

## Abesana Research Foundation renders yeomen services in education: Governor

IT News  
Imphal, Jan 4:

Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan has said that Abesana Research Foundation has been rendering yeomen services in the field of education. He was speaking at a philanthropic event held at the Auditorium of Manipur State Film Development Society, Konung Mamang in Imphal today.

Governor said, Diana Rajkumari, in whose memory, the Research Foundation has been organizing these philanthropic activities which are indeed an inspiration to the youths of the present generation. He said, although, unfortunately, she passed away while pursuing her Ph.D., she made significant scientific contributions in the field of Horticulture to save endangered orchids. In recognition of her invaluable contributions, she was awarded Young Scientist Award. Governor expressed hope that the Foundation will keep continuing accomplishment of various philanthropic activities in different parts of the State to disseminate message of having quality education in life.



Union Minister of State for External Affairs & Education Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh while lamenting the untimely demise of his daughter Diana Rajkumari, said, although we lost Diana, we have a number of promising young girls whose endeavor will flourish the future of the nation. He said, under NEP-2020, the basic aim is to give more focus on employability. Under the policy, young citizens will be trained in

diverse fields of education wherein they may be best suited for job opportunities. He continued that many universities and colleges are equipped with digital platforms and 1200 channels have also been introduced. Citing the importance of women in education, Dr. Ranjan said, women should be the frontrunner in education and development. He appealed the students and teachers to maintain clean-

liness in their schools and also to be an environment enthusiast in fighting the effects of climate change, globally.

Governor along with Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh distributed bicycles, smart projectors, sport materials and school bags to 90 girl students from 18 Schools of Imphal valley. The event was organized by Abesana Research Foundation under the sponsorship of the Leela Foundation, India.

## AMWJU and EGM condemns summoning of Hemanta Ningomba

IT News  
Imphal, Jan. 4:

The All Manipur Working Journalists' Union and Editors' Guild Manipur condemned the picking up of Hemantakumar Ningomba, Editor of Sanaleibak from his residence today early morning.

After a detailed discussion in a joint sitting of the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union and Editors' Guild, Manipur held at the Manipur Press Club, Imphal at 10.00

AM, the meeting strongly condemned the manner of the picking up from his residence in the early hours today by a team of Imphal Police Station of Imphal East District.

Hemantakumar is a respected editor and is not an absconder and the manner how he was picked up for his statement in a panel discussion in local TV channel affects his dignity and stature in the society. The concerned officers could have simply invited him for a discussion during the office hours as no

case has been registered against him and he was set free after some hours, said a joint press release issued by the two bodies.

The meeting also resolved to place before the State Government to ensure that such unsavoury incidents do not recur in future. If such avoidable incidents happen again, the journalist fraternity will not take it lying down and all efforts to safeguard the journalists of the state will be taken up, including legal action.

## Can State create new districts in hill areas and plain revenue areas? SC to consider on Feb 20

Courtesy: Live Law  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

The Supreme Court will hear on February 20, the Special Leave Petition challenging a Manipur High Court order which held that the State government has sufficient power to create new districts in "Hill areas" and "Plain revenue areas".

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Yesterday, before a Bench of Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar, Advocate Shivendra Dwivedi told that the matter is of great relevance.

"The issue is very important, it is on whether the State has the power to create new Districts in Hill Areas", Dwivedi argued.

Agreeing with this, the Bench granted time till February 3 to file a rejoinder and asked the parties to file their written submissions before

the next hearing.

According to the plea, the 2016 notification is illegal as the State government has no legal competence and jurisdiction to issue it under Rule 30 of the Rules.

It is the petitioner's case that the Rules are only a procedural code for the allotment of internal departmental works and not a legal tool for conferring power on matters of legislative subjects.

"In the event of creating or altering the limits of new autonomous districts in the Hill areas or creating, altering, abolishing new districts, new subdivisions, and new Tehsils in the Plain Revenue areas, separate notifications to that effect could be issued by the Respondent 1 (Government of Manipur). It has no such blanket legal jurisdiction or competence to issue a common single notification under Rule 30 of the Business of the Government of Manipur (Allocation) Rules, 2009 for creating new districts in both the Hill areas and the Plain revenue areas of Manipur".

The SLP pointed that the High Court had erred by mechanically passing the 2019

order, ignoring the basic constitutional scheme of tribal autonomy and separation of power between the Hill areas and Plain Revenue areas as contemplated under Article 371 C of the Constitution and Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972.

Further, it pointed out that there's no sanction of laws in any of the legislations for the creation of new Revenue districts.

The pertinent question that the High Court failed to consider in proper perspective, is whether the autonomous districts of Hill areas can be torn apart, causing "paradigm demographic changes, without mandatory consultations with Hill areas/committees of the Legislative Assembly elected from Hill areas".

The petition further stated that the pattern of legislation and acts from the very beginning clarifies that the Hill areas are a sensitive concern and legislature has always understood and intended to protect it by providing special autonomy.

## Modi, Shah to visit Nagaland over Naga issue, separate state demand

Agency  
Kohima, Jan 4:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are scheduled to visit Nagaland over the issue of separate state demand by the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation (ENPO) and Naga political issue, Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio informed on Tuesday.

Shah will visit Nagaland on January 6 and meet with

representatives of the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation (ENPO) over their demand for a separate state, Rio said while addressing the 61st Zhadima village Youth and Sports Organization (ZVYSO) sports meet held at Zhadima village, about 17 km from Kohima.

As for PM Modi, Rio said the premier was expected to visit Nagaland around mid January as the state assembly elections would likely be held in the last week of February or first week of March.

The official announcement for the state polls is yet to be notified by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Ahead of Modi and Shah's visit, the BJP high command is visiting the state on Tuesday evening, Rio informed. A cabinet meeting with regard to the ENPO's demand will also be held before the state legislators meet with the BJP central leaders.

The chief minister said that Shah's visit to the state

will make clear if the vexed Naga political issue would find a final solution.

Even if a solution is not arrived at, he reiterated that state elections would be conducted as per ECI notification.

However, if a solution is arrived at, he said that seats would be increased in the state Assembly, Lok Sabha, and Rajya Sabha, besides bringing about peace, infrastructure, and economic development.

## Free food supply to India's poor won't help eradicate poverty

### National Food Security Act has failed to serve its purpose

By: Nantoo Banerjee  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

It is a pity that the government could not think of a better "new year gift for the country's poor" than continuing to feed 81.35 crore Indians with free food grains for another year till December 31, 2023, under a 10-year-old National Food Security Act (NFSA), at a cost of over Rs.200,000 crore. In the process, the government admits that India's poverty level continues to increase with the growth of its population. The union government enacted NFSA in July, 2013, giving legal entitlement to 67 percent of the population — 75 percent in rural areas and 50 per cent in urban areas — to receive highly subsidised food grains.

India's population was 128.13 crore then. The free ration scheme was started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2020 under 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)' to help the country's 67 percent poor population whose livelihoods were shattered by a national lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus. It was certainly a very thoughtful move on the government's part at that point of time. There were four phases of lockdowns (between 25 March 2020 and 31 May 2020), and two unlock periods (1 June–31 July 2020) in India. By 2021, life nearly turned normal.

However, giving-away anything for free is easy. It generally makes recipients highly happy. But, freebies carry a

risk factor. Their withdrawal could make the donor quite unpopular among the gift recipients. The free food grains scheme was extended through the entire 2021 and 2022 probably because a number of India's states, including West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Puducherry, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, went for legislative assembly elections. The extension of PMGKAY through 2023 may have also made sense for the Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled national government as nine more states are due for assembly elections during this year.

One will not be surprised if the scheme is even run through the next year, when the national election is due along with seven state assembly polls.

The PMJKAY seems to have assumed a new purpose: that is to deny the opposition parties of taking advantage of a possible withdrawal syndrome among poor voters who will be deprived of free rations. In the process, the real issue leading to the enactment of NFSA appears to have gotten lost. Meanwhile, the government does in support of the country's so-called poor, represented by a static percentage (67 percent) of the population that's growing every day, every month and every year, have overtaken its intention to eradicate poverty.

When NFSA was enacted in July 2013, less than a year before the 2014 Lok Sabha election, the country's population was 128 crore. And, at 67 percent, it covered some 85 crore

population. Interestingly, the act did not help the Congress party win the 2014 national election. Now, India's population is nearly 141.4 crore. That raises the number of the poor under the NFSA definition to 94.47 crore and not 81.35 crore as computed by the PMGKAY implementing authority. Under NFSA, food grains were to be made available at highly subsidised prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains respectively for an initial period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act (July 13, 2013). Thereafter, prices were to be fixed by the union government from time to time. The government decided to continue with the above-mentioned subsidised prices under NFSA despite inflation

and rising high open market prices of food grains. Sadly, NFSA has always been used as a political tool by the ruling parties in both the union and state governments. It operates more like an election agenda to reward the poor. Poverty eradication received less priority from the government.

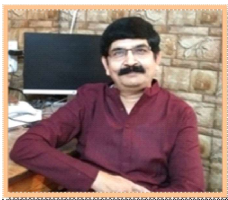
This explains why so many so-called poverty eradication schemes have failed to make a dent on the number of the poor under NFSA over the years. The schemes include the National Food for Work Programme; Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana; Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana; Indira Awaas Yojana for Rural Housing; Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act; Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana;

Rural Employment Generation Programme; Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U); Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G) and Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana.

While PMAY-U is a flagship union government mission implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, PMAY-G was introduced to boost the "Housing for All" scheme by the end of 2022. The main aim of the PMAY-G scheme is to provide brick-built houses with some of the basic amenities. The scheme has already missed the execution deadline. It continues through the current year.

contd. on page 4

# Rage over Rape incidents in Jammu & Kashmir



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

Not a single day is without the news on rape in Jammu & Kashmir. According to crime data released by Jammu and Kashmir police, as many as 365 cases of rape were registered by the police in the union territory in 2020. This is 19 percent more than 2019. In 2019, the union territory recorded 297 rape cases. It is widely acknowledged that the rate of unreported sexual violence in Indian society is far higher than official statistics would indicate, and that this is likely to be a bigger problem in India than in other

countries, as it is a more patriarchal society. Protest against rape is important, it shakes the conscience of society, it brings people close to change, it makes them feel part of the change.

In view of the increasing incidence of the rape incidents in J&K, it is absolutely necessary to review the rape law humanely and progressively as the existing law is not only partial but also outdated. The subject needs a comprehensive review and should include various types of assault, violence and torture, and with gender neutrality. Indian women are far too vulnerable to violent assaults. Sexual violence in villages, though little reported, keeps girls and women indoors after dark. The pity is that to change attitudes to rape so many young women have had to suffer and die.

Women are routinely groped and harassed by men on buses and trains. The reason behind is the vulgar display by even top grade heroines in the form of 'item numbers' has become a must for any successful movie. All these adds to the frustration where the age of sexual maturity does not match with the permissible age for marriage. A piece of fool-proof legislation is needed to safeguard innocent victims.

Rape is not something that occurs by itself. It is part of the continuing and embedded violence in society that targets women on a daily basis. Hastily made laws will serve no purpose. The government should reconsider the ordinance, giving more importance to the panel recommendations. It is rightly pointed out that "The law, if it is to be effective, must keep up with these changes, not try to force a regression to a time long past." While Sections 375 and 376 of the Indian Penal Code are the major laws dealing with rape, they have failed to match the international standards of addressing the crime. A comprehensive psychological study of the mindset of rapists is the urgent need of the hour to get some real insight into the mindset of criminals. Girls are in constant fear of being attacked, raped, victimised by men throwing acid on their faces, and what not. It is important to conduct an imaginative and sustained publicity campaign in the media, especially in regional languages, in cinema theatres and so on. Any new law on rape should include the conduct of the defence lawyer and bar unethical questions against the rape victim. Rather than punish a culprit after a crime, it is necessary to curb the cause of crime against women. We have enough laws but, unfortunately, they are not effective. What's the purpose of any law that can only bark but not bite?

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One would find that the scenario for women seems grim indeed and this will continue so long as the basic social and economic structures remain unchanged and the implementing and law and order agencies show indifference. Public display of big hoardings only serves to excite the young minds. Laws alone cannot put an end to evils that are endemic in the social structure; the government can at least make some attempt to take its own enactments seriously.

This is the time to effectively implement various policies such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and effect stricter punishment for voyeurism and stalking. Our presumption that stricter laws will bring down crimes against women stands negated. The real problem is ineffective policing. As long as criminals do not get swift and severe punishment, such crimes will continue to be committed. Police reforms should be implemented, the force insulated from political interference, and professionalized. We need not only stringent police reforms but also a deep insight into the fulfillment of community responsibility on the part of citizens. If we fail to educate our children, then we have failed in the most basic of tasks as a society.

Making tougher laws will only be as effective as its implementation. Violent assaults, rapes and murders of women are symptomatic of a deep societal dysfunction. Any new law on rape should include the conduct of the defence lawyer and bar unethical questions against the rape victim. If an FIR is registered against a person in a rape case, he should be automatically disqualified from contesting elections. The prosecution for rape and sexual harassment should have toughest lawyers pleading the case to have 100% conviction and not one in over 1000 cases. Before the dignity of more women is sacrificed, we need to have a real change for the better democracy, greater freedom, full transparency, strict law enforcement, and mandatory punishment for heinous crimes against women. These cases also fall under the rarest of rare cases, warranting the consideration of capital punishment. Crime is endemic to the human condition, but a crime specifically directed at one sex is most despicable and unfortunately, the one that is punished least. According to the Government's statistics twenty five rapes are committed in the country everyday but the unofficial record is in very large number. It is essential to raise our collective voice against rape. But rape is not something that occurs by itself. It is part of the continuing and embedded violence in society that targets women on a daily basis. One would find that Rape is a sexual as well as cultural attack which has become a great social problem today. There are many rape cases which have become the headlines of the leading newspapers but the timely actions are not taken. One should see that by giving a deterrent punishment to the rapist this evil of rape would not be solved. Once it is proved that the person is guilty of rape he should be hanged and the women for their self-defence should learn the art of Karate, Judo and if not they should keep a chilly powder in order to escape from the rapist.

# Undercurrents of ethnic tensions Revived in North East before State Polls

BJP facing serious organisational issues in both Tripura and Meghalaya

By Ashis Biswas

With old ethnic tensions being revived during the current pre - Assembly polls campaign in Tripura and Meghalaya, there is every likelihood of a more polarized vote in the Northeast. And the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is largely responsible for this.

As anticipated, the major controversy triggered by the 'secret' Assam police Special Branch note to District SPs, seeking details of activities conducted by Church authorities, focusing in particular on issues like conversions and asset acquisition, shows no signs of ending. Clearly, Assam Chief Minister Mr Himanta Biswa Sarma's brief announcement dismissing the highly sensitive communication as unofficial and disowning responsibility, has not been accepted at face value.

If anything, the situation has turned more embarrassing for all concerned authorities, whether at the state or central levels. This happened after Trinamool Congress(TMC) spokesman-cum-activist, the redoubtable Mr Saket Gokhale took an escalatory step. He sent a complaint to the Embassy of Holy See of the Vatican in India, according to Northeast mainstream media, complaining of the deliberate sidelining of Christians in India during the BJP's tenure. Party insiders said he had pressed for an immediate intervention from appropriate international authorities to help India's targeted minority Christian community.

TMC circles, defending the move said they had little choice as Mr Sarma's explanation did not seem to be convincing. Now the matter would at least be handled at the level of the Ministry of Home Affairs in Delhi.

From the ruling BJP, whether in

Assam or Delhi, there was no explanation as to how such a communication, dealing with issues of extreme sensitivity, involving diverse ethnic groups of people living in a habitually volatile region, came to be leaked in the media before the elections! 'Whatever the ultimate official justification for such a lapse, these instances of top-level inefficiency hardly enhance the prestige of our elaborate national security establishment,' said a Kolkata-based TMC leader. Worse, they increased the distrust between communities, instead of contributing to greater social harmony.

In Tripura, the BJP has rejected the idea of joining any pre-poll alliance with Tipra Motha, the new entrant currently making waves in the electoral scene. In Meghalaya, the BJP began with two seats in the 60 member house in 2018, but over the years, its strength rose to 6, with defections from other parties adding to its strength. It was a junior partner in the National Peoples' Party-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance Ministry (MDA).

Northeast media reports suggest the party will contest around 25 seats on its own and hopes to do much better this time. There were some dissidents within the party not satisfied with the performance of Mr Ernest Mawrie as the state party President, himself a contestant this time. But of late local misunderstandings had been mostly sorted out, according to party sources.

The emergence of Tipra Motha, the indigenous tribal-led organisation headed by the young popular Pradyot Manikya, has turned into a challenge for other contending parties in Meghalaya,

no matter how major. The success of the Tipra Motha in the prestigious state autonomous tribal District Council polls, upstaging older tribal formations functioning within the ruling NDA Ministry in Tripura impressed many. Most young educated tribals have responded to the TM's appeal: it stands for a greater Tripaland, seeking more educational/economic opportunities for indigenous tribespeople.

Mr Manikya's grouse is that even 70 years after independence, the tribespeople have remained poor and backward. This must change urgently. The Motha is not targeting any community or group in the region and is committed to strictly observing democratic norms in carrying out its socio-political movements. Such a commitment puts it at a different level from other similar parties in the region, according to observers.

When it comes to countering the TM's demands and its criticism of the present, more established parties in Tripura, the BJP has proved more vocal than others. It has accused the TM of corruption, levelling the most damaging charge against a political party: the saffron party alleges that the TM received generous funds from the centre and state Governments to run the District Councils it had won a year ago, for carrying out local development work.

Yet, the party failed to submit detailed statements of the expenditures the Council incurred, which did not speak well of its financial transparency. The TM on the other hand, charged the state Government of virtually starving it of funds, to create unnecessary problems for the Council.

What remains unclear how the TM's eventual vision of a greater

tribal-dominated state within (or will it need territory from adjoining states as well?) Tripura can be achieved. No roadmap has been announced yet.

The issue, which might have been discussed at the highest level, was publicly not made clear even during the recent visit of a TM deputation to Delhi. A large team of about 1500 tribal leaders and workers led by Mr Manikya visited the national capital to highlight their campaign.

So far there has been no official response from the central BJP leadership to the Motha campaign or its long term demand for a bigger separate state. Observers suggest that the present autonomous tribal district enjoys the widest possible administrative powers permissible under the law, as things stand. While the demand for separate statehood from an autonomous position is no more than natural progression for most political organisations, Tripura remains a very small state with limited resources in the Northeast, hardly having the kind of space needed to accommodate a separate state.

In any case can such a move be considered seriously in the face of objections almost sure to arise from the existing non-tribal population in the state, accounting for over 70% of the aggregate mix? As of now there have been no clear answer to the obvious question lurking in most minds. Given the turbulent history of the long and often bloody encounters involving tribals and non-tribals in Tripura, dealing with new complex political demands will call for deft statesmanship in the days ahead, if political stability and a stable ethnic relationship is to be maintained in the Northeast. (IPA Service)

# Entrance Tests are an essential part of the Educational Process



By: Vijay GarG

Till about 20 years ago, India had very few entrance exams, most of them in the areas of management, engineering and medicine. But today, entrance tests are an essential part of the educational process and a principal criterion for courses in pharmacy, law, architecture and design. In some areas such as medicine, there is a single test, but most disciplines have multiple university and state-level tests.

## (1) Medicine

The National Eligibility and Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET is the only entrance exam for students who wish to pursue medical, dental and Ayush (ayurveda, yoga and naturopathy, unani, sidha and homeopathy). The applications open in January, and the exams are conducted in May.

Candidates should have studied physics, chemistry and biology in classes XI and XII, and scored a minimum of 50 per cent in the board exams to qualify.

NEET is an offline exam with a duration of three hours and 20 minutes. There are 200 questions, out

of which 180 MCQs or multiple-choice questions must be answered. The NEET cut-off changes every year, but one should aim for a score of 580 plus (out of 720) to get admission into a reputed medical college.

## (2) Engineering

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) is an engineering exam conducted for admission to over 1,600 colleges in India. It is also an eligibility test for the JEE Advanced, which allows entry into the 25 IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology). Registration is open for session 1. For session 2, registration starts on February 7 and closes on March 7, 2023. The first session of exams will be from January 24 to January 31, while the second phase will be from April 6 to April 12. One must have good mathematical and analytical abilities and problem-solving skills, and should have taken physics, chemistry and mathematics in classes XI and XII to qualify for the JEE examination. It is a multiple-choice test with three sections-physics, chemistry and mathematics. Students must answer 75 of 90 questions.

Unlike medicine which has a single entrance exam, there are several exams for engineering courses. For example, Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS), Pilani conducts the BITSAT, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai has SRM JEE, while Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, conducts VITEEE for its campuses in Vellore, Chennai, Bhopal and Amravati. There are also several state entrance exams. Some of the

newer colleges such as Plaksha University in Pune- Jab, BML Munjal University,

Haryana, Manipal University, Jaipur and Shiv Nadar University, Delhi, accept SAT scores for admission into their engineering programmes. Students attempting JEE and NEET should consult NCERT Class XI and Class XII textbooks for an understanding of basic concepts. However, one must refer to other books as well. Some of these are Objective Physics by D.C. Pandey, Fundamentals of Physics by Halliday, Resnick and Walker, and Organic Chemistry by Morrison and Boyd.

Students preparing for NEET should also go through Objective Biology by Dinesh or Objective Biology by Ansari, while students preparing for the JEE must refer to books related to algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus to tackle the maths section of the paper. Solving previous year's question papers and taking mock tests is good practice.

## (3) Hotel Management

The National Council of Hotel Management Joint Entrance Examination (NCHM JEE) is a national-level entrance exam for admission to 74 public and private institutions. Students from any stream can apply to hotel management programmes.

The exam has five sections: English language, reasoning and logical deduction, numerical ability, general knowledge, current affairs and aptitude for the service sector. Registration is open from February to May and the exam takes place in June.

IIHM-eChat, AIMA UGAT, PUTHAT, MAH BHMCT CET are some of the other tests for hotel management courses. Some of the books one could consult by way of preparation for this exam would be: Ultimate Guide for Hotel Management NCHMCT-JEE Entrance Examination 2023, Guide for Hotel Management 2023 by Arihant, Food and Beverage Service by R. Singaravelan.

## (4) Architecture

The Council of Architecture (COA) conducts the National Aptitude Test in Architecture (Nata) for admission to the five-year BArch degree programme in institutions across India. The test measures aptitude in drawing, observation skills, sense of proportion, aesthetic sensitivity and critical thinking. Students who have completed Class XII with physics, chemistry and mathematics or those who have passed the 10+3 diploma examination with maths as a compulsory subject will be able to take the test. The first session of the Nata is likely to be held in the second week of April. The other important exam for architecture is JEE MAIN Paper 2 which gives admission into Mizoram University, Mizoram, Schools of Planning and Architecture (SPAs) in Delhi, Bhopal and Vijayawada, the NITS and BITS. It has a similar testing pattern of drawing, general aptitude and mathematics, with a few differences in the number of questions and the sections. COA releases mock tests every year.

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## Simple nasal swab can provide early warning of stealthy viruses: Lancet study

Agency  
Washington, Jan 4:

Testing for the presence of a single immune system molecule on nasal swabs can help detect hidden viruses not identified in standard tests, according to a study published in The Lancet Microbe journal.

As seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially dangerous new viruses can begin to spread in the population well before the global public health surveillance system can detect them.

"Finding a dangerous new virus is like searching for a needle in a haystack," said Ellen Foxman, an associate professor at Yale University in the US.

"We found a way to significantly reduce the size of the haystack," said Foxman, a senior author of the study.

Public health officials typically look to a few sources for warning signs of emerging disease. They study emerging viruses in animals that may transmit the infection to humans.

However, determining which of

the so many new viral variants represent a true danger is difficult.

They also look for outbreaks of unexplained respiratory ailments, which was how SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was discovered in China late in 2019.

However, by the time an outbreak of a novel virus occurs, it may be too late to contain its spread.

Nasal swabs are commonly taken from patients with suspected respiratory infections and are tested to detect specific signatures of 10 to 15 known viruses. Most tests come back negative.

However, as Foxman's team observed previously, in a few cases, the swabs of those who tested negative for the "usual suspect" viruses still exhibited signs that antiviral defenses were activated, indicating the presence of a virus.

The telltale sign was a high level of a single antiviral protein made by the cells that line the nasal passages.

The team applied comprehensive genetic sequencing methods to old samples containing the protein, and in one sample, found an unexpected influenza virus called influ-

enza C.

The researchers also used this same strategy of retesting old samples to search for missed cases of COVID-19 during the first two weeks of March 2020.

While cases of the virus had surfaced in New York State around that same time, testing was not readily available until weeks later.

Hundreds of nasal swab samples collected from patients at Yale-New Haven Hospital during that time had tested negative for standard signature viruses.

When tested for the immune system biomarker, the vast majority of those samples showed no trace of activity of the antiviral defense system.

However, a few did show the activity of antiviral defense system. Among those, the team found four cases of COVID-19 that had gone undiagnosed at the time.

The findings show that testing for an antiviral protein made by the body, even if the tests for known respiratory viruses are negative, can help pinpoint which nasal swabs are more likely to contain unexpected viruses.

## Drunk man urinates on woman passenger on Air India flight, DCGA seeks report

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

Aviation regulator DGCA on Wednesday said it has sought a report from Air India on the incident of a passenger urinating on a co-passenger onboard a flight from New York to Delhi.

The watchdog also said it will take action against those found negligent with respect to the incident, while Air India has set up an internal committee to look into the matter and decide on appropriate action.

On November 26, an inebriated male passenger urinated on a female co-passenger during a flight from New York to Delhi, according to reports.

An Air India spokesperson on Wednesday said it has reported the incident to the police and regulatory authorities for them to further investigate and take any necessary action against the misbehaving party.

"We are seeking a report from the Airline and shall take action against those found negligent," a

senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official said.

An airline official said it has set up an internal committee to look into the incident and take appropriate action.

"We are aware of the incident involving a passenger who had behaved in an unacceptable manner, affecting another."

"We have also been in regular contact with the aggrieved passenger and her family during the investigation and reporting process," the spokesperson added.

## India detects 175 new Covid-19 infections in 24 hours

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

India has recorded 175 fresh Covid-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the active tally to 2,370, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday.

Active caseload declined by 12 in a day and now comprises 0.01 per cent of the total infections, the data showed.

The tally of Covid cases in India is crore while the death toll is 5,30,707, data updated at 8 am stated. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 0.09 per cent while the weekly positivity was 0.12 per cent.

The national Covid-19 recovery rate has increased to 98.80 per cent, according to the health ministry website.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged

to 4,41,45,854 while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent.

According to the ministry's website, 220.11 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the Covid-19 vaccination drive.

India's Covid tally crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16.

## 11th Oja (Prof.) Naorem Sanajaoba Memorial Lecture, 2022 organised in connection with Ojha's 77th Birth Anniversary by Ojha Sanajaoba Memorial trust (OSMT) on "Demographic Challenges in Manipur & Remedies"

By: Prof. R.K. Narendra Singh

Contd. from previous issue

Assumption:

– Same decadal population growth rate of state (to be estimated) and standard population,

$$- \text{No. of migrants} = \frac{\text{Ppr (DPRst - DPRsp)}}{100};$$

where Ppr: Population of the preceding year (based year) of the state; DPRst: Decadal population growth rate (%) of the state during the decade; and DPRsp: Decadal population growth rate (%) of the standard population during the same decade.

Table-13

Census year	Estimated number of migrants in Manipur					
	Difference of decadal population growth rate (%) & estimated migrants of Manipur with					
	Gold Standard		India		Manipur (DPGR: 12.8%)	
	PGR	EM	DPGR	EM	EM	
1951-61	13.04	75,324	13.4	77,403	1,28,466	
1961-71	17.32	1,35,102	12.72	99,221	1,92,825	
1971-81	13.95	1,49,649	7.79	83,567	2,10,796	
1981-91	14.08	2,00,070	5.42	77,016	2,34,173	
1991-01	12.26	2,25,231	3.32	60,992	2,21,557	
2001-11	13.8	3,16,558	6.86	1,57,361	2,68,386	
Total	-	11,01,934	-	5,55,560	12,56,203	

DPGR: Decadal Population Growth Rate; EM: Estimated Migrants

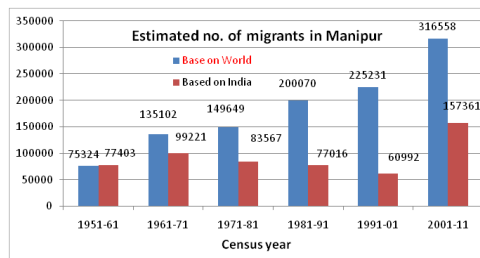


Fig-8: Showing comparison of number of estimated migrants in Manipur based on World and India

Under the assumption that growth rate of Manipur has exactly followed standard population growth rate, then the excess rate which was absolutely contributed by the migrants and finally converted into their numbers (migrants) through the formula. As the decadal population growth rate of the world is treated as gold standard then the number of migrants (both immigrants and in-migrants) entered and settled in the state of Manipur during the decades of 1951-61, 1961-71, 1971-81, 1981-91, 1991-01, and of 2001-11 were estimated as 75,324, 1,35,102, 1,49,649, 2,00,070, 2,25,231, and 3,16,558 respectively. The same procedure is adopted when decadal population growth rate of India is taken again as standard then the estimated number of migrants for the corresponding decades were 77,403, 99,221, 83,567, 77,016, and 60,992. Based on the former, 11,01,934 migrants had already entered and assimilated with 17,53,860 local people in the state during 1951 to 2011 while based on the latter, 5,55,560 migrants were assimilated with 23,00,234 natives in the state during the period. The population compositions on the first March 2011 based on the former and latter were

38.6% (migrants); 61.4% (native) and 19.5% (migrants); 80.5% (native) respectively. Since, India as a whole also has been suffering migration problem indulging from the problematic neighboring countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc.; considering the world figure as gold standard, as it is free from migration component, is quite justifiable technically.

Further, the population of migrant is estimated for all the decades under the assumption that at each decade the decadal population growth rate (DPGR) was stationary at 12.8% which was the DPR of Manipur during 1941 - 1951. That DPGR is treated as the natural growth rate which was free from the invasion of migration during the decade. If the migration component is arrested and kept constant then the growth rate would not be greater than 12.8% during the successive decades as fertility, major enhancing component of population dynamics, was declining among the natives. For obvious reasons, considering 12.8% as DPGR for each decade for the estimation of migrants in the state would not exaggerate the number of migrants. This finding highlights that during 1951-2011, 12,56,203 migrants had already entered in the state with the population component ratio of 44.0% (migrants); 56.0% (natives).

In all the three methods of estimation, highest number was witnessed during the last decade, 2001-11. And the influx trend was increasing steadily from the previous decade to next one, which was projected by the first and the last methods while fluctuation trend is highlighted by the second method.

### IX. Remedial measures:

There are two potential ways to protect and preserve the indigenous people of Manipur. They are (a). Constitutional protection and (b). Non cooperation movement.

(a). Constitutional protection:

For implementing proper planning, the State needs very reliable information of demographic profiles like growth, fertility, and migration pattern on the following:

(i). Profile of Migrants:

- Who they are and their place of origin?
- When and with whose help did they arrive in the state?
- Where do they settle/ stay?
- What is the agenda behind those local collaborators who helped them?
- Which accessible routes did they use?
- What is their (migrants) intention/motive?
- How much does their presence affect the interest of local people?
- How much does their presence affect identity and survival of the indigenous people?
- How much affect on the National and State security? etc.

(ii). Role of authority to curb influx:

The role of authority/ law enforcing agency is so vital to deal migrants very cautiously on the following:

- Population commission should be functionalized immediately
- State Population policy should be frame
- Inner Line Permit (ILP) should be implemented effectively
- Stop issuing any kind of documents
- Don't include their names in electoral rolls
- Disfranchise them in electoral process
- Stop inviting them to settle by the politicians
- Check and destroy mushrooming new villages
- Crack down all networks of preparing fake documents and human trafficking
- Warn as well as stun action to be pronounced to wrong doing officials as well as public; whosoever indulging to support
- Book local people who are indulging to settle and rehabilitate migrants
- Stop providing Centre and State governments' Welfare Schemes to migrants

- Stop further infiltration and vigil their movement and function, etc.
- Stop carrying migrant labors by local contractors
- Avoid inviting migrants by allied community/ persons
- Avoid *Craft-resist Domination Theory* among indigenous people
- Stop human trafficking, etc.
- (iii). Role of authority to slow down fertility:
- Identify community having high fertility
- Identify the reasons for their high fertility & accordingly formulate appropriate intervention

- Make sure Family Welfare Programme be implemented uniformly among the communities
- There must be some incentives for small family norms through State Population Policy

- Make people aware about small family norms, etc.
- (b). Non cooperation movement:

It is fact that without the wisdom and help of the local people no migrant both emigrant and immigrant could settle and live on at any cost. So attitude of the local people towards migrants is so crucial that make either push or pull factors. For the former the followings have to deal vigilantly.

- (iv). Role of society to curb influx
- Inform whosoever migrant was noticed to the authority
- Change preferable attitude towards the outsider
- Prefer local and indigenous people and its yields
- Not to sell your land to outsiders
- No rent to outsiders
- Change our work culture, easy going lifestyle, etc.

### Conclusion:

It is very loud and clear that the district decadal population growth rates between the valley and hill as well as among the districts are significantly varied. The pattern of variation is found true in increasing non-inhabitant villages. The population growth rate of SC and ST are must faster than that of General caste. Religious composition and its growth rate have intensely been changing in Manipur. Composition of Hindu population is reducing faster than it had in the previous decades, and Hindu is no more majority religion in Manipur. There will be sifting of Assembly seats through Delimitation Exercise from one district to another due to imbalance population growth among the communities. If so, there will be a constitutional crisis as well as it creates havoc in ethical line.

Manipuri society is under threat of demographic imbalance and influx of migration through internal and external aggression, so called demographic terrorism. Some minority communities have been intentionally enhancing their population either through fertility and/or migration to dominate majority communities. As results an imbalance population growth in terms of religion, caste, inhabited village, and like ones is witnessing among the ethnic lines, it is so called demographic imbalance. It is a very serious form of demographic terrorism. It certainly affects whole system of the society. To maintain equitable development, harmony, tranquility and peace among the all sections of the society, an equitable population growth should be maintained.

To salvage the lost status as well as to overcome the ill fated society to a new harmonious and healthy society, we should join hands together – government and people. Work together very cautiously and judiciously because the issue is awfully serious as it relates to survival and identity of indigenous people. Henceforth, the need of the hour is to make equitable and sustainable population growth, and healthy society among the hill-valley, districts, communities, etc. For this, the Government should make functionalize the State Population Commission urgently and through it prepare a State Population Policy as the State badly needs very scientific and reliable inputs with remedial steps on the population profiles for effective planning and execution.

Concluded

# Air India puts 30-day travel ban on passenger who peed on elderly woman in flight

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

Air India today took action on a man who urinated on an elderly passenger in business class and exposed his private parts to her on a flight. The incident happened in November 2022 on a New York-Delhi flight.

After the incident came to light and created a buzz on Wednesday, Air India issued a statement saying that it has imposed a 30-day travel ban on the person, adding that they have taken very serious note of the incident that has caused extreme distress to a passenger.

"Air India has taken a very serious note of the incident, where a passenger behaved in an unacceptable and undigni-

fied manner on the New York-Delhi flight that caused extreme distress to a fellow passenger. A police complaint has already been lodged in this case and Air India is committed to assisting the law enforcement agencies as well as regulatory authorities to ensure that justice is delivered to the aggrieved passenger," the Air India spokesperson said.

The airline also said that the matter has been reported to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for further action.

"We have also constituted an internal committee to probe lapses on the part of Air India's crew and address the deficiencies that delayed quick redressal of the situation. We are also in regular contact with the aggrieved passenger and

her family during the investigation and reporting process." Air India spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, an FIR has been lodged by the Delhi Police under sections 354, 509, 510 of the Indian Penal Code and 23 of the Indian Aircraft Act.

The police said that the incident occurred on November 26 and the concerned airline (Air India) approached the police after a month and two days, i.e., on December 28.

The victim also wrote a letter to the Chairman of the Board of Tata and Sons, N Chandrasekaran, describing the flight experience extremely traumatic and expressed deep disappointment.

"I am writing to express my deep disappointment regarding the appalling incident that

occurred during my business class trip on flight AI102 (commencing in NY, JFK yesterday 26th November at 12.30 pm, and arriving this afternoon in New Delhi Indira Gandhi International Airport at approximately 1.30 pm). This has been the most traumatic flight that I have ever experienced."

"During the course of the flight, shortly after lunch was served and the lights were switched off, I was getting ready to sleep, and another passenger walked to my seat completely inebriated. He unzipped his pants, relieved himself, and continued to expose me to his private parts. The passenger sitting next to me asked him to return to his seat. He did not respond immediately, but after a few moments left the area," the letter read.

# BJP national executive may endorse extension in J P Nadda's term at Delhi meet this month

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

Amid the push in preparations for elections, the BJP national executive is to meet in the national capital for two days on January 16-17 and is likely to endorse an extension in party's national president J P Nadda's tenure, sources said.

"The focus of the two-day meeting will be the upcoming state elections this year and the next general elections. Another point of deliberations will be the campaign on India's G20 presidency. As Naddaji's term is getting an extension, the national executive is expected to endorse the leadership's decision," said a

party leader.

Nadda's three-year term as the national president ends by this month. Nadda is likely to lead the BJP till the next Lok Sabha elections are over, sources added. In the political resolution, the BJP's performance in recently held Assembly polls and the functioning of the Central government will be the highlights.

Postponement of the organisational polls in view of the Assembly elections and the all-important Lok Sabha polls in 2024 may also come up for discussion at the meeting. According to sources, the process of internal polls in the party may begin after the Lok Sabha polls are over in April-May 2024.

# Ex-Tripura CM Biplab Deb's ancestral home attacked, vehicles vandalised & shops torched

Agency  
Agartala, Jan 4:

The ancestral home of former chief minister of Tripura and Rajya Sabha MP from the state—Biplab Deb—came under attack by miscreants, late on Tuesday night.

The miscreants, who attacked the ancestral home of former Tripura chief minister Biplab Deb, Rajdhanganagar, are allegedly suspected to be backed by opposition CPI-M.

The miscreants also allegedly vandalised several vehicles that were parked near the ancestral residence of the former Tripura chief minister.

Several other vehicles and nearby shops were also allegedly set on fire by the miscre-

ants, who also attacked the ancestral home of former Tripura CM Biplab Deb.

Former Tripura chief minister Biplab Deb has accused the Left Front-led by the CPI-M of orchestrating the attack.

The attack allegedly took place when priests arrived at the residence to perform rituals ahead of the death anniversary of the father of the former Tripura CM.

According to reports, around 30 miscreants carrying sharp weapons launched the attack on the residence and vehicles, setting many of them on fire.

Although fire tenders reached the spot on time, the miscreants allegedly prevented them from putting out the fire.

# PM, CM don't have disciplinary control over council of ministers: SC

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan 4:

Prime minister or a chief minister does not have disciplinary control over the members of the council of ministers and it is not possible at all times for them to take the whip whenever a disparaging statement is made, the Supreme Court said on Tuesday.

The observation by a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice S A Nazeer came while delivering its judgement on the issue of freedom of speech and expression of public functionaries.

"The Prime Minister or the Chief Minister does not have disciplinary control over the members of the Council of Ministers. It is true that in practice, a strong Prime Minister or Chief Minister will be able to drop any minister out of the

Cabinet."

"But in a country like ours where there is a multi party system and where coalition governments are often formed, it is not possible at all times for a Prime Minister/Chief Minister to take the whip, whenever a statement is made by someone in the Council of Ministers," Justice V Ramasubramanian, who wrote the judgement for himself and Justices Nazeer, B R Gavai and A S Bopanna, said.

The apex court said the suggestion made by the petitioners that the prime minister, in the case of a minister of the Union of India and the chief minister, in the case of a minister of the state should be allowed to take appropriate action, against the erring minister, is just fanciful.

"Governments which survive on wafer thin majority (of

which we have seen quite a bit), sometimes have individual ministers who are strong enough to decide the very survival of such governments. This problem is not unique to our country," it said.

Justice B V Nagarathna, who wrote a separate judgement while concurring on the larger issue of additional restrictions on high public functionaries, however, differed on various legal questions including the one related to whether the government can be held vicariously liable for the disparaging utterances of its ministers.

The apex court ruled additional restrictions cannot be imposed on the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression of high public functionaries as exhaustive grounds already exist under the Constitution to curb that right.

Contd. from Page 1

# Free food supply to India's poor...

In fact, none of the schemes achieved their prescribed lofty goals. High rates of rural and urban unemployment continue. The Consumer Pyramid Household Survey of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy showed the employment rate among Indian youth (15-24 years) at 10.4 percent in 2021-22 compared to 10.9 percent during the lockdown-hit 2020-21. The average unemployment rate in India at eight percent may be a grossly underestimation. The quality of jobs presently offered in the government and other institutions is poor — mostly fixed salaried contract service.

NFSA may have succeeded in giving a kind of "food security" to the country's rural and

urban poor, but the real issue of providing jobs and livelihood to the bottom section of the society to tackle the high poverty rate remains a big challenge. Among the principal causes of unemployment in India are: the caste system, pervading virtually every aspect of life including the provision of certain categories of jobs; inadequate economic growth; rising population, especially among the poor; seasonal agricultural occupation; significant decline in the growth of the cottage and small industry sector affecting small investors and artisans; low rates of savings and investment; poor economic planning leading to imbalanced supply and demand of labour; and lack of job specialisation.

India totally lacks in providing a universal education system to its pupils with uniform curriculum and modern work skills. According to a study, nearly 33 percent of India's educated youth are unemployed due to a lack of future skills. Addressing these issues are much tougher than providing free or highly subsidised food grains to an overwhelming number of India's population (67 percent) helping politicisation of poverty. Interestingly, the government's new education policy, based on "four pillars which are access, equity, quality and accountability," does not address those burning issues leading to joblessness and poverty. (IPA Service)

## Sports

# National Boxing Championships: Manish Kaushik, Mohammad Hussamuddin advance to quarters

Agency  
Hisar (India), Jan 4:

Riding on exceptional performances, the 2019 World Championships bronze medalist Manish Kaushik, 2022 Asian Championships bronze medalist Mohammad Hussamuddin and the 2018 Commonwealth Games champion Gaurav Solanki advanced to the quarter-finals of the 6th Elite Men's National Boxing Championships on Tuesday.

Going up against Sandeep Doni of Andhra Pradesh, Manish Kaushik (63.5kg) who is representing the Sports Services Control Board (SSCB) put on a show of immaculate strength. The 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medalist showcased his exceptional technical ability to outperform his opponent and won the bout after the referee stopped the contest (RSC) in the second round.

He will face the winner of the bout between Manipur's Rohit Ningehougan Singh and Jharkhand's Neeraj Kumar Singh in the last 8.



Boxer Manish Kaushik (left) during the 2022 Men's National Boxing Championships

Hussamuddin (57kg) who is also representing SSCB was squaring off against Lallawmawma of Mizoram. The two-time Commonwealth Games bronze medalist was at the top of his game and dominated proceedings to blank his opponent and win by unanimous decision. He will face Uttar Pradesh's Manish Rathod in the quarter-finals.

Haryana's native Solanki

(60kg) was squaring off against Harendra Singh of Madhya Pradesh in his round-of-16 bout. Producing a power-packed performance, Solanki was in complete control from the start of the bout with his quick-fire attacks and stellar defence. He ultimately got the better of his opponent to seal a 5:0 win and progress to the quarters.

The 2022 Asian Champi-

onships bronze medalist Govind Sahani (48kg) who is representing Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) made lightwork of Mansingh of Jammu and Kashmir to secure a 5:0 win by unanimous decision. He will face Heli Tana Tara of Arunachal Pradesh in his quarters bout.

His RSPB teammate Varinder Singh (60kg) prevailed in a similar fashion against Ibrahim Mohammed of SSCB with a 5:0 win to book his place in the quarter-finals. The 2021 Asian Championships bronze medalist will take to the ring against Gaurav Solanki in his quarters bout.

The 2021 Asian Youth champion Biswamitra Chongtham (51kg) who is representing SSCB triumphed over Prabhudas Yadla of Andhra Pradesh with a 5:0 victory in a scintillating manner. He will face Yogesh of Haryana in the quarter-finals.

A total of 386 boxers across 13 different weight categories are participating in the championships. All the quarter-finals will be played on Wednesday.

Agency  
London, Jan 4:

Arsenal's mounting Premier League title charge was checked as the leaders could find no way through third-placed Newcastle United in a disappointing 0-0 draw at The Emirates on Tuesday.

Mikel Arteta's side have been relentless this season and a 15th league win from 17 games would have seen them open a 10-point lead over Manchester City at the top of the table.

But they had to make do with a point against a rock-solid Newcastle who defended superbly to remain unbeaten since August.

The closest the hosts came to breaking the deadlock was in the 87th minute when Newcastle keeper Nick Pope made a great save to keep out a low shot by Eddie Nketiah while Arsenal also had a vociferous late penalty claim waved away.

It is the first time Arsenal have not scored this season in all competitions and the first time they have dropped home points while Newcastle have now kept 10 clean sheets.

# Premier League: Leaders Arsenal held by rock-solid Newcastle United

Eddie Howe's visitors were content to sit deep for most of the evening and wait for chances from counter-attacks although Joelinton wasted a good opportunity before the break.

The draw was a fair result

though, leaving Arsenal on 44 points from 17 games, eight ahead of Manchester City who have played a game less and nine in front of Newcastle and fourth-placed Manchester United.

## Canteen Smart Card Lost

I, the undersigned have lost my Canteen Smart Card issued in my name by the Indian Army, Govt. of India in between Naharup to Konung Mamang area in Imphal East on January 2, 2023.

Finders are requested to hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Saikhom Bishworjit Singh  
Naharup Makha Pat,  
Imphal East, Manipur  
Contact No. 9637433586

## Name Change

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that I have renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of my old name Diten Singh as I have assumed my new name H. Diten Singh.

In future I shall be known as H. Diten Singh in all documents and others.

Sd/-

H. Diten Singh  
Hihgat Mayai Leikai  
Gularthol, Jiribam, Manipur