

CM inaugurates first state-run De-Addiction Centre at Sunusiphai, Disposes drugs worth Rs 205 Crore

DIPR
Imphal, June 26:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh today inaugurated Anouba Mangal De-addiction Centre at Sunusiphai, Bishnupur District on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking, 2022. Anouba Mangal is the first de-addiction centre in the State which is directly run by the Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur.

The Chief Minister also disposed Rs. 205 crore worth of drugs in the international market which included around 3000 Kg of Ganja, 14 Kg of Heroin, 20 kg of ice drug, or crystal methamphetamine, 104 kg of WY tablets, 3482 kg of SP tablets and other illegal drugs as Pre-trial and Post-trial

AR foils cross border smugglings

IT News
Imphal, June 26:

Modi Battalion of Assam Rifles along with Manipur Police foiled cross border smuggling of drugs at Machi Sub Division on Saturday.

Troops of Assam Rifles along with Manipur Police launched an operation which led to an apprehension of smuggler and seizure of Opium worth Rs. 2.44 lakhs.

The apprehended person with the items were handed over to Machi Police Station for further investigation.

Manipuri Sahitya Parishad New Executive formed

IT News
Jiribam, June 26:

The new executive body of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Jiribam has been formed today after the completion of the tenure of previous body.

Tha Panthoi Singh and N. Manikanta Singh; S. Jadhob Singh were elected as President and Vice President of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad for the new executive body.

In the new executive body Sarat Thokchom; H. Joysankar Singh and M. Malaya Devi have been elected as General Secretary; joint Secretary and treasurer of the parishad.

While S. Khogen Singh and K. Babaton Singh have been selected as an advisor of the Parishad.

The formation of new executive body meeting was held at Jiri Ima Meira Paibi Apunba Lup (JIMPAL) office today where many office bearers of the Parishad attended the meeting.

Thereafter, in the evening session an yearly meeting of the Parishad will be held.

Drug Disposal of Manipur Police at Sunusiphai.

The programme on International Day Against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking, 2022 was organized jointly by the Department of Social Welfare and Police Department, Manipur.

Speaking on the occasion, N. Biren Singh stated that many unregistered rehabilitation centres are operating in the State without following proper guidelines or procedures as to how the inmates should be treated. As such, the State Government felt the need to come up with the Government-run de-addiction centre. Stating that drug addicts shouldn't be treated with physical punishment rather they should be given proper advice, the Chief Minister added that staff had been recruited to look after the centre considering the need to keep trained people for the same.

N. Biren recalled that the State Government's War on Drugs Campaign was started in November, 2018 with the aim to save the youths from ill

effects of drug consumption and its illicit trafficking. He maintained that the various steps had been taken up with the Government's motto to do something for the welfare of the people and the society. He informed that during the first term of his Government, 1674 cases related to drug activities had been registered while 2104 persons were arrested. Illegal drugs worth around Rs. 321 crore in the domestic market were also seized. He continued that 181 cases had been registered with the arrest of 227 persons since the formation of his Government for the Second term. Drugs worth around Rs. 59 crore in the domestic market which would be around Rs. 589 crore in the international market had also been seized.

Maintaining that many communities had shown support to the Government's War on Drugs Campaign, taking resolutions to uproot poppy plantation, the Chief Minister expressed his hopefulness that the State would be drug free soon.

Raising concern on the rise of number of widows in the

State and their hardship to run their families, N. Biren informed that the Government would come up with the next mission to set up various work sheds where widows could take up certain productive activities to make their own living and run their families. He further urged the public to have respect for one another and support the welfare works taken up by the Government so that the State could progress smoothly towards development.

Social Welfare Minister Heikham Dingo, delivering his presidential address, cautioned that the State is in an alarming situation regarding drug consumption and its illicit trafficking.

The ill-effects of drug menace could be widely seen nowadays and as such the State Government had started its fight against drugs to save the future of our youths. He sought support of the public stating that the efforts of the Government alone would not be enough to overcome the drug menace without the involvement and cooperation of the public.

Kidney transplant to 3 patients successful at JNIMS, CM announces reward

IT News
Imphal, June 26:

Three operations for kidney transplant were successfully conducted for three patients by doctors at JNIMS today. Satisfied with the success, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh announced a reward of Rs. 5 lakh to the team of Doctors, Nurses and other technical staffs of Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences (JNIMS).

Those patients successfully transplanted Kidney are Takhellamb Bikramjit Singh (37 years) from Wangoo Tera, Kakching,

Kimsary (41 years) from Tuisongjang Village, Churachandpur and Hanso Wungleng (32 years) from Winitang, Ukhrul.

While congratulating the doctors, nurses and others, the Chief Minister termed the first successful conduct of kidney transplant by Government Hospitals in Manipur as an huge achievement. He continued that many people of the State faced financial hardship for kidney transplant and as such the State Government had taken up certain efforts under mission mode to upgrade the infrastructure and service of JNIMS. Fortunately, operations

for kidney transplant had been successfully conducted for three persons, he added.

He expressed his satisfaction that the kidney transplant for the three persons were conducted availing the benefit of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) package for Kidney Transplant. The patients didn't bear any expenses of the operation charges and medicine required. He further expressed his thankfulness to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for saving the lives of many people through the scheme.

Flood in Assam worsen, Silchar still reels under water, Himanta Biswa visits affected areas

By a Correspondent
Silchar, June 26:

Flood in Assam gets worsen today with over 25 lakhs people affected in 27 districts of the state. Manipur's neighbour Silchar in Assam continue to be inundated. Report said that the death toll due to floods and landslides reached 121 with four deaths reported today, where 21 are reported from Cachar district.

Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma today visited Silchar and Cachar district for the second time to review the situation. Sarma had made an aerial survey in flood affected areas of Silchar and Cachar on Thursday. The Chief Minister took a boat ride in and around the city, where over two lakh people have been affected due to severe floods since June 20.

Heavy rains on the hills of adjoining Meghalaya and Mizoram swelled the water level in the Barak river causing a breach in an embankment. This made the flood situation in Silchar and adjoining areas in the Cachar district grim since June 20.

Videos shared on social media showed people dangerously standing in waist-deep flood water for water bottles and food items being airdropped by IAF helicopters in Silchar. The NDRF personnel also continued their rescue efforts while the administration stepped up efforts to distribute drinking water and food items.

Cachar deputy commissioner, Keerthi Jalli told DH on Sunday that the administration was using drones to drop drinking water

in the worst affected areas. "There are still areas in many narrow bylanes that we couldn't access which is currently the area we are focusing for nearby delivery with a request for taking up distribution to local volunteers, or through ropes and human chain and now we are exploring drone technology as well", she said.

The daily flood report issued by Assam State Disaster Management Authority on Sunday said

25,10,989 people in 2,894 villages still remained affected by floods. A total of 2,33,271 people are taking shelters in 637 relief camps. Relief materials were also distributed to other affected populations, who are not taking shelter in relief camps, the official said.

The NDRF has been helping the district administration in safe evacuation of people from affected areas apart from our own SDRF, fire and emergency service personnel, police and others.

AR rescue elderly couple



IT News
Silchar, June 26:

Srikona Battalion of Headquarter 21 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of Headquarter Inspector General Assam Rifles (East) continued its efforts to rescue stranded people in Silchar town. On receipt of an SOS call the Special rescue team responded swiftly and rescued an elderly couple and their mother from Rangikhari area. Mr Deepak Khandelwal (72 years in paralytic condition), Mrs. Lata Khandelwal (70 years) and Mrs. Ashadevi (92 years, mother) were stuck on the first floor for the last three days in their residence with no

network and supplies. In spite the odds, rescue team managed to reach the location and successfully rescued the senior citizens. The people appreciated and blessed the efforts by the Assam Rifles in these trying times of natural disaster.

On the other hand, Medical team of Srikona Battalion reached out to the local populace suffering from illness caused due to raging floods. The Srikona Battalion abreast by its extensive rescue operations in the city rendered immediate medical aid to the flood victims. The medical team attended especially the sick, elderly, injured and expecting mothers.

“Involvement of Politicians rise the drug related cases in the state”

IT News
Thoubal, June 26:

Issues of illegal drug related cases are on the rise in the state of Manipur due to the involvement of elected representatives of the people. This was stated by Nongpoknganba, Lt. Col. Of the 165 Infantry Battalion (H&H) Assam while speaking on the International Day Against Drug and Illicit Trafficking in Khangabok of Thoubal district.

On the occasion organized by Peace Institute for Alcoholic & Drug Addiction Center, Khangabok under the

them 'Share Drug Facts to Save Lives', the Lt. Col. Said that there are instances of illegal drugs seized and recovered from the official quarters and vehicles of elected representatives in the state of Manipur.

Lt. Col. Nongpoknganba said that Manipur has been facing lot of trouble due to drug abuse and trafficking problem since a very long time and till today there are still apprehensions about the safety of the youths of the state from the menace of drugs. Now, another trend of cultivating poppy is taking place which not only is a big

concern for drug used but also give a great impact to the ecological imbalance to the society.

"It is next to impossible that Poppy Plantation in far flung hill areas are conducted without the knowledge of the village chiefs or the king.

Appealing to the youths, particularly to the users, Nongpoknganba said that every one of us should try to lead a meaningful healthy life which is free from drugs. Those users should also have full determination to quit the bad habit for the cause of their love one and family.

Kangleipal appeals to open outlets for distribution of fertilizers at Lamlai

IT News
Imphal, June 26:

Political Activist Sapam Kangleipal has urged the government of Manipur to open an outlet for distribution of fertilizers at Lamlai area for the farmers of the Lamlai Assembly constituency.

Talking to media persons, at his residence at Nongada, in Imphal East Kangleipal also appealed the government of Manipur to simplify the distribution of fertilizers to the farmers at subsidized rate by

exempting the mandatory clauses of submitting the cultivation land patta as most of the farmers are tenant farmers and the owners sometime takes time or are reluctant to give the land patta to the tenant farmers.

Kangleipal said that standing at queue for the subsidized fertilizers is not an issue however going to Porompat to stand in queue is the problem faced by the farmers as Lamlai area is far from the location.

"The Agriculture

department can use the Agriculture Office opened at Lamlai area which remain close for distribution of fertilizers", Kangleipal said.

He further added that most of the paddy field are inundated at present due to the incessant rain and thus the need of the hour is to find a solution to make sure that the farmers don't waste time and money for production. He appealed the authority to distribute good quality Phoudi (paddy seeds) to the farmers.

Religious riots vs. humanity

By: Harkirat Kaur

The core of religion is truth. The purpose of Dharam is to create truthful human beings. Only a truthful human beings can be created clean society. When a human being was born from his mother's womb, he had no religion, he did not know who the Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Christians were, he just seemed to be all human beings, the same human beings like him. As the family grew older, it became clear to us whether we were Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims or Christians, all we had to do was go to our place of worship and worship. When the child tried to find out about other religions, he was immediately stopped and reprimanded that he could only acquire knowledge about his own religion. Such an environment and behavior inherited from childhood instills in the child a fear of religion, a fear of God and jealousy of other religions. The only common religion of a human being is humanity. The Gurus, Peer Prophets, Rishis and Munis of all the religions have preached the service of humanity, eliminated caste, division in the name of religions and preached "Manas Ki Jaat Sabhe Ek Pahchanbo". But I am amazed at the situation today that those who call themselves righteous, the so-called guardians of humanity, are destroying humanity in the name of religion. I believe that if you have to cause riots, play with people's lives, roll people's leaves to make your religion look the best, then it does not deserve to be called a religion. I am not talking about riots of any one religion but of riots in the name of all religions. History has shown that from time immemorial, some so-called religious leaders have washed their faces in the bloodbaths of the people in order to persuade them of their religion. Some of the cracks are still there when in the riots in the name of religions, six-foot-tall young sons of mothers were turned into piles of ashes. Has anyone ever tried to think what is the philosophy of religion? What does religion say, in the name of which people's houses are demolished, riots are carried out, then it is not even worthy to be called a religion, because no religion, be it Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, has ever preached genocide. Rather, the prophets of all religions have preached peace.

In the blind devotion of religion, the blind and deaf people do not see the pain of the suffering people nor do they hear the screams. There is no doubt that religious devotion leads the human being to the straight path but blind faith also destroys the human being. This devotion not only destroys a house but also destroys streets, neighborhoods, cities. I often watch religious debates on social media and other news channels and am amazed at how so-called highly educated people are abusing religion in the name of religion on the national platform!

I think we should all understand the meaning of "religion" before rioting in the name of religion, before hurting anyone's religious feelings, before calling any religion bad, whether it is really in religion. There has been talk of violence, has it really been said that if someone is calling your religion bad, instead of dealing with it alone, you should make the lives of tens of millions of innocents a living hell.

Besides, we cannot deny that no matter how many religions there are riots in the name of, their strings are connected with politics. There are three types of people living in our society, smart, naive, straightforward. The clever people hurt the feelings of the innocent people and make them angry and these people have to join the flag waving protests without using their brains and the direct victims are the people. The so-called religious people who think that by shedding blood, by creating an atmosphere of fear among the people, if they can prove the supremacy of their religion, they are absolutely wrong, people who play with people's lives, people who play with people's emotions. Neither does he deserve to be called righteous, nor does he deserve to be called the supreme religion under the guise of which the homes of innocent laughing people are destroyed.

If we talk on the basis of facts, the number of riots in the name of religion is huge, but I would like to make a brief reference that if we talk internationally, the communal war between Israel and Palestine continues to this day, thousands Millions of people lost their lives, many became homeless. If we talk about India, the first post-independence religious riot in India took place in 1957 which is known as Rammand. Later Hindu-Sikh riots over the establishment of Punjabi state in 1966 in which 14 people testified, thousands went to jail and became homeless, riots over Urdu language in Ranchi in 1967, riots over dargah and temple in Gujarat in 1969, Riots between Hindus and Muslims in 1983, Sikh massacre by Hindus in 1984 in which more than 17,000 people lost their lives, followed by Ahmedabad and Gujarat in 1985, In 1986, riots broke out between Hindus and Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir. If we talk about the year 2022, then this communalism continues in the same way today. Recently, in June 2022, we have seen the provocative form of these riots, riots, slogans, rhetoric. Here I have briefly mentioned a few years but every year hooliganism in the name of religions strangles humanity.

We all need to understand that religion is a way to hold human beings accountable for their duties, and that man's greatest responsibility is to respect humanity, to kill any human being, be it a Sikh or a Hindu, Be it Muslims, Buddhists, Jains, if you want to be called religious, I will not shy away from saying that those people are a stain on the name of their religion, nation and humanity.

Use your intellect and try to understand who may be behind these riots. Are those who are pushing us in this blazing fire also keeping their feet with us in this blazing fire? Stop slaughtering humanity due to blind faith and ignorance, try to understand the policy of tearing people and rule. Every religion preaches the message of humanity, calls for a voice against oppression, but never says that you should take the form of oppression yourself. There is no greater religion than humanity! We cannot expect governments to stop this hooliganism in the name of religion because all these riots have deep roots, and religion is one of the biggest roots in politics. The main need of the hour is, if you want to stop these massacres in the name of religions, then we all have to become truly religious, otherwise these riots under the guise of religions will always trample humanity underfoot.

The Quiet Transformation in Defence Pensions

By: Rajnish Kumar

The mediascape is rife with narratives which may lead distinguished retired defence services personnel to get apprehensive about the quiet transformation which is happening in the management of Defence Pensions in India. The System for Pension Administration – Raksha or SPARSH, as announced in the Union Budget 2017-18, is a landmark policy decision of the Government of India, to provide comprehensive web-based interactive pension disbursement system for defence pensioners. The project is managed and implemented by the Defence Accounts Department under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence, with the support of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) as the software development partner.

This article is not a declaration but a presentation of contrast, between legacy systems and technological innovation, and between facts and fiction. The phenomenon of governance in India has evolved, where numerous initiatives are being designed keeping the beneficiary at the centre. The Government is increasingly relying on digital systems to ensure transparency, efficiency and effective public service delivery. It is a privilege that the Defence Accounts Department, over the course of more than two and half centuries, continues to serve defence pensioners whose number is nearly 33 Lakh presently. Within this system, steeped in history, outdated processes and regulations, SPARSH comes as a positive disruption, where the Department has adopted a paradigm shift towards enhancing and ensuring right pension to the right person at the right time by a transparent and participative process.

There is a need to examine these legacy systems and corresponding transformational innovation. For the benefit of the reader, here is a short primer on the old system of

Pensions Management, which involves nearly 2,500 offices across the Defence Services. When service personnel retire, their service details including their names, service records, commendations and details of their dependents *inter alia* are verified by the Pensions Initiating Agencies, be it Record Offices, Directorates, Head of Departments, or others. These details are sent to the Pension Sanctioning Agencies (PSAs) which are various offices of the Defence Accounts Department, namely, Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (PCDA) Pensions in Prayagraj, Jt. CDA (Air Force) in New Delhi and PCDA (Navy) in Mumbai for audit and sanction of pension payment and generation of the Pension Payment Order (PPO). The PPO is communicated to the pensioners and the various Pension Disbursing Agencies (PDAs) such as Banks and Defence Pension Disbursement Offices (DPDOs).

At this point, it is impressed upon the reader the importance and difficulty of audit. Errors in details are difficult to rectify by any singular agency and disconnect within the ecosystem is a bane to efficiency. The systems are old and need reform. The scale and size of the process is concomitant with the size and complexity of how the Indian Armed Forces operate – with their own rules and customs. This is why even the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) in their report on Defence Pensions recommended that the three pillars – Record Offices, PSAs, and PDAs – should be connected online, enabling automated flow of information, in a secure mode, with proper validation and security checks.

The SPARSH Portal bridges a long-pending lacuna in public service delivery, where the portal takes on the responsibility of connecting and interfacing with all stakeholders in the pension ecosystem. More than 5.13 Lakh pensioners

have been onboarded to SPARSH, whereas more than 27 Lakh pensioners continue to be served by the legacy system. There is verifiable data of massive improvements in processing time and sanction, with majority of the PPOs being generated within a week.

There was a delay in credit of April 2022 monthly pension to 58,275 pensioners via SPARSH due to technical and procedural reasons was immediately addressed and pension was credited within four working days. In contrast, the department continues to actively pursue non-credit of pension in nearly 1.2 lakh cases which are disbursed by the banks. SPARSH has the capability and the flexibility to generate corrigendum PPOs at the click of a button. Fresh cases i.e. the new retirees who are coming onboard SPARSH have expressed satisfaction at the ease of pension processing.

SPARSH services have further been expanded across more than 4 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) to ensure last mile access to pensioners, established backend linkage to fetch Aadhaar-based Jeevan Pramaan directly on the portal. Recently, a mobile number update utility has also been deployed for pensioners for better communication and ease of access.

Principal Controller of Defence Accounts (PCDA) Pensions, Prayagraj is the primary agency for Pension Sanction on behalf of the Defence Accounts Department. However, it would be simplistic to assume only one agency or office is completely empowered and autonomous in function within a careful system of checks and balances.

The Pension Regulations for various Defence Services, as approved by the Parliament, are the primary rules based on which the Defence Pensions are regulated in India. The requirement for annual

identification or life certification is drawn from these regulations, which bounds the Department as well as other audit agencies in India. The rule of law is the *sine qua non* of a functioning democracy.

TCS has been brought on board as software development partner. The SPARSH Portal has undergone testing and security clearances from the highest cyber security agencies in the country, to ensure that the handling of data of ex-servicemen and defence pensioners is protected and secured. With two rounds of pilots being run from February 2020 and despite the advent of a global pandemic, SPARSH was deployed in a phased manner successfully for the civilians and consequently for the Indian Air Force, Indian Navy and the Indian Army. The technical complexity of pensions management is matched by the innovation.

The SPARSH Portal has truly transformed this entire process and it has been the constant effort on part of the Ministry of Defence to ensure that Defence Pensioners are provided the best possible services, which is a vast improvement over the legacy system described above. The pensioner should not have to run from pillar to post, seeking to move offices and departments for their rightful pension. The Department is using technology to do so. The Defence Accounts Department, with the sincere cooperation of the Service Headquarters, is striving to ensure satisfaction of all stakeholders and welcomes the continued cooperation of the defence pensioners in this endeavour to transform defence pensions management in India.

(The author is an officer of the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS) and is the current Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA). Views expressed are personal)

Continued focus and re-doubled efforts: Improving the Nutritional Status of Women and Children in Uttar Pradesh

By: Preeti Pande
Senior Dietician, Apollomedics
Super Specialty Hospital,
Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh (UP) has accomplishments to claim, successes to celebrate and hopes to look up to as it rolls out Mission Poshan 2.0 in its efforts to improve the nutritional status of women and children.

The launch of PoshanAbhiyaan 2018, Central government's flagship programme aimed to improve the nutritional status of children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers, in a time bound manner, drew the focus on fight against undernutrition among the most vulnerable groups.

The programme was based on four strategic pillars—use of technology for real time monitoring, community mobilization and behavior change, convergence of multiple departments of the state, and the focus on interventions during the critical first 1000 days of a newborn baby. The strategies were to translate into implementable activities, primarily through the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) mechanism.

This involved detailed planning and timely execution of training the Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) who are the backbone of the ICDS programme. The training was based on the incremental learning approach. UP was one of the first

states to have completed the roll-out of all incremental learning modules for the AWWs. Anecdotal evidence from the field suggested an improvement in capacities of the AWWs and it was expected to subsequently lead to a positive shift in the community knowledge and behaviors, on maternal, infant, and young child nutrition.

Anganwadi Centres in UP were equipped with approximately 1.57 lakh growth monitoring devices to strengthen the monitoring of nutritional status of children and pregnant women, which is one of the key services of ICDS. An almost similar number of AWWs were provided with smart phones to be able to operate the mobile-based application for real-time monitoring of their field activities and build their knowledge base by accessing the e learning modules. The initiatives have gathered momentum in UP slowly but steadily. Some of these efforts, though got negatively impacted during the pandemic.

However, the findings of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) for nutrition status in the state have been encouraging. There was an improvement in select nutrition indicators between NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21).

Progress was evident in some of the indicators related to maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN) that can be attributed to the achievement of the objectives of PoshanAbhiyaan. Exclusive

breastfeeding rate showed a marked improvement (at 59.7 percent in NFHS-5 vis-à-vis NFHS-4 when it stood at 45.6 percent). The percentage of underweight children showed a drop from 39.5 percent to 32.1 percent. There was an encouraging decrease in the percentage of stunted children from 46.3 percent to 39.7 percent. A drop in the prevalence of stunting reflects action at multiple levels across multiple sectors. Consumption of iron and folic acid tablets improved marginally and anemia prevalence in pregnant women also showed a decline.

Anganwadi Centres played a critical role as part of the Jan Andolan activities under PoshanAbhiyaan. Besides some centrally supported events, state-specific community-based events were also organized from time to time. These events provided an opportunity for knowledge sharing by the AWWs on issues relevant to maternal and child nutrition and peer learning for pregnant women and lactating mothers in an environment of celebration.

To involve the community in this endeavor, the government adopted traditional events such as 'godbharai' and 'annaprashan' as platforms to promote optimal nutrition and health behaviors in the community. These events provided an opportunity to reiterate and highlight the core and critical elements of good, wholesome nutrition, diet diversity, and

balanced diets. These were institutionalized as Community Based Events (CBEs).

Similarly, the PoshanPakhwada and PoshanMaah were celebrated in the state with as much zest and fervor as across the country. There were efforts to establish a statewide review mechanism with monthly meetings organized at the block and district levels under the chairpersonship of senior officers in the district. Convergence of stakeholder departments was initiated for synergistic action on malnutrition and undernutrition. Innovations were encouraged for facilitating the uptake of services, enhancing community knowledge and behaviors on maternal, infant and young child nutrition. And all these efforts did yield positive results.

With the launch of Mission Poshan 2.0, UP will continue to work towards infant and young child nutrition and will also focus on maternal nutrition to complete the spectrum of MIYCN and contribute to further improvement in the nutritional status of women and children. Children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition will receive due attention and the probability of averting morbidity and mortality in these children will be much higher.

Steadily and surely, the state is making progress on the indicators of nutrition that are the fundamental markers of long-term good health.

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Droupadi Murmu is all set to become the next President of India

By HarharSwarup

Battle lines for coming Presidential election have been drawn. The ruling NDA has set up, former Jharkhand Governor Droupadi Murmu as its presidential candidate. Murmu is a tribal and this would be for the first time a tribal and woman would be elected President as NDA has comfortable majority in the electoral college with the support of the outsiders like BJD and YSRCP.

Belonging to the Santhal community from Odisha, 64-year-old, Murmu was named the Presidential candidate of the BJP-NDA on Tuesday, hours after former union Minister Yashwant Sinha was declared the joint nominee of major opposition parties

including the Congress, TMC and NCP.

Sharad Pawar's "no" to becoming Opposition's consensus candidate—he has said he wants to remain in active politics—is a sign that the ruling side is confident of getting its candidate through. Pawar was best placed to garner the support of non-BJP parties, given his cross party relationship over his long political career spanning half century. But after having won every election he has contested, he may not want to take risk of losing now.

The NDA commands 48 per cent of the electoral college vote. But remaining 52 percent is a divided house. Five non-BJP parties were absent at June 15 Opposition parties meeting called by Mamata

Banerjee to revolve a consensus. They were Biju Janata Dal, Telangana RashtraSamiti, YSR Congress, Shromani Akali Dal and AamAdmi Party—these parties were obviously keeping their options open.

Stridently critical of the BJP, the TRS Chief and AAP are unlikely to go with the NDA. TRS chief KCR, who has expressed a desire to move to national stage, may have hoped to emerge as the opposition's consensus choice for Rashtrapati, but there have been few takers so far.

More significantly, Odisha chief minister, Naveen Patnaik (BJD) and Andhra chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy have indicated an open mind on supporting the NDA and



met Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently. The party accounted for seven per cent of the electoral college vote; the support of even one of them will ensure a comfortable win for NDA candidate. But even without them, the BJP can be expected to pull out all stops, work on independents and smaller parties, create abstentions and rebels in the Major groups, as we saw recently in Rajya Sabha elections. The BJP will have to keep its ally Janata Dal (U),

on the right side.

The opposition is not only a divided house, it also got into the act late. First Sonia Gandhi broached the subject with a few opposition leaders, then Mamata Banerjee decided to invite 22 parties to a meeting. In a show of accommodation, the congress leaders decided to attend the meeting and mollify parties like AAP and TRS, it has indicated its willingness, to back anyone selected by consensus.

The importance of the Presidential poll for the opposition lies in effecting the maximum possible unity amongst non-BJP parties in preparation for 2014 Lok Sabha polls and going for a candidate, and who can symbolize its counter

narrative.

As the results of Presidential contest will be known only on July 21, there is also a fundamental question: What kind of a President does the Republic need today? Is s/he just meant to be government's rubber stamp, or does his role of Rashtrapati go beyond that?

The president in our set up does not enjoy executive powers. The 42nd amendment enacted during the Emergency made the advice of Council of Ministers binding on the President. Though the Janata Dal government undid many of the draconian laws enacted by Indira Gandhi, it left the provision subscribing the President's role untouched.

Every Prime Minister has sought a President of his or

her choice. It is easier for a powerful Prime Minister who commands a majority, like Narendra Modi and Indira Gandhi to have their way. The President may be a figure head but s/he has power to appoint the PM, to ask his cabinet to reconsider a decision or to delay decisions by sitting on them, among other things.

An adventurist President like Zail Singh in 1987 was on the verge of sacking the then Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi despite his unprecedented majority of 414 Lok Sabha MPs and offered to swear-in Vice-President R. Venkataraman as PM instead. RV refused, and so did V P Singh, who was also sounded out. Fortunately, Zail Singh, pulled out from brink. At the last moment. (IPA Service)

Students of Manipur kicks start off Madhya Pradesh under the EBSB student exchange prog.

PIB
Imphal, June 26:

In a unique initiative under EBSB, student-exchange between partner states kicks off from today.

33 students, 4 teachers from Manipur leave for partner state Madhya Pradesh.

Beginning today, student exchange between paired partner states—overall 750 students all over India - will visit the other state in a series of visits in a unique initiative under Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat (EBSB).

As part of the exchange programme 33 students along with 4 teachers from Manipur has left Imphal today for Madhya Pradesh, its partner state, for 6 days' visit. The students include 19 students from schools and 14 from college. Their journey was flagged off from Manipur Institute of technology, Imphal this morning.

During their visit they will visit Sewage treatment and Bio CNG plant in Indore, and a



Cultural Exchange visit to the city of temples - Ujjain.

They will also witness Sports Academy in Indore along with sporting events. Their visit list also includes ASI Monuments of historical importance, museum, heritage sites and meeting internationally famous artisans of Maheshwar

silks. Apart from this they will visit Mandav Garh, the cultural heritage town of Holkar Dynasty and experience food and culture among many other things.

Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat programme aims to enhance interaction & promote mutual understanding between

people of different states/UTs through the concept of state/UT pairing. The states carry out activities to promote a sustained and structured cultural connect in the areas of language learning, culture, traditions & music, tourism & cuisine, sports and sharing of best practices, etc.

WISSER Innovation Prize launched for Designers and Innovators from North East Region

Guwahati, June 26:

WISSER Innovation Prize was launched on **Wednesday 22nd June 2022** for Designers and Innovators from the North East region. It is a design challenge for livelihood generation for the rural artisans in the North East Region in India. This design challenge is being organised by The Hub Jorhat, Bosco Institute and Childaid Network in collaboration with Dhriti-The Courage Within.

The Prize aims to identify product design solutions with pre-determined natural resources available in the North East Region which would enable generation of livelihoods for rural artisans across clusters.

The innovators/designers can apply as an individual or as a team (maximum 3 member teams). In case of individual innovators/designers, the applicant should be from one of the 8 states of the North East Region and in case of teams, at least one of the team members

should be a resident of any of the 8 states of the North East Region. Both students and practitioners can apply with their innovations/designs for the WISSER Innovation Prize.

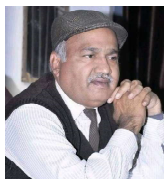
The selected innovators/innovator teams would be awarded cash prizes worth approximately INR 4 Lakhs and mentorship support by design and business mentors from across the globe.

"4 selected innovations would be provided cash prizes and mentorship support to support them in prototype development. The selected innovations would be piloted to build a complete product value chain as a micro enterprise cluster for rural artisans. The intent is to select design solutions with the given natural resources which have the potential to be produced by numerous micro/nano enterprises in rural areas and create livelihoods for rural artisans." said **Fr. Jerry Tom, Bosco Institute, Jorhat.**

Jonas Pfaffinger, Advisor, Childaid Network says, "It is a pleasure to see the WISSER Innovation Prize being launched today and we would like to mention the vision, support and trust provided by the Wiser Family in Childaid Network and the team behind the innovation prize to support the best design talents from the North East Region to create livelihood solutions for rural artisan populace of the region."

will work in the form of product/design hackathon wherein solutions which can support local artisans earn their livelihoods are invited. We are calling for design innovation ideas from both students and practitioners (in the field of design and innovation) in two categories of products, **Category 1 being bamboo and cane** and **Category 2 being Natural Fibres (Water Hyacinth, Kauna Grass, Shital Pati).** said **Mr. Anirban Gupta, Co-founder, Dhriti - The Courage Within.**

A New Pandemic (Food inflation)



By: Vijay GarG

In India, rural consumer food price has doubled in the year through March 2022, according to the All India Consumer Price Index (CPI) by the National Statistical Office (released April 12) at 13 per cent, the country's annual wholesale inflation was at the highest in a decade. Food and fuel prices played a major role.

Such is the impact of inflation that the World Food Program (WFP), currently running one of its most expansive food relief operations in recent history, made a desperate appeal for further funding. Because food inflation has significantly increased the cost of its day-to-day relief. It's paying USD

71 million (Rs 5.4 lakh crore) more per month now for the same operation level.

In the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, energy security came into focus. The world has been debating how the fossil fuel disruption will derail the planet's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to stop global warming and resultant climate change. Fuel price is already rising and adding to the overall costs of everything, including food production and transportation.

But, the war has also disrupted foodgrain supply and circulation further adding to the demand-supply equation. Extreme weather events continue to affect large swathes of areas growing food and thus bringing down overall production. To sum up, the most fundamental survival need is at stake.

This crisis exposes the globalised world's another fault line. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, an interconnected globalised world suddenly woke up to a situa-

tion where every country retreated and scrambled for self-protection; expectedly the rich world jealously colonised all resources needed to fight the pandemic leaving the rest helpless.

The food sector is also interconnected and interdependent, though perilously. WFP calls its aftermath a "seismic hunger crisis" gripping the world. In Africa and West Asia, the hunger crisis has already set in.

The World Bank has warned that each percentage point increase in food prices would push an additional 10 million people into extreme poverty. The impact of food inflation is impacting the world's poor and developing countries the most because most of these countries are also food importers. For instance, some 50 countries, mostly poor countries, depend on Ukraine and Russia for wheat, a staple grain.

Country after food grain surplus country are now hoarding through curbs on export. This makes the availability of food grains difficult

for deficit geographies.

In an unprecedented joint appeal, the heads of the World Bank Group, International Monetary Fund, WFP, and the World Trade Organization gave an urgent call:

We call on the international community to urgently support vulnerable countries through coordinated actions ranging from the provision of emergency food supplies, financial support, increased agricultural production, and open trade... We also urge all countries to keep trade open and avoid restrictive measures such as export bans on food or fertilizer that further exacerbate the suffering of the most vulnerable people.

This appeal sounds similar to many such global solidarity calls made at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is probably the first time there is a universal call about the crisis on food. Like in cases of recent crises including the COVID-19 pandemic, the globalised world is testing its efficacy both in letter and spirit.

Office of the The Socio Economic and Rural Development organization (SEARDO)

Regd. No. 256/IE/SR/2000

H.O. - Thangbajrou Pangong Makha Lekaik, Imphal East, 795005, Manipur.

Notification

This is for information to the general public, particularly to youths and students that the SEARDO has been approved by the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL), Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to open CABA-MDTP Center at Khargao Bazar, near Nilofar School, Imphal-East - 795005, Manipur in the name of **National Information Technology**.

This Center is an opportunity for the youths and students of the state. So far many have started enrolling in the center.

There are other centers opened under NCPUL (Council) at various places of the state. At North side the center open is under Center Code : 2217 (Khabam Lamkhai, Mantripukhri), In South, it is open as Center Code : 2232 (Lilong Bazar), in West it is opened as Center Code : 220013 (Arsalan Afifah Islamic Cultural Society, Thangal bazaar near Axis Bank, Rahman Building) etc. As for the East the SEARDO has been approved to open the center, the center Code is 220033.

Session for the CABA-MDTP course at our center, approved by the Council is to commence from July 1, 2022, however, on the request of the interested students we have already started the classes at our center since June 20, 2022.

Interested students can still contact the office of the SEARDO between 9 a.m to 4.30 pm on every day except on Friday and Sunday.

Minimum Education Qualification required for the CABA-MDTP course is class -X.

We, the members of the SEARDO thanks the NCPUL, Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education, Govt. of India for approving the center at Imphal East. The center will promote Urdu Language and also computer knowledge to the students of the state, in the similar ways that other centers had provided.

Sd/-
In-Charge
National Information Technology
Center Code - 220033

Maan Ki Baat : PM calls upon country's youth to always remember dreadful period of Emergency

**AIR
New Delhi, June 26:**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today called upon the youth of the nation to always remember the dreadful period of Emergency.

Addressing the nation in his Mann Ki Baat programme on All India Radio, Mr Modi said the generations to come should never forget the mass movement during the Emergency.

The Emergency was imposed in the month of June in 1975. Prime Minister Modi recalled that all rights were taken away from the citizens of the country. One of those rights was the Right to Life and Personal Liberty provided to all Indians under Article 21 of the Constitution. He elaborated that the country's courts, constitutional institutions, and the press, were put under control. The condition of censorship was such that

nothing could be printed without approval. Mr Modi remembered when famous singer Kishore Kumar refused to applaud the government, and was banned. His entry on the radio was done away with.

The Prime Minister stated that even after many attempts, thousands of arrests, and atrocities on lakhs of people, the faith of the people of India in democracy did not shake. He said the democratic spirit which runs in the veins of people finally won. The people of India got rid of the emergency and re-established democracy in a democratic way. Mr Modi admitted that it is difficult to find such an example of defeating a dictatorial mindset, a dictatorial tendency in a democratic way, in the whole world. He added that during the Emergency, he had the good fortune to have been a

witness and a partner in the struggle. Today, when the country is celebrating 75 years of its independence, Mr Modi exhorted Indians to never forget that dreadful period of emergency.

Addressing the nation in his Mann Ki Baat programme on All India Radio, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted that in the past few years, many big feats related to the space sector have been accomplished in the country. One of these achievements has been the creation of an agency named In-Space. He said this agency is promoting new opportunities in the space sector for the private sector of India. He pointed out that this beginning has especially attracted the youth of the country.

The Prime Minister took pride in the fact that the number of startups in the space sector amounts to more than a hundred. Until

a few years ago in the country, no one even thought about startups in the space sector. He said all these start-ups are working on ideas, which were either not thought about earlier, or were considered impossible for the private sector. Mr Modi cited the example of two startups in Chennai and Hyderabad - Agnikul and Skyroot! These start-ups are developing launch vehicles that will take small payloads into space. Through this, the cost of Space Launching is estimated to come down significantly. Similarly, he took the name of Dhruva Space, another Start-Up of Hyderabad. It is working on High Technology Solar Panels for Satellite Deployer and Satellites. He spoke about Tanveer Ahmed of Digantara, which is another space start-up who is trying to map waste in space. Both Digantara

and Dhruva Space are going to make their first launch from ISRO's launch vehicle on the 30th of June.

The Prime Minister mentioned Neha, the founder of Astrome, a space start-up based in Bangalore. This start-up is making flat antennas which will not only be small, but their cost will also be very low. He said demand for this technology can be all over the world. Mr Modi also gave the example of Tanvi Patel, who is a school student of Mehsana. She is working on a very small satellite, which is going to be launched in space in the next few months. Like Tanvi, about seven hundred and fifty school students in the country are working on 75 such satellites in the Amrit Mahotsav. The Prime Minister expressed delight that most of these students are from small towns of the country.

Touching the topic of Sports, Prime Minister spoke about Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra who was in the headlines recently. Even after the Olympics, he is setting new records of success, one after the other. Neeraj won the silver at Paavo Nurmi Games in Finland. Not only that, he also broke the record of his own Javelin Throw. Mr Modi said Neeraj once again made the country proud by winning the gold in Kuortane Games. He claimed that this zest is the hallmark of today's youth.

The Prime Minister exuded pride that India's youth are setting new

records from Start-Ups to the Sports World. In the recently held Khelo India Youth Games as well, Indian players set many records. Mr Modi highlighted that a total of 12 records have been broken in these games. Not only that, 11 records have been registered in the names of female players. M. Martina Devi of Manipur has made eight records in weightlifting. Similarly, Sanjana, Sonakshi and Bhavna have also made different records. He said that with their hard work, these players have proven how

much India's prestige is going to rise in international sports arena in the coming times.

The Prime Minister mentioned that there has been another special feature of Khelo India Youth Games. He said that this time, many talents have emerged from very ordinary families. Mr Modi noted that in their success, their family, and parents have a big role to play. He spoke of the father of Adil Altamash from Srinagar who is a tailor by profession. Similarly, he gave the example of gold medalist Dhanush's father who is a carpenter in Chennai. Kajol Sargar's father works as a tea vendor. Kajol would help her father and practice weight lifting as well.

Mr Modi went on to add that Tanu of Rohtak has performed a similar kind of miracle. Tanu's father Rajbir Singh is a school bus driver in Rohtak. He stated that in the sports world now, the dominance of Indian players is increasing. He

said that at the same time, a new image of Indian sports is also emerging. Mr Modi pointed out that in Khelo India Youth Games, five indigenous sports were included this time. These are - Gatka, Thang Ta, Yogasan, Kalariappayattu and Mallakhamb.

The Prime Minister exuded pride that an international tournament is going to be held of a game which was born centuries ago in India. This Chess Olympiad will begin from the 28th of July. More than 180 countries are participating in the Chess Olympiad.

Mr Modi stated that sports and fitness cannot be complete without another name - this is Telangana's mountaineer Poorna Malavath. He said that by completing the 7 summit challenge, Poorna has added another feather in her cap of success. The seven summit challenge is the challenge of surmounting seven most difficult and highest mountain peaks. Mr Modi lauded Poorna for ascending the highest peak of North America Mount Denali and bringing honour to the country. Poorna had accomplished the amazing feat of conquering Mount Everest at the age of just 13.

The Prime Minister also discussed Mithali Raj, one of the most talented cricketers in India. She announced her retirement from cricket this month. Mr Modi said Mithali has not only been an extraordinary player, but has also been an inspiration to many players.

The Sunday exclusive

Learning poverty increases to 70 per cent, inequality widens South Asia among one of the two worst suffering regions

By Dr. Gyan Pathak

The Global learning poverty has further increased to 70 per cent in 2022 with largest increases in South Asia and the Latin America and the Caribbean, as per the simulation result based on the latest available data and evidence. It means the world has lost the gains during 2000-2015 when it had fallen from 61 per cent to 53 per cent.

"The State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 update" prepared jointly by six organizations - World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, FCDO, USAID, and BILL & Melinda Gates Foundation - says that high rate of learning poverty indicates that education systems are failing to ensure that children develop critical foundational skills and thus are far from reaching, and in many cases are not on track to reach SDG 4 target of universal quality education for all by 2030. This makes it much harder for children to acquire the technical and higher-order skills needed to thrive in increasingly demanding labour markets, and for countries to develop the human capital needed for sustained, inclusive economic growth. The very high levels of learning poverty violate children's right to education, the update emphasized.

Learning poverty was on the increase even before the general closures of schools during February 2020 - February 2022 on account of COVID-19 crisis. In 2019, when the learning poverty indicator was first launched, the learning poverty rate was already estimated to have increased by 4 per cent to 57 per cent between 2015 and 2019 in low- and middle-income countries, a category India falls in. On account of being largest populated country in South Asia, one of the two worst suffering regions, India is obviously among the worst suffering nations.

The update has come only two days after the World Bank

approved additional financing of \$250 million for Outcomes for Accelerated Learning (GOAL), a programme which aims to improve education results for children across Gujarat, the only state in India, where such a programme is being implemented. Education system in Gujarat has almost 12 million students, 65 per cent of which are in remote regions of 'priority districts'. Following the COVID-19 crisis, the state estimated learning losses of about 10 per cent, with students in priority areas being disproportionately impacted. The latest financing complements the original loan of \$500 million approved in March 2021. This Rapid Response Framework seeks to reach every child and retain them in schools, assess learning levels regularly, prioritise teaching the fundamentals, increase catch-up learning, and develop psychological health for students and teachers. The additional financing will scale-up the coverage from original 9000 to 12000 schools.

It should be noted that India is home to almost 25 per cent of world's children (over 2.2 billion), and students not only of Gujarat but of all the states in the country have been in need of such programmes to overcome learning poverty. The recent data available for a few countries, for example, for the state of Karnataka in India, shows learning losses equivalent to the extent of the school closure - meaning that one year of school closures maps to roughly one year of normal learning that was not achieved or was forgotten, the update says. World average of closure of in-person schooling was 141 days with highest of 273 days in South Asia.

The update further says that the actual learning data now emerging from numerous countries show that there have been very large learning losses. More recent results from both lower- and upper-

middle-income countries find even larger losses. For example, it says that in India, between 2017 and 2021, average language and math scores for 5th graders on the national assessment have declined.

As response to the school closures countries resorted to remote learning, but due to lack of connectivity and the existence of a wide digital divide the efforts were found to have very low level of success, and insufficient to compensate for the learning losses. It failed for most students, and only the richer segments of the population - those with broadband connectivity, access to devices for the use of each family member, a place to study, availability of books and learning material, and a conducive home environment, among other conditions - were able to maintain a reasonable level of education engagement. It widened the inequality in education.

The latest update has even quotes a 16 year old student Shirin Rajesh from India as saying "...Schools haven't cut back much on their curricular expectations and 'ineffective' learning becomes detrimental for students in the long run...It's a struggle to tackle the never-ending list of assignments, especially with mental health issues in teens being at an all-time high."

Drawing on recent experiences with accelerating learning at scale, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank have also recently proposed the RAPID strategy of learning recovery and acceleration. It gives specific example of Gujarat, that has realigned the entire curriculum for the first quarter of the academic year to focus on foundational learning. Results from the Periodic Assessment Tests (PAT), a weekly assessment that began pre-pandemic, were used to personalize remote education to the level of each student

during school closures. In addition, Gujarat has used a mix of low- and high-tech interventions to deliver personalized, adaptive education to each student.

Ten-year-olds unable to read and understand a simple story increasing to 7 out of 10 is very high in low- and middle income countries with exacerbated inequalities in education. We have narrow window to act decisively to recover and accelerate learning, but without urgent action to reduce it we face a learning and human capital catastrophe, the update summarized. If children do not acquire the basics of literacy - together with numeracy and other foundational skills - the futures of hundreds of millions of children around the world, and their societies, are at grave risk. However, our action will require firm political commitment and implementation of evidence-based approaches for rapid impact.

Without action, the current generation now risks losing \$21 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value, or equivalent to 17 per cent of today's global GDP. In low- and middle-income countries it implies an annual loss of \$975 per person. Recovering from this massive shock with exacerbating inequality in education, we require broader national coalitions of families, educators, civil society, the business community, and other ministries of the government with firm political will, the update says. National commitments to education require that all actors align in the design and implementation of reforms with the sole objective of improving the education and wellbeing of children and youth - not the positions or interests of political parties or unions, nor the interest of suppliers, vendors, or providers, or any other education stakeholders, but only the interest of students.

(IPA Service)

AR felicitates environmental activist, conducts anti-drug camp



**IT News
Imphal, June 26:**

Mantripukhri Battalion Assam Rifles of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) organised a felicitation ceremony for Mr Rohan Agarwal, Environmental Activist at Chingmeirong, Imphal East in Manipur on 25 Jun 2022.

Rohan Agarwal enlightened about his mission on plastic pollution and the ill effects of using plastic. The environmental activist expressed gratitude for all kinds of cooperation and help provided by the Assam Rifles

during his mission and expressed the desire to get more such cooperation in future.

On the other hand, Chassad Battalion under aegis of HQ 10 Sector Assam Rifles and Inspector General Assam Rifles (South) organised lectures on Drug Trafficking and Legal and Health Implications of Drugs under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan, marking the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking on 26 Jun.

The Battalion reached out to the interior villagers of Kultuk, Molvailup, Aishi,

Lakhan and Phaimol of Kamjong district to make people aware about the societal problems due to illegal drugs. The lectures covered drugs related facts as well as solutions for treatment to fight against the prevalent drug menace. Total 80 villagers attended the lectures at various places.

This initiative of Assam Rifles was highly appreciated by the locals, especially, the youths who were motivated to educate their peers against the indulgence in drug related malpractices with the motto of "SAY NO TO DRUGS AND STAY FIT".