

Convenor of the JCILPS Manipur BK Moirangcha succumb to COVID-19



IT News
Imphal, Feb 6:

Convenor of the Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System (JCILPS) and also the President of All Manipur Economic and Socio Cultural Organisation (AMESCO) B. K. Moirangcha passed away today at JNIMS hospital due to COVID-19.

He is survived by his son and wife. He originally hail from Kakching Bazar Khunai Leikai in Kakching district. Moirangcha has been working to strengthen the bond of brotherhoods between the various communities of the state. He had spearheaded in many political issue concerning the common people of the state as and activist.

Various clubs and organisations have condoled the demise of BK Moirangcha. During the COVID-19 Pandemic he had volunteered as convenor of the CSOs in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. He along with other leaders had conducted various awareness campaign to protect the people from the dreaded COVID-19 Pandemic but he finally contracted the virus and succumbed to the dreaded disease today.

After settling differences between BJP intending candidates, CM N. Biren Singh personally campaign at various constituencies

IT News
Imphal, Feb 06:

After settling the issues of various intending candidates to support to the common BJP candidate at many of the constituency, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh keeps visiting various assembly constituencies of the state to make sure that BJP gets the magic number in the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly election which is scheduled on February

27 and march 3 this year. "It takes almost weeks to consolidate all the intending candidates at various assembly constituencies who have been denied tickets", N. Biren Singh told Imphal Times while visiting the residence of Elangbam Johnson – the BJP candidate from Keishamthong Assembly constituency. It was their believe and trust to the BJP leadership that they stand by the party decision and assured full support to

make the BJP returning to power once again. N. Biren said referring to those intending candidates of BJP who were denied party ticket but assured to stand by the party. The chief minister was referring to RK Sivachandra who had openly declared support to any of the BJP candidates in Keishamthong Assembly constituency even if he has been denied BJP ticket. Last election Sivachandra contested as BJP candidate but defeated to NPP candidate. A

similar case was also with Ashinikumar, the BJP worker who has been working to contest election at Thanga Assembly constituency for years but denied at last minute. Ashinikumar had openly said that he will support to the decision of the BJP and will make sure that the party returns to power with absolute majority in the next assembly.

Later, after visiting the residence of E. Johnson, the BJP candidate of

Keishamthong Ac, the Chief Minister went around the constituency and met various people to vote for the BJP candidate.

Interestingly, while going at Keishamthong Hodam leirak, the vehicle of the Chief Minister suddenly halt on the way after he saw two kids waiving their hands. N. Biren Singh stopped the vehicle and took self with

the kids. Many people gathered and praise the Chief Minister for his simple gesture.

Everything is settled now and differences between the BJP intending candidate has also been settled and the BJP is sure to get the majority seat in the next state legislative Assembly N. Biren Singh told Imphal times.

We take small share of rice as we cannot survive with hay – PREPAK(Pro)

IT News
Imphal, Feb 06:

A statement proscribed group PREPAK (Pro) today clarified that they have taken a small share of rice from the cheap rice issue by the government as the cadres of the party cannot survive by eating hay.

Reacting to a statement by an MLA and intending candidate of the BJP from Khurai Assembly

constituency, a statement by Th. Eshingchaoba, Assistant Publicity Secretary of PREPAK (Pro) said that the organisation never hijack the products of the farmers but save the rice issued by the government of India from falling into the wrong hand.

"If the share that has been taking by the PREPAK (Pro) cause any harm or hunger to the poor people of Manipur than we are ready to stop taking it", the statement said

but added that the hunger and poverty of the people is cause by the anti-people policy of the government and those running the government.

The statement added that in the name of development many paddy field have been shrunk and made the people food dependent to the mainland. These people in the government didn't even tried to double the crops productions by providing

adequate facilities to the farmers.

The PREPAK (Pro) further said that the candidates should rather try to improve the people instead of playing politics by coming down at 1 Kg of rice. It also said that the PREPAK(Pro) can't survive with hay but need rice to eat for survival if any people is against this then the PREPAK (Pro) is ready for a referendum on the matter, the statement added.

Blessing prayer of Manipuri documentary film held

IT News
Imphal, Feb. 06:

Blessing prayer programme of a Manipuri documentary film entitled Lee AmadeeWa (Cane and Bamboo) was held at Sapam Laibung Leikai, Khongjom on 5th February 2022 organised by ApunbalmagiMachasing (AIMS), Manipur. The event was held in presence of Prof.

Amar Yumnam, Former Vice Chancellor, Manipur University as Chief Guest and Dr. H. Birkumar, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-NEIST was presided the programme. Guest of Honours of the programme include Dr. S. Manikanta, Additional Director (Retired), Manipur Health Services, Prof. Naorem Mohilal Meitei, Head, Department of Zoology,

Manipur University, Dr. Homen Thangjam, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University and M. Khelendro, President, Apunba Imagi Machasing Apunbalmagi Machasing (AIMS), Manipur.

The main theme of the documentary film will be based on the Manipurimanscript known as "Walonpuya" with latest development of science and technology revealing

many unknown facts about the cane and bamboo that are still unknown to world.

Main role of the documentary film will be acted by Miss Pribhata Langpoklakpam. Joychand Moirangthem, Bobby Haobam, Inaocha Khundrakpam and Sanjoy Chare respectively Director, Chief Consultant, Editor and Director of Photography of the documentary film.

Two books by late MK Binodini released on her Birth centenary

IT News
Imphal, Feb. 6:

The MK Binodini Devi Centenary was launched by the Maharaj Kumari Binodini Devi Foundation with the publication of two new books by the eminent Manipuri writer on her 100th birth anniversary. The centenary celebrations will see events by literary groups and institutions of Manipur and beyond, headed by the MK Binodini Centenary Committee instituted in 2021. It will be held over the course of the next 12 months.

The Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan, tweeted: "Extremely exuberant to extend my sincere greetings on the 100th anniversary of Maharaj Kumari Binodini Devi. *Cultural Confluence* is being organised as veneration to her sublime literary imprint that exhibits her deep moving ethos on social and cultural fabric of Manipur."

The new books by

Binodini were launched with prayers and offerings by MK. Binodini's close relatives of Imasi Foundation at the *singgar arti* to Lord Govindaji at Sri Sri Govindaji Temple of Sana Konung, the Royal Palace of Manipur. "It is especially meaningful for us to offer prayers for my late *Imacha*

on her 100th anniversary at the Sana Konung because this was where she was born and where she grew up offering services to Lord Govindaji," said Thoidingjam Lakshimpriya Devi, the daughter of MK Angousana Devi, older sister of MK Binodini Devi, and the eldest grandchild of Maharaja Churachand Singh and Maharani Dhanamanjuri of Manipur. Joining her at the morning *singgar arti* were her younger sister Huidrom Anuradha Devi, Trustee of Imasi Foundation; their younger cousins L. Somi Roy, son of MK Binodini Devi and Founder-Trustee of Imasi

Foundation, and Wangam Somorji of the foundation's Advisory Council; and Rakesh Konjengbam, Educational Adviser to the foundation.

"Editing *Wari Macha Binodini* was an emotional journey for me as it brings her stories in her first book *Nungairakta Chandramukhi* that I read as a boy, along with her unpublished short stories, to today's young readers," said Roy. "We thank Amit Das and Imasi Foundation Adviser Satyajit Aribam of EV Mobility, and Rahul Manav of Samyak Entrepreneurs, for their support for this and other centenary publications." *Wari Macha Binodini* is published by Imasi Publications in Meitei Mayek for use by students. The original stories in *Nungairakta Chandramukhi*, included in *Wari Macha Binodini*, have recently been added to the curriculum at Manipur University. It is the

third volume of unpublished works by MK Binodini Devi to be brought out by Imasi Foundation, after *Isei*

Binodini of her songs and *Khonjel Lila Binodini* of her radio plays.

Imasi Foundation Trustee Huidrom Anuradha noted, "By publishing new books by *Imacha*, we advance the mission of Imasi Foundation to protect, preserve, and promote the legacy of MK Binodini Devi. Bringing *Nungairakta Chandramukhi* back into circulation along with stories she was not able to publish during her lifetime, is the highest and most intimate tribute we can pay to the writer known to her many sons and daughters of Manipur as *Imasi*."

Bhasha Samsad's publication of *Nil Sandhyar Agun Megh*, a translation of the writer's renowned play *Asangba Nongjibi* by Minati Ghosh, with L. Somi Roy, is the first publication of the works

of MK Binodini Devi in Bangla. "We at Bhasha Samsad and Minati Ghosh whose translations we have had to pleasure of publishing over the years, are proud to have produced such a landmark book,"

said Bitasta Ghoshal, Founder and CEO of Bhasha Samsad. "That we introduce Maharaj Kumari Binodini to the Bangla reading public with two works in the book - *Nil Sandhyar Agun Megh* and *Sri Bhavana* - that are rooted in Bengal's Santiniketan, will deeply touch all her readers in Bengal. We feel so close to Manipur and the Maharaj Kumari that our publication is launched at Lord Govindaji by her family on the Centenary. The eminent writer so deeply loved Rabindranath Tagore and Bangla literature that it makes it an special honour for us to be part of remembering her through her words and works. We bow our heads to Lord Govindaji and to the Maharaj Kumari from Bengal."

Sunday Editorial

Why not a demand for minority status to Meitei / Meetei in election manifestos

Among others one major issue of the Meitei/meetei people is the apprehension about the fate of Meitei/Meetei as many people felt that a constitutional provision to protect the people and the land is required.

For years some have been demanding for granting of the ST status to the Meitei/Meetei people as it is considered as a tool to protect the land. But many didn't like this idea as it would either distort the history of the erstwhile kingdom or may create chaos in the society.

This is being mentioned as the demand for ST status for Meitei/Meetei has been strongly reacted from hill people on the fear that their quota's may be useless if Meitei/Meetei community have been included in the ST list.

Those demanding Meitei / Meetei status and those opposing the demand have little difference if look upon with from their respective perspectives. Both wanted full protection of the Meitei/Meetei community even though their strategies are different.

This issue is one complicated issue and perhaps all chief Ministers of the successive government were left with no choice on whom they had to be sided with.

May be that is one reason for political parties to sideline this matter. The Congress manifesto which was released two days back mentioned nothing about this matter and NPP too sideline this issue.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had stated in the state assembly about the deliberate needs for protection of the Meitei/Meetei as others in the Hill have already been protected by the article 371C of the Indian constitution and those in the valley have also been protected by the Minority act. The statement however, had angered the Schedule Tribe Demand Committee of the state and had reacted denouncing the CM reply in the ongoing session as irresponsible.

At first people across the state including this newspaper felt trouble water brimming in the N. Biren Singh Administration. He had stated that he will look into the demand for inclusion of the Meitei/Meetei in Schedule Tribe list.

While replying to the queries in connection demand for inclusion of Meitei/Meetei the leader of the house N. Biren Singh seem to know what to do as he is very much concern about the protection of the people of his state. Both parties demanding the ST status and those opposing it knows that Manipuri people, particularly the Meitei community need some kind of protection. But then ST demand perhaps is not going to be a solution as not every Manipuri like the idea.

At this point it is worth mentioning that the Supreme Court has asked the Central Government to file a reply to the request to the High Court to transfer the pending petition seeking grant of minority status in 9 states including Manipur to the High Court. The petition has requested to transfer all the cases related to it to the Supreme Court. The SC also gave times to the center to grant minority status to Hindus in the said 9 state.

Everyone knows that Meitei/Meetei community in the state have been following the Hindu religion for many centuries. If the Meitei/ Meetei following the Hindu religion have been granted minority status there should not be any differences of opinion because this is one opportunity to get constitutional safeguard to the meetei Meitei community following Hindu religion.

Imphal Times hope that political parties contesting in this election include some idea which will be consensus to all people like demand for minority status for the Meitei / meetei community in their respective "Election manifestos".

Boss, your smartphone knows all about you

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



A video is going viral on social media in which it is shown that a man gets so engrossed in his mobile phone that he does not know where his next step is going to fall.

The man falls on the railway tracks while walking on a platform at a metro station in East Delhi. Luckily some security personnel from the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) caught sight of him and he was saved before the arrival of a train. Smartphones have become so important in our lives that most of the time we all spend scrolling this or that on the screen. And a smartphone is such a thing about which it is said that "it knows everything about you". Not only that, your phone knows you more than you. The same applies to computers as well. Both the devices are based on the Internet and Artificial Intelligence (AI) has arrived to manage the Internet. Google is at the forefront in using AI. As per the accounting firm PwC, the artificial intelligence industry will be worth over Rs 117 lakh crore by the year 2030. Artificial intelligence has already entered people's lives through digital assistants and face recognition technology etc.

Dr. Amit Nagpal, Founder and National President of Bloggers Alliance, an association of bloggers, storytellers and creators, says that in the coming times, "Artificial Intelligence will handle the routine tasks of work and everyday life, while humans will engage their brain in creative tasks. That is, machines and gadgets will do routine work and humans will do creative work." World renowned Artificial intelligence expert Stuart Russell says that if machines become super intelligent then the very existence of humans will be in danger. Intelligence is power. Power means control, and that will be the end of the story of humans on Earth. Through artificial intelligence technology, you can track people, recognize their faces. Its abuse has already started, for example, your computer knows all about you, and your mobile phone listens to all your conversations. It is the responsibility of man now to stop these machines from making terrible mistakes, or else everything will perish. It's a warning.

In general terms, artificial intelligence refers to computation tools that resemble human intelligence to perform certain tasks in exactly the same manner. This technology is currently progressing at a very fast pace. Indeed computer databases have evolved into the core infrastructure that drives software. It is anticipated that most of the new features that will be included in the software in the coming years will be powered by AI. Then there is Big Data by which YouTube receives over 400 hours of video content every single minute. Computers have been trained in such a way that it can identify a person's personality better than his friends. To do this, it is seen what type of posts a person likes on social media. Artificial intelligence and Big Data have a special relationship. Machine learning has contributed a lot to the development of AI. This technique trains AI using large data sets. AI chatbots can be trained on data sets that include understanding human interactions.

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Children's Mental Health is a treasure for the future



By - M.R. Lahu

The impact of the pandemic on children's education was immense. It forced schools to shut in many states and children were leaning on the mobile screens to learn their lessons. The reopening process is on step by step and the schools will be back to normal functioning in a couple of days. The process of learning should be a never ending one. There have been studies and researches to delve into the health hazards that prolonged screen time can cause. Studies reveal that lengthy screen time can definitely cause physical and mental health issues. The World Mental Health Day was observed with a slogan "Mental Health of the Youth in the Changing Times." Not only lengthy screen times that causes mental and physical issues, there are also factors that most of us rarely take notice of. It is estimated that about 50% of the mental health problems among the youth start well before the age of 14. When the person is 24 years old, he would gather almost all habits and behavioral benchmarks which would ultimately work as the basics of his future mental health. It has become a normal affair for our society to deal with issues such as mental health problems, drug addiction, criminal behavior and many other diseases among children.

A young man of 24 years hacked his aged parents to death recently in Kerala. To ensure their death, he

hacked them multiple times and managed to flee to the neighboring state. His revelations to the police were so startling that after killing his parents, he tried to inject pesticides on their dead bodies. Since that did not work, he poured it on their face and mouth. The reason that led to the crime was more shocking than the crime itself. His mother asked him to fetch a glass of water from the kitchen as she sat on the couch and he got easily provoked by his mother's demand. When his paralysed father started to cry out of fear, he hacked him several times. This is not an isolated incident. There are many such incidents to quote from. Who should we pin blame on when a society has to undergo such incidents?

Studies with regard to the functioning of human minds reveal the fact that the behavioral changes that the child captures when he is a child would continue to stay with him as he grows. Small behavioral issues that we neglect usually get accumulated and mutated into issues that become difficult to handle in a later stage. Doctors speak of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), a chronic condition which includes attention difficulty and hyperactivity. This situation, starting at a young age, persists into adulthood. Experts say that children with ADHD at a young age would carry the imprints of its modified version into their adulthood. This indeed, according to some surveys, leads to issues such as low self-esteem, inconsistency in the workplace, distorted family life, mental sickness and criminal mentality. Impact of adverse childhood experience would lead the child to serious health issues both mental and physical. To some extent, the surveys reveal that such issues may indeed lead to the premature death of the person. A

study conducted among 500 prisoners at one of the jails in Kerala came out with shocking findings. It says that about 150 sampled prisoners had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in their childhood. The study also reveals that proper intervention in their childhood could have averted such behavioral problems. A large number of kids housed in the Children's Home by the state government have mental health problems. Children living in such an environment are away from their parents bereft of parental care and love. This affects their mental health seriously and brings irreparable hazards in their behavior. Studies also reveal that mental health of the mother during pregnancy is an important factor. The mental impulses of the mother during the pregnancy sends waves impacting the child's brain and becomes a part of the child's mental aptitude as he grows.

The virus has once again chained our kids to the mobile screens and chances of real-life socializing became less. Incessant gluing to the mobile screens would take away the energizing elements of genuine socialization. The virtual world the child captures and scrolls down on the mobile screen is not small but that is not as enduring and effective as the real-life situations that a child can involve and experience from. Children need to be monitored by the parents and positive parenting needs to be a natural agenda of the family. There should also be initiatives taken at school and college level to address this issue. Adequate interventions by the teachers by regularly monitoring the mental growth of the children with better refreshing activities should be put in practice. When it comes to the schools, the class teachers can play a greater role by monitoring the physical and mental

requirements of the children with the support of the parents. But locking the children up in their houses curtails all such interventions. What becomes riskier is the fact that the children, being put in isolation, begin to create a virtual world of imagination and the influence of materials available on the screen mounts. It becomes more difficult for the parents and the teachers to accurately study the impact of screen life in a secluded real life. Not only is the real educating process getting disrupted but home confinement of children pulls them away from creative socialization. Parents have a great role to play in helping the children. This pandemic and its enforced home isolation should be used for more creative interventions in the family itself. Especially, parents should be a consistent listener to their children and try to spend more time with them. Without avoiding their feelings, they should be helped to pick up and nurture positivity in a large way. Setting separate time for online learning and online enjoyment, parents can regulate children's mental involvement on virtual contents. Creating a positive environment in the family would help the children to become more inventive and help them appreciate goodness around them. Interacting with their friends would also help the children come out of their mental stress to some extent. No doubt, living a healthy life in a pandemic hit world, without our children being lost in the virtual world of illusion is a challenge but not impossible.

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Awareness About Gender sensitisation

By - Kaustov Kashyap
Founder & Director, HR & Career Consultant, Jorhat, Assam

Gender sensitisation refers to the crucial process of educating and raising awareness about gender justice and raising awareness about systemic inequities for marginalised genders. Growing up in Indian households, we are made to imbibe gender-based stereotypes.

These stereotypes can range from restricting those assigned females at birth to the domestic sphere, to expecting or allowing only men to help the patriarchy of the family with financial issues. Many aspects of life like moral policing for clothing, arranged marriages, participating in the public sphere, and more are also deeply intertwined with the casteist notion of "purity" and "pollution".

Hence, while discussing gender sensitisation it is also important to acknowledge the hierarchical obstacles of caste and class.

Households also reinforce gender-based stereotypes regarding clothing, hair colour and even how a person decides to walk or talk. For example, some behaviours are deemed too feminine for those who are assigned male at birth and some behaviours are too masculine for those who are assigned female at birth. There is very little conversation around how gender is a socially constructed concept that individuals can 'transgress'.

Moreover, there is also the compulsive need to adhere to either of the two binaries when it comes to gender expression, leaving very little space for non-binary individuals to feel comfortable at their homes or at their educational institutes, where

the latter reinforces what is learnt at home. Furthermore, these also invalidate transgender and non-binary identities and trigger gender dysphoria for many individuals.

Educational institutions play an essential role in building a cohort of young individuals who move forward and play important roles in administrative policies. Schools are a starting point for children to learn about gender sensitisation.

During the formative years of their lives, institutions like schools and colleges must make an active attempt to educate them about issues surrounding gender-based stereotypes and prejudices. Hence, gender sensitisation must be introduced when young individuals are growing and learning. With this, they would be able to form positive ideologies and create positive change moving forward.

Marginalised genders face a lot of challenges growing up within prejudicial households and institutes. The prejudice is made doubly aggressive for those belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward castes. It is also tied up with wealth privilege. While talking about gender sensitisation, it is important to address the intersectionality that exists within each of these challenges as well as how they can be addressed by organisations or administrations.

Despite existing legal mandates, schools and colleges do not always prioritise student safety. This is es-

pecially true of campuses that do not hold regular gender sensitisation training. Moreover, many colleges do not have a proper committee that deals with cases of sexual harassment within colleges. This committee is known as the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).

According to the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, an educational institute must set up the ICC adhering to its guidelines to create an unbiased redressal mechanism. The same is true for schools that are careless when it comes to informing students about their rights when it comes to the violation of consent.

However, while many universities have an ICC on paper, the students are unaware of its functioning and do not know how to approach them. This is where Gender Sensitisation Committees (GSC) come into place. GSCs are supposed to help students in accessing legal aid. However, complex jargon becomes a barrier, and the knowledge of legal discourse also becomes inaccessible to many people.

Even though the committees can make an active attempt to educate students within the classroom about redressal mechanisms and legal knowledge, the complicated language through which the rights of students are laid out creates difficulty in understanding and seeking out legal aid.

College campuses are often extremely oppressive for marginalised genders. Moreover, there also exist systemic obstacles in the path of creating a gender-sensitive classroom. For example, while many col-

leges have now started giving importance to Women's Development Cells, the presence of Queer Collectives in colleges is still very meagre. Few colleges like Miranda House have been able to provide administrative support to the queer collective on campus.

However, inherent homophobia and a lack of understanding of gender-based issues lead to marginalised genders still feeling isolated and unsafe within their college campuses. For example, for non-binary or transgender individuals, the unavailability of gender-neutral washrooms can trigger gender dysphoria and risk their safety.

Moreover, those who identify as trans or non-binary, or whose gender expression does not conform with societal expectations, are also faced with verbal, emotional and physical bullying. A lack of understanding of queer identities has long term impacts that pose a considerable threat to life for queer people. Conversion therapies where queer folks are forced to go through brutalities is one example where a lack of gender sensitisation amounts to extreme violence.

Gender sensitisation, if included within the curriculum, provides a sense of security to marginalised genders. A gender-sensitive classroom would be able to educate students within the campus and enable faculty about important issues about gender discourse.

A gender sensitisation training session can help students understand what kind of behaviours are harmful to marginalised genders. The training sessions can also help students understand what

microaggressions are. This is especially true of students brought up in an environment where gender-based stereotypes have formulated most of their lives. Hence, gender sensitisation training can help them unlearn regressive prejudices and provide a meaningful transition to develop into more responsible students and peers. Moreover, it is also essential to have a continuous discourse regarding establishing boundaries and understanding consent.

Gender sensitisation committees can provide a two-pronged approach wherein dominant genders are taught to respect consent and boundaries while marginalised genders are taught about their rights regarding safe practices. For example, while marginalised genders must understand their rights and assert firm boundaries, it is equally vital for dominant genders to know that they are very much a part of the process that can make college campuses a safer space.

Dominant genders must learn the importance of respecting consent in social and private situations and learn the importance of being active bystanders. Gender sensitisation practices can also help students understand who to approach in case their consent is violated.

Training manuals and workshops also streamline processes while educating individuals about sensitive topics. For example, a workshop on learning about the importance of the POSH Law will empower students to reach out to their campus ICC in any case of need. Necessary legal knowledge and constitutional rights that are otherwise not easily accessible can also be introduced in a simplified manner.

SUNDAY POEM

This is an election

By:- Herojit Philem

This is an election, and we fight
We kill our brethren
Our mothers cry; we cry.

This is an election, and it sold us
At a drop of wine,
At a piece of meat.

We care not who becomes the leader.
We are threatened with bullets.
We are tempted with money.

We are given fake promises.
But we have hope for a better life
And we believe our elected leader will do the best.

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Legendary Singer Lata Mangeshkar Passes Away India Mourns the Death of the Country's Nightingale

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Feb 06:

Legendary singer India's nightingale Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar (92) who was admitted to the Breach Candy Hospital in South Mumbai after being diagnosed with COVID-19 and Pneumonia on January 08, passed away, on Sunday, February 06.

She breathed her last at 8.12 am. Her sad demise was mourned by one and all, who included the President, Prime Minister and a host of leaders, artists and common men. In his condolence message Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said that it's "heartbreaking that our dear Lata didi is not with us today."

"There is hardly a corner of the world where her voice was not heard," Thackeray added. Her last rites will be performed at 6.30 pm at Shivaji Park, in Central Mumbai on Sunday. The Maharashtra Government has declared two days state mourning.

Lata has four siblings-Meena Khadikar, Asha Bhosle, Usha Mangeshkar and Hridaynath Mangeshkar-of whom she was the eldest.

Lata Mangeshkar, the eldest daughter of musician Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar, and his wife Shevanti was born as Hema, on September 28, 1929 in Indore in Madhya Pradesh. She was named as Hrudaya and finally as Lata. Pandit



Bharat Rata Lata Mangeshkar. (Photo credit: DGIPIR)

Deenanath was a classical singer and theatre actor. In 1942, when Lata was 13, her father Deenanath died of heart disease. Master Vinayak (Vinayak Damodar Kamnarkar), the owner of "Navyug Chitrapat" movie company and a close friend of the Mangeshkar family, helped Lata to start her career as a singer and actress.

Lata sang the song "Naachu Yaa Gade, Khelu Saari Mani Haus Bhaari", which was composed by Sadashivrao Nevrekar for Vasant Joglekar's Marathi film "Kiti Hasaal" (1942), but the song was dropped from the final cut. Then Master Vinayak gave her a small role in Navyug Chitrapat's Marathi movie "Pahili Mangalaa-Gaur" (1942), in which she also sang "Natali Chaitraachi Navalaai" which was composed by Dada Chandeekar. Her first Hindi song was "Mata Ek Sapoot Ki Duniya Badal De Tu" for the Marathi film "Gajabhaau" (1943).

However, Ghulam Haider gave her first major break with the song "Dil Mera Toda, Mujhe Kahin Ka Na Chhota", in the movie Majboor (1948), which became her first big breakthrough film hit. In a career spanning nearly eight decades, Lata Mangeshkar was the singing voice for a bevy of Bollywood leading ladies. She lent her voice to over 5,000 songs in over a thousand Hindi and 36 regional films. She has had an unprecedented impact on Indian film music

Music direction
Lata Mangeshkar composed music under the pseudonym "Anand Ghan" for the Marathi films: Ram Ram Pavhana (1960), Marathi Tituka Melvava (1963), Mohityanchi Manjula (1963), Sadhi Manase (1965) and Tambadi Mati (1969). She won Maharashtra Government's Best Music Director Award for the film "Sadhi Manase". The

song "Airanichya Deva Tula" from the same film received the best song award. **Production**
Lata Mangeshkar produced four films: "Vandal" (Marathi) (1953), "Jhaanjhar" (Hindi), co-produced with C. Ramchandra (1953), "Kanchan Ganga" (Hindi) (1955), and "Lekin" (Hindi) (1990).

Awards
The Dadasaheb Phalke Award was bestowed on her in 1989 by the Government of India. In 2001, in recognition of her contributions to the nation, she was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour and was only the second vocalist, after M S Subbulakshmi, to receive this honour. France conferred on her its highest civilian award, the Officer of the Legion of Honour, in 2007.

She was the recipient of three National Film Awards, 15 Bengal Film Journalists' Association Awards, Four Filmfare Best Female Playback Awards, two Filmfare Special Awards, Life Time Achievement Awards, and many more. In 1974, she became the first Indian to perform at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

Politics
Lata Mangeshkar was also a Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha from November 22, 1999 to November 21, 2005.

melodious and mesmerizing voice, brought joy to the lives of every generation, not only in India, but also throughout the world. It is not possible to put into words her contribution to the music world, her death is a personal loss for me." The Union Home Minister said that "I consider myself fortunate that from time to time I received the affection and blessings of Lata Didi. With her incomparable patriotism, gentle and sweet speech, she will always be amongst us; I express my condolences to her family and innumerable fans."

Enhanced capital spending in Budget 2022 will have 3-4 times multiplier effect on the economy, says Piyush Goyal

Courtesy AIR
New Delhi, Feb 06:

Union Minister for Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal has said that the Union Budget 2022-23 has laid a focus on demand stimulus and that the enhanced capital spending would lead to greater demand and job opportunities. He was speaking in a special industry interaction programme on the Union Budget held in Bombay Stock Exchange in Mumbai yesterday.

He stated that, capital expenditure has been raised by 35%, to more than Rs. 7.5 lakh crore. Rs. 1 lakh crore is being given to states as interest-free 50-year loan to support funding of infra projects.

He said, Centre and states together, we are looking at Rs. 10.5 lakh crore of public spending." The Minister said that the enhanced capital spending of Rs. 10.5 lakh crore provided in the Budget 2022 is expected to have at least a 3-4 times multiplier effect in economic activity.

The Minister noted that import figures were rising,

indicating revival of demand. He added, together with capex thrust provided by government, this opens up huge opportunities to businesses to expand and look at new business avenues.

Union Minister Shri Goyal said India was showing rapid recovery in terms of tax collections, industrial output, consumer demand. He said in the Budget 2022-23, there are no new taxes and the government has forecast conservative revenue estimates.

Union Minister further said Budget 2022 has provided sufficient funding so that economic growth continues to be above 8% in next year and hope to look at least two decades of growth, ensuring prosperity can flow to everyone.

Detailing the focus on PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan in the Budget, Union Minister said that the Plan will help us plan infrastructure projects more intelligently, and also reducing logistics costs.

Goyal said India did not let down a single international obligation even during COVID19 period. He added

that due to Digital India and thrust given for broadband expansion, we were able to continue to provide services to any part of the world.

The Minister exhorted the merchandise sector and services sector to go for a race to the top. The merchandise exports target which stands at \$ 400 billion and service exports which stands at \$ 240 billion should each aim to reach \$ 1 trillion, he said.

Commerce and Industry Minister shared with the industry that despite the pandemic, our services export this year will cross \$ 240 billion, the highest ever in India's history.

The Minister recalled that to determine India's export target PM did a first-of-its-kind bottom-up approach in consultation with industry and foreign missions in 180 countries.

Minister informed that as of 31st January, India has already achieved \$ 336 billion of exports, thanks to 10 months of continuous \$ 30 billion-plus exports. Commerce Minister exhorted the industry to take up this exports challenge.

PM, HM condoles the passing away of legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar

PJB
New Delhi, Feb 06:

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has expressed deep grief over the passing away of legendary singer Lata Mangeshkar. The Prime Minister has spoken to her family and expressed his condolences. He also said that the coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerise people.

In a series of tweets, the Prime Minister said;

"I am anguished beyond words. The kind and caring Lata Didi has left us. She leaves a void in our nation that cannot be filled. The coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability to mesmerise people."

"I consider it my honour that I have always received immense affection from Lata Didi. My interactions with her will remain unforgettable. I grieve with my fellow Indians on the passing away of Lata Didi. Spoke to her family and expressed condolences. Om Shanti."

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah has also condoled the passing away of famous playback singer, Bharat Ratna Sushree Lata Mangeshkar.

Skilled youth are the future of the country

The beginning of the robot revolution, which was predicted earlier, will now be premature due to the spread of the corona virus. The latest report of the World Economic Forum (WEF) has also said that the nature of billions of jobs will change by the year 2025. Billions of jobs are being changed as a result of the rapid increase in automation and digitization. Due to this, up to ten crore new jobs will be created.

The good news is that due to artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, more jobs will be created than the number of people who will lose their jobs. However, it is most important for the youth to be ready with the skills to grab them with both hands. The WEF analytical report means that the plans of the countries of the world need to be accelerated to the extent

of necessity. Twenty sectors such as satellite services, electric vehicles, innovative antibiotics, ed tech etc are expected to change the world in the near future. To what extent will India benefit from such expansion opportunities?

Last year, UNICEF projected that by 2030 the country's working-youth population would exceed 96 million, the highest in the world with 310 million graduates. However, only half of the total applicants will have the skills required for employment. Studies show that the number of people who lack the skills for the job is increasing. It has also been suggested that there is a need for immediate corrective action. However, the slogan of the new National Education Policy is that 'Quality Education is the right of the student'. It is good to hear, the broader agenda of



By- Vijay Garg

mobilizing human resources to maximize their contribution to the country's development is yet to emerge as the main agenda of the governments. Launched the 'Skilled India' policy with an aim to convert 40 crore people into highly skilled resources till date. The Center itself admitted that only 24.17 per cent of those who were trained in the first phase of the 'Skill Development Scheme' during 2016-2019 could get employment. The fact that out of 72 lakh trained

candidates, only 15 lakh were in employment, can come. This proves beyond doubt that the Skill India target has been badly missed. Both the Telugu states have recently signed an agreement with American company Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to improve the talent of 80,000 students by next year. He has collaborated with Microsoft and National Skill Development Agency to equip one lakh young graduates with digital skills. In India, where more than a third of the country's population is in the age group of 15-24 years, it is urgent to mold them into skilled human resources. It is not possible, a special system which periodically assesses the number of skilled human resources required in each sector over the next five to ten years, says that such system should be created and suitable based on its research

and recommendations of Curriculum should be designed. Priority should be given to basics of language, maths and science up to secondary level, moral education and character development should be limited and priority of studies at college level should be employment and skills, while many companies do not have jobs. The reasons for giving are attributed to non-availability of properly qualified skilled workers. It is a viable strategy to allay the plight of postgraduate and doctoral candidates competing for modest jobs. If education is turned into a powerful tool to meet the emerging employment requirements from time to time, then the country will be able to move ahead and lead with multifaceted development.

IT Correspondent
Geneva, Feb 06:

Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the global media safety and rights body, mourns the demise of a promising Indian scribe in a landmark blast, planted by left-wing rebels in Kalahandi locality of Odisha province. A native of Mohangiri village under Madanpur Rampur area, Rohit Kumar Biswal (40) stepped on the mine on 5 February 2022 and died on the spot.

Rohit used to work for an



Rohit Kumar Biswal, who died in the line of duty as a reporter. After 12 journalistic casualties in January, where Mexico was at the top with the murder of four scribes, followed by Pakistan, Haiti, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Honduras and Philippines, India has added one more in the beginning of this year's second month," said Blaise Lempen, PEC secretary-general (www.presseemblem.ch).

The bygone year witnessed the killing of 79 media employees by assailants in 29 countries, where Afghanistan came out as the most dangerous country for journalists with 12 casualties, followed by Mexico (10 dead), Pakistan (7), India (6), the Philippines, Yemen (4 each), Democratic Republic of Congo (3), Myanmar, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Burkina-Faso, Turkey (2 each), etc.

India earlier lost Buddhishat Avinash Jha (a journalist cum Right to Information activist) from Bihar on 12 November, informed Nava Thakuria, PEC's India representative, adding that the populous country earlier lost media workers namely Ashu Yadav, Sulabh Srivastava, Ch. Keshav, Manish Kumar Singh and Raman Kashyap to assailants in 2021.

Moreover, Indian photojournalist Danish Siddiqui was killed in Afghanistan by Taliban forces last year.

Charanjit Singh Channi to be Congress CM face in Punjab, announces Rahul Gandhi

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 06:

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday announced incumbent chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi's name as the CM candidate for the upcoming Punjab Assembly Election 2022. It was a difficult decision but the people of Punjab made it easy as they wanted a CM who comes from a poor family, Rahul Gandhi said, after sharing anecdotes about Channi, Navjot Singh Sidhu and Sunil Jakhar. "It is a decision of Punjab. It is not my decision. I haven't decided. I asked workers, candidates, MLAs, people, the youth of Punjab... what people said has led me to my final decision," Rahul Gandhi said adding that Congress is a party of diamonds and it is not easy to pick one among them. Thanking Rahul Gandhi, Sidhu and Jakhar, Channi turned emotional and said he will serve Punjab with total honesty. I sincerely thank the Congress High Command and people of Punjab for bestowing their trust in me. As you have seen

us work so hard in the last 111 days to take Punjab forward, I assure you to take Punjab and Punjabis on the path of progress with new zeal and dedication. While all eyes were on the crucial announcement which Congress did contrary to its practice, Rahul Gandhi delayed the announcement as he recollected stories about Sidhu, Channi and Jakhar and how Congress in Punjab has a team of able leaders. "It is very easy to give a speech. But I have been observing our leaders deeply, how they react to a situation... Politics is not an event, it is a journey full of difficulties, Rahul Gandhi said. "Everyone has their own fight. PM Narendra Modi also has his own fight. Sidhu ji, Channi ji, Jakhar ji all have their different fights," Rahul said. Opening the address on Sunday, Sunil Jakhar, who was apparently miffed with the Congress high command, heaped praises on Rahul Gandhi and said making Charanjit Singh Channi the chief minister of Punjab following Amarinder Singh's exit was the greatest political decision that Rahul Gandhi

has ever taken. Following Jakhar's address, Navjot Singh Sidhu took the stage and using his usual strain of 'thoko taal', Sidhu said Rahul Gandhi is the only person who can make Charanjit Singh Channi the chief minister. "Rahul Ji, Sidhu aashiq hai Punjab da," Sidhu said adding that he will always remain a worker of the party and only a minister becomes an ex, but a worker never becomes 'ex'. As Sidhu raised an emotional pitch during his address, Channi left his seat and hugged Sidhu. The Congress put up a unique show of unity as Rahul Gandhi

arrived in Punjab. Sunil Jakhar drove the car for Rahul Gandhi while Charanjit Singh Channi and Navjot Singh Sidhu sat in the back. Tweeting the video of the car, the Punjab Youth Congress wrote, "This is how the United Congress will drive the Congress to victory in Punjab." As Charanjit Singh Channi addressed, he said in his long association with politics, he always had a clean image and has always been honest. Pledging to full cooperation, Channi said he will support whoever becomes the CM candidate in the upcoming polls.

India's COVID vaccination coverage crosses 169 crore mark

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 06:

India's COVID-19 vaccination coverage crossed 169 Crore mark yesterday. Till now over 169 crore 40 lakh 55 thousand doses have been administered. Health Ministry said, more than 40 lakh 57 thousand Vaccine Doses were administered yesterday. It said, more than one crore 46 lakh 98 thousand Precaution Doses have been administered to identified categories of beneficiaries like Health Care Workers, Front Line Workers and people over 60 years age. The country reported over one lakh 27 thousand new Covid cases in the last 24 hours. The National Recovery Rate stands at 95.64 percent.

Sports

Athletic Club Bilbao Knock Real Madrid Out of Copa Del Rey

Agency
Bilbao, Feb 06:

Alex Berenguer's 89th-minute winner put Athletic Club Bilbao into the semifinals of the Copa del Rey for the fourth consecutive season with a 1-0 win at home to Real Madrid to add to their 3-2 win over Barcelona in the previous round. The game looked to be heading for extra time when the winger collected the ball on the edge of the Madrid area to slot the ball past Thibaut Courtois in the Madrid goal. It was what Athletic

deserved after dominating the league leaders, who had beaten them three times previously this season, Xinhua reports. The first half saw Athletic look to keep the pressure on Real Madrid high up the field and they created several chances with Dani Garcia seeing one shot saved by Thibaut Courtois and another deflected out for one of several corners. Nico Williams was causing problems down the Real Madrid left flank and he saw a shot blocked, before Iker Muniain fired into the side netting, before Rodrygo hit

Real Madrid's only shot of the half straight at Athletic keeper Julen Aguirrezabala. Eder Militao then produced a great block when Nico looked as if he was in on goal before Athletic suffered a setback on the stroke of halftime when the younger of the Williams brothers was forced off with a hamstring injury. Berenguer replaced Williams for a tense second half with few chances as both sides defended magnificently, but the substitute would be decisive to make it fourth-time lucky

for the Basques, who lost the last two cup finals. In Thursday's second semifinal Betis enjoyed a crushing 4-0 win away to Real Sociedad with two goals from former Real Sociedad striker, Juanmi after 12 and 57 minutes, before a penalty from William Jose, another former player for the home side, and an 87th-minute goal from Aitor Rubial wrapped up a win that was much easier than expected. Valencia and Rayo Vallecano booked their semifinal spots after beating Mallorca and Cadiz on Wednesday night.

ICC U-19 World Cup:

India lifts a record fifth title after beating England by four wickets in Antigua

Courtesy-AIR
Antigua, Feb 06:

In the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, India lifted a record fifth title after beating England by four wickets in the summit clash at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua. Earlier, batting first after winning the toss, England posted 189 runs losing all wickets in 44.5 overs with the help of James Rew's 95-run knock. For India, Raj Bawa picked up a 5-wicket haul while Ravi Kumar took four. In reply, the Yash Dhillal Indian side overhauled the target for the loss of six wickets in 47.4 overs riding on the fifties smashed by Shaikh Rasheed and Nishant Sindhu. For England, Joshua Boyden, James Sales and Thomas Aspinwall scaped two wickets apiece. Earlier, India had won the



U19 World Cup in 2000, 2008, 2012, and 2018. Meanwhile, BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Twitter announced cash rewards for under-19 Indian team. He said, each player from the victorious Indian team will get

a cash reward of 40 lakh rupees. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has congratulated Indian Team for winning the ICC Under-19 World Cup. In a tweet, Mr Modi said, he is extremely proud of our young

cricketers adding that they have shown great fortitude through the tournament. He also said, their stellar performance at the highest level shows that the future of Indian cricket is in safe and able hands.

Covid digest:

Health News

Monkey study finds Omicron booster may not be needed

Courtesy - HT

US government researchers have said they pitted the current Moderna Covid-19 booster shot against an Omicron-specific booster in a study in monkeys. The results showed no significant differences, suggesting a new booster for the new variant may not be required. The study, which is yet to be peer reviewed, involved monkeys vaccinated with two doses of Moderna's vaccine. They were dosed nine months later with either the conventional booster or one specifically targeting the Omicron variant. Researchers said they found both boosters produced "comparable and significant increases in neutralizing antibody responses" against all variants. "This is very, very good news," Daniel Douek, a vaccine researcher at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases who co-lead the study, was quoted as saying by Reuters news agency. "It means we don't need to radically redesign the vaccine to make it an Omicron vaccine." John Moore, a professor of microbiology and immunology who was not involved in the study, said a key advantage of the monkey study is that researchers can boost the animals and then infect them with the virus and measure the immune response. "Let's see what the human data show," Moore said. "Monkey data are generally pretty predictive, but you are going to need the human data." Moderna and Pfizer have started testing Omicron-specific boosters of their vaccines in humans.

Here's the latest on coronavirus from across the globe:

Americas
Data compiled by Johns Hopkins University showed that more than 900,000 people in the US have died so far of the coronavirus. The country has registered more Covid deaths than any other country in the world. "Each soul is irreplaceable. We pray for the loved ones they have left behind, and together we keep every family enduring this pain in our hearts," said President Joe Biden, while urging people to get vaccinated. Health officials in the US are also considering lengthening the gap between the first two vaccine doses to lower the risk of heart inflammation and improve their effectiveness. The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was making the recommendation for the two most commonly used vaccines, Moderna and BioNTech-Pfizer. Currently, the recommended interval between the first two shots of BioNTech-Pfizer and Moderna vaccines is three and four weeks, respectively. Authorities in Canada's Ottawa moved 150 police officers to parts of the city affected by protests against Covid restrictions. "It's not a protest anymore. It's become an occupation. It's time for this to come to an end," said Ontario Premier Doug Ford. Ottawa police chief Peter Slosy said police expected protests to ramp up again this weekend. Demonstrations are also planned in Toronto and Quebec City. Thousands of protesters railing against mandatory vaccination and other Covid-19 restrictions descended on Toronto last

weekend, blocking traffic around Parliament Hill. The numbers have since reduced, but more protesters are expected this weekend. **Asia**
Organizers of the Beijing Winter Olympics reported 45 new Covid cases on the first day of the Games. "The overall number is increased but it is within our expectation," said Huang Chun, deputy director general of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games Pandemic Prevention and Control Office. With most athletes and team members already at the site, organizers now expect case numbers to drop with fewer new arrivals coming. The Games are taking place in a bubble completely separated from the population. Singapore reported 13,046 new cases in the last 24 hours, almost triple the previous day's tally. The country has fully vaccinated 89% of the population, and 59% have received booster shots. Authorities had warned the daily cases may rise to as many as 15,000, due to the spread of the Omicron variant. Health officials said Singapore recorded 85,357 cases over the last 28 days, but 99.7% of them had mild or no symptoms. **Middle East**
Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday said that both he and his wife have tested positive for Covid-19. "Thank God, we are pulling through the sickness, which we learned is an Omicron variant," Erdogan posted on Twitter. Turkey's Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said in a tweet that the couple were well enough to continue working. The minister also said the variant was spreading rapidly in the country.

New WHO platform promotes global cancer prevention

Courtesy-UN News

To mark World Cancer Day, the World Health Organization's (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) launched on Friday the World Code Against Cancer Framework, an online platform that will promote prevention globally and the development of Regional Codes to help fight the disease. Based on current scientific evidence, at least 40 per cent of all cancer cases could be prevented with effective primary prevention measures, and further mortality can be reduced through early detection of tumours. **Regional differences**
Dr. Carolina Espina, the IARC scientist who leads the project, explains that some risk factors are common worldwide, but some patterns are specific to certain regions and socioeconomic and cultural conditions. Because of that, the new framework provides a common strategy and methodology to develop recommendations tailored to the context and needs of local populations. The framework builds on

the success of the fourth edition of the European Code Against Cancer. "This new platform will host existing Regional Codes Against Cancer, such as the European Code... as well as Regional Codes that are currently under development, such as the Latin America and the Caribbean Code Against Cancer, and other future Regional Codes", Dr. Espina explained. The Latin America and the Caribbean Code Against Cancer is expected to be launched in 2023. It will be the first regional adaptation of the European Code Against Cancer. **Rays of Hope Initiative**
Also on Friday, The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced a new initiative, called Rays of Hope, to support Member States with diagnosis and treatment using radiation technologies, beginning with African countries most in need. In a joint statement, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and the IAEA Director General, Rafael Mariano Grossi,

explained how low and middle-income countries (LMICs) are disproportionately affected. **By 2040, over 70 per cent of cancer deaths are expected to occur in LMICs.** According to the two officials, recommended interventions for preventing cancer and other noncommunicable diseases have not been adequately implemented, and treatment remains inaccessible in many parts of the world. "Globally, an estimated half of people diagnosed with cancer may require radiotherapy as part of their care, yet many countries do not have a single radiotherapy machine", they say. The disparity is particularly acute in Africa where nearly 70 per cent of countries reported that radiotherapy is generally unavailable. The IAEA and WHO have a long-standing collaboration to support Member States to address their cancer burdens. The organizations have successfully supported more than 90 governments through IMPACT review missions, and through WHO cancer initiatives in cervical, childhood and breast cancers.