

## JP Nadda to soon unveil BJP Manifesto; PM Modi likely to visit State



Courtesy: ANI  
Imphal, Feb 13:

Ahead of the upcoming Manipur election, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president Jagat Prakash Nadda is now set to visit the poll-bound state. Manipur Chief Minister N

### Guv' Ganesan on 70th birth anniversary of (L) Sushma Swaraj

IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan has extended his heartfelt greetings on the auspicious occasion of 70th birth anniversary of (L) Sushma Swaraj.

"She epitomized dignity, decency and unwavering commitment to public service. Firmly rooted in Indian values and ethos, she had great dreams for our nation. She was an outstanding Minister", La Ganesan said in his message and added that she was a disciplined karyakarta, a fierce orator and an outstanding Parliamentarian who never compromised on her ideals. She will always be remembered for her kind nature & helping the distressed in their trying times.

She helped numerous Indians in trouble who reached out to her during her tenure as the Foreign Minister on social media, the Governor added.

Biren Singh on Saturday informed that the BJP chief will soon visit the state and release the party's manifesto for upcoming Assembly elections. The CM also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to make a visit to the state.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh said that the party is now looking forward to its top brass visiting the state ahead of the polls. Speaking to ANI, he informed that the party's national president will soon release the election manifesto.

"BJP president JP Nadda will soon visit the state and release the party manifesto for the State Assembly election. PM Modi will also visit the

state however the schedule is not confirmed yet," Biren Singh said.

Earlier, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had conveyed his confidence in the retention of the BJP government in Manipur and said that the party will retain power with a thumping majority.

In the 2017 Assembly polls, the BJP had formed a government in the state even as it won just 21 seats compared to Congress' 28, by joining hands with two local parties - National People's Party (NPP) and Naga People's Front (NPF).

The Election Commission of India (ECI), on Thursday,

revised the poll dates for the Manipur Assembly elections, postponing the voting for Phase 1 and Phase 2.

As per the revised dates, voting for the first phase of elections will take place on February 28 instead of February 27. The second phase of voting will happen on March 5 instead of March 3. Elections for the 60-seat Manipur Assembly are being held in two phases. The counting of votes and declaration of results is scheduled for March 10.

Republic & P-Marq opinion poll predicts BJP victory

In a recent opinion poll conducted by Republic TV in collaboration with P-Marq between January 23 and January 25, the BJP appears to be ahead in the race for the Assembly polls in Manipur.

The recent data projects BJP bagging 29-35 seats out of the 60 total seats with a 39% voting percentage. BJP is followed by the Indian National Congress (INC), which is predicted to win 13-19 seats with a 28.8% voting percentage, as per the poll forecast.

The opinion poll projected BJP to stay ahead in the race as the poll depicts the party bagging a majority of 31-37 seats out of 60 seats followed by Congress winning around 13-19 seats.

IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

Union Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju on a visit to Manipur ahead of the Manipur Legislative Assembly election 2022 said that people should not waste their single vote on Congress party. People should avoid reopening the dark phase in Manipur that was witnessed during the Congress rule, he said in Imphal today.

Rijiju arrived in the state on Sunday to attend the Mega Yuva Conclave held at THAU Ground, Thangmeiband today. It was organised by the organised by Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha Manipur.

Addressing the function as chief guest, Rijiju said that the BJP government's concern for the welfare of Manipur is reflected in the recent budget provision. There are tremendous changes in the state with the advent of the BJP-led government in the state, he said.

"I had visited Manipur four times on different occasions in connection with different election campaigns. The first time, I had come to Manipur in 1994. Comparing to past some years, I can say that there is a lot of change in the state now.

"To maintain this flow of



development and shut the dark phase of Congress party rule, people should elect the BJP government to get absolute majority. People should not divert their mind for regional party as the BJP will remain in power at the Centre for some more period," he claimed.

Rijiju criticized the previ-

ous Congress party rule by charging that divide and rule policy of the Congress party created ridges between various communities. Besides this, there was frequent bandh and blockade. However, nowadays, with the formation of the BJP government, such things are no longer happening, he added.

### Sunday Editorial

## Rahul Gandhi's idea of India may impact on Manipur Election

The idea of India, as stated by Rahul Gandhi during the ongoing budget session have some clarity to the idea of India as a Union of states is quite logical as he talk about the necessity of federal structure in the country. But the shocking part is that Mr. Gandhi's idea of India has not included the North Eastern states of India. There was already a demand or perhaps many suggestions being expressed through various columns in this newspaper about the need for re-

view of the National Anthem as Manipur and some North Eastern states are not included in the lyrics of the National Anthem. The National Anthem described India as a nation which is only for Punjab-Sindh-Gujarat-Maratha, Dravida-Utkala-Banga, Vindhya-Himachal-Yamuna-Ganga and Uchchhala-Jaladhi-taranga. It was written in 1911 and may be that time Manipur, the erstwhile kingdom which was merged to India in 1947, was not a part of India, may be because of that the song he wrote missed Manipur and other NE states as it was not a part of India.

Well Rahul Gandhi had spoken about Manipur's Political party's delegations and questioned the Union Home Minister about the reason for humiliation by forcing them to take out their shoes while entering his room. He had also visited Manipur during election time. The question now is that 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election is knocking on the door and the Congress party under his leadership is working hard to make sure that their members get majority seat in the state to form the next government. At a time when the Manipur Congress party needs all possible supports and encouragement from the central leaderships, it was indeed a big slashing blow to the ongoing campaign, as people are not happy when the leader of the Congress party described India as a union of state which started from Gujarat and end at Bengal. It cannot be considered a mistake as he was speaking in the parliament telling the members on the idea of India.

It is natural that we the people of North East definitely think that to Congress Party India North East India has never been recognized as its states. Perhaps, the AFSPA, and the various kind of oppressive laws has been imposed and empowered the army to suppress the people during their regime.

Without a clear cut apology or clarification, not only to the people but inside the parliament, by Mr. Gandhi, people will surely consider that to the Congress the North East States are nonexistence to the idea of India. Or else Congress party which is oblivious of their fate in this election may face the music.

#### National Anthem

Jana Gana Mana Adhinaayak Jaya Hey, Bhaarat Bhaagya Vidhaataa Panjab Sindh Gujarat Maratha, Draavid Utkal Ganga Vindhya Himachal Yamuna Gange, Uchchhal Jaledhi Taranga Tav Shubh Naamey Jaagey, Tav Shubh Aashish Meange Gaagey Tav Jayageetha Jana Gana Mangal Deeyak, Jaya Hey Bhaarat Bhaagya Vidhaataa Jaya Hey, Jaya Hey, Jaya Hey, Jaya Jaya, Jaya Hey

## Dr. Kh Kanba Singh set the file case against S Rajen Singh

IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

Dr. Khundrakpam Kanba Singh, the Janata Dal (United) candidate of Lamshang constituency has stated that he is preparing to file a case against sitting MLA Sorokhaibam Rajen Singh over filling of wrong affidavit to his nomination paper for the upcoming State Assembly election.

Speaking during his flag hosting programme, Dr. Kanba thanks to all people of 49 polling of his constituency for joining his flag hosting



programme.

He said that he is preparing a case for against Sorokhaibam Rajen Singh, Intending Candidate of Lamshang Assembly Constituency of BJP. He also said that he was to S. Rajen Singh's passing out year of B.A. and also in time of nomination file of election every year, he submitted different passing out year of B.A.

He also said that he should only file a class against him but the decision will be finalized by the Election Commission of India as well as Higher Courts Authority.

## Scribe beaten to death in India, three arrested, PEC demands stringent punishment

IT Correspondent  
Geneva, Feb 13:

Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the global media safety and rights body, demanded stringent punishments to perpetrators of the murder of a young scribe in central India's State of Uttar Pradesh some days back. Condemning the demise of Sudhir Saini (30), the PEC also urges the UP government in Lucknow to adequately compensate the reporter's impoverished family.

It may be mentioned that Sudhir, who worked for a local

newspaper titled Shah Times, was physically attacked by three individuals while traveling by a car in Saharanpur locality on 26 January 2022. They had a quarrel with Sudhir, who was on a two-wheeler, following an issue of overtaking the vehicle. The car passengers not only stopped the reporter, but also thrashed him and finally threw a water channel.

Seriously wounded Sudhir was taken to a nearby hospital by the locals, where he succumbed to injuries. The eyewitnesses provided vital inputs to the police about the



vehicle and those passengers. The police team accordingly arrested Jahangir, Farman and Mannan accusing them of

murdering the reporter, who was only son to the elderly parents.

"It's so unfortunate that the life of a promising scribe had ended in such a way. India continues to be a dangerous country for working journalists as the populous nation lost six journalists to assailants last year," said Blaise Lempen, secretary-general of PEC adding that year 2021 witnessed murders of 79 media workers in 29 countries, where Afghanistan emerged as the most dangerous country with 12 journo-casualties, followed by Mexico (10) and Pakistan

(7).

Days back, another young scribe named Rohit Kumar Biswal died in a landmine blast, informed Nava Thakuria, PEC's India representative. Biswal (40), who used to work for an Oriya daily titled Dharitri, stepped on the mine planted by left-wing rebels in Odisha's Kalahandi locality and died on the spot. The incident took place on 5 February as the reporter went to cover a local election related developments where the ultra-left extremists threatened people to boycott the forthcoming polls.

# Land record rooms to be set up in every district

## Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Most of the banking functions and transactions have become digital now. Due to this change, people are getting a peace of mind. Earlier, one had to travel to far away places to get the payment or had to wait for his turn in the banks. In government offices, a large number of staff were deployed to manage the files and a lot of time was lost in searching the files. The ghost of red tape used to be hidden in the files itself. This was the major reason behind getting the things delayed. Gradually everything became digital and online. In the Covid pandemic time, there was no other solution other than going digital. Work from home also made it necessary for everyone to be online. In the coming few years, everything related to life will become digital and there is no doubt about it. Under the Digital India scheme, linking of land databases with revenue court records, bank records and Aadhaar is being considered. However, the decision on whether to link everything with Aadhaar will be voluntary and it will not be mandatory.

The government wants to issue a 14-digit identification number on every plot of the country. According to the Parliamentary Standing Committee report, it will later integrate its land records database with revenue court records and bank records as well as Aadhaar numbers on a voluntary basis. According to the Department of Land Resources, the Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) scheme was initially launched in ten states, which can be implemented across the country in the coming times. This is the next phase of Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme. Under the scheme, a modern land record room is to be set up in each district at a cost of Rs 50 lakh each. In addition, Rs 270 crore will be spent on integration of land records with the Revenue Court Management System. Later the land records database will be linked with the banks. With ULPIN, land disputes will be resolved faster. This will prevent land frauds, especially in villages where land records are very old or disputed.

The Ministry of Rural Development has approved the 'consent-based' linkage scheme. This scheme of the central government was first made public in 2014. The program aims to digitize India's old paper-based land records and land registration system. There are estimated to be 30.16 crore land records in India. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Haryana, Tripura, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh have already started pilot projects to link Aadhaar with land records. The records of the Revenue Department in Haryana have come on digital mode. For this, 18,500 documents were scanned and uploaded on the NIC portal. Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar inaugurated modern revenue record rooms of all 22 districts in the state through a virtual meeting recently. Now these documents will be in front of the eyes at a click of the mouse. Digital labs have been set up for this purpose in every district in Haryana. Records of all departments including irrigation, urban and local bodies, agriculture and farmers welfare, development and panchayat, police and education will also be linked with the lab.

# Complicated case of musical chairs

## The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's candidates' list for the upcoming Assembly elections in Manipur has elicited widespread defections

By - Yambem Laba



Tensions were high among Manipuris in general and supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party in particular as they awaited announcement of the names of the 60 candidates who would be contesting elections to the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly, scheduled in two phases on 27 February and 3 March this year.

The BJP authorities were perhaps aware that there would be disappointment among those who did not make the mark. As a precautionary measure, the party closed its headquarters in Imphal, deployed heavy security comprising Central Reserve Police Force troops and the Fire Brigade was also put on alert. The closure began on 29 January.

The announcement was not made in the state capital Imphal but from New Delhi and by 3 p.m. on 30 January, details of the candidate list were all over Manipur. It includes 10 former Congress Party leaders who recently defected to the BJP.

The list has the name of R K Imo Singh, Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh's son-in-law and son of former Union minister and state chief minister late R K Jaichandra Singh, from the urban Sagolband Assembly constituency. S S Olish is also set to contest for the BJP from Chandel. That said, Biren Singh's younger brother N Boy Singh did not get a party ticket from the Khundrakpam Assembly constituency.

The flash point, however, was the denial of a ticket to the sitting BJP MLA from Kakching, M Rameshwar Singh. Instead Y Surendra Singh, who had recently been disqualified by the Speaker of

the Manipur Legislative Assembly and joined the BJP from the Congress Party just about two weeks ago, has been given the nod from Kakching. The constituency, whose majority population belongs to the Scheduled Caste category, is the most industrious and organised region of Manipur. There were widespread protests and thousands of members of the BJP, especially cadres belonging to various front organisations, tendered their resignations en masse.

The same sentiment was echoed in the Sagolband constituency. In 2017, the BJP had fielded Kh Loken Singh - he was first elected to the Assembly on a Congress Party ticket in 2007 but was denied the oldest party's ticket last time. R K Imo Singh had been given the Congress Party ticket in 2017 from Sagolband and Loken Singh fought

the elections on a BJP ticket but he narrowly lost thanks to the postal ballots. This time, after defecting to the BJP, Imo Singh has got the saffron party's ticket. Loken Singh's supporters took to the streets and made a bonfire of BJP flags and festoons.

But the worst reaction to the BJP's candidate list was from the Lilong Assembly constituency. The intending candidate and his supporters had struggled hard for the last five years to establish the BJP in an area which is a predominantly minority-dominated one. The party's ticket, however, has been given to Y Antas Khan, who was earlier elected from the seat as an Independent during a by-election. In protest, a cow was purportedly slaughtered on a BJP flag and it is believed that the police have taken into custody two of those involved in the act.

Such developments apart, Ningthoujam Biren Singh, a former legislator and minister first elected on a Congress Party ticket almost 30 years ago, had joined the BJP 10 years ago. He was denied a BJP ticket in the last elections but told that he would be given a political post. After the same happened this time, he has gone back to the Congress Party, which has given him a ticket.

Ningthoujam Biren Singh also spoke to the media alleging that he was asked to cough up Rs 50 lakh to get a BJP ticket. Similar complaints poured in from various quarters to the extent that crores of rupees seem to have been amassed.

The BJP's list of 60 candidates also includes quite a few with criminal backgrounds. Okram Henry Singh, earlier elected on a Congress Party ticket and nephew of former Congress Party CM Okram Ibobi Singh, later changed sides to the BJP. He was a minister in CM Biren Singh's Cabinet till his election was declared null and void by the

Manipur High Court. He is also one of the main accused in what is now known as the "airport drugs case" and has been since charge-sheeted by the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Next in line is Yamthong Haokip who was under the National Investigation Agency's scanner and is currently out on bail in the case relating to the theft of 9mm pistols from the armory of the 2nd Battalion Manipur Rifles.

The BJP list of candidates has turned into a windfall for Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United), which was a party that existed only in name in Manipur. Those who have missed the BJP bus have made a beeline for the JD-U this time. Foremost among them are four sitting MLAs, namely Khumukcham Jyokishan from the urban Thangmeiband Assembly constituency and Md Assafuddin from Jiribam bordering Cachar district in Assam.

The new faces in the JD-U are led by firebrand super cop Thounaojam Brinda. Next to her is former director general of Manipur Police, L M Khaute who took voluntary retirement in November last year. Among the former ministers to join the JD-U are Ksh Biren, Samuel Zindai and Loken Singh, and former chief secretary Oinam Nabakishore. The JD-U has since announced the names of 30 candidates.

Conrad Sangma's National People's Party saw four candidates being elected during the last elections. It became a partner to the BJP along with the Naga Peoples' Front, which had also returned four seats. Initial calculations were that a possible combination of the Congress Party and NPP could be forged to challenge the BJP's claim of getting an absolute majority and forming a government of their own.

The NPP, which has put up candidates for 10 seats, also seems to have made the mistake of choosing people without the approval of Hebron. The Congress Party has already named 40 candidates while the NPP has announced 33 names so far, which include many new entrants from the BJP also.

The rush for a BJP ticket stems from the assumption that getting one immediately assures a berth in the Assembly and that is where the selection process could have gone wrong. The question is which party will emerge as the single largest among the BJP, Congress Party, NPP and now, the JD-U. In all probability though, Manipur seems to be headed for a hung verdict when results are declared on 10 March.

(\*\*\*)The writer is the Imphal-based Special representative of The Statesman

# Online higher education is boosting youth employment in the post-pandemic world

Unemployment issues weren't new when the Covid-19 pandemic struck which only aggravated the job insecurity faced by the Indian youth due to the regressive job market in 2020.

A series of lockdowns imposed due to the Coronavirus outbreak forced graduates to face the dreary prospect of unemployment this year as well. This vulnerable employment was further accentuated by the lack of quality higher education, limited resources and looming skill shortages due to technological advancement.

After the second Covid-19 wave that broke in May 2021, India's unemployment rate stood at a dangerous 11.8%, according to data released by the Center for Monitoring India's Economy. On one hand, unemployment was soaring due to job losses and business collapse, leading to the speedy emergence and adaption of new technologies. On the other hand, these emerging technological skillsets kept widening the skill gap among the job seekers with traditional credentials. As a result, the unemployment rate has skyrocketed.

We had a massive wave of jobs that went online, in a work from home mode that still continues to be online. The majority of these jobs such as sales, data analytics, digital marketing and web development, were available for early career professionals. However, skills match led to a lot of open positions. Large IT companies are unable to close even half of their positions leading to a major revenue loss.

To close this widening skill gap, a market-oriented education system

had to evolve. This gave way for job-seekers to adopt e-tech solutions and become job-ready by opting for bite-size certification courses. These bite-sized courses were revolutionary in nature. Firstly, the delivery mode was technology-led and could replace existing class environments. Secondly, there was unbundling of skills and only the most relevant ones had to be pursued. Unlike a traditional degree which is a stack of credentials that don't serve any purpose, these courses were able to help in what the industry needed. Thirdly, the delivery took more engaging shapes as well - live classes, cohorts, peer learning and more, previously unavailable in large MOOC platforms.

A new wave of platforms shaped up which connected learners to recruiters posts these courses as well. The trend was seen not just in technology-oriented courses, but finance, law, accounting and general management. These alternative credentials help individuals upskill themselves in emerging technologies in a short time and apply for jobs in available career domains. The best part was talent suddenly becoming borderless. People from India were being staffed in Europe, with youth in India from Tier 2/3 towns connected to companies in Tier 1 cities. So, apart from skilling becoming primarily online, employment methods became online as well.



By: Vijay GarG

Companies had to do their training online to upskill them after hiring and onboarding. As a result, alternative credentials are now becoming increasingly available to offer short-term upskilling opportunities for job-seekers and, in turn, help businesses thrive by leveraging emerging technologies.

Alternative credentials include micro-credentials, digital badges and industry-recognised certificates are being provided by various institutions and business organisations. Adoption of these credentials is helping people qualify for the available job roles, making them competent for the future job market.

Nowadays, the online education market is largely driven by courses in artificial intelligence, data science, cloud computing, the Internet of Things (IoT), virtual reality and machine learning, according to a study by KPMG India and Google. These career fields are in high demand in the current job market, but the lack of skills among job seekers has prevented them from gaining employment. A bite-sized certification course is the only way to solve this problem in time!

Online certification courses have shown us the way to boost our economy through quality higher education. In a convenient and affordable format, these courses fill the skill gaps created by the fast proliferation of new technologies. Through this transformation in education, those at high risk of losing their jobs regardless of their academic backgrounds, will be able to transition into relevant roles. As opposed to traditional education, which puts academic history

into much consideration, these certification courses provide an egalitarian space for professionals by allowing people from all backgrounds to pursue these courses.

Consequently, if we look at the numbers now, Michael Page India, India Inc. reported increased employment of 14% from Q3 2020 to Q3 2021, based on sectors like engineering, manufacturing and technology.

In the midst of the fourth industrial revolution, technology is advancing at an unprecedented pace, making it difficult for long-term courses to keep up. Therefore, a demand-driven and skill-based alternative to the traditional degree system is created.

This trend has led several companies to offer alternative credentials instead of training employees. Additionally, most of these employers have created their own curricula, expanding their publicly available credentials quickly. Thus, this form of higher education will prevail in the future and continue finding a wider acceptance. The list includes organisations like Google, Microsoft and Infosys, among others.

Throughout one's career progression from a newly qualified entrant to mid-career professional to expert, alternative credentials aid in developing technical, behavioral, domain and analytical knowledge. It also inculcates leadership and soft skills. Thus, these courses will enable unprecedented opportunities for millions of people who might otherwise be left behind by the 4th industrial revolution.

As we shift toward a culture of lifelong learning and skill development, the landscape of higher education will be reshaped in order to provide better employment opportunities for the youth.

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## Sunday Poetry

### Life goes on...

Written by:- Irom Calvin

Learn to say please, sorry and thank you,  
Life goes on, and the days we live are very few.  
Focus on the dreams you wish to pursue  
Ultimately friends and family are your crew.

The step you take may or may not be wrong,  
In life, pains are worries that come along,  
So, stay awake, alert and strong  
Because sadness will not prolong.

The dew drops of rain,  
Washes away all the pain.  
There exists a new life,  
Where all worries are cut with a knife.

The shining rainbow in the sky,  
Gives us courage to aim high,  
The bright colours of the rainbow,  
Makes us smile with a glow.

# India's daily Covid-19 tally drops to 44,877; 684 deaths in last 24 hours

Agency  
New Delhi, Feb 13:

The daily Covid-19 tally in India dropped to 44,877 on Sunday, bringing the total caseload to 4,26,31,421, according to the data released by the Union health ministry. The number of infections recorded on Sunday was 11 per cent lower than yesterday.

The country reported 684 more deaths in the last 24 hours, increasing the overall fatality count to 5,08,665.

India's recovery rate now

stands at 97.55 per cent. As the active cases declined by 73,398 in the last 24 hours, the active caseload now stands at 5,37,045.

While the weekly positivity rate is currently at 4.46 per cent, the daily positivity rate stands at 3.17 per cent.

The top five states which have registered maximum cases are Kerala with 15,184 cases, followed by

Maharashtra with 4,359 cases, Karnataka with 3,202 cases, Tamil Nadu with 2,812 cases and Rajasthan with 2,606

cases.

As many as 62.76 per cent of the new cases are reported from these five states, with Kerala alone responsible for 33.83 per cent of the new cases.

A total of 1,17,591 patients recovered in the last 24 hours, which brings the total recoveries to 4,15,85,711 across the country.

India has administered a total of 49,16,801 doses in the last 24 hours, which brings the total tally of doses administered to 1,72,81,49,447.

A total of 14,15,279 samples

were tested in the last 24 hours. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization's chief scientist,

Soumya Swaminathan, said on Friday that the world was not yet at the end of the Covid-19 pandemic as there would be more coronavirus variants. She said the world has seen the virus evolve and mutate. "So we know there will be more variants, more variants of concern, so we are not at the end of the pandemic," Swaminathan was quoted as saying by Reuters.

# Centre approves continuation of police modernisation scheme for 5 yrs with Rs 26,275 crore

Agency  
New Delhi, Feb 13:

The Modi government has approved the continuation of a mega police modernisation scheme for five years up to 2025-26 with a financial outlay of Rs 26,275 crore.

The Union Home Ministry said the scheme includes security-related expenditure in Jammu and Kashmir, north-eastern states and Maoists-affected areas, for raising new battalions, developing high-tech forensic laboratories and other investigation tools.

The government under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the continuation of the umbrella scheme of Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF), an official state-

ment said.

The approval for the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 moves forward the initiative of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to modernise and improve the functioning of the police forces of states and union territories, it said.

This scheme comprises all relevant sub-schemes that contribute to the modernisation and improvement with a total central financial outlay of Rs 26,275 crore, the statement said.

It said provision has been made under the scheme for internal security, law and order and adoption of modern technology by police.

Assistance will be given to states for narcotics control and strengthening the criminal justice system by developing a

robust forensic set-up in the country.

A central outlay of Rs 18,839 crore has been earmarked for security-related expenditure in Jammu and Kashmir, insurgency-affected north-eastern states and Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas.

According to the statement, Rs 4,846 will be given by the central government for the modernisation of state police forces.

To develop operationally independent high-quality forensic sciences facilities in states and union territories for aiding scientific and timely investigation, Rs 2,080.50 crore will be given.

With the implementation of the 'National Policy and Action Plan' for combating

Maoists or LWE, LWE violence incidents have come down drastically, the statement said.

To further pursue this accomplishment, six LWE-related schemes with a central outlay of Rs 8,689 crore have been approved. These schemes include Special Central Assistance (SCA) to most LWE-affected districts and districts of concern to consolidate the gains, it said.

For the raising of India Reserve Battalions or Specialised India Reserve Battalions, a central outlay of Rs 350 crore has been approved.

The statement said Rs 50 crore has been approved under the central sector scheme of Assistance to States and Union Territories for narcotics control.

# Goa polls 2022: All Congress MLAs will join BJP after result announcement, claims Arvind Kejriwal

Agency  
Panaji, Feb 13:

Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday urged the people of Goa not to vote for Congress if they are not in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He argued that all Congress MLAs would join the saffron party in the end.

He also assured the people of Goa that if elected to power, the Aam Aadmi Party will begin mining within six months of forming government in the coastal state.

While speaking to media, Arvind Kejriwal claimed that after polls of the upcoming Goa assembly are announced on March 10, by March 11 all from Congress will join BJP.

"So I appeal to the people of Goa who want to see the BJP lose, don't vote for Congress. Their vote will go wasted, it will go to the BJP. Give all your votes to AAP," he said.

The Delhi chief minister went on to add, "AAP is promising the people of Goa that we will begin mining in 6 months (after coming to power, if elected)... Mining has been

stopped for 10 years under BJP government, so no point in voting for them. Vote for AAP, give us a chance."

Elections to 40 assembly constituencies in Goa and 70 assembly constituencies in Uttarakhand will take place on February 14.

Shifting focus to another poll-bound state - Uttarakhand, Kejriwal promised to establish healthcare services and schools in all villages of the hilly state. He also assured that if his party forms the government in the state, they would increase employ-

ment opportunities to halt migration of youth from the state in search of jobs.

"To the people of Uttarakhand, I want to say that AAP will bring adequate employment opportunities so that migration stops. We will generate jobs that will be sufficient for the youth living here and the ones who have migrated... We aim to bring all of them back," he said.

The results of Assembly elections in five states - Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur - will be declared on March 10.

# Hijab row: Section 144 imposed around all high schools in Karnataka's Udupi from Feb 14 to 19

Agency  
New Delhi, Feb 13:

Amid the hijab row, prohibitory orders under Section 144 have been imposed around all high schools in Karnataka's Udupi district. The prohibitory orders will come into effect at 6 am on Monday, February 14, and remain enforced till 6 pm on Saturday, February 19.

This means that all gatherings and agitations are banned in the area around high schools in the district till Saturday.

Section 144 was imposed after the Superintendent of Police made a request to Deputy Commissioner in Udupi, Kurma Rao. He requested that prohibitory orders be enforced in 200-metre radius area around high schools in the district.

Earlier, the authorities in Bengaluru had imposed prohibitory orders to restrict gathering of any kind around schools and colleges in the city.

Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)

was imposed around the schools, PU colleges, degree colleges and other educational institutions in Bengaluru. The prohibitory order is in effect till February 22.

**HIJAB ROW IN KARNATAKA**

The Karnataka hijab row erupted after a group of young Muslim students were not permitted to enter their college in Udupi district on account of wearing hijabs.

The issue spread across the state as more colleges

and schools issued similar diktats. Opposing groups of students began protesting both for and against the right to wear hijabs in educational institutes. Those opposing the Muslim girls donned saffron scarves and the clash in ideology turned violent in a few areas.

The controversy snowballed further with national political parties attacking each other over the issue. The protests have now spread to different parts of the nation and the matter is in the high court at present.

# Celebrate November Seven as a National Students' Day: Prez



By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai, Feb 13:

President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday suggested that November 07 should be celebrated as a National Students' day across the country to commemorate Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's enrolment in the school on that day.

The president who visited Dr. Ambedkar's ancestral village Ambadawe in Mandangad taluka in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, stated that Ambedkar had enrolled in the school in 1900 and as such November 07 is celebrated as Student's Day in Maharashtra. "Every program associated with Ambedkar inspires us to realize the vision of a compassionate and egalitarian society. Hence we could consider celebrating November 07 as Student's Day across the country."

He said that April 14 is celebrated as Ambedkar Jayanti day (birth anniversary), November 26 as a Constitution Day, and December 06 as "Mahaparirvan day" (Ambedkar death anniversary). In addition, November 07 could be the National Students' Day in memory of Ambedkar.

The President said that Ambedkar's birthplace is at Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, his Deeksha Bhoomi is in

Nagpur (where he embraced Buddhism), the Parinirvan Sthal is in Delhi, Chaitanya Bhoomi (the cremation place) is in Mumbai, and Ambedkar memorial house is in London. Similarly, the Ambadawe village should be declared as "Spurbhoomi" (a land of inspiration) since Ambedkar contributed with full energy in various fields throughout his life.

The President was happy to note that the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCII), in association with Khadi Village Industries Corporation, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Technical University, and Bank of Baroda has undertaken initiatives to make Ambadawe village self-reliant, apart from doing relief work for villagers affected by the Nisarga cyclone in June 2020.

On the occasion, the President visited the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Memorial at the Ambadawe village, which is his ancestral home converted into a monument and where his articles have been preserved.

The President said that Babasaheb advocated self-employment and set up a firm to do business as a consultant in the trading of stocks and shares. He submitted a memorandum to the then Viceroy Linlithgow in 1942, demanding the participation of the under-

privileged in the tenders of CPWD. But Babasaheb himself could not give time to his entrepreneurial side. But the Constitution drafted by him stipulates the opportunities to the youth in every field.

In his address, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari said that Babasaheb gave a new direction to the country with the Indian Constitution. He was a prolific student and a scholar. He came from a humble family but overcame all obstacles and continued his studies. His commitment to eradicate the social evils and his dedication to unify the society is simply unmatched. He said that he would donate Rs. 30 lakh from Governor's Discretionary Fund to build a library for students in the Ambadawe village.

President's wife Savita Kovind, the Supreme Court Judge Bhushan Gavai, Maharashtra Ministers- Anil Parab and Sanjay Bansode, NCP MP Sunil Tatkare, National Commission For Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes Chairman Bhiku Ramji Idate, Ratnagiri Collector Dr. B N Patil, Divisional Commissioner Vilas Patil, DGP Sanjay Pande, Special IGP Sanjay Mohite, and others were present on the occasion. The police band played the national anthem at the beginning and the conclusion of the program.

# Assam Rifles conducts Medical Camp



IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

In continuation with the efforts of Assam Rifles to reach out local population and assist them in humanitarian aid, Phundrei Battalion under the aegis of IGAR(S) organised a medical camp at Chakpikarong village, Chandel district on 12 February.

As part of Operation Sadbhavna, the medical camp was organised to assist the villagers who have limited access to basic healthcare services in remote areas of Chandel district.

Medical team from Assam Rifles in collaboration with the Community Health Centre,

Chakpikarong carried out healthcheck up of 178 villagers to assess their health status. The individuals diagnosed with severe diseases were referred to civil hospital for detailed examination.

The medical camp culminated with distribution of essential medicines to villagers.

## Name Change

I, the undersigned Maibam Valentina Chanu, a resident of Heirangoithong Ahongsangbam Leikai, P.O. & P.S. Singjamei, Imphal West District, Manipur do hereby declare that my mother has relinquished, renounced and abandoned the use of her old name Maibam Mirabai Leima, as she has assumed her new name, Moirangthem Mirabai Devi. I want to correct my mother's name as Moirangthem Mirabai Devi instead of Maibam Mirabai Leima which was recorded earlier in my passport bearing number J5880239. Both Maibam Mirabai Leima and Moirangthem Mirabai Devi are the same person.

Sd/-  
**Maibam Valentina Chanu**  
Heirangoithong Ahongsangbam Leikai

## Political parties/candidates may campaign from 6am to 10pm following all extant instructions

IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

The Election Commission took a periodic review of the status of COVID in the country and specially in the poll bound State. As per information received from the Union Health Secretary the ground situation of COVID has significantly improved and the cases are fast receding in the country. Even in the reported cases maximum cases are reported from non-poll going States. The poll going states are contributing a very small proportion of the total reported cases in the country. All India figures of the Covid cases are fast receding from around 3.47 Lakh on 21 Janu-

ary to just about 50 thousand as on today. Especially in the Poll going states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa total number of cases which were more than 32 thousand at peak on 22nd January, 2022 have come down to around 3 thousand on 12th February.

The Commission took note of substantial reduction in COVID cases in the country as well as in the poll bound States. Based on the facts and circumstances, need of the political parties and candidates for greater participation in elections, the Commission with immediate effect further relaxes the provisions of campaigning in the following manner:

(1) Ban on campaign tim-

ings will be between 10 pm to 6 am instead of 8 pm to 8 am before. Political parties/candidates may campaign from 6am to 10pm following all Covid appropriate behaviour and protocols of SDMA.

(2) Political parties/candidates may hold their meetings and rallies upto maximum of 50% of the capacity of the designated open spaces or the limit prescribed by SDMA, whichever is lesser.

(3) Pad Yatra consisting not more than permitted number of persons as per SDMA limitations and only with prior permission of district authorities will also be allowed.

All other existing provisions related to electioneering shall continue to operate.

## Decision on Covid-19 Vaccination for 5-15 age group to be taken as per experts' recommendation: Mandaviya

Agency  
New Delhi, Feb 13:

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Saturday that the central government will roll out COVID-19 vaccination for children in the age group of 5 to 15 years as soon as it receives recommendation to that effect from a group of experts. Mandaviya told this to reporters here when he was asked about the government's approach towards the vaccination for children in the age group of 5 to 15 years. He said the group of experts has so far not made any recommendation on the vaccination of this category. The minister was here to take part in a programme organised by

the BJP on the Union Budget that was presented on February 1.

"When to vaccinate and to which age group is decided on the basis of recommendation of a group of scientists. We had implemented its recommendation for the precaution group within one week. We will surely implement its recommendation (for 5 to 15 age group) as and when we receive it," he said in a press conference. The country-wide COVID-19 vaccination of children in 15-18 age group began last month. "Today, vaccination is not an issue. We have enough vaccines, there is no shortage of doses. We will definitely follow the recommendation of the scientific community," Mandaviya added.

The government has so far not received any such recommendation, and a decision in this regard will be taken in the coming days on that basis. It is not a political decision. Sero survey and sero prevalence survey in July-August last year showed that 67 per cent children also developed anti-bodies, and children remained asymptomatic, he said. "Ultimately, these are

biological things. Therefore, scientists study before making recommendations. Earlier we used to follow the world (for recommendations regarding vaccination). Today, our scientists conduct their own analysis, they have their own study, and make opinions based on this," he said.

He also said that India used vaccination very effectively to fight the pandemic during its third wave. Large-scale vaccination helped India counter the third wave, as attested by top institutes across the world and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the minister added.

He said 75 per cent of children (15-18 age group) have received their COVID-19 vaccination doses and 96 per cent adults have received the first dose, while 77 per cent have got both the doses. The ICMR studies showed that COVID-19 vaccination has helped most of the people, and as a result, the country is moving towards the flattening of the curve, he said, adding, "On the basis of all this, I can certainly say that India has been able to use vaccination very effectively to fight against COVID-19 crisis," he

said. He said the government's emphasis on vaccination during the lockdown in 2020, soon after the outbreak of the virus, helped India sustain its growth and not suffer from high inflation and negative growth like what is seen in the US and Europe. Mandaviya said that research on vaccination was taken on priority basis and the government offered funds for it, and by January 16 last year, India's indigenously-manufactured vaccine was launched along the same time the vaccines developed in other countries. "India offered vaccination to the world, and even started manufacturing it at a fast pace. The result was that by the time the third wave (of COVID-19 pandemic) came, we had moved ahead of the world in vaccination. We were saved in the third wave, because India completed 96 per cent of the first dose," he said. Talking on the Union Budget, Mandaviya said it will usher in a golden age for India. "I believe its implementation will increase the pace of comprehensive and time-bound development in the right direction," he said.

## Election Observers take stock of Poll Preparedness in Chandel and Tengenoual Districts

IT News  
Chandel, Feb 13:

In connection with the ensuing state assembly Election, 2022, Election Observers of State Assembly Election 2022, for 41- Chandel (ST) and 42- Tengenoual (ST), Yogesh Kumar, IAS- General Observer, Sivasankaran Pattanam Singaram, IRS- Expenditure Observer and Gaurav Singh, IPS- Police observer, took stock of poll preparedness in Chandel & Tengenoual Districts yesterday.

The Observers (General/

Police/Expenditure) had an interactive session with District Election Officers (DEO) Chandel, DC Tengenoual, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Chandel and Tengenoual, ROS, AROs and all the other Nodal Officers at the conference Hall, DC complex, Chandel. During the meeting the DEO/DC Chandel, Rajkumar apprised the observers regarding the preparations being taken up for the forthcoming Assembly election.

It can be mentioned that, it has already been notified that the Election Observers will be staying at 26th sector,

Assam Rifle, Pallel, 795137. The General observer will stay till 10th March, 2022 and the Police observer and the Expenditure observer will stay till the poll day on 5th March 2022. It had further been informed that the Observers may be reached at the phone numbers provided against their names and any public, who intends to meet the concern Observers may visit at the time and place, indicated against their names as mentioned in the notification on all working days.

On the other hand till the end of last day of filling nomi-

nation papers on 11.02.2022, a total of eleven candidates, four (4) for 41- Chandel and Seven (7) for 42-Tengenoual had filed their papers. The nominated candidates for 41- Chandel (ST) includes one BJP, one NPP and two from NPF whereas for 42-Tengenoual (ST), one BJP, one NPF, one NPP, one RPI, one INC and two independent candidates have filed their nominations. Here it can be mentioned that the scrutiny of nominations will be done on 14.02.2022 and the last date for withdrawal of candidature is on 16.02.2022, as already notified by the CEO, Manipur.

## Disabled body to organized opinion poll

IT News  
Imphal, Feb 13:

The Disabled and Development Association Manipur and HD Foundation Manipur will organise a

pre opinion poll at Manipur Press Club on this coming February 17.

A press release stated that in Manipur different political parties and their candidates who are contesting

as candidates in the coming 12th Manipur State assembly election after winning election the candidates, what will be done for the persons with disabilities and the plan in the future.

## Sports

## ISL: Liston shines as ATK Mohun Bagan move to second spot with win over NEUFC

Agency  
Margao, Feb 13:

ATK Mohun Bagan rode on Liston Colaco's brilliant show to climb to the second spot after they beat wooden spoons NorthEast United FC 3-1 in the Indian Super League here on Saturday.

Suhair Vadakkepedika (17th) gave NEUFC the lead early on before Joni Kauko (22nd) drew level only for Liston (45th) to make it 2-1 just before half time.

Liston was all over NEUFC in the second half as he fed Manvir Singh (52nd) for the team's third goal before making way for Kiyann Nassiri in the 66th minute to cap off another brilliant night.

The result means ATKMB are now on 26 points from 14 games, two adrift of leaders Hyderabad FC who have played two matches more. NEUFC remained rock-bottom with 10 points from 17 games. ATKMB extended their unbeaten streak to 10 matches.

ATKMB missed the services of key players Hugo Boumous and Carl McHugh as both picked up injuries in the last game.

As expected, the Mariners started on the front foot with Liston Colaco's early corner posing little threat and Manvir



Singh's effort saved by Subhashish Roy Choudhury.

Against the run of play, NEUFC took the lead. Marcelinho got a loose ball in the middle of the park and ran at the ATKMB defence to then find Suhair who rifled home from the edge of the box to beat Amrinder Singh in goal.

ATKMB got back in the game soon after cutting short NEUFC's joy as Kauko fired home from outside the area after being set up by Colaco with no NorthEast United shirt closing the Finland international down.

Suhair tried to double his

lead but shot over before Pritam Kotal drilled a free header wide from a corner. Just before half time, the Mariners took the lead riding a Colaco strike to make it his seventh goal of the season. Kauko turned provider this time, laying the ball up for Colaco after an incisive run for the latter to slam the ball into the bottom right corner.

ATKMB moved up a gear in the second period, Manvir finding the back of the net as early as the 52nd minute after the exceptional Colaco snatched possession to send Manvir in the clear as the latter

cut back to beat his marker and slot home past Subhashish.

Head coach Juan Ferrando also replaced Prabir Das with Sandesh Jhingam at half time, the star defender playing for the first time this season since returning from Croatian club HNK Šibenik.

NEUFC created a host of chances after falling behind with Imran Khan, Hernan Santana and Marco Sahaneke coming close to scoring. In the end, the green and maroon shirts held on to their lead and made it two wins in two games to exert their authority.

## France stun India 5-2 in FIH Pro League hockey

Agency  
Potchefstroom (South Africa), Feb 13:

Olympic bronze medallists India dished out a shoddy performance to lose 2-5 against lower-ranked France in the second match of the FIH Hockey Pro League two-leg tie here on Saturday.

India started the match as clear favourites after having registered convincing wins — 5-0 against France and 10-2 against South Africa — in the FIH Pro League so far.

But France had better plans on Saturday and got the better of their fancied opponents in every aspects of the game.

The Indians were slow to get off the blocks but gained in confidence as the match progressed.

While France enjoyed the early exchanges, India controlled the proceedings thereafter but both the teams failed to create any real goal-scoring chance.

A minute into the second quarter, India secured the first penalty corner of the match but poor trapping didn't give Harmanpreet Singh a shot at the goal.

France caught the Indian defence off guard in the very next move and earned a penalty stroke which was beauti-

fully converted by Victor Charlet.

Stunned by the Frenchmen, India upped the ante and secured their second penalty corner in the 21st minute, but France goalkeeper Arthur Thieffry came up with a brilliant save to deny young Jugraj Singh.

But in the very next minute, India drew level when Jarmanpreet Singh's cross from the right went into the French goal after getting a deflection from the sticks of Stanislas Branicki.

The Frenchmen looked more purposeful after the change of ends and secured back-to-back penalty corners in the 32nd minute but failed to utilise those chances.

France continued with their attacking game and restored their lead in the 35th minute through Viktor Lockwood, whose powerful shot from the left corner went through the legs of veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh into the Indian net.

Down by a goal once again, the Indians came out attacking and kept up the pressure on the French defence but failed to break it.

India had their chances and secured five penalty corners in the third quarter, including three in succession in the

44th minute, but erred in execution.

France extended their lead in the 48th minute from their third penalty corner through a variation strike from Charles Masson.

India secured two more penalty corners but the likes of Harmanpreet, Jugraj and Varun Kumar found it difficult to get past the French defence, which was brilliantly led by goalkeeper Thieffry.

India pulled one back in the 57th minute through a penalty stroke conversion by Harmanpreet Singh.

Pumped up by the goal, the Indians stepped up the pressure and secured two more penalty corners but France defended in numbers.

To add to India's woes, world no. 13 France scored two more goals in the final two minutes of the game — first through a penalty corner conversion by Charlet and then a field strike by Timothy Clement.

India's lacklustre performance can be summed up from the fact that they earned as many as 10 penalty corners but failed to find the back of the net.

India will next play hosts South Africa in the second FIH Pro League match between the two sides here on Sunday.