

Chief Minister attends Laii Day Celebration Government is giving priority to the interior villages and border areas: CM



IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

Senapati is a strategically important area, and taking advantage of the national highway which passes through the district, it can be fully developed, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said today adding that we are trying to create a city like atmosphere in the district with due consultation with civil organisations like NPO and students union etc. The Chief Minister further highlighted developmental projects undertaken in the district including construction of Ima Market, stadiums, laying of astro turf for football, development of amusement park, foundation stone laying of youth centre for skill development of youth, etc.

N. Biren Singh was speaking as the Chief Guest of the inaugural function of the Laii (Vafimai) Day cel-

ebrated under the theme "Our Culture, Our Identity" at the local ground, Laii Village, Senapati Manipur. The two day festival is celebrated on January 12 and 13. Upon his arrival at the venue, the Chief Minister and his entourage were accorded a rousing welcome by the general public.

We are working day and night, the Chief Minister said adding that today we are able to provide potable water to at least 70-80 percent in the district. Further calling on the people to be united and live together, the Chief Minister urged all to forgive and forget the past mistakes and instead move forward unitedly.

He also sought the people's support to the 'War on Drugs' campaign and further appreciated the people of the district including the Poumais, Thangals, Maos, Maram, Liangmais for coming out voluntarily and

pledging against poppy plantation and illegal drug business.

Explaining the ills of poppy plantation, the Chief Minister said it not only helps in production of drugs like opium but also destroys forest and environment. It causes massive deforestation, which is adversely affecting the climate, the Chief Minister said.

At the same time, the Chief Minister also lauded the Naga community for protecting and preserving the jungle cover in their areas.

Highlighting that the proposal for upgradation of the Laii-Tusom via Kharasom road to national highway status was not included in the proposal sent to the Centre earlier, the Chief Minister said he would look into the demand for the upgradation. N. Biren Singh also assured to look into the other points included in the memorandum submitted by the villagers.

He further applauded the people of the village for properly preserving their age-old tradition and culture.

Stressing on certain similarities between the Poumais and the Meiteis, the Chief Minister also explained that he wants to fully understand these similarities.

He also explained the need to visit the interior villages and said the government has to understand the necessities and needs of its entire people including those living in the interior villages.

Highlighting the launching of the 'Go to Hills' and 'Go to Village' schemes in the earlier term, the Chief Minister said the government understands the difficulties of life in the far-flung villages and so in its second term, the government is giving first priority to the interior villages and border areas under the leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Village chairman Th. Kapani in his welcome address said the day is celebrated every five years to commemorate the innumerable blessings, the people have received since time immemorial, and also the day to showcase the rich cultural heritage of the village.

Minister L Susindro Meitei, MP Rajya Sabha Maharaj Leishemba Sanajaoba, MLA L. Dikho, DC, SP, public leaders among others also attended the inaugural function.

Highlights of the day include inauguration of a monolith by the Chief Guest, whooping by three keels, hoisting of village flag, special items, cultural item by the Laii Women Society, Bee Dance by Laii Village Men folk among others.

N.F. Railway completed excavation work of the Main Tunnel for a length of 7445 m in Manipur



IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

N.F. Railway, Construction, has conducted a "break-through blast" to mark the successful completion of excavation work of the Main Tunnel for a length of 7445 m from Portal-1 to Face-5, in Manipur today.

Official source said that the Tunnel-12 is having total length of 10.275Km with parallel safety tunnel of 8.30Km and it is the longest Tunnel of N. F. railway. The Tunnel is passing through the most complex geological strata. This project cannot be completed without the

completion of this tunnel. The Railway is putting their full effort by working 24X7 for the completion of work with facing all the challenges of heavy rainfall and other hindrances. This tunnel is connecting hills to the Imphal valley and critical for the completion of Tupul-Imphal section.

The ongoing tunnel construction is being accomplished by cutting through fragile and Soil type strata. The attendant challenges are being tackled on daily basis through strict 3D monitoring and proactive application of desired tunnel support systems in accordance with the New Aus-

trian Tunnelling Method (NATM).

N.F. Railway, Construction has been consistently achieving success in the execution of infrastructure marvels in the most challenging area of North-eastern States. The Railway has taken up tunneling work in a big way with successful completion of High altitude and Mountainous tunnels in Jiribam-Imphal New BG Line Project.

The Railway is highly thankful to all state govt. officials and govt. of Manipur for providing all necessary support for achieving this critical milestone.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai reviews Central Government Schemes in Thoubal

IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

Union Minister of State for Home, Nityanand Rai today reviewed various central schemes taken up in the District.

In the meeting held at the Conference Hall of Deputy Commissioner Thoubal, the DLO's of various departments apprise the minister about the various central sponsor schemes taken up by the departments. The Minister advised the District level Officers to go to the field to take stock of the situation for better implementation of schemes.

The Minister expressed

happiness regarding the implementation of Jaal Jeevan Mission in the District which is an ambitious program to avail safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connection by 2024. He said the model implemented in the District can be applied to other parts of India also.

Regarding the Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan, the Minister instructed the officials to focus on counseling and treatment facilities in hospitals and rehabilitation centers.

With regard to Mission Amrit Sarovar the Minister instructed the officials to beautify the water bodies site to

attract the public. Mission Amrit Sarovar is aimed at developing and rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country as part of the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Amrit Sarovar projects in the district is targeted to be completed by August, 2023.

The Minister appealed the Government officials to take up new initiatives to increase and ensure the availability of government benefits directly to the beneficiaries.

The meeting was attended by A. Subhash Deputy Commissioner Thoubal, Jageshchandra Haobijam, SP Thoubal, ADM and other District level Officers.

2 poachers, one trader nabbed with dead migratory waterfowl

By a correspondent
Imphal, Jan 11:

Two poachers and a trader were nabbed on charges of selling and buying migratory birds at Mayang Imphal Bazar about 20 km from Imphal. Two dead migratory birds were also recovered from their possession, an official source said here on Wednesday.

A joint team of Unique Wildlife Protection Committee Manipur, Kachhing Range Forest staff, and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau Eastern Re-

gion were on regular patrolling in the western part of Loktak lake and Mayang Imphal Bazar.

During the patrol, they came across three suspects involved in trapping, killing, and trading of migratory birds in the Mayang Imphal Bazar area on Tuesday.

The team members grilled them and the beans spilt out and recovered a dead male locally called Naganu Mitngoubi (Ferruginous Pochard) and a female Naganu Thoidingnum (Gadwall) from them.

After further interrogation, it also came out that they trapped the birds on the western side of the Loktak lake and sold the waterfowl to a hotelier cum trader at Mayang Imphal Bazar.

The two poachers namely Akham Tomba Singh (52) and Ningthoujam Ibchoaba (54) both the residents of Mayang Imphal Heigum Yangbi and the trader have been handed over to Central Forest Division for appropriate action under Wildlife Protection Act 1972, the source added.

ICAR scientist Dr. Y Prabhabati Devi's Roselle Cheese and Chilli launched

IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

Two products were launched during North East Krishi Kumbha 2023 and 49th Foundation Day of ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region Umiam on January 6, 2023.

The two products launched were value added products from under utilised horticultural crops which have high nutraceutical and antioxidant properties- Roselle cheese and Chilli RTE developed by Dr. Y Prabhabati Devi SMS, Home Science, KVK, Chandel, ICAR, Manipur Centre.

The products were launched by Prof. Prabha Shankar Shukla, Vice Chancellor, NEHU, Shillong, who attended the occasion as chief guest.

George B. Lyngdoh,



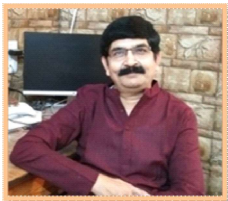
member of legislative assembly, Govt. of Meghalaya, S. Chakravarthy Sadhu, IAS, Director Community and Rural Development, Govt. of Meghalaya, Dr. Neeta Maheskar, Director, North East Institute of Ayurveds and Homeopathy,

Meghalaya and Dr. V.K. Mishra, Director ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region, Umiam during North East Krishi Kumbha 2023 attended as dignitaries on the occasion.

The 49th Foundation Day of ICAR Research Com-

plex for NEH Region Umiam from January 4, 2023 to January 6, 2023. These two value added products will be a source of income for many women entrepreneurs and it will provide employment opportunities for many rural youths, and farm women.

Take risks in your life. If you win, you can lead, if you lose, you can guide



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has rightly said that the coming decade belongs to the youth and lauded them for believing in the system and questioning it when it does not respond properly. 12th January is celebrated as the National Youth Day every year since 1985 which has been an indelible part of India's tradition. Incidentally, this was also the day when Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest social reformers, thinkers, and philosophers of India, was born. He was the pioneer in leading the youth to meaningful protests through associations. The philosophy, ideas, and teachings of Swami Vivekananda can justifiably be called national assets from traditional and cultural points of view. At the same time, the youth are the future of our country. He belonged to the 19th century, yet his message and his life are more relevant today than in the past and perhaps, will be more relevant in future because persons like Swami Vivekananda do not cease to exist with their physical death.

Addressing his last 'Mann ki Baat', Modi said that the youth hate anarchy and disorder and dislike casteism, nepotism and favouritism, remarks that come in the backdrop of recent violent protests in various university campuses over the Citizenship Amendment Act and proposed NRC. Swami Vivekananda said "My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out of them will become my workers they will work out the whole problem. They will spread my message from centre to centre until we cover the whole of India." He had to arise and awake a Nation which 'felt like a slave, under the shadow of the British and the west. It would be difficult to name any freedom fighter that time and afterward also, who were not influenced by the thoughts, ideals, and patriotism of Swamiji. Actually, if we analyze critically we will find that development of oneness, unity and the role of Indian became clear to everybody only after the speeches and works of Swami Vivekananda. In many places during his lecture session he said "Our country requires a hero, be a hero, stand firm like a rock. Be brave, be brave Man dies but once". Youths are everything, they have the capability to do anything out of the box, the only thing they need is the direction or a mentor for the future of our country. Today the youth need safe spaces where they can come together, engage in activities related to their diverse needs and interests, participate in decision making processes and freely express themselves. The youth is considered to be the best asset of any country and investment in the human resource promises astonishing returns.

Swami Vivekananda's teachings and Philosophy is very much relevant today. The number of problems that the nation is facing today can be solved through his teachings. Swamiji's life and speeches are capable enough to develop in anybody the patriotic feelings and in return, the person is bound to contribute in the Nation Building. His call to the nation is: 'Arise, awake; wake up yourself, and awaken others. Achieve the consummation of life before you pass off. Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

I would like to conclude with one of his quotation "My hope of the future lies in the youths of character, intelligent, renouncing all for the service of others, and obedient - good to themselves and the country at large". Our elders need to understand that a little space and trust shown in them will open the doors of the opportunities for the youngsters.

Citing the cases when youth vociferously react whenever an incident of disorder takes place and make a video of it to make the culprit realise the consequence, Modi exhorted youth to give a thought to this responsibility and take on this resolve on Vivekananda's birth anniversary on January 12.

Swami Vivekananda taught us the essence of nationalism in his bold writings. He wrote: "Our sacred motherland is the land of religion and philosophy-the birthplace of the spiritual giants-the land of renunciation, where and where alone, from the most ancient to the most modern times, there has been the highest ideal of life open to man."

Using Entertainment in Imparting Education



By: Vijay GarG

Listening, reading and speaking are three important ways through which children participate in stories. Schools help students with story-telling techniques through text books, library sessions or dramatics. Story telling helps in more ways than one.

Language Development

Listening to stories help children gain an exposure to a world of new words. Storytelling introduces them to expressiveness and basic conversation skills. Research has shown that children whose parents narrate incidents to them speak much earlier as compared to children who are less spoken to. Children also acquire good language skills as it gives them an opportunity to practise speaking a given language.

Cognitive Development

Children love to listen to stories. This helps the young minds build on their ability to memorise, including sequence of events, characters and plots. In fact, some children are creative enough to even change incidents and characters in the story as per their imagination. This ability to tweak encourages children to be creatively imaginative.

Holistic development

Stories are an important way to tap into the heart of the students, providing a channel for conveying a deeper message based on emotion. Much of what students remember from a learning experience are the feelings of the underlying mes- sage and that could be motivational. For example, the 'thirsty crow' story is used effectively to convey that patience and perseverance is needed to achieve success.

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Acid Rain & its Effect

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

Acid rain may seem like a phenomenon of the past, but it is still a problem in many parts of the world, destroying entire ecosystems and damaging buildings and other structures. But what causes acid rain to begin with? Acid Rain, as the name suggests, can be said as the precipitation of acid in the form of rain in the simplest manner. When atmospheric pollutants like oxides of nitrogen and sulphur react with rainwater and come down with the rain, then this result in Acid Rain. Acid rain is made up of highly acidic water droplets due to air emissions, most specifically the disproportionate levels of sulphur and nitrogen emitted by vehicles and manufacturing processes. It is often called acid rain as this concept contains many types of acidic precipitation. The acidic deposition takes place in two ways: wet and dry. Wet deposition is any form of precipitation which removes acids from the atmosphere and places them on the surface of the earth. In the absence of precipitation, dry deposition of polluting particles and gases sticks to the ground through dust and smoke.

The pH value of regular rainwater is around 5.7, giving it an acidic nature. The oxides of nitrogen and sulphur are blown away by the wind along with the dust particles. They settle on the earth's surface after coming down in the form of precipitation. Acid rain is essentially a by-product of human activities which emit oxides of nitrogen and sulphur in the atmosphere. Example - the burning of fossil fuels, unethical waste emission disposal techniques. Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide undergo oxidation, and then they react with water resulting in the formation of sulphuric acid and nitric acid, respectively.

Acid rain is very harmful to agriculture, plants, and animals. It washes away all nutrients which are required for the growth and survival of plants. The ecological consequences of acid rain are seen most strongly in marine habitats, such as streams, lakes and marshes where fish and other wildlife can be toxic. Acidic rainwater can leach aluminum from soil clay particles as it flows through the soil and then floods into streams and lakes. Acid rain affects agriculture by the way it alters the composition of the soil. It causes respiratory issues in animals and humans. When acid rain falls down and flows into the rivers and ponds it affects the aquatic ecosystem. It alters the chemical composition of the water, to a form which is actually

harmful to the aquatic ecosystem to survive and causes water pollution. Acid rain also causes the corrosion of water pipes, which further results in leaching of heavy metals such as iron, lead and copper into drinking water.

Acid rain damages the buildings and monuments made up of stones and metals, especially those constructed with limestone, react with the minerals and corrode them away. This leaves the buildings weak and susceptible to decay. Modern buildings, cars, airplanes, steel bridges and pipes are all affected by acid rain. Irreplaceable damage can be caused to the old heritage buildings. Acid rain leads to weathering of buildings, corrosion of metals and peeling of paints on surfaces. Building and structures made of marble and limestone are the ones especially damaged by acid rain due to the reactivity of acids in the rain and the calcium compounds in the structures. The live examples are, the Taj Mahal, one of the 7 wonders of the world, is largely affected by acid rain. The city of Agra has many industries which emit the oxides of sulphur and nitrogen in the atmosphere. People continue to use low-quality coal and firewood as a domestic fuel, adding to this problem. The formation of calcium sulphate results in the corrosion of this beautiful monument. Statue of Liberty which is made of copper has also been damaged by the cumulative action of acid rain and oxidation for over 30 years and is, therefore, becoming green.

The only precaution that we can take against acid rain is having a check at the emission of oxides of nitrogen and sulphur. Regulating the emissions coming from vehicles and

buildings is an important step, according to the EPA. This can be done by restricting the use of fossil fuels and focusing on more renewable energy sources as well, such as nuclear power, hydropower, and geothermal energy, solar and wind power. Among these, the most extensive use is the nuclear and hydropower. Also, each person can do their part by reducing their vehicle use. Using public transportation, walking, riding a bike or carpooling is a good start, according to the EPA. People can also reduce their use of electricity, which is widely created with fossil fuels or switch to a solar plan. Renewable sources of energy are helping to reduce acid rain, as they produce much fewer emissions.

Acid rain is harmful to animals, plants and the monuments. Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide are the principal chemicals for acid rain. It can also influence humans since the acid goes into fruits, vegetables and animals. In other words, we can get really sick if acid rain doesn't stop, and we eat those things. In general, acid rain affects men, but not directly. It is also possible to prevent acid rain forming, by adding lime deposits to major water sources. This method has been used to neutralize the pH levels in the water, which reduced the acidity, for thousands of years, the LA Times reported. These so-called "liming" operations have also been used to restore wildlife. Being responsible citizens, one should be aware of the harmful effects they cause and of the industries which give out nitrogen and sulphur compound wastes unethically.

(Writer can be reached to: sjgugeshwor@gmail.com)

A Year of Shrinking Freedom of Press and Free expression in Manipur!



By: Jayanta Sharangthem

Is the people's freedom of speech and expression under attack? Freedom of speech is the cornerstone of a democratic country. It is the most fundamental right that all people have in a democratic country, regardless of religion, culture, or ethnicity. It is often regarded as an integral concept in modern liberal democracies, where it is understood to outlaw censorship. Speech is an inalienable right as it is the expression of thought, and our minds belong to us by nature. The free exercise of religion, a free press, and the right to peacefully assemble and express grievances and petitions are, in theory, the most basic rights of the people and the cornerstone of Indian democracy for checking government accountability. Freedom of expression has broad social, economic, and political purposes: (i) it aids in the discovery of truths; (ii) it helps in decision-making; (iii) it provides a mechanism of balance and stability from their perspectives; and (iv) it provides accountability, verification, and transparency in the actions of others. However, these very freedoms come under regular attack by governments that want to stifle criticism. As we get further, freedom of expression, free press, social media users, and personal freedoms continue to be a centre of debate in India. What the stories behind the arrests or sum-

mons of each journalist clearly bring to the fore is that journalism, especially investigative reporting, is increasingly becoming a dangerous occupation. Whether it is poppy plantations, palm plantations, go to hills, IRB recruitment, border issues, school phagathansi, alcohol legalisation in Manipur, illegal constructions and evictions, the governor's action on disqualification of MLAs, formation of government, criticising government policies and programmes, police brutality, or any kind of corruption, the ones who bring the murky truth to light often end up fearing for their lives or giving threats to the editors, social media users, anchors, and studio TV panelists.

What do you mean by freedom of the press? Freedom of the press or media refers to the rights given by the Constitution of India under the freedom of speech and expression in Article 19(1)(a). It encourages independent journalism, exchange of ideas, raising the voice of the people, being accountable for actions, checking facts, delivering news updates to people, and promoting democracy by letting the people voice their opinions for or against the government's actions. The media has a vital role in scrutinizing, auditing, and evaluating the actions of governments. In fact, no other institution wields as much power or influences public opinion as the media. So, free speech is seen by many as the bedrock of Indian democracy. Activists, journalists, lawyers, and academics are concerned that free speech in India is deteriorating. Article 19 of the Constitution of India guarantees freedom of speech and expression along with certain restrictions. However, under these restrictions, various means have been exercised by the government to curb this very

freedom from time to time since the enforcement of the constitution of India on January 26, 1950, and surprisingly, such curbs have risen more since 2014.

Our voice matters. We, under this democracy, have the right to say what we think, share information, and demand a better Manipur. We also have the right to agree or disagree with those in power and to express our opinions peacefully, as long as we do not violate others' dignity, defamation, contempt of court, decency, or morality, state security, friendly relations between India and other countries, incitement to an offense, public order, or the maintenance of India's sovereignty and integrity. Exercising these rights without fear or unlawful interference is now under attack in a country like India, which will have a huge impact on accessing justice and enjoying human rights. Yet governments routinely imprison people or try to threaten them for speaking out, even though the country's constitution refers to the value of free speech. When questions arise about the government's illegal actions, the government tries to harass and arrest them under the provisions of UAPA, making it difficult for them to be released on bail. We all know that when someone speaks against the government, an income tax raid, CBI search, ED search, or police pick-up action against them is sure to happen in the following days in order to give them some threats and make them silent. Also, journalists who ask awkward questions are likely to get some threats in order to create a climate of fear, abuse, and division in their minds from all corners. It means the government is trying to tell us they can suppress us even if we have done nothing wrong, and to be clear, that is a signal to the free-

dom of the press. This is against the very structure of our Indian Constitution. If this trend continues, a dictatorial form of government will undoubtedly emerge in the future.

Freedom of speech and expression today still often depends on wealth, privilege and our position in society. Those who are wealthy and powerful, such as MLAs and ministers, are rarely restricted from expressing their opinions. Free speech is under attack in many ways. Now-a-days, repression by governments has increased. All India Radio, Imphal's political analysis and discussion on state issues have been restricted recently. Above and beyond that, there have been numerous incidents such as crackdowns, arrests, and restrictions on the use of social media. Free speech is the best defence against bad government. Politicians who err should not try to stop criticism. Those who hear it may respond to it; those who silence it may never find out how their policies misfired. As a result, free debate separates good ideas from bad. Never try to silence views with which you disagree. Win the argument without resorting to force. And grow a tougher hide. As Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate, has pointed out, no democracy with a free press ever endured famine. At the same time, we, the people, should take care of the sponsored or fake news too. We live in an era of propaganda, proactive false information, and half-truths. The media coverage, or rather blackout, of certain press conferences, and distorting headlines with a pro-government bias, is an attempt to spread disinformation. Unless we, as ordinary citizens, rise up and demand accountability from the government, there will be no change in the situation.

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Over 30,000 youths to attend National Youth Festival: Anurag Thakur

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 11:

More than thirty thousand youths from across the country will participate in the inauguration ceremony of the National Youth Festival, said Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Thakur.

The National Youth Festival is held on January 12, every year, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

"More than thirty thousand youths across the country will be coming for the inauguration ceremony of the National Youth Festival. Apart from this, more than 7,500 youths across the nation will actively participate in the festival," he said on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be inaugurating the



National Youth festival which will begin on January 12 in the twin cities of Hubli-Dharwad in Karnataka.

The National Youth Festival will continue till January 16, said Thakur.

"There will be competitive as well as non-competitive events at the festival," the Minister added.

"As the nation is celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence. We hope that the youth is empowered and they play a vital role in the development of the nation," he said.

Talking about the G-20 Presidency of India, Thakur said, "It is a historic moment for all of us. Meetings of the Youth 20 will also be held in

different parts of the country, as part of India's Presidency."

"We will try to provide the youths who are coming from across India to the festival with the information of Y-20. When these students go back to their states they will be engaging in Y Talks, which will be held in college and universities across India," said Thakur.

"The message which the people from different parts of the globe put during India's G-20 presidency, we will convey it across the country through Y-20 and Y talks," he added.

He also said that five traditional games of India like malkham, yogasana, kalarepattu, Thangta and Gatka will be included in the festival so that people get to know about them and they can become national and international games in the future.

The training of Agniveer Pioneer Batch starts at ACCS, Ahmednagar

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan 11:

The Armoured Corps Centre and School, located at Ahmednagar in Western Maharashtra has begun training Agniveers as part of an all India training program under the new Agnipath scheme from this month.

The training under Agnipath scheme includes an intensive scenario-based practical training and will focus on areas such as physical training, drill, marksmanship and common military knowledge. Besides, tactical acumen, unarmed combat and situational awareness is a part of Basic Military Training which will be followed by Advance Military Training in their respective trades.

After successful completion of the training, the Agniveers will be attested as young soldiers and will join various regiments of the Armoured Corps to serve the nation, an Indian Army statement read.

The Agnipath Scheme was launched last year in June. Now, for the next six months those who underwent intense trials and tests will have to undergo rigorous training.

The recruitment process for the first batch of 'Agniveers' is almost complete and those recruited have reported in different



regimental centres of the army between December 25 and December 31, 2022. The training has started in all regimental and training centres. Women have also been included in the first batch of "Agniveers" at the Corps of Military Police (CMP) in Bengaluru (Karnataka) for training.

Training Centres

The regimental centres where the training of the first batch of Agniveers has begun include: Armoured Corps Training Centre, Ahmednagar, Artillery Training Centre, Nashik and the Guards Regimental Centre, Nagpur-Maharashtra. Artillery Training Centre, Hyderabad (Telangana), Jakir Regimental Centre, Jabalpur, One STC, Jabalpur-Madhy Pradesh, Corps of Military Police, Bengaluru (Karnataka) – for women

Agniveers. Punjab Regimental Centre and Sikh Regimental Centre, Ramgarh (Jharkhand); Bihar Regimental Centre, Danapur (Bihar), Kumaon Regimental Centre, Ranikhet (Uttarakhand) and Two STC, Goa.

Ranks

The soldiers recruited under this Agniveer scheme will be known as Agniveer. They will join the army for four years. The review will be done after four years of service. After the review, only 25 percent Agniveers will be able to serve further in the army and the remaining 75 percent will be retired. The Agniveers serving the army for four years will be called a soldier and the rank will be Lance Naik, Naik, Havaldar, etc. like common soldiers. Besides Army, 3000 Agniveers will be recruited in the Air Force and Navy.

The Golden Jubilee Celebrations of INS Agnibahu

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan 11:

INS Agnibahu, the shore establishment, which serves the administrative and logistic base for the 22nd Missile Vessel Squadron (22nd MVS), located at Colaba in South Mumbai, celebrated its Golden Jubilee on Monday.

A host of events including a symposium on "Ensuring Future Readiness in Surface-to-Surface Missile Warfare", were organised on Sunday and Monday.

Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C), Western Naval Command (WNC), was the Chief Guest for the symposium, while Vice Admiral RB Pandit, Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Forces Command was the Guest of Honour.

A host of other dignitaries, including distinguished veterans and ex-Commanding Officers of INS Agnibahu, also attended the event. The symposium covered aspects of modern missile warfare including lessons learnt from recent conflicts across the globe.

The "Agnibahu" meaning an arm of fire, was commis-



FOC-in-C, WNC, Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, with a distinguished veteran during Golden Jubilee celebrations of INS Agnibahu in Mumbai.

sioned on January 08, 1973 as the Tender Ship for the 25th Missile Boat Squadron, boats that had the distinction of conducting the daring attack on Karachi in the 1971 War with Pakistan.

With the creation of Headquarters, Maharashtra Area, on March 23, 1987, this unit was transferred under the operational and administrative control of Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra Naval Area (FOMA). 22 MVS was formed at Mumbai with the induction of 1241 RE ships (Veer class) from 1987 onwards.

K 25 continued to look after

the old missile boats (P 205 Project) and Veer class ships also till old missile boats were shifted to Visakhapatnam in October 1991. Thereafter, Captain K25/Agnibahu was re-designated as Captain K22/Agnibahu, with the 22 Missile Vessel Squadron (Veer class ships) under him.

Over the years, the unit has distinguished itself in providing excellent administrative, logistic and accommodation support to these vessels while remaining true to its motto "Always and Forever". It has grown multifold in size and operational responsibility in this period, and

has provided operational support to both the Missile Squadrons during various operations including Glow Worm, Falcon, Pustak, Suraksha, Gemini, Pawan and Cactus.

Participation of many ex-Commanding Officers from across India in the Golden Jubilee celebrations was a fitting tribute to the strong personal bonds and traditional values this fine unit represents. INS Agnibahu continues to remain the punch behind the First Strike capability of the 22nd MVS and stands steadfast and committed to fulfilling this mandate with elan and excellence.

India records 171 new Covid-19 infections; active cases at 2,342

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 11:

In the past 24 hours ending 8 am on January 11, India recorded a 171 new Covid-19 infection cases as the total active cases increased to 2,342, data on the Health Ministry's website showed.

The case fatality rate was recorded at around 1.19 per cent. The daily positivity rate stood at 0.09, while weekly positivity was pegged at 0.11.

The active Covid-19

caseload saw an increase of 23 across the country in the past 24 hours, news agency PTI reported. This increase was recorded from the 1,80,926 samples collected by the health officials on Tuesday.

Out of the total 2,342 active cases in the country, most are from Kerala, whose tally of active cases is 1,342, followed by Karnataka, which has 210 active cases. However, most cases registered in the past 24 hours were from Maharashtra. It reported 19 new cases, ac-

cording to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

A total of 220.15 Crore (220,15,14,689) vaccines have been administered in the country until now, with 51,377 being registered on Tuesday itself. Most vaccines have been distributed in Uttar Pradesh, with around 39 crore vaccines, followed by Maharashtra at about 17 crore total. Recently, the Indian Government has also approved its first needle-free nasal vaccine, iNCOVACC (BBV154).

Contd. from Page 2

A Year of Shrinking Freedom of Press and Free expression....

The response of the executive to lawful speech takes several forms, from criminalising dissent to outright censoring. While charging university students, lecturers, scholars, writers, activists, comedians, one who comments on Facebook, and journalists under criminal and anti-terrorism laws, the strategy of the government to curb criticism is palpable. The government's fight against free speech is sometimes tainted by a communal element as well. Any mild criticism of the government or its

policies is subject to criminal charges. We also know that many national and local print media editors and TV anchors are forced to resign due to the pressure given to them from all sides. With this, India's press freedom has fallen in recent years. There are so many incidents that show the government supports Hindu nationalist agendas, posing a threat to unity in diversity and other minorities from the agenda like one nation one language one religion. The government sometimes becomes a silent spectator to

those opinions the government is pleased with. The freedom to criticise and dissent is part of one's broader freedom of speech, which is seen as fundamental to the functioning of a democracy. If a state's citizenry is not free to express themselves, then their other civil and political rights are also under threat. The freedom of the press is also crucial to the functioning of democracy. In the absence of a free press, citizens lose their ability to make informed decisions in a free and fair electoral process. Freedom of the press is part

of the fabric of our democracy. It acts as both a check against government power and a tool for enabling the public to make informed decisions. This is why it's critical for journalists to have the protections they need to keep the public informed.

The summoning and detention of Sanaleibak newspaper's editor for some hours in a police station after picking him up from his residence on the charge of sharing his views during a discussion programme on a local television news network regard-

ing the on-going drive to destroy poppy plantations, is seen as a new low for press freedom in Manipur. Press and human rights groups condemn and see it as an attack on the freedom of speech and expression. Free-speech activists and media commentators affirm that the space for hard-hitting journalism, dissent, and debate has rapidly shrunk in India's mainstream media. The violence against journalists, the politically partisan media, and the concentration of media ownership all demonstrate that

press freedom is in crisis in the world's largest democracy, ruled since 2014. Several media owners who are close to the ruling party or who want their business interests furthered have started putting pressure on journalists to curb reporting, change editorial direction, or just practise self-censorship, or force them to follow the dos and don'ts.

Free speech in India, therefore, faces multiple attacks from the executive. As history teaches us, no dictatorial regime can claim perma-

nency, as history teaches us. There are, no doubt, changes for the better, as indicated by a considerable section of the population. Freedom is a political imperative. Surely, there will come a time when the country will look back and thank those who contributed to the revival and correction of its democracy and the right to free expression. It will thank the editors, expert panellists, writers, activists, scholars, and academicians for asking difficult questions to the executive. Only time will tell.

Using Entertainment in Imparting....

Stories also help them to learn caring. When a story of Mother Teresa is recounted to them, as learner, they begin to see themselves in the story and begin to identify with it, they start to care. A story thus, helps to build the emotional quotient of a student.

Infuses life in stories
For centuries, people have used stories to pass on knowledge. When information is embedded in the context of a story, it is transferred to a listener or reader in a unique way. For example

the story of India's freedom struggle is understood better by students when it is broken down into smaller stories like biographies of freedom fighters or incidents like Quit India Movement or the Swadeshi movement. So besides getting

knowledge about our country's freedom movement, the story format is reshaping the knowledge to make it easy and interesting to learn and understand it.

Personality development

Stories can motivate students towards a learning

goal. They are ideal for personality development because when the student is motivated, they no longer need to be persuaded. An encouraging story will inspire them to take action.

Imbibes moral values

Many stories come with

a moral at the end of it. The moral is better absorbed by students when it is placed in the context of a story. It kind of comes alive with a story.

Social Development

Stories introduce children, to social norms that

they are expected to follow through their lifetime. Values, imbibed through childhood stories, take deep roots and shape world views. Stories also encourage children, to be more participative in a group set-up and become better listeners.

Naturally ventilated polyhouse for floriculture inaugurated at Mongjam

IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

In a simple ceremony, a naturally ventilated polyhouse for floriculture was inaugurated today at Mongjam Mamang Leikai Chingkhong, Imphal East. The polyhouse was established by Council for Scientific and Industrial Research - North East Institute of Science and Technology (CSIR-NEIST), Jorhat, Branch Laboratory Lamphelpat, Imphal as a part of CSIR Floriculture Mission.

Dr. H. Birkumar Singh, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-NEIST, Lamphelpat inaugurated the polyhouse in the presence of Mayanglambam Khelendro Singh, President of Apunba Imagi Machasing, Manipur and Dr. Homen Thangjam, faculty member of Indra Gandhi National Tribal University, who were the President and Guest of Honour of the function, respectively.

Dr. H. Birkumar Singh stated, "The objective of the mission is conservation and promotion of indigenous orchid species of Manipur. Further, he added that when the Government of India undertakes any scheme, it examines the potential of the prospective beneficiary, feasibility of the space where the scheme shall be implemented and finally, the prospect of further expansion. He said, "I am



glad to know that Thongam Joysana has been already working for years in bee-keeping, producing organic honey. Moreover, he has been maintaining a nursery for flowers. In appreciation of his sincerity, work culture and dedication, we decided to provide him this polyhouse". He added, "Let me say, this is the first step. In the years to come, I hope we can help him and other deserving beneficiaries more".

Dr. Homen Thangjam appreciated Dr. Singh and expressed his gratitude to CSIR-NEIST for such a noble cause. He added that on account of climate change various plant species are disappearing from the face of earth. Providing polyhouses to deserving beneficiaries shall go a long way to conserve and promote ex-

otic species of Manipur's orchids. He also added that such a venture also assures avenues for revenue generation to several unemployed educated youths of Manipur.

Mayanglambam Khelendro Singh also thanked Dr. Singh and CSIR-NEIST. He observed that Thongam Joysana has been living in this isolated hamlet along with his young wife and three kids for more than 10 years tending to bees and undertaking farming to sustain the family. He said, "Of all the many youths I have known, I have never come across such a brave and hard-working person like Joysana. He is someone who does not lose heart in the face of adversity and poverty". He added, "Our land shall progress when there are persons who earn

money through sweat and hard work. Equally, our land shall be prosperous when the Government allots items of any scheme to deserving beneficiaries, not to any Tom, Dick and Harry, who are relatives of the Government employees".

After the Inauguration function, Dr. Birkumar Singh also presented to Joysana, Urea (50 Kg, one bag), SSP (50 Kg, one bag), MOP (50 Kg, one bag), Coco pith wet, ready to use (25 Kg, 10 bags), Nursery poly bag black colour (24x12 cm; 1000 pc per pack; one packet), hose pipe (one roll), one battery operated spray, garden tools including Khurpi (two pieces), one five-litre water tank, one hedge cutter, one spade, one Secateur and one bill hook, and one roll of aluminium wire (one Kg).

Centre names new integrated food security scheme launched from January 1, 2023 as PMGKAY

PIB
New Delhi, Jan 11:

The Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved new integrated food security scheme for providing free foodgrains to Antodaya Ann Yojana (AAY) & Primary Household (PHH) beneficiaries, to be rolled out from 1st January 2023. New scheme has been named as Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY). Implementation of the new scheme has started from 1st January 2023, benefiting more than 80 crore poor and poorest of poor people.

Keeping in view welfare of the beneficiaries and in order to maintain uniformity across the States, free foodgrains will be provided under PMGKAY

for the year 2023 to all PHH and AAY beneficiaries, as per entitlement under NFSA. The integrated scheme will strengthen the provisions of NFSA, 2013 in terms of accessibility, affordability and availability of foodgrains for the poor.

For effective and uniform implementation of NFSA 2013, PMGKAY will subsume the two subsidy schemes of Department of Food & Public Distribution (a) Food Subsidy to FCI (b) Food Subsidy for decentralized procurement states dealing with procurement, allocation and delivery of free foodgrains to the states under NFSA.

Necessary steps have already been taken for smooth implementation of the

PMGKAY in the field, i.e. necessary notification has been issued for making price of foodgrains zero for AAY and PHH beneficiaries, resolution of technical issues at Fair Price Shops (FPS), advisory related to margin to the Fair Price Shop Dealers, zero prices in the print receipts given to beneficiaries etc.

Officers of the Department of Food & Public Distribution and FCI are regularly interacting with State Government officers for smooth roll out of new scheme in the field.

The Central Government will spend more than Rs 2 lakh crore in 2023 as food subsidy under NFSA and other welfare schemes, to remove the financial burden of the poor and the poorest of the poor.

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR STATE NODAL CELL (CMHT) DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES

PUBLIC NOTICE for CMHT

Imphal, the 11th January, 2023

SNC-1-101/7/2022-SNC-DHS: Whereas, the empanelled hospitals under CMHT shall provide treatment/interventions to beneficiaries as per specified packages and the rates mentioned in the Annexure-2 to the Agreement between the empanelled hospitals and State Nodal Cell;

2. Whereas, the empanelled hospitals shall provide treatment/intervention to the beneficiaries in a complete "cashless" manner as per Section 2 of the Agreement. Cashless means that for the required treatment/intervention as per package rates and no payment shall be done by the beneficiary undergoing treatment or any of its family member till such time there is balance left in the sum insured;

3. Whereas, CMHT Beneficiary Audit during/post hospitalization conducted from March 2019 to October 2022 revealed that significant number of beneficiaries (CMHT Card holders) were subjected to out-of-pocket expenses during hospitalization in the empanelled hospitals. In most of such cases, the expenditures incurred by the beneficiaries were far more than the admissible packages under the Schemes. While redressing such grievances of the beneficiaries, empanelled hospitals shall be required to refund all the expenditure amounts to the beneficiaries/ family members and this amount may, in certain cases, result to loss of income for the hospitals;

Now, in order to minimize the out-of-pocket expenses by the beneficiaries (CMHT Card holders) and loss of income to the empanelled hospitals, all empanelled hospitals are hereby instructed to strictly adhere to the

CMHT guidelines and to provide free cashless treatment to the beneficiaries. In case of failure to comply with the instruction, proceedings for de-empanelment or any other suitable actions including cancellation of licences may be taken up against any of the empanelled hospitals for violation of conditions laid down in Annexure-6 to the said Agreement;

Further, beneficiaries/public are informed to immediately report to the Grievance Cell (CMHT) by calling the Toll Free phone number 18001032015 or raise their complaints directly to the State Nodal Cell (CMHT), Directorate of Health Services, Manipur if any empanelled hospital attempts to take advanced deposits/charge money from the beneficiaries undergoing medical treatment.

Sd/-

Dr. Kh. Sasheekumar Mangang
Director, Health Services
& SNO (CMHT)

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR STATE HEALTH AGENCY

PUBLIC NOTICE for PMJAY

Imphal, the 10th January, 2023

SHA-601/2/2022-SHA-DHS: Whereas, the empanelled hospitals under PMJAY shall provide treatment/interventions to beneficiaries as per specified packages and the rates mentioned in the Annexure-2 to the Agreement between the empanelled hospitals and State Health Agency;

2. Whereas, the empanelled hospitals shall provide treatment/intervention to the beneficiaries in a complete "cashless" manner as per Section 2 of the Agreement. Cashless means that for the required treatment/intervention as per package rates and no payment shall be done by the beneficiary undergoing treatment or any of its family member till such time there is balance left in the sum insured;

3. Whereas, PMJAY Beneficiary Audit during/post hospitalization conducted from March 2019 to October 2022 revealed that significant number of beneficiaries (PMJAY Card holders) were subjected to out-of-pocket expenses during hospitalization in the empanelled hospitals. In most of such cases, the expenditures incurred by the beneficiaries were far more than the admissible packages under the Schemes. While redressing such grievances of the beneficiaries, empanelled hospitals shall be required to refund all the expenditure amounts to the beneficiaries/ family members and this amount may, in certain cases, result to loss of income for the hospitals;

Now, in order to minimize the out-of-pocket expenses by the beneficiaries (PMJAY Card holders) and loss of income to the empanelled hospitals, all empanelled hospitals are hereby instructed to strictly adhere to the PMJAY guidelines and to provide free cashless treatment to the beneficiaries. In case of failure to comply with the instruction, proceedings for de-empanelment or any other suitable actions including cancellation of licences may be taken up against any of the empanelled hospitals for violation of conditions laid down in Annexure-6 to the said Agreement;

Further, beneficiaries/public are informed to immediately report to the Grievance Cell (PMJAY) by calling the Toll Free phone number 18001032015 or raise their complaints directly to the State Health Agency, Directorate of Health Services, Manipur if any empanelled hospital attempts to take advanced deposits/charge money from the beneficiaries undergoing medical treatment.

Sd/-

Laltanpui Vanchhong
Chief Executive Officer,
State Health Agency, Manipur.

Assam Rifles conducts Medical & Dental Camp in Ukhrul District

IT News
Imphal, Jan 11:

Somsai Battalion Assam Rifles under the aegis of HQ IGAR(South) conducted a Medical & Dental Camp under Operation Sadbhavana at

Choithar village of Ukhrul district on 11 Jan 2023.

This camp was organised on the request of village authorities as the villagers do not have access to medical facilities in the village and are situated away from district

hospital, Ukhrul.

A total of 253 Villagers (88 men, 103 women & 62 children) from Choithar & near by villages were examined and provided with basic medication. The initiative by Assam Rifles has solved the long

pending need of Medical assistance for the villagers.

Village authorities applauded the efforts of the Assam Rifles for such kind gesture which will improve the mutual trust and maintain peace and harmony in the region.

Sports

Stage sets for inauguration of 2023 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup today

Agency
Cuttack, Jan 11:

All preparations have been completed for the opening ceremony of FIH Men's Hockey World Cup -2023 at Barabati Stadium at Cuttack. The opening ceremony of the World Cup will be held on a grand stage. On Tuesday afternoon, the choreographers and artists finished their practice on the stage for the last time.

The players of all the participating countries in the World Cup, their supporting staffs, diplomatic officials of those countries, officials of Hockey India and Hockey Federation, many Ministers, MLAs, High Court judges etc. of the Central and State Governments have also been invited to witness the opening ceremony tomorrow.

The Cuttack district administration, CMC, Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) and the Commissionerate Police are working in close cooperation for smooth organization of the hockey world cup opening

ceremony, said CDA Chairman Anil Kumar Samal.

"The entire city has been decked up for the mega event. The roads have been widened, footpaths and walls have been painted and streets have been illuminated as part of the city beautification project. It is a proud moment for all of us," Samal added.

The cultural program will start from 3 pm tomorrow and will continue till 9 pm. At 6 o'clock in the evening, the Chief Minister will attend the function and officially inaugurate it said the CMC Mayor Subash Singh.

"As many as 50 platoons of police force and at least 300 officials will be deployed in and around Barabati Stadium for smooth organization of the opening ceremony. The Commissionerate Police will hold a security rehearsal for the mega event tomorrow," said the Police Commissioner.

Meanwhile, the CMC has started distribution of invitation cards to the inaugural ceremony of the men's hockey world cup.

Meanwhile, the CMC has started distribution of invitation cards to the inaugural ceremony of the men's hockey world cup.

"The CMC has decided to distribute invitation cards among 2 lakh people in the city here. The invitees can watch the opening ceremony live on giant LED screens in all 59 wards of the city. This apart, as many as 16 hockey fan parks have been set up across the city for live streaming of the opening ceremony," said an official.

Hindi film actors Ranveer Singh and Disha Patani are scheduled to perform at the

opening ceremony. Besides, there will be live performances by the K-Pop brand BLACKSWAN featuring Shreya Lenka of Odisha. This apart, many local artists will also perform at the event.

Around 40,000 people including players and officials from 16 countries and dignitaries from across India are scheduled to attend the opening ceremony, sources said.

Notably, Odisha will host the men's hockey world cup at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar and Birsamunda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela from January 13 to 29.

Drug License Lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my Drug License, bearing D/L No. 5/WS-IW/2010-from 20-b of DT Medicos at Sagolband Ingundam Leirak on the way of Paona Bazar area on January 5, 2023.

Finders are requested to hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Kh. Binodkumar Singh
Proprietor
DT Medicos,
Sagolband Ingundam Leirak