

JP Nadda releases BJP manifesto, promises AIIMS in Manipur



IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

Raising the bar for the battle for Manipur, the Bharatiya Janata Party on Thursday promised to establish the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Manipur if voted to power.

Releasing the election manifesto at Classic Grande, Imphal, BJP national president JP Nadda also highlighted the achievements of the BJP-led coalition government in the state.

"Manipur has seen a sea-change in the last five years under the dynamic leadership of N Biren Singh Ji and his dynamic members. All of them have done a wonderful job.

And I can say with confidence that Manipur has seen a sea-change as far as development is concerned," Nadda boasted.

Maintaining that the BJP is committed to empowering all sections of the society, focusing on infrastructure, health, and education, the BJP supremo said: "The BJP Manifesto, unlike that of other political parties, is not just a piece of paper, but the commitment of the BJP in the next five years."

The party is committed to protecting the integrity of Manipur and the indigenous identity of Manipur, the BJP national president underlined.

Some of the key commitments made by the BJP in its manifesto include the estab-

lishment of Manipur Skill University, free scooty for meritorious college-going girls, free laptops to meritorious students passing class 12th examination, and an incentive of Rs 25,000 for girls from economically weaker sections and backward sections under the Rani Gaidinliu Nupi Maheiroi Singi scheme.

To boost tourism, the manifesto promised to establish the Loktak Mega eco-tourism project, Fo-Fo train service. Moreover, cash incentives and subsidies for the homestay owners to generate 1 lakh employment opportunities in the state. In a bid to woo the voters, the party has also promised to increase the monthly pension for all senior

citizens from Rs 200 to Rs 1000.

Assuring a considerable leap of development in the coming times, the BJP chief said: "Manipur has undergone from instability to stability. From insurgency to peace. From divisive politics to united Manipur. We had seen fake encounters, and now there is the rule of law."

Earlier, Manipur was at the height of the drug menace. Now, the state is committed to zero tolerance to the drug menace. Manipur was once synonymous with commission and corruption. Today, it is good governance in Manipur. Then, Manipur was known for blockades and bandh; now, it is known for development, peace, prosperity, and coming forward."

Manipur CM N Biren Singh, state BJP president A Sharda Devi, Union Minister of State RK Ranjan, MP Leishemba Sanajaoba, BJP Manipur in-charge Sambit Patra national, Works Minister Th. Biswajit and state party leaders attended the manifesto releasing function.

The first phase of the Manipur Legislative Assembly election will see 38 seats vote on February 28, while the remaining 22 seats will cast their ballots on March 5.

Government of Manipur has announced holiday on polling day

IT News
Imphal Feb 17:

The government of Manipur has announced holiday at all Government Offices and Educational Institutions, Private Sector Undertakings located in areas under 1st Phase of polling for 38 (thirty eight) Assembly Constituencies

and 2nd Phase of polling for 22 (twenty two) Assembly Constituencies shall remain closed on 28th February, 2022 (Monday) and 5th March, 2022 (Saturday) respectively in order to enable the Government employees to exercise their right of franchise during the ensuing general election to the 12th Manipur Legislative

Assembly, 2022.

The order by the Governor of Manipur also declare holiday to all Banks/Financial Institutions & LIC on 28th February, 2022 (Monday) and 5th March, 2022 (Saturday) respectively on the days of poll for the 12th General Election of Manipur Legislative Assembly, 2022.

All should try to understand the importance of Ayurvedic Medicines: La. Ganesan



IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan appealed people to understand the importance of ayurvedic medicines to prevent diseases and to enable all for a healthy living. He was speaking at the distribution function of Ayurvedic medicines kits to the employees and security personnel working in

Raj Bhavan held today at the Darbar Hall.

La. Ganesan said, India is proud of having Ayurveda as a means of treatment, healing and prolonging life from ancient days. In view of such importance, a separate ministry has already been set up and steps have been taken up to bring awareness to people. All forms of treatment begins with Ayurveda

and people should try to understand its importance. He further said that AYUSH medicines prevent diseases by boosting our immune system and therefore more particularly in these days of Covid pandemic, it will be very helpful to use immune boosting medicines formulated by AYUSH. People should try to encourage the uses of AYUSH medicines along with allopathy and other forms of treatment, he added.

Dr. A. Guneshwar Sharma, Director, AYUSH said, AYUSH medicines has a very specific role in treatment and prevention of any diseases by promoting our health. Health promotion is the best option to fight any ailment in our body, he added.

Governor distributed AYUSH medicine kits to the officers, officials, staffs and security personnel working in the Raj Bhavan.

Mizoram Govt agree to handover alleged murder case of two Meetei

IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

A talk between the representatives of the government of Mizoram and World Meetei Council (WMC) were held in the Mizoram House, New Delhi on 15th February 2022 to find out ways to resolve the issues arising out from the double murder of Keisham Prabin Singha and Namrang Nipen Singha in Mizoram on 31st January 2022 and 8th February 2022 respectively,

both residence of Cachar district of Assam. Mizoram government was represented by Rosangzuala, OSD to the Chief Minister and WMC was led by Mayanglam Diana, Vice President of WMC Delhi unit.

It may not be out of context to mention that the Secretary General, WMC Yambem Arun Meetei joined the meeting via video conferencing from Bangalore and the Hon'ble CM Zoramthanga calling up his OSD from Aizawl to enquire the

progress of the talk.

The talk between the two parties agreed to :

1. Handover the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) by the Mizoram government

2. WMC would withdraw the blockade on Silchar-Aizawl National Highway on February 21, 2022, the day of the last rites of the 2nd victim and

3. WMC would be following up the issue to ensure that justice is delivered.

The two parties have agreed to work for improving the communal relations existing between the different communities living in the region.

The OSD had also invited WMC to Aizawl to meet the Chief Minister or the Home Minister of Mizoram for further discussion. WMC is also working to take along members of the victims families and genuine members of CSOs who have all along been working to get justice in all our future course of action

KPA alleges intimidation to their poll campaign by armed cadres

IT Correspondent
Lamka, Feb 17:

Kuki People's Alliance (KPA) has alleged disruption of election campaign by workers of BJP workers at Singhat

Assembly constituency in Churchandpur district.

"KPA workers at Muallum village, Singhat Sub-division of CCPur District were intimidated on the intervening night of 15th February 2022, and again, on the 16th February, they attempted to disrupt the peaceful Public Meeting program of the Kuki People's Alliance (KPA) at Singhat Public Ground situated under the nose of the Assam Rifles Post", the KPA workers told media persons. The KPA alleged that before the public meeting began, volunteers of the BJP candidate led by some armed cadres who are under SoO with the government, opened fire few rounds in the air at Singhat (Singhat) village to scare away the potential attendants of the KPA public meeting coming from Singhat and the surrounding villages.

As reported by attendants of KPA meeting from the ground, around 11 a.m., two to three vehicles (Scorpio) carrying volunteers of the BJP candidate rushed to Singhat Public Ground and attempted to burn down the

hall and banner of KPA meeting using kerosene, petrol and sacks. However, the workers of KPA confronted and prevented them from doing so. Then the BJP volunteers left the scene. On their way about 100 meters from Singhat Police Station, they opened fire at the air near the gate of Mr. Lampau, the president of the United Zou Organisation-Singhat Block. Later, four empty-cases and one live bullet were found at the scene.

In another incident, Mr. Paumuanthang s/o (L) Lethothang of Singhat HQ Veng lodged complaint at the Singhat Police Station. As narrated by him, around 10:30 PM of 16th February 2022, some armed cadres of ZRA from the designated camp near Teikot village, came to him with three vehicles (2 Bolero, 1 pick-up van) at his residence. One of the armed cadre pointed a pistol at his head and warned him of dire consequence if he continue to support the KPA candidate and then fired his gun at the air.

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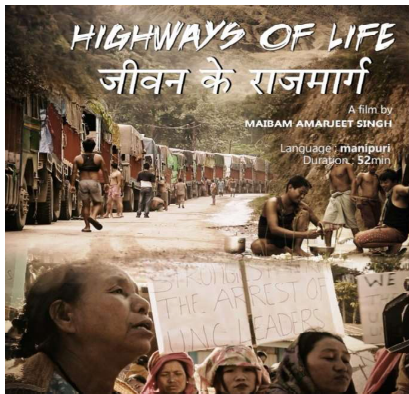
Amar Maibam's *Highways of Life* & Ratan Saikhom's *Beyond Blast* to compete in Film Southasia 2022, Kathmandu

IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

Two documentary films from Manipur namely Amar Maibam's *Highways of Life* and Ratan Saikhom's *Beyond Blast* were selected to be screened at Film Southasia's (FSA) silver jubilee year, the 13th edition of the biennial festival of Southasian documentaries in Kathmandu from April 21 to 24, 2022.

Festival authority said that of the more than 3000 films they received, these films were among the 64 selected for screening at the festival.

Film Southasia (FSA) is a biennial festival that was set



up in 1997 with the goal of popularising the documentary so that it entertains, informs and changes lives. In addition to the festival that takes place in Kathmandu every two years, FSA organizes screenings, discussions and workshops across Southasia to promote Southasian non-fiction within the Subcontinent and around the world. Film Southasia believes that film is a powerful medium that helps to not only in better represent the region internationally, but also contributes immensely in introspection and initiatives to bring change at the local level.

Twelfth editions of the festival have been held to

date. At each festival, films are judged by a three-member Southasian jury and the best film is awarded the 'Ram Bahadur Trophy' for Best Film along with a citation and a cash prize of USD 2,000. The second best film is awarded a citation and cash prize of USD 1,000. The Best Debut Film is awarded the Tareque Masud Award and cash prize of USD 1,000. There is also a UNICEF Nepal Award for the film that best portrays social/children's issues, with a cash prize of USD 1,000. A Best Student Film Award (instituted in 2015) with a citation and cash prize of USD 500 will also be given for entries sent in through film schools.

From Disco to Ooh la la Bappi Da scattered gold

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Bappi Lahiri, popular play-back singer from Bollywood, has left us all. Bappi Da, who made Disco music popular among the Indian masses in the 80's and 90's, used to display his love for gold chains

and lockets. He was never seen without gold ornaments in any public appearance. His music was also as pure as gold. After Lata Di left us earlier this month, the demise of Bappi Da is another big jolt to the music lovers. My humble tributes to Bappi Da, who gave us a sweet melody like *Ooh La La*. The mortal remains of Dada will be merged into the five elements. What is the importance of *Panchtatva* (five elements) in our lives, 5G technology has the same value for the telecom sector. Recently, there was a big confusion in the US even before 5G was officially launched, when the movement of foreign aircraft suddenly came to a halt at many international airports. Air India had also suspended its flights to and from the US saying that 5G technology could cause serious problems in the functioning of aircraft. India is also planning to adopt the 5G technology and there were doubts about the technology. Question was raised that will this technology cause problems in aviation in India too?

In this regard, telecom regulator TRAI put to rest the apprehensions by saying that due to 5G mobile services, aircraft flying over India will not face any safety issue. TRAI said that the distance between the aircraft and the spectrum earmarked for 5G in the US is small, while in India this distance is very high. However, to completely remove this apprehension, TRAI will conduct a thorough investigation at its level. It said the 5G band in India is similar to the spectrum allocated in the markets of Europe, South Korea and Japan. In these markets, 5G has not caused any problems and there has not been a single problem related to aircraft. It will take some time for 5G to arrive in India. In view of the problems with the aircraft, the US had to suspend its plan to launch a 5G network. In the US, the 5G network and the frequency of some large aircraft landing equipment were almost at the same level, threatening the safety of the aircraft.

American telcos had paid \$81 billion to get the C-band, which is now in jeopardy. The C-band service offers faster speeds and wider coverage and was scheduled to be operational in mid-January. This would have caused the most problems for the Boeing 777 class of long-range and wide-bodied aircraft. Boeing had issued an advisory in this regard and warned of the danger. Meanwhile, another news related to number 5, which is taking rounds, is that salwar suits and kurtis are more in demand than sarees in India. Similarly, western wear is more in demand among women. Between 2015 and 2020, the market for readymade garments grew by 63% to about Rs 5 lakh crore. For the next 5 years, it is estimated that the readymade garment market will grow by 60% to about Rs 8 lakh crore. The biggest growth has been in the women's wear segment. In that too, there is more demand for western style clothes than traditional clothes.

Contribution of Leimayol Arts Centre in the field of Arts & Culture in Manipur

By: Irom Calvin



Leimayol Arts Centre, Chingamkha which is popularly known as "LAC" was established in the month of October, 1970 with an aim to promote dance, music, song and drama in Manipur. It was originated in a very simple and humble way and now it has completed 51 years of its existence in the present society because of the tireless and relentless efforts of the members of this centre. The main focus of this centre is to promote and preserve the rich heritage of all forms of theatrical art forms.

Leimayol Arts Centre, Chingamkha was registered under the Co-operative Societies Act on 14th May, 1971 at the initiative of newly elected Board of Directors. The first constitution of this centre was approved and enforced on 27th November, 1971 with (L) Haobam Ibotombi Singh, (L) Irom Nabakanta Singh and (L) Lourembam Dharmo Singh being elected as the President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

This centre has acquired its own land measuring an area of 0.20 acres near the main road of Chingamkha and has a semi-pucca building having an auditorium of more than 500 seat capacity and a spacious stage. At first, the plot was lying under water-logged and marshy land but later on, it was filled by many truck loads of earth which was brought from the sand of Singamei Chinga Macha under the directives of (L) Irengbam Tompok Singh, Ex Deputy Chief Minister of Manipur under the initiative of (L) Huidrom Surendrakumar Singh, Ex President of LAC. The foundation stone for the construction of the auditorium of this centre was

drawn by (L) L. Mangi Singh, Architect, PWD, Manipur and was laid on 8th June, 1979. (L) Mainsam Jitendra Singh, Retd. Chief Engineer, PWD, Manipur played a pivotal role in constructing the present auditorium hall of this centre.

The first drama play which was produced by LAC, Chingamkha was the "Bhakta Biramangol" in the year 1971 which was played only by female artists. It had won 6 prizes including Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor and Best Production at the Drama Festival which was organized by Publicity Dept. Manipur. It was directed by (L) Haobam Amuba Singh and was first staged at the Mandop of (L) Kongbrailatpam Thambal Sharma. In the year 1972, a play called "Leipung Wari" was played at the Drama Festival which was again organized by the Publicity Dept. Manipur. (L) Mainsam Mani Singh was awarded as the Best Actor of the said Drama festival. Again, in the year

1973 a Drama Festival was organized by Manipur State Kala Academy and a play called "Sangoisana" written and directed by (L) Irom Nabakanta Singh was adjudged as one of the best historical plays in the state. Since then LAC, Chingamkha has been producing different drama plays of different genres from time to time. So far, it has produced more than 120 drama plays and some of the memorable plays are "Sangoisana", "Koubrugi", "Mamomloi", "Harischandra", "Jayadev Kavi", "Certificate", "Apang Khunao", "Liklang Pareng", "Hingngileeba Thawai", "Mingshel", "Thonglen Laloitamba", "Ariba Shatabdi", "Pirang", "Khongimnubi", "The Bet" etc. The first ever play of this centre which was played in hindi version was the "Jeevit Chahane Wala Aatma" which was directed by Laishram Prakash Singh, Ex Director of LAC. It was played at the 6th All India Multi-lingual Drama and Dance Competition which was held at Solan, Himachal Pradesh in the year 2003.

A short story called "The Bet" which was written by Anton Chekhov in the year 1889 was abstracted and was rewritten by Manas Mainsam. It was also named as "The Bet" and was played at the 42nd Short Play Competition for Creative Directors, 2011 which was organized by Theatre Centre Manipur (TCM) in collaboration with Manipur State Kala Academy. It was directed by Oinam Sharmila Chanu, Director of LAC, Chingamkha and had won 6 prizes including Best Production, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Supporting Actor, Best Light and 3rd Best Music.

In the year 1999, a Radio Drama Festival was organized by All India Radio (AIR), Imphal and a play called "Chaina Pung" written by (L) Thoudam Nodiya Singh was presented and was regarded as one of the best plays in the state of that time. At present also, The All India Radio (AIR), Imphal also broadcast the drama plays which are being played by this centre on different occasions.

Leimayol Arts Centre, Chingamkha also participated at the State Level Drama Festivals and Competitions which are being organized by different theatre groups of the state under the supervision of Manipur State Kala Academy and Theatre Centre Manipur (TCM). Some of the drama festivals are Kha Manipur Drama Festival, Short Play Competition for Creative Directors and Rural Theatre Festival. In the year 2014, LAC, Chingamkha also participated at the Festival of Plays which was jointly organized by Department of Arts & Culture and North Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre.

In addition to the above drama plays, LAC, Chingamkha has been celebrating Khongiom Day every year on 23rd April ever since the establishment, and the renowned teleplay "Khongiom Lal" which was written by (L) Thoudam Nodiya Singh of this centre was telecast for the first time by Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Imphal in the year

2000 under the initiative of (L) Irom Gyaneswar Mangang, Ex President of LAC. The first ever souvenir of this centre was also released on 23rd April, 1991 as a part of Khongiom Day celebration of this centre under the presidentship of (L) Mainsam Jitendra Singh, Ex President of LAC. Presently, the Khongiom Lal play is broadcast by the All India Radio (AIR), Imphal on every Khongiom Day Celebration.

Initially for a very long period of time span LAC, Chingamkha was unable to participate at the national level competitions and festivals as it was not recognized by Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, but later in the year 2002 after a long awaited time it was recognized by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi and got its support for the production of new drama plays. The initiative and process for the recognition of this centre to the Sangeet Natak Akademi was carried out by the Board of Directors of LAC during the presidentship of (L) Irom Gyaneswar Mangang, Ex President of LAC.

The centre has been running all the drama plays and the necessary requirements or salaries of the artists and directors with the financial assistance and support from the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, Department of Arts & Culture, Manipur, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, MLA Local Area Development Fund and the contributions and donations that are being given by the general public for the development of Arts & Culture in the state. Recently, in the year 2019 during the presidentship of Sagatpam Tomba Meetei, two salary grants were also sanctioned by Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India.

For the past 50 years, Leimayol Arts Centre, Chingamkha has continuously strived to achieve a high standard of theatre production and this has reaped rich dividends in the form of various awards and laurels won by this centre at the state and the national level theatre festivals and competitions. Without discarding the traditional theatre style of Manipur, the centre has adapted to the modern theatre forms and production styles and has produced experimental plays infusing different elements of rich art forms of the state, which had won critical acclaims in different drama festivals. All the above achievements were successfully achieved by the able guidance of the distinguished Gurus/Directors of this centre namely, (L) Haobam Amuba Singh, (L) Haobam Ibotombi Singh, (L) Irom Nabakanta Singh, (L) Thoudam Nodiya Singh, (L) Loitongbam Manijao Singh, (L) Thokchom Shyam Singh, Laishram Prakash Singh, Ashem Seityabanta Singh, (L) Kiran Meikam and Oinam Sharmila Chanu.

With the increase and development of Artificial Intelligence in today's society, the drama and theatre plays have been decreasing day by day. Nowadays people from different regions all across the globe usually prefer using electronic devices for watching films, movies, dramas and plays. People have stopped coming to theatre auditoriums for watching dramas and plays due to the strong developing flow of new technologies. In order to revive and save the theatre, we need to give an awareness of the knowledge of rich culture of Art and Theatre to the youths of today's generation for the betterment and for preservation of the Arts and Culture which were the dreams and aims of the people in the early days of life. Culture is the only way in which one can develop a region by unifying among the people and to spread the knowledge and feeling of peace, unity and integrity to the society.

Your Child's Screen Time – Parents, Are You Watchful?

Digital environment is a reality influencing most of our lives. Changing day by day, with more sophistication and inventions, the whole digital scenario is getting revolutionized. A new generation, growing with digital gadgets like computers, tablets and mobile phones is bound to have a different view on learning. Trying to tie it on to what an old generation believed and practiced would be improper. Undoubtedly, the present generation is much more intertwined and deeply engrained into what we call a digital world. Parents need to have more patience to understand the children of today who grow totally immersed in the possibilities of technology. For parents, jumping into conclusions, pretending to be a probable diagnosis, to what a situation that the present generation is undergoing, will be dangerous in a digital environment. Situations like absence of passionate communication among family members, lack of understanding, improper judgement, lack of unbiased love and acceptance are issues that silently creep into most of the families. Issues pertaining to mental health, obesity and behavioral changes are sure to crop up. Experts are of the opinion that prolonged screen time is bound to bring adverse situations affecting sleep, relationships, diet, social interaction and family relationships. A rapid change with unpredictable momentum, digital learning, digital entertainment and digital upbringing would remain a reality. Most of the parents, with a childhood spent in the absence of digital marvels like mobile phones and social media, need to educate themselves about a digital environment which is changing fast.

Amid this swift progress of digitalization, institutions such as the

World Health Organization (WHO) came out with directives for the children of the digital age. It suggests no screen time for toddlers up to 24 months. And to the kids of 2 to 5 years, the organization recommends an hour or less screen time a day. There may be differences in assumptions on accuracies as to what should be the time allotted to kids on screen. But one thing is sure that the parents need to know as to what is the digital requirement of their child. To assess the adverse effect of screen time, segregating it from other issues may not be easy. A child, being part of the society, is easily exposed to a variety of influences. To detect the ill effects of what the child is exposed to is tough. For parents, what makes the situation difficult is to make alternatives to the standard of digital learning available to their kids. Children of the preschool age need special attention and focus. It is necessary to understand what kind of alternative will satisfy their level and quest for entertainment. Most of the parents fail to feed their babies without videos or cartoons played to them on the mobile screen. For some, trusting mobile phones in the hands of their kids help them to take up their daily chores without their children doggedly pestering them around. Normal toys seem to become outdated and out of sight in most of the families.

Are screens effective in imparting the right kind of knowledge to the children? When it comes to the face-to-face interactions, the child has immense scope to cope up with varying life-giving tendencies and impulses which the screen normally



By: M.R. Lahu

fails to deliver. Various studies suggest that real learning takes place when a child is put to face-to-face interactive learning process. What is detrimental about digital learning is that most of the time, children from economically backward classes fail to make use of it in a better way than the children from well-to-do families. As children grow, the time they spend on screen is natural to increase. Adverse influence of television, social media and video games will be at least a reality to many parents. Socio-economic factors cannot be denied as they influence the time that the children spend on screens. Social security concerns can also be reasons behind some parents thrust screen devices in the hands of kids. It is justifiable to them as they perceive a security threat in certain areas where less social amiability exists. Children coming out of their houses mingling with the rest of the society is mostly not encouraged due to this unfavorable security atmosphere. To the tiny toddlers, prolonged screen time is seen to be curtailing the quality of their sleep, which according to some studies is in proportion to the time they sit at the screen.

Parents have to ensure that the time that a child spends on screen does not take away his mental and physical wellness. As the child spends more time on the screen, he gradually enters into critical cyber spaces where children of his age are not welcome. In a family, parents have to consciously make decisions about what choices they should help their children with regard to the content on the screen. It is as important as the food that they choose to serve their kids with. The prolonged time spent on screen genuinely steals the time that the child should essentially

use for creative, sensible social interactions. By reducing the physical activity, screen time can accelerate lethargy among the children pushing them through multiple health hazards. A well-managed screen time can definitely contribute to the learning process of the child. Digital media can of course help the child to communicate with the people who are away from them. Undoubtedly, there are apps that can support children to delve into serious reading and help them learn and practice various physical exercises, yoga and much more. But while thrusting a screen device in the hands of a child, the parent should also be conscious about the need of making quality interventions with the child. The more the screen time at a younger age the more will be the exposure of alien contents to the child. How to best manage screen time is obviously a challenge.

With a vast range of electronic devices at their fingertips, today's children are far ahead of what their previous generation had to go through at this age. Therefore, the parents of today have to figure out ways to limit the screen time of their kids. Surveys and studies accentuate on the negative impacts of too much screen time. Exposure to violent television shows and video games on mobile screens are seen to be impacting the children, subsequently turning them violent to petty situations both at home and learning places. More time on screen reduces qualitative conversations in families and naturally a mental distance between parents and children takes place. Parents need to show the way for their children. What is more important for the parents is to keep a healthy boundary for all types of digital enjoyment in the family. They have to sacrifice their own screen interest to a large extent to ideally streamline a screen time for their kids.

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India adds 30,757 COVID-19 cases, tally increases to 4,27,54,315



Agency
New Delhi, Feb 17:

With 30,757 people testing positive for the coronavirus infection in a day, India's total tally of cases rose to 4,27,54,315, while the recovery rate crossed the 98 per cent mark again, according to Union health ministry data updated on Thursday.

The death toll has climbed to 5,10,413 with 541 daily fatalities, the data updated at 8

am stated.

The daily COVID-19 cases have been recorded at less than one lakh for the last 11 consecutive days.

The active cases have declined to 3,32,918, comprising 0.78 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 98.03 per cent, the health ministry said.

The recovery rate had last crossed the 98 per cent mark on January 5, when it was 98.01

per cent.

There has been a reduction of 37,322 cases in the active caseload in a span of 24 hours, it said.

The daily positivity rate has been recorded at 2.61 per cent while the weekly positivity rate has been recorded at 3.04 per cent, according to the health ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has increased to 4,19,10,984, while the case fa-

tality rate has been recorded at 1.19 per cent, it said.

The cumulative doses administered so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 174.24 crore.

India's COVID-19 tally crossed two crore cases on May 4 and three crore cases on June 23.

The 541 new fatalities include 338 from Kerala and 41 from Maharashtra.

The data stated that 5,10,413 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,43,492 from Maharashtra, 63,019 from Kerala, 39,715 from Karnataka, 37,956 from Tamil Nadu, 26,086 from Delhi, 23,414 from Uttar Pradesh and 21,079 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.

Training for polling personnel held for Kangpokpi District at DC Complex



IT News
Kangpokpi, Feb 17:

Training for the polling personnel for the three assembly constituencies of Kangpokpi District was conducted yesterday at the office complex of Deputy Commissioner, Kangpokpi District.

The three Returning Officers namely - Bungba Maibam Khuman of 46-Saikul (ST) AC, Laishram Manikanta Singh of 50-Kangpokpi AC and Sapam Bishwojit Singh of 51-Saitu (ST) AC conducted the training programme as the resource persons. The polling personnel were enhanced with the knowl-

edge of paper works, machineries and mobile apps to be used for the poll.

Today's training programme was conducted after the second round of randomization was held on February 12, 2022 in presence of the General Observer. Poll teams consisting of four polling personnel each - President Officer, Polling Officers - I, II and III were formed to be deployed in the three assembly constituencies of the district. The first round of training was conducted after the first randomization was held on January 13-15, 2022.

It may be mentioned

that General Observer Probbudutta David Pradhan, IAS, Expenditure Observer Manish Kumar Chavda, IRS (C&CE) and Police Observer Sarat Kaviraj, IPS have been assigned for the Kangpokpi District for the 12th Manipur Legislative Election, 2022 scheduled to be held on 28th February, 2022.

Altogether 17 candidates - 8 (eight) from 46-Saikul (ST) Assembly Constituency, 3 (three) from 50-Kangpokpi Assembly Constituency and 6 (six) from the 51-Saitu (ST) Assembly Constituency are contesting in the Kangpokpi District.

Study suggests red wine may protect you from COVID

Agency
Melbourne, Feb 17:

A study published last month in the journal Frontiers in Nutrition made headlines around the world. Among a number of findings concerning alcoholic drinks and COVID, it reported drinking red wine was associated with a reduction in the risk of contracting COVID.

Before you start inviting people over to celebrate, it's important to be aware there are a number of reasons to be cautious about these findings.

This paper is a great example of why many studies addressing diet and health are unreliable and need to be interpreted carefully.

Limitations in the way many

of these studies are conducted is the reason we're often told a food is good for us one day, only for this to be contradicted in another study.

This whiplash in study findings is a source of continued frustration in the field of nutritional science.

Let's explore some of the reasons why these studies can be misleading.

What were some of the findings?

There were a number of findings reported in this study.

Probably the most captivating was from a media perspective was that drinking between one to four glasses of red wine a week was associated with an approximate 10% reduction in the risk of getting COVID.

Drinking five or more glasses of red wine a week was associated with a reduction in risk of 17%.

Although drinking white wine and champagne also appeared protective, the effect was smaller than with red wine.

In contrast, drinking beer was associated with a 7.28% increased risk of getting COVID.

It was hard to identify clear patterns with some of the other findings. For example, while drinking spirits was associated with an increased risk of contracting COVID, drinking fortified wine, in small doses only, appeared protective.

Similarly, while drinking alcohol more frequently was associated with a lower risk of getting COVID, drinking more than

the UK guidelines for alcohol consumption was associated with an increased risk of contracting COVID.

Let's delve deeper into the findings concerning red wine to explore some of the reasons why one should be sceptical about the results of these sorts of studies.

Correlation doesn't equal causation

The first and most obvious reason to be cautious when interpreting this study is correlation doesn't equal causation.

You hear this phrase all the time, but that's because it's so important to make the distinction between two variables being simply linked with each other, and one causing the other.

Asia's Largest Tribal Festival, the Medharam Jathara commences with traditional fervour in Telangana



PIB
New Delhi, Feb 17:

The celebrations of the First Day of the auspicious and much-awaited biennial "Medaram Jathara" commenced on the 16th of February 2022 as the arrival of Saralamma on to the 'Medaram Gaddhe' (Platform) was undertaken by the Koya Tribe of Telangana.

Medaram Jathara is the second-largest fair of India, after the Kumbh Mela, celebrated by the second-largest Tribal Community of Telangana - the Koya tribe for four days. As the largest tribal fair in Asia, Medaram Jathara is conducted in honour of the Goddesses Sammakka and Saralamma. It is celebrated once in two years in the month of 'Magha' (February) on the full moon day. Saralamma was the daughter of Sammakka. Her idol, according to the rituals, is installed in a temple at Kannepalli, a small village near Medaram.

In the early hours of the day, Pujaris (Priests) performed

sacred pujas. The traditional Koya priests (Kaka Vaddes) bring, on the first day, the insignia (Aderalu / Sacred pots and Bandaru / Mix of turmeric and saffron powders) of the goddess Saralamma from Kannepalli and place on her Gadde (platform) in Medaram, amidst their traditional musical beats (Doli / cylindrical drum, Akkum / brass blowing instrument, Thootha Kommu / bison-horn blowing instrument, cymbals, etc.) and dances with huge processions/prostrations of the pilgrims seeking boons for children, etc.

Similarly, on the same day by evening the insignia of Sammakka's husband Pagididda Raju - flag, Aderalu and Bandaru - is brought by Penka Vaddes from Punugondla village, Kothaguda Mandal, Mahabubabad district to Medaram. Likewise, the insignia of the deities of Govindaraju, brother-in-law of Sammakka and Nagulamma, sister of Sammakka are also brought by Dubbagatta Vaddes from the village Kondayi,

Eturunagaram Mandal, Jayashankar Bhupalpal district to Medaram.

The villages of Kannepalli performed 'Aarti' and organized grand farewells to Saralamma. Subsequently, the idol of Saralamma is brought to Medaram Gaddhe through 'Jampanna Vaagu' (a small canal named after Jampanna). After arriving on to the 'Gaddhe' Saralamma is worshipped with special pujas and other rituals. More than 3 million devotees visit Saralamma and offer special pujas as a part of the Medaram Jathara.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is proactively supporting and covering the events of the festival and ensuring the preservation and promotion of the various intriguing facets of the Scheduled Tribes of Telangana. This festival aims to generate awareness of tribal cultures, festivals and heritage as well as maintain a harmonious bond between the visitors and the Tribal communities of Telangana.

Career Guidance

Women are ahead of men in every field



By: Vijay Garg

Women are the mirror of society. If we want to look at the condition of a society then we have to look at the condition of women there. The woman is not only an idol of struggle but also an idol of sacrifice and love. He is not only a person but also a force that destroys monsters when the time comes.

A woman who nurtures family, society and nation, who is also a sister, wife, mother and builder of society, plays a vital role in such a society from birth to death. Mahadevi Verma had said that some women are not only individuals but they are also the epitome of poetry and

love. The man is hungry for victory and the woman for surrender.

The Government of India has come up with a number of schemes for the empowerment of women as a result of which women are surpassing men in every field and setting different milestones. The government has also enacted stricter laws from time to time to curb various crimes against women.

For example, a law was enacted in 1860 to prevent child marriage, and later the minimum age for marriage for girls was raised to 18, which has now been raised to 21.

A law was enacted in 1961 to curb the practice of dowry and in 1987 a strict law was enacted against the display of pornographic images of women. Strict rules have been enacted to prevent sexual harassment of working women in the workplace. In addition, the Women's Protection Act was enacted in 2005 to curb the daily occurrence of domestic violence against women, but despite all these provisions,

there has been no significant change in the mindset of the society. Incidents of crime against women are on the rise. Women lead mostly stressful lives and their tendency to commit suicide is on the rise.

According to the National Family Health Survey, 20 per cent of married women in the age group of 15-49 years in the country have experienced violence from their spouses and it is in this category that midwives commit suicide the most.

There is a growing tendency among today's youth to live abroad. They somehow reach abroad and then the greed to become a permanent resident arises in their mind. He marries foreign girls instead of telling his parents. When they return to their homeland, they get remarried but after a few days, their foreign marriage is discovered and now the local girl has nothing left but stress and she starts committing suicide.

Child marriage is also responsible for such incidents. A woman cannot make her

own decisions because of child marriage. Due to her immaturity, she becomes a victim of stress and is forced to commit suicide.

Poverty is also such a curse that many families do not even get two meals a day. A woman whose husband is an alcoholic or does not earn anything and has only three or four children in the house and they are also girls, then the only helpless woman thinks helplessly and commits suicide.

All the people of the society should change their mindset. They should not forget that they have daughters and sisters and if such incidents happen to them then what will they do about it? We need to awaken our narrow mindedness in a positive way. At the same time, there is a great need to streamline the judicial process so that the aggrieved woman gets justice immediately and the perpetrators get severe punishment. Similarly, more needs to be done for women empowerment.

MSPCL MD, two GMs granted anticipatory bail to MD of MSPCL and 2 others

IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

Session Judge, Imphal East has granted interim anticipatory bail to managing director and two general managers of Manipur State Power Company Limited (MSPCL) till next date of hearing, which is February 21. The Session judge however instructed the three to appear before the Investigating officer between 8 am to 10 am on every day starting from February 15 till the next date as and when directed by the IO. The court also directed the three to not influence any prosecution witnesses and also to co-operate with the investigation of the case and also not to leave the state without prior permission.

MSPCL managing director N Sarat and general managers Thokhom Kaminimohon and Monoharmayum Budhachandra Sharma had filed applications for granting of anticipatory bail under section 438.

According to the application, the court called records of investigation and objection or status report from SP, Kakching in connection with the case registered against them. They filed anticipatory bail with an apprehension of being arrested by the personnel of crime branch police station, Imphal with recommendation of Manipur Lokayukta for misappropriation of funds.

Manipur Lokayukta, on February 7, recommended Kakching SP Shrey Vats to investigate an alleged fund embezzlement case in connection with the installation of 33 Kv sub-station project in Chakpikarong, Chandel district against three officers of MSPCL.

The Lokayukta has recommended the state government not to allow MSPCL managing director N Sarat Singh to function

as its managing director. It recommended to entrust the function and duties of the said post to an official deemed appropriate by the state government till the completion of an ongoing investigation.

Manipur Lokayukta stated that as per a report of the inquiry officer, many documents in relation with the present project i.e. installation of 2 x 1 MVA, 33 kv Sub-Station along with the associated 33 kv line and related works at Chakpikarong in Chandel, executed under the work order dated September 25, 2009 are suspected to be manufactured and recently created ones.

Many of the important documents like Measurement Books (MBs) are missing and also many of the officers under the managing director are suspected to be involved in concealing/misplacing and destroying or manufacturing important documents, it stated.

Lokayukta further stated that general managers of MSPCL Thokhom Kaminimohon Singh and Manoharmayum Budhachandra Sharma should be taken out or transferred from their present posting till the completion of the investigation of the case.

During the hearing, the petitioners counsel submitted before the court that the three officers refuted the charges and denied the allegations made in the inquiry report which is frivolous, concocted and vexatious.

The total cost of Rs 9,45,80,605 of the project cost which includes sub-station works including associated civil works in addition to 33KV line construction work not only the cost of 33KV line portion. Although the allegation for misappropriation of Rs 5, 18, 98, 440, as pointed out is false and totally baseless, it stated.

While Special PP submitted that in pursuance of the direction of Lokayukta, the FIR has been registered against twelve accused persons. As per report from the IO, there has been delay on the part of managing director to inform or seek permission from the state government regarding the shortening of 33KV line.

As the investigation is at early stage and having found prima facie case by the Manipur Lokayukta, custodial interrogation of the three officers shall be needed, the petition said.

The court viewed that as many as twelve accused persons have been named in the FIR and the investigation is at early stage and any of the accused persons have not yet been arrested or questioned. It is also not disputed that the three officers are government servants and there is no likelihood of

their fleeing from justice from the case.

The case is also based upon the documents and according to the officers all the relevant documents have already been submitted to the Manipur Lokayukta in connection with the complaint leading to the registration of the FIR.

The court opined that a detailed hearing is required regarding the financial norms etc for the execution of the work and also perusal of the case diary. Therefore, interim anticipatory bail has been granted to them.

The court also stated that in the event of their arrest, the IO is directed to release them on interim bail on their furnishing PR Bond one lakh with one surety.

The court called further status report from Kakching SP for final consideration on or before February 21.

Ch. Bijoy files case against party president Sarda Devi



IT News
Imphal, Feb 17:

Former chief spokesperson of Manipur BJP Chongtham Bijoy Singh has filed a petition against state party Chief Adhikarimayum Sarda Devi for "unconstitutionally" removing him from the party.

Bijoy Singh filed the suit at a local court in Imphal West district against state BJP president Sarda Devi under Section 34 of the Specific Re-

lief Act, 1963, with a prayer for declaration with consequential reliefs.

While hearing the case via video conferencing, the Court of the Civil Judge (junior division) of Imphal West has summoned the BJP chief to appear before the court on February 24.

"You are hereby summoned to appear in this court in person or by a pleader duly instructed, and able to answer all material in question relating

to this application on February 24 at 10:30 am to answer the claim," said civil judge in-charge Heeralata Moirangthem in a order.

The BJP chief was also directed to file on the day a written statement in her defence and to produce the same on the said day.

Manipur BJP chief Sarda Devi has expelled the party spokesman Bijoy Singh for six years for violating the party's rules and regulations.

Govt rejects study that claimed India undercounting COVID-19 deaths, calls it fallacious and inaccurate

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 17:

The Central government has responded to media reports and claims that India has had much higher deaths than officially counted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The government said the reports are fallacious and inaccurate, and not based on facts.

As per a release issued by the Press Information Bureau, the published research paper had claimed that there have been between 32 lakh to 37 lakh deaths in India due to COVID-19 by early November 2021. The government said the official count, on the other hand, is 4.6 lakhs.

"There have been some media reports based on a published research paper alleging that mortality due to COVID19 in India is much higher than the official count and actual numbers have been undercounted... As has been stated earlier for similar media reports, it is again clarified that these reports are fallacious and completely inaccurate. They are not based on facts and are speculative in nature," the government said.

The release stated that there is a robust system in India to report deaths, including those fatalities caused by COVID-19. The government asserted that deaths in the country are reported in "a

transparent manner". "Based on globally acceptable categorization, Government of India has a comprehensive definition to classify COVID deaths which has been shared with the States and the States are following it," the release added.

"The study quoted in the media reports has taken four distinct subpopulations — the population of Kerala, Indian Railways employees, MLAs and MPs, and school teachers in Karnataka, and uses triangulation process to estimate nationwide deaths.

Any such projections based on limited data sets and certain specific assumptions must be treated with extreme care before extrapolating the numbers by putting all states and country of the size of India in a single envelope," it added.

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KPA alleges intimidation to their...

As they left the house, the same group opened three rounds of fire within the house's yard. Paumanthang wondered how the ZRA cadres who are under the Suspension of Operation (SOO) with the government, can loiter

around with full arms and terrorize the innocent public with impunity. He further wondered how the Assam Rifles stationed at Singhat can merely remain a mere spectator while the public shiver in fear. He urged the concerned author-

ity to book Mr Nathan, the ZRA cadre and his cohorts as soon as possible as per the Law of the land. Complainant Paumanthang also submitted a 9mm cartridge to the police station while making his complaint.

Sports

ISLC: Odisha, Chennaiyin share spoils to further dent slim semifinal hopes

Agency
Vasco, Feb 17:

Odisha FC and Chennaiyin FC were dealt body blows to their flailing semifinal aspirations as they shared the spoils in a 2-2 draw in the Indian Super League at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here on Wednesday. Both teams had to win this game in order to keep their slim chances alive but a stalemate means while they are mathematically still not out, their chances of making the cut are all but over. Rahim Ali (2nd) opened the scoring for Chennaiyin before Javi Hernandez (18th) pulled one back for Odisha for Jonathas Cristian (51st) to help them go in front in the second half. But Nerijus Valskis found the back of the net for Chennaiyin to ensure their rivals don't get all three points.

Chennaiyin remained in eighth place with 20 points from 17 matches while Odisha stayed in the seventh spot having 22 points from 17 matches. Chennaiyin noded ahead inside the first two minutes, Rahim Ali tucking in a free-kick from Nerijus Valskis which was initially blocked but fell to the striker who was un-



marked at the far post.

It was all Chennaiyin in the opening 15 odd minutes but Sabir Pasha — in charge of the team after Bozidar Bandovic parted ways with the club — saw his team not being able to make the most of the great start. Javi equalized in the 18th minute after some brilliant off-the-ball movement saw him get past his markers to then play a one-two with Jonathas Cristian and curl the ball with his left foot from outside the box and into the back of the net. Chennaiyin tried to keep more of the ball after the equalizer with Ariel Borysiuk's ambitious attempt from yards outside the

box flying over the bar.

Borysiuk did better with another effort closer to half-time but the ball just missed the target to sail over the bar. Jonathas then forced Debjit Majumder into a good save as the referee blew the whistle for halftime. Odisha started on the front foot in the second half and Jonathas helped them take the lead for the first time in the game, smashing home off a rebound after Chennaiyin defenders failed to clear the ball inside the area. Soon after, Jonathas chipped an effort before Valskis nodded in a powerful header into the bottom corner from a cross.

India to host 2023 Asian Cup third round qualifiers in Kolkata

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 17:

India, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan are the six host nations for AFC Asian Cup 2023 Qualifiers.

The Qualifiers Final Round will be held across three match days on June 8, 11 and 14, 2022, while the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 will start on June 16, 2023.

There are 13 teams, including host China PR, that have already qualified on the basis of their earlier performances in

the second round of the AFC Asian Qualifiers. The final 11 places remain up for grabs for 24 teams in the decisive Group Stage.

There are 24 teams still competing for a place at China 2023, six have never appeared in the AFC Asian Cup, while the likes of Hong Kong and Cambodia will be hopeful of qualifying for the first time in over half a century, with the winners and five best runners-up of the six centralised qualifying groups to complete the field for the quadrennial showpiece event.

India will host the matches at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata. China will host the main tournament in 2023.

"We had bid to host the third round qualifiers of the AFC Asian Cup, and are grateful to the Asian Football Confederation for accepting our bid," All India Football Federation (AIFF) general secretary Kushal Das said.

"We understand that playing at home, and that too in Kolkata will be an added advantage to the Blue Tigers in our quest to qualify for the Asian Cup."

The Indian team was part of the last Asian Cup but could not make the knockouts despite a fine victory over Thailand in their tournament opener.

Das added, "We had bid with Kolkata as the venue for the qualifiers. The infrastructure in Kolkata is exceptionally suited to host the qualifiers with the stadium, the practice venues and official accommodation all very closely located.

"The support from the host association, and the state government has also always been exemplary.

SAI appoints 398 coaches, assistant coaches in preparation of Olympics 2024, 2028

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 17:

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Wednesday announced it has appointed 398 coaches at various levels across 21 disciplines to prepare for important tournaments including the Paris and Los Angeles Olympics.

The new batch of coaches and assistant coaches has a host of eminent names, including Asian Games gold medalist rower Bajrang Lal Thakur. He joins as rowing coach.

Commonwealth Championship gold medalist grappler Shilpi Sheoran joins as an assistant coach in wrestling, while Olympian Jincy Phillip will serve as an athletics coach.

Pugilist Pranamika Borah, multiple medalist in leading international championships, joins as a boxing coach.

"The recruitment comes in the wake of the effort of the Ministry of Youth Affairs of Sports to provide 360 degree support to athletes as they prepare for important national and international

competitions, including Olympic 2024, 2028," a sports ministry release said.

Of the total number of 398, 101 coaches are joining on deputation from PSUs and other government bodies.

"I am happy that a number of ex-athletes who have competed at the highest international level of competition and won medals have applied for these posts and have been selected," Sports Minister Anurag Thakur said.

"Their (the ex-international athletes) inclusion in the system

will mean that besides training athletes in the sport itself, they will be able to train them for mental toughness which is the key to success when competing at the world stage."

Speaking about what he looks forward to in the new assignment, Thakur, an Arjuna awardee, said, "I am grateful to the Sports Authority of India for giving me a chance to give back to sports as a coach especially at a time when water sports in India has a great chance of making an impact at international competitions.