

Powerful bombs blast at the residence of two INC intending candidates; no one injured

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

After miscreants shot dead two persons including a BJP workers at Shamuroi in Wangoi Assembly constituency within 48 hours after the Model Code of Conduct came into effect, unknown miscreants blasted two powerful Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) at the residence of two intending candidates of the Indian National Congress at early hour today.

Report said that a powerful blast was triggered by unknown miscreants at the residence of the INC intending candidate Salam Joy at Shamuroi Naorem Chaprou of Wangoi Assembly constituency in Imphal West district at around 2.20 am today. There are no reports of any



human casualty; however, the impact of the blasts destroyed the surroundings of the main gate of the residence. Salam Joy was the former representative from Wangoi Assembly constituency before the present Minister O. Lukhoh replaced him. Joy is preparing to contest as INC candidate this time.

On the other hand soon after blast, another blast took place at the residence of another INC intending candidate Khuraijam Ratan Kumar, at Kangle Sangomshang of Khurai Assembly constituency in Imphal East district at around 3.00 am today. Report

said that the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was blasted at the middle of the gate of Ratan Kumar's residence. There were no human casualty; however, glasses of the house and the back windshield of a parked four wheeler vehicle were destroyed by the impact of the blast.

Interestingly, the serial blast, which is probably related with the upcoming state Assembly election that is scheduled in two phases i.e. on February 27 and March 3, occurred after Chief Minister N. Biren Singh expressed serious concern to the attack on political work-

ers while visiting the residence of the deceased BJP workers and a police personnel who were shot dead by miscreants at Shamuroi near Machu Cinema Hall on Saturday evening. The residence of Salam Joy, the intending candidate of INC, is just one or two kilometre from the site where the two were shot to dead.

The state police department has also already constituted a four member Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by the Additional Superintendent of Police (Ops) Imphal West, M. Amit Singh on January 10.

Mayai Lambi bandh

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

Twelve hour total shut down called by the JAC formed against the killing of Abujam John and Abujam Sashikanta at Shamuroi on January 9 evening has seriously affected normal traffic along the Mayai Lambi today.

Since early morning today large number of people from Shamrou to Wangoi area came out at Mayai Lambi and stopped all short of vehicular moment along the route.

Miscreants shot dead a ZUF(J) cadre

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

Unknown gunmen suspected to be cadres of the NSCN-IM shot dead a cadre of the armed group ZUF (J) namely Pouluangai, a resident of Riyangpang near Nungba in-between Awangkhuil and Wangkhung under Noney Police Station at around 8.30 pm yesterday evening. Police team who rushed the site recovered an empty case of 9mm pistol near the dead body.

KCP (PWG) clarifies

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

Armed rebel group KCP (PWG) has clarified that the two persons identified as Wahengbam Mathoi @ Thoi of Kiyamega Shantipur and Bushan @ Bushankamal of Nongpok Sekmai arrested by the Manipur Police claiming them as members of the KCP (PWG) are not related or have any connection with the outfit. The statement said that the police statement is an attempt to malign the image of the party.

Army chief expresses regret on Nagaland killings

Agency
Kohima, Jan 12:

Army chief General MM Naravane on Wednesday expressed regret over the killing of civilians by special forces troops in Nagaland's Mon district in December last year, adding that the army's Special Investigation Team (SIT), which is investigating the killings, will submit its report in a 'day or two.'

"The incident was regrettable. The inquiry is in its final stages, and the report may be submitted in a day or two. Appropriate action will be taken. The law of the land is paramount, we will do whatever is necessary to uphold it," General Naravane, the senior most military officer in the country post the untimely demise of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat whom he also succeeded as army chief, said.

Further corrections in the standard operating procedure (SOP) will be made upon the completion of the probe, he further said, as he addressed the annual army chief's press conference.

On December 4, 2021, commandos of an elite unit shot dead six coal miners, in what the force and the Union government later described as a case of 'mistaken identity.' Immediately following the killings, the troops were confronted by furious villagers; in the subsequent melee, seven more villagers and a



commando, too, lost their lives.

A day later, as protests broke out, another civilian was killed as protesters stormed a local Assam Rifles camp, prompting soldiers to open fire.

The killings triggered massive outrage, as well as calls to repeal the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from across the northeast. The legislation grants troops operating in regions designated as 'disturbed areas' powers to search, arrest and even shoot people, if necessary for maintenance of public order.

In such cases, under AFSPA, soldiers can only be prosecuted on sanction from the central government.

At least two chief ministers in the northeast, Nagaland's Neiphiu Rio,

and his Arunachal Pradesh counterpart Conrad Sangma, have publicly called for the act to be repealed.

The Centre, on December 26, set up a high-level home ministry panel to review to look into the possibility of the withdrawal of AFSPA. However, on December 30, it extended the act for a further six months in Nagaland.

"Appropriate and corrective action will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation," General Naravane said at an annual press conference, calling the incident 'regrettable'.

Earlier on Tuesday, Naga civil society organisations demanded that the Nagaland government make public the findings of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up by it to probe into the Mon killings.

Former MLA Y Surchandra tenders resignation from INC

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

Y Surchandra Singh, who was elected as INC MLA from Kakching Assembly constituency but disqualified following a verdict of the Manipur High Court for non-disclosure of assets in November 2020, has tendered resignation from the primary membership of the Indian National Congress today.

A resignation letter has been submitted to the President of the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee today. A few days back Y Surchandra had told the media that he may not contest the upcoming assembly election as INC candidate, however, he didn't disclose on which party he is going to contest.

Mentioned may be made that the Manipur High Court declared the election of Y



Surchandra from Kakching Assembly Constituency in 2017 assembly elections as null and void over non-disclosure of information the election affidavit and named M Rameshwar, who secured the second place in the then elections, as the elected Member of Kakching Assembly Constituency.

M Rameshwar, the BJP candidate administered the oath of office by Manipur Legislative Assembly Speaker Yumnam Khemchand in Imphal on November 9, 2020.

In the last election, Y Surchandra (65 yrs), won the Kakching Assembly seat with 11,133 votes while BJP's Rameshwar got 10,503 votes.

Tamenglong Women bodies threaten agitation against Shivalaya Construction Company Private Limited

IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

The United Women Organization Tamenglong (IUWOT), a conglomeration of Inriangluang Luh Chuzeang Phuum, Women Wing of United Chuluan Council, Pui-Karung-Nuh (Women organizations of Tamenglong Ward No. 1 to 5 has served an ultimatum to the Project Manager of Shivalaya Construction Company Private Limited to complete the repairing works

of roads at their area with January 17 this year.

The Tamenglong women's body said that the company has shown total disregard and complete disrespect to the appeals made through social media from various individuals and your own agreement to maintain standard of the public road including black topping.

The dense, thick blanket of dust and deep heavy sounds emanating from the company vehicles ferrying stones day

in and day out is creating havoc to public health issues especially to the children, elderly person and person who are on medication.

The women's body urged the Company to repair and maintain standard road including black topping starting from point IVAOAT Auto Parking, Merrylane to Oil Pump, Duigailong within January 17, 2022 and threaten strong agitation against the Company if fail to fulfill the demand.

Manipur joins the Nation in observing National Youth Day

IT News & Agency
Imphal, Jan 12:

The National Youth Day is celebrated today across the country to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The main aim behind this is to make sure that the students across the country can be encouraged to learn about the life, the ideas and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and apply them in their lives.

Here in the state of Manipur the day is observed by the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MCPCR) at its Office with the Chairperson of the Commission Phurailatpam Manibabu Sharma on the chair. Members of the MCPCR L. Megharaj Sharma said that the day is observed to improve the condition of the youth of the state.

Today is the 159th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The theme for National Youth Day 2022 is 'The Theme of 2022 is "It's all in the mind."'

It may be mentioned that the decision to celebrate

Vivekananda's birthday as National Youth Day was taken in 1984, and it was first marked on January 12, 1985. The government had then said that the philosophy of Swamiji and the ideals for which he lived and worked "could be a great source of inspiration" for the Indian youth.

Swami Vivekananda, born Narendranath Datta on January 12, 1863, was a disciple of Sri 19th-century Indian mystic Ramakrishna Paramhansa. He went on to become a key figure in the introduction of the Indian darsanas (teachings, practices) of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world and was credited with raising interfaith awareness.

Vivekanand was highly regarded as a major force in the contemporary Hindu reform movements in India and contributed to the concept of nationalism in colonial India.

Famous for his famous speech in Parliament of World's Religions in Chicago, 1893, he focused on channelling the energy of the youth.

As his teachings and practices had a huge influence on

the youth, the Government of India in 1984 declared January 12 days as National Youth Day.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the Indian youth for their resilience and innovation especially during the hardships while inaugurating the 25th National Youth Festival today in Puducherry via video conferencing.

During his address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India considers its youth as a demographic dividend as well as a development driver.

"The world has admitted that India has two limitless power - demography & democracy. The youth of India carry democratic values along with demographic dividends. India considers its youths as development drivers," PM Modi said during the National Youth Day programme.

The Prime Minister highlighted how Indian youths have adopted technology and during the tough phase of lockdown due to covid-19 showed their prowess as more and more startups were introduced.

It seems inflation will not go down this year

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



The corona virus and the pandemic not only increased health problems the world over, inflation also increased tremendously in about 150 countries of the world. This is a

problem not only in India, but the whole world is suffering from the price rise of consumer goods and food items. Strong chances are there that the inflation will come under control gradually in a year's time or more. Shortage of raw materials, disruption of supply chains, reduced production of necessary parts and climate change affecting agricultural production made everything from food to daily use items costlier. Due to the outbreak of Omicron, the situation is expected to remain like this till April. Even after this, it may take nine to twelve months to fully control inflation. This year a variety of electric vehicles will come in the market. Many changes will be seen in this regard. Companies will also have to reduce the prices of their e-vehicles. Gradually people will start getting disillusioned with petrol and diesel powered vehicles and the number of electric vehicles will increase on the roads. The shortage of chips (semiconductors) not only hindered the manufacture of cars, but also had a huge impact on the electronics industry.

Companies making electronics and consumer goods faced many other problems too during the Covid era, such as increase in the prices of raw materials like steel and copper, problems in shipping and increase in sea freight, slow movement of cargo at ports and uncertain future arising out of increased transportation cost and labour shortage. Industry people point out that the cost of electronics manufacturing companies has gone up by 20 per cent, while the prices have increased only marginally. It was the festive season from Diwali to Christmas and New Year, so the electronics firms did not increase the prices of their consumer items even after taking low margins. But that would not continue for long. Therefore, there is a high possibility that electronics goods companies like Godrej, LG, Hitachi and Panasonic may increase the prices of their products by 6 to 7 percent in the coming weeks.

Inflation has increased worldwide. During the lockdown, the production of many things decreased, but after the lockdown was lifted, the demand for all the things suddenly increased in the market. That is the reason why inflation went up all of a sudden. For example, in many countries there is a shortage of workers. For this reason, there is not enough production of palm oil in Malaysia. Prices of soap, oil, shampoo, biscuits, cosmetics, namkeen etc went up due to increase in palm oil rates. The increase in the price of crude oil has increased the cost of freight and delivery. Due to this, the prices of chemical fertilisers, paints, rubber and synthetic yarn etc. have gone up. Transportation of goods by sea has become expensive. Due to labour shortage in China, industrial metals like brass, copper, steel, nickel and cobalt have become expensive. This has affected the prices of products like television sets, refrigerators, ACs, washing machines etc. Climate change has affected the supply of agricultural products in many countries, such as the sugarcane crop in Brazil for the same reason. As a result, the price of sugar increased.

Skill development for Sustainable Livelihood

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh
Asst.Prof.JCRE Global College, Babupara, Imphal

As Mahatma Gandhi said "If Indian Villages are developed the nation is developed" is true even today. India is an agrarian society where more than 70% of the population is living in rural area. The rural population mainly depends on agriculture and associated sectors of agriculture for their livelihood. The ability of the individuals in any society is necessary to vest them for social alteration, economic growth, contribution in development process. Therefore a nation progressing towards development requires institutions, entrepreneurship and skill development to initiate and achieve the course of change and changing societal structure and livelihood profiles. India is rich in human resource. What is needed now is a long term policy for development of human resources through education, training, skill development, empowerment and creation of congenial socio-economic, institutional and political environment for the fullest possible utilization of the vast untapped reservoir of human power and ingenuity.

In order to promote self-employment among the rural youth, Government of India has taken a two-pronged approach viz: enabling skill development and implementation of direct employment programs for lower skilled individuals. To create an institutional base for skill development in India, in 2009 government launched the National Skill development Policy (NSDP) with a target for skilling 500 million people by 2020. With the creation of National Skill Development agency (NSDA) in June 2013, the NCSD, NSDCB and Office of Advisor to Prime Minister on skill development have now been subsumed in NSDA. Ministry of Labour and Employment has taken a number of initiatives in the field of skill development and employment. In earlier days, most of the rural youths are comfortable with seasonal plantation jobs, no specified skill and education was needed; be-

sides parents do not want to send youth to far-off urban and semi-urban areas for livelihood. But recent trends showed youth were attracted on skill development for their livelihood. Public-Private partnership (PPP) model for skill development of unemployed rural youth is very much needed. Based on this PPP model skill development for rural youth in various skill developments will improve self-employment, then more employment opportunity will enhance sustainable livelihood among the rural youth in Manipur too.

National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011. The mandate of the Ministry is rural poverty alleviation through programs directly targeted poor household. The major programs of this ministry that directly targeted for creation of assets, skill development and self-employment started with Integrated Rural Development Programs (IRDP) in the year 1980 and induced several other programs like the Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), Supply of improved Tools to Rural Artisans (SITRA), Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY). On account of the multiplicity of programs, which were viewed as separate programs in themselves, the desire linkage among these were not established effectively. These were more concern with achieving individual program targets rather than focusing on the substantive issue of sustainable income generation. Based on the recommendation of planning Commission, the schemes of TRYSEM, SITRA, GKY and DWCRA were merged into a single self-employment program called Swamijayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), implemented by the state Government. These self-employment programs aimed at work opportunity for rural special focus on poverty alleviation.

In case of Manipur, implementation of National Rural Livelihood Mission is very complicated. More than 90% of Manipur is the rural hilly areas while out of 9% valley area, majority are taken as urban area. The hilly area covers 20,082 sq.km and centrally located valley covers about 2,238 sq.km, accounting for only one-tenth of the total area of the state. The tribal groups are distributed in all the ten hill districts of Manipur. Scattered pockets are also found in the valley and urban areas. The oval shape small valley area is the targeted place for all section of the people in the state for any purpose. Thus for effective implementation of rural livelihood Mission, youth centered skill training was one of the options. Manipur Society for Skill development (MSSD) is an initiative of the Government of Manipur under National Skill Development Corporation and State Skill Development Mission (SSDM) to enable youths to be skilled and to get employment opportunities in a holistic manner. The mission aims that the youths would be trained in skill as per their capabilities and merit to make employable. About 40% of populations in Manipur are in the age group of 15-29 years. They can act as agent of transformation, by being empowered with various employable skills which will enable them to make impact not only on their lives but also on the lives of other individuals.

The recently approved Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikash Yojana (PMKVY), a flagship scheme for imparting skill training to youths, focusing on improved curricula, better pedagogy and trained instructors. The training includes soft skills, personal grooming, and behavioral change at all. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Skill India Mission on 15th July 2015, on World Skill Day. It is aimed at providing vocational training to youth across the country to over 40.02 crore people in the country by 2022. The formation

of the National Skill development Mission (NSDM) has necessitated the need to re-examine the need for skill development in relation to rural livelihood in Manipur. This is felt more in a state like Manipur where the challenge emanating from the demographic dividend, rural and urban set up. As of 2016-17 youth unemployment (for the age group 15-35 years) in Manipur stood nearly 40%. Skill development can therefore be seen as the need of the hour for promoting rural livelihood in Manipur. Manipur is one of the highest unemployment in India which mostly belongs to youth in the age group of 15-29 years. Though youth have the zeal to do something new and innovative but due to lack of training opportunity, lack of skill, financial support they become frustrated and therefore sometimes indulged in consumption of drug or join insurgent groups. Nearly 7 lakhs are seeking for jobs in Manipur of which mostly belong to youth in the age group of 15-29 years. Higher number of unemployed is found in matriculate with 33.36%, closely followed by under matric with 31.08%. Intermediate or class XII account 18.82%, graduate 2.96%, post graduate 2.28, diploma or Engineering graduate with 1.5%. The highest number of unemployment (matric and under matric) show that youths belongs to the highest number of unemployment. Absence of professional training Institution is one of the hindrances to accessing skill training in rural Manipur. The success of skill entrepreneurship and vocational training depends on hard and soft skills and content of the course. Thus improving self-employment opportunities through skill development is the need of the hour. To promote sustainable livelihood through skill development, the rural youth need practicable updated knowledge rather than some traditional training with dull lectures or thick manuals.

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People's are afraid of the third wave of Corona

In the last one and a half years, inflation also made everyone cry. The main reason for this was due to excessive taxes on the prices of petrol and diesel. There was also no change in bank interest rates. Nearly 60 per cent of the people working in the unorganized sector borrowed money from some source or the other to meet their day-to-day expenses during both the waves of the pandemic.

The last few months were good that Corona again set foot in India in the form of Omicron. The figures of infection have taken a terrible form in a few days. Everyone is feeling intimidated by the daily statistics. Of course, the first reason to be afraid is because everyone is concerned about themselves and their families. Many people lost their loved ones in the first and second wave. But it is a matter of satisfaction that the number of vaccinations in the country has crossed 150 crores, which is definitely a big success in a short span of one year.

Simultaneously, the introduction of vaccination for adolescents is also encouraging. Nevertheless, if the first and second wave are seen in comparison with the current third wave, then vaccination has created a sense of security in the mind of the common man, while on the other hand, he has again become worried about the economic side. The apprehensions are not taking the name of ending from his mind. The reality behind these apprehensions is much harsher than what we have been through.

During the first wave everyone saw a complete lockdown in the economy for the first time in their life which shook everyone's economic life. During that time, the GDP growth rate had gone down by twenty five percent in the first quarter. It was also natural to happen because due to the complete ban, production had come to a standstill in the major sectors of the economy. Millions of people lost their jobs.

We have not yet recovered from that shock to the economy. Now the problem is that the outbreak of the third wave is starting to show its effect. And to prevent this, governments are again imposing such restrictions, which cannot live without affecting economic activities. Most of the people who feel this danger are common man. These include from laborers, laborers to all those people who earn daily and run the house. Apart from this, the crisis in front of people engaged in employment in the private sector is also not less. Even today people are facing problems like low wages and salary cuts.

There is no doubt that the Indian economy has tried to recover from the shocks of Corona. But the fact also cannot be denied that due to the pandemic, the economic life of the common man in the last two years, he has not been able to come out from it. If we try to understand from the figures, then in December 2021, the unemployment rate in India was 7.9 percent, while in the two financial years before Corona it was an average of five percent.

However, in December 2020 after the first wave, this rate was 9.1 percent.

It is a fact that even after one and a half years, the employment figures today have not reached the same figures as before Corona. If we look at the employment figures of March 2019-20 and the employment figures of December 2021-22, then there is a loss of employment of about twenty nine lakh people. If we talk about salaried persons, there has been a decrease of 2.2 percent during this time, which makes it completely clear that they do not have employment today. Before the arrival of Corona, the number of salaried people in India was 21.2 percent of the total employment.

Apart from this, a statistic that is very frightening is that during this one and a half year of epidemic, more than one million entrepreneurs were forced to close their business or business. In this context, it is necessary to mention that in more than eighteen months, the maximum loss of ninety nine lakh jobs occurred in the jobs related to the manufacturing sector. In the service sector, this loss was maximum in the sectors of hotels, tourism and education. Seeing these conditions, people are now scared and they feel that due to the third wave, such situations should not happen again.

Another reason for fear in the mind of common man is about the level of health related facilities in the society.



By: Vijay Garg

The large number of people who died due to lack of health facilities during the second wave cannot be easily forgotten. Although corona vaccines are available today as a protective shield, new forms of the virus have increased the risk. By the way, the reality is that compared to other countries, there is still

a huge lack of research and development on health related facilities in India.

Statistics show that in the financial year before Corona, the per capita health expenditure was only Rs 1944, which was only 1.29 percent of GDP. While this figure is 14.3 percent in America, 9.2 percent in Japan, 7.5 percent in Britain, 6.5 percent in Italy, 3.9 percent in Brazil and 2.9 percent in

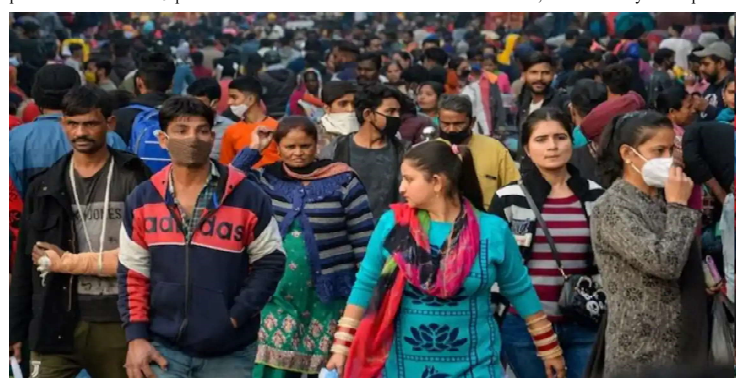
China. Whereas India ranks second in the world in terms of population. While such low expenditure on health services explains the acute shortage of medical facilities, at the same time, due to this, the per capita working capacity is also comparatively low.

Today people are very worried about the future of their children. During the last two waves, not only has the education of children suffered, but questions have also been raised about examinations and future. It has a very bad effect on the children. Now again schools have been partially or completely closed. Doesn't it seem necessary that the governments should have taken necessary concrete steps with a far-reaching outlook regarding the online education system during the period before this third wave.

It is true that the online medium has saved the work related to education

from stagnation, but in this context it is also necessary to understand whether the person sitting in the villages or far-flung has internet facility? Does a common man have all the necessary facilities of the information technology era, through which he can connect his child to online education?

In the last one and a half years, inflation also made everyone cry. The main reason for this was due to excessive taxes on the prices of petrol and diesel. There was also no change in bank interest rates. Nearly 60 per cent of the people working in the unorganized sector borrowed money from some source or the other to meet their day-to-day expenses during both the waves of the pandemic. However, now it is being claimed in many reports that there will be great progress in the economy in the coming times. But seeing the current situation, no one is ready to accept this.



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Nagaland citizens demand PM Modi to scrap AFSPA, justice for Oting massacre victims

Agency
Kohima, Jan 12:

The two-day march 'Walkathon against AFSPA' from Dimapur to Kohima concluded on Tuesday afternoon with the submission of a representation to Prime Minister Narendra Modi through Nagaland Governor Prof Jagdish Mukhi.

The representation, appended by the Global Naga Forum, Naga Students Federation, Naga Mothers Association, Eastern Nagaland People's Union Dimapur and Konyak Union Dimapur, made an earnest appeal to the PM to repeal the AFSPA from the Naga homeland and the northeast region in toto.

The four-point representation urged Modi to take cognizance of the serious human rights violation committed by the Indian armed forces at Oting in Mon district on January 4 last year by bringing justice to the victims, their families and the injured.

It also appealed to him to recognize the state government's role in handling the law and order of the State and make provisions so that the AFSPA will not be enforced in Nagaland henceforth.

The protesters demanded that the perpetrators of the Oting massacre in which 13 innocent civilians were gunned by brought under civil court for criminal prosecution.

They also demanded immediate and adequate compensation to the families of the victims and the injured.

"Help initiate the process of justice and of righting past wrongs by bringing the perpetrators under civil court for criminal procedures," the representation appealed.

Greeting the PM on the New Year, the signatories, along with the public of Nagaland and across the Naga homeland, sought his urgent action on the AFSPA and the brutality and injustice that have accompanied its operations in the Naga homeland for the last 63 years.

"Everybody knows what happened last month at Oting, Mon, was not an isolated incident," the representation said.

It pointed out that among other abominable things, the AFSPA has repeatedly deprived innocent civilians of their right to live, 'which contradicts the very concept of human rights and the reason for governments to exist in the first place'.

The protesters marched from Dimapur early morning on Monday and reached Kohima on Tuesday afternoon, covering a distance of over 74 km, 60 km of which falls on the hills.

The walkathon was triggered by the Oting massacre of civilians and the extension of the AFSPA in the state on December 30 last year for another six months.

AR apprehends insurgents of KYKL and PREPAK (PRO)



IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

In two separate operations, Khoupum and Khuga Battalions of Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) apprehended one insurgent of proscribed groups KYKL and two insurgents of PREPAK (PRO) in Bishnupur and Churachandpur district on January 10.

Based on specific inputs from reliable sources, troops of Assam Rifles launched operations leading to these apprehensions.

The apprehended insurgents were handed over to Bishnupur and Churachandpur Police Station for further investigation.

PM security breach: Supreme Court appoints 5-member panel headed by ex-judge Indu Malhotra

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

The Supreme Court has appointed a five-member panel headed by a retired judge, Justice Indu Malhotra, to inquire into the security breach during PM Narendra Modi's visit to Punjab on January 5.

SC bench of CJI N V Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli requested Justice Malhotra Committee to submit inquiry report as early as possible.

Other members of the SC-appointed inquiry panel

headed by Justice Malhotra are - DG of NIA or his nominee not below the rank of IG, DGP of Chandigarh UT, DGP of Punjab, and Registrar General of Punjab and Haryana High Court.

The apex court has asked HC Registrar General to submit all records and documents collected by him on orders of the SC to the inquiry panel.

The Supreme Court further said that the panel will inquire into the causes of the security breach, persons responsible for it and the measures to be taken in future for preventing

such security breaches of VVIPs.

Earlier, the apex court has asked HC Registrar General to submit all records and documents collected by him on orders of the SC to the inquiry panel.

Earlier on Monday, the apex court had asked both the Central government and the Punjab government to not go ahead with the inquiries by the Committees constituted by them.

The Prime Minister was stuck atop a flyover for 15-20 minutes while on his way to Ferozepur, Punjab earlier this month due to the road being blocked by some protesters.

The Prime Minister was to visit Ferozepur and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than Rs 42,750 crore. After the security lapse, he decided to head back to Bathinda Airport.

Union Home Ministry has sought a report from the Punjab Government on the security breach during the Prime Minister's visit to Punjab calling it a major lapse in his security.

Janbagidari Road inaugurated by 44 Assam Rifles



IT News
Imphal, Jan 12:

Roads are of vital importance in order to make a nation grow and develop. They make crucial contribution to socio-political - economic development, growth, prosperity and bring important social benefits to an area. It provides access to service, health and education facilities and employment opportunities. For these reasons, road infrastructure is the most important of all public assets. To keep existing and future roads in optimum condition requires a consistent and regular maintenance program.

Azuiram village is located in Tousem Sub-division of Tamenglong district, Manipur. It is located approx 24 kms away from district HQ, Tamenglong and connected by a single road. It is through this road only that approx another 13 villages in the hinterland are connected to Tamenglong town. The villagers are presently dependent on this vital road for accessibility to health and better market facilities in the nearby town. The villagers were facing acute hardship due to depleted condition of this road since long time. 44 Assam Rifles under the aegis of 22 Sector AR/IGAR (East) took the initiative and started repairing the link road.

To mitigate the problems of villagers, immediately a meeting was held at Battalion HQ Tamenglong, wherein a road map was prepared to repair the Azuiram - Barak - Tamenglong road within existing resources

of the unit & it was pledged that the repaired road shall be dedicated to the local population of far flung villages as a New Year gift. The plan was shared with the village authority of the Azuiram & Namtiram village, who willingly agreed to contribute constructively towards repair of this vital road.

On 03 Dec 21, the repair work on this road was started with full enthusiasm. Without losing vision of its CI task, the unit employed adequate manpower & machinery for this noble cause. The news of repair of their lifeline which otherwise had potholes, water logging & collapsed drainage system came as a new ray of hope for the villagers & soon the news got spread in the neighbouring villages too.

Taking motivation from the initiative of 44 Assam Rifles, the locals especially youth from Azuiram & Namtiram villages also pledged to toil in the sunlight. Mr Micah Panmei, Member ADC Tamenglong also contributed towards repair of this vital road. It was a dream to achieve self reliance and contribute something constructive to the society which motivated the youth to share the load along with the jawans. The zeal of giving better future to the next generation kept them motivated to pursue their dreams. Working against all odds, it took 40 days to complete the repair work of 12 km stretch of this road. The repair work got completed on 11 Jan 21. The repaired road has come as a New Year gift for the villagers as

now they will have access to better education, health, employment, govt developmental schemes & markets for self reliance opportunities.

On 11 Jan 2022, DIG, 22 Sector AR in presence of huge crowd from nearby villages inaugurated and dedicated the repaired road to the locals of the area. Speaking on the occasion he asserted people to be self reliant and contribute constructively in the nation development. He stressed upon the importance of roads as a gateway to development and prosperity. He also sought cooperation from the villagers so that the AR and civil population can move synchronously towards development of the society. He also urged the locals to extend help to security forces in conduct of free & fair upcoming Legislative Assembly Elections in the area. He felicitated the youth of these two villages for the grit, will power & energy they have reflected in achieving self reliance through Jan Bhagidari. Its true reflection of Atam Nirbhar Bharat while celebrating the Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav. The story of achieving the dreams of better and improved road connectivity is incomplete without the narrative of locals together joining hands with AR in achieving this rare feat. The energy of the youth if channelised properly can rewrite the self reliance and self sustainable dream of a society. This is Naya Bharat where you yourself plan, execute and contribute towards development and nation building.

The 18th Cheongju Jikji World Letter Calligraphy Competition held in South Korea

Five Indian Calligraphers Emerge Winners



The works of Indian calligraphers exhibited in the 18th Cheongju Jikji international Calligraphy competition held in South Korea.

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan 12:

Indian calligraphers were honoured at the recent 18th Cheongju Jikji, a World Letter Calligraphy international Calligraphy Biennale (Competition) held at the Korean Art Museum organized in South Korea.

The competition was held from December 23 to December 28, 2021. A total of 71 works of art were submitted by 40 calligraphers in different Indian languages in this calligraphy competition. Calligraphers from different countries presented their arts in their own scripts.

This competition was based on the theme- "Peace, Unity, Love". On this occasion, a group of Korean calligraphers urged the artists to preserve the Korean traditional method. The participation of Korean artists generated enthusiasm among Indian calligraphers.

The "Cheongju Jikji" World Calligraphy Competition, not only introduces the cities of Jikji and Hangul to the world but also conveys to the new generation the only one heritage of calligraphy of the central region. "Cheongju Jikji" has achieved the status of World Heritage and its name is also

included in the UNESCO world list. In addition, it is affiliated with the International Written Heritage Centre (ICDH).

Calligraphy is the art of beautiful handwriting. The term derives from the Greek words for "beauty" (kallos) and "to write" (graphein). It implies a sure knowledge of the correct form of letters—i.e., the conventional signs by which language can be communicated—and the skill to make them with such ordering of the various parts and harmony of proportions that the experienced, knowledgeable

eye will recognize such compositions as a work of art.

The calligraphers from India who won the awards included Achyut Palav, Narayana Bhattathiri, Akshaya Thombre, Rupali Thombre, and Shubhangi Gade.

Achyut Palav, who completed GD Art from Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai, also received Research Scholarship from Ulka Advertising for a thesis on the "Modi" script. He had been an Ex. A faculty member of Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art. Narayana Bhattathiri is a name synonymous with Malayalam calligraphy.

Akshaya Thombre is a student of "Achyut Palav School of Calligraphy", who is among the new generation of inspired calligraphers with imagination and a heightened sense of aesthetic.

Rupali Thombre is a student of "Achyut Palav School of Calligraphy", is an engineer by education. But she cultivated Calligraphy as a hobby which gave her a new identity of writer, poet, painter and calligrapher. Shubhangi Gade has participated in many national and international calligraphy and other art exhibitions.

India's active Covid-19 cases cross 9.5 lakh; Omicron tally at 4,868

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

India recorded 1,94,720 fresh Covid-19 cases and 442 deaths in the 24 hours ending 8 am Wednesday. Active cases mounted to more than 9.5 lakh, up from the previous day's 8.21 lakh, and the highest in 211 days. The daily positivity rate increased to 11.05 per cent, data from the Union Ministry of Health showed.

The Omicron tally in the country reached 4,868, of which as many as 1,805 have either recovered or been discharged from hospital. Maharashtra has the highest number of Omicron cases (1,281), followed by Rajasthan (645). Delhi, which has the third highest tally (546), recorded no new cases of the news variant on Tuesday.

With several states witnessing a rise in their case counts, Karnataka has extended its curbs till the end of January while Delhi had mandated work from home in private offices. Karnataka on Tuesday reported 14,473 new cases, while the national capi-

tal recorded 21,259 new cases and 23 fatalities—the highest number of deaths since June 16.

Maharashtra recorded 34,424 new cases on Tuesday, 954 more than the previous day. Its capital city, Mumbai, however, continued its downward spiral, registering 11,647 cases on the same day. The city's daily cases have been dropping since January 7. However, Health Minister Rajesh Tope told "It is too early to say that the curve has started plateauing or flattening."

In West Bengal, the number of active cases breached the 1-lakh mark as 21,098 more people tested positive. Tamil Nadu reported 15,379 new cases, up from Monday's 13,990. Similarly, Kerala registered a sharp rise in its daily cases, reporting 9,066 new infections.

On the Omicron front, the infection count stands at 4868, a rise of 407 from the new variant's caseload on January 11.

Also, more than 8.5 million additional doses of Covid-19

Kerala records 76 Omicron cases, highest-ever single-day spike, tally rises to 421

Agency
Thiruvananthapuram, Jan 12:

Kerala's cumulative count of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 climbed to 421 on Wednesday after 76 new cases were reported, the highest single-day spike in the state so far.

Kerala health minister Veena George said that the situation is really serious in Pathanamthitta district.

On Monday, 17 patients in Kerala were found to be infected with the 'variant of concern' while 23 cases were reported on Sunday. More than 140 patients have recovered from Omicron in Kerala till now.

Kerala is the fifth worst-hit state from Omicron after Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Delhi and Karnataka. Despite the fast-spreading variant wreaking havoc along with a surge in daily Covid-19 infections, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led state government has ruled out a possibility of a lockdown in Kerala.

Veena George said last Saturday that the government can't hamper with the economic activities, adding that people should work together to avoid a complete shutdown.

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On Monday, India began the latest phase in its vaccination drive, as 'precautionary doses' were administered to health care workers, frontline workers and senior citizens with comorbidities.

Ensure Adequate Buffer Stock of Medical Oxygen: Centre to States

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

Noting the "significant surge" in COVID-19 cases in the country, the Centre on Wednesday wrote to all states and UTs urging them to direct departments concerned to ensure adequate buffer stock of medical oxygen for at least 48 hours and reinvigorate oxygen control rooms. The Union Health Ministry said the emerging scenario calls for immediate measures by states and UTs to ensure optimal availability of medical oxygen at all health facilities.

In a letter to states and UTs, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said that private health facilities providing oxygen therapy services may be assessed and their medical oxygen infrastructure capacities need to be explored. A possible strategy and mechanism to leverage the private sector in times of peak of demand can be explored, he advised. Bhushan outlined that LMO tanks at the health facilities should be sufficiently filled and uninterrupted supply chain for their refilling should be ensured.

Stating that health facilities across the country have been strengthened with PSA plants, he stressed that it is important to ensure that these PSA plants are kept fully functional. "All steps should be taken for the proper upkeep and maintenance of such plants," Bhushan said. "All health facilities providing in-patient care and oxygen therapy should have buffer stock of medical oxygen sufficient for at least 48 hrs," he said.

Bhushan said all the health facilities should have adequate inventory of oxygen cylinders along with back-up stocks and robust refilling systems. It should also be ensured that these cylinders are filled and kept ready. "All districts should ensure that oxygen concentrators supplied to them are fully functional. Their proper upkeep and maintenance need to be ensured," he said.

All higher-level health facilities should have life support equipment including ventilators, BiPAP, SpO2 systems and associated consumables in sufficient numbers to respond to the emerging needs. All infection prevention protocols

should be adopted while using the oxygen delivery devices and equipment at all the health facilities, he said.

Bhushan asked states and UTs to ensure optimal use of all oxygen delivery equipment and devices, and deployment of adequately trained HR at all facilities. As advised, training of facility wise oxygen stewards should be completed within the next few days. The Health Ministry along with Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship has organised 10 hours training for operators of PSA plants for day-to-day operation, 40 hours training of Master Trainers and 180 hours training of trouble shooting of PSA to a significant number of persons in all States. The oxygen control rooms should be reinvigorated at state and UT level for prompt resolutions of oxygen related issues and challenges, Bhushan stated.

All the states have been asked to ensure on boarding of all healthcare facilities utilising oxygen to ODAS digital platform, directly or through State APIs, the letter stated.

Smriti Irani slams Punjab govt for failing to provide safe passage to PM Modi

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

Union minister Smriti Irani on Wednesday slammed Punjab's Congress government for failing to provide a safe passage to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cavalcade during his visit to the state on January 5, citing media reports indicating that it was aware of the protesters gathered along the route.

"Why did the DGP (director general police) in Punjab give an all-clear in terms of the safety of the route that was to be taken by the Prime Minister?" Irani asked.

PM Modi was stuck on a flyover for 15-20 minutes on his way from Bathinda to Ferozepur on January 5 due to a blockade by protesters. The security breach sparked a war of words between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress government in Punjab. Both the Union and Punjab governments later set up their inquiry panels to probe the incident.

Reports claimed that Punjab police personnel briefed their seniors and the state administration about the presence of protesters along the route

that Modi's cavalcade was to take during his visit.

Irani cited the reports and said that it was "disconcerting" that Punjab Police officials in it have highlighted how they continuously engaged with the Congress government and administration in Punjab to bring to light the threat to the security of the Prime Minister and his entourage.

"The question is, who in the Punjab Congress-led government continued to deliberately ignore these threats to the Prime Minister's security?" she asked at a press conference.

She slammed Punjab chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi for briefing Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra about the breach. "Priyanka Gandhi said she was briefed by the Punjab chief minister about the prime minister's security breach. The question is, what security clearance does a citizen have that the chief minister is keeping her apprised about the prime minister's security. The details should be given only to the security agencies... why is it being given to a private citizen?"

V. Prez Venkaiah Naidu pays tribute to Swami Vivekananda on his birth anniversary

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

On National Youth Day today, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has called upon India's youth to lead the transformation of the nation by playing an active role in nation-building. Mr. Naidu said that our youth must dream big and work hard to achieve their goals. Mr. Naidu said that youngsters must take inspira-

tion from Swami Vivekananda and imbibe his values of nationalism, his belief in universal brotherhood, and compassion for the needy. The Vice President said that our youth must always take pride in the richness of Indian culture.

Paying tributes to Swami Vivekananda on his birth anniversary today, Mr. Naidu said that Swami Vivekananda was a visionary spiritual leader and an iconic ambassador of India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Swami Vivekananda on his birth anniversary. In his message, Mr. Modi said Swami Vivekananda's life was devoted to national regeneration. He said he motivated many youngsters to work towards nation-building and asked everyone to keep working together to fulfill the dreams Swami Vivekananda had for the nation.

Sports

Boxing: Mary Kom, Amit Panghal added to national camps



Agency
New Delhi, Jan 12:

Six-time world champion M C Mary Kom and Asian Games gold-medallist Amit Panghal were among six Indian boxers who were on Tuesday included in the ongoing national camps for women and men in Delhi and Patiala respectively. Panghal was joined by a fit-again Vikas Krishan, who underwent a shoulder surgery last year after the Olympics, Manish Kaushik, Satish Kumar, and Ashish Kumar in the men's camp in Patiala. Mary Kom will report to the

women's camp at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium here after the inclusion of their names was recommended by the Boxing Federation of India.

The two camps will continue till March 14, the Sports Authority of India said in a statement.

All six of them were not included in the camps conducted in December last year as they had skipped the national championships after the Tokyo Olympics.

"The Olympian boxers will now join the camps, which started on January 3 with only those who had competed in the

National Championships. "With the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games drawing close, Sports authority of India approved the inclusion recommended by the Boxing Federation of India," the SAI stated.

As many as 63 men boxers across different weight categories and 27 coaching and support staff have been in the National Camp in NIS, Patiala.

A total of 57 women boxers, including Olympic Games bronze-medallist Lovlina Borgohain and 25 coaching and support staff are already in the national camp in the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

ISL: Ishan Pandita's strike helps Jamshedpur defeat East Bengal at GMC Athletic Stadium

Agency
Bambolim, Jan 12:

Ishan Pandita's lone strike in the 88th minute helped Jamshedpur FC defeat SC East Bengal 1-0 here at the GMC Athletic Stadium in the ongoing Indian Super League (ISL) on Tuesday. The result allowed Owen Coyle's men to leapfrog the competition and reach first place in the points table with 19 points.

Ishan Pandita (88') was the difference-maker after scoring another late goal with a towering header to secure three points for Jamshedpur FC.

The early exchanges saw both teams create half chances as there was little to separate the teams. Arindam Bhattacharya was called into action in the 27th minute after Murray found space behind the defensive line. The goalkeeper did well to leave the box and make the clearance. No major scoring chances fell to either team until the half-hour mark.

Boris Singh had a good chance to open the scoring in the final stages of the first half. The winger found himself unmarked inside the box but his



header was disappointing and went way above the crossbar. Despite dominating the possession and creating more attacking opportunities, JFC was not able to score as both teams went into the break without scoring.

The Men of Steel started the second half on the front foot, with Jordan Murray hitting the crossbar with a looping header. Influential defender Adil Khan had to be replaced

just before the hour mark by Darren Sidoel due to an injury. Murray then had another shot saved by Arindam who parried the ball away with a strong right hand.

The last 15-minutes saw JFC attack with more intensity. Murray was again on target in the 85th minute but his right-footed shot lacked the power to beat the SCEB custodian. However, it was Ishan Pandita yet again who scored a late

goal to break SCEB hearts. The striker scored with a precise header after meeting with Greg Stewart's corner. Pandita's goal was enough to secure the win and propel JFC to the top of the league table.

Jamshedpur FC will next face high-flying Hyderabad FC at the Athletic Stadium on Monday. On the other hand, SC East Bengal meets Derrick Pereira's FC Goa at the same venue on Wednesday.