

## Chief Minister releases the Manipur Electric Mobility Policy, 2022



IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh released the Manipur Electric Mobility Policy, 2022 today, during the inaugural function of the "Two-day Awareness-cum-workshop on Electric Vehicles (EVs), Charging Infrastructure and Renewable Hybrid Energy in North-East India" at City Convention Centre, Imphal.

Speaking as the Chief Guest of the inaugural programme, the Chief Minister had said "To embrace and accelerate the pace of adoption of electric vehicles, 'The Manipur Electric Mobility Policy, 2022' was notified in August this year" and that the policy targets to facilitate adoption of at least 20 percent EVs in the State by 2026.

Incentives are also provided under the policy in the form of waiver of upto 30 percent in Motor Vehicle Tax at the time of registration of

newly purchased EVs, the Chief Minister said adding that the government is considering giving priority to EVs while purchasing vehicles for government departments.

N. Biren Singh highlighted the rapid growth and urbanization over the years and also stressed that with increase in population, coupled with better standard of living, vehicle ownership has increased significantly.

Traffic congestion leading to increased vehicle emission affects ambient air quality and vehicle emission from petrol and diesel vehicles is a main cause of concern for urban population and their health, the Chief Minister said.

Carbon emissions from vehicles also contribute to Climate Change, the Chief Minister also said explaining the importance of Electric Vehicles and added the Electronic Vehicle is a prominent solution being adopted globally to ad-

dress the problems of vehicular pollution.

N. Biren Singh also said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is also taking numerous steps to promote electric vehicle in the country.

Further stating that the Prime Minister had also recently set India in a path to achieve Net-Zero Carbon by 2070, the Chief Minister also stressed that Government of India's scheme such as "Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles" (FAME) aims to reduce dependency on fossil fuel and to address issues of vehicular emissions.

The Chief Minister also said that awareness through such workshop and collaboration with CSIR would help in the process of adoption of electric vehicles in the State and setting up required infrastructure.

Several schemes and initiatives have been launched to

boost the demand for EV. Transport Minister Kashim Vashum said explaining the Centre's efforts under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to develop as a global leader in the EV sector.

The Minister also highlighted initiatives taken up by the State government under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh to boost EV vehicles and said that among others, EV vehicles will not be charge Parking Tickets.

The transport department is signing a MoU with SCIR, Dehradun to engage the institute as advisor to the Government of Manipur, Transport Department in EV related matters, he said.

He added that The Manipur Electric Mobility Policy, 2022 will help in achieving a Green and Clean Manipur in the days to come.

Additional Chief Secretary Planning Vumlungmang Vualnam said E Vehicle is a new concept, its time has come and the Government of Manipur is also aware of it. He added the seminar will have technical sessions on various aspects of EV.

The inaugural function was also attended by Chairman Tourism Corporation of Manipur and MLA Karam Shyam, Chief Secretary Dr. Rajesh Kumar, CSIR-IIP, Dehradun Director Dr. Anjan Ray, Chief Scientist, HoD, AFLAD, CSIR-IIP Poonam Gupta, Principal Scientist CSIR-IIP Dr. Atul Ranjan, Principal Scientist CSIR-IIP Dr. Robindro Lairenlakpam, among others.

## Education (S) signs Memorandum of Understanding with Infosys Ltd.



IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

Education Department, Government of Manipur signed a Memorandum of Understanding today with Infosys Ltd. on implementation of Infosys Springboard in the presence of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh at the Cabinet Hall of the Chief Minister's Secretariat. Education Minister Th. Basanta Singh and MLA Sapam Kunjakeswor Singh were also present at the event.

The MoU was signed between Education (S) Commissioner Gyan Prakash, Education (S) Director L. Nandakumar and Head-Corporate Affairs Santhosh Ananthapura, Sr. Vice President Infosys Ltd

Thirumala Arohi.

The MoU is for enhancement of teaching-learning activities and teaching effectiveness through technology aids under the Corporate Social Responsibility Scheme. The scheme has both student and teacher-oriented components and is fully aligned with the National Education Policy 2020.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh lauded the Infosys Ltd. for the new venture. Further highlighting the National Education Policy to be a remarkable policy, the Chief Minister said the policy has already been adopted in the State and that for its full implementation, the State needs support.

N. Biren Singh also said

that the government has launched some schemes and projects to improve education system in the State. He explained schemes like the School Fagathansi Mission and Star Education.

Explaining School Fagathansi, the Chief Minister said it was initially taken up in 60 schools, one school from each of the 60 Assembly Constituencies.

It may be mentioned that through the scheme, Infosys Springboard will provide a curriculum-rich virtual platform that delivers corporate-grade learning experiences, on any device, with closer educator-learner collaboration for students from Class 6 to lifelong learners.

contd. on page 4

## Person arrested for alleged hate comment released on bail

IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

22 years old Laishram Malemnganba of Waiton Mamang Leikai of Imphal East district who was arrested for his alleged hate post in social media was released on bail by the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Imphal East today.

Malemnganba was arrested by Heingang Police based on the complaint filed by the President of BJYM Barish Sharma for posting derogatory and hate comment on facebook post. The accused posted - "4 yonlinga yonni, Channinga Chani, Nawa Loude, Sanyung Thakpa BJP Party".

Interestingly, a photo of Malemnganba taken while in police custody, which was circulated in facebook was also noted by the CJM. The Court warn the officer in charge of the police station for allowing to take such photograph and has directed the SP of Imphal East to inquire about the matter.

## MU condole demise of Prof. Bimola



IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

The Department of Political Science deeply mourns the sad demise of Professor Kshetrimayum Bimola Devi. The Department fondly recalls Professor Ksh. Bimola's contribution in building and nurturing the Department since its inception.

Prof. Ksh. Bimola was an irreplaceable asset, not only to the Department and Manipur University but also brought laurels as a Public Intellectual in the state of Manipur.

As a mark of respect to the departed soul the Department convened as Condolence Meeting with the Faculty, Students and Non-Teaching Staff.

A two-minute silence was observed to express sorrow and share its grief with the bereaved family.

## Justice D Y Chandrachud sworn in as 50th Chief Justice of India

Agency  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

Justice Dhananjaya Yashwanth Chandrachud, who was part of the Supreme Court benches that delivered several landmark verdicts including the Ayodhya land dispute case, was sworn in as the 50th Chief Justice of India on Wednesday.

President Droupadi Murmu administered him the oath at a brief ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. He took the oath in English and in the name of God. Justice Chandrachud took over as the CJI from Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, who demitted office on Tuesday, and will head India's Judiciary until November 10, 2024, a day before he completes 65 years.

Those present at the ceremony included Vice President and Rajya Sabha chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, and Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah and Kiren Rijju.

Outgoing CJI Lalit was also present. On October 11, he had recommended to the



Centre Justice Chandrachud's name as his successor.

On October 17, Justice Chandrachud was named the 50th CJI. He was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on May 13, 2016.

He is the son of the longest serving CJI Y V Chandrachud, who headed the Judiciary from February 22, 1978, to July 11, 1985.

Justice Chandrachud, who calls dissent the "safety valve of democracy", was part of several Constitution benches and landmark verdicts of the top court, including on matters relating to the Ayodhya land dispute and Right to Privacy.

He was also part of the benches that delivered path-

breaking judgements on decriminalising same-sex relations after it partially struck down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, validity of the Aadhaar scheme and Sabarimala issue.

Recently, a bench headed by him expanded the scope of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act and the corresponding rules to include unmarried women for abortion between 20-24 weeks of pregnancy.

A bench headed by him had also passed several directions to assuage people's miseries during the COVID-19 crisis, terming the brutal second wave of the pandemic last year a "national crisis".

contd. on page 4

## Sacrifice for the land is a wakeup call for future generation – PREPAK

IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

Proscribed group People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) has appealed the people of the region to shun all sort of entertainment programme on November 12, as the armed rebel group is observing "Athoubasingi Ningsing Nimit" (Martyrs' Memorial Day) in commemoration to the sacrifices of its cadres at Kameng on this day of 1978.

A release signed by publicity and propaganda LeibaakNgaakpa Luwang appealed to the people of the state to lit candles at their doorsteps and also at the memorial site of the martyred souls.

In the early morning of November 12, 1978, combined

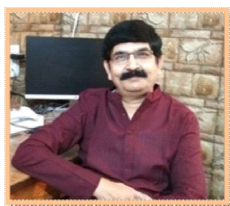
troop of CRPF and Manipur Police attacked to the transit camp of the PREPAK at Leimarok in Kameng area. In the attack two cadres of the PREPAK Ayekpam Dhiren@ Angam, of Sagolband Tera Loukrakpam Leikai and Phurailatpam Kabikanta @ Leimu @ Leimgam Sharma of Sagolband Meino Leirak and another cadre of PLA, Pukhramba, Gambhir Singh, Singamei Makha Naorem Leikai were martyred. In another incident, in 1985 of that day (Nov 12) leader of the armed rebel group, RK Tulachandra lost his life in the hand of the security forces posted at the Sugar Factory Complex of Kabowakching.

Commemorating the two tragic events, the Red Army, the army wing of the PREPAK has been observing the day

(November 12) as "Athoubasingi Ningsing Nimit" every year.

The statement of LeibaakNgaakpa Luwang further said that in the last 73 years, people of the region has been suppressed and harassed under the shadow of democracy. It said that India's democracy is clouded with corruption, absence of justice and run by wrong doers. In India only a clique of people enjoy freedom and not for all. The PREPAK statement said that India will be disintegrated in the years to come as there is no state in the country without any crisis. Kashmir, Punjab, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odessa, West Bengal, South India and North East India have armed struggle to restore their independence.

## Support the change, support anti-ragging



By: Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

The vicious practice of ragging has not only become rampant in our educational institutions but also acquired hideous proportions costing the sanity of the institutions and life of some of the students. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions. The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of indiscipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created.

Ragging and abetting the crime on the college campus will remove the lurking fear in the minds of freshmen, especially those who opt to stay in hostels. The authorities should not stop with just making rules but take effective steps to implement the same and highlight the ill-effects of ragging through the visual media. The move will implant fear and discipline in the minds of senior students who indulge in ragging. Even today, students from the rural areas have a lingering fear when they go to cities for higher studies. To dispel such fears, colleges should prominently display a banner saying their campus is free from ragging. Those who indulge in ragging look for temporary pleasure but end up destroying many lives. Students alone can put an end to it. Anti-ragging steps should be strictly enforced. Parents and teachers are equally responsible for eliminating the virus. Service organizations and NGOs should too launch awareness campaigns against the menace in educational institutions.

There was not much awareness in those days and ragging in the past was one way of familiarizing freshers with senior students. But now, the increased incidents of ragging have exposed the errors in our education system which may be successful in churning out academically brilliant students, but has failed to inculcate proper values in them.

The cantankerous behaviour of some students in colleges is often the offshoot of indiscipline in the schools in which they studied, and uncaring families. Instead of attempting to classify the acts of ragging as "soft" and "hard," we should employ the guidelines of the committee in letter and spirit. If faculty members communicate more informally with them, a healthy academic environment can be created.

It is also noticed that those who indulge in ragging do not plan in advance. On most of the occasions, things go out of control. The guilty should not only be expelled but also barred from admission to any other college.

Looking to the increase in ragging incidents, active involvement of media and the civil society is essential in tackling the problem of ragging. The mindset of the student has changed and now we need to focus in on enforcing stringent measures like rustication of a student, withholding of scholarship, debarring a student from appearing in any test. If possible students who involve in ragging must be put in jail instead of just being suspended or expelled. An example needs to be set.

## Green energy for international peace



By: Vijay GarG

Curbing conflict. Our current geopolitical woes are tied to our dependence on fossil fuels. Green energy is a way out.

Underlying the chaos and conflict of our times — be it war or cataclysmic natural disasters linked to climate change — is the dependence on fossil fuels. Climate change is the consequence of overuse of fossil fuels over centuries. And, the urge to control regions rich in these fossil fuels has been one of the primary drivers of war.

These wars have periodically driven economies the world over into a tailspin of inflation and growth paralysis. What we are going through today is not dissimilar to earlier episodes of war, disruption and inflation, over the last 80-100 years; territorial control over resource rich regions has been a driving force all along.

The fact is that large quantities of fossil fuels are concentrated in tiny geographical pockets. Hence, the urge to control over regions rich in reserves of coal, oil, and natural gas forms the sum and substance of foreign policy worldwide.

Countries neighbouring these prized regions, as well as others, play all sorts of games to grab them — deploying religion, language, alliances to that end. Conflicts also suddenly start when there is a temporary change in the balance of power, breaking the earlier, often fragile, equations of peace.

### Historical overview

Control over fossil fuels has historically been a reason for some of the biggest wars. The century of the occupation of the Ruhr (1923-1925) falls next year. The Ruhr region spreads around the Rhine River, which borders France and Germany. French and Belgian troops occupied the mineral and industrially rich Ruhr region, as Germany had stopped sending coal to France as part of the reparation deal struck during World War I. This occupation led to the crash of the German currency and the economy, which eventually led to the start of World War II.

contd. on page 3

## Festivals and National Integration

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

proving tourism through events. Festivals, carnivals, national day celebration, anniversaries celebration, coronation, music concert are all subset of event tourism. Festival on the other hand possesses the efficacy to integrate the nation due to its potential in bringing people together in a celebrative mood. It facilitates friendship, social cohesion, tolerance, shared social and cultural values and experiences.

Festivals have become a medium through which citizens consume and experience cultures. They also have attractive way of packaging and selling cultural performance and generating tourism (Picard & Robinson, 2006). Festivals have been examined as ways of responding to various forms of crisis; social, political, economic and as a means of remaking and re-animating spaces and social life. Tourism is increasingly complicit in the festival processes of re-invention and in forming new patterns of social existence. According to the Policy Studies Institute as noted by Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell (2011) festival is viewed traditionally as a time of celebration, relaxation and recuperation which often followed a period of hard labour. Glenn et al further suggested that, the essential feature of festivals is the celebration or reaffirmation of community or culture. While Getz (1996) defined festival as a themed public celebration which extends leisure and cultural opportunities beyond everyday experiences and choices.

The socio-cultural impacts of festivals are divers as noted by several authors; example, Getz (1991a) outlined six reasons for special events and festivals as follows; (i) To attract people into the area, (ii) To attract people outside the main season (iii) To create media attention and raise the profile of the area (iv) To add animation and life to existing attractions (v) To encourage repeat visits (vi) To assist regeneration. In addition, festivals offer the following benefits; (a) Strengthen community ties and a sense of cultural identity (b) Serve the purpose of bringing happiness into our lives (c) Connect us as

people of a nation (d) Solidify patriotic spirit in the society (e) Promote cultural and civic boosterism (f) Festival space serves as site for encounter and cultural exchange (g) Help in overcoming the challenge of seasonality in tourist's destination. Andy, Taylor and Woodward (2014) argued that festivals facilitate the acquisition and development of cosmopolitan sensibilities as individual are given access to new ways of seeing the world around them. Festivals are critical elements in modern day socialization process. The festivals hosting communities, festival goers, planners and all other stakeholders are all involved in this social encounter and the resultant effect of this social web is the emergence of new friendships, social cohesion, shared values and integrated opinions in the society.

When defining event ology, Goldblatt (2011) said 'it is the study of planned events to promote positive societal benefits.' According to Goldblatt, bringing people together through planned event such as festivals makes societies healthier, smarter, wealthier, fairer, greener, safer and stronger. It is the cumulative impact of the expert opinion of Goldblatt that carried the real gem that can integrate communities or nations and usher in development due to the economic benefits of festivals. Festivals and carnivals are part of the celebrations that are well defined in the event ology concept. One of the major benefits of festival and carnival is the formation of communities. According to Franklin (2003) communities is used to describe a unique social bond that is achieved through touristic engagements such as festivals, carnivals, pilgrimage or holidaying. Tourism in this concept is generally believed to encourage generalized sociability among festival goers.

Tourism as a transitory phenomenon is bound by, and shares limited spatial and temporal realities (McConnell quoted by Picard & Robinson 2006:3). Carnival as a subset of event tourism is defined as a "series of performances and rituals with attendant discourses that are contested, negotiated and renegotiated that generate their own social realities. Carnival as bestialized event is examined as a way of responding to various forms of crisis; social, political, economic and as a way of remaking and re-animating spaces and social life. It interrogates notions of ritual and tradition, shapes new spaces, creates and renews relationships between participants and observers. Tourism is increasingly complicit in the festival processes of re-invention and informing new pattern of social existence of societies" (Picard & Robinson, 2006). The catalytic role of tourism in fostering socio-cultural changes of our contemporary society cannot be over emphasized as it is evidently seen in the everyday life of tourist destinations. Popescu & Corbos (2012) opines that festivals are majorly planned to address specific needs of the society. Such needs could be national integration, economic and political agenda, promotion of national image, increasing the profile of tourist's destination and general development. Tourism engages and involves interdisciplinary discourses and spaces. It involves movement and interaction of people from diverse cultural background and ideological position; it will therefore be an easy avenue for acculturation or cultural fusion which will consequently result in spatial or even complete transformation of the cultural and social life of the destination where such touristic interaction or occupation is taking place.

Festivals spread brotherhood and faith among all humans, they connect us with one another as live wire of the society. Festivalization as a concept is fundamental increasing fun and memorable touristic experience thereby ensuring repeat visit by tourists or events goers. It is a new trend in event tourism industry that contains the gem of spurting growth and national integration. It turns communities, cities and nations into festivals cape and also brings about social cohesion, inclusiveness, friendship, cultural exchange, promotion of national and global brotherhood, civic boosterism while strengthening shared cultural values and experience.

(Writer can be reached at: [sjgushwor@gmail.com](mailto:sjgushwor@gmail.com))

## Self-introspection among Assam press persons needed

By: Nava Thakuria

Guwahati: India observes National Press Day on 16 November with an aim to pay tributes to everyone who contributed to the growth of print media along with its mentor & watchdog the Press Council of India (PCI). Moreover, it's also an occasion for the practicing media persons to introspect seriously over their noble profession where it has actually been heading in the post Covid-19 pandemic era.

Since its inception and functioning, the PCI continues to symbolize a free and responsible press in the largest democracy of the world. Among all press or media councils, functioning in various countries, the PCI is recognized as a unique entity that exercises authority over the media and also safeguards independence of the press.

PCI was first constituted on 4 July 1966 as an 'autonomous, statutory, quasi-judicial' body with Justice JR Mudholkar, then a Supreme Court judge, as its chairman. Under the Press Council Act 1965, various relevant functions are being authorized for the PCI, such as helping newspapers to maintain their independence and building up a code of conduct for newspapers and journalists in accordance with high professional standards.

It was Mahatma Gandhi, who articulated the concept of self-regulation, in which press councils or

similar bodies were founded and still functioning. Under this noble concept, the sole aim of journalism should be the service to humanity. Till the last century, newspapers dominated the media scenario, but lately it has witnessed a drastic fall in the circulation of printed newspapers. The newspapers are actually struggling for survival after the invasion of television channels and digital media outlets.

Arundoti emerged in 1846 as the first newspaper in northeast India of our region. Today it witnesses the publication of a good number of morning daily newspapers in various languages. Sizable population of the region still depend on physical newspapers for necessary news content. Prior to the pandemic, Guwahati supported the publication of around 30 morning dailies with hundreds of periodicals in various languages.

But relentless corruption in the offices of proprietors and editors, with no promotional activities for the budding journalists where most of the editors maintained double identities (both as a journalist and a creative writer) for their excuses whenever there emerges a socio-political crisis and a visibly low space for the valued readers to make their points publicly when it is really necessary, etc have steadily ruined the sacred profession.

Once the quality internet becomes available to the common people, a large number of social media users start questioning the professional journalists, for which the media persons were seemingly not ready. Rejection to social media terming it a nuisance by a number of print-editors has deteriorated the situation. Even after claiming to maintain the circulation figure, the newspaper industry can not reclaim its earlier social influence.

In the recent past, altogether three Guwahati-based television journalists were named and shamed in social media as being beneficiaries of the multi-crore rupees scam in the updation of National Register of Citizens in Assam. Luit Kumar Barman, a businessman turned prominent filmmaker, as well as some scribes named those editor-journalists of city-based satellite news channels in their facebook posts claiming that those media personnel grabbed a huge amount of money, actually meant for thousands of data entry operators (who were engaged as part time workers in NRC Assam updation process).

For records, the accused journalists aggressively supported the draft NRC in various official appearances (reasons best known to them), even though it still faces many questions ranging from its cut-off year (1971) to inclusion of millions of illegal migrants. One accused even made a public comment that those, who support 1951 as the cut-off year to identify the infiltrators in Assam, are idiots only.

For more than a month now, the accused scribes remain silent over the allegation (as if they have gone for hibernation), even though thousands of social media users urged them to clarify their stand over the allegation. Lately senior journalist Dipankar Devsarmah in his post claimed that those scribes (formerly associated with the print media) lavishly spent money in the press club election to have a governing body of their choice. Need not to mention that the concerned electoral exercise was a visibly expensive affair for the Guwahati residents.

Even a large number of leading scribes were lured with personal benefits to manipulate the process, where a good number of city-based veteran journalists were denied their membership (so that they cannot participate in the election). Rumours were spread that a powerful politician was behind their mission. But amazingly, the accused journalists are not being supported by their beneficiary media friends at this time of crisis. Nonetheless, where is the PCI having no authority over news channels and digital outlets to enhance the overall media scenario here!

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

can be sent to our e-mail: [imphaltimes@gmail.com](mailto:imphaltimes@gmail.com). For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-3590330 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.



# India's first private rocket launch likely between Nov 12-16

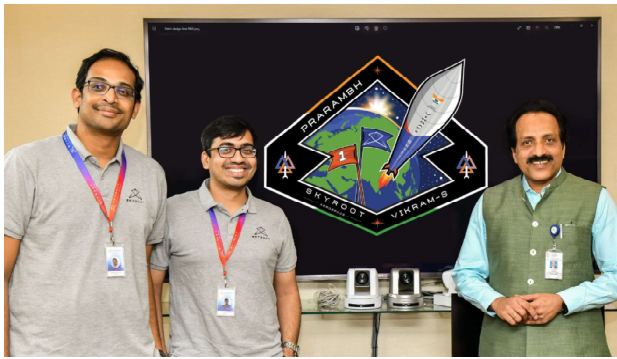
Agency  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

India's first privately developed rocket Vikram-S is set for a launch between November 12 and 16, Hyderabad-based space startup Skyroot Aerospace announced on Tuesday.

The maiden mission of Skyroot Aerospace, named 'Prarambh' (the beginning), will carry three customer payloads and is set for launch from Indian Space Research Organisation's launchpad at Sriharikota.

A launch window between November 12 and 16 has been notified by authorities, the final date being confirmed based on weather conditions, Skyroot Aerospace CEO and co-founder Pawan Kumar Chandana said.

With this mission, Skyroot Aerospace is set to become the first private space company in India to launch a rocket into space, heralding a new era for the space sector which was opened up in 2020



to facilitate private sector participation.

The Vikram-S rocket is a single-stage sub-orbital launch vehicle which would carry three customer payloads and help test and validate the majority of the technologies in the Vikram series of space launch vehicles, Naga Bharath Daka, Chief Operating Officer of Skyroot Aerospace, said in a statement.

Chandana said Skyroot could build and get the Vikram-S rocket mission-ready in such a short time only because of the invaluable support from ISRO and IN-SPaCe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre).

Skyroot's launch vehicles are named 'Vikram' as a tribute to the founder of the Indian space programme and renowned scientist Vikram

Sarabhai.

Based in Hyderabad, Skyroot builds state-of-the-art space launch vehicles for launching commercial satellites to space. It aims to disrupt entry barriers to cost-efficient satellite launch services and space-flight by advancing its mission to make space-flights affordable, reliable and regular for all, the statement said.

# India logs 811 new COVID-19 cases; active tally dips to 13,559

Agency  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

India logged 811 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 4,46,62,952, while the active cases declined to 13,559, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The death toll climbed to 5,30,511 with two fatalities being reported from Maharashtra, the data updated at 8 am stated. The active cases comprise 0.03 per cent of the total

infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate increased to 98.78 per cent, according to the ministry website.

A decrease of 462 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,41,18,882 while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent. According to the ministry's website, 219.75 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far

under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive. 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 went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. The country crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23 last year. It crossed the four-crore mark on January 25 this year.

# Assam Rifles organised Cancer Awareness Lecture

IT News  
Imphal, Nov 9:

On the occasion of National Cancer Awareness Day, Khuga Battalion of Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) organised a Cancer Awareness

Lecture for the inhabitants of border village of Zou Khunuo and Songdoi in Churachandpur district Manipur on 07 Nov 2022.

In India, nearly 1.1 million new cases of Cancer are reportedly annually. Therefore, the lecture was organised to

raise awareness and highlight the significance of early detection, correct diagnosis and timely treatment of the disease.

More than 30 villagers benefitted with the said lecture and appreciated the efforts of Assam Rifles.

# The Seafarers detained in Equatorial Guinea since August

By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai, Nov 9:

Twenty six seafarers, including 16 Indians, on board Crude Oil Tanker "MT Heroic Idun" have been detained by Equatorial Guinea, the Central African country, since August, for alleged violation of the maritime boundary, with no sign of their early release.

In a letter dated November 06, to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Rajya Sabha MP AA Rahim has sought his "urgent intervention" to ensure the release of the 16 Indian crew members detained illegally.

"After being detained the authorities in Equatorial Guinea conducted the investigation and made the ship to pay heavy fine with an assurance to release the ship on

September 28. The owners of the ship paid the fine. But the crew were not released. Although the crew have not been ill-treated, their continued detention has caused mental distress and has led to the deterioration of their health. Now it is said that they are being handed over to the Nigerian authorities. This has caused further panic" Rahim stated.

The Indian embassy in Equatorial Guinea in a tweet on Monday stated there "This Embassy and our High Commission in Abuja are closely working with authorities of Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria for the early release of the crew who are safe and those who were in the Detention Centre have now been shifted to the ship."

As per media reports dated August 21, the Chief of Policy

and Plans, Nigerian Navy, Rear Admiral Saidu Garba, stated "While monitoring the maritime domain on August 7, it was observed that a large crude oil carrier MT Heroic Idun entered the Nigerian maritime environment and headed for Akpo Field without any form of authorisation. The vessel was inspected by the Nigerian Navy Inshore Patrol Craft, NNS Gongola, when the captain of the vessel stated that the ship was without clearance to operate in the field. As such the vessel was ordered to follow NNS Gongola to Bonny anchorage".

However after contacting the master/shipping agent, the Captain stated that he had been told not to take directives from the Nigerian Navy Ship. He also made a broadcast of false piracy attack call to IMB



The sailors on board "MT Heroic Idun" stranded in Equatorial Guinea. (Photo credit @AllSeafarers).

Piracy Reporting Centre to mislead mariners that NNS Gongola was a pirate vessel. As such the Equatorial Guinea Amphibious Ship, "Captain David" was vectored to intercept and arrest MT Heroic Idun on August 12. The vessel is currently being held at Luba Anchorage in Bioko Island, Equatorial Guinea, where the

country is conducting her investigations, while we await diplomatic procedures for handing over the vessel to the Nigerian Navy, Rear Admiral Saidu Garba had said.

All India Seafarers Union in a tweet stated that the crew are accused of being involved in crude oil racketeering.

OSM Statement on He-

roic Idun

However Finn Amund Norbye, Group CEO, OSM Maritime, in a statement said that the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker, "Heroic Idun" was ordered to load a cargo of oil in early August from the Akpo terminal in Nigeria. While awaiting the clearance of papers, the Nigerian navy approached the vessel under cover of darkness. The captain of the ship believed it to be an attempted piracy attack. As such the vessel escaped into international waters.

At the request of the Nigerian navy, the vessel was intercepted by a navy vessel from "Equatorial Guinea" and at gunpoint escorted to Malabo where it is stuck since 13 August, allegedly for not displaying the Equatorial Guinean flag. A fine was paid

at the end of September against a promise of release of the vessel and its crew. However, both the ship and crew remain in captivity.

OSM as Ship Manager for the vessel has now been informed that a decision has been made by the authorities of Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria to move the vessel back to Nigeria for further investigations. The seafarers are being treated like criminals, without any formal legal process. It is nothing short of a shocking maritime injustice.

We must now see urgent action to resolve this situation. OSM together with the Ship Owner, Insurers, Legal advisors, Flag State, Embassies, ITF, and other industry players has been working to bring this to a conclusion, Norbye added.

Contd. from Page 2

# Green energy for international....

Almost 45 years after the end of World War II, ownership of fossil fuel (petroleum) became the focus of another global conflict when Saddam Hussein invaded neighbouring Kuwait.

A win over Kuwait would have made Iraq world's leading energy power, dominating both the Arab and the Persian Gulf regions, home to the bulk of the planet's oil reserves. The US and its allies could not have accepted this dramatic shift in balance of power, if Iraq were to win.

Fast forward to the present day conflict involving Russia and Ukraine. The Donbas region has rich coal reserves. The other parts including the Dnieper-Donetsk region, and the Black Sea of Azov are a rich source of natural gas, an important input for manufacturing fertilisers.

The Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014 was related to control over oil and natural gas reserves in the Black Sea region. Quite like the Ruhr region which had a considerable German population but was occupied by the French and Belgians, this time around the

Donbas, Dnieper, Donetsk and the Luhansk regions has a large Russian speaking population — with both Russia and Ukraine claiming rights over these territories. These prolonged conflicts have led to highly volatile energy prices, hurting the world economy. Take for instance, the Yom-Kippur war of 1973 and the subsequent Saudi embargo, leading to worldwide stagflation. During 1974, to fight the raging inflation that skyrocketed to 11 per cent, the then Fed chairman, Arthur Burns raised the funds rate to 12 per cent, before reducing it to about 5 per cent in 1975. But that did not help as there was a second oil crisis in 1979 with the start of the Iran-Iraq war.

Combating inflation

To tame inflation, Paul Volcker, who was in charge of the Fed at that time, pursued a consistent hawkish policy. Between 1979 and 1981, the Fed increased policy rates from 13.6 per cent to 20 per cent. It took about a decade to tame inflation, which touched 14.5 per cent in the US during the early part of 1980s. However, such

monetary tightening came with a cost — namely, recession (famously touted as Volcker's recession), with the US unemployment rate climbing to 10 per cent. There was collateral damage as well. Countries like Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico which borrowed heavily in dollars to sustain infrastructure investment, defaulted as an appreciating dollar increased the cost of borrowing.

The present events are eerily similar. Many countries in Asia (Pakistan and Sri Lanka), Europe (UK) and in Latin America (Argentina) are suffering because of an appreciating dollar, an outcome of a hawkish monetary policy undertaken by Fed Chairman Jerome Powell.

The 2022 inflation is not as bad as what the US witnessed during the late 1970s; but it remains the worst inflation in decades. Aggressive monetary tightening, with the Fed increasing the policy rate by 300 basis points since March 2022, has led to an increase in the yield on one-year US treasury securities, from 1.86 per cent in March 1 2022 to 4.12 per cent on September 9, 2022.

More such bouts of monetary tightening may follow, and that may spell bad news for emerging and developing economies. The good news, however, is that central banks around the world are not averse to raising rates on par with inflation, thereby snuffing out inflation expectations that could feed into a wage-price spiral. However, the rate hikes the world over are likely to peak sooner than later, as fears of a recession loom large.

Inflation volatility is the outcome of our excessive dependence on fossil fuels, and as a result there are conflicts, dictatorships, and climate change. An uncertain economic environment instigates fear and induces high defence spending that could otherwise be spent on social welfare measures and to arrest a degrading environment. A decisive shift towards renewable energy could alter this destructive chain of events.

Unlike fossil fuels, sources of green energy — sunlight, water, wind — are much less localised. That could eliminate the reason for many territorial conflicts.

# Baba Farid Prof. (Dr.) R.K. Uppal, awarded MTC Global Fellow Membership

IT Correspondent  
Bathinda (Punjab), Nov 9:

MTC Global certify Professor Rajinder Kumar Uppal, Principal, Baba Farid College of Management and Technology, Bathinda, as Fellow member on 17th day of Oct., 2022 having satisfied the organization's membership criteria and he is committed to follow its professional standards. This is a rare professional fellow membership in MTC Global Group. Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal, a prolific writer, a Man of Letters, an acclaimed academician, research stalwart, and the more ingenious guide has won accolades not only in the academic field but also in the genre of research. He is also a frequent reviewer, discussant, and on session chair for several professional organizations. Truly, he is a visionary in the field of banking and finance, with exceptional theoretical and applied contributions in the subject. Little did he know that this inclination towards a subject could ignite his passion in



ways that would lead him to make global records. Completing the Maximum Number of Major Post-Doctoral Research Projects on Banking and Finance, he has registered his name in the India Book of Records, Asia Book of Records, International Book of Records, and World Book of Records.

Orville University awarded D.Litt. International Peace University awarded honorary D.Litt 2019 and Nelson Mandela University, USA also awarded Doctor of Letters to Dr. Uppal. University of South America also awarded honorary D.Litt. International Journal; Pune conferred the Best Reviewer Award on him. His monumental work encouraged various national

organizations to honor such an inclusive academic and research stalwart with Jewel of India Award, Best Educationist Award, Shatya Shriomani Puraskar, Pride of India Award and Excellent Research Award by Punjab Commerce and Management Association respectively. This colossal figure earned Life Time Achievement Award from Dashmesh Girls College, Badal for his exemplary service to the cause of education. Deputy speaker, Punjab assembly, S. Ajab Singh Bhatti also awarded Life Time Achievement award. Malout administration honored Dr. Uppal during 71th R-Public Day celebration due to unparalleled contribution in the field of higher education and quality research. Nelson Mandela University Awarded International Dr. Abdul Kalam Best Economist Innovative Award for the year 2019. He was also awarded Eminence Social Scientist I am thankful to Prof. Dr. Bholanath Dutta, President of MTC Global.

# Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla says effective use of the RTI will help in building a developed and corruption-free India

PIB  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla today said that the main aim of the Right to Information Act is to empower citizens, bringing transparency, getting system rid of corruption and taking the democracy to the hands of the people of the country in true sense. Speaking at the 15th Annual Convention of Central Information Commission titled, "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav: Citizen - centric Governance through RTI" at Vigyan Bhawan, Om Birla said that effective use of the RTI will help in building a developed and corruption-free India, as envisioned by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, transparency and Citizen-centricity are the hallmark of the Modi governance model. Addressing the 15th Annual Convention of Central Information Commission titled, "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav: Citizen - centric Governance through RTI" at Vigyan Bhawan, Dr Jitendra Singh said, ever since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took over in 2014, transparency, accountability and citizen-centricity became the hallmark of the Governance Model. He said that in the last over eight years, every conscious decision was taken to strengthen the independence and resources of the Information Commission.

The Minister noted that empowered citizens are an important pillar of democracy and the Central Information Commission will continue to work for empowering the people



through information.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, RTI Act is not a standalone law, but it is part of the larger narrative of strengthening Indian democracy, ensuring transparency in governance and building capacities of the common citizen to enable him to take informed decisions and choices. Above all, it is about nurturing the trust between citizen and the state - where both must have faith in each other, the Minister added.

Dr Jitendra Singh noted that it was during the Modi government that a 24-hour portal service was introduced for e-filing of the RTI applications during any part of the day or night and from any part of the country or abroad. He added that technology has been harnessed for developing mobile based applications, e-filing, e-hearing, e-notification etc., facilitating the task of information seekers in availing remedies under the law. The mobile app developed by CIC enabled citizens to file appeals with ease, besides using technology for audio video hearing of cases. The Minister said, as a result, the Central Information Commission has succeeded in reducing the pendency from 38116 cases in

the year 2020-21 to 23405 cases in the year 2021-22.

Referring to indiscriminate filing of RTI applications in an era of Information Explosion, Dr Jitendra Singh humbly appealed to check before filing the application, whether the desired information is already existing in the public domain or not. He elaborated that to-day all major decisions and information are in the public domain and we have achieved transparency with credibility.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, despite the challenges posed by the unprecedented pandemic, earnest efforts were made by CIC and SICs to dispose of RTI second appeals and complaints and some Commissions even exceeded pre-Pandemic figures of disposal during certain periods. He also mentioned that June 2020 saw higher disposal of cases in CIC in comparison to pre-pandemic year of 2019. The Minister said, this became possible due to the innovative approach of shifting into virtual mode (audio-video) for hearing and disposal of cases.

Dr Jitendra Singh also pointed out that it was during the challenging times of pandemic in May, 2020, the Central Information Commission

started entertaining, hearing and disposing of RTIs from the newly created Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, through virtual means, after the passing of J&K Reorganisation Act 2019. He said, applicants from J&K and Ladakh were allowed to file RTI applications from home and even for appeals to the CIC. He added that the significant change now is that the non-domiciles and Non-State subjects of Jammu & Kashmir will also now be entitled to file RTI related to Union Territory issues or agencies.

Dr Jitendra Singh lauded Central Information Commission for achieving consistent decline in pendency with corresponding rise in disposal of the Right to Information (RTI) appeals.

Chief Information Commissioner, YK Sinha, in his address, said that the level of transparency and accountability of the government have increased through RTI. He said that it has also led to controlling the corrupt practices in the system.

Chief Information Commissioners of States and Union Territories and other officials of the Central Information Commission were also present during the event.

## City scribes to observe National Press Day

IT Correspondent  
Guwahati, Nov 9:

The city-based scribes will observe the National Press Day on 16 November commemorating the day since the Press Council of India (PCI) started functioning in 1966, and discuss the state of press

freedom in Northeast and India as a whole along with the relentless threats, pitfalls and challenges to the journalists after the steady invasion of digital media users.

Media persons, under the banner of proposed Assam Union of Journalists, to be affiliated by Indian Journalists

Union (www.indianjournalistsunion.com) are requested to arrive at Hotel Blue Moon, Ujan Bajar (near Gauhati High Court) at 11 am on 16 November. Former publisher of Assam Express newspaper, Deepak Gogoi will host the program which will culminate at 2 pm.

Contd. from Page 1

## Education (S) signs Memorandum....

Under the scheme, the faculty development program will consist of series of sessions on the "Facilitate to Engage" course towards effective teaching techniques: instructional design and content creation; introduction and awareness to emerging and digital technologies, how to leverage online platform for effective

learner engagement; authoring courses and assessments on online platforms.

The program will be delivered online virtually by Infosys experts and in addition, teachers can up-skill themselves.

Infosys Springboard also empowers students through the present scheme of : Student

to learn by doing and develop holistically in preparation for emerging jobs and career opportunities; teaches to better collaborate with learners on their skilling journey using the platform's engagement features; motivating to learn; leveraging the Teacher-Student relationship; Just-in-time Learning, etc.

## Justice D Y Chandrachud sworn in...

Recently, Justice Chandrachud, as the senior-most judge after then CJI Lalit, was among the two judges of the apex court Collegium who had objected to the method of "circulation" adopted for eliciting views of its members on the appointment of judges to the top court.

On September 30, a bench headed by him sat till 9:10 pm, around five hours beyond the regular working hours of the apex court, to hear 75 cases to clear the board before the onset of the Dussehra vacation.

In a landmark verdict delivered in February 2020, a bench headed by him had directed that women officers in the Army be granted permanent commission and command postings, rejecting the Centre's stand of their physiological limitations as being based on "sex stereotypes" and "gender discrimination against women".

Later, the bench had also paved the way for granting permanent commission to women officers in Indian Navy, saying a

level-playing field ensures that women have the opportunity to overcome "histories of discrimination".

Justice Chandrachud, who has played a pivotal role in digitisation of the judiciary, has been part of several Constitution benches.

On November 9, 2019, the apex court in a unanimous verdict cleared the way for the construction of a Ram Temple at the disputed site in Ayodhya and directed the Centre to allot a five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a mosque.

Justice Chandrachud was part of the five-judge Constitution bench which dealt with that case. He had written the lead judgement for a nine-judge Constitution bench in the Justice K S Puttaswamy versus Union of India case in which it was unanimously held that Right to Privacy constituted a fundamental right.

He was also part of a five-judge Constitution bench that unanimously decriminalised part of the 158-year-old colonial law

under IPC section 377 which criminalises consensual "unnatural" sex between consenting adults, saying it violated the rights to equality.

In another five-judge bench, Justice Chandrachud in a unanimous verdict held IPC section 497, which criminalised adultery, unconstitutional on the ground of being arbitrary, archaic and violative of the Right to Equality and Privacy.

In a strong dissent, Justice Chandrachud differed with other members of a five-judge Constitution bench which, by a majority verdict, upheld the constitutional validity of Aadhaar.

He held the unique biometric identity number to be unconstitutional and violative of fundamental rights.

He had concurred with the majority verdict in the Sabarimala case in holding that the practice of prohibiting women of menstruating age from entering the temple was discriminatory and violative of women's fundamental rights.

## Sports

## Asian Boxing Championships: Lovlina Borgohain and Shiva Thapa to lead India's gold medal charge

Agency  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

Olympic bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain and Shiva Thapa will spearhead the Indian challenge as 12 pugilists from the country aim to seal their berth in the Asian Boxing Championships finals in Amman, Jordan here from Wednesday.

The semi-final bouts for the women's category will begin on Wednesday and will be followed by the men's last-four contests on Thursday.

The Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist Lovlina (75kg), who is contesting in this weight category at an international tournament for the first time, will take on Seong Suyeon of the Korea in her semi-final bout.

Alongside Lovlina, the 2022 world championships bronze medalist Parveen (63kg) will be up against Urandbileg Shintsetseg of Mongolia while competition debutant Preeti (57kg) will be involved in a tough match-up against the Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Irie Sena of Japan.

The other four women in



semi-final action will be Alfiya Pathan (81+kg), Saweety (81kg), Ankushita Boro (75kg), and Minakshi (52kg).

In the men's category, Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) who became the most decorated Asian champion after ensuring his sixth medal in the competition will face two-time Asian Championships medalist Bakhtodur Usmonov of Tajikistan.

Two-time Commonwealth bronze medalist Mohammad Hussamuddin (57kg) will go head to head against the 2021

world championships silver medalist Serik Temirzhanov of Kazakhstan.

The other three men in semi-final action will be Narender (92+kg), Sumit (75kg), and Govind Kumar Sahani (48kg).

Narender (92+kg) dominated his way to the semis by comfortably defeating Iman Ramezanpourdelavar of Iran with a unanimous 5:0 verdict late on Monday night.

India's total medal count of 12 in this year's edition of the

tournament is the third highest among all competing nations.

The women pugilists of the country have secured seven medals which ranks them second in the standings among all nations while the men's total tally of five medals places them joint third alongside Jordan and Mongolia in their respective rankings.

The final of the tournament for the women's category will take place on Friday and the men's final bouts will be conducted on Saturday.

## India to host women's World Boxing Championship next year: Boxing Federation of India

Agency  
New Delhi, Nov 9:

India will host the women's world boxing championships in 2023 in New Delhi, two years after the country was stripped of the hosting rights of men's event for not paying the requisite fee to the global governing body.

India has never conducted the men's world championship but it will be the third time that the elite women's competition will be held in the country having conducted the championships in 2006 and 2018 in New Delhi.

"We have got the hosting rights of women's world championship and are looking to host the event around the end of March and first week of April," Boxing Federation of India (BFI) Secretary General Hemanta Kalita told PTI.

International Boxing Association (IBA) President Umar Kremlev is on his maiden visit to the country and the dates of the marquee event will be finalised during the trip.

"The dates of the event are



yet to be finalised. We will sit down with the IBA president and reach an agreement during his trip," Kalita added.

The tournament is likely to be held at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

The hosting rights of the event to India comes as a significant development as BFI had lost the hosting rights of the 2021 event to Serbia after failing to pay the host fee, prompting the International Boxing Association, then known as (AIBA), to terminate

its agreement. At the last edition of the women's event in Turkey, India had returned with a haul of three medals, including Nikhat Zareen's gold in the flyweight category.

Kremlev had recently announced that the men's world championship, to be held in Tashkent next year in May, will see the prize money go double from the previous edition.

It is to be seen if the world body announces the same for the women's event.