union health ministry data updated on Saturday.

The death toll has climbed to 5,07,981 with 804 daily fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The daily COVID-19 cases are being recorded at less than one lakh for the last six consecutive days.

The active cases comprise 1.43 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has further improved to 97.37 per cent, the ministry said.

It said a reduction of 87,359 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate has been recorded at 3.48 per cent, while the weekly positivity rate has been recorded at 5.07 per cent, according to the ministry.

The number of people who

have recuperated from the disease has increased to 4,14,68,120, while the case fatality rate has been recorded at 1.19 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 172.29 crore. India had crossed two crore cases on May 4 and three crore cases on June 23.

The 804 new fatalities include 492 from Kerala and 63 from Maharashtra.

A total of 5,07,981 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,43,355

from Maharashtra, 61,626 from Kerala, 39,575 from Karnataka, 37,887 from Tamil Nadu, 26,047 from Delhi, 23,382 from Uttar Pradesh and 20,965 from West Bengal.

The health ministry said that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

Assam engineer's forum bats for pragmatic flex-fuel policy



IT Correspondent
Guwahati, Feb 12:

All Assam Engineer's Association (AAEA) appreciates the latest initiative taken by both the Union government in New Delhi and State government in Dispur to encourage the use of green fuel in all kinds of automobiles and urges the concerned authorities to launch a public awareness campaign about the alternative fuel for the benefit of automobile users across India.

It may be mentioned that Union road transport & highways minister Nitin Gadkari has been advocating for ethanol mixed fuel (mostly with petrol/gasoline) for the vehicles. Lately the minister asked the carmakers in the country to

introduce flex-fuel engines on a large scale. He argued that the ethanol mixed petrol will be cheaper and it would reduce the air-pollution drastically.

India today spends around rupees eight lakh crore annually for importing crude oil, gas and other petroleum products and the PM Narendra Modi-led central government decides to reduce the amount with the use of ethanol, methanol, bio-diesel, compressed natural gas, green hydrogen, electric arrangements.

The optimum use of ethanol (also called ethyl alcohol or grain alcohol) in petrol-powered engines would financially benefit the farmers as the inflammable organic and colourless compound is prepared from the agricultural pro-

duce like grain, sugarcane, hemp, molasses, potato, etc. Presently India has a maximum of 9 per cent ethanol blended petrol in use.

Ethanol (symbol C_2H_5OH) burns in a cleaner way than petrol which usually leaves a significant volume of toxic carbon-monoxide (CO) is generated due to incomplete combustion of fuel in the air. Moreover, the low-level blend like 10% ethanol and 90% petrol can be used in conventional petrol engines. However, the increasing percentage of ethanol content (above 20) would need certain engine modifications.

"Assam government should formulate a pragmatic flex-fuel policy so that the local farmers can get higher benefits out of the initiative. We urge State chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to take the lead with necessary inputs from agriculture scientists, qualified engineers and other stakeholders," said a statement issued by AAEA president Er Kailash Sarma, working president Er Nava J. Thakuria and secretary Er Inamul Hye.

Vaccinated patients less likely to need critical care due to Omicron: Study

Agency
Los Angeles, Feb 12:

Vaccinated adults have a lower risk of severe illness due to Omicron variant of coronavirus, and are less likely to land in intensive care compared with unvaccinated patients, a US study suggests.

The study, published in a weekly report by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), also found that during the Omicron period fewer patients died while hospitalised, compared with those admitted when the Delta variant was dominant.

"Overall, the Omicron-period group had a lower likelihood of being admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) and were also less likely to require invasive mechanical ventilation compared with the Delta-period group," said Matthew Modes, a pulmonologist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre in the US, and co-first author of the study.

The researchers looked at the characteristics of 339 patients hospitalised with COVID-19 at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center from July to September of 2021, when the Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 was dominant.

They compared that group with 737 patients admitted with COVID-19 during December 2021-January 2022, when the Omicron variant was most prevalent.

Clinical information was gathered from the electronic health records of the patients in the study.

The analysis shows that a greater portion of the patients

hospitalised during Omicron were vaccinated as compared to patients hospitalised during the summer of 2021 when the Delta variant predominated.

"In addition to the protection that vaccination offered people admitted to the hospital when Omicron dominated, we saw that the addition of a booster dose appeared to be particularly important in reducing the severity of illness, especially among older adults," said senior author of the study Peter Chen, from Cedars-Sinai.

"Unvaccinated patients hospitalised with COVID-19 during the Omicron variant dominance still had a higher chance of being admitted with serious complications and appeared to be at higher risk for the development of respiratory

failure, compared with vaccinated patients," said Chen.

The researchers noted that vaccination, including a booster dose for those who are fully vaccinated, remains critical for mitigating the risk of severe illness associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection.

"A clear pattern emerges if you take just the Omicron-period patients and compare their vaccination status against the percentage of them who ended up in the ICU," said Michael Melgar, a co-first author of the study and a medical officer with the CDC.

"The more vaccinated someone is — from unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, fully vaccinated without a booster dose to fully vaccinated with a booster dose — the better the outcome for the patient," Melgar added.

Disability Pension to Lower Ranks Sepoy

IT News
Imphal, Feb 12:

As per extant orders, Armed Forces Personnel including Sepoy who is invalided out from service on account of a disability which is attributable to or aggravated by Military service is being granted disability pension consisting of service element and disability element. The rate of disability element for 100% disability shall be 30% of emoluments last drawn by the individual. For lower percentage of disability, the disability element reduces proportionately.

Saabka Sainik Sangarsh Committee submitted various representations regarding calculation of disability element on slab based system as had been recommended by

7th Central Pay Commission (CPC).

The 7th CPC recommended a return to the slab based system. The 7th CPC, however, in respect of Civilian Employees of Central Government had not made any recommendation. Civilian Employees of Central Government were getting disability pension under 6th CPC on percentage based system as such they will continue to get disability element on percentage based system. It created an anomalous situation. Therefore, the Service Headquarters requested to maintain Status quo i.e. to be continued the calculation method of disability element on percentage basis as per 6th CPC regime.

The concerns of Services were examined in this Department and the matter was referred to

Anomaly Committee on Pension through Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance conveyed the approval of the Cabinet regarding recommendation of Anomaly Committee in the matter that parity with Civilian for grant of Disability Element which was granted to Defence Forces under 6th CPC regime, shall be maintained. Accordingly, orders were issued on 04.09.2017 for continuing Disability Element on percentage basis.

Saabka Sainik Sangarsh Committee was replied on the lines of existing position.

This information was given by Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt in a written reply to Shri Ramalingam S in Lok Sabha on 11 February 2022.

US Navy Delegation Visits Western Naval Command, Mumbai

A Consensus for Cooperation in the Underwater Domain Between Both the Navies Reached

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Feb 12:

A ten-member US Navy delegation led by Rear Admiral Leonard C 'Butch' Dollaga, Commander Submarine Group VII, visited Headquarters, Western Naval Command (HQWNC), Mumbai on Wednesday.

The delegation was accompanied by Consul General David J Ranz of the US Consulate, Mumbai. During the visit, Rear Admiral Dollaga called on Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Western Naval Command, and discussed matters of relevance to the maritime domain with special emphasis on the growing cooperation between the two navies.

The visit of the US Navy (USN) delegation was part of follow-up activities linked to the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) discussions held in October 2020 wherein a consensus was reached to explore cooperation in the field of Underwater Domain Awareness (UDA) with a formal agreement between the two sides.

The USN delegation presented various avenues to progress cooperation in the niche field of UDA and further strengthen Indo-US compre-



US Navy's Rear Admiral Leonard C 'Butch' Dollaga called on Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, FOC-in-C, WNC, in Mumbai.

hensive global strategic partnership. On the Indian side, the discussion was led by Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Chief of Staff, HQWNC wherein various facets of cooperation in the field of UDA were deliberated, a Defence spokesman said.

Major agreements signed between India and USA since 2014 include the Defence Framework Agreement (DFA), BECA, General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), Communication Compatibility and Security Arrangements (COMCASA), and the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement

(LEMOA). India was accorded 'Major Defence Partner Status' by the USA during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the USA in June 2016 that institutionalized defence trade and technology sharing with India, at par with closest allies and partners of the USA.

Commensurate with the Major Defence Partner designation, in 2018, India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorisation Tier 1 status, which allows India to receive license-free access to a wide range of military and dual-use technologies regulated by the Department of Commerce.

In September 2021, in a meeting with US President Joe Biden and Modi, Biden reaffirmed the US' "unwavering commitment" to India as a Major Defence Partner through close engagements, including information sharing and strengthening cooperation in advanced military technologies. The leaders also welcomed the deepening of advanced industrial cooperation and noted the project to co-develop air-launched unmanned aerial vehicles under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative, and encouraged more such joint efforts.

Current LAC situation due to disregard of written accords by China: Jaishankar

Agency
Melbourne, Feb 12:

The current situation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) has arisen due to the disregard of written agreements by China not to mass soldiers at the border, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday.

Speaking at a joint press conference along with his Australian counterpart Marise Payne, Jaishankar further said when a large country disregards written commitments, it's an issue of legitimate concern for the entire international community. The minister made the comments in response to a question on the eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries.

When asked whether the India-China border standoff issue came up for discussion during the Quad Foreign

ministers' meeting here on Friday, Jaishankar replied, Yes.

"Yes, we (Quad) had a discussion on India-China relations because it was part of how we briefed each other about what was happening in our neighbourhood. And it's an issue in which a lot of countries legitimately take interest, particularly if they are from the Indo-Pacific region, he said.

The situation at the LAC has arisen due to the disregard by China in 2020 of written agreements with India not to mass forces at the border, he said.

"So, when a large country disregards written commitments, I think it's an issue of legitimate concern for the entire international community," he added.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted

following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

The tension escalated following a deadly clash in Galwan Valley.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process in the north and south banks of the Pangong lake in February and in the Gogra area in August last year.

India and China held the 14th round of Corps Commander-level meeting on January 12 during which the two sides agreed to maintain dialogue through military and diplomatic channels to work out a "mutually acceptable resolution" of the remaining issues of the standoff at eastern Ladakh.

New low-cost coating for fabrics can kill Covid virus: Study

Agency
Toronto, Feb 12:

Scientists in the US have developed an inexpensive, non-toxic coating for almost any fabric that decreases the infectivity of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19, by up to 90 per cent.

The coating, described in the journal ACS Applied Materials & Interfaces, may be used in future to develop an antiviral spray for fabrics.

"When you are walking into a hospital, you want to know that pillow you are putting your head onto is clean," said study lead author Taylor Wright, a doctoral student at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada.

"This coating could take a little bit of the worry off front-line workers to have personal protection equipment (PPE) with antimicrobial properties," Wright said.

Researchers soaked fabric in a solution of a bacteria-kill-

ing polymer which contains a molecule that releases sterilising forms of oxygen when light shines on it.

They then used an ultraviolet (UV) light to turn this solution to a solid, fixing the coating to the fabric.

"This coating has both passive and active antimicrobial properties, killing microbes immediately upon contact, which is then amped up when sunlight hits the cloth," said senior study author Michael Wolf, a professor at UBC.

Both components are safe for human use, and the entire process takes about one hour at room temperature, the researchers said. It also makes the fabric hydrophobic, meaning microbes are less likely to stick to the cloth, and doesn't seem to affect the strength of the fabric, they said.

The coating can also be used on almost any fabric, including cotton, polyester, denim, and silk, with applications in hospital fabrics, masks,

and activewear, according to the researchers.

Whereas other such technologies can involve chemical waste, high energy use, or expensive equipment, the new method is relatively easy and affordable, they said.

"All we need is a beaker and a light bulb. I am fairly certain I could do the whole process on a stove," Wright said.

To test the coating's bug-killing properties, the researchers bathed treated fabric in bacterial soups of *Escherichia coli* (E. coli) and *Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), both major sources of hospital-acquired infections.

They found there were 85 per cent of viable E. coli bacteria remaining after 30 minutes, which fell to three per cent when the treated cloth was exposed to green light for the same amount of time.

Similarly, 95 per cent of viable MRSA bacteria remained, dropping to 35 per cent under

green light. No bacteria remained after four hours.

The researchers also looked into whether the coating reduced the infectivity of SARS-CoV-2 by bathing treated fabric in a solution of the virus particles and then adding that solution to living cells to see if they could infect them.

They found the passive properties were not effective against the virus, but when treated fabric was exposed to green light for two hours, there was up to 90 per cent decrease in the infectivity of SARS-CoV-2.

"In other words, only one tenth of the amount of virus signal was detected on cells infected with the UV-fabric and light treated virus," said study co-author Francois Jean, a professor at UBC.

The team found they needed an 18 square centimetre piece of fabric to kill microbes with material containing seven per cent weight of the active ingredient.

K. Saratkumar extended support to Budhachandra



IT Correspondent
Jiribam, Feb 12:

The senior most BJP member and intending candidate for seeking BJP ticket for 40-Jiribam Assembly Constituency extended his support to N. Budhachandra Singh, BJP Candidate, Jiribam Assembly today in a simple function held at Kamrang, Jiribam.

Budhachandra Singh expressed his gratitude to K. Saratkumar Singh for his generous support. He added, K. Saratkumar Singh is one of senior most person who work in Jiribam Assembly Constituency from previous 5 years for strengthening the BJP party.

N. Budhachandra said, as the party offered him ticket to contest from Jiribam Assembly Constituency. He will ever re-

main indebted for K. Saratkumar Singh sacrifice and support who had done for the seek of BJP party.

Thereafter, K. Saratkumar Singh also formally extended his support to BJP Candidate of Jiribam N. Budhachandra Singh and appealed to his supporters to favour N. Budhachandra Singh in the interest of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

46 candidates file nomination for 10 AC in Kakching and Thoubal district

IT News
Thoubal, Feb 12:

Altogether 46 candidates from different political parties and Independent candidates had filed their nomination from 10 Assembly Constituencies of Thoubal & Kakching districts on the last day of the nomination. Polling in these constituencies will be held on 5th March.

Candidates who file their nomination on the last

today include Y. Surchandra Singh of BJP and N. Nabachandra of JD(U) from Kakching AC. Dr. U. Devan of BJP file his nomination from Wabagai AC. E. Dijiama of JD(U) & N. Sanjoy of RPI(A) filed their nomination from Hiyanglam AC. Four candidates; K. Jadu of JD(U), O. Hariadash of NCP and L. Domen & Md. Abdul Helim; Independent filed their nomination from Wangkhem AC. Two Independent

Candidates, Dr. Irshad Hussein and Md. Abdul Manal file their nomination from Lilong AC. M. Totomsana of RJSP filed his nomination from Heirok AC. K. Muktasna, Independent candidate also filed his nomination from Sugnoo AC.

Prominent leaders who have earlier filed their nomination for the upcoming 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election include former Chief

Minister and CLP leader O. Ibobi Singh of INC, from Thoubal AC. Sitting MLA K. Meghachandra, O. Surjakumar & Md. Fajur Rahim also filed their nomination as INC candidate. Former Education Minister Th. Radheshyam, Y. Antas, P. Brojen filed their nomination as BJP candidates.

Scrutiny will be held on 14th February and the last date of withdrawal is 16th February.

Contd. from Page 1

Poll Preparedness: 2nd Randomisation of...

For the upcoming election, altogether 71 Polling Stations will be handled by all women polling personnel and 31-Thoubal AC will be handled by all women polling personnel.

The election for the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly will be held in two phases on 28th February and 5th March to elect the 60-member state Assembly. The results will be out on 10 March.

60-Singhat AC will see a close contest among four contenders which included sitting MLA Ginsuanhou Zou (BJP), Tunkhan Kiamlo Hangzo (INC), Chinlunthang (KPA) and T. Hangkhanpau (JD-U). Singhat AC has a total of 27463 voters (13409 male and 14054 female voters). It has 56 polling stations.

There are two intermediary strong rooms for the two districts - one at Jiribam and another at SDO office, Henglep.

A total of 5 Observers were already here to oversee the election preparations. Rahul Dwivedi and Siladitya Basu were General Observers while Mithun Nandkumar Shete and Vijay Kumar R. Mangla were Expenditure Observers for the districts. Police Observer for all the six ACs is Shri Rahul Dev Singh. A dedicated Observers' Control Room has been opened at R-204, A-2 Building, Mini-Secretariat Quarters, Tuibong, Churachandpur.

Sports

ISL: Sunil Chhetri's record strike in vain as Hyderabad FC defeat Bengaluru FC



Agency
Bambolim, Feb 12:

Sunil Chhetri's historic goal went in vain as Hyderabad FC beat Bengaluru FC 2-1 to consolidate their lead at the top of the table in the Indian Super League here on Friday.

Chhetri became the all-time ISL top scorer with his 50th goal but by the time the legendary marksman got his name on the scoresheet, Hyderabad were already leading 2-0 with first-half strikes from Javier Siverio (16th) and Joao Victor (30th).

Hyderabad now have 29 points from 16 games, four more than second-placed Jamshedpur FC who have played two matches less. Bengaluru remain third with 23

in their kitty from 16 outings.

The marquee clash got off to a fiery start as both teams looked to press and not let the opponent enjoy possession. Hyderabad strung together some good passes and one such move resulted in an early goal for the table toppers.

Ogbeche tried to turn in a cross whipping from the left flank but could not connect well, only for Siverio to pull the trigger and beat Gurpreet Singh Sandhu for pace as the keeper got a hand to it but it wasn't enough to keep the ball out of the net.

Hyderabad kept pressing after drawing first blood and at the half-hour mark, doubled their lead, this time a training ground drill working wonders.

Souvik Chakraborty and Joao Victor combined from a free-kick with the latter moving to his right and firing home a low shot that nestled into the bottom right corner.

In the second half, Bengaluru tried hard to get back in the game but could not deliver the goods in the final third as Hyderabad held firm.

Bengaluru's industry paid off three minutes to full time when Chhetri struck to become the all-time highest scorer in the league with his 50th goal. Cleiton Silva fed Udanta Singh on his right with a delectable ball and the pacy winger crossed for Chhetri who found the back of the net with aplomb.

Squads:

Bengaluru FC:

Gurpreet Singh-Sandhu (GK), Naorem Roshan-Singh, Parag Satish Srivas, Pratik Chaudhari, Alan Costa, Udanta-Singh, Suresh-Singh Wangjam, Danish Farooq-Bhat, Bruno Silva Almeida, Sunil Chhetri, Cleiton Silva, Muirang Wungyanyng, Prince Ibara, Iman Basafa, Lara Sharma (GK), Ashique Kuruniyan, Jayesh Rane, Ajith Kumar, Edmund Lalrindika, Sarthak Golui, Ajay Chhetri, Sharon P (GK), Sivasakthi Narayanan, Namegal Bhutia, Aakashdeep Singh, Damaitphang Lyngdoh, Bidyashagar Singh, Harmanpreeth Singh, Rohit Kumar, Leon Augustine

Hyderabad FC:

Laxmikant Kattimani (GK), Akash Mishra, Ashish Rai, Chinglensana Singh, Juanan, Joao Victor, Nikhil Poojary, Souvik Chakraborti, Aniket Jadhav, Joel Chianesse, Bartholomew Ogbeche, Nito Dorjee Tamang, Hitesh Sharma, Javier Siverio-Toro, Edu Garcia, Amritpal Singh, Seityansen-Singh, Rohit Danu, Mohammad Yasir, Sahil Tavora, Mark Zothanpuia, Aaren DSilva, Abdul Raheeb-Anjukandth, Gurmeet Singh (GK), Pritam Singh, Halicharan Narzary, Lablakhlua Jonate (GK)

India complete WI series sweep without much trouble



Agency
Ahmedabad, Feb 12:

Collectively, West Indies were a shambles, their batting in particular. Yet again, their top order was in give-away mode, playing with the gaiety of recreational cricket. 169 all out, chasing 266 for victory, completed a 3-0 ODI series sweep for India. Under lights at Motera, the hosts barely broke a sweat. Commentating for the host broadcaster, Ian Bishop called for setting up a High-Performance Centre in the Caribbean.

The West Indies bowling was good and some individual gains were their only takeaway from this defeat. Alzarri Joseph and Odean Smith enhanced their reputations ahead of the Indian Premier League auction.

Joseph went unsold last year. In all likelihood, it would be different this time. Smith (36, 18 balls) added his batting pyrotechnics to his bowling, laying into Kuldeep Yadav and probably upsetting the chinaman bowler's auction prospects a bit. But in the context of the third ODI, which India won by 96 runs, it was just delaying the inevitable.

The hosts, too, suffered a top-order collapse, but that was mostly down to the excellent Joseph (2/54), bending his back on a bouncy and a little two-paced pitch. Virat Kohli fell prey to a soft dismissal, caught down the leg-side, something that happens during a lean patch. Kohli is having an elongated one, and he had a rueful smile after getting out for a duck.

Rohit Sharma, who had started off with a rasping square cut against Kemar Roach off the first ball of the match, was Joseph's first scalp. The India captain went for a cover drive without moving his feet and inside-edged a fullish delivery on to the stumps. Kohli's wicket a

couple of balls later gave Joseph a double-wicket maiden. It was the second time in the series that he dismissed Sharma and Kohli in the same over.

The returning Shikhar Dhawan departed in Smith's first over, failing to handle the extra bounce and India were 42/3 in the 10th over. KL Rahul sat out of this game owing to a niggle and Shreyas Iyer came at No. 4 after recovering from Covid. He had Rishabh Pant for company to resurrect India's innings. Both scored half-centuries, in contrasting styles, and added 110 runs for the fourth wicket. If Pant's knock was silken, Iyer's was a tad laboured. But the latter gradually grew into the game.

Pant's batting in a way defines the Orwellian 'doublethink', which simultaneously accepts responsibility and irresponsibility. He is capable of sublime as well as messy stuff.