

ECI committed to conduct Free, Fair, Accessible and Inducement Free Election: CEC

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra reiterated that the Election Commission is committed to conduct the forthcoming elections in a free, fair, accessible, inclusive and inducement free manner. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) was briefing the media in a press conference held at Hotel Classic Grande, Chingmeirong today.

Sushil Chandra continued that the Commission has zero tolerance towards abuse by money power and misuse of government machinery and would also not tolerate any mistakes from officers with mala fide intentions and who behave in a biased manner. He further stated that the Commission had harnessed technology to facilitate empowerment of Voters to report violations of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and abuse of money power by activating the eVIGIL App. The eVIGIL is a simple, Android-based Mobile App and a powerful tool to promptly report unlawful



campaigning activities and violation of MCC within minutes of having witnessed them and without having to rush to the office of the returning officer. Users can also report complaints anonymously and action will be taken within 100 minutes. Appreciating the State for promoting gender participation despite obvious logistics challenges, the CEC informed that at least 487 All-Women Managed Polling Stations (16.4% of the total polling stations) would be set up in the state which will have all women polling staff, also including women security personnel in many of

these stations. The initiative had been taken up to provide a comfortable experience to women voters. He also informed that five Assembly Constituencies namely 13-Singjamei, 31-Thoubal, 14-Yaiskul, 15-Wangkhei, 58-Churachandpur will have all polling stations, managed exclusively by women. Apart from these, 115 Model Polling Stations will be set up in the state. The Commission has also directed the Chief Electoral Officer and District Election Officers of all Electoral Districts to ensure availability of Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) like water, electricity, toilets, ramp at all polling sta-

tions, he added. Stressing on measures taken to make the elections truly accessible, Shri Sushil Chandra informed that appropriate facilitation including pick up/drop, wheelchairs, volunteers support and postal ballot facility are being provided to all the mapped PwD and 80+ senior citizen voters in the state. Webcasting will be arranged in 2400 out of 2968 polling stations (over 80%) being set up in the state and the remaining will be covered with offline Videography to ensure smooth conduct of election, he added.

contd. on page 4

NPP alleges threats by some armed outfits to their candidates

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

The National People's Party (NPP) has alleged intimidation and abuse of power being exercised by several militant outfits from Manipur. In a statement, the political party said that some outfits namely, KNF-MC, KNF-Z, UKLF, KNA, HPC (D) have threatened the NPP candidates in different constituencies and have openly come out to support our opponent candidates from BJP and NPF.

"In 55-Tipaimukh AC, the cadres of militant outfits HPC (D) is moving around with arms intimidating the voters and village chiefs to vote for BJP candidates. The underground group like KNA and UKLF under Suspension of Operation (SOO) is threatening our party workers and village chief to support BJP candidate Letpao Haokip at 42 - Tengnoupal AC. At Tamenglong constituency, outfits under SOO are campaigning strongly for NPF and BJP candidates. The outfit has warned our party workers with dire consequences", the NPP

said.

It added that on February 6, the KNF-MC and KNF-Z leaders Paokholen Haokip, Jangkhonlum Haokip and Lunmang Haokip have threatened our workers and village chief to vote for BJP candidate Letzamang Haokip of 57-Henglep AC. The outfit members had halted six women NPP workers and two drivers at Lamden Kuki village and threatened to shoot them if they campaign for NPP candidate.

"We have complained about the incidents of attacks and threats issued to our candidates to Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur State and to Election Commission of India. The ongoing situation is an attempt to jeopardise the conduct of peaceful, free and fair election in the State of Manipur", it added.

National People's Party believes in the democratic process and would like to urge the Election Commission of India to ensure that the election in the State of Manipur is conducted in a free and fair manner.

If the ongoing situation is

allowed to prevail, where militant and underground outfits are moving around openly with arms, the electorates will fear and would not come out to vote, which will directly hamper the conduct of elections.

"Therefore, we at National People's Party would like to urge the authorities to put all underground groups under SOO in their respective camps and recover arms from their possession. We would also like to urge that all constituencies, which has presences of UGs be declared 'MOST SENSITIVE' and additional security is provided in the constituencies for conduct of fair election process", the NPP statement alleged.

The NPP urged authority to provide adequate security cover to the candidates, who are contesting the election from different parts of the State. It is to be mentioned that security cover for our sitting MLAs namely Y. Erabot Singh from Wangkhei AC has been reduced, we demand that enough security cover is provided to him, the statement added.

Governor inspects Covid Vaccination Centres in Kangpokpi & Senapati Districts

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan inspected Covid Vaccination Centres in Kangpokpi & Senapati districts today and reviewed the overall preparedness with health and district

ACOAM Lup and CADA concedes

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

All Club Organisation, Association and Meira Paibi Lup concedes the untimely demise of BK Moirangcha. A simple condolence meet was organized at the Head office of ACOAM Lup in the presence of its President and members and concedes the demise of Bijoykumar Moirangcha. BK Moirangcha was the convenor of the People Task Force for COVID-19 and conducted awareness in every nook and corner of the state. To lose a great leader like BK Moirangcha during this critical time is a loss not only for the CSOs but for all of the state, the press release said.

Coalition Against Drugs and Alcohol (CADA) also concedes the demise of BK Moirangcha. A press release by the body said, "The untimely demise of BK Moirangcha, Convenor of Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System (JILPS) due to COVID-19 on 6 February at JNIMS Hospital is very unfortunate."

level officials for maximum coverage under Covid-19 Vaccination Programme.

While reaching the Vaccination Centre at Inspection Bungalow (IB) at Kangpokpi district head quarters, Governor was accorded a warm welcome by the Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police and other district level officials. Shri La. Ganesan inspected the facilities provided for the vaccination programme and interacted with students who were waiting their turns to get vaccinated. He asked the students to be the messengers of the vaccination programme so that many will come out voluntarily to get vaccinated. Governor distributed vaccination certificates, vaccination badges and pens to the students.

Later, Governor went to Senapati district head quarters where he visited the Covid Vaccination Centre opened at the Mini Stadium. La. Ganesan in-

spected the facilities provided for the vaccination and interacted with the people there about the vaccination programme. Governor also enquired about the preparedness, coverage and people's response to the programme. Deputy Commissioner, Senapati and Health officials brief about the coverage, preparedness and assure him to cover maximum population in the programme. Governor also distributed Vaccination Certificates to the beneficiaries. He asked the district administration to communicate school authorities and Head Masters/Principals for their support to ensure maximum enrolment of students in the vaccination programme.

Dr. N. Shyamjai, Mission Director, National Health Mission, Manipur, Chief Medical Officers of Kangpokpi and Senapati districts and other officials attended the inspection visit.

Minister Losii Dikho files nomination

IT News
Senapati, Feb 8:

Losii Dikho, Minister, Printing & Stationery and PHED filed his nomination for the upcoming 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly from 48 Mao constituency (AC) in Naga People's Front (NPF) ticket today. He filed his nomination paper at the office of the Returning Officer (RO) 48- Mao AC, H. L. Jain.

Tadubi AC MLAN. Kayisii

also filed his nomination from National People's Party (NPP) ticket at the office of RO 49 Tadubi AC, H. L. Jain.

Filing of nomination for the second phase of the upcoming State Assembly election to the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly will continue till 11th February and scrutiny of Nomination paper will be taken up on 14th February. The last date for withdrawal of candidature will be 16th February.

College teachers demand clarification regarding payment of beneficiaries to retired teachers

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

No. 10/187/2018-HE dated 03/07/2021 as approved by the state cabinet dated 23/12/2021.

The retired teachers have problems to submit their applications for commutation of pension and other claims related to pension which is to be submitted within one year from date of retirement i.e., on or before 28/02/2022 since the majority of teachers superannuated during the year had retired on 28/02/2021. In this connection, the Government has to issue the orders related to the retired teachers within the month of February, 2022 so that the retired teachers may get benefits under ROP Orders No. 10/187/2018-HE dated 03/07/2021.

It is also learnt from reliable sources that the matter is pending with the Administra-

"Govt should send the clarification to AG, Manipur regarding the effective date for payment of SCA & TA and Retirement benefits to the retired college teachers in accordance with the state cabinet decision dated 23.12.2021 by taking special permission from Election Commission of India" - AMCTA

tive Department (HE) after obtaining the concurrence from Finance Department (PIC), Government of Manipur due to sudden imposition of Model Code of Conduct of Election. In this situation, AMCTA feels that the matter is not related to any political issue/party in part/partially as the matter had already been decided by the Government since long back.

Therefore, the Government

of Manipur particularly the Administrative Department of Higher and Technical Education should initiate to seek Special Permission from Election Commission of India for issuing the orders in accordance with the Cabinet Decision dated 23/12/2021 and send the clarification by issuing the orders in the larger interest of the college teachers as well as the higher education of the state.

Chief Election Commissioner inaugurates SVEEP Exhibition

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

On the second day of the Election Commission of India's visit to Manipur, the Chief Election Commissioner of India Sushil Chandra inaugurated SVEEP-Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation Exhibition in connection with the General Election to 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly, 2022 at Hotel Classic Grande, Chingmeirong, Imphal, today.

The Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners were felicitated by First-Time Voters on their arrival at the SVEEP Exhibition site. Balloons with slogan 'Manipur



Votes, 2022' were also released marking the inauguration of the exhibition.

The Chief Election Commissioner, Shri Sushil Chandra

flagged off two video Vans of Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur with messages of 'Informed and Ethical Voting', 'No Voters to be left behind', State Icons and Old Aged voters were felicitated by the Chief Election Commissioner.

The SVEEP Exhibition was organised for the Commission's visit by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur highlighting various activities taken up during Special Summary Revision, 2022. Exhibition of photographs of activities on SSR - 2022, Accessible Elections, Meet the Icons, Cultural Troupe programs under Regional Outreach Bureau,

Imphal, Ballot Battle Quiz Competition, State wide observance of National Voters' Day, State Level SVEEP Workshop, Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs), engaging students to sensitise them on their electoral rights and familiarise them with the electoral process, were among others that were prominently displayed during the Exhibition.

The exhibition was attended by Election Commissioners Rajiv Kumar, Anup Chandra Pandey, Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur Rajesh Agrawal, senior officials of Election Commission of India, State Election Icons and Old Aged voters among others.

Horn OK Please – no one knows this riddle

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Horn OK Please. You must have seen these three words on the back of almost every truck. This sight is common all over the country. No one knows exactly what it means and who first

started this strange tradition. It is said that during the Second World War, when there was an acute shortage of diesel, the trucks had to be run with kerosene. From the point of view of safety, it became necessary to keep distance between two vehicles, so they wrote on the back - Horn OK Please! Another story tells that the Tatas had a monopoly on trucks in the country. To promote 'OK', one of their detergent brands, OK was written in the middle of the Horn Please. God knows, what is the real story behind this riddle. Agreed, that older trucks usually don't have indicators and rear view mirrors, which makes it necessary to blow the horn. Earlier the roads also used to be narrow and accident prone. However, most of the roads nowadays are multi-lane, and new trucks do have indicators and mirrors, yet the 'Horn OK Please' continues to be written.

In 2015, the Maharashtra government banned this 'Horn OK Please' on the back of commercial vehicles. The rationale behind this was that this encourages drivers to use the horn improperly, which increases noise pollution. When it comes to horns, Nitin Gadkari, Union Road Transport Minister, has his own view. He wants to bring a law under which the sound of Indian instruments can be heard from the motor horns. If Gadkari succeeds, the music of flute, tabla, violin, mouth organ and harmonium will be heard from the vehicles. Ambulances and police jeeps will also replace the sirens with the mesmerizing tunes played on All India Radio in the early morning hours. It may sound interesting, but isn't it a weird idea? The main function of the horn is to give a warning, not to entertain people in such a way that they turn around and forget to move away or give a passage to another vehicle.

It is true that loud horns have become so prevalent on highways and in cities that it leaves one's head dizzy. It is also natural to have accidents when driving at high speed with a loud horn. It is reported that 5 lakh road accidents occur in India every year, in which about 1.5 lakh people get killed and many are injured. India loses three percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) due to accidents. The Ministry of Road Transport is considering this problem only to reduce the stress caused by noise. Experts warn that being exposed to noise above 93 decibels for eight hours can lead to hearing loss. In addition to irritability, the noise of the horn can cause loss of hearing. In European countries, vehicle horn noise ranges from 87 to 112 decibels. The ban on the use of multi-tone horns is in force in many cities of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi NCR and Chandigarh. There should be strict legal action on those who use loud horns or honk unnecessarily. Some people lack patience, and hence blow the horn repeatedly. They must be taught a lesson.

India-the spirit of oneness it is and the politics of division it suffers

supreme truth. We as a country have accepted, respected and followed this principle.

The question that surfaces here in this context is that, are we too polarized to forget the spirit of oneness that we nurtured, cherished and flourished with. The best way to delve into this subject is to refer to what Swami Vivekananda spoke of it long ago. Vivekananda was the Shankaracharya of modern India. And Shankaracharya, to re-instate the essence of oneness as a nation, established 4 spiritual monastic centers in four directions of this country. To keep a politically scattered landmass, an agglomeration of regions together, Shankara discovered and promulgated and used the idea of Advaita Vedanta like the inner golden thread that joins the pearls of a necklace. Both the saints considered this land as motherland which, for them, was sacred and divine as the great Goddess herself. For them, the land was her body, her social, economic and political life, her mind, and her philosophy and culture, her soul.

When Swami Vivekananda proclaimed that each soul is potentially divine, Shankara had long ago accentuated it through his Advaita doctrine. Both had spiritual ideals experimented and elaborated to the people of their time barring all other differences and focusing on one practical principle, which was to realize the ultimate truth in everything. The truth, they said, attempts to withhold people from dissecting



By: M.R. Lahu

their intellect in the name of religious differences but helps them find a unifying essence that goes through every religious doctrine like a thread connecting beads of plurality. Swami Vivekananda proclaimed to the

western world that truth is one and we identify it as many. For India, its culture was so supreme that it could easily accept even the idea of atheism without any grudge. Shaking the nation and its people from their self-forgetfulness, he awakened the national spiritual consciousness by genuinely injecting in them the idea of oneness. This was indeed an effort to indirectly elevate the mass into a divine national consciousness which essentially strengthened the country through its millions of freedom fighters. An invigorated freedom struggle against the colonial rule in the country began with full force as the words of Vivekananda swayed across the country. Subhash Chandra Bose and many more moved forward in the path of acquiring freedom igniting the fire of wisdom and essence of oneness that Vivekananda astutely spoke of. For him, religion was a mechanism to serve the poor irrespective of the beliefs and traditions it followed.

But there have always been efforts to downsize the essential Indian thought of oneness by an academia with vested interests in India and abroad. Repeated cries alleging that the country is pitching a war against its minority is heard on a daily basis. The genocide against Muslims that this country is blamed for is because the present dispensation at the center is believed to have a saffron mandate. India with more than 200 million Muslims contributing to its progress in a big way has always been inclusive allowing all its diverse beliefs and faiths enjoying freedom to flourish. Chiseled out of India, our two newborn neighbors with a disproportionate population of the minorities including Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, have successfully curtailed the wings of their generations from prospering, forcefully brushing them under the fear carpet. Being a civilized nation, amicable coexistence was India's pri-

ority irrespective of unscrupulous attack on its secular national credentials. Mahatma Gandhi had imbibed this essential oneness that India stood for generations and wanted to revive that in a country which was free from the British hands. The future of this country stays on such an inclusive ambience that never discriminates people based on their faith, language, tradition, lifestyle and religion.

Artists, actors, comedians, students, politicians or anybody for that matter, enjoys the freedom to diminish and tarnish the essence of our spiritual ethos from platforms in India and abroad. Strengthening its democratic credentials, the country with its majority population, has never reacted to such onslaughts of deliberate denials in a way such situations could have been dealt with in countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh. On one side, a deliberate attempt to demonize India by vested interests is on, but on the other we can see a world intensely inquisitive about the inclusiveness that India stood for generations, taking lessons from it. Wooing the vote banks, Manmohan Singh was not regretful as he battled for the Muslims to have first claim on the country's resources. Decades of Congress Raj in India was a ceremonial attempt to appease the minority to advantageously nibble from their unshaken vote bank. Now what backfires the Congress is the BJP's entry into the Indian polity with Ayodhya, Mathura and much more in the disguise of a savior of the nationalistic, pluralistic Indianness. Rahul Gandhi needs more time to dive deeper into the oneness that Hinduism and Hindutva stand for. And the political Hindutva what he is trying to pin the blame on is an outcome of the minority appeasement politics that his party is known for. For India, Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas by the Modi government should be a benchmark of oneness that India stood for ages with development knocking all the doors with unprejudiced dynamism.

(****The author is a freelance Journalist, Teacher and Social worker based in Kerala. He did his masters in Philosophy and English Literature with BEd. He is based at Pathanamthitta District, Kerala.)

The life of man on earth is dependent on nature

Is it not surprising that the direction in which modern science could think only in the last century, its presence in India was not only in contemplation for centuries, but it was also making historical contributions in many fields of science. By converting ideology into practicality, he laid a solid foundation of mathematics and science.

The life of man on earth is dependent on nature. Nature not only fulfills the needs of man and other living beings, but it also leads to the spiritual element of life. Human beings have got many innate gifts from nature without any discrimination, in which the power of thought and the power of concept come first. On the basis of these divine boosts, human civilizations developed, man gained proficiency in fields like knowledge, science, psychology, philosophy, healthy life through his efforts and went ahead.

The outside world kept motivating him to know every aspect of him. But just as ideas and concepts helped to identify this world, so did questions like where life came from, and what after life. The specialty of the development of the ancient civilization of India was that the seekers, gurus, sages, mystics and ascetics here not only looked outside, but also tried to understand the innermost of man. He recognized the basic consciousness that established the unity of man. He continued to excel in study, contemplation, contemplation, with a tendency to move forward diligently in knowledge and philosophy, and to know more deeply about every achievement. He recognized the interconnectedness of man and nature and clearly laid down the responsibility of man to maintain this mutuality.

The basic element of ancient Indian thought, philosophy and scientific findings, which became a part of life here thousands of years ago, its importance has become not only fully

accepted but also necessary in today's world. If the spirit of non-possessiveness and good conduct had been accepted, then global problems like environmental pollution, climate change, disease, hunger would not have appeared in front of man in a dire form.

Wasn't this scientific thinking that the resources with nature are limited, that man should use them only for fulfilling his needs, not for storage or misuse? The serious and deeply ingrained philosophy and contemplation contained in it was not possible on the basis of experience gained by the five sense organs alone. It has been a powerful and available medium. Modern science has expanded its scope by many tools. But there's also another medium: instincts! This was not possible even with the use of the brain alone. It required the coordination of both the mind and the mind. This is what ancient Indian thought had achieved.

All the civilizations that have developed since ancient times, the pace of their development and the time of beginning are not always the same. Many ideas, discoveries and revelations of nature were made at the same time by many places and also by people. Many civilizations perished due to storms over time, some were able to counteract them and preserve their continuity and progress. The famous poet Mohammad Iqbal saw it this way in the context of the civilization of India: 'There is some thing that the personality does not die, our enemies have been visiting for centuries - where ours is.' He was able to keep this civilization safe even in all kinds of storms. Its inclusive nature was its strength.



By: Vijay Garg

This is what Gandhiji said, 'I will keep the doors and windows of my house open, so that fresh air can come from all sides, but I will not allow my house to be destroyed in the storm!'

At this time the discussion is only about the civilizations of the East and the

West. The situation in the present education system of India is such that the people here have only limited knowledge of their knowledge-tradition. The civilization of the West is mainly seen as the development of science and its global impact. In such a situation, the acquaintance of Indians with science and science in ancient Indian thought and thought cannot be said to be unexpected. It is also a fact that efforts to destroy the Indian tradition of learning and application continued for almost seven hundred years, so the progress that should have been made over time could not have happened.

But from the beginning of the twentieth century, the science of ancient Indian thought was accepted even by the stalwarts of science. Psychologist Charles Robert Richett (1850-1935), who received the Nobel Prize for Medical Sciences in 1913, wrote that metaphysics was not yet officially recognized as a science, but had to be accepted. On many occasions, reality does not reach us only through the five senses, it also reaches us in other ways. Sir James Jean (1877-1946) said in one of his speeches that it is almost agreed in science that all knowledge is moving beyond physical facts, sensory experiences and realities in a direction where the universe appears to be an idea rather than a machine. will give!

Isn't it surprising that the direction in which modern science could think only in the last century was not only present in India's contemplation, but it was also making historical contributions in many fields of science. By

converting ideology into practicality, he laid a solid foundation of mathematics and science. Based on his understanding of 'time and space', he presented physical structures (the universe) and made calculations, which still stand true to today's science. When the contributions of sages like Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, Bodhayana, Bhaskaracharya, Kanada, Sushruta, Charaka, Baghatta are understood and presented correctly, then the lack of science in India's learning tradition can only be regarded as a ridiculous conclusion.

The historicity of Indian thought and philosophy and the scientificity inherent in it are discussed all over the world today. Still even the eminent scientists wonder how thousands of years ago in India such a deep knowledge tradition could develop, which was able to give such a global vision to the Indians and in which the subtle vision like 'Ishwar Ansh Jiva is indestructible' and 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhin: 'There was such a practicality. The sages, ascetics and inventors of India not only gained knowledge at the conceptual level through observation and contemplation, but also considered the results obtained on experimental basis as the main basis.

Faced with the great challenge of poverty and illiteracy before the divided country immediately after independence, India considered science and technology as essential for development and established institutions for it. The youth of India who came out of these institutions increased the prestige of India in the world. Our present school and universities structure may have been an implant of an external system, but India has achieved such a place in science, technology and communication technology in the twenty-first century, which is capable of providing alert and alert people of the whole world. It has been able to inspire to believe that India has always been a country of practical, public interest, scientific and logical thinking and research.

Pregnancy in a pandemic: inequalities in maternal health

By: The Lancet Digital Health

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting modifications to health services have exacerbated the global number of negative maternal and perinatal outcomes. Using data from electronic health records, a study by Piekos and colleagues showed that mild or moderate SARS-CoV-2 infection early on in pregnancy resulted in increased risk of preterm delivery and stillbirth, emphasising the importance of prioritising pregnant people for COVID-19 vaccination. However, the pandemic has also elucidated social and racial disparities in these outcomes; a rapid report by MBRRACE-UK found that six of the ten women reviewed who died during or after pregnancy from COVID-19 or its complications were from Black or minority ethnic groups.

Such disparities have been previously recognised to play a role in adverse pregnancy outcomes. Using data from 2017 to 2019, results of a maternal deaths and morbidity report by MBRRACE-UK showed persistent inequalities in maternal mortality rates; compared with White women, those who are Asian, of mixed ethnic background, or Black have a higher risk of dying in pregnancy. Likewise in the USA, data from 2014 to 2017 showed that Black,

American Indian, and Alaska Native women were more likely to die during or within 1 year after pregnancy than women of other racial and ethnic groups.

Studies have investigated underlying systemic causes, such as socioeconomic status. For example, analyses of data from England from 2015 to 2017 found that 24% of stillbirths, 19% of preterm births, and 31% of births with fetal growth restriction could be attributed to socioeconomic inequality, and adjusting for factors including ethnic group substantially reduced these percentages. Outdated government policies can also have long-standing impacts. In the USA, redlining is a historical discriminatory practice of delineating areas and basing the safety of investments on the racial composition of these areas, negatively impacting people of colour. This practice has been linked to poor health outcomes; within redlined areas, the rate of preterm births is higher in neighbourhoods graded as hazardous compared with better graded neighbourhoods, emphasising the enduring consequences of structural racism.

contd. on page 3

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Urban Naxal jibe, immature taunt during Covid: PM Modi's 5 big attacks on Cong



Agency
New Delhi, Feb 8:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched an all-out attack on the opposition during his reply to the debate on the motion of thanks to President's speech in the Rajya Sabha. From dynastic jibe and Urban Naxal barb at the Congress, to calling opposition conduct during pandemic "immature", PM Modi didn't mince words dur-

ing his attack in the Upper House. Here are the five biggest attacks by the Prime Minister.

"Urban Naxals have hijacked Congress"

Prime Minister Modi hurled Urban Naxal barb at the Congress, the biggest attack ever on the Grand Old Party.

"Congress mindset has now been hijacked by Urban Naxals. The party leaders are now heavily influenced by this ideology," he said.

Invoking Mahatma Gandhi, Prime Minister Modi told Rajya Sabha that the Father of the Nation wanted Congress to be disbanded after Independence.

"Had there been no Congress, there would be no Emergency. India would be free of dynastic rule and would tread on the path of Swadeshi instead of being influenced by foreign mindset. Had there been no Congress, poor would get electricity and water," the

prime minister said.

"Cong didn't think beyond dynasty"

Continuing his dynast jibe, Prime Minister Modi invoked Congress leader DK Barooah's slogan 'Indira Is India, India is Indira'.

"Some people believe that India was born in 1947. Congress only believed in dynasty rule," he said.

Hailing India's fight against coronavirus, PM Modi launched a scathing attack on the opposition.

"Opposition leaders said vaccination is not a big deal. They called vaccines a wastage of money. This immaturity has left Indians disappointed," Modi said.

'Double digit inflation under DUA'

Countering the opposition on inflation, PM Modi took a swipe at the Congress during his address to the Rajya Sabha.

"Inflation had touched double digits during UPA regime. While in present times, India is the only country which registered medium inflation and high growth," he said.

Assam Rifles apprehends KYKL insurgent



IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

Phundrei Battalion of Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR(South) in a joint operation with Manipur Police

apprehended an insurgent of the proscribed group KYKL in Kakching Khunao, Kachhing district on 07 February. Based on specific input, troops of Assam Rifles along

with Manipur Police launched an operation with which led to the apprehension.

The apprehended insurgent was handed over to Waikhong Police Station for further investigation.

44 Assam Rifles conducts "Mental Health Wellness"

IT News
Imphal, Feb 8:

On fourth day of Assam Rifles healers conclave in Tamenglong, an awareness cum interactive session on importance of Mental Health Wellness and building Interpersonal relationship was organised by 44 Assam Rifles under the aegis of 22 sector/IGAR (East) in collaboration Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, Manipur. Dr. Loitongbam Nelson, Psychiatrist, was the resource person and coordinated by Deputy Commandant YB Singh, Senior Medical Officer of the unit. Dr. Nelson virtually addressed the attendees at Tamenglong and highlighted various aspects related to Mental Health. Addressing the fact that mental illness can lead to various disorders affecting sleep, eating habits, mood, anxiety, psychotic and personality of a person. He emphasised to take



care of both physical and mental health and get the most from life. He also advised on practical ways to look after our mental health.

Continuing its "Healers Conclave" efforts among the local populace, 44 Assam Rifles, today also organised door to door vaccination campaign at Panikheti and Naibed village in collaboration with PHC, T

Waichong of KPI disthlyth society. Dr. Arif was incharge of vaccination drive. The aim of this vaccination drive was to contribute against fight to eradicate COVID. The villagers were motivated to adhere to the guidelines of COVID-19 for restricting community spread of virus and were encouraged to undertake COVID vaccination.

UP election 2022: We have fulfilled 92 per cent of 212 promises made in 2017, says HM Amit Shah

Agency
Lucknow, Feb 8:

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on Tuesday, launched the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) manifesto for the forthcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections 2022. Speaking at the launch of BJP's UP election 2022 manifesto, titled the Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that the BJP has delivered 92 per cent of the 112 promises made in 2017. Highlighting the various promises ahead of Uttar Pradesh elections 2022, Shah said that the 'double-engine government in UP will work towards making Uttar Pradesh the 'number one' state in the country by 2030.

"BJP UP team has given form to this 'Sankalp Patra'. It is not just a 'ghoshna patra', it is the UP government's resolution...the 2017 'Sankalp Patra' had 212 resolutions, of which 92 have been fulfilled. We do what we say," Union Home Minister Amit Shah said in Lucknow.



- Taking a review of the development works undertaken by the Uttar Pradesh government, Shah said that 92 per cent of the promises made in the 2017 Sankalp Patra have been fulfilled by the 'double-engine' government in the state. Reiterating confidence in the leadership of Yogi Adityanath, Shah highlighted the promises in the election manifesto for Uttar Pradesh elections 2022.

"I remember that in 2017, the BJP had unveiled a 'Sankalp Patra' in front of Uttar Pradesh. Sankalp Patra is BJP's commitment to the development, safety, and prosperity of Uttar Pradesh. The five years of Yogi government have been years of development in UP," says Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has delivered on all the promises made in 2017. Speaking at the launch of the BJP manifesto in Lucknow, Adityanath said that the 'double-engine' government in UP has changed the lives of every citizen in the state.

What the BJP has promised "The Union Minister for Home and Cooperation, Amit Shah will release the BJP's 'Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra' on February 8, 2022, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh," BJP said in a statement. According to a report by news agency ANI citing sources, the BJP manifesto for Uttar Pradesh elections 2022 will be focused on nationalism, development, development of holy

cities such as Kashi and Mathura, and good governance.

On Monday, while addressing a virtual rally, PM Narendra Modi also slammed the Samajwadi Party (SP) - Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) governments in the state for supporting the mafia raj. He added that during the BJP government under CM Yogi Adityanath, the state was made safer for women. He also stressed the BJP's double-engine growth model for Uttar Pradesh. Both these aspects may figure in the BJP election manifesto.

Uttar Pradesh goes to the polls in seven phases starting February 10. The polls will be held on February 10, 14, 20, 23, 27, and March 3 and 7. Counting of votes for the 403 seat Assembly will take place on March 10.

In 2017, the BJP had come to power with a landslide victory, winning 312 seats. While SP managed a distant second position with 47 seats, BSP bagged 19 seats and the Congress had to settle for just seven seats.

Contd. from Page 2

Pregnancy in a pandemic: inequalities...

Digital technologies have been recognised as a potential tool to address racial and ethnic health inequalities. A partnership between the NHS AI Lab and the Health Foundation is funding four artificial intelligence-based projects aiming to tackle this issue, such as developing standards to improve the representativeness of health datasets and using machine learning to investigate factors contributing to harmful outcomes experienced by mothers of different ethnic groups. Given that implicit biases within health-care systems can affect the care and treatment received, the Irth app

was developed to enable expectant people of colour in the USA to search and write reviews of doctors or hospitals to empower others like them to make more informed choices about where and from whom to receive care.

The use of digital tools can also speed up the implementation of system-wide changes. An example of this is the removal of race and ethnicity variables from a calculator used to estimate the likelihood of a successful vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC), which systematically predicts lower chances of success for people of colour; the updated tool was shown to be

accurate, and as it is available online, its dissemination and use could potentially occur more rapidly and provide equitable options for safe delivery.

It is clear that COVID-19 has only served to worsen maternal health inequalities, and addressing them requires a multifaceted approach. It is imperative to ensure equitable access to health care and treatments, including COVID-19 vaccines, to prevent adverse outcomes, and eliminate biases in patient-provider interactions. Acknowledging and addressing the systemic causes of inequalities outside of the health system (such as

providing greater education and employment opportunities) would also go some way towards improving health outcomes. Digital health services like telemedicine have proved pivotal for managing health conditions during the pandemic, but more investment is needed to increase the availability of these services to underserved and rural communities. It is also vital to collect globally representative data on maternal and perinatal outcomes to push for accountability at the government level, and drive policy changes to ensure a safe, healthy, and equitable maternal experience for all.

Rs. 3.22 lakh crore sanctioned under PMMY against target of Rs. 3.50 lakh crore in FY 2020-21

PIB
New Delhi, Feb 8:

Under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), the Government allocates annual targets for the amount to be sanctioned by more than 150 Member Lending Institutions (MLIs). This was stated by Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.

The Minister stated that MLIs in turn fix their respective State-wise target according to potential of the area, their presence and other related parameters. Targets allocated to MLIs vis-à-vis achievements in FY 2020-21 are ANNEXED.

Responding to a question on targets of PMMY, the Minister stated that the national level targets under the scheme have been consistently met since inception of the scheme, except for FY 2020-21 due to COVID-19 pandemic. In FY

2020-21, an amount of Rs. 3.22 lakh crore was sanctioned under PMMY against the target of Rs. 3.50 lakh crore.

Under the Scheme, institutional credit up to Rs. 10 lakh is provided by MLIs to micro/small business units for income generating activities in manufacturing, trading, services sectors and also for activities allied to agriculture.

As per data uploaded by MLIs on Mudra portal, the Minister stated that as on 31.12.2021, over 32.53 crore loans involving a sanctioned amount of Rs. 17.32 lakh crore have been extended under PMMY, since its inception in April, 2015.

The Minister listed out a number of steps that have been taken by the Government to improve implementation of the Scheme, which, inter alia, include: i. provision for online applications through psbloansin59minutes and udayamitra portal; ii. some of the Public Sec-

tor Banks (PSBs) have put in place end-to-end digital lending for automated sanctions under PMMY;

iii. intensive publicity campaigns by PSBs and Mudra Ltd. for increased visibility of the Scheme amongst the stakeholders;

iv. simplification of application forms;

v. nomination of Mudra Nodal Officers in Public Sector Banks (PSBs);

vi. periodic monitoring of performance of PSBs with regard to PMMY etc.

The Minister also stated that as per Para no. 25 of RBI's Master Circular no. RBI/2015-16/59 dated 01.07.2015 on 'Customer Confidentiality Obligations', banks are under obligation to maintain secrecy arising out of the contractual relationship between the banker and customer, and as such no information should be divulged to third parties, except under circumstances provided in the circular.

India reports 67,597 new Covid cases, 1,188 deaths

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 8:

India saw a single-day rise of 67,597 new coronavirus infections that rose its tally to 4,23,39,611, while the active cases fell below 10 lakh after around 27 days, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

The death toll has climbed to 5,04,062 with 1,188 fresh fatalities, data updated by the ministry at 8 am stated.

The active Covid cases have declined to 9,94,891, comprising 2.35 per cent of the total infections. The national recovery rate improved to 96.46 per cent, the ministry said.

There was a reduction of 1,14,047 cases in the active COVID-19 case count in a span

of 24 hours, as per the data.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 5.02 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 8.30 per cent, it said.

The number of people who have recuperated from Covid surged to 4,08,40,658, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent, the data showed.

The cumulative vaccine doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 inoculation drive have exceeded 170.21 crore, it stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on

September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one crore mark on December 19. The country crossed the grim milestone of two crore Covid cases on May 4, 2021, and three crore cases on June 23 last year.

The 1,188 new fatalities included 860 from Kerala and 49 from Karnataka, the data stated.

Of the 860 deaths, 14 were reported in the past 24 hours, 113 occurred in the last few days but were not recorded due to late receipt of documents and 733 were designated as COVID-19 deaths after receiving appeals based on the new guidelines of the Centre and the directions of the Supreme

Court, a Kerala government release said on Monday.

A total of 5,05,062 deaths have been reported so far in the country, including 1,43,098 from Maharashtra, 59,115 from Kerala,

39,396 from Karnataka, 37,772 from Tamil Nadu, 25,998 from Delhi, 23,330 from Uttar Pradesh and 20,852 from West Bengal.

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

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

Contd. from Page 1 ECI committed to conduct Free, Fair, Accessible....

The Chief Election Commissioner further asserted that a new initiative for facilitating Absentee voters by way of Postal ballot facility, for Sr citizens, Covid-19 suspects or affected persons and persons related to notified Essential Services, is being provided. He also added that the postal ballot facility is an optional facility and ensures total secrecy of voting and representatives of candidates will be present and the total procedure to be videographed. Regarding service voters, he stated that an Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System had been instituted and 21,935 service voters have been mapped in the state for the same. The CEC was delighted on learning that the state has 749 centenarian voters with Senapati district having the maximum number of centenarian voters i.e 110 and added that he had directed to CEO/DEOs to facilitate such centenarian voters who can act as role models for the youngsters.

Stating on the objectives taken up to further improve the voter turnout in the state, Sushil Chandra informed that 300 Low Voter turnout Polling booths have been identified under Mission 300 Programme by CEO Manipur and Focused Booth Level Action Plan had been prepared by engaging BLO, local clubs, women clubs and elderly voters. The Commission had also directed the CEO and DEOs to prioritize low voter turnout pockets for targeted SVEEP interventions to ensure inclusive and participatory elections.

Speaking on the importance of publishing Criminal Antecedents, the CEC stressed that candidates having criminal antecedent (whether independent or sponsored by a Political Party) and Political Parties sponsoring such candidates are required to publish detailed information including their Criminal antecedents. Instructions have been issued that candidates will have to advertise thrice in newspapers and TV Channels during Campaign period. It is also mandatory for political parties to publicize in the newspaper, social media and upload on their website detailed information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases selected as candidates, along with reason for such selection, as also why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates, he added.

The CEC continued that for informed and ethical voting, the Commission had launched 'Know Your Candidate' mobile App which will have all details of the candidates including their criminal antecedents, if any. He added that voters should use the App and access all details regarding the candidates contesting in their constituencies. On Covid protocol and vaccination status, he stated that all polling officials and police personnel are fully vaccinated and those left with a second dose will be necessarily covered in the next 10 days. Precautionary doses are being administered to all eligible polling personnel.

Mentioning that conducting Inducement free & ethical elections is of prime importance for the Election Commission of India, the CEC stated that the District Officers and enforcement agency officials have been instructed to monitor expenditure sensitive Constituencies and ensure comprehensive, coordinated actions. He informed that seizures worth Rs. 97.6 crores have been made in the state including Rs 1.48 crores of cash, liquor worth Rs. 40 lakhs, Narcotics worth Rs 81.5 crores, freebies and gold worth 14.2 crores since the announcement of elections.

The Press Conference was attended by Election Commissioners Rajiv Kumar, Anup Chandra Pandey, Chief Electoral Officer, Manipur Rajesh Agrawal, Deputy Election Commissioners Nitesh Vyas, T. Sreekanth and Director General, ECI Shephali B. Sharan among others.

It may be mentioned that the Election Commission team led by the Chief Election Commissioner was on a two day visit to the State to review the status of poll preparedness for the forthcoming 12th General Election to Manipur Legislative Assembly, 2022. The Election Commission team met representatives of National and State Recognised Political Parties and interacted with Chief Secretary, Director General of Police, Director General, Assam Rifles and other top Officials of the State during their visit. The team also met the delegates of All Manipur Christian Organisation (AMCO) today.

Assembly election: BJP may win UP, Uttarakhand, Manipur; hung house in Goa, Punjab, says Survey

Courtesy: Deccan Herald
New Delhi, Feb 8:

BJP is predicted to retain Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Manipur, while Goa and Punjab may return a hung assembly where Congress is not in the driver's seat, a pre-poll survey predicted on Monday.

AAP has the advantage in Punjab, while BJP may romp home finally in Goa, according to the Republic TV-P-MARQ survey.

It predicted Uttar Pradesh for the BJP but with a reduced margin from the 2017 polls - from 312 to 252-272 seats with 41.3 per cent vote-share in a House of 403. Their main opponent Samajwadi Party could win 111-131 seats with

33.1 per cent votes, increasing its MLAs by more than double from the 47 it won last time.

BSP could further shrink, winning only 8-16 seats as against 19 it won in the 2017 polls, while Congress' may slide further down in one of the most politically crucial states, as it may win only 3-9 seats as against seven it won earlier, according to the survey. Others could win up to four seats.

A survey by India TV-Ground Zero Research also showed the BJP winning but with lesser numbers at 230-235 seats (39.32 per cent votes). SP could see a three-fold increase in its seats to 160-165 (36.2 per cent), this survey predicted, while it gave Con-

gress 2-7 seats (5.54 per cent), BSP 2-3 (12.99 per cent) and others 1-3.

According to the Republic TV-P-MARQ survey, Punjab may see the emergence of AAP as the single largest party with 50-56 seats with 37.8 per cent votes, just short of the half-way mark of 59. Punjab is the lone state where Congress is in power among the five states going to polls in February-March.

Congress could win 42-48 seats with 35.1 per cent votes while Akali Dal could get 13-17 (15.8 per cent) and BJP alliance 1-3 seats (5.7 per cent), the survey showed, indicating that former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, who left the Congress, and his...

Congress could win 42-48

seats with 35.1 per cent votes while Akali Dal could get 13-17 (15.8 per cent) and BJP alliance 1-3 seats (5.7 per cent), the survey showed, indicating that former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, who left the Congress, and his...

Manipur is also likely to go the BJP way as it may win 31-37 seats (39.2 per cent votes) in a House of 60 while Congress may win only 13-19. NPP (3-9) and NPF (1-5) are other parties that may win seats in Manipur where BJP managed to usurp power after engineering large-scale defections from Congress, which was the single largest party in the state in 2017.

Sports

ISL: Odisha FC keep semi-final hopes alive with win against SC East Bengal

Agency
Vasco (Goa), Feb 8:

Odisha FC fended off a strong challenge from SC East Bengal to record a 2-1 win in the 2021-22 Indian Super League (ISL) at the Tilak Maidan Stadium, here on Monday. The result keeps the outfit in the hunt for the top-four places by elevating them to sixth place in the points table. Jonathan (23') gave the Odisha FC an early lead that lasted until Antonio Perosevic (64') scored the equaliser in the second half. Javier Hernandez (75') regained the lead for OFC with a precise finish which proved to be the winner in the end.

In the early stages of the match, Odisha FC piled a lot of pressure and was finally rewarded with an early goal from Jonathan. The cross for the goal was provided by Javier Hernandez who made room on the right flank and served the ball on a platter for the striker who tapped in from close range.

Looking for the equaliser, Hira Mondal took an attempt just before half-time but his left-footed strike went wayward. The first half ended with the Kalinga Warriors retaining their one-goal advantage. The restart saw more sluggish



gameplay as neither side was able to find inspiration in the final third.

The best chance to score the equaliser fell to Antonio Perosevic two minutes before the hour mark. A long ball from deep saw the forward find room behind the defensive line but his volley had too much elevation. However, the Croatian made no mistake from a similar opportunity a few minutes later and scored the equaliser with a low finish

into the bottom right corner.

Nevertheless, Odisha FC regained the lead ten minutes later through Javier Hernandez. The midfielder received a lay-off from Jonathan who turned from scorer to provider. The right-footed shot from the Spaniard took a slight deflection before swerving into the back of the net.

Javi looked to have scored another a few minutes later but Mondal managed to make a goal-line clearance to deny

him the goal. The Red & Gold Brigade had four minutes of added time to find the leveller for the second time which they eventually could not, allowing OFC to bag the three points.

Odisha FC face the reigning champions Mumbai City FC in their next match at the P.J.N Stadium on Sunday whereas SC East Bengal play an in-form Kerala Blasters FC at the Tilak Maidan Stadium on Monday.

T20 World Cup 2022: India-Pakistan match tickets sold out within minutes

Agency
New Delhi, Feb 8:

Come October 23, India will lock horns with their arch-rival Pakistan in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. India-Pakistan is the most predictable early-round fixture in ICC tournaments will be played in the T20 World Cup when India and Pakistan square off at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The two countries now play only in ICC events, with no bilateral series since 2013.

One of the reasons is this match helps the world body with a big windfall in terms of gate money and eyeballs on television guaranteed.

Such is the demand to see one of world cricket's biggest rivalries, the allocations for the India vs Pakistan match to be played at Melbourne Cricket Ground on October 23 were sold within five minutes of going on sale.

India and Pakistan clash on the opening weekend of the main round of the tournament at the iconic MCG. More than 90,000 spectators are expected at the stadium for the match. It is expected



to be their first encounter since the T20 showpiece in the UAE late last year when Pakistan broke their World Cup duck against India.

ICC men's T20 World Cup 2022 Local Organising Committee CEO Michelle Enright said: "The response from the fans has been fantastic and we're proud of the fact we were able to reward our fans who purchased tickets to the postponed event in 2020 and those who registered early with us to get priority access to tickets in the pre-sale."

According to Broadcast Audience Research Council India (BARC), a TV audience measurement service, the India-Pak game in the 2021 T20 world cup soared up to 167 million viewers on television alone in India. According to

the ICC, the India-Pakistan game in the 2019 ODI world cup had 273 million viewership worldwide and 50 million digital-only viewers.

It's the first time that Australia will host T20 cricket's global showpiece for men, with matches to be played in Adelaide, Brisbane, Geelong, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney.

The fixture for the event was recently announced with the First Round to get underway in Geelong and Hobart featuring former champions West Indies and Sri Lanka, before hosts and defending champions Australia take on New Zealand in the opening match of the Super 12 at the SCG on Saturday 22 October in a re-match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 Final.