

Impressed with projects exhibited at IT Startup Challenge, says CM N. Biren



IT News
Imphal, Oct 20:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said that he was quite impressed by the students and their projects at the "Destination Infinity – Manipur IT Startup Challenge" at the Innovation Hub, Information Technology Park, Mantripukhri today.

N. Biren Singh, accompanied by Chief Secretary Dr. Rajesh Kumar and Information Technology Director Shri N. Deben was interacting with media persons as part of the "Destination Infinity – Manipur IT Startup Challenge".

During the interaction, the Chief Minister appreciated the students exhibiting their projects at the hub and said that the projects exhibited today by the young students are quite encouraging and innovative, and a few will be taken up as pilot projects soon, he added.

Minister Biswajit elected as MBA president

IT News
Imphal, Oct 20:

Forest & Environment and Power Minister Thangam Biswajit has been elected as president of the Manipur Badminton Association (MBA) for the term 2022-2026.

In a press release, Manipur Badminton Association (MBA) election returning officer M Nilachandra informed that GA Chittaranjan Sharma, IK Muivah, Heny Luny, P Ranakumar Singh, and MH Moon have been elected as vice presidents of the association, while Hajirimaayum Sanjeev Sharma will be the secretary, Ashangbam Laiba Meitei and Moirangthem Sanatomba Singh, joint secretaries; and Wahengbam Premkumar Singh, treasurer.

Nilachandra added that Heikrujam Jugin Singh, BS Augustine, Yumnam Bale, Kh Ranjit Singh, and T Dineswar Singh have also been appointed as executive members of the Association.

N. Biren Singh said that the Innovation Hub, Manipur IT Park at Mantripukhri, inaugurated on March 15, 2021, is the first IT Innovation Hub in North East India.

Stating that certain prototypes based on IOT have been developed in the hub, including flood monitoring system and early warning system for rivers, smart control of home appliances and weighing machine with smart detection and sales reporting based on cloud reporting and management, the Chief Minister said some of the prototypes exhibited to-

day when implemented practically could be quite beneficial for the State.

The Chief Minister also said that a MoU has been signed with MiKroTik for exploring possibilities in certifying network engineers for next generation network infrastructure.

He said that the main objective of the hub is bringing out new ideas and generating new products in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Atmanirbhar and initiatives of Vocal for Local.

The Centre, the Chief Minister said, is roughly spread

across 4000 sq.ft with three main laboratories of Robotics laboratory, Artificial Intelligence Laboratory and Internet of Things Lab.

N. Biren Singh also highlighted some events and activities taken up by the hub, and said 162 students have been trained on basics of IoT and 22 lecture series on emerging technologies taken up and online seminars.

He continued that around 1200 students from various institutes have visited the hub for exposure on various emerging technologies and that 26 students have completed internship as a part of the academic project.

It is due to education that today our youth are able to enjoy the changes happening across the world in the IT, Science and Technology sectors, N. Biren Singh said.

In an appeal to the youth of the State, the Chief Minister said let us concentrate on education and be a part of the global IT change happening around the world. We don't lack talents, but our effort seems to be lacking, he said adding that the youths should have constructive and positive mindset.

Later, the Chief Minister also inspected the ongoing works at the IT SEZ and New Secretariat complex.

Ethnicity & Insurgency should not hold Manipur back – Panelists of NE Seminar



IT News
Imphal, Oct 20:

The NE Seminar organised by Assam Rifles at Convention Centre raised hope & Optimism and showcased the Manipur marching beyond Ethnicity & Insurgency. It was evident from a large scale attendance in excess of 650 with over 400 youth & students besides people from all strata of society.

The event was conducted in two sessions. The first plenary session was chaired by Jaideep Saikia on the topic "The Troubled Neighbour – Turbulent Myanmar: Implications and impact". The panelists of the first session included Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, former Ambassador to Myanmar, HK Jain, a Myanmar expert, and Yudhvir Shahrawat, former Chairman of Land Ports Authority of India. A virtual talk was also delivered by Dr. Alex Waterman of Leeds Uni-

versity, United Kingdom on the impact of the "Naga Peace Process in Manipur". The second plenary session was chaired by veteran Lt Gen K H Singh (Retd) on the topic "Past v/s Future: Shedding the Historical Baggage in Manipur. Education Minister of Manipur Th Basanta Singh, renowned journalists Subir Bhaumik and Pradip Phanboubam enlightened the audience on the roadmap for a peaceful and prosperous future in Manipur.

CM N Biren Singh praised the role of Assam Rifles under DG AR in restoring normalcy by dint of their perseverance and hard work. He spoke in synchronization with local panelist Pradip Phanboubam that it was extremely important to move beyond the troubled past for a glorious future of the state. The CM also thanked the Security Forces for their cooperation in facilitating the exten-

sion of de-notified areas and highlighted that it was extremely important for all stakeholders to reach out to each other. All the panelists in both plenary Sessions were unanimous in their opinion that Manipur was on the cusp of transformation and normalization & progress made so far need to be exploited to see the state moving beyond Ethnicity & Insurgency.

DG AR assured the audience that Assam Rifles will continue to remain steadfast in ensuring peace, progress and prosperity of Manipur & that there was no objection to the relocation of Canchipur post requested by CM provided the basic amenities like approach road, water, and electricity were taken care of by state administration. He thanked the audience for large-scale attendance and enthusiastic participation, which made the event a great success.

Mission LiFE will help in fighting climate crisis: PM Modi launches initiative with UN Chief in Gujarat



Agency
New Delhi, Oct 20:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) in the presence of António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations at the Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar, Kevadia.

Explaining the theme of Mission LiFE, PM Modi said, "It is a lifestyle of the planet, for the planet and by the planet." "The issue of Climate change is being witnessed everywhere, our glaciers are melting, rivers are drying up... Mission LiFE will help in fighting climate crisis," he emphasised.

"A perception was created that climate change is merely a policy-related issue and that either governments or international institutions will take steps regarding it. But now, people are feeling the effects of climate change," he added,

as quoted by news agency.

Citing daily practices that have an environmental impact, PM Modi further asserted, "some people prefer dropping AC temperatures to 17 degrees, this creates a negative impact on the environment. Use cycles while going to gyms, doing our bit to change our lifestyles can be of help to the environment."

He highlighted that "reuse, reduce, and recycle" are part of India's traditions and culture. "We need to bring back these practices and work towards making sustainable choices," the Prime Minister said.

He concluded his address by quoting "Prakriti rakshati rakshita", meaning Nature protects those who protect it. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in his address quoted Mahatma Gandhi and said, "World has enough to meet everyone's needs but not greed... unfortunately in recent times greed is prevailing

over need and we need to reverse it."

At the global launch of 'Mission LiFE' in Gujarat, he emphasised that "individuals and communities can and must be a part of the solution of protecting our planet and our collective future."

"G20 countries account for 80% of global greenhouse gas emissions but it also represents 80% of global GDP. G20 combined as resources, they have the power to end the war against nature and set us on course towards sustainable living," the United Nations Chief mentioned.

He stressed, "developed countries must follow through on their commitments to provide meaningful financial and technological support to countries like India throughout this transition. We need to unleash a renewables revolution and look forward to working with India on this."

contd. on page 4

JMC received 3rd Best Performing Award in PMAY



IT Correspondent
Jiribam, Oct 20:

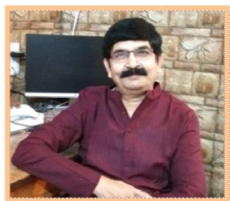
Jiribam Municipal Council received the 3rd Best Performing Municipal Council in Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Housing for All in India and a special award for recognition to the state with the best visibility and coverage. Yesterday,

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the India Urban Housing Conclave 2022 in Rajkot. The conclave will run from October 19 to October 21. Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, presented the award during the first day of the conclave.

For the Jiribam municipal council, Moirangthem Surjit

Singh Executive Officer, A. Mannohan Singh Section Officer and MAHUD director Robert Singh Kshetrimayum IAS, Soram Arunjit MIS specialist, and R. K. Johny Singh Civil Engineer received the award. The competition is organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.

Remembering the heroic efforts, patriotism and devotion of the police personnel



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

21st October is observed as Police Commemoration Day. It is a national holiday to pay tribute to the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. It is also a day to express gratitude to the officers and the families of those who continue to serve and protect us every day. "The Wall of Valour" – 30 feet tall granite sculpture stands at a police memorial with the names of over 35,000 martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty and reminds them of their valour and glory. This is day is observed as Martyr's Day in all police

forces of India

Since Independence, 34,832 Police personnel have sacrificed their lives for safeguarding the integrity of the nation and providing security to people of this country. Since Independence, 23,000 Indian Army soldiers have made supreme sacrifice. If we deeply go to the reality, with the increasing rate of crimes, today, the shortage of manpower has an impact both on crime prevention and detection. With the increasing rate of crimes, shortage of manpower will have an impact both on crime prevention and detection. Inspectors and SIs at the police station have little time to focus on all cases and investigation is usually confined to sensational cases or grave crimes. From problems relating to police organisation, infrastructure and environment to obsolete weaponry and intelligence gathering techniques to shortage of manpower to corruption, police force in the country is not in a good shape.

There are Police personnel who are also complaining of stress due to over working. Deployment of police for traffic regulation and accident-prevention activities also takes a beating. There are occasion where most of the time Police personnel goes attending to day-to-day functions like VIP security, public agitations etc. For every Indian VIP, there are three police personnel. There are as many as 47,557 cops protecting 14,842 VIPs across the country which comes to a ratio of three to one. The incidents of chain and bag snatching have also been reported frequently across the city. While residents and experts stress the need for increased patrolling, the question many ask if there are enough policemen to do the job. The shortage of staff often leads to delay in investigation and filing of charge-sheet in cognizable offences. There should be no compromise in the deployment of men for vehicle checks, night patrolling and traffic regulation. Unlike the Assembly elections where Central para military forces were roped in for security, the State police have to manage the local body polls with the available strength. With no major recruitment done in recent times and thousands of police personnel retiring each year, the vacancies are set to increase, making it difficult for police to manage the election along with routine duties. The increasingly sedentary lifestyle of younger generations, the increased occurrence of obesity, and the relatively low fitness level of so many people have also led to a smaller group of potential police officer candidates. There is a huge manpower shortage in the police department. The police-population ratio, currently 192 policemen per lakh population, is less than what is recommended by UN i.e. 222 policemen per lakh. There is now a serious requirement for the execution of the proposed system as the city population is growing and a stronger police force is needed to tackle crime and L & O situations. It is also reported that more and more police personnel were being diagnosed for hypertension, diabetes and stress-related ailments in the annual health screening camps. The situation is more or less the same in many stations in the city where police personnel are forced to put in extra hours. Therefore, the State Government should recruit personnel on a war footing.

(The author is a Free-lance Journalist, Writer & Cartoonist)

Raksha Mantri hosts Indian Ocean Region Plus Defence Ministers' Conclave on the sidelines of Defexpo 2022

By: Lt Col Manish Shrivastava

After the huge success of 'Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Defence Ministers' Conclave' held in February 2021, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh hosted IOR+ Defence Ministers' Conclave on the sidelines of 12th DefExpo in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on October 19, 2022. The conclave was attended by 40 countries, with 22 ministers addressing the conference, some of them in hybrid mode. The broad theme was 'Challenges Opportunities and Collaborations in the Indian Ocean'. It facilitated dialogue towards fostering a stable and peaceful Indian Ocean, with strategic and commercial partnerships within the IOR, in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

Delivering the keynote address, Rajnath Singh termed the conclave as an initiative to promote dialogue in an institutional and cooperative environment that can foster peace, stability & prosperity in the IOR. He stated that this forum has been named IOR+ as the idea of this conclave is shared responsibility and prosperity. "We believe in a multi-aligned policy which is realised through engagements with multiple stakeholders, so that views and concerns of all can be discussed and addressed for a prosperous future for all. India is willing to work with all the stakeholders to ensure a rules-based maritime order to the benefit of all in the region," he said.

The Raksha Mantri described the Prime Minister's vision of SAGAR as the theme of New Delhi's Indian Ocean Policy. He quoted the Prime Minister "Our vision for the Indian Ocean Region is rooted in advancing cooperation in our region and to use our capabilities for the benefit of all in our common maritime home".

Rajnath Singh cited Martin Luther King Junior's statement 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere', stating that it holds the most relevance in this era of high connectivity and interdependence.

"When peace and security of any region is threatened, the entire world feels its impact in multiple ways. The recent Ukrainian conflict showed how its ripple effects could adversely impact the energy and food security for the most vulnerable countries. Similarly, failing states pose a challenge not only to their region, but also to the world at large, since these states may act as nurseries of terrorism, piracy and trafficking. We believe that engaging our partner countries through forums like this allows us to appreciate each other's concerns and helps create a global order which is beneficial to all of us," he said.

The Raksha Mantri called for collective efforts towards addressing the present and emerging threats to security & stability in the IOR. He stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already outlined India's commitment and vision to tackle global concerns in his dynamic five 'S' vision, which comprises Samman, Samvaad, Sahyog, Shanti and Samridhi (Respect, Dialogue, Cooperation, Peace and Prosperity). Rajnath Singh voiced India's determination to play a responsible role and contribute to regional and global security. "We have demonstrated our commitment in organizational as well as operational aspects at various bilateral and multilateral forums of the IOR and look forward to furthering our engagement to ensure that the region takes its rightful place as the driving engine of the global economy in the near future," he said.

Rajnath Singh listed out shared challenges in the IOR such as spread of terrorism through sea routes, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, piracy and regional and global food security. He asserted that terrorism, exported, supported or coordinated through maritime routes remains a major concern and India continues to guard against the spread of the menace. He appreciated the fact that piracy has been suppressed in the West-Indian Ocean with concerted in-

ternational effort and sustained efforts must continue to deter the menace.

On IUU fishing, the Raksha Mantri called for a multi-national effort for compilation, collation and sharing of surveillance data, collected from diverse sources, i.e., satellites, radar, reconnaissance planes or human intelligence. It will help in identifying actors with irregular or threatening behaviour, which then will have to be countered resolutely, he said.

Rajnath Singh reiterated that India unequivocally rejects any hierarchical conception of global order and the pretensions of moral superiority in international relations. He asserted that New Delhi believes in a global order based on mutual respect and benefit of every country. "We do not subscribe to the zero-sum paradigm of strategic competition. Rather, we believe in a win-win paradigm of international relations. India looks forward to working with the representatives of Government, Business and Academia of our partner countries for promoting cooperation and closer interaction among the nations, seeking peace and stability of IOR," he said.

The Raksha Mantri termed sustainable exploitation of maritime resources as an important means for growth and development of nations across the IOR in the 21st century. He called for a collaborative effort in ensuring that the maritime expanse of the Indian Ocean is peaceful and optimally harnessed for ensuring regional and global food security. "We have demonstrated our respect for a rules-based order and continue to stress on the need to nurture Indian Ocean as a region of peace and stability. We would like to reiterate that interdependence instead of dominance is the only way to keep this important trade and energy waterway stable. With half the world's container shipment, one-third of its bulk cargo traffic and two thirds of oil shipments being carried across it, the IOR clearly assumes a

very important place in our international affairs," he said.

Rajnath Singh reiterated the Government's commitment to build capacities of partner countries by providing ships, maritime aircraft, Coastal Radar and other Surveillance systems, training, access to Indian shipyards and availability of trained manpower for indigenous development of similar capacities. He stated that the Aerospace & Defence sector in India has come a long way, with private and public sector industries at the forefront of developing state-of-the-art technologies.

"The recent commissioning of first indigenously constructed Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant, induction of the indigenously developed Attack Helicopter, Prachand, etc. are the milestones in our march towards developing indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities. The Indian aerospace and defence industries present an attractive and significant opportunity for foreign companies to take their cooperation to newer levels. India is ready to supply various types of Missile systems, Light Combat Aircrafts/Helicopters, Multi-Purpose Light Transport aircraft, Warship and Patrol Vessels, Artillery Gun systems, Tanks, Radars, Military Vehicles, Electronic Warfare Systems and other weapons systems to the friendly IOR countries," the Raksha Mantri said.

Rajnath Singh urged the IOR countries to leverage the R&D ecosystem created by the Government in India for the mutual benefit for all. He said, with the right policies and framework, India is poised to be a global R&D hub. "Our start-up ecosystem, particularly in the defence sector, is one of the world's biggest and is playing a significant role in crafting a self-reliant India. Policies and frameworks are now in place for fostering innovation and technology development in defence and aerospace industry. We have a lot to learn from our partner countries, and a lot to share with them," he said.

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Need to Know About Green Crackers Celebrate Pollution-Free Diwali



By: Vijay GarG

What is the difference between conventional firecrackers and green crackers?

Green crackers have low thermite content, and minimum usage of aluminium. They don't contain barium compounds which are used to get the green colour. Barium nitrate is a metal oxide that adds to air and noise pollution. Green crackers, instead, use potassium nitrate as an oxidant. Conventional crackers use black powder, oxidising agents like nitrates, chlorates and perchlorates; reducing agents like sulphur and charcoal, and colouring agents like barium and binders like dextrin (starch).

Why have they been introduced?

In a landmark judgment on October 23, 2018, just before Diwali, the Supreme Court banned the use of fireworks other than green crackers. This was on writ petitions filed by a few residents of Delhi in September 2015, seeking a ban on the sale of firecrackers as they were concerned about increasing air pollution. The manufacture of joint crackers and the use of barium, a key chemical in the manufacture of several fireworks and sparklers, was banned. The court reconfirmed the ban on barium in 2021.

Are green crackers available in

the market?

Manufacturers in Sivakasi, the capital of firecrackers in India, claim they only produce green crackers. Retailers also claim they sell only green crackers. However, it is difficult for the layman to identify a conventional cracker and a green cracker from the wrapper.

How has been the enforcement of this order?

The state pollution control boards are responsible for ensuring that manufacturers produce only green crackers, and that retail shops sell only green crackers. However, in the first two years after the court order was passed, there was no clarity on green crackers, and the subsequent two years were lost due to the pandemic. This year has been subdued as manufacturers have substantially reduced production awaiting a favourable ruling from the court.

How has all this impacted manufacturers?

Before the ban, the small town of Sivakasi manufactured fireworks valued at over 1,600 crore. Over 1,000 units employed nearly three lakh direct employees, and another five lakh indirect employees, mainly with thousands of vendors. In 2019, the industry lost considerably due to the confusion over 'green' crackers. The pandemic aggravated the situation for the industry for the next two years. This year, production has dropped by 50 per cent over the last year.

An open letter to my mother



By: Dayananda Thiyam

loving mother is alive. But for those who have lost their mother, all the mothers in the world can be your mother. A mother is not only the one who is blood related to you but those who love and take care of you wholeheartedly.

When I was writing this article, a question came to my mind. That question kept distracting me. I tried really hard to find the answer to that question but all in vain. Should the mother have to take care of their children until she gets old or till the point she leaves for heaven? This is the question I am struggling to find the answer to.

The role of a mother is very large and could not be compared to anything in this world. When I was a teenager, I felt very annoyed with my mother for carrying about me so much. It even sometimes makes me feel very chained. But now, I have realized the value of caring from my mother. I know how to say this but - that carrying from my mother evolves into love and then finally it goes way inside my heart. I still remember my mother took me hand in hand for the first day of school. Funny how small I was - holding the big hand or rather the fingers of my mother, scared of crossing the road, scared of seeing the fast vehicles, mixed emotions all over. I was also thinking how my teacher would be - will she be like my mother? Funny me.

Coming back to the relationship between me and my mother, I don't usually keep any secrets from my

mother. Honestly - we are more like friends. Funny but - I even share stories of relationships. You know what! When I share all this with my mother, it gives my mother a high chance or a clear idea of who I am, so that when I go down a wrong path she can always correct me. I know - I have also seen some of my friends who don't really share anything with their parents. You know why they are not sharing anything? Maybe because they are afraid that their parents might think they are bad or that they are below their expectations.

In 20 years of my human experience on this planet earth, I have seen that there is a high chance that those who don't share much with their parents always end up falling in the wrong path of life. Sadly, I have close friends who now have started using drugs just because of not being open to their parents. With all the things that I am sharing with you all today, I am not suggesting that you should be open to your parents and parents should also allow anything that their children say. But all that I am putting is, it gives a chance to rectify some mistakes.

I would not carry on, let me end here. Love your mother, or parents in common - just be friends with them because they also want to be friends with you. Just share anything with them, they will never judge you.

(The writer is an ex-student of Herbert School Changangai, Impal West.)

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Launch of Integrated Pensioners' Portal aimed at "Ease of Living" for the Central Govt Pensioners

PIB
New Delhi, Oct 20:

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (IC) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS of Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions launched the Integrated Pensioners' Portal on October 18, 2022 at Vigyan Bhawan New Delhi. The Portal, Bhavishya 9.0 version, has been developed in collaboration with State Bank of India and aims at enhancing "Ease of Living" for the Central Government Pensioners. All the remaining 16 Pension disbursing banks shall also begin their integration with Integrated Pensioners Portal.

During an interaction with the beneficiaries of Bhavishya portal on June 15, 2022, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Minister of State had suggested setting up of a Single Pensioners' Portal for Ease of Living of pensioners. Accordingly, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) developed an Integrated Pensioners' Portal using the Bhavishya Portal as the base portal, to provide a Single Pensioners' Portal. BHAVISHYA has recently been rated as the 3rd best portal among all Government of India service portals by National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA). The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) therefore chose this End-to-End digitized portal for the integration with BHAVISHYA as the base portal which shall finally become a single window for all Central Government Pensioners. The Integrated Pensioners' Portal incorporates various stand-alone Portals of DoPPW viz. BHAVISHYA, CPENGGRAMS, ANUBHAV, SANKALP, ANUDAAN etc. & Banks' portals so as to provide multiple services from a single window.

State Bank of India is the first pension disbursing Bank to integrate its Pension Seva Portal with BHAVISHYA in record time. The process of integration with all the Pension Disbursing Banks has commenced. This integration is a milestone development and shall enable Pensioners to get all information and services at one place with a single login. It will also provide an opportunity to all banks to showcase their services, enabling pensioners to select a bank based on the services provided and geographical location. Initially the services shall be available to 1.7 lakh Central Government Civil pensioners whose cases have been processed through Bhavishya and subsequently shall be extended to all the central government pensioners.

During the launch, Dr Jitendra Singh said, BHAVISHYA, a Portal for Pension Payment and Tracking System is being integrated with Pension Seva portal of SBI and this would enable Pensioners to get all information and services at one place with single login. On completion of all phases of this integration the retirees can choose a Bank and Branch for opening an online Pension Account, check their monthly pension slips, Form 16, Status of Life Certificate as well as change their Pension Disbursing Bank through BHAVISHYA.

India sees marginal spike in Covid cases with 2,141 infections in 24 hours

Agency
New Delhi, Oct 20:

India saw a single day rise of 2,141 coronavirus infections, taking the tally of COVID-19 cases 4,46,36,517, while the active cases declined to 25,510, according to the government data updated on Thursday.

The death toll climbed to 5,28,943 with 20 fatalities, which include 13 deaths reconciled by Kerala, the data updated by the Union health ministry at 8 am stated.

Of the seven fresh fatalities, three were reported from Maharashtra and one each from Karnataka, Punjab, Uttar

Pradesh and West Bengal.

The active cases constitute 0.06 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate increased to 98.76 per cent, the ministry said.

There has been a decrease of 458 cases in the active caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 0.85 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was 0.97 per cent, the health ministry said.

The number of recoveries increased to 4,40,82,064, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent.

According to the ministry, 219.46 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.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4, three crore on June 23 last year and four crore on January 25 this year.

Four PFI activists arrested by Maharashtra ATS from Panvel near Navi Mumbai

By: Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Oct 20:

Based on specific inputs, the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) arrested four activists of the proscribed Popular Front of India (PFI) from Panvel in Raigad district, about 50 km from Navi Mumbai, on Thursday.

Those arrested included Abdul Raheem, Secretary of the banned outfit's Panvel committee, a local member of the banned outfit's state expansion committee and two other workers, the official sources said.

The ATS had specific information about a meeting of two functionaries of the PFI and few workers in Panvel, despite a ban imposed on the PFI by the Government of India.

After questioning, all the four were placed under arrest in a case registered at the Kalachowki unit of the ATS in Mumbai under section 10 of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Further probe into the case is on.

The Maharashtra ATS booked 22 PFI activists from different parts of Maharashtra as part of the nationwide crack-

down by the National Investigating Agency (NIA) and Enforcement Directorate, in which over 170 people allegedly linked with the PFI from 08 states were detained last month.

The PFI is an Indian Muslim political organisation, that engages in a radical and exclusivist style of Muslim minority politics. Formed to counter Hindutva groups, it was banned by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs under Unlawful Activities Act on September 28 for a period of five years.

The ban has also been im-

posed on its fronts including Rehab India Foundation (RIF), Campus Front of India (CFI), All India Imams Council (AIIC), National Confederation of Human Rights Organization (NCHRO), National Women's Front, Junior Front, Empower India Foundation and Rehab Foundation, Kerala as an "unlawful association".

As per the inputs received by both the NIA and ED, the PFI has been raising and collecting substantial funds from abroad in a well organized manner and transferring to India through clandestine and illegal channels.

Assam to give scooters to nearly 36,000 meritorious students

Agency
Guwahati, Oct 20:

The Assam government will distribute scooters among nearly 36,000 meritorious students, mostly girls, who have passed this year's higher secondary examinations.

A proposal for implementing the programme at a cost of ₹258.9 crore was passed by the State cabinet on Wednesday,

Education Minister Ranaj Pegu told reporters after his meeting chaired by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

A total of 35,800 students — 29,748 girls who secured first division and 6,052 boys who secured 75% marks — will get the scooters, he said.

The Department of Higher Education will also provide financial assistance for registration and insurance to the stu-

dents, he added.

The cabinet also decided to hike the monthly remuneration of assistant professors working for fixed pay in provincialized colleges to ₹55,000, the minister said.

The cabinet decided on the guidelines for issuing certificates to hill tribes in plains and plain tribes in hills. Tourism Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah said.

The caste certificates will be issued by the deputy commissioners under 'Mission Bhumi Putra' to help them avail economic, educational and employment benefits provided by the State government, he said.

To boost tourism, it was also decided that a hotel will be developed in Kaziranga by the Hyatt Group, Mr. Baruah said.

Mephedrone worth Rs 60 lakh seized from two places in Mumbai, three arrested



IT Correspondent
Mumbai, Oct 20:

The Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC) of the Mumbai Police conducted raids at two places and seized over 280 gram mephedrone worth Rs 60 lakh and arrested three persons in this connection, the police stated on Wednesday.

Mephedrone, also known as 'meow meow' or MD, is a synthetic stimulant and psychotropic.

The first raid was conducted in Kurla in North Central Mumbai, on Monday, where an autorickshaw driver was caught by the Azad Maidan unit of the ANC with 200 gram mephedrone worth Rs 42 lakh. The accused is a history-sheeter, with 7 offences including house breaking, theft and drug ped-

dling on his head.

The accused-Ganesh Appaji Sonawane (27) was arrested from his residence at Sanjay Nagar, at Kurla-Kamani in North Central Mumbai and an offence (No 176/2022) under sections (8) (K) 22(K) and 29 of the NDPS Act 1985 was registered against him. The police are trying to know the place from where the drug was procured and where it was meant to be supplied.

In the second operation, the Ghatkopar unit of the ANC nabbed two persons from Dongri, in South Mumbai, including a person residing in a high-rise on Tuesday and recovered the banned drug worth around Rs 18 lakh from them, the ANC said in a statement.

40 gram mephedrone worth Rs 8.40 lakh was recov-

ered from one Naushad alias Irfan Pir Mohammed Shah (33). Similarly over 40 gram mephedrone worth Rs 9.40 lakh was seized from Sarfaj alias Farhan Sattar Shaikh. The accused Sarfaj resides at Khairunisa heights, at Dongri. The first accused Naushad told police that he had taken drugs from Sarfaj. An offence (No 177/2022) was registered under sections (8) (K) 22(K) and 29 of the NDPS Act 1985 and both the accused were arrested.

The operation was carried out by Police Inspector Rajendra Dahiphale (Azad Maidan unit) and Police Inspector Lata Sutar (Ghatkopar unit) under the guidance of Joint Commissioner of Police Suhas Warke and Deputy Commissioner of Police Datta Nalawade (ANC).

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Raksha Mantri hosts Indian Ocean....

On climate change, Rajnath Singh said, it has a huge impact on the maritime environment and its effects can pose challenges for taking forward national & regional aspirations. He asserted that India has been the first responder in a large number of Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) requirements in the region for the last few years, making special mention on the SAGAR missions and Operation Samudra Setu during the COVID-19 pandemic. He, however, called for a broader and deeper disaster management collaboration between the IOR countries to better respond to adverse events. "We have been engag-

ing with navies in the region and will continue to do so. We wish to move ahead from 'Sailing together' to 'Operating together' in order to meet the challenges in the future," he said.

In his welcome remarks, Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar highlighted the crucial role of the Indian Ocean as a civilisational link across the globe. He said, India's growing global integration means that the Indian Ocean is one of the top policy priorities. He termed maritime security cooperation as a vital component of India's diversified cooperation portfolio in the IOR and mentioned various initiatives, including the Indo Pacific

Oceans Initiative proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the East Asia Summit in 2019, which furthers practical cooperation. The Defence Secretary reiterated that India is ready to work on bilateral, multilateral and regional fora for ensuring development and continued stability in the IOR region.

Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral SN Ghormade delivered a talk on the theme 'Leveraging Technologies and Holistic Capacity Building - Pathway to Safe and Secure Oceans' highlighting the role of emerging technologies as the primary enabler for maritime capacity building. The 2nd IOR+ conclave

subsumed aspects related to defence industry cooperation, availability of Indian shipyards for refits, voyage repairs, ship design & shipbuilding, access to Indian ports, maritime information-sharing, maritime surveillance and co-operation, HADR, tackling marine pollution, development of technologies and capabilities for harnessing marine and maritime aviation resources etc.

The conclave organised by the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence. The initiative was very well received and highly appreciated by all participating countries.

(The author is PRO (Defence), Imphal, Manipur)

Indian defence companies will get orders worth Rs 8 lakh crore over next 7 yrs, says Army chief

Agency
Gandhinagar, Oct 20:

Discerning that the Russia-Ukraine war has shown the need to cut dependence on foreign suppliers, Army chief Gen Manoj Pande Thursday said indigenous weapon system is the way forward and that orders worth Rs 8 lakh crore will be placed with Indian companies in the next 7-8 years.

He noted Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) – which includes drones, mobility solutions in forward areas especially the mountains, special armaments like loitering munitions and Artificial Intelligence and encrypted communication – as primary thrust areas for him and the Army.

“The Russia-Ukraine conflict has taught us a lot. One of the things had been on how to be more self-sufficient and not to have foreign dependence even when it comes to sustenance, including ammunition,” Gen Pande said responding to a query by ThePrint, during an interaction with select journalists on the sidelines of DefExpo 2022 in Gandhinagar.

He said the Army has already taken steps towards indigenisation of ammunition while also looking at alternative sources of procurement when it comes to spare parts.

“Indigenous systems are the way forward. In the last 3-4 years, our indigenous procurement has grown three times. In the next 7-8 years, we expect to place about Rs 7-8 crore of orders with Indian firms,” he said.



Gen Pande, who believes that future wars will have to be fought on indigenous systems, said that last year the Army had placed orders worth Rs 47,000 crore with Indian firms.

He underlined that the fourth round of emergency procurement powers, extended to the Services by the government, is exclusively for indigenous systems.

The Army chief noted that in the last three rounds of emergency powers – under which the Services can close procurement deals within Rs 300 crore each without going through the tiring and long-winded regular process – the Army had inked deals worth about Rs 6,000 crore.

He also said that emergency powers vested are good for the Services be-

cause they cater to their immediate requirements and give them an opportunity to test in field the systems being going in for larger acquisition through the Capital Budget route.

Seeking to allay fears about the focus on indigenisation affecting the preparedness of the armed forces, Gen Pande pointed out that the Indian defence industry has come up with a lot of multiple solutions with capability to deliver in the needed time frame. (re-phrased para)

“I would say that to modernise, we need to indigenise. This focus on indigenisation is not an impediment but an opportunity,” he said.

The Army chief said that design, development and manufacturing of defence

systems have four foundations – resource allocation, enabling policies, viable market and competition.

“I see the role of the Army as a facilitator of executing government policy and creating a viable market,” he said.

He said that the Army is hand holding a number of private firms working in niche technology while also easing out trial periods, making firing ranges available among others.

“This cannot be a buyer-seller relationship. It has to be a partnership,” he said.

Gen Pande said that the Army is already inducting new long range rockets systems, software defined radios which are less prone to jamming, drones, see through armour and other new technology.

PM to launch recruitment drive on Oct 22 for 10 lakh personnel to join 38 Central ministries, depts

Agency
New Delhi, Oct 20:

PM Making Diwali special for as many as 75,000 youth and their families across the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hand over the youngsters the appointment letter of their government job on October 22. Modi will also launch ‘Rozgar Mela’ to recruit 10 lakh personnel.

The PM will connect with the shortlisted youngsters via video conferencing as he virtually gives the appointment letters to them. Sources in the government said the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) had asked all the ministries to find out vacant posts in their respective min-

istry and fill them up in a stipulated time.

Union ministers have been told to be present in their state or the place where these youths stay. Around 75 places have been shortlisted where the central ministers and members of parliament will join the ceremony along with those getting the jobs.

While information and broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur will be present in Chandigarh, rural development minister Giriraj Singh will be in Bihar, education minister Dharmendra Pradhan will be in Odisha and Ashwini Vaishnaw will be in Rajasthan, commerce minister Piyush Goyal will be in Maharashtra and tribal affairs minister Arjun Munda will

be in Jharkhand. Health minister Mansukh Mandaviya will be in Gujarat to attend the event.

During his second term, PM Modi had asked the Staff Selection Commission to shortlist vacant posts along with the details and eligibility criterion.

These jobs are from the home, defence, railways, labour ministries, and banking and other sectors. The Modi government had promised to give 10 lakh jobs in the public sector. The recruitments are being done in Mission Mode by ministries and departments either by themselves or through recruiting agencies such as UPSC, SSC, Railway Recruitment Board.

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Mission LiFE will help in fighting...

Excessive consumption cause of three-fold planetary emergency of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, the UN chief said.

Guterres mentioned that in a few weeks, world leaders will meet for COP 27 in Egypt which will present a key political opportunity to renew trust and accelerate actions on all pillars of the Paris climate agreement.

Several world leaders including French President Emmanuel Macron, United Kingdom’s Prime Minister Liz Truss, Georgia PM Irakli Garibashvili, Estonia PM Kaja Kallas, and Madagascar President Rajoelina sent video messages for the global launch.

“France looks forward to working with India to make this initiative a success including in

the perspective of the Indian presidency of G20 next year,” Macron said, as quoted by news agency ANI.

“At a time when our world is subject to increasing geopolitical tensions, we’ve to choose cooperation as no one can address global challenges, especially climate change alone,” he asserted.

UK PM Liz Truss, in her video message, said: “As democracies, we must work together to secure energy independence and protect economies. We’re investing with partners like India to develop vital climate infra. I commend India’s leadership in launching Mission LiFE, let’s keep leading the way.”

Earlier in the day, PM Modi held a bilateral meeting with the UN Secretary-General.

According to the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO), Mission LiFE is expected to be an India-led global mass movement that will nudge individual and collective action to protect and preserve the environment.

“Mission LiFE aims at following a three-pronged strategy for changing our collective approach towards sustainability. First is by nudging individuals to practise simple yet effective environment-friendly actions in their daily lives (demand); second is by enabling industries and markets to respond swiftly to the changing demand (supply) and; third is to influence government and industrial policy to support both sustainable consumption and production (policy),” the statement read.

Sports

ICC T20 World Cup 2022: Sri Lanka beat Netherlands, reach Super 12’s



Agency
Geelong (Australia), Oct 20:

Kusal Mendis blasted a timely half-century and Wanindu Hasaranga took three wickets as Sri Lanka eased into the Super 12 phase of the T20 World Cup with a 16-run win over the Netherlands in Geelong on Thursday.

The wicketkeeper-batsman’s swashbuckling 79 from 44 drove Sri Lanka to 162 for six on a sunny afternoon at Kardinia Park before the talismanic Hasaranga helped re-

strict Netherlands to 146 for nine, despite an unbeaten 71 from opener Max O’Dowd.

The win put Sri Lanka top of Group A ahead of second-placed Netherlands, while knocking the winless United Arab Emirates out of the tournament.

Sri Lanka were stunned by Namibia in their first qualifier, but steadied their campaign by thrashing the UAE.

“We knew that when we came to the World Cup we would be the favourites in this group,” said captain Dasun Shanaka.

“Unfortunately we missed out in the first game, but we regrouped and we came back strong.”

“I thought the wicket wasn’t easy to bat on, it was a bit two-faced. So I thought in the first 10 overs we were able to control the scoring rate really well.”

The Netherlands have a nervous wait for the late match at Kardinia Park between third-placed Namibia and the UAE.

Victory for Namibia would see the Africans advance on superior run rate at the Nether-

lands’ expense as one of the group’s top two sides.

“Hopefully the UAE can help us get through, but it was in our hands and just disappointed we weren’t quite there tonight,” said Netherlands captain Scott Edwards.

With injuries tearing through Sri Lanka’s bowling contingent, the Asia Cup champions brought in Lahiru Kumara and left-armers Binura Fernando in place of Dushmantha Chameera, who was ruled out of the tournament on Wednesday, and the sidelined Pramod Madushan.

The replacement seamers each chipped in a wicket, while Maheesh Theekshana took 2-32 in front of a modest but buoyant crowd of Sri Lankan fans.

The Netherlands started well in their chase but came to grief as the powerplay wound up, losing two wickets in four balls to fall to 47 for three in the seventh over.

The runs dried up as all-rounder Hasaranga went to work with his legspin and Shanaka bowled tidily off the seam.

Needing 100 runs off the last 10 overs, Netherlands tried to slog their way out of trouble but a quick double-strike by Hasaranga in the 17th over all but wrapped up the match.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Pakistan threatening to pull out of 2023 WC

Agency
New Delhi, Oct 20:

Anurag Thakur, the Union Minister of I&B and Youth Affairs and Sports, has said that the Home Ministry will take a call on India touring Pakistan. Thakur also reacted to Pakistan’s threat of pulling out of the 2023 World Cup and opined that “India is in a position where it doesn’t have to listen from anyone”.

“Home ministry will take a decision as there are security concerns in Pakistan. It’s not just cricket. Eng/Australia travelled to Pakistan but can they

be compared to India?” Anurag Thakur said on Thursday (October 20). “India is in a position where it does not need to listen from anyone. We will invite all countries for World Cup - those who want to come can come.”

The former BCCI chief’s remarks came in response to PCB’s letter, where the board said that the BCCI’s decision can have long-term consequences and implications.

“The PCB has noted with surprise and disappointment of yesterday’s comments made by the ACC President Mr Jay Shah with regards to

shifting of next year’s Asia Cup to a neutral venue. The comments were made without any discussion or consultation with the Board of the Asian Cricket Council or the Pakistan Cricket Board (event host) and without any thoughts towards their long-term consequences and implications,” the Pakistan board wrote.

Speaking to the press after the BCCI’s AGM, Jay Shah had announced that the Asia Cup will be played at a neutral venue. The past 2 editions of the tournament were played at neutral venues.

Online Essay Competition

Commemorating the 126th Birth Anniversary of Lamyamba Hijam Irabot, Team Imphal Times is organizing an Online Essay Competition. This is the 2nd time that the Team Imphal Times is organizing an Essay Competition. This year theme is – “Manipur’s Socio-Economic Problems: System Failure or Individual Failure.”

All submitted essays will be published in the Imphal Times newspaper and the name of the winners will also be published. The word count for the essay must be between 1000 and 1200 words.

1st prize Rs 5000, 2nd prize Rs 3000, and 3rd prize Rs 2000 with certificates. The competition is opened to all individuals and every submission must be accompanied by a photo/image of the candidate. The last date of submission will be 6 pm on October 30.

All participants should enclose details of their identity. Father’s or Mother’s name, Address, Qualification, Contact No. (Cell Phone or Landline) should be enclosed at the of submitting the write up. Language medium : English.

Participant can be sent by e-mail to: imphaltimesessaycompt@gmail.com in MS Word or PDF format.

Team Imphal Times