

Droupadi Murmu takes oath as the 15th President of India

'My election is proof that...': Droupadi Murmu

New Delhi, July 25:

Droupadi Murmu takes oath of office as the 15th President of India on 25 July.

She is the second woman President of the country, first-ever tribal woman to hold the highest Constitutional post and the first President to be born in independent India.

In her first address as President at the Central Hall of Parliament, Droupadi Murmu said, "While Standing in the Parliament - the symbol of expectations, aspirations and rights of all Indians - I humbly express my gratitude to all of you. Your trust and support will be a major strength for me to carry out this new responsibility."

Addressing parliament as India's new president, Murmu said: "My election proves poor Indians can not just dream but also fulfil aspirations'. President Murmu also said that it is a source of satisfaction for her that 'those who have been deprived for centuries, who have been away from the benefits of development... are seeing their reflection in me'.

She also said that, "I am fortunate to have got this opportunity to serve during the 75th year of independence."

She also added that reaching the Presidential post is not personal achievement but an achievement of every poor in India.

"My nomination is evidence that the poor in India can not only dream but also



fulfill those dreams," she said.

She further added, "It is the power of India's democracy that a girl born in a poor tribal home could reach the topmost constitutional post."

"I am the first President of the country who was born in independent India," President Droupadi Murmu said.

She further added, "Satisfying to me that the people who were devoid of development for years - the poor, Dalits, backward, the tribals - can see me as their reflection. My nomination has blessings of the poor behind it, it's a reflection of the dreams & capabilities of crores of women."

The swearing-in ceremony took place in the Central Hall of the Parliament. Chief Justice of India NV Ramana administered the oath of the office.

Earlier in the day, President Murmu paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, father of the nation, at Raj Ghat and also visited Rashtrapati Bhavan where she was welcomed by former President Ram Nath Kovind and his wife Savita Kovind.

The former Jharkhand Governor marked a historic victory over Opposition's presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha in the presidential polls on July 22.

The results for presidential election were declared on Thursday in which it was revealed that Murmu bagged 2,824 votes against her opponent Yashwant Sinha who only secured 1,877 votes. A total of 4,809 MPs and MLAs cast their votes in the polling on July 18.

After the declaration of results, Secretary General of

Rajya Sabha and the Returning Officer for Presidential Election 2022, PC Mody handed over the certificate to President-elect Droupadi Murmu at her residence in the national capital.

In 1997, Murmu began her political career by joining the BJP and was first elected as the councilor of the Rairangpur Nagar Panchayat. She was then became the chairperson of the same panchayat in 2000 and later, served as the BJP Scheduled Tribe Morcha's vice president. In 2007, she was conferred Nilkhantha Award for the best MLA in the Odisha assembly and became the first woman governor of Jharkhand in 2015.

The term of former President Ram Nath Kovind came to an end on 24 July.

(Speech by the President produced at Page 4)

2nd session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly begins

Congress MLA points out violation in BAC meets

IT News
Imphal, July 25:

Veteran politicians Okram Joy Singh, who have now retired often put-up matters about 'point of orders' in the house of the law makers, but may be democracy in India is too weak that there seems to exist no provision to halt the proceeding of the sitting of the house, may be due to lack of provisions.

In the first day of the 2nd state assembly session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Congress MLA K Meghachandra today points out some critical issues which violate the proceedings of the meeting of Business advisory committee meeting. In Indian parliamentary democracy it is a much that the state Assembly follows the Rules of Procedure and Conduct and Business of Manipur Legislative Assembly and to have a sitting

of the business Advisory Committee meeting before the commencement of any state assembly session.

As per the Rules of Procedure and Conduct and Business of Manipur Legislative Assembly, it is mandatory that the BAC meeting should be attended by both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Manipur legislative Assembly. The irony is that as of now the post of the deputy speaker is vacant and because of that deputy speaker was not present.

However, in the Rules of Business and conduct of the Manipur Legislative Assembly it is mandatory for the Deputy speaker to attend in the BAC meeting.

MLA K Meghachandra of the Congress party questions whether it is okay to convene the BAC which is compulsory before the session. It is okay for the Karnataka Assembly as no

such provision is included for the state of Karnataka. But how is it possible to convene a state assembly session without the presence of the Deputy Speaker during the BAC meeting.

Minister Biswajit, who represented as the leader of the house due to absence of Chief Minister however said that, when the Dy. Speaker is not elected yet how could it be possible for him to present.

The speaker, Th. Seityabrata, gave no justifiable reply but said that the matter will be look after.

The surprising part is that the session continues and none object.

Indeed, Manipur Legislative Assembly has created another history by not properly discussing the matter which may make the functioning of State Assembly as per the rules of those in power.

RPF condolences

IT News
Imphal, July 25:

Proscribed group Revolutionary Front (RPF) condoles the demise of its member Loitongbam Biradhaja from Wangoo Ahal Lup Awang Leikai on July 23rd. He was 76 years old. Biradhaja was discharged from the party honorably on 4th June 2010.



A condolence press release sent by the group said, "Biradhaja joined the party on 1993 and received Basic Military Training on April 15, 1996, and was inducted to the War Office with Army number 0997." A condolence meeting was held at every RPF unit, Department, and station. The group shares the grief and sorrow of the departed soul's family, friends, and near ones.

Projects for Connectivity and Development in NE States

PIB
New Delhi, July 25:

Several infrastructure development projects including connectivity projects have been taken up by the concerned Ministries and Departments of the Central Government in the North Eastern Region (NER). These relate to improving rail connectivity, road connectivity, waterway connectivity, power connectivity and telecom connectivity in the NER. These *inter-alia* include:-

i. **Rail connectivity:** As on 01.04.2022, 19 projects costing Rs.77,930 crore for 1,909 km length falling fully/ partly in North Eastern Region including those sanctioned during the period from 2004 to 2013 (except Agartala-Sabroom new line project and Lumding-Hojai Doubling project) are under different stages of planning/ approval/ execution, out of which 409 km length has been commissioned and an expenditure of Rs.30,312 crore incurred upto March, 2022. These include (i) 14 New Line Projects covering a length of 1,181 km at a cost of Rs.61,520 crore, out of which 361 km length has been commissioned and an expenditure of

Rs.27,458 crore incurred upto March, 2022; and (ii) 5 Doubling/ Multitracking Projects covering a length of 728 km at a cost of Rs.16,410 crore, out of which 48 km length has been commissioned and an expenditure of Rs.2,854 crore incurred upto March, 2022. Agartala-Sabroom new line project (112 km) was sanctioned in 2008-09 and commissioned in 2019-20. Lumding-Hojai Doubling project (45 km) was sanctioned in 2012-13 and commissioned in 2019-20.

ii. **Road Connectivity:** During the period from 2004 to 2013, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has undertaken 394 projects of total road length 5595.14 km costing Rs. 23038.58 crore for connectivity and development in the North Eastern States. Out of which, 337 projects of total road length 4232.55 km costing Rs. 13154.86 crore have been completed, and 57 projects of total road length 1362.60 km costing Rs. 10073.64 crore are ongoing.

iii. **Waterway connectivity:** National Waterway-2 (NW-2) (river Brahmaputra) was declared in 1988 from Dhubri to Sadiya in the State of Assam for a length of 891 km and was developed and maintained

with terminal facilities, fairway and navigation aids. To maintain waterway connectivity between NW-1 & NW-2 in North Eastern Region, maintenance of Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) Route was continued which existed since 1972, under which inland vessels of one country can transit through the other country. During the period 2004-2013, 03 projects on Brahmaputra River (NW-2) in Assam and 02 projects of Indo-Bangladesh Protocol on Transit and Trade were undertaken for connectivity to North Eastern Region.

iv. **Power connectivity:** Ministry of Power had undertaken Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) projects through Regulated Tariff Mechanism (RTM) and Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) mode in the North Eastern States. During the period from 2004-2013, 03 projects costing Rs.11178.26 crore were undertaken by POWERGRID under RTM in NER and 01 project under scheme for enabling import of NER/ER surplus by NR through TBCB mode.

v. **Telecom connectivity:** BharatNet project (earlier known as National Optical Fiber Network) was initially ap-

proved by the Union Cabinet on 25.10.2011. BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity through an optimal mix of media (Optical Fibre Cable/ Radio/Satellite) to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) of the country, including NER. As on 04.07.2022, total 5804 GPs have been made Service Ready in NER States.

For providing broadband connectivity to Rural & Remote areas, Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) signed an agreement with BSNL on January 20, 2009. Under this scheme, as of 31st January 2015, a total of 15,313 broadband connections and 277 kiosks were set up in NER.

A scheme has been launched by USO Fund to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing infrastructure sites/ towers spread for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there was no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. Under this scheme, as on 30th November, 2013, 542 towers were set up, and 963 BTSs were commissioned in NER.

Agreements were signed with BSNL in the year 2003 for

replacement of VPTs with reliable technologies, which were earlier working on Multi Access Radio Relay (MARR) technology and installed before 01.04.2002. Under this scheme, as on 30th June 2012, total 12576 MARR VPTs were replaced, in NER. All the remaining inhabited villages as on 01.10.2007 as per Census 2001 have been included for provision of VPTs with subsidy support from USO Fund under this scheme. Agreements in this regard were signed with BSNL on 27.02.2009. Under this scheme, as on 30th March, 2015, total 38,220 VPTs were replaced in NER.

In addition, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER) implemented various schemes/packages viz. Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) Scheme, Special Packages of Assam for Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), Schemes of North Eastern Council (NEC), for the development of North Eastern Region. Under these developmental schemes/packages, 1689 projects worth Rs.17,748.54 crore, including connectivity projects, were sanctioned during the financial years 2004-05 to 2013-14.

Month long workshop cum creative production concludes



IT News
Imphal, July 25:

A month long workshop cum creative production of "Yening Mapao" organised by the Sidaba Culture Foundation of Yaikuk Chingakham Leirak, Imphal West under the sponsorship of the Sangeek Natak Akademi, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, New Delhi concluded at Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy yesterday.

The closing function of the workshop cum creative

production was graced by N. Amusana Devi, A noted artist and awardee of Sangeet Natak & Manipur State Kala Akademi as Chief Guest. Ustad Bismillah Khan, Yuva Puraskar Awardee and Assistant Professor of Manipur University of Culture Dr. Manju Elangbam, guest faculty of Manipur University of Culture and president of Kanglei Sheishaklon Shindamhangee President Khumanthem Sundari Devi also attended as guest of honours.

A world where fish are no longer forced to climb trees



By: Schindler Potsangbam

Albert Einstein once said "Everybody's a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

Ladies and gentlemen, today we have modern-day schooling. Not only do they make a fish climb a tree, but they also make them do a 10-mile run. Turning million into robots each and every day.

Do you realize how many kids relate to that fish, never finding their gifts, thinking they are stupid, and believing they are useless? Well, the time has come, no more excuses. I accuse the school of killing creativity, and individuality and being intellectually abusive. It is an ancient institution that has outlived its usage.

Richard Williams, a civil rights activist from St Louis, MO in his video once remarked and I quote "Let's take a modern-day phone and a phone from 150 years back, big difference, right? Let's talk about a car from today and a car from 150 years ago again a huge difference. Well then get this, look at a picture of today's classroom and a classroom from 150 years ago. Now ain't that a shame that literally more than a century and nothing has changed. Do you claim to prepare students for the future? But seeing the scenario, I must ask do you prepare the children for the future or the past?"

Now if we look back then we can conclude that schools were made to train people to work in factories which explains why they put students in straight roles nice and neat and tell them to sit still, raise their hands if they want to say or ask something, give them a 10 minutes break for lunch and for 8 hours a day tell them what to think and make them compete to get an 'A', a letter which determines product quality. Now isn't this insane?

But I get it, then times were different and I myself am nothing to have a say in this but today we don't need robot zombies or something like that. Society needs people who can connect and think creatively, rationally, innovatively, critically, and independently.

See we all know that every brain is different and so is every person and scientists have already confirmed that.

But then how come the school treats each and every student the same way?

It is like you are giving the same size fits of clothes to all the customers or a doctor giving the same medicine to all the patients. And that's how we can explain why storms are named after people. It's awful.

So when it comes to school it's the exact thing that is prevailing there for ages where one teacher stands in front of 60 kids each one having different goals, different dreams, different perspectives, and different capabilities. Yet they teach the same thing the same way. Now that's horrific.

A system where nobody has a say and curriculums and policies are made by people most of which have never taught in their entire life and are just obsessed with standardized tests. But I guess it's never too late to change.

I have faith in humanity and I believe that this could still change. Let's give every gift an equal chance. Sure Maths is important but not more than dance or arts. I know its sounds like a dream come true but countries like Finland are doing impressive things such as shorter school days, homework is non-existent and they focus on collaboration, not competition. And to be honest their educational system outperforms every other country in the world. Not only them, but countries like Singapore are also succeeding rapidly so on and so forth the list goes on. Sure people are changing. So let's get moving because students may be 20% of the population but they are 100% of the future.

In conclusion, I dream about an educational life where each and every soul is given priority to their dream and encouraged and backed up by the school itself and by their parents. This is a world in which I believe, a world where fish are no longer forced to climb trees.

"What makes a child gifted and talented may not be good grades in school, but a different way of looking at the world and learning." - Chuck Grassley

(The writer is from Singjamei Chingamakh of Tomal Leirak and now studying Class XII, Delhi Public School. RK Puram, New Delhi)

The evolving role of teachers and technologies amidst the COVID-19 pandemic - Student Friendly Adaptions of CAU, Imphal

By: Dr. Lokesh Kumar Mishra and Prof. Indira Sarangthem

As of 1st April 2020, more than 3.4 billion people, representing 43% of the world population, were in lockdown in more than 80 countries and territories around the world. The lockdown and social distancing measures immediately had an enormous impact on higher education when the COVID 19 pandemic engulfed the world in its initial phases.

Recent data released by the UNESCO indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost 1.37 billion students across the world - this comprises 90% of all enrolled students in around 138 countries. This pandemic is surely the biggest crisis faced by humankind over the past century. In Indian higher education institutions (HEIs), the crisis has affected new admissions, examinations, student internships, placements and student mobility. An effective strategy is necessary to minimise the adverse impact of the pandemic. India with large student population belonging to diverse demographics, constrained student-faculty ratio, distinct rural-urban divide and gaps in access to digital resources makes the higher education field extremely complex. The pre-existing digital divide among the rural and urban regions was further aggravated in COVID 19 pandemic era. 394 Universities and around 60.53% of the Colleges are located in rural areas of India as per a report published by Association of Indian Universities (AIU). These learning centres lack sufficient digital infrastructure (hardware and software), connectivity, uninterrupted power supply and other resources needed for effective implementation of learning activities in online mode. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that physical campuses having minimal digital infrastructure was not accessible to faculties due to COVID 19 appropriate SOPs justifiably imposed by State and Union Government in the larger interest of minimizing the potential health hazards among the population and lack of personal digital connectivity particularly in non-metro and small cities. Furthermore, almost 50% of the students coming from economically weaker sections, non-disadvantaged social groups also lack the conducive home environment for online learning or they may be living in areas with poor internet connectivity or irregular power supply that hinders online learning among these students.

Despite the overwhelming consequences of the pandemic, this global crisis has also been an extraordinary time for learning. All stake-

holders that include the policy makers, teachers, students and families are learning how to adapt to the evolving situation and work towards making a resilient educational system.

The sudden shift away from the classroom globally due to COVID-19 pandemic and adoption of online learning may in all possibility continue to persist in the post-pandemic world, and such a shift would have huge impact on the worldwide education market. Even before the emergence of COVID-19, there was already high growth and adoption in education technology. The global investments in edtech reached US\$18.66 billion in 2019 and the overall market for online education was projected to reach \$350 Billion by 2025. There has been a significant surge in usage of digital learning tools and platforms such as language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, or online learning software, since COVID-19 engulfed the world. The pandemic forced educators to rapidly devise pedagogical adaptations that have proven to be pivotal as the traditional in classroom lecturing models do not translate to a remote learning environment. Lecture deliveries by educators in remote mode through diverse channels like YouTube, Online-meeting platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco Webex, and Microsoft Teams demand that the teachers evolve their teaching activities in such a way that they can engage students in a creative manner. This becomes even more important considering the pandemic driven frequent lockdowns, which forced every household to become a classroom despite the fact that majority of these households do not have favourable learning environment.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the pandemic has recalibrated how teachers divide their time between teaching, engaging with students, and administrative tasks. In Brazil according to a survey conducted by Instituto Peninsula, 83% of teachers did not consider being prepared to teach remotely, 67% were anxious, 38% felt tired, and less than 10% were happy or satisfied. The pandemic has highlighted the need for flexibility and more time for student-teacher interactions. For example, in Estonia teachers were given autonomy to adjust the curriculum, lesson plans, and their time allocation.

Almost 90% of countries that responded to the survey of Ministries of Education on National Re-

sponses to COVID-19 conducted by UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank (2020) supported teachers by sharing guidelines stressing the importance of: providing feedback to students, maintaining constant communication with caregivers, and reporting to local education units to keep track of learning. The Association of Indian Universities (AIU) undertook several initiatives to support Member Universities to minimise the impact of COVID-19 - these include online faculty development training for online teaching, national and international webinars, leadership talks and online workshops on themes such as assessment and evaluation, and fostering social responsibility among others. An online survey of HEIs was also being conducted to gauge the preparedness of Indian HEIs for online teaching. A significant initiative that the AIU worked upon with the O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) to produce "COVID-19 Response Tool Kit for Indian Higher Education Institutions", which was developed to help build Institutional Resilience for Academic Planning and Continuity.

Faculties adapted several novel methods of teaching globally. In Indian context, the course instructor has always played a central role in traditional classrooms by acting as an authority on the subject matter. The online format presents an opportunity to come out of this model and engage with students as active learners, while not being physically present within the same space. Instead of delivering a lecture, the course instructors need to focus on using flipped classrooms. In this approach, the faculty can assign the theoretical component as pre-reads for the class and utilize the classroom time for practical applications including discussions on real-life case studies, solving numerical problems, or any other practical component associated with the course.

The teachers have been using the following main methodologies to deliver the online classes suggested by COVID Response Tool Kit for Indian Higher Education Institutions published by AIU in August 2020:

1. Synchronous - Teaching live and having student-faculty interactions.

2. Asynchronous - Sharing content in various formats including audio/video recordings, videos, documentaries, movies, reading material, presentations, e-books etc.

with students consuming the content at their own pace and time of choice.

3. Hybrid - During live virtual classes, most sessions are happening at present with videos remaining off for students or even course instructors due to internet bandwidth constraints. Even audio remains patchy in most cases making interactions among course participants a difficult task. Thus, the body language related cues remain largely unavailable to the instructors. This makes synchronous discussions challenging. Thus, faculty have the option to explore hybrid means to conduct classes and can use the following means to create/ add an element of interaction to the asynchronous means:

*** Social Media** - The faculty can utilize Social Media platforms including WhatsApp or Facebook to create course specific groups and use these for engaging students in asynchronous discussions related to the course.

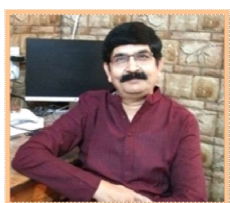
*** Discussion boards** - The students can also actively share their learning, resources they find insightful, and ask questions that can be answered by their peers or teachers. Free platforms like Piazza (www.piazza.com) that have been created for academic discussions can also prove very useful for asynchronous discussions, asking and responding to questions (including options for doing so anonymously), and sharing resources. Such spaces can be made accessible to next batches also and can prove useful beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

Technology interventions have enhanced teacher engagement with students, through improved access to content, data and networks, helping teachers better support student learning all over the world. Despite several shortcomings related to connectivity, Digital-Divide, health concerns due to increased screen time and inadequate learning environments at home for learners, globally institutions are adopting technology driven teaching and evaluation systems.

Central Agricultural University a premiere institution for Higher education in Agriculture and Allied Sciences in North Eastern India has been at the forefront of adopting technologies for remote learning, academic management and evaluation systems. The institution having it's headquartering at Imphal, Manipur has 13 constituent colleges in the seven North Eastern states.

contd. on page 3

Why death by drowning in India on rise ?



Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

of all injury-related deaths. The day supports individuals and organizations in understanding the global context of drowning and drowning prevention, as well as in using the advocacy materials created for the event to improve what they are doing and inspire others in their networks to do the same. Drowning and lack of first aid is an open ended health hazard across the globe, especially Asia. World Health Organisation, terming drowning a global burden, states that "children aged under five years are disproportionately at risk and males twice as likely to drown as females. Over half of casualties are aged under 25 years.

Drowning is among the ten leading causes of death for children and

youth aged 1-24 years. More than 90% of drowning deaths occur in rivers, lakes, wells and domestic water storage vessels in low- and middle-income countries, with children and adolescents in rural areas disproportionately affected. According to WHO, men accounted for 78% of all drowning deaths in India. The world over, men are at a higher risk of drowning, with twice the mortality rate of women, because of a higher exposure to water and riskier behaviour such as swimming alone, drinking alcohol before swimming alone and in small towns having water bodies like ponds, lakes, rivers and reservoirs, most of which are unprotected, unguarded and unsupervised, leading to drowning incidents. Lack of awareness, negligence, entering waters in an inebriated state and even suicidal acts account for the increasing instances of drowning. Drowning also happens to be an easy way for murdering people and the police are reluctant to register drowning cases as they are difficult to solve, especially in rural areas. The remote locations of drowning events lead to underreporting to hospitals and police stations, and hence there is a lack of data on drowning. India has seen maximum number of "selfie death" incidents with highest toll of 160 deaths. Drowning in natural water environments and among young children are issues of concern in India. Weak swimmers attempting to rescue other persons may themselves be at risk of drowning.

In India with unguarded lakes, ponds and rivers, especially in rural areas, there is no government policy for preventing drowning, such as barriers around water-bodies, safety lessons to children in schools, and safe boating laws. Lifesaving is an important concept, but our country has taken a long time to realise this. We do not have a central policy or authority to form policy on drowning prevention and safety. No doubt, Precautionary measures such as putting up warning signs near water bodies where drownings are reported frequently, enhanced patrolling at beach areas and dissemination of information through police aid posts at tourist hotspots are being done but it seems to have had little impact in bringing down accidents. According to the National Crime Record Bureau's, every day more than 100 people drown in India on average. Drowning deaths are preventable except in cases of suicide and murder.

Despite many lives being lost each year, drowning remains a

largely unrecognised threat to health and wellbeing. Despite conveying sufficient information on water safety, the lack of willingness to learn about safety measures remains a hindrance. There should be more public awareness using mass and social media and more government resources for awareness programmes, protective and security devices. "No selfie zones" could be a way to decrease selfie casualties and injuries. India identified "no selfie zones" but the move has not led to any decrease in the reported "selfie deaths". With adequate supervision, swimming instruction, and public education measures, it is estimated that 85% of drownings can be prevented. We need to work across all sectors to develop national water safety plans and policies.

(The writer is Free-lance Journalist, Writer & Cartoonist)

25th July is marked as the World Drowning Prevention day. There are an estimated 320,000 annual drowning deaths worldwide. Drowning is the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide, accounting for 7 percent

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India reports 16,866 fresh Covid cases, 41 deaths in 24 hours

Agency
New Delhi, July 25:

India reported 16,866 fresh COVID-19 cases, informed the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Monday.

The country on Sunday had reported 20,279 new infections.

A total of 41 deaths were reported with 18,148 recoveries in the last 24 hours.

India's active caseload currently stands at 1,50,877. Its daily positivity rate is at 7.03 per cent.

As per the ministry, out of the total of 2021766615 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country so far, 1682390 doses were adminis-

tered under the Nationwide Vaccination Drive in the last 24 hours.

The Central Government is committed to accelerating the pace and expanding the scope of COVID-19 vaccination throughout the country. The nationwide COVID-19 vaccination started on January 16, 2021.

The new phase of universalization of COVID-19 vaccination commenced on June 21, 2021. The vaccination drive has been ramped up through the availability of more vaccines, advance visibility of vaccine availability to States and UTs for enabling better planning by them and streamlining the vaccine supply chain.

As part of the nationwide

vaccination drive, the Government of India has been supporting the States and UTs by providing them with COVID Vaccines free of cost.

In the new phase of the universalization of the COVID-19 vaccination drive, the Union Government will procure and supply (free of cost) 75 per cent of the vaccines being produced by the vaccine manufacturers in the country to States and UTs.

In the new phase of the universalization of the COVID-19 vaccination drive, the Union Government will procure and supply (free of cost) 75 per cent of the vaccines being produced by the vaccine manufacturers in the country to States and UTs.

Union Minister Smriti Irani sends Legal Notice to Congress leaders in Goa liquor bar issue

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, July 25:

Union Minister Smriti Irani on Sunday sent a legal notice to Congress leaders Pawan Khera, Jairam Ramesh, Netta D' Souza, and Congress over remarks on her 18-year-old daughter and asked them to tender a written unconditional apology and withdraw the allegations with immediate effect.

No notice has been served upon her daughter Zoish Irani by the Goa Excise department and this is an attempt to tarnish the name of the family, she said.

Although the minister in a media conference had

claimed that her daughter was not involved in running the bar, in her interview with food specialist Kunal Vijaykar she was seen discussing the future plans of the Cafe and Bar.

No sooner did the controversy erupted on Saturday. The Iranis covered the word "bar" on the signboard with black tape. But Goa Youth Congress activists reached the venue and removed the tape restoring it to its original position. They also demanded that the bar be closed down and also handed over the lock and key brought by them, to the police.

The protest outside the SillySoul Cafe & Bar at Bhouta Vaddo in Assagao village was led by Goa Youth Congress president Varad Mardolkar and state unit spokesman Amarnath Panjikar. They demanded that the establishment be shut down immediately.

Speaking to the Transcontinental Times, Panjikar said Irani cannot run away from her responsibility by striking an emotional chord and that she has to respond to the allegation. Irani was holding senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi responsible for the illegality done by her family members. He demanded that action be initiated against the restaurant and those involved in the illegality.

Advocate Aires

Rodrigues said that the Goa Excise Commissioner has rightly issued a show cause notice to the up-market Silly Souls Cafe & Bar allegedly run by the Irani family over the illegally obtained Liquor licenses. There needs to be a thorough inquiry into this alleged fraud which was orchestrated by Irani's family in conjunction with Excise officials and the local Assagao Panchayat.

Though the Excise rules in Goa allow a Bar license to be issued only to an existing restaurant, the Excise department on February 18, 2021, in rank violation of law, issued a license for the retail sale of Foreign liquor for consumption on the premises along with another license for the retail sale of Indian Made Foreign Liquor and Country liquor to the outlet. These liquor licenses were issued without there being a Restaurant license as required by law.

The Excise department issued the licenses in the name of one Anthony Dgama, who as per the Aadhaar card submitted by him shows that he was a resident of Vile Parle in Mumbai and that the Aadhaar was issued on December 30, 2020. The Excise licenses were issued for this sprawling 1200 sq. mts plush premises without any verification.

On June 29, the local Excise office in contravention of

law renewed those licenses in the name of Anthony Dgama despite he passed away on May 17, 2021, as per the death certificate issued by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

The show cause notice issued by the Excise Commissioner has been served on the Bar & Restaurant, so at the hearing on July 29, we would know about the ghost who runs the show. Those in power should not dare hoodwink the authorities as the long arm of the law catches up, slowly but surely. There must also be a probe into the legality of all properties including the benami ones bought in Goa by Irani and other central leaders. It's time to say that enough is enough.

In the meanwhile in response to the bar scandal, there were several witty remarks against the BJP, a protagonist of Hindutva, saying "Beef, pork, mutton, chicken, fish, beer, whiskey, rum, gin & all other types of foreign & desi liquor are available in this BJP sanskari restaurant & liquor bar in Goa. Jai Ho".

Caption

The word "bar" was concealed from the signboard of SillySoul Cafe & Bar, after the controversy. (Inset: Top right: Zubin Irani's (Smriti's husband) Instagram referring to the bar. Right Down: Smriti and Zoish.

Career Guidance

Why we need climate change education



By: Vijay GarG

How many policymakers, curriculum planners and developers, educators and teachers in India are familiar with the term "climate change education" (CCE)? How many of them can talk about its importance or think it is necessary to include CCE in the school curriculum? I leave it to readers to guess the percentage of educated people who have some knowledge about CCE and the need for it in 21st century.

According to the World Economic Forum's Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2022, which measures the environmental health and sustainability of countries, India ranked lowest among 180 countries. Shocking? Does it disturb us in any way? As a nation, we have been least bothered about such reports, as we seem to think that climate change issues are not real. Not many parliamentarians and legislators are interested in talking about this issue. Our television channels do not think that the climate crisis is a topic worth

debating. We don't seem to be interested in finding answers to why temperatures are on the rise and why cyclones and floods have become common nowadays. Our callous attitude to the climate crisis could be attributed to our lack of sense of belonging to the planet.

Need for urgency

As a result, our education system does not give adequate importance to climate change education, nor does it have any curriculum on climate change. It is a matter of concern for us as many countries including New Zealand, Italy and Britain have taken proactive measures and introduced CCE in schools with the aim of creating awareness among students and producing champions of climate action. Unfortunately, India does not seem to have realised the urgency with which it should respond.

While speaking at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow in 2021, Prime Minister Modi stressed the need to include climate change adaptation policies in the school syllabus but, recently, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) removed chapters on climate change (Class 11: Greenhouse effect, Class 7: weather, climate and water and Class 9: the Indian monsoon). The reason given was that it was an attempt to reduce students' workload.

Not only was it a backward step but also displayed a lack of sensitivity. After many educationists and activists expressed dismay at this decision, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced a week ago that the dropped chapters would be restored. Should we treat it as good news or take it with a pinch of salt?

Everyone's responsibility

Climate change education, according to the UNESCO, helps students "understand and address the impacts of the climate crisis, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to act as agents of change." Climate change affects everyone on the planet. It is everyone's responsibility to protect the planet. Teachers should help students become aware of the climate crisis and the importance of environmental health (clean air, safe use of chemicals, sound agricultural practices, protection from radiation, and so on), and encourage them to take proactive steps to become champions of climate action.

According to EPI 2022, deteriorating air quality and rapidly increasing greenhouse gas emissions are the primary reasons for India's low score. Another report states that India has 21 of the 30 most polluted cities in the world and air pollution kills over 16 lakh people every year. In this context, it is necessary to explain

to students, in an easy-to-understand language, the policies and actions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the associated Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE). It is also important to invite climate enthusiasts and activists to schools and encourage students to interact with them. Such interactions might motivate some students to involve themselves in climate action.

Only education can help people become aware of issues, look at them critically, respond to challenges in a meaningful and effective manner and make informed decisions. It is the responsibility of educators to help students become aware of climate issues, enable them to change their attitudes and behaviour and empower them to become champions of climate action. Educators should be supported by policy makers.

"My planet - my home - my responsibility" should be the attitude of citizens interested in saving the planet. Those who have this attitude will have a sense of belonging to the planet. If the country's policy-makers, curriculum developers, educators, teachers and other stakeholders have a "green" attitude and a sense of belonging, the nation can produce responsible "green" citizens.

JFA demands fair distribution of housing flats to media persons

IT Correspondent
Guwahati, July 25:

Journalists' Forum Assam (JFA) demands a fair distribution of flats, developed by Assam State Housing Board, to media persons so that the real needy families get the opportunity instead of continued possession by rich personnel including the editor-journalists. The forum also insists on affidavits by the housing flat owners declaring that they don't have private houses in the city.

"It is understood that many affluent media personalities have been occupying the

affordable housing flats in various parts of the city. Once the housing flat owners become wealthy to buy properties (including luxurious apartments), they should abandon the housing flats so that more needy families can get those," said JFA president Rupam Barua and secretary Nava Thakuria.

The scribe's forum argues that there is nothing wrong to acquire a housing flat when one is looking for an affordable place to live in the city, but once he or she becomes wealthier (to have private apartments), it should be a general conscience to leave

the affordable flats so that it can be handed over to the most needy families. Journalists should show the gesture first, added the statement.

"The concerned authority must take an initiative to identify those wealthy housing flat owners (if necessary, an affidavit by them can be asked to submit) to recover those flats meant for low income families," said the JFA statement, adding that State chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma should formulate relevant policies so that the new-found rich owners have to abandon their old housing flats voluntarily.

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The evolving role of teachers and technologies amidst the COVID-19...

The College of Agriculture, Imphal, is the oldest constituent college of Central Agricultural University, Imphal. Established in 1979 as Manipur Agricultural College it acted as the foundation for establishment of Central Agricultural University, Imphal on 26th January, 1989. Since its inception CAU, Imphal has produced 3836 graduates, 1344 post graduates and 75 Ph.D. students. Currently, the College of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal has 379 undergraduate, 113 post graduate and 30 Ph.D. students enrolled for various degree programs.

The College of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal with dynamic and decisive leadership of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor took several measures to mitigate the issues that have been confronting the academic atmosphere in view

of COVID-19 pandemic. The College faculties have worked tirelessly to evolve novel teaching methods for the benefit of the students. Many of the teachers have created their own YouTube Channels where specific lecture topics are uploaded. The College of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal also created its own YouTube channel where faculties were provided facilities to upload their video lectures. When the first lockdown was enforced the College had to send the students home on 16th March 2020. The faculties swiftly adapted towards online teaching platforms like Google Meet and Zoom. Considering that many students live in remote corners of North Eastern States the faculties created whatsapp groups for each course through which lecture notes,

reading materials and practice tests were disseminated. Evaluation methods using Google Forms for quiz was adopted widely for efficient feedback regarding the progress of learning among the students.

All the constituent colleges of Central Agricultural University including the College of Agriculture, Imphal adopted online admission procedure in the academic year 2020-21. A robust online academic management system (AMS) hosted by Indian Agricultural Statistical Research Institute, New Delhi has been adopted for paper free academic management. All the colleges are working towards adopting the system and it is targeted to completely move to the AMS platform. Central Agricultural University, Imphal also adopted and Online Ex-

amination platform developed hosted by a private service provider to conduct the end term examinations of the academic year 2020-21.

All these measures during COVID-19 pandemic ensured that academic activities of the Central Agricultural University, Imphal were conducted efficiently. The College of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal ensured that academic activities were carried out with all sincerity. This allowed 60 undergraduate, 25 post graduate and 03 Ph.D. students to complete their degree during the pandemic. This included 05 students of foreign origin.

All these collective efforts of faculties, supporting staff, university administration and most importantly students has yielded its benefits. In the recent ICAR rankings of Agricul-

tural Universities 2020, Central Agricultural University jumped from 25th position to 13th position. In coming months CAU, Imphal is going to admit students in UG, PG and Ph.D. program in 13 different constituent colleges of the university located in seven different states of North East India. A huge rush for the seats of CAU in these programs is anticipated in this year also as has been a trend. Students can get admission in these courses in three modes a) by nomination through NE state governments b) through ICAR c) through CAU entrance examination for PG and Ph.D. program. Few seats at CAU, Imphal are also available under high payment category however it can be claimed only by students having good rankings in ICAR, CAU en-

trance examinations. Detailed information regarding admission at CAU, Imphal can be accessed from www.cau.ac.in.

The pandemic and the extended closures of educational institutes have changed the role of teachers and most of them were not prepared for such change; a comprehensive strategy is required for socio-emotional monitoring and psychosocial support to ensure teacher wellbeing. Similarly, students need the continuous support through these tough times to ensure that overall learning activities continue with high quality. Recently Central Agricultural University, Imphal celebrated its 30th foundation day where it was stressed by Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Dr Anupam Mishra that all the constituent colleges of CAU,

Imphal shall work in mission mode for excellence in academic, research and extension activities so that the farming community of north east will find us inseparable from their profession.

(Dr Lokes Kumar Mishra is Associate Professor/Incharge of Academic Cell, College of Agriculture, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Manipur. He is also working as Member Priority Setting, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Cell, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Manipur and Prof. Indira Saranitham is Dean College of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal. She is also the Chairperson of Faculty of Agriculture, CAU, Imphal and is working as member in several committees of CAU, Imphal and Manipur State Government)

Address by Droupadi Murmu on her assumption of office as President of India

PIB
New Delhi, July 25:

Johar!
Namaskar!
I express my heartfelt gratitude to all Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies for electing me to the highest Constitutional post of India.

Your vote for me is an expression of the faith of crores of citizens of the country.

I humbly greet all the fellow citizens from this sacred Parliament, a symbol of the hopes, aspirations and rights of all the citizens of India.

Your affection, trust and support will be my greatest strength in discharging my functions and responsibilities.

The country has elected me as the President at a crucial time when we are celebrating 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

A few days from today, the country will complete 75 years of its independence.

It is also a coincidence that my political career started when the country was celebrating its 50th year of independence.

And today, in the 75th year of independence, I have been assigned this new responsibility.

It is my great privilege to be given this responsibility at such a historic time when India is engaged with full vigour in realising its vision for the next 25 years.

I also happen to be the first President of the country who was born in independent India.

We have to work at a fast pace in this Amritkal to fulfil the expectations of our freedom fighters from the citizens of independent India.

In these 25 years, the path to attain the goals of Amritkal will proceed on two tracks – **Sabka Prayas aur Sabka Kartavya** (everyone's effort and everyone's duty).

The new development journey towards the bright future of India has to be undertaken

by our collective efforts, following the path of duty.

We will be observing Kargil Vijay Diwas tomorrow i.e. July 26th. This day is a symbol of both the bravery and restraint of the Indian armed forces.

Today, I extend my best wishes in advance to the armed forces of the country and to all the citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I started my journey of life from a small tribal village in Odisha in the eastern part of the country.

From the background that I come from, it was like a dream for me to get elementary education.

But despite many obstacles, my determination remained strong and I became the first daughter of my village to go to college.

I belong to tribal society. I have got the opportunity to rise from serving as a ward councillor to becoming the President of India. This is the greatness of India, the mother of democracy.

It is a tribute to the power of our democracy that a daughter born in a poor house in a remote tribal area can reach the highest constitutional position in India.

That I attained the post of President is not my personal achievement, it is the achievement of every poor person in India.

My election is a proof of the fact that the poor in India can have dreams and fulfil them too.

And it is a matter of great satisfaction for me that those who have been deprived for centuries and those who have been denied the benefits of development, those poor, down-trodden, backwards and tribals are seeing their reflection in me.

This election of mine has blessings of the poor of the country. And it reflects the dreams and potential of crores of women and daughters of the country.



This election of mine also shows the courage of today's youth of India who is ready to walk on new paths and shun the beaten tracks.

Today I feel proud to lead such a progressive India.

Today, I assure all fellow citizens especially youth of India and the women of India that their interests will be paramount for me while working in this position.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before me is such a great legacy of the Presidency of India which has continuously strengthened the prestige of Indian democracy in the world.

From the country's first President Dr. Rajendra Prasad to Shri Ram Nath Kovind ji, stalwarts have adorned this post.

Along with this post, the country has also entrusted me with the responsibility of representing this great tradition.

In the light of the Constitution, I will discharge my duties with utmost sincerity.

For me, the democratic-cultural ideals of India and all the citizens will always be my source of energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our freedom struggle had prepared the roadmap for India's new journey as a nation.

Our freedom struggle was a continuous stream of those struggles and sacrifices which had nurtured so many ideals and possibilities for independent India.

Pujya Bapu had resorted to Swaraj, Swadeshi, Swachhta and Satyagraha to show us the way for realising Indian cultural ideals.

Countless personalities like Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Nehru ji, Sardar Patel, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru and Chandrashekhar Azad had taught us to keep national pride as paramount.

Many brave women icons like Rani Lakshmi Bai, Rani Velu Nachiyar, Rani Gaidinliu and Rani Chennamma had taken to new heights the role of women power in defending and building the nation.

From Santhal revolution, Paika revolution to Kol revolution and Bhil revolution, all these revolutions had strengthened the tribal contribution in the freedom struggle.

We derived inspiration from the sacrifice of 'Dharti Aaba' Bhagwan Birsa Munda Ji for social upliftment and patriotism.

I am happy that many museums are being built across the country dedicated to the role of the tribal communities in our freedom struggle.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 75 years as a parliamentary democracy, India has carried forward the resolve of progress through participation and consensus.

In our country full of diversities, we are engaged in the making of 'Ek Bharat - Shreshtha Bharat' by adopting

many languages, religions, sects, food habits, life styles and customs.

This Amritkal, which commences with the 75th year of our independence, is a period of new resolutions for India.

Today I see my country inspired and ready to welcome this new era with new thinking.

Today India is adding a new chapter of development in every field.

The kind of capability that India has shown in combating the global crisis of Corona pandemic has enhanced India's credibility all over the world.

We Indians not only faced this global challenge with our efforts but also set new standards for the world.

Just a few days ago, India has set a record of administering 200 crore doses of corona vaccine.

The patience, courage and cooperation shown by the people of India in this entire battle is a symbol of our growing strength and sensitivity as a society.

India not only took care of itself in these difficult situations but also helped the world.

In the atmosphere created by the Corona pandemic, today the world is looking at India with a new confidence.

The international community has high hopes from India for ensuring global economic stability, ease of supply chain and peace.

In the coming months, In-

dia is also going to host the G-20 Group under its chairmanship.

In this grouping, twenty big countries of the world will brainstorm on global issues under the chairmanship of India.

I am sure that the conclusions and policies that will emerge from this brainstorming in India will determine the direction of the coming decades.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Decades ago, I had the opportunity to work as a teacher at Sri Aurobindo Integral School in Raigarh.

After a few days, we will observe the 150th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo.

Sri Aurobindo's thoughts on education continue to inspire me.

I have had an active association with educational institutions, serving in various positions as a public representative and then as a governor.

I have closely observed the enthusiasm and self-confidence of the youth of the country.

Our revered Atal ji used to say that when the youth of the country progress, they not only create their own destiny but also shape the fate of the country.

Today we are witnessing it come true.

Moving ahead in every field - from 'Vocal for Local' to 'Digital India' - today's India, marching in step with the world, is all set for 'Industrial Revolution Four Point O'.

The youth of India have a big role in creating a record number of start-ups, in numerous innovations and in the adoption of digital technology in far flung areas.

In the past few years, a new energy has been infused in the country due to the decisions taken and policies formulated for women empowerment.

I want all our sisters and daughters to be empowered more and more so that they continue to increase their con-

tribution in every field of nation building.

I want to tell the youth of our country that you are not only building your own future but also laying the foundation of the India of the future.

As the President of the country, I will always extend my full cooperation to you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Growth and progress mean continuously marching ahead, but equally important is awareness about one's past.

Today, when the world is talking about sustainable planet, the role of India's ancient traditions and sustainable lifestyle becomes more important.

I was born in that tribal tradition which has lived in harmony with nature for thousands of years.

I have realized the importance of forests and water bodies in my life.

We take necessary resources from nature and serve nature with equal reverence.

This sensitivity has become a global imperative today.

I am happy that India is guiding the world in the field of environmental protection.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my life so far, I have realised the meaning of life only through public service.

There is a line from the poem of Bhim Bhoi Ji, a famous poet of Shri Jagannath Kshetra - 'Mo Jeeban pachhe narke padi thau, jagato udhar hau'. That is, working for the welfare of the world is far greater than one's own interests.

With this spirit of welfare of the world, I will always be ready to work with full devotion and dedication to live up to the trust you all have reposed in me.

Let us all unite and move forward on the path of duty with a dedicated spirit to build a glorious and self-reliant India.

Thank you,
Jai Hind!

Sports

Not easy to live up to expectations of fans every time: Mirabai Chanu

Agency
New Delhi, July 25:

Tokyo Olympics silver medalist weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu feels that it's not easy for her to live up to the expectations of fans every time.

However, the 27-year-old lifter from Manipur expressed hope that she would not disappoint people with her performance in the upcoming Commonwealth Games.

India have been the best performers in weightlifting in 1990, 2002 and 2018 and the Chanu-led 15-member strong team is again hoping to repeat their winning streak at Birmingham.

Mirabai went on to break the Games record enroute the gold medal at the 2018 CWG at Gold Coast and all eyes will be on her to win the gold because of her Tokyo 2020 performance.

One of the most decorated athletes in India, Mirabai vowed to make the country proud with another stellar performance in the upcoming paralympic event.

"I know what the fans want.

I will try my best to do well in the CWG. I have done a lot of work on my overall training. After Tokyo, I have been focusing mainly on my technique and right now I can only assure you that everything is fine with my training and technique. I have done a lot of work on that. So I am hopeful for better results," she told IANS.

India are the second most successful country in the history of the Commonwealth Games with 125 medals in this sport. Only Australia (159) have won more medals than India in weightlifting at the CWG.

"CWG is comparatively easier as many world class weightlifters from China and North Korea do not participate in it. But that doesn't mean there is no competition. I will try my best to go beyond my personal best. I have to give my best performance keeping in mind the future tournaments," she said.

Due to her consistent performance, Mirabai had qualified for the Rio Olympics. However, her performance in

Rio was not up to the expectations. She failed to lift the weight in all three clean and jerk attempts.

Leaving the Rio debacle behind, Mirabai performed brilliantly in the 2017 World Championships in Anaheim, California, lifting a total of 194 kg (85 in snatch and 107 in clean and jerk), which was a competition record.

She set the CWG record in 2018 (in 49kg category) for snatch (86 kg), clean & jerk (110 kg) and the total (196 kg). In Birmingham she will compete to break her own world record.

"The Birmingham CWG is also preparation for the Paris Olympics. After this event, I have to start preparing for the Olympic qualification. The CWG will help me rectify my weakness. So I am hoping for a good show."

"I wanted to test all the work I've done on improving my snatch. This is like a trial for me. I want to see how much I've improved. It will help me to do better in other events and of course at the Paris Games," she added.

Agency
London, July 25:

France will face Germany in the semi-finals of Euro 2022 after ending the Netherlands' reign as European champions thanks to Eve Perisset's penalty in a 1-0 win after extra-time on Saturday.

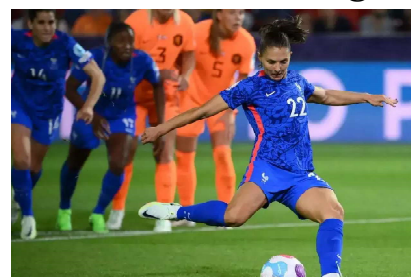
The scoreline did not do justice to the gulf in class between the sides as France were frustrated for 90 minutes by the brilliance of young Dutch goalkeeper Daphne van Domselaar.

However, the FC Twente stopper was finally beaten from the penalty spot 12 minutes into extra-time when Kadidiatou Diani was tripped by Dominique Janssen.

It took a VAR review for the spot-kick to be awarded and Perisset's penalty just had too much power for Van Domselaar. Defeat rounded off a difficult tournament for the Dutch, who had been weakened by injuries to key players and coronavirus cases.

Vivianne Miedema was fit to return after she missed the group stage wins over Portugal and Switzerland due to Covid.

UEFA Women's EURO 2022: Eve Perisset's extra-time penalty breaks Dutch defence, sees France through to semis



However, the Arsenal striker looked well short of match fitness as one of the world's best players struggled to have any meaningful impact on the game.

France scored five in the first half of their opening game against Italy and could easily have repeated that feat in Rotherham.

The Netherlands lost veteran goalkeeper Sari van Veenendaal for the rest of the tournament to a shoulder injury in their opener against Sweden, but Van Domselaar has shone in her absence.

The 22-year-old had made

just one international appearance prior to Euro 2022, but now looks certain to keep her place as the Dutch number one going forward.

France were also guilty of wastefulness in front of goal as they missed the predatory presence up front of the injured Marie-Antoinette Katoto.

Diani was first to test Van Domselaar before Delphine Cascarino stung her palms.

Cascarino then fired against the post from outside the box and Sandie Toletti blazed over a glorious chance before Stefanie Van der Gragt twice rode to the Netherlands' rescue.

The Ajax centre-back got back to clear off the line from Melvine Malard and then blocked another goalbound effort from Grace Geyor as France bombarded the Dutch goal without reward.

Miedema had to wait 55 minutes for a sight of goal and the Netherlands' all-time record goalscorer would have expected to do better when she volleyed over when unmarked from a corner.

Soon it was Van Domselaar who was back in the firing line, though, as she flew to her right to turn Wendy Renard's header to safety.

Geyoro then headed wide with the goal gaping before Renard turned away in disbelief when her looping header was clawed away by Van Domselaar with the last act of the 90 minutes.

France, though, refused to be denied a place in the last four of a women's European Championship for the first time.

Diani's pace took her away from Janssen, who dived in with a desperate lunge to halt the Paris Saint-Germain forward.