

Nongmaiching Forest area set ablaze deliberately for poppy plantation

CM N. Biren announces Rs 5 lakh reward to fight forest fire

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

Co-ordinating Body, Khurai, a conglomerate of 42 CSOs and Nongmaiching Laipham Environment Preservation committee had stated that some anti social people have been deliberately set on fire many part of the Nongmaiching Reserved Forest area with intention for poppy plantation. Since January 19 till February 8 this year, some people set ablaze the Reserved Forest area six times.

Taking the matter with extreme seriousness Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had announced a reward of Rs 5 lakh to the person who provides accurate information

tion of those who cause wildfire.

Biren made the announcement on his Facebook post on Wednesday night citing the wildfire that occurred at Nongmaiching hill in Imphal East on Wednesday evening.

Earlier, the Forest department had issued notification to prohibit trekking, camping and picnicking in all forest areas of the state. The notification said that no persons or individuals who violated the notice without prior permission will be punished as per the Forest Act.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said that despite the appeal to stop any activities

that could cause wild fire there was a wild fire incident at Nongmaiching.

"The government will reward Rs 5 lakh to the person who can give accurate information to nab persons involved in causing wildfire," Biren said.

It may be mentioned that, the Co-ordinating Body, Khurai, a conglomerate of 42 local clubs, Meira Paibi and Working Class of Khurai area, had submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Manipur urging a proper investigation to the burning of forest areas at Nongmaiching Forest Range area by some individuals with intention of deforesting for Poppy plantation at the area.

The memorandum also stated that some villagers settling in and around Nongmaiching Hill Forest Range are regularly burning down the Reserve Forest of Nongmaiching Hill Forest Range deforesting the Reserved Forest area for the purpose of poppy plantation causing irreparable loss to the Forest Area for the purpose of poppy plantation thereby causing irreparable loss to the ecosystem and wildlife.

It added that the Reserved Forest was set ablaze on January 19, 2023. On Jan 21 again and on Jan 26 the forest was set on fire. And later on February 6, 7 and 8 2023 some anti social people set on fire the reserve forest area.

Allow aspirants to write in Meitei Mayek for Manipuri literature in UPSC exams – MP Sanajaoba



IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

Rajya Sabha MP Leishemba Sanajaoba in a special mention has drawn the attention of upper house to allow candidates appearing Civil Service examination conducted by the UPSC to write in Bengali and Meitei Mayek script for Manipuri Literature optional papers, in the ongoing parliament session at

Rajya Sabha.

MP Leishemba Sanajaoba putting up as a special mention said, there are two optional papers, Paper I and Paper II for Manipuri literature with a total mark of 500(250 each) in the civil services exam conducted by the UPSC. From 2006 onwards, as a state policy by the Government of Manipur has started the transformation from Bengali script to Meitei Mayek in a phased

manner. Colleges and Universities in Manipur have started the transformation from Bengali script to Meitei Mayek and have already produced BA and MA graduates. As Graduate and Post Graduate who elect Manipuri subjects written in Meitei Mayek are now having problems taking Manipuri as an optional subject in the UPSC exam, as the exam papers are set in Bengali script. There have been demands by the candidates to allow them to write in Meitei Mayek script for Manipuri optional papers and is a legitimate demand, said the Rajya Sabha MP from Manipur.

To solve the said problem faced by aspirant candidates, instructions in the Manipuri literature for UPSC Main exams which currently reads as "Answer must be written in Manipuri (Bengali script)" should be changed to allow the candidates to write the exam in either Bengali or Meitei Mayek script for Manipuri Literature, urged MP Leishemba Sanajaoba.

Like Minded stakeholders working on Child Rights meeting held

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

A "One Day Networking & Alliance Meeting of Like Minded Stakeholders" was held today at the administrative office Wide Angle Social Development Organization at Moirang Hanuba Leirak, Imphal, the said program is supported by CRY (Child Rights and You).

The objective of the program is to further strengthening the rapport & cooperation amongst all the key stakeholders in Imphal West District, Manipur. The program was grace by Salam Ulka Devi, Chairperson of Manipur State Commission for Women, Rinku Khumukcham, Editor, Imphal



Times and Montu Ahanthem, Secretary, Wide Angle as the Chief Guest, Guest of Honor and President respectively.

The Technical session

was moderated by Keisham Pradip former member of Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights with Y. Indramani, District Child Protection Officer (Imphal West)

and Mala Lisham, Program Officer - State Child Protection Society as the resource person of the technical session.

AMUCO's charity mission continues

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

The 3-Days' Blood Donation Camp in collaboration with National Health Mission (Blood Cell), held in connection with AMUCO's 30th Foundation Day has been undergoing at the RIMS Hospital and the JNIMS Hospital from February 8 to 10, 2023. The ongoing camp has been carefully assisted by the respective Department of Transfusion Medicine, RIMS and JNIMS.

In the aftermath of the blood donation camp, the AMUCO is organising a Free Medical Camp on 12 February 2023 at the LAVA Club Community Hall, Phoungakchao Ikhai at the junction of Bishnupur District and Churachandpur in association with the United Clubs' Organisation of Bishnupur District (UCOBID), Chief Medical Officer, Bishnupur and SHESTRONG Association, Ningthoukhong.

PM's reply to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address in Rajya Sabha

PIB
New Delhi, Feb 9:

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi replied to the motion of thanks on the President's address to Parliament in the Rajya Sabha today. The Prime Minister started his reply by thanking Rashtrapati Ji for guiding both the Houses by presenting the vision of "Viksit Bharat" in her address.

The Prime Minister said as opposed to the earlier times "Our government's aim is to provide permanent solutions for the citizens and empower them." He said while it was the responsibility of the government in the earlier times to provide solutions to the people's problems, they had different priorities and intentions. "Today we are moving towards permanent solutions to the

problems", he added. The Prime Minister gave the example of the water issue and explained that instead of tokenism, a holistic integrated approach of creating water infrastructure, water governance, quality control, water conservation, and irrigation innovation has been deployed. Similar measures have created permanent solutions in financial inclusion, DBT via Jan Dhan - Aadhaar-Mobile, infrastructure planning and implementation via PM Gatishakti Masterplan.

"We understand the importance of Infrastructure, Scale and Speed for building a modern India", the Prime Minister said. He emphasized that the working culture in the country has been transformed by the power of technology and the government is focused on increasing the speed and enhancing its scale.

"Mahatma Gandhi used to say 'shrey' (merit) and 'priy' (dear). We have chosen the path of 'shrey' (merit)", the Prime Minister remarked. The Prime Minister underlined that the path chosen by the government is not the one where resting is a priority, but the one where we work tirelessly every day and night to fulfill the aspirations of the common people.

The Prime Minister highlighted that the government has taken the significant step of achieving saturation in the Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal. He reiterated the efforts of the government where 100 percent of benefits reach every beneficiary in the country. "This is true secularism. This eliminates discrimination and corruption", Modi said.

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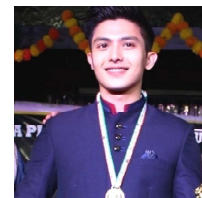
Dr. N. Santa appointed as the Ambassador of WHRPC

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

Dr. Nongmaithem Santa Singh, son of N. Ibichou Singh of Sagolombga Makha Leikai, Imphal West Manipur has been appointed as the Ambassador of World Human Rights Protection Commission and the National President for Human Rights WHRPC in India.

Dr. Nongmaithem Santa is a Multifaceted Personality. Previously Dr. Nongmaithem has received organizational leadership and Social Work recognition for Human rights.

WHRPC considered Dr. Santa as the right person for the World Human Rights Protection Commission Ambassador and National President for Human Rights in India.



"Dr Santa concerns for world peace are genuine. He has felt more compelled to strive for the betterment of people who are stuck in conflict and have nowhere to go. He has chosen this to be his next goal in life", a statement added.

Dr. Santa has been working for the peaceful development of several countries worldwide. He has seen that often conspiracies and politics

have impacted the development of several countries and ruined the lives of regular citizens. Holding the post of a Global Peace Ambassador and National President, Dr. Santa Singh has received various awards including Dr. BR Ambedkar National Award, Dr. BR Ambedkar National Fellowship Award, National Corona Award, International Young Star Award, Rastriya Samaj Seva Ratna 2022, Bharat Bhushan Award 2022, Bhartiya Samaj Ratna Award, Pune, Indo Nepal Friendship Award 2021, National Pride Awards, Delhi, Bharat Gaurav Shree Sanman 2022, Bharatiya Utkrush Nagrik Sanman 2022, Nelson Mandela Excellence Award 2022, Iron Man Of India and Ambassador of World Peace Citizen.

District Skill Mela, 2023 held at Kakching

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

District Skill Committee, Kakching District today organized a District Skill Mela, 2023 at JNURM Hall, Kakching Sumak Leikai. The District Skill Mela was organized under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India.

The programme was attended by L.N. Kashung, IAS Mission Director, Manipur Society for Skill Development as Chief Guest, Somorjit Salam, IAS Deputy Commissioner, Kakching as President

and Kh. Bobby Singh, Chief Operating Officer-Skills, State Skill Mission, Anuradha Oinam, SRA/NRL, Amarjit Rajkumar, Jt. Director, Manipur Society for Skill Development as Guest of Honour respectively.

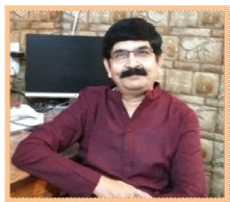
Speaking as Chief Guest of the function, L.N. Kashung stated that when literacy rate is high unemployment rate was high as well in Manipur. To bring awareness of skill development in our society is very much in need. Even the educated persons should keep themselves trained and fit. We must equip with skills that are required to meet the

demands of our rapidly growing economy. We should be very clear to what is skill and for what it is?

In his presidential speech, Deputy Commissioner, Kakching Somorjit Salam said that in Manipur there are many educated unemployed. In future, educated would not survive without possessing a unique skill. If unemployment figure is kept on rising lots of crisis will follow. To generate employment, skill development with hard working and efficient is a must in our society, he added.

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Why we observe National Deworming Day?



By: Vinod Chandrashekar Dixit

10th February is observed as the National Deworming Day that is an initiative of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India to make every child in the country worm free. This is one of the largest public health programs reaching large number of children during a short period. Deworming is done through platforms of schools and Anganwadi centres "to improve their overall health, nutritional status, access to education and quality of life". Its success and impact lie in convergence with the Swachh Bharat Mission. NDD also presents opportunities to further policy dialogue on health and nutrition as a way of supplementing efforts under POSHAN Abhiyan.

The first round of NDD was conducted in February 2015 and 8.9 crore children were administered the deworming tablet across 11 states/UTs by achieving 85% coverage. To make this deworming mission successful, ant parasitic medicines are given to children from government schools. According to the World Health Organisation, about 241 million children in India in the ages of 1-14 years are at a risk of parasitic intestinal worms. India accounts for approximately 28 per cent of the total number of children globally estimated to be at-risk of STH infections. Intestinal worm infection often makes its way through vegetables which are not properly washed, peeled and cooked; contaminated water; and outdoor activities – children who play in soil and then put their hands in their mouths without washing them.

According to WHO, health is a state of complete mental, spiritual, physical, and social well being and not only the absence of disease. If a person is in a good physical state and free from any diseases but is under constant stress, greed, tension, anger, etc, then that person is not healthy. Children frequently ingest sufficient calories but nevertheless suffer from malnutrition, owing to a lack of vital vitamins and minerals required for normal physical and mental development in their diets. Evidence has shown detrimental impact of Soil Transmitted Helminths (STH) infestation on physical growth-anaemia, under nutrition and cognitive development as well as school attendance. Periodic deworming can reduce the transmission of STH infections. There are three main types of STH that infect people, roundworm, whipworm and hookworms. These worms depend on the human body for their food and survival and while being there, they lay thousands of eggs each day. In India, over 22 crore children under 14 years of age are at risk of STH infections.

Worm infection can also lead to diarrhoea; dysentery; loss of appetite; reduced nutritional intake and physical fitness; increased malabsorption – a condition that prevents absorption of nutrients through the small intestine. People who defecate outdoors in the soil, spread these worm eggs everywhere. These eggs then contaminate the soil and further spread the infection. If the worms remain untreated or undiagnosed for a long time, it can lead to long term effects on a child's health and development. Heavy infections often make children too sick or too tired to concentrate at or even attend school. If untreated or undiagnosed, worms can have a long term effect on a child's health and development.

Intestinal worms are parasites that live in the human intestines and consume nutrients and vitamins that a child consumes. The worms lay thousands of eggs on a daily basis and chiefly consume nutrients meant for the human body. Worm infection can be caused due to various factors in children including lack of personal hygiene, uncooked and contaminated food, and excess sweets and junk food consumption. Let us maintain personal hygiene and avoid open defecation. Let us improve hygiene which includes washing hands particularly before eating and after using toilet; using sanitary latrines; wearing slippers/shoes; keeping the surroundings clean; ensuring nails are short and clean.

Holistic Education for Peace in Northeast India



By: Fr Paul Lelen Haokip

Northeast India boasts of rich biodiversity, but peace is still a long-ing. Insurgency, inter-tribal hostilities, boundary disputes, and trust deficits abound galore. Inhabitants of these eight states of India are vulnerable to media influence, political propaganda, and incited violence due to a lack of holistic education. Private enterprises are taking up education at various levels. Thanks to the growing educational competitiveness, even without many state-sponsored motivations.

Why education:

Education is a means to learn about others, a tool to bind people and nourish multiculturalism. Education is not a method to separate, segregate or create hostility between communities. Holistic education helps us to know ourselves

and also accommodate others with their uniqueness. Education makes us see things from the proper perspective. For example, with our normal naked eye, we don't see anything spectacular while observing tree leaves. But with proper education and in-depth knowledge, we realise that the trees' leaves are breathing. This awareness could change our perspective about trees.

Hate speech:

Hate speeches and sectarian ideas creep into a person or community due to shallow education and a lack of universal perspectives. Hate speeches show myopic vision of life and a 'frog in a well' philosophy. Hate speeches are popular today in various degrees, thereby causing further 'trust deficit' between communities. The hatred between communities is a dormant monster that will erupt as ethnic conflict or war. People who propagate and close their eyes to hate speeches are far from peace. Hate speeches and hate mongers should be snubbed at its bud else negatively will thrive and spoil the social fabric of peace.

Root cause syllabi:

All the educational syllabi include various subjects to train a person for a holistic view of life. Engagement with various subjects is to broaden one's mind and attain holistic education. Once a society has holistic education, it will look at problems as occasions for solu-

tions. An educated society will not indulge in the symptomatic treatment of problems but conduct a proper diagnosis and treat problems at their roots. This exercise can be handled by subject-trained persons and not any Dick and Harry. Root cause treatment will contribute to long-term redressal and save money.

Consumption of truth:

Once a society attains holistic education, its members will not believe dramatised TV debates, films, shows, social media war, and divisive propaganda. They can read between the lines and extract the truth from the apparent. While the truth is hard to spell out and even harder to digest, it is still true whether it is told or hidden. Truth makes us free. Lies can be told for a few years (1,3,5,10), but they cannot go on. Education opens the minds of people to know what is true and false. The truth is that the Constitution of India is oriented towards peaceful living and coexistence with accommodative people from multicultural backgrounds. Diversity is the truth of India, while propaganda for homogeneity is a direct blow to peaceful coexistence. If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything, but if you tell lies, you will have to remember the sequences of your lies to make them look like the truth.

Enemies of holistic education:

Some real enemies hold back holistic education: absenteeism of Government appointed teachers in their place of appointment, substitute teachers, non-existence of conducive infrastructure for the education of children, corruption in the appointment of unfit teachers, mere lip service propaganda and less holistic education ground zero realities, commercialisation of educational institutions. Aping some education models that are not quite relevant to a particular society, numerous external interferences on the administration of educational institutions, lack of focus on skill development, the mere insistence on rote memory etc., are some areas for proper subject expert investigation redressal.

When educated people lead society, it will progress. It is bound to deteriorate if a society is led by force and half-educated people. Holistic education will bring about environmental care consciousness, a coexistence mindset and, above all, peace, the need of the hour. Holistic education will lead to tolerance, appreciation of diversity and peaceful coexistence. When there is peace, progress and social cohesion are its cousins.

(The author is a PhD research scholar, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Christ University, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. Email: paulhowke20@gmail.com)

Turkey Earthquake; prophecies based on planetary geometry is still ambiguous

By: Herojit Nongmaithem

A devastating earthquake of 7.8 magnitude struck Turkey/Syria border areas on February 6, around 4:15 a.m. local time. With a series of aftershocks largest of which were M7.5 and M6.7 have already caused death over more than 5000 peoples and thousands more injured as on Tuesday, the 7th February, 2023. Such mega earthquakes are common in the world causing huge disasters in terms of fatalities and infrastructural buildings and other properties as well. The region along Turkey-Syria border is tectonically governed by the East Anatolian fault system and has a history of twelve earthquakes of AM6.0 during the last two decades. What provokes the scientists rather the seismologists are the prophecies based on the planetary geometry as a probable cause of precise prediction that has gained a mammoth populace amongst the general public.

The planetary geometry model of predicting earthquake became an instant hit when Frank Hoogerbeets, a Dutch researcher from the Solar System Geometry Survey (SSGEOS), predicted the devastating earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria three days ahead in his twitter account. The tweet that have more than 34 million views and said, "Sooner or later there will be a ~M 7.5 #earthquake in this region (South-Central Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon)". The tweet that apparently proved to be correct was posted on February 3, was followed by more than 1.87 lakh followers. However, many of the seismic intellects have counter reacted to this model.

The basic idea of this planetary prediction is that the alignment of planets and other celestial bodies can have a gravitational pull on the Earth that can trigger seismic activity. Mr. Hoogerbeets also elaborates these earthquakes are always preceded by

critical planetary geometry, as on 4-5 Feb. However, this idea is not supported by scientific evidences and has been discredited by the vast majority of seismologists and geologists. The prediction of earthquakes is a complex process that involves a thorough understanding of the Earth's geology, plate tectonics, and seismic activity. There is no evidence that planetary alignment has any significant impact on the likelihood of earthquakes. In at least one case reported in the mainstream media, Hoogerbeets made a similarly audacious prediction of a massive 8+ magnitude earthquake that was seemingly imminent in late December of 2018. To its contrary there were no records of an earthquake anywhere on the earth except a M7 earthquake that hit Philippines on 29th Dec, 2018. With enough predictions, even if most do not pan out, given that dozens of tremors occur around the globe every day, it is not impossible

that one forecast hits the bulls eye.

Lunar tides within the Earth are bigger and so more likely to be the immediate trigger of an earthquake, but won't be the cause of earthquake. This statement is the key for the present moment since the science behind earthquake prediction is still an active area of research and the current methods used by seismologists involve analyzing patterns of seismic activity and studying the Earth's crust to identify potential areas of increased risk.

Keeping such views in mind and considering the possibility of a mega earthquake (±M8) in the Bangladesh - North East India region being postulated by many workers, its high time we focused ourselves in aseismic designs in all the construction and infrastructural set ups to minimise casualties.

(The author is a Senior Geologist, GSI, Imphal Office)

Perennial Ascent with Political Accuracy



By: M.R. Lahu

Narendra Modi's premiership once again topped the list of the most popular leaders across the globe. This time it was a US-based consulting firm 'Morning Consult' which came out with its approval ratings. The firm has firmly estimated 78 per cent approval rating for the Indian Prime Minister among the 22 global leaders it enlisted. Among those leaders who followed Modi in the popularity ranking are Mexican President Andres Manuel, Swiss President Alain Berset and American President Joe Biden. For an average Indian, this success status of his Prime Minister is a subject of great jubilation. Modi

could consistently maintain his popularity among the Indian populace since the very first day he began to hold the top office. But the fact that all his opponents in India need to seriously focus on is the reason behind such a frequent ascent by a leader in a complicated democracy. India's history seldom witnessed such a resounding recognition enjoyed by a leader for almost a decade from outside the Nehru-Gandhi clan. The immense popularity enjoyed by Jawaharlal Nehru is worth remembering. So was the fame of Indira Gandhi though her policies, in a later period, got her bad reputation. Nehru was the product of India's independence struggle but Indira came with the baggage of dynasty pride.

Nehru continued to enjoy popularity with nobody in Indian politics to counter his fame for more than a decade. But the political situation in the country in a later period became a total mishmash with coalition governments grabbing power. Political compulsion was the deciding factor behind choosing a leader and many Prime Ministers appeared with the quickness of clouds

in India's political sky and disappeared without casting much impression. Modi's regime brought a transition with a single party holding the reign with no credible opposition capable of challenging its power. All those consolidations surfacing in the horizon seem to be feeble and a regime change is an unfeasible reality for 2024. As of now, the saffron regime led by Modi has numerous eye-catching achievements to bank on; which means, the ruling party does not have to use its Hindutva plank for denoting its regime renewal. Despite the desperation and accusation ranging from its principal opposition the Congress to all those regional satraps who nurture dreams for their national emergence, Modi is seen singlehandedly depleting their acrimony, both personal as well as political. The latest to the array of condemnation came from the BBC which, with its agenda of vilification, threw the whole episode of Godhra riots with scripted narratives once again. The whole dubious agenda was to defame the most popular leader of the world's largest democracy.

The dangerous trend in this vilification drive is the contribution of Modi's opposition who relentlessly play into the hands of a western

agenda. Re-scripting the western catchphrases, this home-grown opposition is once again out with complete hostility and the parliament being frequently paralysed. The parties in the opposition began to blabbermouth on the Adani meltdown and their accusation levelling against Modi's closeness with the business tycoon kept the parliament procedures languish. The forces aligned against a potential ascent of the Modi phenomenon in 2024 are playing from different corners of the globe. The BBC's misadventure was evidential for such a calamitous well-structured agenda being popularised. Modi's premiership has put many leaders in an awkward situation and the Prime Minister without any PR blitz is comfortable about the chiselling of a stronger regime and its ability to move beyond 2024. However, Modi's political opposition foretells a serious setback for him in the upcoming state elections.

Indira Gandhi's long premiership witnessed strong national leaders stalling her personal ambitions. A string of capable opposition leaders rooted in their political ideology stood against her authoritarian administration. Leaders like A.B. Vajpayee, A.K. Gopalan, Piloo Modi and a towering Lok Nayak

Jayaprakash Narayan and many others stood power-fencing the Indira ascent. But for Modi the situation is different. No leaders with resounding national fame and incorruptible personality are visible credibly posing him a challenge. Modi's clean image itself is a weapon that can easily disarm the whole fighting spirit of the parties opposing him; the opposition gets further disarmed when a constellation of bright welfare programmes launched for the common man gets huge reception all over the country. The PM Jan Dhan Yojana, Make in India, Swachh Bharat Mission, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, PM Mudra Yojana, PM Ujjwala Yojana, Digital India Mission, Start-up India and many more uncountable initiatives by his government keep pouring goodwill in abundance into his casket. Above all, see his earth shattering decisions such as the Triple Talaq Bill, the abrogation of Article 370, Surgical Strike, Balakot Air Strike, Demonetisation, to name a few. All these are sure to go down in history of Indian politics and his regime would be remembered as a gratifying period. Irrespective of the criticisms hammered by the opposition, Modi has been nonchalant and articulate throughout his tenure.

The Ram Temple in Ayodhya has always been a venerated subject for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Modi's premiership is all set to witness the grand temple becoming a reality. A poll promise of his party for decades and the agenda that helped it capture political fortunes since the demolition of the controversial structure in 1992; the inauguration of the temple is sure to intensify the mood of the nation favouring a third regime for him. India's G20 presidency with Narendra Modi's diplomatic conquest over a world scenario would further stimulate his stride. He has a pack of success cards to display as he approaches the General Election. A vast gamut of the organisational machinery of the Sangh would mobilize door to door electoral campaigns for him. For the Congress, its nationwide Yatra could have been a game changer. But its endeavours to defame Modi might land it in more disadvantageous positions. Modi's charisma with his global glow growing enormously; the Congress is still far from posing a threat to his party in 2024.

(Freelance Journalist/Author of "India @ 75- A Contemporary Approach")

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Turkey, Syria quake toll tops 16,000 as cold compounds misery

Agency
Antakya, Feb 9:

Freezing temperatures deepened the misery Thursday for survivors of a massive earthquake in Turkey and Syria that killed more than 16,000 people, as rescuers raced to save countless people still trapped under rubble.

The death toll from Monday's 7.8-magnitude quake is expected to rise sharply as rescue efforts pass the 72-hour mark that disaster experts consider the most likely period to save lives.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday conceded "shortcomings" after criticism of his government's response to the earthquake, one of the deadliest this century.

Survivors have been left to scramble for food and shelter — and in some cases watch helplessly as their relatives called for rescue, and eventually went silent under the debris.

"My nephew, my sister-in-law and my sister-in-law's sister are in the ruins. They are trapped under the ruins and there is no sign of life," said Semire Coban, a kindergarten teacher, in Turkey's Hatay province.

"We can't reach them. We are trying to talk to them, but they are not responding... We are waiting for help. It has been 48 hours now," she said.

Still, rescuers kept pulling survivors from the debris as the death toll continued to rise.

As criticism mounted online, Erdogan visited one of the hardest-hit spots, the quake's epicentre Kahramanmaraş, and acknowledged problems in the response.

"Of course, there are shortcomings. The conditions are clear to see. It's not possible to be ready for a disaster like this," he said.

Twitter access returned on Thursday morning after the social network did not work on Turkish mobile networks for several hours Wednesday, according to AFP journalists and the NetBlocks web monitoring group.



Turkish officials had held talks with Twitter leaders after which deputy infrastructure minister Omer Fatih Sayan tweeted Thursday that Turkey expected the social network to cooperate more in the "fight against disinformation".

Children saved

Temperatures plunged to minus-five degrees Celsius (23 degrees Fahrenheit) in Gaziantep early Thursday, but the cold did not stop thousands of families from spending the night in cars and makeshift tents, too scared to stay in their homes or prohibited from returning to them.

Parents walked the streets of the southeastern Turkish city — close to the epicentre of the earthquake — carrying their children in blankets because it was warmer than sitting in a tent.

"When we sit down, it is painful, and I fear for anyone who is trapped under the rubble in this," said Melek Halici, who wrapped her two-year-old daughter in a blanket as they watched rescuers working late into Wednesday night.

Officials and medics said 12,873 people had died in Turkey and at least 3,162 in neighbouring Syria from Monday's quake, bringing the total to 16,035. Experts fear the number will continue to rise sharply.

In Brussels, the EU is planning a donor conference in March to mobilise international aid for Syria and Turkey.

"We are now racing against the clock to save lives to-

gether," EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said on Twitter.

"No one should be left alone when a tragedy like this hits a people," she said.

'People dying every second'

Due to the scale of the damage and the lack of help coming to certain areas, survivors said they felt alone in responding to the disaster.

"Even the buildings that haven't collapsed were severely damaged. There are now more people under the rubble than those above it," Hassan, who did not provide his full name, said in his rebel-held Syrian town of Jindayris.

"There are around 400-500 people trapped under each collapsed building, with only 10 people trying to pull them out. And there is no machinery," he added.

The White Helmets, leading efforts to rescue people buried under rubble in rebel-held areas of Syria, have appealed for international help in their "race against time".

They have been toiling since the quake to pull survivors out from under the debris of dozens of flattened buildings in northwestern areas of war-torn Syria that remain outside the government's control.

A leading UN official called for the facilitation of aid access to rebel-held areas in the northwest, warning that relief stocks will soon be depleted.

"Put politics aside and let us do our humanitarian work," the UN's resident Syria coordinator El-Mostafa Benlamlih

told AFP in an interview.

Syria appeals for EU help

The issue of aid to Syria is a delicate one, and the sanctioned government in Damascus made an official plea to the EU for help, the bloc's commissioner for crisis management Janecz Lenarcic said.

A decade of civil war and Syrian-Russian aerial bombardment had already destroyed hospitals, collapsed the economy and wrenched electricity, fuel and water shortages.

The European Commission is "encouraging" EU member countries to respond to Syria's request for medical supplies and food, while monitoring to ensure that any aid "is not diverted" by President Bashar al-Assad's government, Lenarcic noted.

Dozens of nations, including the United States, China and the Gulf States have pledged to help, and search teams as well as relief supplies have already arrived.

The EU was swift to dispatch rescue teams to Turkey, but it initially offered only minimal assistance to Syria because of EU sanctions imposed since 2011 on Assad's government over its brutal crackdown on protesters that spiralled into a civil war.

The Turkey-Syria border is one of the world's most active earthquake zones. Monday's quake was the largest Turkey has seen since 1939, when 33,000 people died in the eastern Erzurum province.

In 1999, a 7.4-magnitude earthquake killed more than 17,000.

Journalist killed in India, PEC demands a fair probe

IT Correspondent
Geneva, Feb 9:

Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the global media safety and rights body, expresses shock over the killing of journalist Shashikant Warishe in Maharashtra and demands a fair probe to identify the culprit for punishing under the law. Warishe (48), who used to work for Marathi-language daily Mahanagari Times, was mowed down by a four-wheeler on Monday at Rajapur area following which he was rushed to a nearby hospital. The brave journalist succumbed to injuries on 7 February.

The committed journalist prepared a series of reports over the resistance by the local residents of Ratnagiri locality against a petroleum refinery. On the fateful day, Warishe was riding his two-wheeler when a speeding SUV hit him and dragged for some distance. A local land mafia dealer named Pandarinath



Shashikant Warishe

Ambekar, whom Warishe described as a criminal in his media reports, was reportedly driving the four-wheeler. Maharashtra police have registered a murder case against Ambekar and promptly arrested him.

"Killing of a journalist because of his/her media report is no way acceptable. In Shashikant Warishe's case, he faced the brutal incident within hours of a published newspaper report against the accused. Maharashtra government must

take the case seriously and punish the guilty," said Blaise Lempen, president of PEC (www.presseemble.ch), adding that Shashikant becomes the fourth journalist to be killed this year worldwide after Ashiqul Islam (Bangladesh), Martinez Zogo (Cameroon) and Michael Finlay (Canada).

PEC south-Asia representative Nava Thakuria reveals that India witnessed the murder of four journalists (Rohit Kumar Biswal, Sudhir Saini, Juned Khan Pathan and Subhash Kumar Mahato) last year. Its neighbour Pakistan lost journalists Sadaf Naem, Arshad Sharif, Muhammad Younis, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Hasnain Shah, Murtaza Shar and Athar Mateen in different incidents. Similarly, Bangladesh witnessed the killing of journalists Hashibur Rahman Rubel, Mohiuddin Sarker Nayem and Abdul Bari to assassinate, whereas Myanmar lost Aye Kyaw and Pu Ti Dim to military atrocities during 2022.

Former Union Minister and NCP leader Praful Patel set to lose property worth crores



By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Feb 9:

The adjudicating authority under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002 (PMLA) has confirmed the attachment of units at Ceejay House, located at Worli in South Mumbai, owned by the NCP leader Praful

Patel and his family, an officer from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said on Wednesday.

Patel will have to vacate four floors-12th to 15th floor, of Ceejay House following the decision of the PMLA's adjudicating authority. A provisional attachment was carried in July 2022 in a money laundering case involving late smuggler and gangster Iqbal Mirchi.

The building was constructed by Patel's firm, Millennium Developers Private Limited, in 2006-07. The building was stated to be constructed on a plot where Mirchi also had some properties. In lieu of the land, Millennium Developers had transferred the 3rd and 4th floor to Mirchi's wife, Hazra Iqbal, in 2007.

When the ED learnt that the land was acquired by Mirchi through Havala transactions, the 3rd and 4th floor of the building were attached by the ED in 2019, in connection with the money laundering case registered against Mirchi and others.

Patel was questioned by the ED in October 2019. That time Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan, the promoters of DHFL, were arrested. Dheeraj Wadhawan

was later granted bail. After the controversy, Patel in a press conference had claimed that all the property dealings at Ceejay House were legitimate.

However the ED's contention is that Mirchi had beneficial interest in the land on which the Ceejay House is located and he had acquired it through Havala transactions.

Mirchi's wife and sons have been declared as fugitive economic offenders by a PMLA court since they failed to appear in the case. ED has so far attached assets worth over Rs. 800 crore linked to Mirchi in India and abroad. Five people were arrested in 2020 and the matter is pending before the special PMLA court in Mumbai. Mirchi, a key member of Dawood Ibrahim gang, died in London in 2013.

Patel served as the Civil Aviation Minister under the UPA Government. He is a close confidante of NCP Chief Sharad Pawar. In the last one year NCP leaders-Anil Deshmukh, Nawab Malik and Hasan Mushtaq have come under the ED's scanner and now Patel is the fourth leader to face its action.

How will NEP 2020 change the education system in India



By: Vijay GarG

NEP 2020 is a milestone in the history of education system in India.

NEP2020 aims to recognise the need to evaluate "higher order skills" such as creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, visualisation, and idea generation.

NEP 2020 emphasises on multidisciplinary learning and no separations are made between vocational and academic streams. Long overdue, the New Education Policy 2020 is on the lines of universalising education from pre-school to secondary level. It replaces a 34-

year-old policy to become a more inclusive, holistic, comprehensive, and far-sighted policy to make India a knowledge hub by the end of this decade.

Under the new policy, the government aims to bridge social gaps in participation, access, and learning outcomes in school education with a target of 100 percent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) or zero school drop outs by 2030.

The top 5 highlights of NEP 2020 are:

Multiple entry and exit options in degree courses

Discontinuation of MPhil Programs

Single regulator for higher education institutes

Low stakes Board Exams

Common entrance exams for Universities

Impact of NEP 2020 on Indian education system

1. Content Curriculum and Pedagogy

The conventional 10+2 school curricula structure is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-

18 years respectively. This implies that a student must have 12 years of schooling preceded by 3 years of Anganwadi or pre-schooling experience.

To implement this change at grassroots levels, curriculum, content, and pedagogy restructuring must be done as per the NCF (National Curriculum Framework) and content revisited in textbooks.

2. Integrate Technology with Learning and Teaching Process

A regulatory body NEAT (National Educational Alliance for Technology) has been set up to integrate technology for better learning outcomes. NEAT aims to use Artificial Intelligence to personalize learning experience depending on learner's requirement.

3. Assessment

PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development), a national assessment centre has been proposed to set up to keep a regular check on the education system.

NEP2020 aims to recognise the need to evaluate "higher order skills" such as creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, visualisation, and idea generation.

Shifting the focus of assessments from academic grades to higher order skills creates higher performance standards demonstrated through varying degrees of competency across social levels.

4. Mother Tongue as a medium of instruction

NEP 2020 focuses on the use of mother tongue as the instruction medium however, not mandating the use of a particular language on anyone.

Home language or local language will be used preferably till Grade 8 as mother tongue lets students grasp complex concepts easily.

5. Science, Arts and Commerce gets blurred

NEP 2020 emphasises on multidisciplinary learning and no separations are made between vocational and academic streams. ACadru, one of the best online learning plat-

forms offer free access to multi-disciplinary modules that help users to build unique careers for future jobs.

Students select the subjects of their choice across streams. Vocational education starts from 6th grade that also include internships.

6. Teacher Training

The new education system is an evolved blend of the digital and traditional learning system. Educators, therefore, have to be trained digitally to blend into the new digital learning processes.

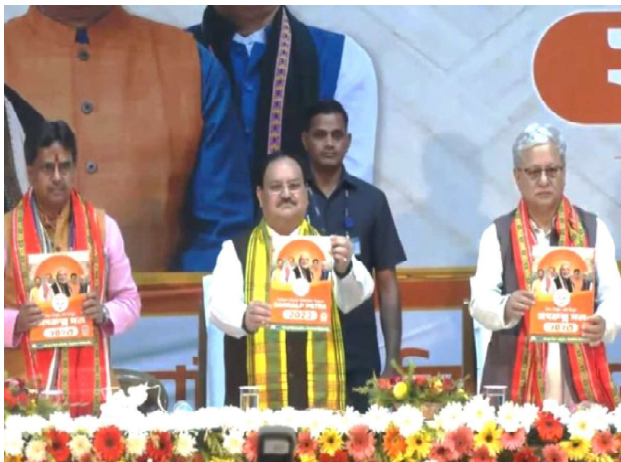
NEP 2020 is a milestone in the history of the education system in India. It will provide the much-needed tectonic shift in the pedagogical structure emphasising experiential and practical learning that will instill 21st-century skills in children. ACadru is currently the only platform that offers a multidisciplinary learning platform with skill-building activities for senior school and college students starting from grade 9.

Name Change

I, the undersigned, Gurnoor Kaur, residence of Baani Sales and Services, Thangal Bazar, Imphal do hereby declare that, I have wholly renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of old name **Gurnoor Kaur Setia**, as I have assumed my new name **Gurnoor Kaur**.

Sd/-
Gurnoor Kaur
Baani Sales and Services,
Thangal Bazar, Imphal

Tripura assembly elections 2023: JP Nadda releases BJP's poll manifesto



Agency
Agartala, Feb 9:

BJP national president JP Nadda, on Thursday (February 9), released the poll manifesto of the saffron party for the upcoming Tripura assembly elections.

Nadda, flanked by top

Tripura BJP leaders released the BJP's poll manifesto – *Sankalp Patra* for the upcoming assembly elections in the state.

Nadda called the manifesto of the BJP for the Tripura assembly elections a “vision document”.

He said that the BJP's Tripura elections manifesto was

“not only a piece of paper but BJP's commitment towards the people”.

“Tripura, once known for blockades and insurgency, is now known for peace, prosperity and development,” he said.

The BJP has promised greater autonomy for tribal ar-

eas, an increase in farmers' monetary assistance and industry-specific manufacturing zones based on rubber if it retains power in Tripura.

Nadda also announced a Rs-5 meal scheme for all, named after religious guru Anukul Chandra.

He also announced setting up of a Regional Institute of Medical Sciences hospital in Agartala, Tripura.

“We will take Tripura on the path of DTH – development, transformation, and harmony,” Nadda said.

“We will set up industry-specific manufacturing zones based on rubber, Agar, and bamboo. The PM Kisan Samman Nidhi of Rs 6,000 will be raised with the state government providing Rs 2,000 more,” Nadda added.

Polling for elections to the 60-member Tripura legislative assembly will be held in a single phase on February 16.

Votes will be counted on March 2.

Notably, the BJP has fielded candidates in 55 seats and has left five seats for its ally IPFT for the upcoming Tripura assembly elections.

Contd. from Page 1

District Skill Mela, 2023.....



ADM, Kakching Adahrii Maheo in his welcome and keynote address point out that the development of skills can contribute to structural transformation and economic growth by enhancing employability and labor productivity. Skill development has been considered as one of the critical aspect for job creation in our country. Everybody must try to get benefit and opportunity of organizing such Skill Mela in the district.

Basically, the District Skill Mela was organized for generating awareness and selection/enrolment of interested persons for skill development training in different sectors under the various skill development schemes of Central and State governments.

The programme was designed to associate with different line departments of the district, Training Providers, employers across the state, banks etc. for overall sensitization of various aspects of Skill Development. Reputed training providers across the state have participated in the event. Later, the dignitaries inspected the stalls.

As part of the Mela, a Talk Show was moderated by Anil Haorokham, Managing Director, SYNAPX and participated by A. Athias, LDM, Kakching, Moirangthem Mukhtamani, Proprietor, Mukta Shoes & Padmashri Awardee, Hanjabam Subhra Devi, Proprietor, Meira Foods, Pradeep Meitram, CEO/Co-Founder, Elle's group and

Dr. Pibarel Meetei, Founder/Managing Director, Medilane.

In today's Skill Mela, altogether 22 stalls have been opened in which DIC, Fishery, Horticulture, Agriculture are Departmental. Training Institute like KVK, RSETI, ITI, CIPET, NIELIT. Training Provider/Employer includes JCRE Skills Solution, Development for Women's Programme, OZONE Pharmaceuticals, SYNAPX, State Institute for Hotel Management, St. Stone Medical Device, Job Thimminasi, Smart Security Service, Romi Bag Industry, Green Cane Industries, Farmer Producers Organisation- Kakching Progressive Kris-e PPO. Meira Foods and Mukta Shoes participated as Entrepreneur.

AR provides prophylactic assistance for destruction of poppy cultivation

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

Chassad Battalion under the aegis of HQ IGAR (South) provides prophylactic assistance for destruction of poppy

cultivation in general area Maokot Village, Sahamphung Sub-Division on 07 and 08 Feb 2023.

Under the theme “War Against Drugs”, a joint team of Kamjong District Police,

Manipur Rifles and Assam Rifles (Chassad Battalions) under the supervision of Addnl SP Kamjong destroyed poppy cultivation over an area of approx 95 acres in Maokot and Lanchah Village area of

Sahamphung Sub-Division from 07 and 08 Feb 2023. During the destruction drive two drones were extensively used. The team also destroyed 02 huts in the poppy fields.

Assam Rifles organises Motivational Lecture & Screening Test

IT News
Imphal, Feb 9:

Churachandpur Battalion under the aegis of HQ IGAR (South) under the Theme “Friends of North East” organised a Motivational Lecture and Physical screening test for youth of nearby villages to

join Indian Armed Forces today at Aima.

The lecture was organised to spread awareness amongst the youths about various opportunities to join Indian Army. Interaction with youth was also carried out to motivate them to utilise “Agniveer scheme”. In addition, a physical screening

test was also conducted for youth of nearby villages attending the event to assess their present physical standards and guide them to maintain the requisite standards for Recruitment rally. The youth were briefed about the upcoming recruitment opportunities for 2023 and assured of assistance

and guidance from security forces to achieve their dreams to serve the nation.

A total of 21 youth attended the event and participated in the physical screening test. The youth and locals expressed gratitude to security forces for conducting such informative events.

PM's reply to the Motion of...

The Prime Minister said “For decades, the development of tribal communities was neglected. We gave top priority to their welfare.” He informed that a separate Ministry for tribal welfare was created during the tenure of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and concerted efforts for tribal welfare were undertaken.

The Prime Minister emphasized that “small farmers are the backbone of India's agriculture sector. We are working to strengthen their hands.” The Prime Minister said that small farmers were neglected for a very long time. The current government focussed on their needs and created many opportunities for the small farmers along with small vendors and artisans. The Prime Minister also elaborated on the steps taken for women empow-

erment and talked about the government's initiative to empower, ensure dignity and create ease of living at every stage of a woman's life in India.

“With the expertise of our scientists and innovators, India is becoming a pharma hub of the world”, the Prime Minister remarked as he drew attention to the unfortunate events when some people tried to let down India's scientists, innovators and vaccine manufacturers. The Prime Minister talked about inculcating scientific temper through measures like Atal Innovation Mission and Tinkering lab. He complimented the youth and scientists for fully harnessing the opportunities created by the government and launching private satellites. “We have suc-

ceeded and are using technology for empowering common citizens”, he said.

“The country today remains the world leader in digital transactions. The success of Digital India has drawn the attention of the whole world today”, the Prime Minister said. He recalled the time when India used to import mobile phones whereas today, we take pride that mobile phones are being exported to other countries.

“It is our resolve that India becomes ‘Viksit Bharat’ by 2047”, the Prime Minister remarked. He reiterated that the government has taken many significant steps to grab the opportunities that we have been looking out for. “India is ready to take the giant leap and not look back anymore”, the Prime Minister concluded.

Sports

Man United stage fightback to draw 2-2, rare home win for Marseille vs rival PSG and Madrid advance to Club World Cup final

Agency
London, Feb 9:

Manchester United fought back from a two-goal deficit to draw 2-2 with Leeds in the Premier League on Wednesday.

Substitute Jadon Sancho rescued a point for Erik ten Hag's team, which missed the chance to move level on points with second-place Manchester City.

Leeds fired Jesse Marsch on Monday. It is still waiting for a first win in the league since Nov. 5, but moved a point clear of the relegation zone.

Both teams, however, will feel they missed the opportunity to take more from the thrilling match at Old Trafford.

Leeds stunned the home crowd by taking the lead after just 55 seconds through Wilfried Gnonto and looked on course for victory when Raphael Varane deflected

Crysencio Summerville's cross into his own net three minutes after halftime.

United got back into the game through Marcus Rashford's header in the 62nd and Sancho equalized in the 70th.

But on a night when United was looking to cut the gap on leader Arsenal to five points, it remains seven behind the London club having played two more games.

The double-header against Leeds looked like an ideal opportunity for the hosts to continue their charge toward the top of the table, with the sides facing each other again in the league at Elland Road on Sunday.

Rare home win for Marseille against rival PSG in French Cup

Marseille celebrated its first home win against Paris Saint-Germain in more than a



Players from Manchester United, Marseille and Real Madrid in action.

decade to reach the quarterfinals of the French Cup, beating its bitter rival 2-1 on Wednesday.

Cheered on by buoyant fans at a packed Stade Velodrome, Marseille had rarely

looked so dominant against PSG since the Paris club started its supremacy in France after Qatari investors took over.

Marseille's previous win at the Velodrome against PSG in

all competitions dated back to November 2011.

Alexis Sanchez put the hosts in front in the fixture known as “Le Classique” of French soccer, and Ukraine attacking midfielder Ruslan

Malinovskyi scored the winner after Sergio Ramos pulled one back.

“We are delighted to progress to the next round, the French Cup is one of our goals,” Marseille captain Valentin Rongier said. “Our fans had been waiting for that win, we are so happy to share it with them.”

It was PSG's third loss this season. It came ahead of a major test as Bayern Munich travels to the French capital for the first leg of their round-of-16 match in the Champions League on Feb. 14.

Madrid advances to Club World Cup final

Real Madrid secured its place in the Club World Cup final with a 4-1 win against Egyptian club Al Ahly on Wednesday to keep alive its quest for a record-extending eighth world title.

Vinicius Junior, Federico

Valverde, Rodrygo and Sergio Arribas scored for the Spanish side, which will play Al-Hilal in Saturday's final. The Saudi Arabian team beat Brazilian club Flamengo 3-2 on Tuesday.

Madrid has won the world club title a record seven times, including three times when the competition was called the Intercontinental Cup. Madrid is chasing its first world club title since 2018.

Ali Maaloul scored the lone goal for Al Ahly, with his team already trailing 2-0 in the second half. Vinicius opened the scoring in the 42nd minute for his 50th goal in 202 matches with Madrid. Valverde added to the lead early in the second half before Rodrygo and Arribas sealed the victory in stoppage time. It was the first goal for the 21-year-old Arribas with Madrid's first team.