

Armed assailants shoot dead BJP leader, police arrested one

IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

Unknown armed assailants shot dead the Convenor of BJP Manipur Pradesh ex-servicemen at around 11 am today.

First hand report said that the 57 years old Laishram Rameshwar Singh was shot by some armed assailant coming in a SUV car by entering at his own residence located at Thoubal Kshetri Leikai in Thoubal district. He was reportedly hit by two bullets at his chest and stomach area. The assailants immediately



escaped the scene after shooting him. Family and relative of the BJP leader rushed him to Raj Medicity Hospital but succumbed to injury after reaching the hospital. The doctors at Raj

Medicity declared him brought dead.

In connection with the killing Thoubal district police had started investigation and arrested the driver of the vehicle which the armed assailants used. Source close to the police said that the shooter who killed the Convenor of the BJP Manipur Pradesh Ex-Servicemen has been identified as Haobam Keshorjit of Haobam Marak in Imphal West, as revealed by the driver. The police teams are in the hunt for the criminal.

Meanwhile, the death body has been deposited at

JNIMS Mortuary for post mortem.

On the other hand BJP Manipur Pradesh has strongly condemned the shooting of its leader Laishram Rameshwar Singh terming it as an act of coward. The party assured to push all pressure to the government for speedy arrest of the culprit involved in the killing of its member.

Source added that the post mortem of the deceased will be conducted today and floral tribute will be paid to the mortal remains at BJP Manipur Pradesh head office.

INA memorial in Moirang is a pilgrimage centre of modern India: Dattatreya Hosabale

By: W. Rorrkychand Singh
Imphal, Jan 24:

While paying his homage to Netaji Subash Chandra Bose on the occasion of Parakram Divas, Dattatreya Hosabale, Sarkaryavah (General Secretary) of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) said that the INA (Indian National Army) memorial situated at Moirang in Manipur is a pilgrimage centre of Modern India.

"My humble homage and tributes to the greatest son of Bharat Mata Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his birth anniversary. His indomitable spirit and unforgettable deeds are ever-inspiring for all Indians. The memorial (Moirang) is a pilgrimage centre of modern India," Hosabale said during his visit to the INA Memorial, Moirang, yesterday morning.

The Sarkaryavah of RSS, who is on a four-day visit in Manipur, joined the nationwide celebration of Parakram Divas by paying floral tribute at the INA Memorial, where Netaji unfurled independent India's flag in 1944 for the first time on Indian soil.

"INA will go down in the history of India's freedom struggle in golden letters. It is because of the INA's great sacrifice and war against British that crores of Indians were enthused to raise their voice



against the British empire and attain freedom. The Navy revolt of Mumbai was inspired by INA's movement and sacrifices made by hundreds and thousands of men and women", said Hosabale.

He also praised the sacrifices of the people of Manipur and Northeast in India's freedom struggle. The contribution of INA made the freedom struggle of India come to its finale.

Dattatreya Hosabale also visited the INA headquarter and museum, accompanied by Kh Rajen Singh, Assam Kshetra Karyavaha, Ullhas Kulkarni, Assam Kshetra Pracharak, Sunil Mohanty, Assam Kshetra Pracharak Pramukh, MM Ashokan, Assam Kshetra Pracharak Pramukh. During his visit, Dattatreya also interacted with local dignitaries and social workers at Moirang.

Full dress rehearsal for Republic Day Celebration held

IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

Amidst boycott called by various rebel group in the state, the Manipur government had successfully organised full dress rehearsal of the Republic Day Parade, 2023 here in Imphal today.

Traffic flow was greatly affected as road entry has been blocked at Moirangkhum and diverted towards Keishamthong in Imphal west. Similar traffic congestion were occurred at Imphal East district during the rehearsal of the Republic Day parade.

The full rehearsal of the Republic day parade was also conducted at all district head quarters of the state under tight security arrangement.

The District Administration Thoubal conducted the full dress rehearsal of Republic Day Parade, at Basu Ground/Public ground opposite SP office Thoubal, the venue where the Republic day celebration for Thoubal Dis-



File photo

trict will be held on 26th January 2023.

Deputy Commissioners of districts will grace the Republic Day celebration as Chief Guest of the Republic day celebration held at their respective District Headquarters. The DCs will unfurl the National flag of India and take

salute of the March past contingents consisting of school students, police, band party and other cultural troupes.

Meanwhile, the main celebration of the Republic day celebration will be held here in Imphal. The Governor of Manipur, Chief Minister, other cabinet Ministers, MLAs and

top officials will be attending the Republic day celebration.

The main function will be held at Sacred Kangla fort. Governor of Manipur La Ganesan will hoist the Indian Tri Colour flag at Kangla..

Meanwhile, Security measures has been beefed up at various places of the state.

Condolence



IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

Joint Administrative council (JAC) of AMTUC and AMGEO condole the sudden demise of the veteran journalist Kangujam Modhumangol, who is also the former President of JAC of AMTUC and AMGEO. K. Modhumangol left for heavenly abode on the eve of January 21 after suffering from a disease at his residence at Kakwa.

As a part of honoured to the departed souls, executive members of the JAC of AMTUC and AMSEO observed a one minute silence at its office located at Babupara here in Imphal. The condolence meeting also pray the almighty for the departed soul to rest in peace.

Bharat Vikas Parishad celebrates National Girl Child Day

IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

Bharat Vikas Parishad (BVP), Manipur Prant celebrated 'National Girl Child Day' - 'ABHYODAYA' today at the Seloi Hindi High School (Bal Vidya Mandir), a school adopted by Gadadhar Abhyudaya Prakaipa - Ramakrishna Mission, Imphal at Upper Charhajare, Kangpokpi district.

Joybi Heikrujam, National Project Member, Mahila Bal Vikas of BVP said that National Girl Child Day is celebrated on 24 January every year in India to spread awareness about the rights of girls and to highlight the inequalities that they face in their lives and to promote the importance of their education, health, and nutrition.

Nongthombam Muhindro



Singh, Regional Secretary (Sampark), BVP said that National Girl Child Day is observed this year on the theme "Digital Generation, Our Generation, Our Time is Now - Our Rights, Our Future". He further said that the objective behind celebrating National Girl Child Day is to provide support and opportunities to the girls of India.

An anaemia screening camp was also conducted as

part of the programme in which about 147 children including housewives were screened for Hemoglobin. Sanitary pads, stationary items and health supplements were distributed to participating children, adolescent girls and lactating mothers.

Swami Devadeveshananda of Ramakrishna Mission, Manipur and Khageshar Sharma, founder of the school had also joined the programme.

Deepika Mayanglambam conferred with Netaji Subash Chandra Bose Memorial Award on "Parakram Divas"

IT News
New Delhi, Jan 24:

Deepika Mayanglambam from Manipur was conferred with Netaji Subash Chandra Bose Memorial Award 2023 on the occasion of Parakram Divas (Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Jayanti), 23 January 2023 at Constitution Club of India, Rafi Marg, New Delhi by the Commission for Other Backward Classes (OBC) Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi. The award was presented by Raj Kumar Anand, Hon'ble Minister of Social Welfare, Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi, in the August presence of Shri Jagdish Yadav, Chairman of the Commission for Other Backward Classes (OBC) Govt of National Capital Territory of Delhi.

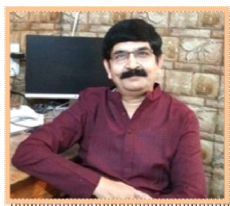
Deepika Mayanglambam is 26 years old daughter of (L) Mayanglambam Gyaneshwar Singh from Sagolband Moirang Leirak, Manipur.



Deepika is a Wellness Professional, founder of **Freedom From Mental Illness**. (a Start-up working in mental health

space). She Completed her Masters in Sociology from Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Give me your blood, and I shall give you freedom



By- Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

"Give me your blood, and I shall give you freedom"—the quote by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose inspired thousands of Indian youths to join the struggle for independence from the British colonial rule. A pivotal figure in India's freedom movement, Netaji is considered by many as one of the greatest leaders ever born. To venerate his contribution to India's struggle for independence, every year on 23rd January, we celebrate his birthday across various parts of the country. This

year we celebrate his 126th birth anniversary.

Subhash Chandra Bose was one of the most celebrated freedom fighters of India. He was a charismatic influencer of the youth and earned the epithet 'Netaji' by establishing and leading the Indian National Army (INA) during India's struggle for independence. He was born on 23 January, 1897 in Cuttack (Orissa) to Janakinath Bose and Prabhavati Devi. Subhash was the ninth child among eight brothers and six sisters.

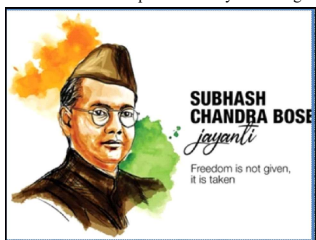
He himself started the newspaper 'Swaraj', edited Das' newspaper 'Forward' and worked as the CEO of Calcutta Municipal Corporation under Das' stint as Mayor. Subhash Chandra Bose played an important role in enlightening the students, youths and labourers of Calcutta. In his fervent wait to see India as an independent, federal and republic nation, he emerged as a charismatic and firebrand youth icon. He was admired within the congress for his great ability in organization development. He served several stints in prison for his nationalist activities during this time.

Although he voiced his dislike for the British often in his correspondences, he also expressed his admiration for their structured way of life. He met with the leaders of the British Labor Party and political thinkers including Clement Attlee, Harold Laski, J.B.S. Haldane, Arthur Greenwood, G.D.H. Cole, and Sir Stafford Cripps and discussed the possibilities that an independent India might hold.

He was known as "Netaji" one of the famous fighters who participated in the freedom of India. He possessed an odd bravery, self-confidence and persistent trust in his capabilities. He taught all the Indians to love homeland from the inmost heart's core. He was able to set up his own army. He managed to escape from his residence in 1940, where he was kept on house arrest by the then British rulers.

Bose, the epitome of intelligence and a fearless fighter managed to trail across the globe, meeting influential leaders from Germany, Italy, and Japan and ultimately formed the INA (Indian National Army) in 1941. He was a brilliant academician and wrote exceptional literature to promote patriotism through his books. Few of the books that "Subhas Chandra Bose" wrote are - An Indian Pilgrimage, Words of Freedom-Ideas of a Nation, The Indian Struggle, Azad Hind and many more. He also wrote books in Bengali like Jaruti Kichul Lekha. Netaji.

"Subhas Chandra Bose" is an icon of the Indian freedom struggle. He ignited the true spirit of patriotism in the hearts and minds of all the Indians. Even the daring Netaji couldn't change his destiny as on 18th August 1945; he faced his tragic end when his aircraft crashed while he was heading towards Japan.



Lawyers in Criminal Court absolute necessity, not luxury: Delhi HC

By -Sanjeev Sirohi, Advocate

While speaking in a most simple, straightforward and suave manner, it must be mentioned right at the outset that the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Ms Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma of the Delhi High Court has in a most laudable, learned, landmark and latest judgment titled *Sunil vs State in CRLA. 273/2009* that was reserved on December 21, 2022 and then finally pronounced as recently as on January 5, 2023 while acquitting a man in a case of preparation for committing dacoity called it a classic case where canons of justice were kept aside by a Trial Court as the accused wasn't provided any effective legal aid. We thus see that while observing that the trial in the case was conducted in a most casual manner, Hon'ble Ms Justice Swarana said that the Trial Court did not deem it appropriate to appoint any counsel to defend the accused. The Bench clearly stated that, "Lawyers are empanelled and paid to prosecute and defend those who are unable to hire lawyers to defend themselves. Needless to say, lawyers in criminal Courts are absolute necessity and not luxury." No denying!

At the very outset, this brief, brilliant, bold and balanced judgment authored by the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Ms Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma of the Delhi High Court sets the ball in motion by first and foremost putting forth in para 1 that, "The present appeal has been filed by appellant under Section 374 read with Section 482 of Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 ("Cr.P.C.") seeking setting aside of the impugned judgment dated 19.03.2009 and order on sentence dated 30.03.2009 passed by the learned Additional Sessions Judge-01, South, Patiala House Court, New Delhi in the Sessions Case No. 124/07 vide which the appellant has been convicted for the offences punishable under Section 399/402 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 ("IPC") and Section 25 of Arms Act, 1959."

To put things in perspective, the Bench then envisages in para 2 that, "The facts upon which the present FIR was registered are that on 11.07.2007, Sub Inspector K.C. Kaushik along with other staff consisting of Head Constable Pritam Singh,

Constable Ram Saran and Constable Maz Ahmed were on patrolling duty and later, were also joined by Constable Dev Lagan. A secret information was received by SI K.C. Kaushik that in MCD/ACC Park, Panchsheel Park, 5-6 miscreants are sitting intending to commit some crime. The information was passed on to the S.H.O, Police Station Malviya Nagar on telephone. 4-5 passersby were requested to join raiding party but they did not join and left without revealing their names and addresses. Thereafter, SI K.C. Kaushik along with raiding team reached at Badarpur Service Lane near Panchsheel Park near MCD/ACC Park at about 10.00 PM. SI K.C. Kaushik had directed the raiding party to go to South West corner carefully and HC Pritam Singh heard the conversation of accused persons and informed him that five accused persons were sitting while one had a country made revolver in his hand. He further revealed that they were talking to each other about tying the guard of one Sabharwal and then taking away the valuables kept in the kothi. They were also saying that they will open fire if anyone will raise alarm. Thereafter, the raiding team surrounded the accused persons but they started running in different directions. Four accused named Omkar, Sukhpal, Sunil and Suraj were overpowered. One loaded country made revolver was recovered from accused Sukhpal. One buttload knife was recovered from accused Sunil. One raxine bag was also recovered from accused Sunil which contained 2.5 metres long plastic rope and a black coloured cloth. One knife was recovered from accused Omkar, however, fifth accused had escaped who could not be arrested by the police. Thereafter, investigation was carried out. Chargesheet was prepared for offences punishable under Section 399/402 IPC read with Section 25 of Arms Act and charges were framed against four accused persons mentioned above. Vide the impugned judgment, four accused persons were convicted for committing offences punishable under Section 399/402 IPC as well as under Section 25 of Arms Act. As per prosecution story, no arms were recovered from accused Suraj, however, he was convicted for offence punishable under Section 25 of Arms Act."

Needless to say, the Bench then states in para 5 that, "The arguments

of both the sides have been heard. Records of the case have also been perused."

While taking potshots at the prosecution case, the Bench states in para 6 that, "In the present case, it is alleged by the prosecution that Head Constable Pritam Singh had overheard the accused persons making preparation and hatching conspiracy to commit offence of dacoity at house of one Sabharwal after tying his guard. However, a perusal of material on record reveals that neither the place where the accused persons were allegedly preparing to commit the offence in question was identified nor the accused were made to point out the same during investigation. This casts serious doubt on the case of prosecution as to whether such a person or house was actually situated or located nearby or even existed for the commission of offence in question."

To be sure, the Bench then points out in para 7 that, "A perusal of the record also reveals that it is mentioned in the FIR that during search of present appellant Sunil, five black masks of cloth as well as plastic rope measuring 2.5 metres were recovered from him, however, the testimony of all the witnesses examined in the Court including the testimony of the Investigating Officer is completely silent on this point. In the testimony, there is nowhere stated that raxine bag, masks and plastic rope were recovered from the possession of appellant Sunil. Though the seizure memo regarding the seizure of bag, plastic rope and masks is on record, the witnesses have neither spoken about it nor has the said case property been produced before the Court or identified by any of the witnesses including the Investigating officer. Since it was not produced before the Court and neither of the witnesses have spoken about the same despite it being a crucial piece of evidence against the accused persons, it has made the case of the prosecution doubtful. The IO has also not explained in his statement or in the FIR, where the entire proceedings are mentioned, as to how the rope was measured to be 2.5 metres in length which has been mentioned in the seizure memo. The above discussion makes it clear that the learned Trial Court failed to take note of the above said while appreciating evidence."

Briefly stated, the Bench discloses

in para 8 that, "The Court while deciding the present appeal also notes that the learned Trial Court failed to provide effective legal aid to the present accused/applicant. A perusal of the record of the learned Trial Court reveals that total five witnesses were examined in the present case who were police witnesses. None of the witnesses has been cross-examined in this case."

Quite ostensibly, the Bench then mentions in para 9 that, "This makes it clear that in the present case, opportunity was granted to the accused persons to cross-examine the witnesses as they were not represented by their counsel nor were provided legal aid counsel. But the order dated 03.09.2008 mentions that the accused persons had requested to be provided with legal aid counsel. However, prior to that, all the five witnesses in this case stood examined."

It cannot be glossed over that the Bench then discloses in para 10 that, "Order sheet dated 18.02.2008 only mentions that counsel for accused was present with the accused. The name of the counsel is not mentioned and interestingly, two material witnesses i.e. PW1 Constable Maz Ahmed and PW2 HC Pritam Singh were examined on the said date. The evidence so recorded on that day does not mention the presence of their counsel but mentions that opportunity was given to the accused to cross-examine the witness (evidence mentions "XXXX by accused. Nil Opportunity given"). The non cross-examination of the major witnesses, thus, makes it clear that no counsel was present on that day as in case the counsel would have been present, it was the duty of counsel to cross-examine the material witness and in case they were not examined, it was essential for the learned Trial Court to have mentioned the name of the counsel and the fact that though the witnesses were tendered for cross-examination, the counsel for accused did not avail the said opportunity. Similar is the fact regarding the examination of PW-3 HC Charan Singh and PW-4 ASI Gopi Chand. That on the day when PW-5 Investigating Officer was examined, there is no mention even of the word "accused present with counsel". The order sheets, thereafter, do not mention the presence of the counsel when PW-5 was examined."

contd. on page 3

Enabling Economic Development in G20 context for India

Manufacturing presents one of the biggest and the most trans formative opportunities for India to reach the ambitious, yet achievable, target of becoming a USD 30-trillion economy by 2047. India's massive and skilled workforce, an emerging supply base, localized access to natural resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and a strong domestic market makes it an attractive manufacturing hub.

Some of the current emerging trends in industry comprises of: Tech-enablement of manufacturing (Industry 4.0), reconfiguring production with focus on IoT, 3D printing, advanced robotics, artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality. Besides, there is increased emphasis on servitization of manufacturing, encouraging Sustainability: Green incentives, improved waste management, building a circular economy; adoption of Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) ratings and Goals. Higher integration with Global Value Chains remains a critical part of this process specially in the post pandemic scenario.

It is in this context that India's G 20 presidency plays a key role in highlighting major issues, given the

current geopolitical and geo-economic scenario. India's presidency can help focusing the concerns of global south, focus on issues relating innovation, sustainability and creation of knowledge frameworks, along with, encouragement of current emerging trends gaining ground in the existing Industrial milieu, promotion of digital public goods and enabling access of open source digital infrastructure across all strata of society and for all countries.

The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues. The Group of Twenty (G20) comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom and United States) and the European Union. G20 members represent around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population. The G20 Presidency steers the G20 agenda for one year and hosts

Ms. Rupa Dutta, Principal Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), M/o Commerce and Industry,

the Summit. India's invitees are: Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, UAE and Spain (permanent invitee).

India holds the Presidency of the G20 from 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023. Drawing inspiration from its G20 Presidency theme of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - 'One Earth One Family One Future'.

Business 20 (B20) is the official engagement group of G20 created in 2010 under the Canadian presidency, with the aim to galvanize global business leaders for their views on issues of global economic and trade governance and speak in a single voice for the entire G20 business community. This engagement group conducts work through various taskforces, the recommendations of which are summarized at the B20 Summit and presented to the G20 leaders prior to the G20 Summit.

Under India's Presidency the work of the B20 is to be conducted through seven (7) task forces and two (2) action councils, namely-

Taskforces:

1. Inclusive GVCs for Resilient Global Trade and Investment
2. Future of Work, Skillings, and Mobility

3. Energy, Climate Change and Resource Efficiency
4. Digital Transformation
5. Financing for Global Economic Recovery
6. Tech, Innovation and R&D
7. Financial Inclusion for Economic Empowerment

Action Council:

1. ESG in Business
 2. African Economic Integration
- A series of events including the subject-specific task force meetings with participation from businesses, policymakers, experts, and international diplomats are to be held as part of this agenda. Around 100 meetings and events, both hybrid and in-person have been planned across India and overseas under India's Presidency. B20 Inception Meeting is to be held in Gandhinagar in January, 2023.

With a motto of 'RAISE'-Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable and Equitable Businesses, B20 India would be an important forum for discussions and deliberations on various issues as climate action, innovation, digital cooperation, resilient GVCs, and financial inclusion. Start-ups have become the engine for innovation-fuelled economic recovery, reorientation, and growth. The Start-

up20 Engagement Group, being initiated under India's presidency of G20, aspires to create a global narrative for supporting start-ups and enabling synergies between start-ups, corporates, investors, innovation agencies and other key ecosystem stakeholders. The primary objective of the new engagement group is to develop an inclusive framework to support innovative start-ups, through strategic collaboration across the G20 nations.

Given this entire perspective, some of the key initiatives assuming center stage are:

Ø Emphasis on Digitalisation and industry 4.0. Businesses need to discuss global issues related to development and optimization of GVCs to intensify participation in global markets and export diversification by businesses. It

Is important to shape the future of GVCs in a sustainable and inclusive way to enhance economic growth and improve business competitiveness.

Ø Ways to create employment at scale aligned to the jobs of the future and Action plan for reskilling and upskilling of the workforce to operate in a world focusing on adoption of advanced technologies
Ø Accelerating financing for economic recovery, particularly encouraging support towards MSMEs

Ø Boosting efforts towards debt servicing and facilitating funding support for most vulnerable economies

Ø Promoting financial inclusion amongst the G20 countries, particularly through digital financial services
Ø Sharing best practices from strategies focused on the digitalization of financial services

Ø In addition to environmental imperatives, priority would be given to sustainable, balanced and inclusive investment, balancing social and economic imperatives, keeping in mind the local and regional context. All above mentioned initiatives/objectives require collective and coordinated efforts amongst all G20 nations, to take concrete steps in the post Covid World. While all countries are focusing on taking optimal steps for Post Pandemic recovery of their economies, the necessity of looking at collaborative and combined efforts for working towards synchronized and synergized economic development across nations, imbibing the principles of collaboration and cooperation assume critical importance.

With India's emphasis on world as One Family, as a cornerstone of its Presidency, it is time to look forward to adoption of sustainable and positive steps enabling economic development across all countries and all income groups within country.

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Mumbai Cyber Police Bust a Gang Duping senior Citizens

By -Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, January 24:

The Cyber Police Division of Mumbai Police recently arrested three people from Uttar Pradesh, on charges of siphoning off Rs 5.5 crore from the people assuring them high returns on maturity of their insurance policies, bank loans and jobs across the country.

The trio duped people in Mumbai, Delhi, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, . Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) cyber crime, Balsing Rajput told media on Monday.

The accused were identified as Anuj Kumar Baleshwar Saha (21), residing at Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. He was running a Mobile shop for names sake and was collecting insurance policy documents from the holders desperate to obtain early refund of the sum insured. He used to get money credited in his bank account and then withdraw it from different ATMs. Totally Rs 71 lakh were found credited in his bank account in Hyderabad, towards maturity of insurance policies. He was arrested on January 07.

Sandip Kumar Lataprasad (28), residing at Gaziabad, used to collect rent receipts, Adhar cards etc from people and based on these documents used to obtain SIM cards. Based on these SIM cards and fake documents, he used to open bank accounts online. Then he used to pass on these bank account numbers and ATM cards to other accused Ravi Singh Sauri Singh and Sumit Singh by collecting Rs 15000 per account. He had opened 27 fake bank accounts in the last one year. He was arrested on



A trio arrested in connection with cyber crime by Mumbai Police. (Photo credit: Mumbai Police).

January 14. Ravi Singh Sauri Singh residing at Greater NOIDA, was working at a call centre at Salarpur. He used to collect money from people by promising them jobs in different companies. He was arrested on January 17.

The offence (FIR No. 20/2022) under sections 419, 420, 465, 467, 468, 471, 120(B), 506, 34 of Indian Penal Code and sections 66-D of Information Technology Act 2000 (as amended in 2008) was registered and the accused were remanded to police custody. They have been booked for cheating, criminal conspiracy, forgery, impersonation and criminal intimidation.

The police confiscated 18 ATM cards, 12 mobile phones, five laptops and Rs 44,000 in cash among other valuables. Besides, an amount of Rs. 20.50 lakh lying in the different bank accounts of the accused was frozen by the police. The accused were found with the policies issued by different insurance companies.

The scam was unearthed when a dry fruit whole sale merchant from Ghatkopar in North East Mumbai was duped of Rs 4.39, 57,532 by assuring him a refund of Rs. 7,70,93,028 on his insurance policy. The accused contacted him for very

long time-November 08, 2021 to August 04, 2022. They communicated to him through e mail, phone calls etc.

To gain his confidence the accused sent him forged RBI receipts and fake letters of the National Payment Corporation of India and Union Ministry of Finance. During the investigation, the police revealed that the accused had opened bank accounts in fictitious names in 27 states. The mobile phones used by the accused matched with the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) originating from three cases in Mumbai and 11 offences across the country.

DCP Balsing Rajput, said, "The mastermind is a repeat offender. We are trying to find out from where they get access to such a huge amount of data. This is a much bigger racket and more people are involved. The accused mostly targeted senior citizens."

The gang was busted by officiating Police Inspector Sharmila Sahasrabudhe, Police Inspector Jagannath More and staff, under the supervision of Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar, Spl CP Deven Bharati, Joint CP Lakhmi Gautam, Addl CP Dnyaneshwar Chavan, DCP Balsing Rajput and ACP Rajesh Nagwade.

PM prioritising Energy Sector in North East, says Union Minister Puri

Agency
Guwahati, Jan 24:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always prioritised the energy sector of the North East, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said.

The prime minister's priority is to put the region on a high growth trajectory and he is putting great emphasis on the energy sector, Puri said while participating at the run-up event to the India Energy Week event here on Monday night.

The India Energy Week will be held from February 6 to 8 in Bengaluru.

Without giving details, the



Union minister said several big projects in the sector are also in the pipeline in the region.

The petroleum and natural gas minister was also present at the signing of the Memo-

randum of Understanding (MoU) between Nulmalgarh Refinery Limited (NRL) and the Assam government to set up three bamboo nurseries that were signed on the occasion.

Each nursery will cover an area of five hectares to accomplish secondary hardening of tissue-cultured bamboo saplings and will be set up in Golaghat, Nagaon and Sonitpur.

He also interacted with farmers who are supplying bamboo on a sustainable basis to Assam Bio-Refinery, the first of its kind 2G (second generation) Bio Refinery with bamboo biomass as feedstock, implemented by Nulmalgarh Refinery Limited.

The second generation bio-refineries use a non-petroleum based process for the production of fuels and chemicals with low greenhouse gas emissions.

After Co-WIN, govt launches U-WIN to digitise universal immunisation prog

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 24:

Carrying vaccination cards of children and pregnant women, struggling to keep a tab on the next jab and other such hassles may soon become a thing of the past. After the success of the Co-WIN platform, the government has now replicated it to set up an electronic registry for routine vaccinations.

Named U-WIN, the programme to digitise India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) has been launched in a pilot mode in two districts of each state and Union Territory.

The platform will be used to register and vaccinate ev-

ery pregnant woman, record her delivery outcome, register every newborn delivery, administer birth doses and all vaccination events thereafter, official sources told PTI.

The platform that replicates Co-WIN, which has served as the "digital backbone" for India's COVID-19 vaccination programme, was launched on January 11 in 65 districts.

The U-WIN is going to be the single source of information for immunisation services, updating vaccination status, delivery outcome, planning of RI sessions and reports like antigen-wise coverage, etc.

"There will be digital registrations of all pregnant women and newborns for individualised tracking for

vaccination, reminders for upcoming doses and follow-up of dropouts.

"Healthcare workers and programme managers will be able to generate real-time data of routine immunisation sessions and vaccination coverage for better planning and vaccine distribution," an official explained.

For pregnant women and children, vaccine acknowledgement and immunisation card linked to ABHA ID (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) will be generated and all states and districts can access a common database to track and vaccinate beneficiaries.

Besides, through the platform citizens can check nearby

ongoing routine immunisation sessions, and book appointments, the official told PTI.

All states and UTs have been sensitised on U-WIN functionalities and objectives for the pilot in 65 districts and staff and healthcare workers have been trained on all modules of U-WIN.

"With this the entire vaccination system including records will get digitised, easing the tracking of beneficiaries.

"Vaccination records under UIP are being maintained manually as of now. So this will do away with the hassle of keeping a physical record. It will enable the digitisation of session planning, and updating vaccination status on a real-time basis.

Contd. from Page 2

Lawyers in Criminal Court absolute necessity, not luxury.....

It is, therefore, clear that it was only on 03.09.2008 when the accused persons requested that they are unable to engage a lawyer, that Sh. Mittal was appointed as Amicus Curie for accused persons at State's expenses. In a nutshell, except at the time of recording of statement under Section 313 Cr.P.C. and hearing arguments on sentence, the Amicus Curie was not present, even on the day when final arguments were heard as his presence is not marked. It is also not mentioned that he had addressed arguments when the final arguments were heard on 07.03.2009. Thus, learned Amicus Curie was not present on the dates fixed for final arguments and also prior to that. On 04.12.2008, when it is recorded that the accused persons, who had earlier expressed their desire to lead defence evidence, stated before the learned Court that they did not want to lead defence evidence, the learned Amicus Curie was not present. It is, thus, a case where the accused remained unrepresented and unaided during the entire effective stages of trial."

There can be no gainsaying what the Bench then observes in para 11 that, "Even the Constitution of India guarantees certain fundamental rights to the accused which stand unfettered during the trial as well as imposes certain duties upon the State, which are reproduced herein below:

Article 21 reads as under: "21. Protection of life and per-

sonal liberty.—No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law."

Article 22 reads as under: "22. Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases.—(1) No person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest nor shall he be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice..."

Article 39A reads as under: "39A. Equal justice and free legal aid.—The State shall secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice, on a basis of equal opportunity, and shall, in particular, provide free legal aid, by suitable legislation or schemes or in any other way, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities."

Most lamentably, the Bench then makes no bones to point out in para 12 that, "The trial in this case for a heinous offence which attracts punishment upto 10 years was, therefore, conducted in most casual manner. The Trial Court did not deem it appropriate to appoint any counsel to defend the appellant/accused, neither when the counsel engaged by him did not appear at the commencement of the trial (which is not clear from the order sheets unfortunately), nor at the time of recording of evidence of the prosecution wit-

nesses. The accused, therefore, did not have legal aid of a counsel in real sense, at any stage of trial. Needless to say, the accused was entitled to such legal aid during the entire period of trial. As already mentioned above, the appointment of the Amicus Curie was at a much later stage after the entire evidence had been recorded and even thereafter, learned Amicus Curie appeared only twice. This Court notes with regret that even at the stage of final arguments, he was not present to defend the appellant who he had been asked to defend at the State's expense. There is no doubt that right of cross-examination to any accused in a criminal case to discredit the witnesses and to test veracity of the statement is the most vital part of a criminal trial."

Most glaringly, the Bench enunciates in para 18 that, "Despite there being catena of judgments emphasizing the need and importance of legal aid, no effective legal aid was provided to the accused persons in present case. Order sheets were written in most indifferent manner by the learned Trial Court. At most places, the name of the counsel is not mentioned in the order sheets. The name, presence or absence of the counsel was not mentioned in any of the evidence recorded. The problem does not end here. The present case was being tried for an offence of preparation of dacoity which attracts punishment upto 10 years. No legal aid was avail-

able to the accused almost throughout the trial, most glaringly, at the time of final arguments and recording of evidence. The Trial Court itself should have realized the duty cast on it to provide effective legal aid to an accused who is poor and marginalized and could not defend himself. The Courts are the guardians of a person's liberty and are duty bound by Constitution as well as their oath to ensure fair trial to an accused which is the constitutional goal set by the Indian Constitution itself"

Most significantly, the Bench minces no words to underscore in para 19 stating that, "Vast sums of money are disbursed to establish legal aid centres, and State Legal Services Authorities to help those who fail to hire the best lawyers due to their poverty. Lawyers are empanelled and paid to prosecute and defend those who are unable to hire lawyers to defend themselves. Needless to say, lawyers in criminal Courts are absolute necessity and not luxury."

Equally significant is what is then added in para 20 holding that, "The right to fair trial is a fundamental right. This noble goal will fail in case if poor man charged with an offence is unable to defend himself without lawyer to assist him. As already mentioned above, the more serious offence, the likely consequences are greater. The Court should have kept in mind the decision of the Hon'ble Apex court in Hussainara Khatoun (4)

v. State of Bihar (1980) 1 SCC 98. The right of free legal services is essential ingredient of reasonable, fair and just procedure for a person accused of an offence and same has been held implicit in the guarantee of Article 21. It is most unfortunate that despite such mandate, at times, as in the present case, there is utter disregard of the decision of the highest Court as well as the constitutional mandate."

While citing the most relevant case law, the Bench then has to add in para 21 that, "It has been held in the case of Khatri (2) v. State of Bihar (1981) 1 SCC 627 that "legal aid would become merely a fake promise and it would fail of its purpose, if it were to be left to a poor ignorant and illiterate accused to ask a for free legal services. The Magistrate or the Sessions Judge before whom the accused appears must be held to be under an obligation to inform the accused that if he is unable to engage the services of a lawyer on account of poverty or indigence, he is entitled to obtain free legal services at the cost of the State."

No less significant is what is then specified in para 22 that, "In the present case, the absence of cross-examination has resulted in gross miscarriage of justice and the Court has to guard against such an eventuality. It is to be remembered that in India, the absence of fair and proper trial is not only violation of fundamental principles of judicial procedure and constitutional mandate, but also viola-

tion of mandatory provisions of Section 304 Cr.P.C. The assistance of a legal counsel, in a meaningful way, was absent throughout the trial. Judiciary has a crucial role to play in ensuring enforcement of human rights and has to meet the great challenge towards making justice accessible in practical terms to the poor in the country."

Be it noted, the Bench emphasizes in para 23 that, "It is important to understand the reality of disadvantage of an individual and ensure proactive steps to prevent injustice by providing effective legal aid in order to deliver equality in justice. The constitutional guarantees of free and fair trial should remain meaningful to the poor of the country and the judiciary has to remain vigilant to protect the interest of the disadvantaged groups also."

Most remarkably, the Bench holds in para 24 that, "This is a classic case where all cannons of justice were kept aside while passing the impugned judgment as the accused was not provided legal aid which he was entitled to get under the Constitution of India as well as under Cr.P.C. The accused has faced trial for last 15 long years. At times, though the agony of a person undergoing trial is not mentioned on the paper while a Judge writes a judgment, the trial which has been prolonged beyond 15 years is an agony itself. The stress of facing a criminal trial is punishment unannounced in a case, as the present one."

As a corollary, the Bench man-

dates in para 25 that, "Considering the overall facts and circumstances of the case, this Court's judicial conscience does not permit to now remand back the matter and direct the learned Trial Court to again conduct a fresh trial. In view thereof, the accused is acquitted of all the charges since the trial in itself was vitiated due to non-assistance of accused by legal aid counsel, besides existence of several inconsistencies and lacunae in the case of prosecution before the learned Trial Court."

Furthermore, the Bench mentions in para 26 that, "Bail bond, if any, stands cancelled. Surety stands discharged."

Finally, the Bench concludes by directing in para 28 that, "A copy of this judgment be circulated by learned Registrar General of this Court to all the District Courts in Delhi and be also sent to the learned Director (Academics), Delhi Judicial Academy for doing the needful."

All told, we thus see that the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Ms Swarna Kanta Sharma has made it indubitably clear that lawyers in criminal courts for the accused is an absolute necessity and not luxury. We thus see that the Delhi High Court so very rightly acquits the man who had to face trial without any legal aid! Of course, it merits no reiteration that all the Judges in India must definitely emulate such worthy and commendable judgment when confronted with similar cases! No denying it!

Nagaland legislators' union defies tribal body's 'boycott Feb 27 elections' diktat

Agency
Guwahati, Jan 24:

Defying the diktat of some influential tribal organisations, all 20 MLAs of eastern Nagaland decided to contest the February 27 Assembly elections in the state.

The decision was made at a meeting of the Eastern Nagaland Legislators' Union on Monday. The 20 legislators include four ministers.

The Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO), the apex tribal body of eastern Nagaland, is spearheading a 'people's movement' demanding the creation of a 'Frontier Nagaland' state. It has already

declared that the people of eastern Nagaland will boycott the polls if the Centre fails to create the Frontier Nagaland state.

Nagaland has 16 districts and the ENPO wants the Centre to carve Mon, Tuensang, Longleng, Kiphire, Shamator and Noklak districts out of the state for the envisaged 'Frontier Nagaland'. Mon, Kiphire and Noklak share a border with Myanmar.

To break the ice, the Centre held some meetings with the ENPO, in Delhi, Nagaland and Guwahati in recent times. Union Home Minister Amit Shah attended one of them.

However, even as the

deadlock continued, the Konyak Union threatened to 'permanently expel' those who would file their nomination for the polls from the 'Konyak soil' and hold their villages solely responsible.

The Konyaks are a majority tribe.

The decision of the Konyak Union was in consonance with the August 26, 2022 resolution of the ENPO to abstain from participating in the elections until the Centre acceded to the statehood demand. Several other leading tribal organisations from eastern Nagaland endorsed the ENPO resolution.

Nagaland has 60 Assembly

constituencies and the 20 seats in eastern Nagaland are currently held by ruling parties Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (16) and the BJP (four).

The statehood demand stems from the alleged backwardness of eastern Nagaland. The locals alleged successive governments had neglected the region.

"The Centre gives a lot of money but it gets finished in (state capital) Kohima, (commercial hub) Dimapur, and Mokokchung. There has been total discrimination against eastern Nagaland for the past 60 years," ENPO secretary W Manwang Anghaa alleged.

Awareness Campaign cum Interaction Programme on TDS at Senapati



IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

The District Administration Senapati jointly with Income Tax Officer (TDS), Imphal organised an awareness campaign cum interaction programme today on

TDS/ TCS with DDOs at DRDA Conference Hall, Senapati.

In today's programme, Jyoti Singh Haobijam, Income Tax Officer (TDS), Imphal who was the resource person spoke on the importance of TDS/ TCS through power

point presentation. He also mentioned on the Income Tax related matters for the financial year 2022-2023.

The programme was actively participated by DDO's, DDO's and cashiers under District Administration Senapati.

Manipur hosts 27th General Conference cum Cultural, Literary & Sports Meet

IT News
Imphal, Jan 24:

The 27th General Conference cum Cultural, Literary and Sports Meet 2023 of the Tangkhul Naga Valley Students' Association (TNVSA) is underway at Muirei village in Manipur's Ukhrul district.

The event, which kicked off on January 17, will culminate on January 26. Altogether 30 villages participated in the 10-daylong general conference being organised under the theme 'Victory in Solidarity'.

Education, Law and Legislative Affairs minister Th Basanta Kumar Singh graced the occasion as the chief guest.

Taking part in the tree plantation drive as part of the cultural event, Th Basanta Kumar Singh lauded the organisers and appealed to them and the



locals to nurture the trees being planted.

Stressing the need to put concerted efforts in the fight against the drug menace, he said, "We need to join hands as a society and fight unitedly against drug abuse to save our younger generations. We have lost 2 to 3 generations due to drug menace in the state."

"Let's take the fight against drugs to a different level as our chief minister's

main focus is a drug-free state," he said. He further stated that Manipur is not only the transit route for illegal drugs but has become a drug manufacturing state as people are involved in poppy cultivation.

He said more trees need to be planted as the state is facing water scarcity mainly due to deforestation both in the hills and valleys. He further added such cultural, literary and sports events are crucial for the

development of society.

"Such cultural, literary and sports meets provide an opportunity for the villagers to unite," he added.

He also said the state government has already started a two-month course for those willing to study and learn the dialects and languages of seven different communities with a stipend of Rs 10,000. The programme aims to safeguard the indigenous communities of the state. The seven languages under the ethnic language training programme include Anal, Paite, Rongmei, Tangkhul, Pumi, Thadou and Meiteilon, he said.

During the event, various units and villages participated in folk songs and dance competitions. A painting competition on the theme 'Global Warming' was also organised as part of the event.

No 'Mahabharat' between govt, judiciary as is being projected: Rijiju

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 24:

There can be a difference of opinion between the government and the judiciary but that does not mean the two are attacking each other and a "Mahabharat" is going on as is being projected by some, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Monday, asserting there is "no problem among us".

He asked if there is no debate or discussion in a democracy, "what kind of democracy is it".

Addressing a gathering at the Tis Hazari courts complex here to mark Republic Day, he also said as judges are not

elected, they do not face public scrutiny but people watch them and make assessment about them from the way they deliver justice.

In India, if democracy has to thrive, then a robust and independent judiciary is a must, he said, adding that if the independence of the judiciary is diluted and its honour and authority are weakened, democracy cannot succeed.

He said if the Supreme Court has some views and the government has some views and if there is a difference between the two opinions, "some people present it like a Mahabharat is going on between the government

and the judiciary. It is not like that...we have no problem among us," he said.

He said "we" (members of the higher judiciary and the government) constantly meet in one way or the other on a daily basis.

He said he has a "live contact" with Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on all big and small issues.

He said in the Bharatiya Janata Party, it is said that we can have "matbhed" (divergence of opinion) but not "manbhed" (discord).

"We can have different opinion. Difference in opinion does not mean we are mounting an attack on each other," he said.

Sports

Headed by Mary Kom, new oversight committee to look after wrestling federation's daily affairs



Agency
New Delhi, Jan 24:

Amid serious allegations against its chief Brijbhushan Sharan Singh by country's top wrestlers, a new oversight committee, headed by boxer Mary Kom, has been formed to look after the day-to-day management of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). The WFI will not be looking after its daily affairs now.

Apart from Mary Kom,

wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt, badminton player Tripti Murigunde and Captain Rajagopalan are also part of the new committee.

WFI and its chief Brijbhushan Sharan Singh have been in spotlight after top Indian wrestlers levelled allegations of sexual harassments on Singh last week and went on a protest, seeking probe. The central government on Sunday decided to suspend all activities of the WFI until the formation of the oversight committee.

This included the suspension of the ongoing ranking competition, and the return of entry fees taken from the participants for any ongoing activities.

The announcement followed a decision by the government to appoint the Oversight Committee which will take over the day-to-day activities of the WFI.

In addition, the Assistant Secretary, WFI, Vinod Tomar,

was also suspended.

The wrestlers on Saturday called off their sit-in protest near the parliament building following a government assurance that a probe into their allegations would be completed in four weeks.

"We are ending our protest," Bajrang Punia, who was among the protesting wrestlers, said. The wrestlers, including young Anshu Malik, Sangeeta Phogat and Sonam Malik among others, started a sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi on Wednesday last week and demanded the sacking of the WFI chief.

The wrestlers have accused the federation president of sexually and mentally harassing young female athletes. The protesters had sought the immediate removal of Wrestling Federation of India president Brijbhushan Sharan Singh and some other officials pending an inquiry against them.

Late Friday, Indian Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur met protesting wrestlers a second time and announced a probe into the accusations by the wrestlers and said it would be completed in four weeks.

Australian Open 2023: Sania Mirza, Rohan Bopanna advance to semifinals after walkover



Agency
Melbourne, Jan 24:

Indian mixed-doubles pair Sania Mirza and Rohan Bopanna have marched into the semifinals of the Australian Open 2023 after receiving a walkover in the quarterfinal round.

The Indian veteran pair were scheduled to take on Jelena Ostapenko and David Vega Hernandez, the number 10 seeds in the mixed doubles category but they have given Rohan and Sania a walkover into the next round.

Rohan himself took to Twitter and shared the news with his

followers. "Let's just say we're moving on #AustralianOpen," wrote Rohan on the microblogging platform, as he tagged Sania in his post.

Earlier on Tuesday, Jelena went down to Elena Rybakina in the women's singles quarterfinal clash.

The Latvian-Spanish pair of Ostapenko and Hernandez paved the way for Sania and Rohan's progress into the final four.

Earlier, the Indian duo had defeated the Uruguayan and Japanese pair of Ariel Behar and Makoto Ninomiya 6-4, 7-6 (11-9)

on Court 7 to make it into the quarterfinals.

In the first round, they defeated home favorites Jaume Fourlis and Luke Saville.

Meanwhile, Mirza had announced that this year's Australian Open would be her last major. She will, however, play in the WTA Dubai Championships which will take place in February.

She had unfortunately failed to get a similar result in the women's doubles second round, with Sania and her Kazakh partner Anna Danilina lost to Belgium's Alison Van Uytvanck and Ukraine's Anhelina Kalinina.