

SC directs review of vaccine mandates, say nobody can be forced to be vaccinated

Courtesy: HT
New Delhi, April 2:

Nobody can be forced to be vaccinated, the Supreme Court said on Monday and directed public and private institutions to review their vaccine mandates restricting unvaccinated people. "No individual can be forced to be vaccinated. Bodily integrity is protected under Article 21 of the Constitution," said a bench of justices L. Nageswara Rao and BR Gavai. Jacob Pulayil, a former member of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation, moved the court against the vaccine mandates restricting access of unvaccinated people to public places, services and essential commodities. He also sought disclosure of vaccine

trial data findings and adverse effects of vaccination. Pulayil claimed that without knowing the efficacy of the vaccines, citizens, especially children, cannot be vaccinated.

The court said the vaccine mandates were "not proportional". "We suggest that all authorities, including private and educational authorities, should review the orders to restrict unvaccinated persons if not already recalled."

The court clarified its order is restricted to Pulayil's petition and does not cover mandates for Covid-appropriate behaviour. It added the direction will not stop governments from issuing directions for control of the pandemic.

The court said no data has been provided by the Centre to controvert the material placed by the petitioner, which



indicates the risk of transmission by the unvaccinated is at par with the vaccinated. It upheld the vaccination policy rolled out by the Centre for the public including children. The court said an individual has the right to refuse to undergo medical treatment. "...in the interest of protection of communitarian health, certain restrictions can be imposed on individual rights. However, it has to meet the three-fold test as laid down by us in the K. Puttuswamy case [2017] on right to privacy which includes legality...legitimate state aim and proportionality."

The bench cited the material placed before the court and said the vaccination policy can-

not be said to be unreasonable. It referred to the vaccination for children and added: "We cannot second guess the opinion of experts as the vaccination follows the global practices."

The court directed the Centre to maintain transparency in sharing findings and reports on approved vaccines. It suggested a virtual platform for sharing information on adverse effects due to vaccination with due regard to the right to privacy.

The bench said information on adverse effects is crucial to understanding the efficacy of vaccines. "...publish reports on adverse events of vaccines from public and doctors on a publicly accessible system without compromising with the privacy of citizens," said the bench.

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Guv', MPCC and many others greet on Eid-ul-Fitr

IT News
Imphal, May 2:

On this joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, Manipur Governor La. Ganasan, greeted the people of Manipur. Governor said, "Preceded by 'Ramadan' a month long fasting period, this Holy Festival not only spreads the message of peace, brotherhood and universal love also entreats mankind to perform deeds of positive value to enhance our souls. The message associated with this festival is most relevant in the present tumultuous world".

He also added that, "while celebrating festivals like Id-ul-Fitr, let us strengthen the feeling of oneness and any ill-will which may be there, should be either forgotten or forgiven. Let us also remember that we human beings inhabit only one planet and the whole world is but a single family and any strife need to be settled through peaceful means. On this auspicious occasion, as beneficiaries of the showers of love of God, let us all resolve to work together to preserve and propagation the message of peace, friendship and love".

Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee also greeted the Muslim Brothers and Sisters of Manipur on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In the release, the Committee further state that the festival followed the month long fasting period and prayed for the festival to bring peace and prosperity in the state.

The All India Tanzeem-E-Insaf (AITI) Manipur State Committee also extended greetings to the followers of Islam and the people of Manipur, hoping that the occasion would further the spirit of brotherhood among the people of Manipur.

According to the press releases, AITI wanted the Meetei Pangal community to join hands with other communities in Manipur on this sacred occasion in order to bring peace, harmony, and prosperity to the state.

Nirupa Sanjenbam recognized as a Woman Achiever

IT News
Imphal, May 2:

During the North-East festival organized in Agartala as part of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, Nirupa Sanjenbam from Manipur was recognized as a Woman Achiever. The theme of the event was "Role of women in the development of North East."

The event was attended by key dignitaries including Harpreet Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, Government of India, Air Marshal Anjan Kumar Gogoi, Honourable Member, North Eastern Council, and Jishnu Dev Varma, Honourable Deputy Chief Minister, Government of Tripura. Nirupa Sanjenbam is a graduate of Calcutta University and completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship and Foreign Trade from Manipur University in 2021. She was nominated from the state by the



Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur.

In her role as a Project Coordinator for the MaoKeki Foundation, supported by partners such as the Agri Entrepreneur Growth Foundation, Anaha Trust, NABARD and Sattva, Nirupa Sanjenbam has been championing the development of farmers and Agri Entre-

preneurs in various districts of Manipur. Most prominent of these is the Veg-in-aBasket agribusiness which acted as a lifeline for thousands of Imphalites by delivering farm-fresh vegetables to many stuck at home during the Covid lockdowns. Recently, she has also been instrumental in the launch of Pukkei

Agribusiness which provides machinery rental services and locally made high quality compost to Manipuri farmers. Another initiative currently being piloted under Nirupa Sanjenbam's leadership is the Noney Banana Company that aims to improve banana productivity and explore the use of banana fibre for handicraft and handloom products.

Please join us in congratulating Nirupa Sanjenbam for this recognition and wish her continued success. It is the drive, energy and commitment of women like her that is instrumental in the development of Manipur and the North-East.

MaoKeki Foundation is a pioneering organization established with the purpose of catalysing positive development in Manipur, India, primarily in the areas of agriculture, education and healthcare. It is registered under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, and more information can be found at <http://www.maokeki.org>.

Justice for killing of Loushambam Rabichandra Singh: Charter of demands submitted

IT News
Imphal, May 2:

Join Action Committee formed Against the Killing of Loushambam Rabichandra Singh continue to stage protest demanding justice for the victim.

Late, Loushambam Rabichandra Singh (28 yrs) S/o L. Ibobi Singh of Nongpok Sanjenbam Khullen, Imphal East District was a fish farm labourer working for oe Longiam Jackson @ Sanjit (28 yrs) s/o L. Kumar Singh of Hiyanglam Makha Leikai, Kakching District. They were staying at a Farm House of the said Fishery Farm since December 2020.

A statement by the Joint Action Committee said that on

24th April 2022, at about 10.00 a.m. Jackson informed to the sister of L. Rabichandra Singh through cell phone stating that Rabichandra was hospitalised at JNIMS due to beaten by unknown persons and deceased was discharged from the hospital on the same day and backed to the Farm.

On 25 April 2022, about 9.30 a.m. Jackson dropped the deceased to his home with multiples injuries and immediately, the parent brought the deceased to the RIMS Hospital. But the Doctors of RIMS told that the injury was serious and thereby conducted an operation/surgery for saving the life of the deceased. However, L. Rabichandra was death on 26th April, 2022 at the

ICU because of the grievous injuries.

On 26 April 2022, the father of L. Rabichandra namely L. Ibobi filed complaint to the Lamlai Police Station against the Longiam Jackson @ Sanjit and others on the grounds of suspicion that the deceased would be beaten up by Jackson and his men.

On the same day, Jackson was arrested by the police under FIR No.27(4)/2022,LLI-Psw u/s 325/302/34 IPC and it is revealed from the under FIR No.27(4)/2022,LLI-Psw u/s 325/302/34 IPC and it is revealed from the interrogation that L. Rabichandra Singh was murdered by L. Jackson @ Sanjit and his men. On 29th April, 2022, the death body of L.

Rabichandra has been post-mortem at JNIMS, Porompat and in this connection, the family of the deceased has been also charged a sum of Rs. 4000/- for video recording and Rs.3500/- for preservation of death body.

Join Action Committee Against the Killing of Loushambam Rabichandra Singh demands arrest all the culprits/accused persons who were involved in the murder of L. Rabichandra Singh. The JAC also demand to file charge sheet within a stipulated time so that those accused cannot escape on bail.

A memorandum in the connection has also been submitted to the Chief Minister of Manipur.

The Editorial May Day- the day of the working class people

People across the world - Left, Right or Central ideologue groups - all observed the May Day. The only differences is that - there is a clear distinction on how the left wing group observed the day when compares with the way that the Right Wing group observed. The observance of May Day in different parts of the World too varies. In India, people in heartland states observed the day announcing better livelihood for the labour community. But when it comes to the state of Manipur among others, many people observed the day crying for justice of the working class people where their rights have been deprived.

The left leaned civil bodies, on the other hand observed the day with anti fascist agenda demanding justice and equality for the working class people.

On the other hand the state government celebrates the May Day as a grand function by promising welfare scheme for the workers.

When one recalled the origin of observing May Day, it is known to everyone that, the exploitation of the labour community by capitalist regime that prompted the uprising of the labour community in Western countries in 1886 is the root for observing the day. The demand for limited working hours was the demand that time. But as time changes the kind of exploitations faced by the labourers are multiple these days. And definitely 'May Day' is known as the day that the problem being faced by the labourer is being discussed and highlighted.

It is known fact that working class people in India particularly the farmers are facing various problems due to aggression by the fascist regime.

On the other hand, we often notice the working people being suppressed by capitalist class from time to time through various draconian laws. As for the working class people of Manipur and other NE states, it is the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) that have been suppressing the people, while in case of the states like West Bengal, Chhatisgarh, Telangana etc. the was that the lower class people are being suppressed and explore the use of banana fibre for handicraft and handloom products.

In general the kind of exploitation to lower working class group by capitalist group is same in all the country across the globe. In the state of Manipur when one ponder on how the capitalist groups are using the lower class people should be understand by all.

First this capitalist group looted the working class people, then they make them hungry and later they feed them so that the working class people become their slaves. The truth is that they are making these groups as slave with things of their own.

The constructing big dams, exploration natural gas, etc. are not good signed for improvement of the working class people.

It is time that people of the state make meaningful observance of the May Day.

May Day observation across the Manipur



IT News
Imphal, May 2:

Various Organizations observed May day at different places of Manipur yesterday. R.K Meghan, former Chairman of the UNLF, attending the May Day observance at Heirangoithong Maibam Leikai at 3:00 p.m. yesterday recalled the origin of May Day and elaborated its relevance with the present day Manipur.

The observance was organised by Star Volunteers Corps. L.Pulchand, Vice

President of Star Volunteers Corps, presided over the observance.

Manipur keithel Phambi Apunba Lup along with Lamphel Super market Coordinating Committee also observed May Day at Lamphel super market Complex, Lamphalpat yesterday at 1:00 pm.

The MKPAL secretary, Laishram Mema, led the observance, and Municipality Co-operation Councillors were the main speakers at the function.

Connecting deep with nature, beauty, spirituality

Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



A lot has changed in the world in the last 25 months. Perhaps the universal powers have been busy in shifting the age-old trends and making corrections in the earthly

plans. Speed has been curtailed, understanding of living in harmony with nature has been growing, and spirituality has been finding more hearts and minds, particularly among the younger generation. Similarly, there has been a change in the thinking about beauty and outward appearance. Globally, cosmetics sales plummeted during the pandemic. During this period, most women worked from home and kept wearing masks, due to which they did not need to do makeup. One of the effects of this change was that women realized their natural beauty better and cut down on make-up, which has affected the business of cosmetics brands around the world. Consumer affairs research firm Kantar surveyed three lakh women in its study. Sales of women's beauty products in the UK are down by 19 percent compared to 2019. Even sales of cosmetics in departmental stores dropped by 40 percent.

Sales of beauty and fragrance cosmetics plummeted during the pandemic. Instead, women focused more on skin, hair and bath accessories. Due to wearing masks for two years, there has been a change in habits, which has caused huge losses to the cosmetics companies. In a way, work from home proved to be harmful for these companies. A shocking survey also came out about the fact that engineering students have negligible interest in sports. Sports and gym are not even mentioned in the top 10 hobbies of these students. Stanford University of USA conducted a survey of hobbies of students from 167 technical institutes in US, China, Russia and India, in which startling facts about engineering students came to the fore. A similar survey was also conducted by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). About 90 thousand students took part in it. The first three hobbies included learning something new, reading and watching online documentary films.

Meanwhile, it was found that 69 crore people in the country are connected to the Ayushman Bharat scheme. 26 crore people have taken some health insurance scheme on their own. That is, 70 percent of the citizens of the country are part of some health insurance scheme, the remaining 30 percent of the population, that is, about 40 crore people are not yet part of any health insurance. The central government also wants to connect these 40 crore Indians with the Ayushman scheme. The National Health Authority and NITI Aayog have prepared its draft. To take advantage of the scheme, each of these individuals will have to pay an annual premium of Rs 250 to 300, in return for which each of them will be able to get free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh in a year. This will also include the facility of being treated in a private ward. This facility is not available in the current Ayushman scheme. The new scheme may be implemented in the next few months. Under the Ayushman scheme, treatment can be done in any hospital associated with the government scheme. Even medical facilities can be used in other states also.

Mercury Rising

By: Vijay GarG

India has been in the grip of what seems like an eternity of heatwaves. April temperatures over north-west and central India are the highest in 122 years. During April 1 to 28, the average monthly maximum temperature over north-west India was 35.9° Celsius and the same over central India was 37.78° C. These averages belie measurements at the district and sub-divisional level where several parts of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, and Maharashtra have seen temperatures inch towards the mid-40s and breach normals. There is little respite expected in May, which is anyway the hottest month, though the India Meteorological Department (IMD) says that while north and west India will continue to sizzle on expected lines, and must likely brace for more heatwaves, the rest of the country is unlikely to see the levels of March and April. A heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature is over 40° C

and at least 4.5 notches above normal. A severe heatwave is declared if the departure from normal temperature is more than 6.4° C, according to the IMD. The proximate causes for the searing heat are an absence of rain-bearing Western Disturbances, or tropical storms that bring rain from the Mediterranean over north India. Cool temperatures in the central Pacific, or a La Niña, that normally aid rain in India, too have failed to bolster rainfall this year. This is an unusual occurrence.

Despite five Western Disturbances forming in April, none was strong enough to bring significant rain and depress temperatures. The IMD has forecast a 'normal' monsoon or 99% of the Long Period Average (LPA) of 87 cm and is expected to forecast the monsoon's arrival over Kerala later in May. On the surface, there is no direct bearing between the intensity of heatwaves and the arrival and performance of the monsoon. In fact, even as northern India baked for want of rain, April saw monthly rainfall break a four-year record with high rainfall in several parts of southern and north-eastern India. May too is expected to see 9% more rain over India than is usual for the month, though it must be kept in mind that base rainfall is so low in this month that it is unlikely to make a mark. While individual weather events cannot be linked to greenhouse gas levels, a warming globe means increased instances of extreme rain events and extended rain-less spells. What is better known is it helps to have disaster management plans in place that help States better deal with heatwaves and their impact on health. The official toll due to heatwaves in the last 50 years is put at over 17,000 people, according to research from the IMD. The heat island effect means urbanisation adds degrees to the already searing conditions; and so, heatwave deaths must be treated as a disaster that merits compensation. Private and public workplaces too must be better equipped to factor heatwave risk.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

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Lashing

From the compilation 'Khunung Eshei Nachom "by Lourembam Bedabati, this ballad "Lashing" is an ode to the cotton flower

Translated in English by: Dr. Aheibam Koireng

Resilient and yet so beautiful, these blossoms survived in the rocks and unfailingly accompanied humans from the cradle to the grave. In its journey as a life companion, this cotton flower as a cloth and held the newborn in its embrace when the baby takes the first breath of 'earth-air'. When in its youth, the same flower gave work to the human hands and livelihood. A gift of exchange between the dwellers of hills and vales, this flower facilitated the bond of brotherhood and sisterhood in the land of the past and at the end, on the final journey to the land of eternal life, yet again the flower provided cover to the body. A call to the youth to save this precious life companion from extinction as a climax to this 'flower-ballad' makes it ever more relevant in the present when the world realizes how cotton cloth is the true life companion when artificial fibers prove toxic and harmful in every way both to the body and soil. Human imagination could only delight at the prospect of a flourishing livelihood means if only we make an effort to make the flower to fill the hills and the vales again.

Chingdai Pakhuli haa Mendo

Ningthou

Into his rocky land wedded the flower

The Maring youth skilled at farming

Spade in hand

Did sow the flower

When on the fifth day

The flower had perished not

But had instead germinated.

And when the flower did bloom

The petals began unfurling

The Maring youth skilled juhm

farmer

The farming-knife in hand

Did cut the bamboo hastily into

shivers

Soft and good looking they were

soon woven into baskets

The flower that became of

Nongbaan's tongue tip

Up to the brim it was filled

And to the rhythmic steps

'heichi'

Sold it at Meidingol/Keithel.

When as an infant the Earth-air

was first felt the flower did embrace

to nurture

And along with the smoke of

death

Did journey to the spirit-world

the human body it shrouded

It is the flower that accompanied

the human till the realm of the

guardsmen of Death.

When hundred damsels die

Hundred lads are awaited

When hundred lads die

Hundred damsels are awaited

When life soars up the heights

in flames

The white clothes did canopy

The lifeless human body

When put up on the fire

Together in flames when the

body catches fire

When the human

Stepped into the world

It was this flower that accompa-

nied

Haada flower beloved

Oh blossoms, you are adored!

The name of the flower,

Tender and delicate, I will call

you 'Lashing'

When settlement began

Civilization started

Stories of days long gone

When fathers and fore father

started to migrate

The flower did accompany

The name of the flower

Sung in echoes blossoming on

the mountains, the cotton flower

Glowing in the golden land of

Poirei,

The flower that partook in 'cre-

ation'

Up to the land of death did accom-

pany

Glowing in the land of Poirei this

flower

Befriending gift between dwell-

ers of hills and vales, this flower

The fame gone far and wide, this

flower

Befriending gift of hills and

vales, this flower

Tender cotton oh beloved flower

Would be lost, precious flower

Oh young men and women hear

you,

Come let's save this 'awakening

flower'

Would surely extinct this 'pre-

cious flower'

Oh flower wedded to the central

PayangPadaivillage .

More delicate than the lush juhm

fields of my fatherland Tangkhul.

Copper colour you resemble

The petals when looked upon

Cock's feet you resemble

At the forefront beloved

Of the world you thought of

shining

Fair lass of Heigang

Pretty lass of Lamgang

Daughter of Anaan Naanphon

she is

As rare as the melei orchid

The lass of the Heigang

Lamgang

The lass of Anaan Naanphou

Hanging on her back in the

hillsmen baskets

Did reach the golden market

Your glorious name

A human I am, I sing of you

Lasing

Chingdai Paakhulihaa Mendo

Ningthou

Nungairaktabuongi lei

Maringnahaa Pam heiba

Yotlenkhtupai

Malenleikantou

Leiraangi khongul leerubdi

Singelsumitollamide

Leiraangtounoudumhullami

Leiraangnaleisattamlakpa

Singelnamakafallakpa

Maringnahaa Pam heiba

Kamthithangjokhtupai

Khongyanwaabutanasai

Leihoukhongdranamiba

Nongbaan tangia leiton aonbi lei

Leiraang ipomai sijille

'Hei-Hei' khongthangda

Meidingol keitheldai yollare

Taibang malang faobadana

owoklei

Thambal meikhu kuhualam

yaikaithin tam

Khamnung maikiei paangbada

namuku maikuptuna

Haathouggaak masaigon

paangminababu leinida.

Nura chaamana siraga

Paakhang chaamana ngainaching
Paakhang chaamana siraga
Nura chaamana ngainaching
Tha waikhong kachulwaibada
Korou phingou thaktak haan
Thawai yaodraba hakchaagna
Khambi meithakta thambada
Meiriga meiwaiminabada
Namu taibanga maalemda
Kongdarakpa matamda
Loinaraklaba singelnida

Haada leirang leinungshi
Singel nungbu nunshiei
Leirang koloi maminge
Sinou lashing kougeko

Poirei khundaraklaba
Taibang khulgunglaklaba
Meina waitaangnasam
Pathaang Phutaang

khunthokgeidagi
Loinaraklaba leirang
Singel maagi koloiabu
Khonthang yeina saknari
Chingda saatpi lasinglei
Poirei sana ngaanalei
Taibang leise myoanalei
Amang tharei loinallei
Poirei saana ngaanalei
Chingam chaana khudolei
Mingchat maiyong yaanalei
Ching tamchaana khudolei

Sinou lasing nungilei
Maangkhiba tare pamulei
Saabisanoukanna lei
Kansilaogaba yakailei
Mangkrabadine lasing lei
Maangba soidre pamulei
Payanga padai khullen
yaidangbi lei
Taangkhol epaam paamnoubu
henna nouna

Ngaanabisingel louwutaabadi
Kori chinbumaanbi lei
Leirang leina taabadi
Kairei yengkhang maanbi lei
Mairong thaabalei nungshi
Taibang ngaangebu khallik

Heingnang chanu shakhenbi
Lamgaang chanu fajabi
Anaan naanphou chanuni
Melei masagumna taangbini
Heingnang lamgaang chanuna
Annan naanphouchanuna
Sanaa keithelyourakle
Singel kollodi ahenba
Taibang ehaakna seithajei.

What Amounts to Regular Power Supply to the People of I.T Road

By: Thanggoul Khongsai

The entry of Electricity in Manipur can be dated back to 1930 with the commissioned of two hydel sets having a capacity of 100KV and 56KV at Leimakhong by the then Manipur State HE Board. Gradually, it was only during the Second Five Year Plan(1956-61) that the State of Manipur saw a significant change in the demand of Power in the State. Ever since from its inception, the demand for Power has been increasing and with the pursuing of Electricity Act, 2013, the then State Electricity Department Manipur(EDM) was unbundled and corporatized into two state owned independent entities i.e Manipur State Power Company Limited(MSPCL) and Manipur State Power Distribution Company(MSPDCL) w.e.f the 1st of February, 2014.

The former MSPCL (TRANSCOM) is responsible for the transmission line and power Sub-Station of Manipur power utility and are responsible for the management of 1) .440KV line 2) .132 KV (EHV) Extra High voltage line 3).33 KV line. Whereas, the later MSPDCL (DISCOM) mainly look after the distribution of power

supply and are responsible for the operation and maintenance of 1) 11 KV line 2) 0.440KV line 3) 0.230 KV line 4) Service connection 5) Revenue Collection 6) Distribution of Transformers 7) Street light etc. However, despite with such a vast power and responsibility vested on the Company, the condition of Power Supply in the region of I.T Road is yet to meet its essential requirements and the frequent interruption of Power Supply only indicates the area not being prioritised; which is against the fundamental principle of the Company in the service of humanity.

Present Day I.T Road Power Condition :

Yes, there exist two Sub Stations in the area. The one at Gelnal sub station consist of only 6 working Staffs and the other is situated at Tamei. This two Sub station, 11KV, supplies major areas of I.T Road and is maintained by DISCOM.

Given the present situation, it may be known that it is not reliable to carry out day to day activities with repeated power cuts causing on daily basis. Thanks to govt for the initiative to ease the living

condition of the people, almost every households are now dependent of Power Supply to meet their working demands. However, this of repeated power cuts not only indicates the area being a neglected region but also indicates the quantum of concern authority's apathy.

With the opening of Schools and establishment, day to day business begins to exclusively depend on electricity. There are number of students who couldn't afford solar lamp for their night studies. Power Cuts become their burden of knowledge-gain and a new misery. Wood misty keep their work on hold for their livelihood. It is undeniable that, the region equally needs power supply as to that of the valley.

Meantime, the total number of 11KV consumers i.e both from Gelnal and Tamei sub-station could be close 1,500 in term of households or may be even more. Thanks to postpaid and Power subsidy from the govt, if I may correctly mentioned , that each household paid Rs 200/- as part of monthly power Bill irrespective of the quantity they consumed. This may be a reasonable amount for

the people whose majority households' economic and financial conditions are still below the poetry line. It may also be known that, this minimum sum of Rs 200/- is still a far dream to arrange for many penury households of the areas.

Being located in a hilly tract, the region of I.T Road is not of easy reach from District Head Quater, Kangpokpi. Crooked and fill with multiple potholes everywhere, the condition of road is the main driver of delayed technicians and working staffs to rush to the spot in time whenever disruption or technical failure of power occurred. It is for this reason that the untrain locals who are not even well verse with electrical engineering or have no electricity background often risk their lives in the interest of public to resolve the electrical problems. Not realizing the hazard of electricity, they are not even provided with electrical kits and wears during their search for line disruption or while their climb to the electrical post. This is the state at present where they locals are becoming unpaid lineman and untrain technician.

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India's Covid positivity rate past 1 per cent again after two months

Agency
New Delhi, May 2:

India's Covid case positivity rate went past one per cent again after over two months as the country witnessed a single-day rise of 3,157 infections and 26 fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Monday.

The rise reported on Monday pushed the country's overall Covid tally to 4,30,82,345 cases and 5,23,869 deaths, the data said.

The number of active cases rose by 408 in a 24-hour span to reach 19,500, the data updated at 8 am showed.

At 1.07 per cent, the daily positivity went past one per cent again after a little over

two months, the ministry said. It was at 1.11 per cent on February 27.

The weekly positivity rate was 0.70 per cent, according to the health ministry.

Positivity rate refers to percentage of all coronavirus tests performed that return positive result. A higher positive rate means higher transmission rate for the virus.

The death toll has now climbed to 5,23,869 with the latest 26 fatalities being reported, 21 of them from Kerala alone.

The active cases constitute 0.05 per cent of the total infections. The country's COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.74 per cent, the health ministry said.

The number of people who

have recuperated from the disease rose to 4,25,38,976, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.22 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 189.23 crore.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16.

It surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23.

The 26 new fatalities include 21 from Kerala, two from

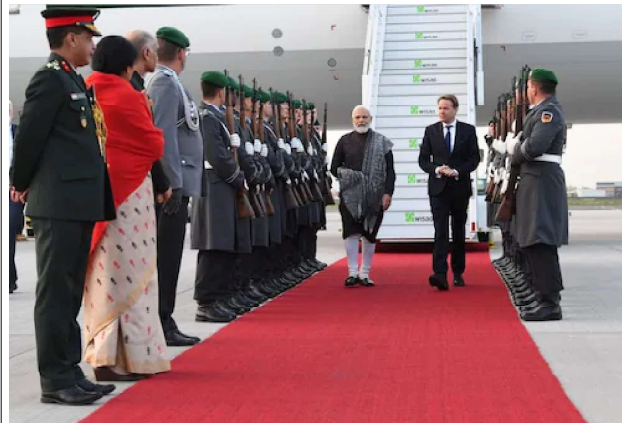
Odisha and one each from Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

A total of 5,23,869 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,47,843 from Maharashtra, 69,068 from Kerala, 40,102 from Karnataka, 38,025 from Tamil Nadu, 26,175 from Delhi, 23,508 from Uttar Pradesh and 21,202 from West Bengal.

The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with (those of) the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

PM gets rousing welcome from Diaspora in Berlin; to attend 25 'Hectic' Meets in 65 hours



Agency
Berlin, May 2:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday arrived in Berlin as a part of his 'three-day, three-nation' tour to Europe. Apart from Germany, PM Modi will also visit Denmark and France to strengthen bilateral ties with these countries.

PM Modi on Sunday said his trip to Europe comes at a time when the region faces many challenges and choices, and that he intends to strengthen the spirit of cooperation with India's European partners.

In a statement, Modi said he will be visiting Berlin at the invitation of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, following which he will travel to Copenhagen on May 3-4 at the invitation of his Danish counterpart Mette Frederiksen to hold bilateral engagements and also participate in the Second India-Nordic Summit.

On the way back to India, Modi said, he will make a brief stopover in Paris for a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron. "My visit to Europe comes at a time when the region faces many challenges and choices," Modi said.

Here are the latest updates in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Europe tour:

- Indian diaspora extends a warm welcome to PM Modi after he arrived in Berlin.

- The visit will be the PM's first international visit this year and comes amid the Ukraine crisis, which has united much of Europe against Russia.

- PM Modi said his visit to Berlin will be an opportunity to hold detailed bilateral discussions with Chancellor Scholz, whom he met at G20 last year in his previous capacity as Vice-Chancellor and Finance Minister.

- The prime minister said he sees this IGC as an early engagement with the new government in Germany, within six months of its formation, which will be helpful to identify priorities for the medium and long term.

- In 2021, India and Germany commemorated 70 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations and have been strategic partners since 2000.

- The prime minister also said Chancellor Scholz and he will also jointly address a Business Roundtable with the goal of energising their industry to industry cooperation, which will help strengthen the post-

Covid economic recovery in both countries.

- After Berlin, he will travel to Copenhagen where he will have a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Frederiksen which will provide an opportunity to review the progress in India's unique Green Strategic Partnership with Denmark, as well as other aspects of bilateral relations.

- Apart from the bilateral engagements with Denmark, Modi said he will also take part in the 2nd India-Nordic Summit along with Prime Ministers of Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Sweden and Norway where they will take stock of cooperation since the First India-Nordic Summit in 2018.

- PM Modi will also make stopover in Paris to meet President Emmanuel Macron, who has recently been re-elected. The PM will not only congratulate the French President in-person, but also reaffirm the close friendship between the two countries.

- Prime Minister Modi will have 25 hectic engagements in his three-day trip to as many countries where he will be spending around 65 hours.

- Modi is also expected to "exchange perspective" on the situation in Ukraine during his tour.

Heatwave: Centre asks states to review health preparedness, issues dos & don'ts

Agency
New Delhi, May 2:

As a severe heatwave continues, the Centre has asked states and Union Territories to review their healthcare preparedness and issued a list of dos and don'ts to prevent heat-related illnesses.

In a letter, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan has also urged for uninterrupted power supply for cooling appliances. Amidst a power shortage across the country, use of solar cells has been suggested "wherever possible".

The weather department has predicted above-normal

temperatures for central, western, and northern India, where mercury has already hit 46°C Celsius in many places, a recorded deviation of 6°C Celsius from normal, the letter says.

While asking healthcare facilities to remain prepared with essential medicines and consumables such as IV fluid, ORS, ice packs and cool drinking water, the Centre has issued a list of guidelines to prevent and manage heat-related problems.

While advising people to remain indoors during the hot parts of the day, the guidelines suggest people cover their head with umbrellas or caps while stepping out.

"Reschedule or plan outdoor activities during the cooler parts of the day," the guidelines state, adding people must remain well-hydrated and drink water regularly even if not thirsty.

The guidelines, however, advise against consumption of alcohol, hot beverages or carbonated drinks.

People have been asked to contact the 108/ 102 helplines should they experience any heat-related symptoms such as high body temperature, unconsciousness or a state of confusion, or lack of sweat.

A core body temperature above 40°C or 104°F, muscle weakness and cramps, nau-

sea and vomiting, besides a rapid heart beat and shallow breathing have been identified as a medical emergency.

In children, refusal to eat, excessive irritability, decreased urine output, lethargy or absence of tears are danger signs, the guidelines say.

The guidelines also has a section for employers, who have been asked to provide cool drinking water at workplaces and ensure people consume it every 20 minutes.

Besides allowing for more breaks, employers have also been asked to provide shaded areas for work and schedule outdoor work for cooler parts of the day.

Scorching heat and power cut make lives horrible in many states

IT Correspondent
Haryana, May 2:

Due to the ever-increasing temperature, there is an outcry in more than half the states of the country, in addition people are facing additional burden due to frequent power cut. Apart from the news media and social media related to electricity, it remains a topic of discussion among the people. National eminent environmentalist and water star Ramesh

Goyal while discussing this matter said that despite such a situation lakhs of units of electricity are being wasted every day due to the negligence of the Municipal Council, Municipality and Municipal Corporation employees. Street lights keep on burning for a long time even after sunrise instead of 5 in the morning. This situation is not only in Sirsa Nagar. He has directly noted this in many cities of Haryana. He told that

Haryana is not an exception. Yesterday on May 1, while going to Kotkapura in Punjab, he saw halogen lights on at many places even after 9 o'clock. They have been trying to make the government and administration aware about this for a long time. I had written a letter to the then Chief Minister Smt. Sheila Dikshit about this chaos in Delhi, while it has been many years since writing a letter to Kejriwal too, but everyone is sleep-

ing with oil in their ears. Mr. Goyal said that he had personally submitted a letter to the Local Self-Government Minister, Haryana Dr. Kamal Gupta on April 28 in this regard and also sent a letter to Power Minister Ch. Ranjit Singh so that power wastage can be stopped. He has also appealed to the public to be aware and take cognizance of such topics and write in media-social media and inform them on 9416049757.

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What Amounts to Regular Power Supply

The Conundrum and the way forward:

Strictly speaking, it may not be a cakewalk for the Govt and concern authority to expedite in resolving the present pathetic Power condition of I.T Road as there exist multiple problems that deems it necessary to look at. For instance, the all round existing of high terrain in the areas where the input wire 33KV and output 11KV passed over the jungles, letting trees and bamboos an easy hit at the wires. This caused disruption of power often particularly during rainy and windy season. This highly exacerbated our power condition and can be overcome to minimum extend by stretching

the wires across the side of the main road. This will in turn ease the hectic linemen during their search for line disruption and also added to their work efficiency.

Not to surprise, the number of human labours or working staffs is in shortage. As cited above, there exist only 6 Staffs at Gelnal Sub Station, whereas the number may be less or same at Tamei sub Station. More surprisingly, absent of Technician at the station is very much common throughout the year who are to deal with the technical issues whenever emergency or technical threat occurs. Also, there should be enough staffs and linemen from both 33KV

and 11KV department to operate on every working days. This may served the public the rights to get their efficient electricity without a day or more delayed of power cuts.

Over the past four or more years of operation of Electricity in the region, the installed post and wires have not been replaced until today. Some of the existing installed old posts are in the verge of fall. They need immediate attention. There's also a handful length of present stretching wires that are found rush and needs an urgent replacement. Having to ignored the present problems of wires and posts may not only disrupt the power condition of the area

but also pose a grave concern to the people of I.T Road. In the meanwhile, length of wires that are made to passed over the trees and bamboos are prone to hit wires during this season and thus, require vigilance efforts to keep the wire on checks.

Power being part of our most essential needs, effort of providing efficient and uninterrupted power to public from concern department should be aided by regular payment of Bills. This will henceforth, ensure better and quality power supplies in the hills area of I.T Road.

(View express are personal. Can be reach at thangoualhkhongsai@gmail.com)

44 AR organised Medical Camp



IT News
Imphal, May 2:

44 Assam Rifles under the aegis of 22 Sector/ IGAR (East) organised a medical camp for the workers of Shivaalay Construction Company. The battalion continuing with its efforts to boost the overall health of local communities, carried on with its unique health care initiative to reach out to local populace of Tamenglong.

Battalion's medical team

organised a health checkup cum wellness camp in Shivaalay Camp near Kahulong village which was aimed to provide basic health care facilities with special focus on old age and ladies with infant children. It holds importance as these old age persons and young mothers cannot travel long distances for receiving medical aid. A basic medical testing lab facility was also setup. Free general medicines were also distributed to the workers and local villagers.

A total of 150 persons were benefitted. Medical Officer, 44 AR also highlighted the initiatives undertaken by the Battalion in which battalion alone had organised 27 free medical camps for improving overall health and wellbeing of the people this year. He also urged attendees to support battalion in improving the overall hygiene of the people and constructively contribute towards development of region.

As COVID-19 cases rise yet again, NTAGI set to review data for vaccination of children above 5 years

Agency
New Delhi, May 2:

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on, the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) is set to review the data of COVID-19 vaccines for children between the ages of five and 12 on May 4. Last week, an NTAGI panel had recommended inclusion of the Serum Institute's Covid jab Covovax in the national anti-coronavirus vaccination programme for children aged 12 to 17 years. The development also comes amid a recent

spike in cases over the past few weeks.

Last week, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya had said that a decision on vaccinating children aged between five and 12 years would be taken on the basis of the recommendation by an expert committee. While the issue had not been taken up during the recent NTAGI meeting, sources say that a decision is forthcoming.

Last week on Tuesday, the Drugs Controller General of India had granted use

authorisation for Biological E's Corbevax for those aged five to 12 years and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin for children in the age group of six to 12 years. Corbevax is currently being used to inoculate children against COVID-19 in the age group of 12 to 14 years.

The DCGI approval comes following recommendations by the Subject Expert Committee on COVID-19 of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation.

India had begun vaccinating children earlier this year in January, with adoles-

cents in the age group of 15-18 years. The nationwide vaccination drive was expanded further on March 16 to include children aged 12-14 years. So far, more than 2.91 crore adolescents have been administered with the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

The cumulative COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country has exceeded 189.23 crore.

India on Monday reported 3,157 fresh COVID-19 cases and 26 fatalities, pushing the active caseload to 19,500.

Eid-UL-Fitr to be celebrated in India on May 3, says moon-sighting panel

Agency
New Delhi, May 2:

The crescent moon for the Islamic month of Shawwal was not sighted on Sunday evening, therefore clerics across the country announced that the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr will be celebrated in India on May 3, according to news agency ANI report.

Lucknow's Markazi Chand Committee said that the Shawwal crescent was not sighted on Sunday evening hence, May 2 will be observed as the last day of Ramadan and Eid ul-Fitr will be celebrated on May 3.

Marzaki Chand Committee said in a statement, "Marzaki Chand Committee Farangi Mahal, Qazi-e-Shahar Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahli Imam Idghah Lucknow has announced that today is the date 29 Ramadan-ul-Mubarak 1443 H. There is no moon of Shawwal on May

1, 2022. So tomorrow is 30th roza and Eid-ul-Fitr will be on May 3, 2022. Eid-ul-Fitr namaz at Indgah Lucknow will be held on 03 May 2022 at 10 am."

Additionally, the moon-sighting committee in Karnataka said in a statement on Sunday, the Markazi Ruyath-e-Hilal (MREH) said the moon was not sighted in the city of Bengaluru due to heavy rainfall, the moon was also not sighted in other districts of Karnataka or anywhere in the country.

"The first day of Shawal (1443) will be on Tuesday, May 3, 2022," the committee said in its statement. The decision was taken after the MREH committee held its meeting today, under the chairmanship of Maulana Sagheer Ahmed Khan Rashadi.

The Executive members of Ruyat-E-Hilal Committee of Karnataka announced that the crescent was not sighted any-

where across the country and hence the Eid al-Fitr will be celebrated on May 3.

Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated by Muslims around the globe to mark the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Ramzan is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting to commemorate the first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad, according to Islamic belief.

Ramzan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which involves rigorous fasting for about 30 days.

During this month, Muslims do not consume food or water from dawn to dusk. They eat Sehri (a pre-dawn meal) and break their day-long fast with 'Iftar' in the evening.

Eid ul-Fitr marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. The festival is celebrated on the first day of Shawwal, the 10th month of the Islamic lunar calendar.

'Yoga Utsav' begins in Assam with 50 days countdown to International Day of Yoga

Agency
Guwahati, May 2:

The 50 days countdown to International Day of Yoga was marked with a 'Yoga Utsav' in Assam's Sivasagar town, the seat of power of Ahom rulers, on Monday with participation of over 10,000 people from different Northeastern states, an official said. Union Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Union MoS for Ayush Munjpara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai, Union MoS for Petroleum and Gas Rameswar Teli, Health ministers of Assam, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, several MPs from the region and senior officials also took part in the programme.

The event, conducted by Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) under the Ministry of Ayush, was simultaneously held at seven locations, including Thora Dol, Rudrasagar Dol, Ronghar, Tolatol Ghar, Kareng Ghar and Joydol, all places of historic importance within the periphery of Sivasagar town. The demonstration of Common Yoga Protocol was done by a team of MDNIY led by its Director, Dr Ishwar V Basavaradi, at the premises at Sivadol (Shiva temple) in the heart of the town, the official added.

Speaking on the occasion, Sonowal said, "As thousands of people from all the Northeastern states came together at Sivasagar to perform yoga, it reinforces our sustained effort to put

the iconic heritage sites of Assam in the tourism map of the world through this event today.

"The idea behind the Utsav is to encourage people to take up yoga, a wonderful gift of our thousands of years of civilization, so that they can enrich their quality of life".

In a series of Tweets after the event, Sonowal wrote: "Sivasagar is one of the iconic archaeological districts of India. The #50DaysToIDY2022 event will help unlock the massive potential in our tourism sector and become Vocal for Local."

In another tweet Sonowal said "I thank all those who became part of this #50DaysToIDY2022 countdown event, especially the people of Sivasagar, for mak-

ing it a huge success."

Sivasagar was selected for the Yoga Utsav in line with a plan unveiled by the prime minister to develop five archaeological sites, viz. Rakhigari (Haryana), Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh), Sivasagar (Assam), Dholavira (Gujarat) and Aichanallur (Tamil Nadu), into iconic sites across India.

Sivasagar assumes great historical importance as it was the epicentre of the Ahom kingdom which ruled between 13th and 19th century. The eighth edition of International Day of Yoga is being promoted through multiple programmes by the AYUSH Ministry to take the message of yoga across the world to a wider audience, including events to mark 100 days, 75 days and 25 days countdown.

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SC directs review of vaccine....

It referred to the segregation of vaccine trial data and added subject to the privacy of individuals, the data of all trials conducted and being conducted must be made available to the public without delay.

The court directed the Centre that all clinical trials, key findings and results of vaccines approved for children be made public.

The petitioner asked the government and the Drug Controller General of India to provide segregated data for each of the phases of clinical trials of the vaccines administered in India.

The court also heard the vaccine manufacturers - Covaxin's Bharat Biotech and Covishield's Serum Institute of India (SII) - before reserving its order in March.

The petition quoted the World Medical Association's Helsinki Declaration of 2013 on Ethical Principles for Medical Research involving human subjects, which mandates researchers to publicly disclose all negative, inconclusive and positive results of their research.

The Centre, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh defended their vaccine

mandates saying they fulfil the test of proportionality and are meant to create more awareness about vaccination.

SII told the court that all necessary data was with the regulator. Bharat Biotech denied allegations of non-disclosure of information and said the data related to the phase III trial has been published.

The Centre told the court all documents related to Covid-19 vaccines and their compositions are available in the public domain, and the vaccines has proved to be very effective and safe.

Sports

I-League: Skipper Lobato inspires TRAU to victory over Aizawl

Agency
Kalyani (West Bengal) May 2:

TRAU FC ended their six-game winless run with a convincing 2-0 victory against Aizawl FC in the North-East Derby, here at the Kalyani Stadium.

First-half goals from Salam Johnson Singh and Helder Lobato for TRAU were enough to sweep Aizawl FC aside and rescue TRAU from the relegation battle.

In the opening five minutes of the game, TRAU applied the pressure, trying to unsettle Aizawl who had fielded a side featuring a few new faces. After dealing with initial attacks, Aizawl moved forward with Ramhlunchunga down the right flank. The winger dribbled past his marker really well before attempting a knuckle shot at the goal and forcing Bishorjit Singh to make a save.

TRAU got their noses in front 13 minutes into the game. Krishnananda Singh came sprinting down the left flank, after being played in by a lofted ball from Milan Singh, and cut it back for Salam Johnson Singh, who was completely unmarked in the box. The striker side-footed the ball past the keeper and the defence perfectly to give his side a cru-



cial lead in the derby.

The front three of Aizawl tried linking up to create an opportunity but were let down by a few poor passes and also by the alert TRAU defence. Fernandinho came close to adding another goal for TRAU from a freekick but his effort sailed over the bar.

Just past the half-hour mark, Salam Johnson was presented with a glorious opportunity after he set off on a counterattack. The striker beat Melory Laldinsanga and only had the keeper to beat. With the goal at his mercy, Salam Johnson, astonishingly, put it wide.

In first-half stoppage time, Robert Primus Jr. seemed to have elbowed Salam Johnson inside the box. The referee immediately pointed to the spot and dished a yellow out for Primus Jr. In the sixth minute of first-half stoppage time, TRAU skipper Helder Lobato sent Lalmuansanga the wrong way from the spot to give his side a comfortable 2-0 lead at half-time.

Familiar faces returned to the Aizawl team as they walked out for the second half. Dipanda Dicka and Willis Plaza were sent on to salvage something from the game. The substitutes did trouble the TRAU

defence but ultimately could not penetrate it.

Three minutes from the hour mark, Salam Johnson was stretched off and replaced by Khanngam Horam. Minutes after coming on, Horam was involved in a quick move and played Krishnananda through on goal. The shot from Krishnananda was saved by Lalmuansanga. There was chaos in the box, seconds later, as Aizawl defenders were scrambling to clear the ball after a barrage of attacks from TRAU.

In the final half-hour of the game, TRAU were completely dominant. A plethora of attacks was launched as some were wasted by poor finishing while the others were defended well by Aizawl. Chances fell to Horam, Krishnananda, Fernandinho and Joseph Olaleye. Despite that, the scoreline stayed the same.

TRAU ended their six-game winless run that started after their victory over Aizawl in Phase 1. The win takes them level on points with Sudeva and a point behind Aizawl. They are also out of the relegation fight. Meanwhile, Aizawl cannot extend their lead but stay at the top of the table with a one-point advantage.

Santosh Trophy 2022: Host Kerala favourites against Bengal in final today



Ranjan Bhattacharjee and Bino George, head coaches of West Bengal and Kerala respectively pose on the eve of the final in Malappuram.

Agency
Malappuram, May 2:

To say that Bengal has its task cut out against Kerala in the final of the Santosh Trophy National football championship at the Malappuram District Sports Complex Stadium on Monday night would be an understatement.

Bengal faces a side that stormed into the final after slamming seven goals in the semifinal. That side will be playing in front of some of the most passionate football fans you would come across anywhere in the

world - and there would be some 25,000 of them.

When the two teams met early on in the competition, in the group stage, the host had won 2-0. So form too favours Kerala. But Bengal could fall back on history, though. It has won the tournament 32 times and was the runner-up on 13 occasions.

Kerala has lifted the trophy six times. Its last triumph came in 2018, when it defeated Bengal in a shootout at Kolkata.

Four years and a pandemic later, the two powerhouses of Indian football promise another

fascinating final. The focus in this final would certainly be on the Kerala striker T.K. Jesin, who scored five goals after coming on as a substitute against Karnataka in the semifinal.

Jijo Joseph is another player Bengal needs to be wary of. The captain has not just been scoring goals for Kerala, but creating them as well.

Bengal is also capable of playing some fine attacking football, as it showed in its 3-0 win in the semifinal against Manipur. Its strikers Fardin Ali Moll and Dilip Oran could cause concern for the Kerala defence.