

Allegation about misuse of public fund: DIPR submits clarification, no action yet

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

About a month has passed ever since the state anti-corruption cell, which is being run under the direct supervision of the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, received a complaint about misuse of funds by the officials of the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Govt. of Manipur.

A couple of days back, when Imphal Times contacted Dr. Shailesh Kumar Chaurasia, Head of the Public Grievances and Anti-Corruption Cell at Chief Minister's Office regarding the matter, it was informed that the case was under investigation and unless there were proper findings, no FIR could be registered. He also told Imphal Times reporter that the investigation might take about 15 days. Imphal Times, at the moment, has no idea whether the investigation is completed or not, but no report of registering of FIR in this connection has been made public. Meanwhile, a highly reliable source told Imphal Times that the Director of DIPR has submitted a clarification regarding the allegations levelled against his officers to the Public Grievances and Anti-Corruption Cell of Chief Minister's Office a couple of days back.

Now, the matter is with the anti-corruption cell under the



supervision of the Chief Minister that will decide the fate of the DIPR officials. However, one need to remember here is that, the DDO of the DIPR, who is accused of misappropriating public fund, is still continuing with official position and duties instead of putting him under suspension during the course of investigation. As he continues to remain in his official position, there are possibilities of misusing his position. Reliable sources said that taking advantage of his position, the DDO had secured signatures of some DIOs to prove his innocence.

On the other hand, Imphal Times could also access an invoice for procuring a video camera along with accessories amounting Rs. 4,48,990/- from an electronic shop called BCS Peripherals. There was no date

mentioned in the invoice having Sl. No. 2565. As per sources, the video camera along with the accessories was to procure for use in the recently concluded 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election, 2022. When Imphal Times staff investigated, it has been learnt that there were 3 (three) Video Cameras before the proposal for procuring of the new video camera for use in the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election was made. At present, there are six staffs in the video section of the DIPR and as per information culled from them, no new video camera was procured for use during the 12th State Assembly election. At present the video section still has only 3 (three) video cameras including the one at DIPR Section of the Chief Minister Secretariat. So, it is questionable where the video

camera procured for use in the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election, 2022 has gone.

Now, another question arises - can government functionary use government money for personal use on failure to utilize the money sanctioned? Maybe such utilization of money for own use is permitted to the DDO of DIPR. It is on record that the DIPR received a sum of Rs. 5,79,200/- for media coverage of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly Election, 2022. The sanctioned amount included Rs. 25,000/- each for distribution to the District Information Officers (DIOs) of 16 districts. However, DIOs of Kakching, Tengougal, Noney, Kamjong and Pherwal were not given the said amount by the DDO on the ground that elections were not conducted by the DCs of these districts. It means that an amount of Rs. 1,25,000/- was unnecessarily put up in the proposal to the government and secured administrative approval as well. Besides, Imphal Times have evidence of the DDO collecting signatures from some DIOs to prove that he had given Rs. 25,000/- each to them although they didn't get the full amount.

Now, the ball seems to be in the court of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, who is all out to wipe out corruption from the state.

CM N. Biren inaugurates schemes, lays foundation stone and distributes benefits

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today attended inauguration, laying of Foundation Stone, Distribution of various schemes/ projects/ benefits of various departments under 100 days Action Points for first 100 days of the New Government at City Convention Centre today.

Addressing the function, the Chief Minister appreciated and lauded the people of the State for their trust in the government and said that the day is a very joyous occasion for the government as it has succeeded in turning its words

into action.

Further appreciating the bureaucrats and security personnel for their commitment in supporting the government to realise its plans, policies, the Chief Minister said that there is still a lot more to achieve. He said because of their hardwork and sincerity, the government is able to achieve despite many obstacles.

The inauguration, laying of Foundation Stones and distribution of various schemes/ projects/ benefits today amounted to a total of Rs. 211 crore, the Chief Minister said adding that projects worth Rs. 176.72 crore were inaugurated, Rs.

3.28 crores worth benefits will be provided to beneficiaries, foundation stones were laid for projects worth Rs. 19 crore and training skilling were provided for Rs. 11.50 crores.

Asserting that the government delivers what it said, N. Biren Singh said that the government follows this commitment and at the same time has an efficient group of ministers who are fully committed in maintaining transparency, quality and meeting deadlines.

He continued at the end of 100-days, the government will announce the target for One-Year of government.

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Combine SF rescue kidnapped trucks and drivers



no.244302 (2) Tauseef s/o Md. Shafeen of Turtipur Elha Shambhal of Uttar Pradesh Pin No. 244302 (3) Md. Kaleem, s/o (L) Md. Jaman of Hindu Pura Khara Uttar Pradesh truck bearing registration No. UT 38 T 5300 were rescued by combined teams of Special Commando Unit.

Police source said that the truck drivers was abandoned by the said involved unknown miscreant cadres and ran down on the hill slope from the NH-2 immediately on seeing the approaching combined teams of special commando, Kangpokpi Police and 22 AR.

The timely action of combined SF have rescued and saved the life of the truck drivers. All the victims has handed over to the Vijay Kumar Gupta shop owner at Imphal Alu Gali. One FIR has lodged by Kangpokpi Police Station for further investigate.

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

A combined team of state police and Assam Rifles troopers has successfully rescued kidnapped trucks and drivers in less than 12 hours.

Report said that the trucks along with the drivers were kidnapped by unknown miscreants while returning towards Imphal along the Imphal-Dimapur road from Kangpokpi district at around

5 am today morning.

A combined team special commando unit, khabeiso, led by OC L. Bebek Singh, KPI Police and 22 AR KPI post under the supervision of Krishnatombi Singh, SP/Railway & I/C Special Commando Unit, Khabeiso, without delaying conducted a rescue operation.

A truck drivers namely (1) Md. Anwar s/o Abdul Rahaman of Turtipur P.S. Nakhasa Shambhal of Uttar Pradesh pin

Chief Minister welcomes member of PLA outfit on joining the mainstream



IT News
Imphal, June 13:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today welcomed Deputy Assistant Secretary, Health and Family Welfare of People's Liberation Army (PLA), S.S. Lt. Colonel Irom Botombi Meitei alias Keirungba alias Chingkhel, on his homecoming to the mainstream, in front of media personnel at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Irom Botombi, aged 56 years, son of Irom Buno Meitei, bearing MC No. 131, 1994-95 batch of PLA as a resident of Thangtek, Nambol Police Station, Bishnupur.

Addressing the media, the Chief Ministers stated that Irom Botombi had come to the mainstream, leaving the PLA outfit, trusting the changes brought in the State

by Central and State Government and firm commitment of central leaders towards development of Manipur and Northeast India. Continuing that the homecoming of such a senior member of PLA shows a new beginning of restoring peace in the State, he assured that the State Government would uphold the commitment of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah not to use single bullet or lodge FIR against any UG cadre who are ready to lay down arms and join the mainstream. He added that the State Government would make all arrangements to ensure security and rehabilitation of the surrendered cadres.

N. Biren maintained that the Government had been making arrangements for rehabilitation of surrendered

Surrendered PLA is an absconder - RPF

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

Even as the Chief Minister of Manipur have given a rousing welcome to Lt. Colonel, Irom Botombi @ Keirungba @ Chingkhel, of PLA, the proscribed group said that the said person is an absconder after misappropriating huge amount of fund belonging to the outfit.

A statement by Bangkim, Assistant Secretary, Publicity of Revolutionary People's front (RPF), said that Lt. Colonel, Irom Botombi @ Keirungba @ Chingkhel, aged about 56, son of late Irom Guno of Nambol Thangtek had been absconded after the outfit found that he had misappropriated

a sum of Rs. 13,41,500/- that were supposed to be distributed to the party cadres.

Irom Botombi initially was assigned for distribution of money to the party cadres, the RPF said. However, on suspicion of his insincerity, the misappropriation of the party fund was found out during an investigation carried out by the Finance department of the RPF.

The statement said that his surrendered to the government will not make the party demoralized.

On the other hand the RPF said that the party will continue its fight for the restoration of Independence and will never engage in talk with the government without the issue of sovereignty.

join the mainstream.

It may be mentioned that earlier on 1st June this year, fourteen cadres of the United Tribal Liberation Army - James Group (UTLA-J) laid down their arms and ammunition before the Chief Minister at a Homecoming Ceremony held at the Banquet Hall of 1st Battalion Manipur Rifles.

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Locals Block JT Road over deplorable condition of road

IT Correspondent
Jiribam, June 13:

Protesting the deplorable condition of a Jiri-Tipaimukh (JT) road, villagers blocked the JT road for 48 hours from 6:00 pm of Sunday to 6:00pm of Tuesday which was organised by Chingdong Leikai Women Organisation (CHWOO), Jiribam.

The road is the only life line for the people of Borobekra Sub-Division of Jiribam District which stretch 28 km approximately from zero point of Jiribam District to Jakurador of Barak circle, which crossed many villages of Jiribam like Dibong, Chingdong Leikai, Lalpani, Latingkhal and many more.

Ironically, the Deputy Commissioner office of Jiribam District also falls under this road.

As the Jiri-Tipaimukh road is in deplorable condition from previous few years, there are several craters as like ponds on



the road, while the rains have made matters worse, but the Government turned a blind eye upon the condition of the road, Today a large number of Agitating villagers blocked the road barricading at Dibong karong.

Talking with media persons, the agitators said regarding the pitiable condition of Jiri-Tipaimukh road several memorandum has been submitted to the concerned authority but it turned out a futile attempt as there was no reply from the higher authorities.

The road is now in its most

deplorably bad condition with potholes in every section of the road, the aggrieved villagers came out and blocked the road.

During the bandh, the essential services were exempted from the purview of bandh.

It might be recall here that on the visit of Chief Minister of Manipur at Jiribam District in connection with 'Go to village 2.0' programme, in his speech he said for the construction of Jiri-Tipaimukh road an worth Rs-114 crores has already been sanctioned, but the construction of the road has yet not executed.

Too much screen time causes anxiety, stress

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is spreading rapidly and is becoming more powerful day by day than before. It is the mechanical form of the human brain, with the help of which many functions are being performed through computers, smartphones, and machines. Innovative applications of AI are emerging one after the other in medical science, computer science, and commercial processes. Your smartphone is called smart because it is powered by AI and the internet, and in the blink of an eye, you can do many impossible tasks with the help of this handy gadget. It is surprising that the smartphone alone has replaced many of the tools and technologies that had existed over the years and thus has changed the lifestyle of people the world over. Now you do not wear a wrist-watch to check the time and don't rely on the radio set or a tape recorder to listen to your favorite songs or music. The camera has already disappeared from the scene. The calculator also met a similar fate. The mobile phone alone is doing a lot of work now and behind it is the power of AI. There is so much about AI that no matter how many times it interferes in our lives, there are some things that only humans can do well. Some of these unique functions include creative thinking, empathy, emotional quotient (EQ), and finding solutions to complex day-to-day problems.

Children born in or after 1995 are now in their prime phase and are between the ages of 25 and 30. One thing is very clear in the case of these youths, who are also called Generation Z, that they depend excessively on the Internet. Because of this, while people of the previous generation relied on their memory for multiplication or daily calculations and did most of the counting with their minds, the youth of Gen Z could not walk a step without a smartphone or the Internet. They need calculators for simple addition and subtraction and the Internet for solutions to every problem, big or small. 40 percent of the youth of this generation are those who spend more than four hours on the internet every day and use the internet to make their everyday decisions. This generation maintained contact with the outside world only through the Internet at the time of the Covid pandemic. The period of the lockdown was such that it was not possible to go anywhere and mutual contacts were also broken, in such a situation, from ordering medicines to necessary video or zoom meetings, these youths kept the pace of work.

Generation Z sees the solution to every problem on the Internet and considers it to be the most effective and reliable source of information. With the introduction of different types of apps, their life has become even easier. Whether ordering a pizza at 2 o'clock at the night or booking a flight or a hotel for a weekend outing, everything is done online and with full confidence; so what's the need to wander elsewhere? The disadvantages of being more online are also coming to the fore, such as one out of every three such youth has a problem with depression, anxiety, or stress. Nevertheless, this generation prefers to participate in all kinds of social or commercial events through social media. To build relationships, this generation also likes people who they have met through online mediums.

No matter how much you use mobile and the internet, living in a natural environment has its own benefits. In many countries in Asia and Europe, 80 percent of school children have been found to have poor vision. Due to modern living and high-calorie food, there were the problems of diabetes, obesity, and heart diseases, but now a problem of vision loss has emerged now. The reason behind this has been that today's children spend most of their time in low indoor light and are less exposed to sunlight outside. The loss of distant vision is called myopia. The problem of myopia remains with the person even at a later age. Such children lag behind in studies and are forced to wear costly contact lenses or eyeglasses. Apart from this, the disadvantages of excessive use of mobile phones are well known. Mobile games like PUBG are making kids violent. Every day such reports come to the fore in which it is told that a child has shot his parents, teacher, or fellow children. One child used to administer intoxicating pills to his parents to play PUBG at night so that they could keep sleeping and the child continued to play violent games on his mobile unabated.

Outdoor sports have many benefits, but there are some indoor activities too which have a good effect on the mind and provide solutions to some medical problems. The drum playing is one such activity that has a medical benefit in addition to music. Recent research conducted at King's College London has shown that drumming can prove to be very useful for children who are suffering from autism and whose brain and other body parts are not in proper coordination. While playing drums, a person's brain, hands, feet all work together, so drumming was shown to improve the physical condition of children having autism. Drumming increases functional connectivity in the brain.

Advertising is of great importance in the market and business. Advertisements serve to provide information for common citizens. That's why people like to watch advertisements on TV or mobile. It often takes a lot of money and effort to create an advertisement that lasts for a few seconds or minutes. The reason is that in a few seconds, the key message has to be conveyed to the audience, which a movie can convey in a couple of hours. But advertising liquor by showing a soda bottle or advertising guthka by showing cardamom is fraudulent. This is called surrogate advertising, which is done covertly to avoid legal action. The Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs has issued guidelines to check such misleading advertisements.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail - imphaltimes@gmail.com. For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-3590330 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.

Religion and Politics - An Amalgam of Trouble



By: M.R. Lahu

India has been witnessing an avalanche of criticisms and diplomatic deadlocks and attempts to downsize its democratic credentials from inside and international platforms. All began with a TV debate and of course the insidiousness that the discussion was loaded with was terrible. It is not fully correct that the controversies began with the TV debate alone, in which the BJP spokesperson is alleged to have made unkind remarks on the prophet. Discontent with the level of a volcanic eruption was brewing since the Gyanvapi came to the primetime debates. There is no doubt that nobody in a democratic setup should be forced to hold his tongue when a decent expression of views is mandated. Now, whoever began to break the decorum showering derogatory remarks on the opponent's religious beliefs should be held responsible for the backlash that as a country India had to face in the wake of the controversies. The entire debate was evidently an accentuation on the divisive and the polemical essence with which the religions could be exhibited. The radicalized arrogance of a particular section of the believers flooding to the streets with sloganeering and stone-pelting with children placed in the front and holding populous cities to ransom is a dangerous trend. We need to count this as a new normal and the country is sure to become susceptible across its landscape to such violent flare-ups purely endorsed by religions which try to establish hegemony through intimidation and disruptive tendencies. This needs to be seen as a well calibrated trend taking place to make its presence felt and also a challenge to the precariousness that India's democracy is. Religions with a genuine cultural background both in essence and

practice need not to raise their fists intending to forcefully establish their credibility. They get noticed naturally, essentially with an urgency to bring about peace and serenity in a world of chaotic, destabilizing and upsetting transgressions.

The most challenging task is to identify the real face of religions that keep dictating moral values to their believers and the hypocrisy with which they function. It was not peace that the Semitic religions entered into the galis and mohallas of countries across the globe. There was always bloodshed and violence and ruthless intimidations and slaughtering of native beliefs. Instantaneous violence in the name of a fabricated victimhood in a country like India can throw it into a slanderous ditch which it would never be able to come out of. And they, including the liberals and azadi seekers in India maintain a radio silence on atrocities committed on minorities in Pakistan and Bangladesh and to take an example from India, we can easily read into the plight of the Kashmiri pandits. The real trauma is, nobody, not even the trained secular fire-fighters of minority protection blow their whistle against the persecution of the pundits in the Muslim majority state in India. Attacking someone's religious beliefs is condemnable. But it should be the same for all. One side is getting severely aggrieved and the other side is dictated to maintain calm, is a double standard. Religions with the history of invasion and infringement and lack of moral backing and always excited to treat a non-believer a subject eligible to be ill-treated, with principles endorsing criminal coercion and disruption, lack the moral binding to beat their breast in victimhood. Efforts to correct the historic wrongs should be treated as the right of those who lost their antiquity to brutality. Pressing their voices to impress and appease a well attuned vote bank is what India has been witnessing for decades. This was the reason why the country went on choosing a party that tilted for the majority emotions and an eye-opener to those who blindfolded a major part of the

country's population deliberately concealing its past. Now, the parties that celebrated partiality of the majority with vehemence and hard-nosed political insensitivity are the backbenchers choking to hold their breath and assiduously focusing to substantiate their views; sometimes even at the cost of defaming the country abroad. This is tragic and losers win their battle by decently losing it. But mountainous political indecency was the reason that a major section of the voters in India pushed the country to take its saffron turn.

Now, the question is who should be blamed for the hullabaloo that the streets of India are infested with. The reverberating discontent in the majority and the minority sides is due to an unpardonable, unholy hobnobbing between religions and political parties, which itself is capable of overthrowing the idea of secularism that we have been proudly drum-beating for years. Nupur Sharma got tightly sandwiched between the hypocrisy of religion and politics in India. The hysteria and violence in the name of religious beliefs and principles, deliberately rattling to destabilize the unity that India was established on; needs to be condemned and the fiasco that such agitations throw this country into, should be rated as an effort to play into the hands of its enemies. Attempts to humiliate a country which has housed religious multiplicity for centuries - panting, but bravely barricading the onslaughts of terror and its subsequent subjugation should not be overlooked. Elements of dissatisfaction and the mindset that keeps burning the wounds again and again would rather deepen the crisis. India for no reason should succumb to the political low that the parties and the religions would drag it through. The BJP with great suffocation must have rated its spokesperson and office bearer as fringe elements. This was a shock for maximum of its rank and file which used to enjoy badmouthing in the primetime shows, and now is wedged and clueless and unprepared to identify the makeover that the party's central leadership has

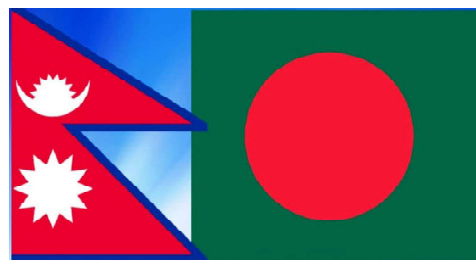
given it. Imagine the level of animosity that the malavits, dharmgurus and spokespersons of different parties meet their followers in the channels with. Maximum parties are unwilling to stop their 'vocal cords' from vibrating against their opponents.

Undoubtedly, India's diplomatic tenacity would help it come out of the deadlock internationally, but the wound and the scar that the warring tongues of religion and politics have been etching on the amiability of its existence, would remain unhealed. I think it is time for the leaders in politics and religious bodies to maintain restraint without precipitating the heat further so as to avoid a devastating wildfire. Bigots frequently jump into action when a country's defencelessness swings between vehemence and divisiveness which indeed is an entrapment that we have chosen to bury ourselves in. This needs a congenial conversation, a course correction, and the initiatives in this direction need appreciation and acceptance. While one party takes its strategic leaning to the majority, the minority is favoured with the same spirit by the opposition. This trend of separation and discordance by the parties after intruding into religions have, undoubtedly been shaking the ground of harmonious coexistence. Ideological clash between monotheism and polytheism and its retaliating effects, seen in the streets in the form of mob violence, would determinately weaken a nation. Choosing neither side, a large number of people in the west are turning agnostics. Forcefully hammering one religious faith on people, however pure and holy that is, would bring repercussions and nobody for that matter, would like to remain submissive to the dry principles that calls for bloodshed and beheading in the name of faith. In India the trend is pertinently gaining momentum and the fashion is to criticize everything that India culturally represents in the pretext of criticizing the government. When religion and politics come together, they make an amalgam of trouble.

(The writer is a Freelance Journalist/ Social Worker)

Promoting Nepal-Bangladesh Ties for Better Bilateral Understanding

By: Professor Dr. Bijaya Gouri Khanal



South Asian neighbors Bangladesh and Nepal share common regional platforms such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Nepal recognized Bangladesh as a sovereign state in 1971 and the bondage between the two nations started from that time. Bangladesh, on its part, has always evinced interest in Nepalese culture, its agricultural development, extraction of stones, production of hydroelectricity, besides tourism.

The first Bangla poetry (Charjapad) was discovered in the library of Nepal's King by a famous linguist Haraprasad Shastri. This collection of mystical poems shows the age-old ties between Nepal and Bangla. Buddhist priests, also known as Charjaguru, opened up the historical linkage.

Nepal and Bangladesh are a short distance apart. The Siliguri corridor - also called the Indian Chicken Neck - in the northern part of India's West Bengal state stands geographically between Bangladesh and Nepal.

The Nepal-Bangladesh ties have a lot of potentials. Bangladesh's economy is booming day by day, and analysts feel it is going to be a South

Asian superstar. Current rulers Bangladesh Awami league are trying to carry out massive industrialization to make it a high-income country by 2041.

Nepal is also a prosperous country. Its people are peace-loving and hard-working, just like those in Bangladesh. Bangladesh and Nepal can connect to raise the living standards of their people.

Hydropower potential

Nepal is a huge source of hydroelectricity, and the Himalayan nation can supply it to Bangladesh to help the latter meet its demands. Bangladesh needs more electricity to run its factories. Nepal can thus play a significant role to boost Bangladesh's economic strength. Nepal will also benefit as its electricity market would grow.

For this, the power transmission line has to be installed and Bangladesh, Nepal and India have to work jointly. India also stands to benefit, and as the South Asian big brother, it should play a positive role to boost Nepal-Bangladesh ties and trade. A trilateral trade scheme can be initiated alongside the border markets. Bangladesh will be able to export its 'surplus' electricity to Nepal during the dry season.

In June 2021, Bangladesh's state minister for energy Nasrul Hamid announced the country will import around 700 megawatts (MW) of hydropower from Nepal to meet its future electricity demand. Bangladesh Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said a deal was in the final stages with Nepal and India allowing his country to import hydropower from

the Himalayan state.

According to Bangladesh Media, Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nepal in 2018 to oversee investment, development and trade in hydro-electricity between the two countries. Under this arrangement, Bangladesh will import up to 9,000 Megawatt of hydropower from Nepal by 2040. Bangladesh is also keen to invest in Nepal's hydropower sector.

Vistas of cooperation

Recently some Nepalese media reports said Bangladesh wanted to export its apparel and fertilizer to Nepal. A total of 52 thousand metric tonnes of urea imported from Bangladesh arrived in Nepal in July.

Tourism, tackling Covid-19, counter-terrorism measures, microfinance, exchange of expertise for training and education sectors are some areas in which the two nations can work. Bangladesh can export agro-products and medicines to Nepal.

Bangladeshi conglomerate Walton Group, which deals in electronics, telecommunication, automobiles and computers, is active in Nepal. International NGO Brac and other Bangladeshi NGOs can play definitive roles to develop the mass education and health sectors in Nepal.

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MUTP-3, North-East Gas Grid among 9 Infra Projects reviewed by PM Modi to avoid delays, cost overruns

Courtesy: News18
New Delhi, June 13:

The key Mumbai Urban Transport Project Phase-3 that could resolve the city's suburban rail transport woes and the North-East Gas Grid project, which will connect all eight north-eastern states, were among the nine big projects worth Rs 59,000 crore reviewed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi a fortnight ago.

"The Prime Minister has directed all stakeholders concerned to adhere to the timelines of the projects to avoid time and cost overruns," say the minutes of the meeting reviewed by News18.

The PM has been repeatedly stressing on timely completion of key projects in the past.

In December last year, the government embarked on an exercise to monitor the progress of nearly 1,700 big central infrastructure projects in order to help flag those, which may not be completed in time and have cost over-



runs.

Top on the review list was the progress of the Rs 11,000-crore MUTP-3, which was cleared by the Union Cabinet in 2016. It is expected to reduce crowding in Mumbai's suburban trains during peak hours, as over eight million people travel in the suburban section in more than 2,900 train services daily.

The phase includes a new suburban corridor between Panvel and Karjat (28 km), new elevated corridor between Airoli and Kalwa (3 km), qua-

drupling of Virar-Dahanu Road (63 km) and procurement of 565 new coaches and trespass control measures.

Another major infrastructure project reviewed was the ambitious North-East Gas Grid Project that involves building a 1,656-km gas pipeline grid which would connect all eight north-eastern states and aims to remove the regional imbalance within India regarding access to natural gas. This project was approved in 2018 with a completion target of 2024. The central government

is directly funding this pipeline with Rs 5,559 crore.

Other important projects reviewed by the PM were the Raipur-Visakhapatnam Economic Corridor, Rs 20,000-crore greenfield road project, which at 464 km will link Chhattisgarh with Andhra Pradesh, improve freight movement and contribute to exports.

The PM also reviewed the progress of the 391-km natural gas pipeline from Kakinada-Visakhapatnam-Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, another key gas pipeline project in the works.

The PM also reviewed the Sulwade Jamphal Kanoli Lift Irrigation Scheme in Maharashtra whose completion date was the end of 2020. The barrage is to come up in the Tapi basin in Dhule district. The Patratu Super Thermal Power Project in Jharkhand, whose foundation stone was laid by the PM in 2018, also came up for review. The first unit of this project was expected to be commissioned this year.

India reports 8,084 new Covid cases; weekly tally touches 50,000 mark, biggest rise since 3rd Wave

Agency
New Delhi, June 13:

The weekly Covid-19 cases in the country saw the biggest jump since the third wave of the pandemic in January this year with fresh cases rising by more than 23,000 to nearly twice the previous week's tally.

All the states and Union Territories reported a rise in infections, however, the deaths remained low.

India is likely to record around 49,000 fresh Covid-19 cases between June 6 and 12, which is almost double than the country's total of 25,596, a report in Times of India said. The weekly cases have been the highest since February 21 and 27, when over 86,000 cases were registered in a week.

The increase of 23,000 cases from the preceding week is the highest since January 17 and 23.

Maharashtra and Kerala registered the highest cases

among states, reporting over 65 percent of the fresh cases.

While Maharashtra recorded 17,380 cases, up from 7,253 in previous week, Kerala recorded around 14,500 cases, 70 percent higher than last week.

Delhi, which witnessed decreasing cases for four weeks in a row, reported a surge in infections. Delhi reported 4,068 fresh cases during the week, seeing a rise of 68 percent that last week.

The sharpest spike in the Covid infections were seen in Karnataka 2,975 cases (84% rise), Tamil Nadu 1,299 cases (63% rise), Telangana 851 (97% rise) and Andhra Pradesh 117 (86% rise).

Meanwhile, the country recorded 24 new deaths in the week, while the previous week's toll was also 24.

India on Monday logged 8,084 new coronavirus infections and 10 deaths; while the positivity rate crossed 3 percent mark, according to health

ministry data.

The active cases comprise 0.11 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was 98.68 per cent, the ministry said. An increase of 3,482 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 3.24 per cent and the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 2.21 per cent, according to the ministry. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,26,57,335, while the case fatality rate was 1.21 per cent.

Delhi on Sunday reported 735 new COVID-19 cases and three deaths due to the disease while the positivity rate rose to 4.35 per cent, according to data shared by the city health department. This was the third consecutive day that the national capital recorded over 600 cases and a positivity rate of more than 3 per cent.

Over 1000 bullets seized from a scrap dealer in Pune

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, June 13:

Even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit Dehu in Pune in Maharashtra, to inaugurate the Sant Tukaram temple on Tuesday, the Pune police seized 1,105 bullets from a godown located at Gururwar Peth and arrested the scrap dealer, on Saturday night.

The bullets were seized from the godown "Gauri Ali" in Havelli taluka and the scrap dealer Dinesh Kumar Kallusingh Saroj was arrested. He was produced before the Pune Sessions Court on Sunday after which the court remanded him to police custody till June 15.

Acting on a tip-off about the illegal storage of arms, the action was taken during an "all-out operation" campaign organized by the Pune police ahead of the VVIP movement in the district.



The police patrol team led by Police Inspector Sandeep Bhosale raided the premises and confiscated 56 live cartridges, 79 bad cartridges, and 970 bullet leads, estimated at Rs. 1.56 lakh from the spot, a statement by the Pune crime branch said.

The accused scrap dealer Dinesh Kumar Kallusingh Saroj (34), residing at Parvati Darshan, was arrested and an FIR under Arms Act and the Maharashtra

Police Act, was registered at Khadak Police Station against him. Saroj is originally from the Pratapgad district of Uttar Pradesh.

The Joint Commissioner (Law and Order) Sandeep Karnik has directed all the police units to search for the extorted criminals, goons, and wanted accused persons and take action against them, ahead of PM's visit.

Speaking to the Imphal Times DCP (crime) Srinivas Ghadge said that the investigation is going on to find out from where the accused procured such a large quantity of cartridges and bullets. It is also being probed whether he supplied cartridges or firearms to anyone else in the city or elsewhere. Police sub-inspector Sanjay Gaikwad is conducting further investigations in the case.

Congress pressurising probe agency to protect Gandhi family assets: Smriti Irani

Agency
New Delhi, June 13:

Union minister Smriti Irani on Monday slammed the Congress 'Satyagraha' march to extend solidarity to Rahul Gandhi, who is being quizzed by the Enforcement Directorate in the National Herald case.

Alleging a 'blatant attempt' by the Gandhi family to hold investigating agencies to ransom, Irani said, "Congress leaders have taken to the streets to pressurize an investigating agency openly because their corruption has been exposed...It's an attempt to protect the assets of the Gandhi family," she said.

"In the 1930s, Associate Journals Limited was formed with 5,000 freedom fighters as

shareholders. Today, a company that was to be run by freedom fighters has been usurped by the Gandhi family," the minister said.

"It is projected that the intent of the AJL was to publish newspapers. However, in 2008, it seemed the company declared it shall no longer publish newspapers but will go into the business of real estate. It is publicly known that the Congress party has waived off a loan of ₹90 crores," she added.

The minister asked the donors who donated the money to Congress, "Did you know that the Congress party instead of utilising that money for public gain and public service, utilised it to profit the Gandhi family?"

Alleging that the Gandhi family invited people to pro-

tect their interests, Irani said the move spoke volumes of its political character.

The union minister's scathing attack comes amid high drama which unfolded in the national capital amid Rahul Gandhi's appearance before the Enforcement Directorate. Since the morning, several Congress workers were arrested by the Delhi Police as they protested.

Accompanied by his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Gandhi marched from the Congress headquarters to the ED office. The Congress party had called the ED action "vendetta". It has termed the charges "fake and baseless" and added that the summonses to the Gandhis was part of the BJP's "vendetta politics".

Contd. from Page 2

Promoting Nepal-Bangladesh Ties...

Bangladesh signed a Preferential Trade Agreement with Bhutan on December 06, 2020. A Preferential Trade Agreement with Nepal is also at the final stage and is likely to be signed soon. This would enable duty-free access to products of both countries.

As an addition to the Protocol of the Nepal-Bangladesh Transit Agreement signed in 1976, a letter of exchange has been inked between the two countries to include the Rohanpur-Singhabad Rail Link between India and Bangladesh.

Nepal is also interested in using Chattogram, Mongla and Paikra Seaports because it is a landlocked country. Bangladesh has agreed to work on the modalities for this during the visit of Nepali President Bidhya Devi Bhandari in March.

Nepal has also expressed its interest to use the inland

waterways of Bangladesh. Besides, Nepal is also keen to use the Saidpur Airport in Bangladesh's Nilphamari district for direct flights to Biratnagar (the capital of Nepal's province no.1). Bangladesh is open to it.

BBIN minus Bhutan?
Bangladesh and India have to work mutually to give Nepal access to seaports. Bangladesh can be an open-source for connectivity with Nepal.

India has already agreed to sign passenger protocol under the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative. Nepal is expected to give the nod to it soon. But with Bhutan opting out of the BBIN connectivity project, India, Nepal and Bangladesh have to work together to start an alternative. In the current age, connectivity is synonymous with development. So Nepal and Bangladesh have to be con-

nected through India.

For implementing the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal, the four nations are exploring some new routes other than the existing ones. The agreement would permit the member states to ply their vehicles in each other's territory for transportation of cargo and passengers, including third-country transport and personal vehicles.

India, Nepal and Bangladesh should have a holistic diplomatic approach to bolster their connectivity project. There are many gains for all parties, and none stand to lose.

(The writer is a Nepalese academic, researcher, historian from Kathmandu, Nepal. She is very interested in the South Asian economy, politics, foreign relations, strategic and security studies)

EC to govt: Limit seats a person can contest to one, ban opinion & exit polls

Courtesy: Indian Express
New Delhi, June 13:

Soon after taking charge as Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar asked the Law Ministry to issue notifications for the linking of Aadhaar with voter IDs, allowing four qualifying dates for eligible people to register as voters, and also renewed the commission's proposals for banning opinion polls and exit polls as well as limiting the seats from which a candidate can contest to just one. The *Indian Express* has learnt.

"The EC sent six key proposals to the Law Ministry. We have requested the government to notify the rules for linkage of Aadhaar to voter IDs and also for the four cut-off dates for eligible people to register as voters," said an EC official who did not want to be named.

In December 2021, Rajya Sabha passed the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 by voice vote, enabling "the linking of electoral roll data with the Aadhaar ecosystem" as the Opposition walked out in protest. Parties had alleged that the government passed the Bill in haste without adequate discussion.

The EC has also sought powers to deregister political parties, a long-standing demand of the poll panel, and sought the modification of Form 24A to mandate the disclosure of all donations above Rs 2,000 instead of Rs 20,000.

This also comes in the backdrop of the commission's action against 'registered unrecognised political parties' (RUPPs) last month. The EC had announced a clean-up drive initiating "graded action" against more than 2,100 RUPPs

for flouting rules, including failure to furnish a contribution report and communicate any change in its name, head office, office bearers and address to the EC.

Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 empowers the commission to register associations and bodies as political parties. However, there is no constitutional or statutory provision that gives power to the EC to deregister parties.

"Many political parties get registered, but never contest election. Such parties exist only on paper. The possibility of forming political parties with an eye on availing the benefit of income tax exemption also cannot be ruled out. It would only be logical that the commission which has the power to register political parties is also empowered to deregister in appropriate cases," the EC

had noted in 2016 in its handbook of proposed electoral reforms.

Renewing another one of its long-standing demands, the EC has sought an amendment of Section 33(7) of the Representation of People Act, 1951 to restrict the number of seats a candidate can contest from. The Act currently allows a person to contest a general election or a group of by-elections or biennial elections from up to two constituencies. In 2004, too, the EC had proposed an amendment of Section 33(7).

It had also recommended a ban on exit polls and opinion polls and said there should be some restriction on conducting and disseminating the results of opinion polls right from the day of the first notification of an election till the completion of the election in all its phases.

Tangkul Naga apex bodies slam Chief Minister for his remarks on land ownership

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

A collective of all the five Tangkul Naga apex bodies have slammed the Chief Minister for his remarks on land ownership terming it as "calous and un-informed" and warned that it is unacceptable and should be withdrawn immediately.

The collective press communiqué signed by David K Shimray, President, Tangkul Naga Long; SA Ramnganing, President, Tangkul Naga Wungnaw Long; Thingreiphi Lungharwo, President, Tangkul Shanao Long; Shimri Raising, President, Tangkul Katamno Saklong and Somatai Machinao, President, Tangkul Mayar Ngala Long stated, "This Press Statement has been necessitated following the front-page reportage on 'The People's Chronicle' of 6th June, 2022, where two articles are juxtaposed besides

each other - 'COCOMI, UNC demand NRC, Population Commission', and, 'CM Biren resents claim of land ownership in hill areas'. In Clause (B) of Section 2 of the Protection of Manipur People Bill, 2015 (PMP Bill) passed by the Manipur Assembly on 31/08/2015, 'Manipur People' is defined as 'persons of Manipur whose name are in the National Register of Citizens, 1951, Census Report 1951 and Village Directory of 1951 and their descendants who have contributed to the collective social, cultural and economic life of Manipur'. By this definition, many people of the Hills would not qualify for inclusion in the NRC. Proper census was not maintained in the Hills, least of all in 1951. Also, Sections 14A (1) inserted in 31/08/2015, after section 14 of the Principal MLR and LR Act of 1960, states: 'Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, Non-Manipur persons, firms,

institutions or any other similar entities who intend to purchase any land in the State of Manipur shall submit an application to the Deputy Commissioner of the district concerned where the land to be purchased is situated for obtaining the prior approval of the State Government before such purchase is made by him.' In other words, anyone (be they from 'mainland India' or the Hills of Manipur) can buy land in the Valley (the Principal MLR and LR Act, 1960 does not extend to the Hills so Section 14 (1) does not apply to the Hills) provided he/she desirous of buying that land procured necessary approval from the State Government."

"The Hills of Manipur, on the other hand, does not permit any non-indigenous person to buy/acquire land - be they from the Valley, 'mainland India' or Tribals from other States of India. Article 371C guarantees us this right" it clarified.

The press communiqué further explained, The 2nd Schedule of the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972 expressly puts land and land use of the hills under the exclusive purview of the Hill Areas Committee. All these measures have been put in place from the colonial times of the British through to the astute Central leadership of the Union of India, in order that the Tribals in the Hills not be alienated from their land. This is not for greed or material requirements but to preserve a relationship which is hallowed.

The collective statement warned "The calous and un-informed remarks of the Chief Minister of Manipur. N Biren Singh, as put out by the DIPR, '...not lay claims of ownership of the hills as they belong to the Mother Nature and not to any particular community,' is unacceptable and should be withdrawn immediately."

Will make Kshetrigao AC as Power-house of Sports - Noorul Hassan



IT News
Imphal, June 13:

MLA Sheikh Noorul Hassan also stressed on the relations between healthy life

MLA of Kshetrigao Assembly Constituency Sheikh Noorul Hassan today said that he will work wholeheartedly to make sure that Kshetrigao Assembly Constituency becomes the power house of Sports.

Noorul Hassan told this while speaking in the closing function of Keikhu Football League 2022, organized under the theme - "Health is Wealth & Let's Free From Drugs".

and games and sports. "Youths of today should have interest in sports activities to remain healthy and to stay away from intoxicants", Sheikh Noorul Hassan said and appealed the students not to waste time unnecessarily. He also appealed the people to make Kshetrigao Assembly constituency a drug free society.

The MLA assured to develop a Turf ground at the earliest in Kshetrigao Assembly constituency.

Community Hall inaugurated

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

Imphal East Zilla Parishad Member Seram Neken has today inaugurated a Community Hall at Uchekon Chongabi in Thongui Assembly Constituency in presence of local people.

The Community Hall was constructed under 3rd State Fi-

nance Commission Award (Zila Parishad share) for the year 2021-22.

Seram Neken, who also contested the last General Election from Thongui Constituency, assured the gathering that the Community Hall will be extended with the same size so as to make the space larger for public convenience.

Foundation Stone of new Government ITI laid

IT News
Noney, June 13:

As part of laying of foundation stone and distribution of various schemes/projects under the 100 days action plan by the Government of Manipur at City Convention Centre Imphal, foundation stone laying programme for the construction of new Government ITI, Noney under Enhancing

Skill Development Infrastructure (ESDI) was held on Monday at Longmai Part-I, Noney District Headquarters through virtual mode. The foundation stone for the new ITI was laid by Chief Minister N Biren Singh along with other projects in the presence of Skill, Labour, Employment and Entrepreneurship Minister H.Dingo Singh.

The G-type ITI buildings that will be constructed in-

cludes administrative block, classroom, chowkidar's quarter, generator set and common toilet blocks. The total project cost amounts to about 9.50 crores and targets to be completed in the next 18 months. The Manipur Tribals Development Corporation (MTDC) is the implementing agency of the project.

During the function, DC Noney H. Guite informed that

the project is aimed at catering the different types of trades with a capacity of about 90-100 students at a time and it will have different infrastructure facilities.

Chief Engineer MTDC Laishram Brojendro Singh, Joint Director MSSD Soibam Ibochouba Singh, DLOs, village authority leaders and CSO leaders also took part in the function amongst others.

Unpublished books written by our forefather need to be published - Karam Shyam

IT News
Imphal, June 13:

MLA Karam Shyam had mooted the importance of publishing books that were written by our ancestors.

The MLA was speaking as Chief Guest in the Award presentation Function cum book released function organized by Sheikhe Sheireng Sheipam Shemgat Lup (SHEIPAL) at Manipur Press Club on Sunday.

"We have found many

books written by our forefather and that were never published. These books should be published with the help of the government as it will be treasures for the future generation", Karam Shyam said.

The MLA further said that the old book will enable to understand the past society of the Manipuris and will help in developing the people.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary of SEIPAL Khontoujam Gita said that the

event was organized in order to honour and encourage the lyricists of the state. She appealed the people to honour and respect the lyricists of the state.

The function was also attended by President of SEIPAL Dr. Athokpam Kholchandra, Imphal East Jilla Parishadki Upa Adhyaksha Dr. Kshetri Tama and Imphal West District Upa adhyaksha Laishram Boby.

This year's Khomdrum

Bidhu & Leimakhubi Lifetime Achievement Award 2021 was conferred to Khangembam Ibeton. "Dr. Mayengbam Kamala Sheiror Mana 2021" was conferred to Kshetrimayum Subadani

A collection of lyrics called "Ningtangbagi Eshei" edited by Rakesh Naorem and another Song Lyrics called "Chinglepakni Chingleipak" written by Khangembam Ibeton were released on the occasion.

Sports

FIH Pro League: Hendrickx strikes twice as Belgium beat India 3-2

Agency
Antwerp, June 12:

Alexander Hendrickx struck a brace as Belgium notched up a thrilling 3-2 victory over India in the second match of the two-leg FIH Pro Hockey League tournament here on Sunday.

Hendrickx (49th, 59th) produced two goals in the fourth quarter to go with a 33rd minute goal from Nicolas de Kerpel as the Olympic champions fought back from a 0-1 deficit to get the better of India, a day after being stunned by the visitors 4-5 in a shootout. For India, Abhishek (25th) had put India ahead, while Mandeep Singh (60) scored another goal just moments before the hooter. With this win, world champions moved up to 2nd spot on the points table, while India were at the third.

India will now take on Netherlands next week.

Belgium controlled the game early on with better ball possession and also earned the first penalty corner when Sreejesh saved one with his foot but in the process ended up pushing the ball into one of the Indian defender's foot. However, Belgium squandered the opportunity.

India had a chance at the 5th minute when Jarmanpreet sent a cross from the right but Sukhjett ended up sending it over the bar.

India enjoyed better possession during the final stages of the first quarter and Jugraj had created an opportunity with a long ball through the center but the visitors faltered with the finish as Belgium defence was up to the job.

Jarmanpreet earned a pen-

alty corner five minutes into the second quarter but Harmanpreet's shot was saved by goalie V Vanasch superbly.

In the 25th minute, India produced the breakthrough with a superb field goal with Abhishek guiding the ball into the net after set up by Gurjant Singh, who superbly combined with Vivek Sagar Prasad inside the circle.

Belgium came back strong looking for an equalizer but the defence held on with PR Sreejesh effecting a superb save as the second quarter ended with India leading 1-0.

In the 33rd minute, Nicolas de Kerpel brought the hosts back into the game with a tight finish after being fed by Arthur de Sloover. A tight battle of supremacy ensued but India's defence stood firm, especially Sreejesh producing some superb saves to deny Belgium.

In the third quarter, India were reduced to 10-man after Akashdeep received a green card.

Things changed in the fourth quarter when in the 48th minute, Suren Kumar conceded a PC and Alexander Hendrickx quickly put Belgium ahead with a lightning fast shot that went through the legs of Sreejesh.

Four minutes left for the end of fourth quarter, India earned a penalty corner but goalie Vanasch Vincent put his right hand on the way to deny the visitors.

On minute shy of the hour's mark, Belgium earned another penalty stroke, much to the dismay of Indian camp and Hendrickx converted it, getting the ball past Sreejesh high on the net to make it 3-1 in their favour.

Chief Minister welcomes member...

Regarding eviction of illegal encroachment and constructions at Waithou Chingol, the Chief Minister stated that the State Government had taken up the eviction process in the larger interest of the people of Manipur and to conserve nature and mitigate the climate change which we are experiencing today. He mentioned that eviction had been taken up following procedures as per the law of the land. The State Government doesn't do anything which is beyond the ambit of the Constitution of India, he added.

Stating that he, as a human being, also feels bad on pulling down certain houses

and structures, he assured to provide arrangements for rehabilitation if any affected party has no other land of their own to stay. He further appealed to all encroachers

and illegal occupants at Reserve Forest areas to voluntarily dismantle their structures as the Government would be continuing with its eviction work.

Name Change

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that I have renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my old name RAJKUMARI DUSHILLA DEVI, as I have assumed my new name LONGJAM ONGBIRK DUSHILLA DEVI.

I, do declare that I shall be known as LONGJAM ONGBIRK DUSHILLA DEVI in all my documents.

Sd/-

LONGJAM ONGBIRK DUSHILLA DEVI
Keishamthong Maning Longjam Leikai,
Imphal West District, Manipur - Pin 795001