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**BJP Ga Loinana**



গোষ্ঠার দল টাউন গোষ্ঠার

**BJP Leiradi, Thajaba Lei  
BJP Bu Mai Pakhanlasi**



**Khanlasi Thoudang Pangba Ngamba, Eikhoigi Meehut**

**Thambalgi Markada Namlasi**



**BJP Bu Maipakhanlasi**

Adomgi vote khudingmak mamal yamna lei,  
Vote soidana thadabiyu, BJP bu Mai Pakhanlasi

# The feasibility study for the CEPA is being accelerated by India and Bangladesh

By Anup Sinha

After a Joint Study Group (JSG) for examining the feasibility of the CEPA submitted its recommendations, India and Bangladesh are expected to start the process of negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to deepen trade and economic ties during the visit of a high-level team from Bangladesh from March 1-4, 2022. Over the next several days, the JSG, which includes negotiators and trade experts from both sides, is expected to begin negotiations toward finishing a report that would analyze the treaty's prospects and make suggestions. One of the agreements that India prioritizes is the CEPA with Bangladesh. The two sides committed to improve trade during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's March 2021 visit to Bangladesh, and the joint declaration emphasized the need to remove non-tariff obstacles and the need for predictability in trade policies, laws, and processes. Given the rapidly developing commercial connection, India has a strong economic motivation to pursue the CEPA. India's Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal stated in November 2021 that the country was aiming to develop a CEPA with Bangladesh. Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla recently stated that two-way trade has increased dramatically, with exports from Bangladesh projected to surpass USD 2 billion for the first time this year. During a discussion with a Bangladesh team at the 10th India-Bangladesh Friendship Dialogue, he said, "Early completion of a CEPA is crucial to strengthening this momentum in trade." "For the first time, Bangladesh's exports to India crossed the USD 1 billion mark in 2018-19, a record 52 percent increase over 2017-18," said Prabir De, Professor, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), as part of a build-up to increasingly multifaceted cooperation in recent years. Over the previous decade, bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh has gradually increased, propelling Bangladesh to become India's largest economic partner in South Asia. The potential bilateral commerce is about USD 40 billion. Both stand to benefit greatly from the CEPA. Under the auspices of the 2006 South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) accord, India and Bangladesh already have a goods agreement that governs trade tariff regimes. Except for alcohol and tobacco, India has provided Bangladesh duty-free

## Why Ukraine is a top draw for Indian MBBS students

Relatively lower cost of education and easy access to Western Europe makes Ukraine a popular destination for medical students. Every year, 20-25,000 students from India, aspiring to become doctors, but with budgets tighter than what is required to secure an MBBS seats in a private medical college at home, head out of the country. Nearly a quarter of them go to Ukraine for the cost advantage it offers as well as its location which provides easy access to Western Europe, say consultants who track these trends. A four-and-a-half-year medical course in Ukraine, and even in Russia, costs Rs 24-30 lakh. In comparison, pursuing MBBS in countries such as Mauritius and Netherlands can set students back by Rs 50-55 lakh. In India, privately run medical colleges charge a steeper Rs 70 lakh-Rs 1.2 crore for MBBS.



By: Vijay GarG

40 Indian medical students walk to Ukraine-Poland border for evacuation

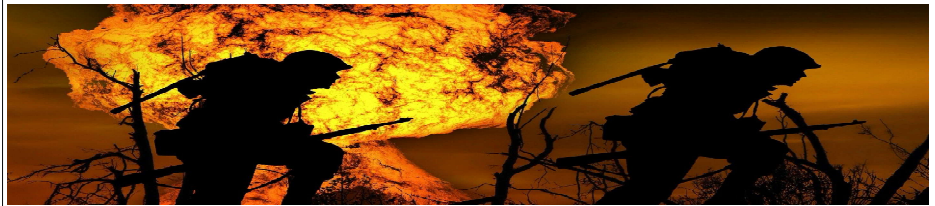
Consultants say that these students seek admission in medical colleges across countries spanning the Netherlands, Russia, China, former USSR nations, Mauritius to Nepal, Bangladesh and even Pakistan in the immediate neighborhood.

"There are options also in other former USSR countries like Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan where the total expenses are under Rs 25 lakh, including fee, accommodation and travel, but many students still prefer Ukraine because of the strong European cultural influences and advantages that it offers later," said Neeraj Chourasia, who runs Gurukul, a consultancy service in the national capital for students looking to pursue MBBS abroad.

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# RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS WAVING FORA COLD WAR AND WW3

By Jayanta Sharangthem, Yairipok Khoirom



War is an organised murder and nothing else –byHarry Patch,last surviving soldier of World War I. Everywhere there is politics to gain or desire for somethingthrough dominating over others. The World is under the threat of 3<sup>rd</sup> World War due to the tension of Ukraine-Russia crisis.We should oppose any kind of war and injustice.You should have sympathy with common people either Ukrainians or Russians. Russia is repeating her 2014 action when she annexed Crimea. The present scenario arises because Ukraine is willing to join NATO,the military alliance of USA and European nations formed during the cold war to curtail the influences of communist USSR. First cold war between USA and USSR ended with the fall of Soviet Union in 1991.Collapse and end of that cold war is often viewed as the victory of United States democracy over Soviet Union's communism and dictatorship.This had hurt the Russian a lot. Putin, whose grandfather had been a cook for Lenin and later Stalin, has the mindset to revenge and revive the territory after de-militarised and de-nazification (as Putin claimed) of the Ukraine with a strong dream of once world super power state under USSR federation. Russia does not want the West interferences over the countries near its border through the US led alliance expansion.History tells us that war does not determine who is right but who is left.In this scenario, Ukraine should not incline on any of these two super power sides but better to adopt the policy like non-alignment that India does. It is very simple that Russian Ukrainian crisis is just a border dispute where the Russian does not want the USA or the EU influences on Ukraine. That is why, even India has neither sided with anyone by abstaining in UN resolution passed.Ukraine neither shares any border with India nor does the two countries have any special relationship but India can't escape from this crisis. Why? Because for India this crisis is not Russia-Ukraine but Russian including Chinavest. Now it becomes a difficult, risky and complicated situation for India to maintain a neutral stand when the two (West under USA and Russia including china) demands India's support.The explanation over this view will be followed shortly.

Democracy has different versions in the West. Russia has its own model of government which is not same with West. Today we all are sad for Ukraine but we have to feel equally for Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran.. that USA destroyed with its allies before. There are anti-war protests around the world and in the heart of Moscow. The world is shouting slogans against Russia.People have taken to the streets. They are protesting the war and war mongers.Presently USA and EU are doing nothing to stop the war but only slapping sanctions that will have little effect over Russia. Is your sanctions compensate the lives of Ukrainians who lost during the war? All you the EU are

playing the same broken records.You all are doing only media interviews and nothing else.Ukrainians president claims that the world super leaders are watching the war from distances and he is defending his country alone. Russia already knows and had done the calculation of the sanctions.You all countries including USA and Russia are playing over weak countries for your world super power ambition.So,for me, I will say, it is the mistake of both US led NATO and Russia dreamed USSR. It is because why Ukraine has to become a victim due to this two world level. Ukrainians, for their country, has the liberty what to choose and how to live. With the thought that an unjust peace is better than a just war, the present Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy after declaring martial law in the state fight for his country alone now. Putin claimed of de-nazification makes no sense as present president Volodymyr Zelenskyy's great grandfather itself once fought against Hitler during the 2<sup>nd</sup> WW.Volodymyr Zelenskyy is the grandson of Simon Ivanovich Zelensky who was the sole survivor of Jewish family killed by Germany dictator's Adolf Hitler during World War II.

Ukraine had been a part of the Russian Federation from 1922 but was independent after 1991 USSR collapsed that had USA's hand. With that breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia lost control of 14 former republics it had. But the loss of Ukraine was the most painful to Russia. Ukraine after got independence gradually sides with the West and is planning to join NATO.NATO is founded in 1949 with USA as main leader. The other countries are Ukraine, France, Germany, Italy, Greece and Turkey were added to NATO,1955 West Germany,1982 Spain was added.Again in 1990 Germany join NATO and gradually in 1999 Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia joined it.After this,Albania and Croatia in 2009, and in 2020 there came North Macedonia. Countries under NATO have a strong position in military because by chance war occurs, these countries collectively under NATO will join and help among themselves to fight with the modern equipmentof NATO's weapons and nuclear they have against the enemies whom they wish. And at the same time, NATO under USA leadership is expanding in the world specially towards the east and even near the Russian border making Putin furious. Russians see this as a threatening encroachment towards its borders and still continues to condemn it.As claimed by Putin, Russia is defending and securing its national interests and borders.But, it is not good that NATO under USA is trying to influence all over the world thereby pressuring Russia. And Putin is also tryingto show his resistance to the EU and USA through waging war on Ukraine.

Since the war has not been stopped, it shows the failure or toothless of UNO or gradual weakness of USA with time.This is the first half history of Russia-Ukraine war crisis. Second hidden one is Putin,in his dream, is still having the once so called world super power USSR revival to counter the EU and United states.Over and above,Putin even thinks that since Ukraine was once with USSR, it is the part of Russia. Yes, we agreed but Ukraine was forcefully russified. In 1700 Catherine, the great, shipped ethnic Russians in Ukraine and school were told to teach Russian languages.Again by 1800, Ukrainian languages were banned. In 1930 Russian leader Stalin steered a famine killing millions of Ukrainians and re-populated the areas with ethnic Russians.That is why eastern Ukraine is richly populated with Russian speaking people .So, it was made and designed to be like that because the land is fertile,has coal and iron.But I don't agree to this thought because claiming Ukraine on the basis of colonial history is totally wrong. Otherwise it will be like Britain claiming India or South Africa, Spain claiming the Philippines.So,past imperialism can't justify present day expansion and revival of USSR as Putin desires.

Now let me quickly tell you the domestic political parties in Ukraine. Basically, there are three political parties in Ukraine. The first category includes those political parties who are pro-Western,pro-NATO, anti-Russianand mainly speaking Ukrainian language and are very liberal.These people are largely dominated in western Ukraine. Example in this category is present president Volodymyr Zelenskyywho openly opposed Russians occupation and with whom Russia not happy with him and also his deepening relationship with the West,over and above planning to join the NATO. The president pulses represents the Ukrainians.Second one are those who are pro-Russian speaking Russian language.They like pro-Soviet culture. They criticize EU and are anti-USA.These people mainly live in eastern Ukraine.E.g.Luhansk and Donetsk whom they called rebel of Ukraine due to the strong support of Russia.E.g former president Viktor Yanukovich.Last political party are those who focus on local interests and regional calledideology of regionalism. This party is newly immersed in Ukraine.

Everybody knows that any kind of war will further increase global inflation. Effect of corona pandemic has not yet finished,another scenario is knocking at our door. Stock market has already been in red colour. Prices of petroleum, cooking oil and many others will soon going to be sky rocketed.UK has targeted five major Russian banks.If the Ukraine-Russia crisis escalates then sanctioned by EU and USA over Russia versus

counter reply from Russia through its natural gas pipeline will affect the prices of essential commodities in Europe since Europe imports 1/3 of natural gas from Russia. Some gas pipeline are passing through Ukraine and this will provide leverage to Putin in any dispute with the West.So,that will soon affect EU financial markets, economy and industries badly.This may even withdraw the foreign investors from their market .That is why Germany,France, Croatia except US are softer approach to this crisis.None of its allies rather than the USA is interested in Russia-Ukraine and Biden is barking too much on this issue. On the other hand, US and EU sanctions will make Russia more dependent on China who is a close ally of it.Economic sanctions on Russia will affect the whole world and EU including USA itself in the long run.At the same time ,India has to initiate for evacuation of Indians from Ukraine soil at the earliest . Before it was attacked by Russia,Ukraine had strong hope that NATO and USA will help and support her.But it was not as wishes.Russia war over Ukraine highlights the efficiency or resistance of the international organisations and power of many others countries. Ukraine crisis is the testing of UNO and Biden external foreign political affair over other countries. Biden reply exposes his weakness of leadership, for not able to maintain sovereignty and freedom of a country.In this diplomatic issue, it has also become a political test for India too. This is not the first time for India. With his non-alignment policy, during the cold war when the world had divided into two blocks(USA bloc vs USSR bloc),India was trying for a balanced approach. Now,firstlyif India sides with Russia on the basis of his old true friend,then India has to faceor inviting the strong economic sanctionsof the Biden and EU.This will make more worst to Modi during this bad economic scenario happened due to corona pandemic.At the same time,India too will not get any support from USA to counter India's biggest threat fromChina and its expansionist policy over Arunachal and North East of India.Secondly, if India votes in favour of USA and EU thereby against the Russia who is a reliable partner of India, whois doing joint research/development in defence and who even support Kashmir issue along with UNSC permanent seat for India at UN,then military support from Russia will hampered.Not only this, India has to face China threat more and more since China,where there is communist party and Myanmar,a military rule, are the allies of Russia.This will adversely affect the North-East including Manipur.Even Pakistan prime Minister met the Putin in the first day of the Ukraine-Russian war. All knows that China too favours Pakistan.Definitely, there isa high chance that they will become an axis. This means there are enemies all over Indian border now.So, India has to take a careful decision in this regard.

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# 12,09,439 voters will decide the fate of 173 candidates in the Phase-I Election

IT News

Imphal, Feb 27:

Chief Electoral Officer Rajesh Agrawal said that since ECI has discontinued photo voter slip as identity proof from 28 February 2019, voters shall be required to produce one of the 12 identity documents approved by the Commission. The approved identity proof includes EPIC card, Aadhaar Card, MNREGA Job Card, Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office, Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour, Driving License, PAN Card, Smart Card issued by RGI under NPR, Indian Passport, Pension document with photograph, Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt./PSUs/Public Limited Companies and Official

identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs.

The poll will ensue from 7 am to 4 pm, wherein 38 Assembly Constituencies, including 10 in Imphal East, 13 in Imphal West, 6 in Bishnupur, 6 in Churachandpur, and 3 in Kangpokpi, will go for polls scheduled tomorrow. For Phase-I, 12,09,439 voters, including 580607 male, 628657 female, and 175 transgender voters, will exercise their franchise across 1721 polling stations. There are 10041 PwD electors and 251 Centenarian voters in these 38 Assembly Constituencies. The polling parties for all polling stations have proceeded for their allotted PS including 23 parties on P-3 day and 117 parties on P-2 day. It is worth mentioning that 381 polling stations will be completely manned by all women polling personnel. Interestingly, 4 Assembly Constituencies namely 13-Singjam, 14-Yaiskul, 15-Wangkhei and 58-

Churachandpur will be manned by all women polling teams. It is also notable that 1 polling station in 59-Saikot will be manned completely by PwD polling personnel. A total of 6884 polling personnel are being deployed and all polling personnel will reach their respective polling stations on 27.02.2022. A total of 173 candidates, including 15 females, are in the fray for the poll scheduled for tomorrow. Out of 173 candidates, 39 candidates have criminal antecedents. The party-wise number of candidates: BJP-38, CPI-I, INC-35, NCP-6, NPP-27, JD(U)-28, LJP (Ram Vilas)-3, RPI(Athawale)-6, Shiv Sena-7, Kuki National Assembly-2, Kuki People's Alliance-2 and Independent-18. Arrangements for webcasting/ videography have been made in all Polling Stations. Adequate CAPF have been deployed in all polling stations. In addition, micro-observers

have been deployed in all critical polling stations. To ensure COVID safe election, adequate arrangements have been made in all polling stations. All polling stations have been sanitised. ASHA and Anganwadi workers have been engaged. Marking of circles with minimum distance has been done to avoid crowding. Besides, mask, glove, face shield, thermal scanners, PPE kit etc. have been provided to polling parties. Voters who are COVID positive or are under quarantine will be allowed to vote at the last hour between 3 pm to 4 pm. On the accessibility front, provision for Pick up/Drop facilities for PwD and aged electors are made available with wheelchair facilities. Besides, two volunteers have been engaged in each polling station to assist voters. Voter Assistance Booths have also been set up in all polling stations.

Postal Ballots for service electors have been issued to all 13274 electors electronically and 559 have been received till date. These will be received till 10.03.2022 before 8 am. A total of 13067 voters on election duty have applied for postal ballot, while 2419 PBs received at the facilitation centre, the rest have been sent to the voters by post at their addresses. Further, 906 postal ballots have been cast by PwD voters and 4968 votes have been cast by 80+ voters in the absentee voter category. For Essential services, 15 PBs issued and all PBs received. The movement of EVMs are being tracked with the help of e-Traccer App which is embedded in the mobile phones of Polling personnel and Sector Officers. Besides, a polling personnel will be able to report any sort of EVM malfunctioning or any untoward incident happening in the polling station. This will

enable the Returning Officer to take immediate corrective actions. Booth App shall also be used to report two hourly report of voter turn out by the polling team. Control Rooms have been set up in all offices of Returning Officers, District Election Officers and Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur. Among one of the initiatives, a voter will also be able to know the queue waiting time in the polling station with the help of voter facilitator app which is available for download in google play store. In order to ensure free, fair and smooth election, certain restrictions have been imposed on poll day in the polling station premises. Providing free conveyance to voters to and from the polling stations by a candidate/this agent is a corrupt practice and strictly forbidden. As provided in Section 130 of Representation of the People Act, 1951, canvassing within

a polling station or any public or private place within a distance of 100 meters of a polling station is strictly prohibited. Cellular phones, cordless phones etc., shall not be allowed except officers on duty in the 100 meters of a PS. Besides, no campaign related posters or banners within 100 meters of the Polling Booth are allowed. Use of loudspeakers within 100 metre PS is also strictly prohibited. Candidates shall also not set up booths within 200 metres of the polling booth. It is appealing to all electors to come out and exercise their franchise fearlessly and out of free will on the poll day tomorrow. Adequate Security arrangements have been made with deployment of Central Paramilitary force at all polling stations. In addition, there will be effective patrolling and area domination by CAPF and Manipur Police in all the 38 constituencies throughout the day, for confidence building and to enable people to come out and vote in a peaceful setting.

## After Ukraine's SOS, Elon Musk Activates Starlink Satellite Broadband

IT News

Imphal, Feb 27:

Elon Musk said Saturday his company SpaceX's Starlink satellite broadband service had been activated in Ukraine, after a Kyiv official urged the tech titan to provide his embattled country with stations. "Starlink service is now active in Ukraine," Musk tweeted, adding "more terminals en route." The tweet came some 10 hours after Ukrainian Minister of Digital Transformation Mykhailo

Fedorov urged Musk to provide Starlink services to Ukraine, days after it was invaded by neighboring Russia. "While you try to colonize Mars -- Russia try to occupy Ukraine! While your rockets successfully land from space -- Russian rockets attack Ukrainian civil people! We ask you to provide Ukraine with Starlink stations," Fedorov tweeted at Musk. He also called on the billionaire "to address sane Russians to stand" against their government's invasion.

Internet monitor NetBlocks said Ukraine has seen a "series of significant disruptions to internet service" since Thursday, when Russia launched military operations in the country. Starlink operates a constellation of more than 2,000 satellites that aim to provide internet access across the planet. The company on Friday launched a further 50 Starlink satellites and many more are slated to be put into Earth's orbit.

IT News

Imphal, Feb 27:

As the first phase of the Manipur Legislative Assembly is around the corner, poll violence escalated in the state with a bomb blast reported in the Churachandpur district on Saturday. The explosion inside a house claimed the lives of two people, including a 6-year-old child, and injured the five others. According to media reports, the bomb was placed inside a house,

and children unknowingly started playing with it, which later exploded. Those injured in the unfortunate incident were taken to Churachandpur district hospital, and authorities have started an investigation to ascertain the cause behind the blast. The explosion was the first major violence incident after the Manipur assembly election dates were announced on January 8. In November last year, insurgents had carried out

an IED blast to attack the convoy of 46 Assam Rifles Commanding Officer then fired at the vehicles in the Churachandpur area. The elections to the 60-seat Manipur assembly will be held in two phases on Monday and Saturday. Votes will be counted on March 10. In the first phase, 173 candidates, including 15 women, are contesting the elections, and 12,22,713 voters, including 6,29,276 women electorates, would decide their electoral fate.

## JD-U candidate of Kshetrigao Rojit shot at, injured

IT News

Imphal, Feb 27:

In pre-poll-related violence, Janata Dal (United) candidate Wanglembam Rojit Singh, contesting from Kshetrigao assembly constituency on a JD(U) ticket, was shot at by armed assailants on Saturday evening. A police report said Wanglembam Rojit Singh, also known as Bullet, was shot by one of the two assailants who came on a two-wheeler. Kshetrigao will go to the polls, along with 37 other constituencies, in the first phase, which is scheduled to be held on February 28. Police said the incident occurred at around 11.30 pm when the candidate was meeting some of his supporters at Naharup Makhapat, about 3 km from his residence, the Indian Express reported. Sapam Ronaldo, the driver of the candidate, said Rohit was shot at by one of the two assailants who came on a scooter. Despite a chase by the escort team, the gunmen managed to escape owing to the narrow lanes of the locality, Sapam added. The 42-year-old received a bullet injury on his chest and was taken to a private hospital in Imphal. He is said to be out of danger. The police have registered an FIR in this connection.

## Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme on Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation organized

IT News

Imphal, Feb 27:

Regional Outreach Bureau, Imphal, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, organized a one-day Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme on Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation at Lilong Bazar, Thoubal District. Md. Nizamuddin, President, Jama Masjid, Lilong presided over the event. Dr. Arinab Ibomcha Sharma, Head of Office, Regional Outreach Bureau, Imphal, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, urged everyone to practice ethical voting and exercise universal suffrage on informed choice. Further, he also urged the audience to go through the Know Your Candidate (KYC) App or the website of the ECI.



Inclusive and accessible election, use of eVigil App, Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT), Toll free number

1950 and COVID Appropriate Behaviour while going out to vote were discussed with the electorates who are going to vote during the 2nd phase of Manipur Assembly Election,

2022. An on-the-spot quiz contest on Election Quotient was held, and prizes along with certificates were distributed. M/s People's Arts and Dramatic Association (PADA),

Top Khongnangkhong, a Private Registered Troupe (PRT) of ROB, Imphal, played a drama on SVEEP namely "Election gi Sambal." The Regional Outreach Bureau has been organizing such literacy programs

ahead of the Manipur Assembly Election. On 26 Feb, the same program was organized at Thoubal Athokpam in Thoubal District. Shri Leimapokpam Romen Singh, President of DLCCYC Club, Thoubal Athokpam, presided while Shri Thongam Ranjit Singh, BLO, and Dr. Pukhrambam Kiranbala, BLO, attended the event as the guest of honor. Informed choice, ethical voting, inclusive and accessible election, use of eVigil App, Know Your Candidate (KYC) App, Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT), model code of conduct and COVID Appropriate Behaviour while going out to vote were discussed with the audience which consist mainly of first time voters who are going to vote during the 2nd phase of Manipur Assembly Election, 2022.

# Purabi Dairy conducts weeklong Scientific Beekeeping Training



**IT Guwahati, Feb 27:** As a part of their efforts to augment dairy farmers' income through allied activities, National Dairy Development Board's (NDDB) in association with National Bee Board (NBB), sponsored a scientific beekeeping training program under Mini Mission-I of National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM). West Assam Milk Union Limited (WAMUL), popularly known as Purabi Dairy, has been empaneled by NDDB as the Cluster Based Business Organisation for formation of Honey FPO (Farmer Producer Organisation) and development of Honey cluster under FPO scheme of Government of India. This project is envisaged to create Beekeepers FPOs/

Honey cluster in WAMUL's operational areas of Hajo under Kamrup(R) district, thus creating a new source of livelihood for the milk producers along with the existing dairy value chain. The weeklong training program in scientific beekeeping, under Mini Mission-I of NBHM, was organized between February 21-27, 2022, at the Regional Institute of Livestock Entrepreneurship Management (RILEM). Shri N.N. Mahanta (Director, RILEM) expressed his happiness to be associated with and provide support for such type of training programs which help increase opportunities for the farmers of Assam. The training program had 25 participants and was delivered by Tanishk Graamin Seva Sansthan through two trainers namely Sanjeev

Tomar and Vishnu Jangle. They were joined by Pranesh Roy, who is providing training on beekeeping in different districts of Assam. Chief Minister of Assam Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier highlighted that to increase farmers' income, WAMUL should integrate allied activities like biogas, bio manure, beekeeping etc. This training program is a step forward in that direction. The training program will also lead to additional income for the local dairy farmers which is a step towards the "Doubling Farmers' Income" aim envisioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Milk unions in other parts of India are effectively using their infrastructure for procurement and marketing of honey and are providing quality honey to its customers. NDDB has been designated as the implementing

agency under NBHM, and WAMUL is committed to make this program an immense success in Assam. It will also provide marketing support for the farmers' produce through its well-established network of milk and milk products in the state. NDDB has been managing West Assam Milk Producers' Cooperative Union Ltd. since 2008 and at present WAMUL stands as an exemplary model of a successful dairy cooperative. WAMUL as a cooperative organisation has been able to turnaround its operations under the management of NDDB. It may be mentioned that honeybees are vital in sustaining plant biodiversity, and beekeeping acts as a catalyst in increasing yield of major agricultural and horticultural crops through cross pollination.

# AR Foils Smuggling Of Covid Vaccines And Test Kits

**IT Imphal, Feb 27:** Tenggounal Battalion under the aegis of IGAR (South) foiled an attempt to smuggle COVID vaccines and RAT kits from India to Myanmar on 26 February. During a search operation, troops of Assam Rifles intercepted a vehicle moving from Imphal to

Moreh. On detailed search of the vehicle, 200 vials of COVISHIELD vaccine (2000 doses) and 299 Rapid Antigen Test kits were found concealed in the body of the vehicle. The two traffickers traveling in the vehicle were detained and subsequently handed over to the Police

authorities along with the seized medical stores. It may be mentioned that cross border smuggling of Covid Vaccines and test kits are on the rise, as the said items are found easily in India. In the past, there were incidents of smuggling of such kits and vaccines foiled by the Assam Rifles.

# The First Batch of Indians Returns from Ukraine

**By Raju Vernekar Mumbai, Feb 26**

The first batch comprising over 200 Indians who were evacuated from war-torn Ukraine reached the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai on late Saturday evening. The evacuees who travelled by the first evacuation flight of Air India-AIC 1944 reached the Mumbai airport at 7.50 pm. They were received by Union Minister Piyush Goyal. BJP MP Poonam Mahajan and Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar were present. The aircraft, which had taken off from the Henri Coanda International Airport, Bucharest, Romania, on Saturday afternoon, brought home 219 passengers, mostly students from India.

A large number of relatives of homebound passengers were present at the arrival course of the Mumbai airport to receive their near and dear ones. Addressing the returnees, at the airport, Piyush said he was glad to see the smiles on the faces of Indians safely evacuated from Ukraine. All those stranded in Ukraine will be brought back to India and no one need to worry. He said the Government is working in mission mode to ensure the safety of our citizens. "We all were worried for the last two days. We have also spoken to other ended in Ukraine. "Prime Minister Narendra citizens. Besides, the Russians have also promised to help evacuate all Indians. Goyal asked the returning passengers to speak to their

friends still in Ukraine and reassure them not to worry. The Indian Embassy officials in Ukraine will assist all those returning to India", he added. Goyal said more evacuation flights are being operated and the second flight is likely to land in Delhi in the wee hours of Sunday. He wholeheartedly thanked Air India for its commitment to the national cause. On the occasion, he hailed the moment saying "Three cheers to India" which was met with applause by all the homecoming passengers, who responded with "Hip Hip Hooray". Mumbai Mayor Kishori Pednekar said that the BMC will provide free services to all the students returning from Ukraine. We will provide them free Covid testing, vaccines, food and other facilities.

# AR foils cross border smuggling, provided assistance to political violence victims

**IT Imphal, Feb 27:** Tenggounal Battalion under the aegis of IGAR(S) foiled cross border smuggling in Tenggounal district on 26 February. During a border domination patrol, troops of Assam Rifles uncovered a large number of packages concealed in thick foliage near Kwatha Junction. On thorough search of the packages

foreign made cigarettes, foreign cosmetic items, Betel Nuts and foreign liquor were recovered. The smuggled items are assessed to be worth Rs 6.59 lakhs. The recovered items have been handed over to Custom Preventive Force, Moreh for further investigation.

Meanwhile, Tenggounal Battalion under the aegis of IGAR(S) rendered life saving medical assistance to three

injured victims of a political clash that took place at Kharoo Khullen village in Tenggounal on 26 February. One of the injured individual sustained severe head injury during the clash and was rendered emergency medical aid by the Assam Rifles Medical Team to stabilise his condition. On stabilising the condition, the injured were transferred to JNIMS Hospital, Imphal for further medical treatment.

## Contd from Page 2 The feasibility....

and quota-free access under SAFTA. The missing middle is a services trade deal, and Bangladesh, with its economy based mostly on agriculture and services, would welcome one that included the services component as well as investment. During Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit in October 2019, a number of pacts and projects were signed and finalized, paving the way for the growth of bilateral ties and the prompt commissioning of a joint study on the chances of entering into a bilateral CEPA. Experts say that a rising and developing Bangladesh and a prosperous India have significant synergy and are beneficial to each other.

Bangladesh's impending graduation from Least Developed Country classification, as well as India's strong economic foundations and demonstrated credentials as Bangladesh's largest development partner, have created a slew of economic dynamics.

Three Special Economic Zones have already been established in Bangladesh for Indian investors, and Indian firms are investing in a variety of industries in Bangladesh, including telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, FMCG, and autos. These are considered as providing a key backdrop to India and Bangladesh's more active bilateral trade and investment activities outlined in the CEPA.

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# Why Ukraine is a top draw for Indian MBBS students

That's why Indian students continue to go abroad despite the perception that MBBS colleges in non-English speaking countries have lower standards. Right to Information data show that less than 10 percent students who appear for the Foreign Medical Graduate Examination clear the test. Medical students with a foreign degree must clear this exam, conducted by the National Board of Examination, to get a licence to practise in India. There are around 10 medical colleges in Ukraine, most of them run by the government and spread across the length and breadth of the country that are top draws for students from India.

Of the nearly 15,000 students who are estimated to be stuck in various parts of Ukraine after the Russian invasion and are anxious to return to their homeland, 80-90 percent are medical students, said student activists and consultants.

Many of these students, understandably, are sending frenzied messages to their families and authorities back home.

Their concerns were echoed by the Indian Medical Association, the largest body of doctors in India, which on February 25, shot an urgent letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking immediate intervention for the medics trapped in the volatile situation.



Most of the students, said the association, can't afford the escalated costs of air travel and even those who can, are unable to travel due to the adverse conditions there.

The government should help them financially and make all possible efforts to get them out, IMA said.

# Russia hits Ukraine fuel supplies, airfields in new attacks

**Agency Kyiv, Feb 27:**

Russia unleashed a wave of attacks on Ukraine targeting airfields and fuel facilities in what appeared to be the next phase of an invasion that has been slowed by fierce resistance. The U.S. and EU responded with weapons and ammunition for the outnumbered Ukrainians and powerful sanctions intended to further isolate Moscow. Huge explosions lit up the sky early Sunday south of the capital, Kyiv, where people hunkered down in homes, underground garages and subway stations in anticipation of a full-scale assault by Russian forces. Flames billowed into the sky before dawn from an oil depot near an air base in Vasyliiv, where there has been intense fighting, according to the town's mayor. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's

office said another explosion was at the civilian Zhuliany airport. Zelenskyy's office also said Russian forces blew up a gas pipeline in Kharkiv, the country's second-largest city, prompting the government to warn people to protect themselves from the smoke by covering their windows with damp cloth or gauze. "We will fight for as long as needed to liberate our country," Zelenskyy vowed. Terrified men, women and children sought safety inside and underground, and the government maintained a 39-hour curfew to keep people off the streets. More than 150,000 Ukrainians fled for Poland, Moldova and other neighboring countries, and the United Nations warned the number could grow to 4 million if fighting escalates. President Vladimir Putin hasn't disclosed his ultimate plans, but Western officials

believe he is determined to overthrow Ukraine's government and replace it with a regime of his own, redrawing the map of Europe and reviving Moscow's Cold War-era influence. To aid Ukraine's ability to hold out, the U.S. pledged an additional \$350 million in military assistance to Ukraine, including anti-tank weapons, body armor and small arms. Germany said it would send missiles and anti-tank weapons to the besieged country and that it would close its airspace to Russian planes. The U.S., European Union and United Kingdom agreed to block "selected" Russian banks from the SWIFT global financial messaging system, which moves money around more than 11,000 banks and other financial institutions worldwide, part of a new round of sanctions aiming to impose a severe cost on Moscow for the invasion. "Restrictive measures" on Russia's central bank.