

CM flags off vehicles carrying relief assistance and SDRF personnel to Assam



IT News
Imphal, June 27:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh flagged off vehicles carrying relief assistance and personnel of State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Manipur for flood victims of Assam from Kangla Western Gate, Imphal today. The relief materials were sponsored by the Department of Relief & Disaster Management, Government of Manipur.

Briefing the media on the occasion, N. Biren expressed solidarity on the worse situation of flood in Assam which

had affected around 22 lakh people residing in 28 districts. He continued that around 2 lakh people had been displaced due to the flood and taking shelter in 680 relief camps. Out of them, more than a lakh people had been residing in 230 camps in the worst affected district of Cachar, he added.

As the neighbouring State Assam is badly affected by flood, the State Government is extending possible assistance towards the flood affected people as a humanitarian service, he stated. Quoting the proverb "A friend in need is a

friend indeed", the Chief Minister stressed the importance of extending at least some possible assistance to Assam, as a friend, during their time of hardship.

N. Biren informed that the relief materials included 3 trucks carrying 135 quintals of rice, 102 bags of dal, 120 bags of salt and 120 boxes of mustard oil. Along with the relief materials, 40 personnel of SDRF would be deputed to help in search and rescue operations. Stating that the relief assistance had been provided through Government to Government contact, he further in-

formed that the deputed SDRF personnel and relief materials would report at Lakhimpur District of Assam, he added.

Mentioning that many Assam Manipuri are also facing many problems like shortage of food and drinking water due to flood, he informed that a Non-Government team consisting of volunteers from Meitei Leepun and Chief Minister's Martial Arts group would also be sent to areas of Silchar, Hojai and Luming, which are largely inhabited by Manipuri, to provide support and relief assistance.

Encouraging the deputed SDRF team to provide all possible humanitarian service to the flood affected people of Assam, he extended his best wishes to the team and prayed for safe rescue operation at flood affected areas.

Relief and Disaster Management Minister Awangbow Newmai, MLA of Keirao AC Lourembam Rameshwor Meitei, Chief Secretary Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Additional Chief Secretaries M.H. Khan and Shri V. Vumlumang also attended the flag off programme.

Laos, India launch construction of dam, irrigation system in Xayaboury



IT News
Imphal, June 27:

Representatives of the Indian and Lao governments have launched a project to build the Nam Xang storage dam and irrigation system in Kaenthao district, Xayaboury province.

The project is funded by a loan of US\$14.7 million from the EXIM Bank of India, and will run for 24 months.

An irrigation system will be built to supply water to more than 1,000 hectares of farmland in the rainy season and to 850 hectares in the dry season.

Almost 300 families in six villages of Kaenthao district will benefit from the scheme.

The project opening ceremony last week was led by India's Deputy Minister of External Affairs, Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, and Laos' Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Dr. Phet Phomphiphak.

Dr. Phet said the project would support the government's agricultural development strategy to 2025 and the vision to 2030, especially the food security programme and the modernisation of agricultural products through a chain system of production.

Dr. Phet thanked the Government of India for supporting the development of agriculture, forestry and rural development in Laos.

Dr. Singh said "This project will be extremely beneficial for farmers and the economic development of Xayaboury province, especially in areas surrounding the dam."

"In particular, the project will have beneficial knock-on effects for local people, apart from directly benefiting farmers and growers who will be able to get water to irrigate their farms and plantations."

India has been extending

development assistance in the form of concessional Lines of Credit for many decades, Dr. Singh said. In 2015, the administration of Lines of Credit was streamlined and they are now provided under the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) through the EXIM Bank of India.

"India extends development cooperation to Laos as a partner developing country on the basis of the principles of equality, solidarity and mutual benefit. All development assistance extended by India is demand-driven and is extended without conditions, without constraining the policy space of the partner country," he added.

On the same day, Dr. Singh attended a handover ceremony for a dormitory at the Laos-India Entrepreneurship Development Centre, which was built at a cost of US\$50,000.

Manipur Shiv Sena chief stopped from meeting rebel MLAs at Guwahati hotel

Courtesy: PTI
Guwahati, June 27:

Security arrangements were on Monday tightened in the luxury hotel near Guwahati where rebel Maharashtra MLAs led by Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde are camping as advocates, senior police and government officials were seen entering there.

President of the Shiv Sena in neighbouring Manipur, M. Tombi Singh, came to meet the rebel legislators but he was not allowed. He said he wanted to tell them not to create a division in the party.

Singh claimed that he had "some contacts with Mumbai" before coming to the hotel.

Though the entry to the hotel has been restricted since June 22, when the MLAs reached Guwahati from Surat, a proper register is being maintained from Monday morning to note who is coming and who is going out.

The police have been asking the names of all before opening the gates. Their names and vehicle numbers have been written in the register. Even each hotel staff was asked about their identities before allowing to go inside.

"We are maintaining the register from today. We don't know why it has been started suddenly. We are doing what we have been told," a police official told PTI in front of the Radisson Blu hotel.

Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) Gyanendra Pratap Singh has been inside the hotel since morning, while Guwahati Police Joint Commissioner Partha Sarathi Mahanta reached there around noon.

Several other IPS officers have also been making rounds since morning.

Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) Chief Executive Officer Gyanendra Tripathi came to the hotel, while a car carry-

ing a board mentioning the chief engineer of the Water Resource Department also entered the campus. Their vehicles left the hotel after around two hours.

It is not known why these officers came to the hotel.

Windows of the vehicles were either covered with curtains or the occupants were wearing face masks, making it difficult to recognise them.

A batch of people also came in cars carrying boards saying "Lawyer, Gauhati High Court" were also spotted entering the hotel.

Shiv Sena's Manipur unit President M. Tombi Singh, along with another person, came to meet the rebels from the Western state but they were stopped at the gate.

"I have come here to talk to Eknath Shinde and tell him that Shiv Sena should remain as one party. We want the political crisis to end soon," Singh told reporters in front of the closed gate of the ho-

tel.

All the Shiv Sainiks are united under the leadership of Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and his son Aditya, he claimed.

To a question, the Manipur leader said: "I want to tell him to do a 'ghar wapsi'. The Shiv Sena should not become two different parties."

Though general people have been barred from entering the hotel for a week, senior police officials, ministers, MLAs and leaders of the ruling BJP have been visiting the hotel daily.

Besides, the crew members of several airlines that have agreements with the hotel, are being allowed inside.

A group of rebel Maharashtra Shiv Sena MLAs, led by Shinde, were taken to Surat from Mumbai on June 21 and then flown to Guwahati the next day. Shinde and his followers have rebelled against Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

Presidential polls: Oppn's candidate Yashwant Sinha files nomination

Agency
New Delhi, June 27:

Opposition Presidential polls candidate Yashwant Sinha filed his nomination at the Parliament in Delhi on Monday.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (NC) chief

Farooq Abdullah, Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leader and Telangana Minister K. T. Rama Rao, Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Abhishek Banerjee, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge were present.

TRS on Monday announced support for joint Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha in the upcoming Presidential polls.

Taking to Twitter, KTR wrote, "President of @trspartyonline Sri KCR Garu has decided to extend support to the candidature of Sri @YashwantSinha Ji in the election for President of India Along with our Members of Parliament, I will be representing the TRS at the nomination today."

Earlier on Friday, Sinha promises to raise his voice for farmers, workers, unemployed youth, women, and

all marginalized sections of society if he wins the election.

In a letter to Opposition parties on Friday, Sinha thanked them for choosing him unanimously as their common presidential candidate and assured them that he will conscientiously uphold, without fear or favour, the basic values and guiding ideals of the Constitution.

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Barah by Barah by Gaurav Madan wins Fipresci-India Grand Prix- 2021 Haobam Paban Kumar's Nine Hills One Valley stands second among top-10 films of 2021

IT News
Imphal, June 27:

Haobam Paban Kumar's second feature- *Nine Hills One Valley* (2020) which evokes the futility and barbarism of ethnic conflict through the journey of a Tangkhul man travelling to Imphal City scored the second highest mark voted by the members of the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) of India Chapter.

In a press release issued by the FIPRESCI-India today, the federation of the India Chapter declares the feature film *Barah by Barah*, Hindi 2021, 118 m directed by Gaurav Madan as the Winner of the **FIPRESCI-India Grand Prix- 2021**. Members of FIPRESCI-India have voted *Barah by Barah* as the **Best Indian Feature Film of 2021** out of the **TOP- 10 films of 2021** voted by them in prefer-

ential order. They are 01. *Barah by Barah* (Hindi) by Gaurav Madan, 02. *Nine Hills One Valley* (Manipuri/ Tangkhul) by Haobam Paban Kumar, 03. *The Road to Kuthriyar* (Tamil-English) by Bharat R. Mirle, 04. *Semkhor* (Dimas) by Aimee Baruah, 05. *The Great Indian Kitchen* (Malayalam) by Leo Baby, 06. *Joyful Mystery* (Malayalam) by Don Palathara, 07. *Manikbabur Megh* (Bengali) by Abhinandan Benerjee, 08. *Godavari* (Marathi) by Nikhil Mahajan, 09. *Pedro* (Kannada) by Natesh Hegde and 10. *Nayattu* (Malayalam) by Martin Prakkat.

Sharing the joy when the *Nine Hills One Valley* stood second among the TOP-10 films of 2021, Meghachandra Kongbam who is the member of International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI)-India and the President of Film Society of Manipur said that it

was a proud moment for Manipuri Cinema and congratulated the film maker Haobam Paban Kumar and his team. As a responsible filmmaker of the society, Paban Kumar created the film with a firm commitment to end the ethnic crisis in Manipur and to have a peaceful atmosphere for overall development of the State, he added.

Haobam Paban Kumar said, "*Nine Hills One Valley* is my personal journey about my intrinsic dilemma of being born in a place like Manipur, which is absorbed into the tapestry of the diversity of indigenous people. Here, people aspire to reach out for an elusive harmony while standing up each day for their forest and land and culture. This film was made during the distressing solitude of the Covid pandemic." He expressed his happiness to recognize his film by the learned film critics of India.

Natural disasters need a long-term planning

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



Some troubles catch us unprepared, while some natural disasters are well known to the state governments, central government, local administration, and common citizens also. Warnings are issued in advance, yet year after year natural disasters such as floods keep coming, devastating the states and its people. Assam - the largest state of Northeast India, suffers every year the tragedy of horrific rains and incessant floods. Everyone knows that there will be floods during the monsoon season. This has been happening for decades. The floods are also so severe that delivery of relief material becomes a big task for the armed forces and NDRF. Millions of people become homeless and get upset because every time their property gets ruined helplessly. Houses get submerged in the flood water, as is happening this time again in Assam and elsewhere. Floods continue to wreak havoc in 28 districts of the state of Assam, with Silchar district being the most affected, where more than one lakh people are trapped on the second or third floors of their houses, or on the roofs, as the lower floors are submerged in flood waters and are completely submerged. Moreover, thieves come stealthily in boats and flee after robbing closed shops and houses.

In Assam, the Indian Air Force is providing necessary help to citizens in flood-hit areas as part of a flood relief drive, but food packets and water bottles are running out as the demand is ever-growing. The Air Force is in need of more water bottles and food packets that are being dropped from helicopters. Relief materials are not reaching the needy people properly, who say that black marketing is at its peak in the area. There a bottle of drinking water is being sold at an exorbitant price of Rs 500 each, while a simple candle is selling at Rs 50 each. There is no electricity in the flood-affected areas in Assam, so in the dark of night, the candle becomes the support of the suffering people. When the tragedy of floods repeats itself every year, and everyone knows about it, then why not some long-term plans are worked out to combat the misery? The state government should think about it along with the central government. So that the citizens there do not have to be a victim of floods every year.

Something similar is the case with Uttarakhand, where the Char Dham Yatra is at its peak, but some flaws have been found in the all-weather road built for this journey leading to Kedarnath and other spiritual destinations in the Himalayas. Geologists and other experts opine that several water bodies were buried under the debris. Due to which water is seeping into the huge stationary rocks and reaching inside, due to which there is a danger of the rocks slipping down. Now think for yourself that the vehicles which are passing through the all-weather road, including cars, buses, and others, are in maximum danger. Rocks can fall from above at any time and major accidents can happen at any time. Experts have warned the state government about this upcoming danger. Scientists know a lot about this. It seems that everything will continue like this until some major accident happens.

For the next two-three days, the Meteorological Department has issued a high alert regarding heavy rain in Uttarakhand, as there is a possibility of rain and storm. That is why those going on Char Dham Yatra are being stopped for two-three days at least. They are being forbidden to go ahead and are being warned not to proceed on the path of Chardham Yatra. Along with Uttarakhand, an alert of heavy rain and storm has also been issued in Himachal Pradesh. The possibility of incidents like heavy rains, landslides, stone-falls, road blockades, and power outages have increased across the state. Monsoon has almost arrived in the state and it is expected that from June 27, the monsoon will be fully active in Himachal Pradesh. That's why people have been asked to be careful.

Meanwhile, in the entertainment industry of India, there were no specific rules and regulations in place regarding the presence of young children in acting and shooting projects, which caused many kids the utmost inconveniences and troubles. Children used to suffer from mental stress and anxiety. For this, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has issued a draft paper, which states that the shooting of TV programs and feature films should not make young children work for more than 27 days a day, and 20 percent of their income should be deposited in fixed deposit (FD) accounts. Minor children who are acting, participating in TV, film, or reality shows, or participating in any entertainment show and are part of shooting often miss school classes, and their studies suffer a lot. Such children should be supported in their education by employing private tutors for them.

Minor children will have to be given a safe environment at the shooting spot. Children have to be given a safe environment. They should not be put in any physical danger. Their make-up room or change room should not be shared with adult artists. Children cannot be shown to be smoking, drinking, or indulging in any crime. For those who do not follow these rules, a provision has been made for both fine and imprisonment. Also, the producers will have to take permission from the district magistrate where the shooting is to take place, to involve children in the shooting. The producers also need to submit a statement before the magistrate that the child has not been subjected to any kind of abuse or exploitation. Before the shooting starts, the producer will also have to give in writing to the district administration the full details of the precautionary steps being taken for such children.

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The Agnipath Yojana: Deify or Demonise?

By: Paojakshup Guite

In what appears to be the Bharatiya Janata Party government at the Centre to cause a tectonic political blitzkrieg(s) in each of five-year stint, it announced an all-shocking scheme called Agnipath in its second inning on June 14. The first inning (2014-2019) had witnessed a demonisation exercise in 2016. A common peculiarity about these two announcements is that they were done so without any debate in Parliament, or for that matter in a relevant Parliamentary Standing Committee.

The Agnipath scheme is envisioned for both male and female aspirants. There have since been a series of state-wide agitations for a rollback of the scheme in such states as Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan, Telanga and the like, thereby even snowballed into a nation-wide strike on June 20 spearheaded by unidentified organisations opposing the scheme.

Agnipath (literally, the Path of Fire) is a new recruitment system of Indian armed forces and is the only route to serve in the country's military. The recruits under this scheme will be known as Agniveers (Fire Warriors). The Agniveers will be recruited for ranks below commissioned officers. The non-officer Agniveers will be recruited only through Agnipath as soldiers, sailors and air men into the Army, Navy and Air Force respectively for a period of four years during which they will undergo rigorous trainings in different walks of the tri-services of the armed forces. The short-term contractual recruitment will be within the productive age group of 17.5 to 21 years (while the upper age limit has been raised to 23 years for this year only, following wide protests by young aspirants across the country). By and large, Agnipath douses the fire in the belly of the prime targets to serve the country in the line of defence. Under the scheme, the 75 % decommissioned Agniveers are deprived of pensions, health or education benefits. Same are with those 25 % who will be permanently commissioned for another 15 years - will meet the same fate post-retirement.

Fragility vs Agility
To march miles requires agility for a soldier, sailor or airman. The existing recruitment system is such that some military personnel become inactive in physique the longer he or she serves in the force. The soft and flabby nature of the redundant recruitment system is a cause for concern. This fragility of armed or non-armed personnel in the tri-services increases from bad to worse over a period of time, while also the fiscal burden eats into the exchequer (defence budget). More than

half of the total expenditures on defence goes to pensions and salaries annually with no remunerative physical fitness in sight of the personnel. The Agnipath scheme is moving in the right direction in choosing the 17.5 to 21 age group, beyond which is not trustworthy of physical fitness. Technological warfare cannot always be trotted out as an excuse to replace manual humankind. There have been enough man-to-man encounter cases across the India-China border between the two Armies.

Man and technology should work in unison to ensure a seamless and hassle-free security. This would bring about efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of the needful security of the land. However, a caveat cannot be ruled out in the case of Navy and Air force. Unlike in the Army where acquiring skills is quite relatively easier, the two forces require time to gain the requisite skills in handling both the software and hardware aspects of the two forces. Equipment such as arms and ammunition are technical in operation, that they require more time and energy to get hands-on expertise. The government could rectify this lacuna through a lateral entry which is devoted exclusively to deal with the technical aspects of the forces with a proviso of a permanent commissioning. The government can do this before the first commencement of the scheme that begins September this year.

Employment and Honour
Defence Ministry provides a dual hope to ambitious young aspirants. There are a group of young men who distinctively conceive of serving the country in the line of military. Administrations ranging from bureaucracy to diplomacy alone are not taken as a platform to serve the nation. For them to be inducted in the military is more of pride and honour, and in serving in this capacity, they even feel complacent looking no more for employment alternatives. The government justifies Agnipath: that, defence ministry is not an employment generating agency is very unfortunate. The fact is that the youth of the country see to it more as an honour in finding one's feet in the military.

No doubt, India's unemployment rate reached an all-time high in double digits. Therefore, recruitment in the armed forces not for just on contract basis would do justice in fulfilling the job promises of the Modi government. In 2014 being for the first time at the helm of Prime Ministership of the country, Narendra Modi had made many promises and one of which was

to create 20 million new jobs every year. Agnipath has the potential to fulfil this job promise of Mr. Modi, but alas not to the likings of the job aspirants! Agnipath will be recruited twice a year, which means most of the promised 20 million new jobs would then be contributed by Agnipath alone within a short period of time. This will result into what I call a cosmetic generation of jobs. In substance, jobs that generated by the scheme would be insecure ones and is there a great likelihood of counter-production: gangsters are suspected to be mushroomed up by some pessimists.

Therefore, taking the caveats into consideration, the government should spare no efforts to give employment of more secure ones to more than half of the 900 million Indians of legal working age. India should tap on the demographic dividends sooner than later.

Hire and Fire

The 4-year contract-based Agnipath is infamous of its short tenure. The unemployed youth of the country are looking for a secure and permanently commissioned job. Their long standing hope of employment is being belied by the newly introduced recruitment system of the country's armed forces. The young aspirants of the military force will turn out to be mere Agniveers for four years at worst while some to be Agniveers hardly for another fifteen years at best.

The suspicion behind the new recruitment system is of cost cutting, that is, a fiscal burden on pension and salary bills. This expenditure cutting on the tri-services of the country can be done best by creating flexible labour markets i.e., contractualisation. With this market mechanism, an employee can be freely hired and fired on the whims and fancies of the market. According to market based economists, workers can be thrown out when firms are not profitable and also bring them in when firms are profitable. This contractualisation-induced flexibility is harmful to the job prospects - no decent job can be provided - and, rather destroys the spirit of work culture.

Lacking the welfare or socialist approach of the founding fathers of Independent India, the Modi government is more inclined to market economy. In this effect, the government has initiated changes to labour laws. These changes bring about sufficient flexibility only to weaken trade unions and association formations, which otherwise they would have provided some bargaining chips for workers. Another consequence of new labour codes is the steep decline in wages between 2011-12 and 2017-18.

This deduction technique in wages is applied on the cost cutting of military forces, hence Agnipath.

The Gender Lens of Agnipath

The new recruitment system to the military forces is meant both for male and female alike of same age group. As much as it is detrimental to male aspirants so is to females. The scheme is a huge blow to the female labour force participation. Under the scheme, at least some of the Agniveer women will be back to the household chores within the four-sided walls of the house.

Stereotypical femininity is in the offing as far as protest against Agnipath is concerned. Everyone is appalled at finding not a single woman involved in both state- and nation-wide strikes for a rollback of the scheme. They were conspicuous of their total absence in the protests.

This does not mean that they have jobs, or that they are not looking for jobs. Rather, their ability to protest is limited by society. While it is the sole onus of the government to arrest the ever increasing gap of employment between male and female on one hand and the absolute female labour market participation rate on the other hand, the government has introduced a scheme like Agnipath which would allegedly lessen employment prospects of women all the more.

Skill development has become a cliché. We have enough number of educated unemployed, so producing more skilled workers is not the remedy for the malady. More emphasis has to be put in place on Output production. For this more industries, more agricultural goods and more services have to be incentivised in the economy. Labour-intensive sectors have to be ventured upon.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge cautioned the government not to play with fire. National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval warned the disgruntled youth to raise their voice but not violence. The ambitious young Indians who have been aspiring to serve the nation in the line of defence should not be disheartened. They still have a chance of 4 to 15 years to serve the country. The 75 per cent Agniveers who get decommissioned after a four-year stint in the Agnipath may be looking forward to start-ups or entrepreneurship with whatever amount of money they are exiting the Agnipath scheme.

(The writer is pursuing an MA in Media Studies at the University of Hyderabad and is currently doing his internship with the Imphal Review of Arts and Politics. He may be reached at guitapaojakshup9@gmail.com)

Selecting a Stream after Class 10

By: Kaustov Kashyap

Every student needs to know his/her choice of stream before opting for it in class 11. After class 10, selection of the right stream is the most crucial step as a student's whole future will be affected by this particular decision. Generally, students pick a course of their parents' choice or they go with the one taken by most of their friends. This happens because students are not aware of making the choice of a stream after class 10. Before selecting a stream, one needs to look at some important factors to arrive at the right choice.

Self-Awareness

This is the most important thing to be considered before deciding a stream after class 10. This involves identifying your interest, understanding your aptitude and skills. Adequate attention must be given to your interests and aptitude. For example, if you are weak in any one of the subjects - Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Biology, then you will have a tough time understanding that subject in class 11 and class

12 with Science stream. This is why a detailed strength-weakness analysis is necessary and important while choosing a stream after class 10.

Know the streams and find out details associated with them

Find out the available streams and then introspect yourself with respect to each field. Find out every minute detail about the stream like subjects, difficulty level, higher education courses and career prospects, etc. Also, list down details about professional courses that one may pursue after passing class 12 with a particular stream. Making a list of professional courses will help you get an idea about career prospects associated with that stream.

Take help of a counsellor

Approaching a counsellor is essential when you are not sure about choosing a suitable path after class 10. It is advisable for the students to attend career guidance seminars and educational fairs where the experts can assist in discovering the student's potential and aptitude and accordingly suggest the right

stream. For more clarification, a student can personally visit a career counsellor who will conduct tests to explore out a student's aptitude, interest and personality to consequently find out the stream that will best suit him.

Do not follow the crowd

This is the time when most of the students get influenced by their friends and end up taking streams that don't even match their interests or skill set. This ultimately has an adverse impact on their career prospects in the future. So before making a decision, think wisely about the factors that will motivate you throughout the course. Make sure to choose a stream that matches your own interest, potential, and ability. Do not simply follow the crowd.

Discuss with your parents & teachers

Seeking guidance from reliable people in the community is another way to go. Parents and teachers are among those experienced people who can easily judge the inner

strengths and interests of a student. Both serve as a major influence on a child's decision-making actions. So, guidance from experts and experienced people always matters. However, their decision should not be solely imposed on children while choosing a stream as often it is seen that students are made to ignore their own passion and follow parent's decision which ultimately takes student's future nowhere. So, a healthy discussion with parents or teachers and conveying about their own real happiness should not be missed out during this phase of the academic career.

Different parameters must be considered while selecting the right stream for your Senior Secondary Education. The foremost criterion is to select a stream that matches your strength. Choosing the right stream makes a significant improvement in one's career path. There is no good and bad stream and a lot of opportunities are there in every field. One just needs to take the right step for building a successful career in the future.

Assam floods death toll rises to 126, over 22 lakh people still affected

Agency
Guwahati, June 27:

At least five more people, including four children, died after drowning in the flood waters in Assam in the last 24 hours. Barpeta, Cachar, Darrang, Karimganj and Morigaon districts recorded one death each as over 22 lakh people still remain affected.

The total number of people losing their lives in this year's flood and landslides in the state has now gone up to 126. Of these, over 17 were killed in landslides.

Barpeta is the worst affected district, with nearly seven lakh people in distress, followed by Nagaon (5.13 lakh people) and Cachar (over 2.77 lakh people).

The districts affected by flood are Bajali, Baksa, Barpeta, Biswanath, Cachar, Chirang, Darrang, Dhemaji, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, Dima Hasao, Goalpara, Golaghat, Hailakandi, Hojai, Kamrup, Kamrup Metropolitan, Karbi Anglong West, Karimganj, Lakhimpur, Majuli, Morigaon, Nagaon, Nalbari, Sonitpur, South Salmara, Tamulpur and Udalguri.

Floodwaters have affected crops on 74,706 hectares across the state. What used to be green paddy fields of hope have now turned into a sea of despair.

As many as 2,17,413 people are languishing in 564 relief camps all over the state. Lost somewhere under the swelling waters, people have been forced to stay in these makeshift



camps.

The Army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and other state agencies are still continuing their rescue and relief operations though the flood waters are receding and the overall situation has shown signs of improvement in all the affected districts of the state.

However, as a matter of concern, the river Kopili continues to flow above the danger level mark in Nagaon district.

A total of 2,77,158 people remained to be affected in Cachar district, with at least 96,972 people in Silchar still suffering. Over 1.09 lakh people are still housed in 230 relief camps in the district, including 25,223 in Silchar.

Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday visited Silchar town to monitor the flood situation.

During his visit, which is the second within two days, CM Sarma inspected inundated areas including Malini Beel, Public School Road, Radhamadhab Road, Kanakpur, Rangirkhari, Sonai Road, National Highway and Tarapur and interacted with the people who have been left devastated by the calamity.

The chief minister later chaired a meeting with senior officials to review the flood situation and gave instructions for providing proper medical facilities to the people in distress. He also informed that 15-20 doctors would be sent to Silchar from Guwahati soon. CM Sarma instructed that a health camp be conducted in each and every municipal ward of the town, besides directing the health department to provide medicines to people's houses at

least for the next seven days.

The chief minister reviewed the status of electricity supply in Silchar and directed the Assam Power Distribution Company Limited (APDCL) officials to restore power supply step by step in the town. CM Sarma also asked the NDRF and SDRF personnel to continue their efforts to the best possible extent to reach various areas and rescue people stranded in flooded places.

CM Sarma also informed us that arrangements are being made to send one thousand litres of kerosene and adequate vegetables and animal medicine from Guwahati to Silchar. He also said that the boats, which are presently available with the administration, should deliver one kit containing a match box, candle, baby food and other essential items to various areas per visit.

Towards a Resilient Health System in NE

By: Ms. Purni Kalita, Dr. Joydeep Das, Dr. Ashoke Roy

The North Eastern Region of India signifies a distinct geographic, cultural, political and ecological entity. Although characterised by diverse social structures, geographical and topographical features, with a mix of hills and plains, multi-faceted ethnic and cultural heritages, this region offers unique challenges for development. Even so, an all-round development of the region remains a priority for the Government under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. Upholding the mantra 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' the Prime Minister says "I see no reason why the North East region of the country cannot develop."

This region has been struggling with poor health indicators, owing to inadequate infrastructure, limited manpower, inaccessibility, and difficult communication. With the launch of National Health Mission in 2005, a community named 'Accredited Social Health Activist' (ASHA) was introduced. When permanent solutions to the long withstanding challenges of inaccessibility were still a distant dream, ASHAs became the first port of call for the community, bridging the gap between people and the health services. The 55,000+ ASHAs in NE States have not only provided basic care to the community but also prepared people for their health rights. They did a splendid work mobilising the community during the pandemic. When the region is burdened with the load of rising non-communicable diseases like the rest of the country, ASHAs once again became an integral part of the battle. Making the community aware about such diseases and the risk behaviours, lifestyle modifications, wellness activities like yoga, mobilising the people for screening for such conditions etc. being a part of the referral and follow-up mechanism for treatment adherence of the beneficiaries are some of the worth mentioning areas where ASHAs have been putting in their efforts.

Over last eight years, the region has achieved significant advancement in creating new health paradigm. During the post-budget webinar on 'Health Sector', Hon'ble PM stated, "I have been talking about 'One Earth One Health'. With the same spirit, we must develop 'One India One Health' in India too. This mission is

also similar, i.e., the same healthcare facilities should be developed in remote areas too. We must strive to ensure that critical healthcare facilities are present at the block level, the district level as well as in the villages".

With this as a driving force, the paradigm shift is being observed in health sector in recent years in the form of additional allocation of around Rs. 1,14,323 crore exclusively for health sector under 15th Finance Commission and Pradhan Mantri Ayushman-Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) grants for strengthening HWCs, Diagnostic Services Network, Critical Care Blocks in all districts, infrastructure, and more.

Across the NE States, 16 Medical Colleges have been established till 2021 and few more are in the pipeline. Remarkable efforts have been put-in for equipping the health services with quality human resources by authorising enhanced annual intake.

Serving the community with better health care services has not been limited at developing infrastructure and engaging more doctors & nurses alone. A relief to the people also came with launch of Free Diagnostic Services Initiatives (FDSI) for both APL and BPL families with free laboratory tests, CT scan & X-ray services.

The dream of Free Dialysis Services came true with the launch of Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme (PMNDP) in 2016, and since then, nearly two lakh free hemodialysis sessions have been availed by patients in 59 districts of the region.

With the launch of Ayushman-Bharat Health & Wellness Centre (AB-HWC) on April 14, 2018, primary health care services have been brought closer to the community. Since then, many HWCs have been set up providing wide range of services, including free treatment, rehabilitate and palliative care for the elderly and terminally ill patients and various wellness activities. With the aim of providing free access to health insurance coverage for the low income earners, free secondary health care for those needing specialist treatments and tertiary health care for those requiring hospitalisation, the Ayushman-Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY) was launched by the Government. The scheme was initiated as a fight against the out-of-pocket expenditure which

pushes many below the povertyline.

In recent years, quality services have always been a priority in the public health system. Promoting cleanliness, hygiene and infection control practices in public health institutes were the aims when *Kayakalp* was launched in 2014. The State of Mizoram has been privileged to be one of the first public health institutes in the country that aims at improved delivery of quality services. To achieve the long-term goal of reducing maternal and infant death, care around birth has been identified as one of the strategic actions and a total of 15 public health institutes, 9/14 are in aspirational districts, have had its labour room and operation theatre quality certified.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the region further strengthened the health care service delivery with commissioning of new field hospitals and additional beds, new ICUs and pediatric ICUs with ventilators and strengthening the diagnostic facilities. Most of the District hospitals now have Oxygen Generation Plants which were not there earlier. Rapid training of frontline workers including ASHAs and building partnerships with local leaders, community engagement helped a great extent.

Over last few years the public health services have undergone tremendous reform and have been brought closer to the community. This is evident in the region as it achieved significant breakthroughs, a few to mention - decreasing trend in maternal deaths (Assam) and infant deaths - four states (Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim) out of eight NE states are having single digit Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), increased institutional deliveries, improved family planning services, prevention and management of seasonal diseases etc.

North-East is diverse, so are its challenges. Behind the picturesque beauty there exist numerous barriers to development. Nonetheless, constant progresses made over the years testify that sincere efforts and commitment can make public health care services better for the community. With such remarkable changes at the grassroots, this region is witnessing the dream of a resilient health system coming true in near future, upholding the mantra 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' in true sense.

India records 17,073 fresh Covid-19 cases & 21 deaths in last 24 hours

Agency
New Delhi, June 27:

A total of 17,073 fresh Covid-19 cases were recorded in India in the last 24 hours, which is 45.4% higher than the previous day with a daily positivity rate of 5.62%. The death toll reached 5,25,020 with 21 deaths reported in the last 24 hours. The active caseload now stands at 94,420. The number of total recoveries in the last 24 hours was reported to be 15,208 increasing the total recoveries to 4,27,87,606. The recovery rate currently stands at 98.57%.

Notably, the majority of the fresh Covid cases were reported from Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh with 80.87 % of the total cases coming from these states. Around 38.03 of the cases were reported in Maharashtra itself.

A total of 3,03,604 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours bringing the total test tally to 86,10 cr. The National Vaccination Drive has administered 197.11 cr vaccine so far. Last week, the Lancet Infectious Diseases journal noted in a study that the Covid-19 vac-

ination drive in India prevented over 42 lakh deaths in the country in 2021.

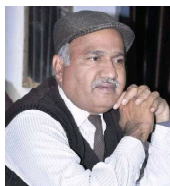
"Across 185 countries and territories, 31.4 million COVID-19-related deaths would have occurred during this timeframe in the absence of COVID-19 vaccination. About 19.8 million deaths were averted by COVID-19 vaccination," said the study, reported news agency ANI.

"Consequently, the number of lives saved by COVID-19 vaccination markedly exceeded the death toll that has occurred. Nonetheless, even more, lives could have been

saved by improving the equitability of vaccination coverage worldwide. Specifically, an estimated 156,900 additional deaths would have been averted if the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) Facility's vaccination target of 20 per cent (for each Advance Market Commitment country) had been attained, and an estimated 599,300 additional deaths would have been averted if WHO's 2021 COVID-19 vaccination target of 40 per cent (for each country) had been attained," the study stated further.

Career Guidance

Increasing trend of students towards Mathematics through Mathematical fairs



By: Vijay Garg

The word 'fair' in Punjabi culture has its own significance. The fair encourages a sense of happiness, excitement and something. The fair, especially for gentle babies taking knowledge of directly and indirectly, is very well aware of some important facts and makes the mind calm. School students have often heard of fair fairs, Baisakhi fairs, science

fairs and have never seen it. But the students of mathematical festivals think differently in a different mood that the mathematical festivals will happen, actually reducing the undeclared scars of the student towards the mathematical fair. According to common belief, learning and teaching mathematics is considered difficult. Mathematical experts believe that connecting mathematics with daily life and using cleverness, understanding the basic concepts of mathematics and repeating them can yield good results for understanding mathematics. In order to teach mathematics, the teacher often uses mathematical calculations, grids, various figures, examples of daily living, to teach mathematical cal-

culations in his class. By looking at, many brilliant students also find new ways to understand the facts of mathematics and enjoy explaining other students.

As a result students are understood by the group we know with peer learning. The Department of Education, the students' mathematical fair is an attempt. In which the students will enjoy their resolved mathematical concepts by showing their own experiences with their own efforts in their own language, and directly or indirectly to their fellow students who need to understand the mathematical concepts. Teach them Mathematical fair will be an exciting way of explaining analytical form to the students of the school, explain-

ing the reasoning topic, the reasoning in a consistent way, and explaining how to combine mathematics in daily life. Let's make a success of this effort by all the students, math students, maths & science teachers, learners, officers, fair attendants, and make this effort of the education department's success and the mood of the student's gentle mind and fear of mathematics Count it. In the fair, brain exercise puzzles, where concepts of mathematics are hidden, discussion of the works of great mathematicians will prove to be effective in increasing the trend towards students' mathematics. To give practical information about students easily through mathematical subjects, The fair will prove effective.

Post-poll violence rocks Tripura, Section 144 imposed in Agartala

Agency
Agartala, June 27:

Sporadic incidents of violence rocked Tripura after the results of by-elections in four assembly constituencies were declared on Sunday.

Several Congress party offices were ransacked and later set on fire while leaders and workers of the opposition parties remained at the receiving end of the violence unleashed by a section of miscreants believed to have allegiance to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party. Two Congress party of-

fices were ransacked by unidentified miscreants at Belonia under South Tripura and Khowai district. The attacks

took place shortly after the violent face-off between Congress and BJP supporters at Agartala.

Passport Lost

My passport which was already stamped for visa has been lost by the Bluebird delivery person on 24th June 2022. My details are below:

Passport number: N3482123

Passport holder name: Lourembam Richmona Devi residing at Singamei Thongam Leikai, Imphal West, Manipur. If anyone found it, please return it to the above mentioned address as well as on the phone number: 9986838052 or 08794164468.

Sd/-
Lourembam Richmona Devi

“National Highway Excellence Awards” 2021

PIB
New Delhi, June 27:

With a view to strengthen and augment the road infrastructure in the country, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) initiated “National Highway Excellence Awards”(NHEA) in 2018 in order to incentivize stakeholders in the highway construction and maintenance process and to create a spirit of healthy competitiveness amongst them.

The idea is to recognize and award companies for the best-performing road assets and toll plazas across the country. Acknowledging companies which are performing exceptionally and delivering the finest quality services during construction, operations & maintenance, innovation, greenery, tolling stages of highway development as well as in the arena of road safety. The aim of the award is to create world-class road infrastructure, highways, toll plazas, expressways, bridges, tunnels every day through new and innovative construction processes along with a strong focus on environmental sustainability and cleanliness factors.

The awards are designed across multiple categories. It identifies players which have adhered to construction and operational guidelines, upheld high quality and safety standards, and employed innovation and sustainable practices in their work. Detailed, category-specific evaluation frameworks have been developed for this purpose. The companies nominate themselves on an online portal <https://bhoomirashi.gov.in/awards> by uploading the project information and documents specific to the award category. The first round is Desktop Assessment (DA), wherein the validity and propriety of the submitted data are verified and evaluated by a 4-sub rounds of quality check by trained officials. This is fol-

lowed by second round of assessment - Field Assessment of the shortlisted projects for verifying the claims made during the DA. In the third round, an expert jury panel reviews the shortlisted projects and identifies the winners after detailed deliberations.

In the first award cycle in 2018, a total of 107 nominations were received across 5 categories (Excellence in Construction Management, Excellence in Operation and Maintenance, Excellence in Highway Safety, Excellence in Toll Plaza Management and Innovation). The final 11 winners were facilitated by the RTH Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari on 8 January 2019.

In the second award cycle in 2019, two new categories were introduced - Green Highways and Outstanding Work in Challenging Conditions. As many as 104 nominations were received across 7 categories. The final 12 winners were facilitated by the RTH Minister on 14 January 2020.

A total of 157 nominations were received in 2020 across all categories, and one additional special award category, Bridge & Tunnel, was added to the pool of categories from 2019. Union Ministers Shri Rajnath Singh and Shri Nitin Gadkari felicitated the final winners at an award ceremony, held at Vigyan Bhavan, on 18 January 2021.

This year, the Ministry is organizing the award ceremony on June 28. The Awards will be conferred in the presence of Union Minister, Shri Nitin Gadkari to honor the companies/stakeholders for the best performing road assets & toll plazas across the country. For the 4th award cycle, two new categories of Bridge Construction and Tunnel Construction were introduced. For the 2021 cycle of awards, the categories are as follows:

• **Excellence in Project Management:** Acknowledges efficient execution of all-project milestones, with timely achievement,

balanced budgetary, and no compromise to quality standards with two subcategories based on the mode of implementation of the Project- EPC & PPP

• **Excellence in Highway Safety:** Focuses on efforts taken to reduce road casualties, and establish preventive measures and emergency response services with two subcategories based on the mode of implementation of the Project- Hilly & Plain Terrain.

• **Excellence in Operation and Maintenance:** Recognizes projects with the swift and smooth execution of repair works, periodic inspections, maintenance of special structures, unparalleled quality in riding experience, and perfect smoothness of pavements. On the basis of pavement type, there are two categories- Rigid and Flexible Pavement.

• **Excellence in Toll Management:** Focuses on the efficient management of traffic and services at the toll.

• **Innovation:** Focuses on significant achievement in devising or adopting a new construction technology or structural and geometric design.

• **Green Highway:** Focuses on exemplary efforts for innovative practices adopted to protect or enhance the natural environment and/or minimize the effect of project development.

• **Outstanding Work in Challenging Condition:** Acknowledges the efforts of the concessionaire/contractor who has worked in a challenging environment.

• **Bridge Construction:** Recognizes if any unique measures are undertaken for infrastructural development about quality and safety enhancement, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness.

• **Tunnel Construction:** Focuses on projects that devised or adapted a unique technology or design in construction that enhances the quality, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, safety, and/or efficiency of the project.

PM Modi to discuss important global issues with world leaders at G7 Summit



Agency
Elmau (Germany), June 27 :

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the G7 Summit here in Germany in which leaders of the world's seven richest countries will discuss various important global issues,

including the Russian invasion of Ukraine, food security and counter-terrorism.

Prime Minister Modi, who is in Germany on a two-day visit from Sunday for the summit of the G7, will exchange views with the leaders of the bloc and its partners on issues

such as energy, food security, counter-terrorism, environment and democracy.

“I will be attending the G-7 Summit today in which we will discuss various important global issues,” he said on Twitter.

The Group of Seven (G7)

is an inter-governmental political grouping consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US.

The leaders of the world's seven richest countries are expected to focus on the Ukraine crisis that has triggered geopolitical turmoil besides fueling a global food and energy crisis.

Modi is attending the G7 summit held in the Alpine castle of Schloss Elmau in southern Germany following an invitation by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The summit is being hosted by Germany in its capacity as the chair of G7.

In his remarks ahead of his departure, Modi said he was looking forward to meeting leaders of some of the participating G7 and guest countries on the sidelines of the summit.

Besides India, Germany, the host of the G7 Summit, has also invited Argentina, Indonesia, Senegal and South Africa as guests for the summit to recognise the democracies of the global south as its partners.

Contd. from Page 1

Presidential polls: Oppn's candidate Yashwant...

“I am overwhelmed with feelings of gratitude towards you and leaders of all the Opposition parties for choosing me unanimously as your common candidate to contest the Presidential Election, to be held on July 18, 2022. I thank you for the trust and confidence they have reposed in me. I assure you — and the People of India — that, if elected, I shall conscientiously uphold, without fear or favour, the basic values and guiding ideals of the Indian Constitution. In particular, as the Custodian of the Constitution, I shall not allow the light of democracy and secularism to be dimmed by the executive,” Sinha said in a letter. On June 21, Sinha was



named as the common candidate of the Opposition for the Presidential elections.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh had made the announcement of his name as the

presidential candidate of the opposition during a meeting.

The announcement comes shortly after Sinha hinted that he has accepted the proposal made by a section of Opposition leaders to make him their presidential candidate.

Sinha, who had quit the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2018, joined the TMC last year. He was later appointed as the party's vice-president.

NDA presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu filed her nomination for the election on June 24.

The election for the office of the President of India is scheduled for July 18 and the counting of votes, if needed, will be done on July 21.

Sports

I will compete with myself at CWG and strive to better my world record: Mirabai Chanu

Courtesy: Indian Express
Birmingham, June 27:

It won't be surprising if diminutive Mirabai Chanu, stands atop the podium, flashing her radiant smile, after winning a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games on July 30.

After all, she will enter Birmingham, as title favourite. Chanu's personal best is 207kg (88kg+119kg) which is far better than the best effort of Nigeria's Stella Kingsley, who will be her nearest rival and has managed only 168kg (72kg+96kg) till date.

Chanu's legend has only grown since the last edition of the CWG. She has added an Olympic silver, an Asian Championship bronze and a world record to her kitty. It is not baffling when she avowed that she herself will be her real competition in Birmingham and not her rivals. “CWG will be easy for me. I will be fighting with myself,” Chanu, who already has a silver (2014) and a gold (2018) at CWG asserts politely.

“There is not much competition in CWG, but that doesn't

man there is no competition. I have to give my best performance keeping in mind the future tournaments,” she said during a candid chat at Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports (NIS).

Since there won't be competition, Chanu has bigger targets in mind. She is eager to rewrite her own clean and jerk world record of 119kg.

“I am thinking of attempting 120kg in the CWG.” The former world champion also wants to breach the much-anticipated 90kg mark in the snatch section, which she confesses has become somewhat of a mental block.

“Yes (it has become a mental block). We have planned to lift 91kg or 92kg at the CWG. Hopefully, it will happen.” But lifting close to twice your body weight is easier said than done specially when Chanu still struggles with a shoulder imbalance.

Earlier this month, she failed to improve her snatch lift, unable to hoist 89kg twice at a domestic event due to her back. “My back became stiff



(tight) 2-3 days before going. The journey to Nagrota was also five hours. We went from Patiala to Chandigarh a day before the tournament, then took a flight from Chandigarh, which was also late. So the back became more tight.” Aware of her weakness in snatch, Chanu has worked on tweaking her technique.

“I haven't gone above 88kg. That is the weight I have set. But training wise right now I am

better placed than I was at the Olympics.

“To lift 90kg in a competition, we set the weight between 80-90kg which we lift consistently everyday. It's not like we lift 90kg everyday,” she explains.

Her personal best of 88kg is 8kg less than Tokyo gold medalist China's Hou Zhihui's world record lift of 96kg.

“I have changed my snatch technique. In snatch, while rising, the toes, back and shoulder

should be in a line. Back and shoulders are very important they need to move fast. Earlier my movement was not synchronised. Now I have changed it.” Chanu conceded that she feels compelled to compensate her frailty in snatch by lifting more in clean and jerk.

“Yes, I feel if not one, then in the other I have to improve. To reach 96kg, it will take some time and it will be a little difficult for me.

“93kg-94kg I can reach. If I perform well in clean and jerk I can get the same total (as the Chinese) or even more.”

Will wear my Olympic earrings at CWG

Chanu, who will be vying for her third CWG medal, will once again be wearing her gold earrings shaped like Olympic rings, which had stolen the show at the Tokyo Games.

The earrings were a gift from her mother, who had sold her own jewellery ahead of the Rio Games, in hope that it would bring her daughter luck. And luck it brought. “I will wear those earrings at the Commonwealth Games. They brought me luck in Tokyo,” Chanu said with an ear to ear grin.

Up and downs in Life

After she won the silver at Tokyo Games, in a heart-warming gesture Chanu felicitated the truck drivers who used to give her free rides till her training academy in Imphal, which was about 30km away from her village.

“I found all the truck drivers and because of Corona they were all sitting at home,” Chanu

reminded.

“They were really happy. I saw them and I thought of those days when they used to keep blowing their truck horns and I would run to get a lift. When I reflect, I remember all the difficulties I had to go through to reach here. But what to do, life is a cycle, kabhi upar kabhi neeche.”

Eagerly waiting for Asian Games

The Asian Games now remains the only big ticket-event where Chanu is yet stamp her authority.

Chanu had missed the last edition due to a back injury. And the wait for a medal at the continental event has increased as this year's Asiad has been postponed indefinitely.

“Asian Games is the only medal left. Now I want that.” “On the one hand, it's good that it has been postponed. On the other hand it will now be held closer to the Olympics. I have got time for training. But now it will be held alongside other Olympic qualifiers which means I will have to be in competition through out that period.”