

Parents criticise NEET PG cut-off to finish interning, demands the cut-off should be increased to May 2023

By: Vijay GarG
New Delhi, Jan 8:

As the National Board of Examinations (NBE) on Saturday put out the dates for NEET-PG 2023, Parents said that the cut-off date of March 31 for completing internship is likely to disqualify more than half the current batch.

With NBE trying to regularise admission dates after the pandemic, the information bulletin released on Saturday states that the examination will be conducted on March 5, and results released by March 31.

NEET-PG is likely to be discontinued from next year, with the government implementing

a new, two-part exit test for all MBBS students, which will be a basis for their registration as doctors and admissions for further PG courses.

The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) tweeted, "More than 50% of interns ineligible, their careers at stake. (Many) states altogether aren't eligible. Will lead to demands of postponement and last minute chaos. Urgent resolution needed."

Dr Rohan Krishnan, national chairperson of Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA), said, "This is actually a chronic problem, which has been worsened by the pandemic.

There were some states that always delayed declaring the results for MBBS finals, leading to delays in students joining the mandatory internships, and delays in completing it. However, because of the pandemic, there have been more academic delays over the last two years."

The current cut-off date, he said, will make "most of the 2017 batch ineligible to sit for the PG exams this year". He said the cut-off should be increased to May.

The cut-off date for the one-year mandatory internship for MBBS students before appearing for PG entrance test was extended to July 31 last year on directions of the

Supreme Court. Last year, internship was also delayed for some students due to Covid-19 duty during the second wave.

The NEET PG schedule has been severely affected over the last two years, leading to a shortage of PG students in medical college hospitals who work as junior resident doctors as part of their training. Resident doctors from FORDA and FAIMA had taken to the streets in December 2021, asking the government to expedite counselling, which was in abeyance for several months due to a series of court cases on the new quota for the economically weaker sections.

Padma Shri Wareppa Naba passes away; CM Biren condoles

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8:

Padma Shri Wareppa Naba, Manipur's renowned theatre personality died at Raj Medicity in Imphal on Sunday, a source close to him said.

Naba, who was honoured with Padma Shri in 2017 for his contribution to the world of theatre in Manipur, breathed his last at Raj Medicity hospital, Imphal at 12.30 am on Sunday, the source said.

Expressing grief, the Chief minister prayed for the departed soul and extended sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

"Aggrieved to learn about the demise of Padma Shri Wareppa Naba who was a renowned theatre personality. I extend my sincere condolences



to the bereaved family, and pray for the departed soul to rest in peace at the heavenly abode of almighty God," Biren tweeted on Sunday.

Wareppa Naba @ W. Nabachandra Singh, son of a prominent sankirtana performing artiste and a popular theatre actor of the yesteryears, spent his early life in the field of traditional art and culture under the

guidelines from his. Born on 16th October 1941 (Academic 1st November 1947) at Haobam Marak Thingel Ngangom Leikai, Imphal West, Manipur.

He was conferred Padmashri Award, in 2017 for his contribution to the field of Art and Culture and was also conferred National Vayoshreshtha Saman, in 2018 for his contribution to the field of Creative Art.

Centre seeks extension of another 6 months to frame CAA rules

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 8:

The Centre has sought six more months to frame the rules for implementing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA).

This is the seventh such extension sought by the Union Home Ministry.

The CAA was passed in 2019 to grant citizenship to non-Muslims from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India before December 31, 2014, without any documents.

On November 24, Home Minister Amit Shah said the rules of the Act were under construction and there were some delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"CAA is a law of the land and those who are dreaming that CAA won't be implemented are mistaken, it will be implemented," the Minister said.

Most parts of the north-eastern States are exempted

from the Act. The tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur are exempted from provisions of the Act.

The undocumented migrants who will be deemed Indian citizens through the Act will not be able to settle down in the exempted areas.

The Home Ministry had sought an extension of six months from the subordinate committee on parliamentary legislation in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, the reported quoting a senior government official.

While the Rajya Sabha committee has accepted the Ministry's request to grant the extension till June 30, a reply from the Lok Sabha committee is awaited, reports said.

Earlier, the Home Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha committee that it needs time till December 31, 2022 to frame

the rules, while it sought time till January 9, 2023 from the Lok Sabha committee.

The Manual on Parliamentary Work says that if a Ministry is not able to frame the rules governing a legislation within the prescribed period of six months after the law is passed, "they should seek an extension of time from the Committee on Subordinate Legislation stating reasons for such extension".

The CAA was passed by Parliament on December 11, 2019, and it received assent from the President on December 12 the same year.

The Ministry notified that the Act would come into force on January 10, 2020. However, the rules have not been notified, making the legislation ineffective on the ground.

As many as 83 persons were killed in protests between December 2019 and March 2020 in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya and Delhi after the CAA was passed.

Homecoming was a fake drama – PREPAK (Pro)

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8:

Reacting to the Homecoming ceremony organized by the state Home Department, at 1st MR Banquet Hall, at which 43 cadres belonging to different underground groups laid down weapon and surrendered, Proscribed group

PREPAK (Pro) stated that the event was a staged drama to get 'Pass Mark' on the "Neo-colonial Recycling Day 26 January".

A statement by the Media Coordinator of the outfit, Lanchenba said that even as Manipur is famous for drama and courtyard paly, the homecoming drama staged yesterday was a flop one.

It said that the two actor of the Homecoming drama identified as Hemam Ibungo and Takhelambam Johnson whom they claimed to be member of the PREPAK (PRO) and the Red Army are not either members or related to the party.

"The PREPAK (Pro) is finding hard time looking if the two

are actually members of the outfit or not", the statement said.

It alleged the government that those actors in the fake drama are those who have gone out of their houses and have no works to do other than troubling their parents.

"Such dramas are not new and everyone knows the reality", it said.

NEFIS joins protest against cancellation of residential proof certificates to Chakma and Hajong communities

IT News
Imphal, Jan 8:

North-East Forum for International Solidarity (NEFIS) today participated in a Protest Demonstration at Jantar Mantar in Delhi against the recent decision by the Arunachal Pradesh government to cancel the Residential Proof Certificates (RPCs) of the Chakma and Hajong communities. This effectively denies them the



right to be considered Indian citizens. This is in violation of various judgments of different

high courts and the Supreme Court on the issue.

The Chakma and Hajong

communities who live in Arunachal Pradesh are among the poorest of the poor communities in the country. However, despite being residents of India for decades, they continue to face various kinds of oppression and deprivation. The communities are at various points made scapegoats by the respective governments for their self-seeking narrow political aims.

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Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 does not Permit Non-Natives Permanent Residency and Land Ownership in Manipur

By: Rajkumar Bobichand
Imphal, Jan 8:

Recently some civil society organisations of Manipur observed in appreciation of the implementation of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 while the Chief Minister of Manipur is also confident of strengthening the ILP system in Manipur.

However, the Manipur Inner Line Permit Guidelines, 2019 is still like without the backbone.

Eight Civil Society Organisations of ILP Demand Committee, Kangleipak observed the completion of three years of implementation of

Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 in the state in a formal function held at the office of ACOAM-Lup Kangleipak, Lamphel on December 11, 2022. The eight CSOs include ACOAM-Lup Kangleipak, IPSA, IPAK, PANDM, KANGLAMEI, Kanglei Ima Lup, CLK and KSA under the umbrella of ILP Demand Committee, Kangleipak.

Reasoning the observation, the Committee in a press release stated that the Committee since November 18, 1997 has been spearheading a movement for a "constitutional safeguard" by organising social awareness seminar and meeting. The neighboring States such as

Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland had earlier enjoyed "constitutional safeguard" under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR) 1873 to protect the indigenous communities of the state who have reduced to minority. Manipur also started demanding the "constitutional safeguard" for protection of indigenous people as the huge influx of immigrants has now dominated one-third of the population of the State.

The release further stated that the CSOs joined hands together in 2015 by forming JCILPS and

subsequently after the State Cabinet a Bill was passed by the Manipur Legislative Assembly. A huge clash took

place on ILP issue which led to the death of Sapam Robinhood and continuance of the movement for many years. When the BJP Government worked out to pass the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) and the entire North-east stand against the CAB, the Government of India extended the BEFR 1873 to Manipur and the CAB is exempted in the ILP enforced states of the Northeast including Manipur.

Although ILP has been implemented, the ILP system being enforced in the state is riddled with various loopholes in the rules and regulations, loopholes in entry points and the increase in the influx of immigrants in the state and

lack of verification of those who have already entered in the state, the Committee said and appealed to the government to honestly perform their duties to save the indigenous people.

To save the indigenous people of Manipur, the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) has also been demanding an update of National Register Citizens (NRC) update and constitution of Manipur State Population Commission (MSPC).

It may be mentioned that COCOMI and United Naga Council (UNC) had earlier jointly submitted a memorandum to the Government of Manipur for setting up of a

Manipur State Population Commission and called for deporting illegal migrants and checking mushrooming of unrecognized villages.

The COCOMI and UNC have also been demanding a resolution by the Manipur State Legislative Assembly and send a proposal to the Government of India for taking further steps to check demographic imbalance. They further demand that the NRC be updated with a fixed cut-off base year to identify illegal immigrants in Manipur.

The Manipur State Cabinet, during its meeting held in June, had resolved to adopt 1961 as the base year for determining the 'native' status for implementation of Inner

Line Permit (ILP) system in Manipur.

However, the Joint Committee on Inner Line Permit System (JCIPLS) had strongly opposed the 1961 base year for implementation of ILP adopted by the state cabinet. JCIPLS had condemned the base year adopted by the state cabinet as 1961 against their demand to be base year as 1951.

Before 1951, even after the merger of Manipur to Indian dominion on October 15, 1949, the Pass and Permit System for Entry into and Exit from Manipur was in force protecting Manipur from illegal immigrants till the Chief Commissioner Himmat Singh abolished it on November 18, 1950.

contd. on page 4

Sunday Poetry

The Mother of All Written

By: Irom Calvin

The Almighty Mother of all living beings,
When your time comes,
We all worship you from the core of our hearts.

In our life span,
If we have done anything bad or wrong.

Please forgive us,
And shower your blessings upon us.

During our stay in this world,
We would contribute at our best level
In creating a healthy and prosperous world.

From the moment,
We open our eyes,
Till the moment,
We close them.

We would help in all possible ways
Time passes very quickly
But at the end of our journey,
We would meet again face to face,
And bring about a change
To the new glory of life.

“The portrait of a young man”

By: Adison Moirangthem

Those lovely days had gone, flew away.
Now with a suit, neck tie, polished shoe.
Of course a sweetly scented life now
seen on a big white screen.
Nothing for but to be a mere faithful, sincere, committed servant.
To survive, ‘A Young handsome man’.

So, I smile every square,
Yes! I'm happy! Fine! every corner.
It is the reality to the world.

What might be the another reality?
What's there at the back stage?

Sorry! no one have thought about it.
World knows only virtual figure.
Knows nothing about its reality.
Love to say, ‘A true reality far from me’.

When in solitary asked
Who am I?
Weep and speak out loud inside -
“I'm a Reek”.

A Sternly Life

By Malem Elangbam

That woebegone borned nomad,
Imbued him by all to find felicity in life,
Nonetheless, languored disquiet of finding happiness,
He saw all endured finding happiness and solicited...

Plethora of ways he notioned and intended,
Merely the ineluctable ways is,
He hold in ambiguity,
The tragic end of pyrrhical steps avoided,
A ripple want for survival was his last wish,
He waited for Talisman...

At last, he found wherewithal and
was susurrous towards the way
he stepped out antecedently,
Dithered and felt petrichor,
Closed the eyes and ran into darkness
to find the penumbra...

The Talisman whispered
the panacea in very low voice
and clued happiness in life,
Shockingly he already lost his hearing and dull...

He walked around
to find Talisman again with outraged ear
to hear the whisper again,
He didn't find anywhere anymore,
He almost forgot the cynosure and lived
in tears finding happiness still
in the blurry roadway
gasping the last breath...

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World Climate 2022, an overview



By: N. Munal Meitei

Climate in 2022 was just like the left foot in the ice and the right in a boiling water and taking the average. Global warming is undoubtedly increasing to extremes – heat waves, droughts and floods, sometimes bewildering the whole world.

Climate change amped up weather extremes, smashing temperature records, sinking river and lake to historic lows and raising rainfall to devastating highs. Droughts set the stage for wildfires and worsened food insecurity. We are pondering the limits of humans' ability to tolerate extreme heat. Record-breaking heat waves baked India and Pakistan, then monsoon flooding left about a third of Pakistan under water, affecting an estimated 33 million people taking 1500 lives, 1.8 million homeless with millions of livestock and acute shortages of food for million. Even temperature broke 50°C in Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan, in May. Landslides have killed at least 145 people in four North-eastern states this year including the Tupul on June 30.

Extreme heat in Europe led to wildfires, especially in Spain and Portugal. The drought in Spain dried up a reservoir, revealing the long-sub-

merged “Spanish Stonehenge,” an ancient circle of megalithic stones believed to date back to around 5000 B.C. Electricity generation in France plummeted, with low rivers reducing the ability to cool nuclear power towers, and German barges had difficulty finding enough water to navigate the Rhine River.

Over and above the Russian war against Ukraine, large parts of Europe sweltered in repeated episodes of extreme heat. The United Kingdom saw a new national record of 40°C for the first time on 19 July, 2022 accompanied by a persistent drought and wildfires. European rivers including the Rhine, Loire and Danube fell to critically low levels.

In United States, the West and the Midwest suffered through intense heat waves, and the crucial Colorado River reservoirs Lake Powell and Lake Mead hit record lows, triggering water restrictions. Yet, U.S also saw major disruptive flooding in several cities and regions, from Death Valley to the mountains of eastern Kentucky.

In China, heat waves and drought stretched over eight weeks and dried up parts of the Yangtze River to the lowest level since at least 1865 – until parts of the same area were inundated with flooding rains in August. Whole of the South Asian countries including Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam were extremely suffered from the floods, cyclones and heat waves.

2022 took an exceptionally heavy toll on glaciers in the Himalayas and European Alps, with initial indications of record-shattering melt with average thickness losses of between 3 to 4 m. The Greenland ice sheet lost mass for the 26th consecutive year

and it rained rather than snowed there for the first time in September, 2022.

In Switzerland, 6% of the glacier ice volume was lost between 2022 and for the first time in history, no snow outlasted the summer season even at the highest points.

Arctic sea-ice extent was below the long-term (1981-2010) average during the September 2022 from 4.87 million sq. km to 1.54 million sq. km. Antarctic sea-ice extent dropped to 1.92 million sq. km, the lowest level on record and almost 1 million sq. km below the long-term average.

In East Africa, rainfall has been below average in four consecutive wet seasons, the longest in 40 years. As a result, an estimated 18.4 to 19.3 million people faced food insecurity before June 2022. Humanitarian agencies warned that such food insecurity situations will be prevailing in most of the African countries like Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. The southern Africa region was battered by a series of cyclones hitting Madagascar hardest with torrential rain and devastating floods. Hurricane Ian caused extensive damage and loss of life in Cuba and southwest Florida in September.

In the Southern Hemisphere, due to marine heat wave, New Zealand and other South Pacific islands were to the warmest and wettest meteorological winter (June-August) with several major floods. Rain was 141% above normal and nationwide temperatures averaged 1.4°C above the 1981-2010 average.

Ocean heat was at record level high in the past 20 years. Concentrations of the main greenhouse gases - carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous

oxide – once again reached record levels in 2022. The ocean stores around 90% of the accumulated heat from human emissions of greenhouse gases. The upper 2000m of the ocean continued to warm to record levels this year.

In its Sixth Assessment Report, released in 2022, IPCC warned that humans are dramatically overhauling Earth's climate. Earth's average surface temperature has already risen by 1.15°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average. That warming has shifted the flow of energy around the planet, altering weather patterns and turning past extremes into new normal. Extreme heat waves, drought and devastating flooding have affected millions and cost billions this year, according to the WMO Provisional State of the Global Climate in 2022 report.

In addition to raising temperature, global warming increases evaporation and sucks more moisture from the surface waters and amplifies warming. When water evaporates, it absorbs heat, and when it later falls as rain, that heat is released back into the atmosphere. This extra energy fuels storms, leading to more intense systems that may also be bigger and last longer, with up to 30% more rain as a consequence of warming.

Yes, these are all manifestations of climate change brought about by human activities that heats up the planet. Thus, climate change interwoven with other anthropogenic crises are making the earth a boiling place, just like a hell for the future generations.

(The author is Environmentalist, email- nmunal@yahoo.in)

Good Mental Physique & Wellness for the Prosperous New Year 2023



By - Deepika Mayanglambam

If we consider on the possible economic losses due to mental health condition as per the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimate of One Trillion USD worldwide during 2012-2030. As per the reports of the National Mental Health survey (NMHS) it has been found that 14% of the population in our country need mental health professional help.

We have witnessed a drastic and unexpected increase in the number of people suffering from mental illness after the Covid-19 pandemic, it has also been reported that one in seven person is suffering from different types of mental illness, for instance, depression, anxiety etc.

Anyone can have mental health issues, it may happen to your friends, colleague, relatives, family, and acquaintances.

ANXIETY has become a ubiquitous form of mental illness which we come across in our regular life. An anxiety can occur in any phase in a lifelong process. Overall anxiety is somewhat a person faced in different angle and scenario. Furthermore, people having anxiety issue finds hard to overcome their fear from mild to longer period of stress or panic.

But yes, anxiety can be effectively treated by different approaches such as SELF-TREATMENT which includes physical activity, a healthy diet, regular sleep, and relaxation exercises may all help to reduce anxiety. Joining a support group may also help. Basis the severity of the anxiety level SEEKING MEDICAL CARE, reaching out to a mental health FIRTAIDER, and taking up a Consultation with a mental health professional can be immensely helpful.

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) released data on suicidal deaths in India in August, 2022 and the figures were startling. A total of 1,64,033 suicides were reported in the country in 2021 which is an increase of 7.2% in comparison to the previous year in terms of total numbers. The number reported is the highest ever recorded in the country since inception of reporting of suicides by the NCRB in 1967. This is a genuine cause of concern especially the unfortunate student suicides in India which recorded an all-time high in 2022. As per reports by NCRB, student suicides saw an increase by 4.5 percent as compared to 2021.

As per the NCERT survey, it has been found that 81% of students feel anxious because of academic stress and competition. It is very much necessary to find solutions.

We strongly believe there may be different reason of the reported suicide cases, may be personal, financial but the numbers are depicting that the MENTAL ILLNESS is becoming a big reason due to lack of proper treatment and awareness. The mental health experts in the country says that up to 15% people suffering from mental health have suicidal tendencies.

It is often observed that, when one wants to express their state of mind and the issues about mental health they are often met by mock-

ery and ridicule.

Data shows clearly that more men go to the doctor for mental health related issues compared to women. Deaths due to heart attacks increased by 6 times in the first half of 2021 compared to 2020, and it has also been pointed out that EMOTIONAL STRESS DURING COVID is one of the reasons of the cause of number of deaths reported.

Before solving it, we must admit to the existence of the problem, and believe that anyone can have mental health issues. In some mental health related cases many people cannot clearly convey their problems as it is frowned upon by outsiders. But it is vital for the overall wellbeing to address mental health issues.

The mental health awareness has also increased in the last few years, date shows that young Indians are actively taking care of their mental health, in the last one year there is 44% increase in consultations: PRACTO. The consultation consists of people from the age group of 25-34 age groups. Where 61% are male and 39% are females who are going for the treatment to doctors or therapist for their mental health issues. This is indeed a good sign.

The younger generation population have started to understand about the mental health issues as an important health aspect.

Many schools in the country have also started giving attention to the mental health to the students especially after two years of virtual schooling.

The biggest misconception in the country is that some people perceive that mental illness only happen to the weak people/abnormal people. Sometimes we tend to believe that if we are strong physically that we should be strong mentally. For one's good mental health, identifying emotions and mental state is a worth needed.

Mental health also affects important organs and gland of the body, more than 56 million Indians are suffering from depression*

Depression is common caused. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is a mental health condition triggered by a terrifying event, causing flashbacks, nightmares, and severe anxiety and the “survey indicated that 28.2% of population [that participated in a survey] suffered from PTSD during lockdown in India”, said Anita Khokhar. The prevalence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in India was found to be 32.4%, and mild and moderate depressions were present among 14.4% and 6.4% of the study population, respectively.

It's okay not to be okay. So going to therapy is not a sign of weakness. Being able to recognize or want help is a sign of high self-awareness and choosing to seek help is incredibly brave.

The ultimate fact is anybody can become a victim of mental health issue. And solving it is a unique journey for everyone, there is no uniform treatment for mental health issues.

Sometimes lifestyle changes help but professional help is always recommended. With the new beginning of the year, the following self-assessment can be considered.

1. Are you overworked and over thinking?
2. Do you get angry very fast?
3. Ever felt low in life that nothing interests you?
4. Do you feel still and lethargic?
5. Do you spend too much time on TV or online?

An honest introspection will do wonders in your life this prosperous New Year 2023.

(The author is the founder of Freedom From Mental Illness. She can be reached at Speak2FMI@gmail.com)

World's longest river cruise 'Ganga Vilas' to unlock River Cruise tourism in India: Sarbananda Sonowal

PIB
New Delhi, Jan 8:

The launch of world's longest river cruise with MV Ganga Vilas by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 13 January, 2023 in Varanasi will herald a new age of river cruise tourism for India, said Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush. The luxury cruise will cover a distance of more than 3,200 kms across 27 river systems in 5 states in India and Bangladesh. The huge untapped potential of river cruise is set to get unlocked with the launch of this service, added Sonowal.

Speaking on the occasion, the Sonowal said, "Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are exploring the immense wealth that our rich river system has to offer. This avenue of sustainable development via inland waterways has received a tremendous boost as efforts to augment cargo traffic as well as passenger tourism has borne fruit with encouraging results. The MV Ganga Vilas cruise is a step towards unlocking the huge potential river tourism in the country has to offer. Our rich heritage will get further transcended in the global stage as tourists will be able to experience the spiritual, the educational, the well being, the cultural as well as the richness of the biodiversity of India. From

Kashi to Samath, from Majuli to Mayong, from Sunderbans to Kaziranga, this cruise packs an experience of a lifetime. I believe that this wonderful initiative, under the guidance of Prime Minister Modi ji, is the beginning of a new era in river cruise tourism in India and strengthening our government's commitment to enable Act East, both through policy and practice."

The MV Ganga Vilas cruise is curated to bring out the best of the country to be showcased to the world. The 51 days cruise is planned with visits to 50 tourist spots including World Heritage Sites, National Parks, river Ghats, and major cities like Patna in Bihar, Sahibganj in Jharkhand, Kolkata in West Bengal, Dhaka in Bangladesh and Guwahati in Assam. The MV Ganga Vilas vessel is 62 meters in length, 12 meters in width and comfortably sails with a draft of 1.4 meters. It has three decks, 18 suites on board with a capacity of 36 tourists, with all the amenities to provide a memorable and luxurious experience for the tourists. The ship follows sustainable principles at its core as it is equipped with pollution-free mechanisms and noise control technologies. The maiden voyage of MV Ganga Vilas will witness 32 tourists from Switzerland relishing the Varanasi to Dibrugarh journey. The expected date of arrival of MV Ganga Vilas in Dibrugarh is on 1st March, 2023.

The itinerary of MV Ganga

Vilas has been curated to showcase the rich heritage of India with stop overs in spots of historical, cultural and religious importance. From the famous "Ganga Arti" in Varanasi, it will stop at Samath, a place of great reverence for Buddhism. It will also cover Mayong, known for its Tantric craft, and Majuli, the largest river island and hub of Vaishnavite culture in Assam. The travellers will also visit the Bihar School of Yoga and Vikramshila University, allowing them to soak in the rich Indian heritage in spirituality and knowledge. The cruise will also traverse through the biodiversity rich World Heritage Sites of Sunderbans in Bay of Bengal delta, famous for Royal Bengal Tigers, as well as Kaziranga National Park, famous for one horn rhino.

Highlighting the need to develop river cruise tourism in the country, the Shri Sonowal said that the development of this sector would generate employment opportunity in the hinterland. The government is making capital expenditure to build capacity for the success of river cruise tourism in the country. He said the river tourism circuits will be developed and integrated with the existing tourism circuits for maximum exposure and rapid development of this sector in the country.

The MV Ganga Vilas cruise is a first-of-its-kind cruise service. With support from the In-

land Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) under Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways (MoPSW), the success of this service is likely to entice entrepreneurs to explore river cruise in other parts of the country.

The global River cruise market has grown at ~5% over the last few years and is expected to constitute ~37% of cruise market by 2027. Europe has been driving growth with approx. 60% share of river cruise vessels in the world. In India, 8 river cruise vessels are operational between Kolkata and Varanasi while cruise movement is also operation on National Waterways 2 (Brahmaputra). Tourism activities like river rafting, camping, sightseeing, kayaking and so on are operation in many spots in the country. The construction of 10 passenger terminals across NW2 are going on which will further bolster the prospect of river cruise. At present, four river cruise vessels are operational in NW2 while it is operating in limited capacity in NW3 (West Coast Canal), NW8, NW 4, NW 87, NW 97, and NW 5. As the capital expenditure is pumped to build capacity in the inland waterways, the river cruise is set to grow further with systematic forward and backward linkage for the economy, especially across the banks of the rivers.

With Temp dipping to 1.5 degree, Delhi colder than most hill stations; Orange alert issued for Sunday



Agency
New Delhi, Jan 8:

With persistent fog and dipping temperatures, cold wave conditions continue in the national capital, as parts of Delhi witnessed a bone-chilling 1.5 degrees Celsius on Saturday.

In the last 24 hours, Delhi's minimum temperature plummeted at 2.2 degrees, which was less than most places of the hilly Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand as well as some higher altitude places in Jammu and Kashmir.

A dense fog continued to float in the capital road, rail and air traffic movement was severely affected.

Due to the ongoing conditions, The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an "orange" alert — warning of dense fog and cold wave — in Delhi, and certain parts of

North India on Sunday.

A severe cold wave brought the minimum temperature down to a numbing 1.5 degrees Celsius at the Ridge weather station in central Delhi. Lodhi Road and Ayangar weather stations recorded the mercury dipping to 2 degrees and 3.4 degrees respectively.

At several places in Delhi, the maximum temperature was at least 7 notches below normal.

Delhi was colder than Chamba (5.8 degrees), Dalhousie (8.3 degrees), Dharmsala (9.2 degrees), Shimla (7.8 degrees), Hamirpur (3.9 degrees), Manali (4 degrees), Kangra (5.6 degrees), Solan (3 degrees), Dehradun (6 degrees), Mussoorie (8.1 degrees) and Nainital (5.8 degrees), IMD said.

Very dense fog lowered visibility to 25 metres at the Palam observatory, near the Indira

Gandhi International (IGI) airport in the wee hours of the morning.

Foggy conditions delayed at least 36 trains by hours, a Northern Railway spokesperson said, PTI reported.

The weather conditions continue to strain power grids and pose challenges to the homeless and animals.

In an advisory, the weatherman said frostbite can occur due to a prolonged exposure to cold and that one should not ignore shivering and should stay indoors.

On Saturday, Delhi's AQI hit "Sever" category at 5 pm, hence bringing in the GRAP stage 3 pollution control measures.

Due to the measures, the pollution was brought down to the 'very poor' category and will remain in the same category for the next three to four days, IMD Scientist VK Soni said, ANI reported.

India logs 163 new Covid-19 cases, 2 deaths in 24 hours

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 8:

India has recorded 163 new Covid-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking the cumulative coronavirus tally to 4.46 crore (4,46,79,924), according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Sunday.

With this, the active caseload has declined to

2,423. The active cases comprise 0.01 per cent of the total infections. A decrease of 86 cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The death toll stands at 5,30,720 with two deaths recorded by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated. The national Covid-19 recovery rate has increased to 98.80 per cent, the ministry said.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,41,46,781, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent.

According to the ministry's website, 220.13 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on

August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of four crore on January 25 last year.

Mishra who peed on elderly woman on an Air India flight arrested from Bengaluru

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan 8:

Shankar Shyam Mishra (Suraj M), who was recently sacked by the American banking giant Wells Fargo, for peeing on an elderly woman on an Air India flight, was arrested by the Delhi Police from Bengaluru and was remanded to 14 days judicial custody by Patiala House Court on Saturday.

Mishra, who was absconding after a complaint by a 72-year-old lady that he peed on her on an Air India flight (from New York to Delhi), in a business class cabin on November 26, 2022 in a drunken condition, became public, was arrested by police on Friday night.

On Saturday, the police sought his remand for three days for custodial interrogation, saying he was required to be identified by three cabin crew members and two captains and other co-passengers were also to be examined. However the Metropolitan Magistrate Anamika passed the order to send Mishra to judicial remand, noting that his custody was not required by the police for recording the statements of other witnesses, including cabin crew and co-passengers. "Just because there's public pressure, don't do this. Go by the law," the



Shankar Shyam Mishra

judge said. The bail application of Mishra will be heard on January 11.

The Delhi Police on Wednesday, January 04, filed an FIR based on a complaint by Air India and registered an FIR under sections 354, 509, and 510 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 23 of the Indian Aircraft Act. They had launched a manhunt to arrest him and formed a team to locate the former American bank executive. The team also visited Mumbai. A lookout notice was also issued particularly to all airports as he was expected to leave the country.

A one storey house at Kamgar Nagar in Mumbai, where Mishra, resided with his parents, wife and a two and half year child, remained locked on Saturday.

His employer-Wells Fargo, headquartered in California, sacked him on January 05 for

his disgraceful act and extended all help to police and Air India in investigation. Mishra worked as Vice President of the India chapter. "Wells Fargo holds employees to the highest standards of professional and personal behaviour and we find these allegations deeply disturbing. This individual has been terminated from Wells Fargo. We are cooperating with law enforcement and ask that any additional inquiries be directed to them", the company stated.

The news evoked angry reactions from social media users, who demanded his arrest. Air India had earlier said that it imposed a flying ban on the accused for just 30 days, which caused outrage since the airline had imposed more severe bans on erring passengers for significantly minor violations in the past.

Mishra had allegedly tried to compensate the victim with financial offers to ensure that no police complaints are filed. The victim, had urged the airline officials to have Mishra arrested after the flight landed in Mumbai. But the airline officials allegedly did not act on her pleas. The matter came to light when she expressed her displeasure in a letter to Tata Group Chairman N Chandrasekharan, accusing the Air India cabin crew of showing extreme insensitivity to the circumstance.

Apna Bharat, Apna Gaurav



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

9th January is celebrated on every year as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India. This day was chosen as the day to celebrate this occasion since it was on this day in 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa, led India's freedom struggle and changed the lives of Indians forever. The first PBD was held in January 2003 in New Delhi. So far 13 editions of the PBD Convention have been held, the last in Gandhinagar, Gujarat in January 2015 which coincided with the 100th anniversary of Mahatma

Gandhi's return from South Africa. It is also known as Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day is celebrated to strengthen the engagement of the overseas Indian community with the Government of India and reconnect them with their roots.

The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention is being organized in partnership with the Madhya Pradesh Government from 08-10 January 2023 in Indore. The theme of this PBD Convention is "Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in AmritKaal" Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention is the flagship event of the Ministry organized every year since January 2003, with a view to connect India to its vast Indian Diaspora and bringing their knowledge, expertise and skills on a common platform. From 2003 to 2015, this was celebrated like a festival commemorating the Indian Diaspora and dedicating it to them. Indian youth and their Diaspora counter-

parts should come together in developing strong networks, to lead to partnerships in trade, industry, entrepreneurship and social work. The event also serves as a platform to discuss concerns and issues related to the Indian Diaspora around the globe.

The little-known event is also known as 'Non-Resident Indian Day' as it marks the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa in the year 1915 on January 9. It also acknowledges the contribution of Indian community living abroad in the development of India. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated over three days from January 7-9.

According to our Prime Minister Narendra Modi Indian immigrants went abroad looking for opportunities, but today, that situation had changed drastically. In the global context today, India has huge strength and capital.

PBD is the most suitable time and hilarious atmosphere to all Indians in India or abroad to come together and work together for strengthening economy. It's good to have such gathering of NRI but

should have long term results for the working class who bring foreign remittance.

The event holds much importance as it also helps in extensive networking among the Indian community who attend it from various parts of the world. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas programme serves as a platform for them to share their valuable experiences in various fields, be it economic or social.

The point of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is to showcase India's unity and present the country as a transnational nation that incorporates the 30-million strong Diaspora and is built upon supposedly shared cultural values in a fictional historical continuum. India can become a superpower and had the potential to become a spiritual and cultural hub. Today India has changed and there are many new opportunities, all kinds of opportunities to earn and make a very good living.

Let us on the day Pravasi Bharatiya Divas; pledge to make our contribution when the entire process of development that is taking place in India.

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A Parade of Veterans of the Armed Forces held in Mumbai

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai, Jan 8:

A large number of veterans of the Armed Forces participated in the second edition of parade organised from National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA) to Marine Drive in South Mumbai and back on Sunday, January 8.

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari flagged off the parade from the promenade opposite NCPA, Nariman Point.

The Governor greeted the War veterans, Veer Naris and Ex-Servicemen from the armed forces and walked a few steps with them as an expression of solidarity with them. Hundreds of youth, members of the armed forces and citizens cheered the veterans as they marched towards the Marine Drive amidst the chanting of "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jay".



The parade was organised by the Navy Foundation, Mumbai Chapter in association with the Headquarters of the Western Naval Command. It was held after a gap of two years.

Over 500 war veterans putting on their ceremonial dress with caps and medals marched from NCPA to Marine Drive and back. War veterans, some in wheelchairs, gallantry awardees and other retired senior officers participated in the march.

Flag Officer Commanding in Chief of the Western Naval Command Vice Admiral Ajendra

Bahadur Singh, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat Area Lt. Gen HS Kahlon, President of the Navy Foundation Mumbai Chapter Commander Vijay Vadhera were present. Besides, the officers and jawans of the armed forces, war veterans, ex-servicemen and their family members and citizens were present in large number.

According to the Navy Foundation, the objective of celebrating Veterans Day is to bring about compassion, empathy and respect for the veterans

from the people. It is a unique initiative of Indian Defence Services to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice by our veterans who even after retiring, are always in search of opportunities to serve the Nation.

According to Commander Vadhera, the Navy Foundation Mumbai Chapter had conducted India's first Veterans Day Parade on Sunday January 12, 2020 at the Marine Drive. It invoked a lot of interest amongst the students as well as the citizens of Mumbai when they witnessed about 500 War Veterans including Veer Naaris, coming from the distant Mumbai suburbs, proudly marching upon their ceremonial dress with medals. The parade could not be held due to Covid, in 2021 and 2022. However this year there was a renewed enthusiasm among the participants and spectators.

NEFIS joins protest against cancellation of residential proof...

Instead of granting citizenship rights to the communities as per rules and procedure, shamefully denying them even RPCs, creates legal precariousity for the vulnerable Chakma and Hajong communities.

The wealth of the country is created by the labour of its people. Be they of whichever religion and ethnicity, they toil and perform labour to make a living. Likewise, the Chakma and Hajong communities have been living for decades in Arunachal Pradesh and have been contributing to the building of the economy. Therefore,

whoever contributes to the building of the economy through labour cannot be denied citizenship right.

However, due to the narrow self-serving political interests of the dominant political forces seeds of discord are sought to be sown among the toiling people of the state. The situation in the North-East is such that successive governments have promoted conflict among various communities. The strategy to sow conflict has been used to deny people the chance to unite for their long-standing issues, and instead promote hatred in the

name of ethnicity and indigenous culture. While the common masses continue to face issues, the elites hold onto power by creating conflicts among the people.

NEFIS said that it stands for protecting the democratic rights of the people and demands the immediate revocation of the decision to cancel RPCs of the Chakma and Hajong people in the state. The organization demands that all rights including that of citizenship should be ensured to the Chakma and Hajong communities immediately.

Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 does not Permit...

The abolition of the Pass and Permit System opened the floodgates for the illegal immigrants and therefore, the All Manipur Students' Union (AMSU) also has had two agreements with the Government of Manipur at two instances – first in 1980 and second in 1994 signed with the Governor V K Nayar taking in 1951 as the base year for determining illegal immigrants.

The fact that the decadal population growth from 1951 to 1961 in Manipur after the abolition of the Pass and Permit System was as high as 35.04 per cent and many including the Civil Societies like JCILPS and AMSU consider it as unnatural population growth in Manipur due to influx and therefore fixing 1961 as base year for determining the "native" people of Manipur will protect the illegal immigrants instead of protection of the indigenous people of Manipur.

Recently, Manipur Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren announced that the state government will be installing sophisticated face identification cameras in two months for more effective implementation of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system.

Chief Minister Biren made the announcement during the launching of ILP Portal for Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and Labour Commissioners (LCs) at CM Secretariat on December 23, 2022.

He also informed that the portal had been launched with an updated version added to the earlier ILP system and the bar code has been put in the permit for instant authentication by scanning it to detect any duplication or forge of the ILP card.

As maximum of the outsiders entering the state are for labour purposes, the DCs and the LCs can now directly issue the permit online, besides giving a better convenience to the visitors of the state in applying for ILP. He said that visitors to the state can apply online for ILP through its web portal "www.manipuronline.mn.gov.in" or by downloading an application of ILP from the Google Play Store.

Pointing out that illegal immigrants impersonating as a citizen of the country or state by using forged documents is the big threat to the state, Biren sought the support of all the stakeholders and the public in tackling this real issue of the state, instead of making 'issue' out of nothing.

Appealing to the public to be the eyes and ears of the government in sorting out illegal immigrants, he cautioned that the state forces will soon start house-to-house verification to check illegal immigrants. The Chief Minister also cautioned legal consequences against landlords who are found to be renting space to any illegal immigrants or outsiders with fake documents.

Chief Minister Biren said that all these efforts have been made considering the importance of saving the indigenous population of Manipur.

However, the need to successfully implement the BEFR 1873 and regulate ILP is to define who are the indigenous people or "native" of Manipur and who are the Manipuris or Manipurese and who will be the permanent residents because the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 doesn't permit non-natives permanent residency and land ownership.

All these have to be clearly defined in the Manipur Inner Line Permit Guidelines and published in the official gazette. All these have been said and discussed in earlier articles and local television media panel discussions by this writer.

Though the Manipur Inner Line Permit Guidelines published on December 31, 2019 is considered as toothless by many including JCILPS. Besides incorporating all the provisions of the BEFR 1873, the Guidelines should encourage the civilians to be vigilant against illegal immigrants and cooperative with the law-enforcing agencies to regulate the ILP.

Moreover, Section 7 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 is the backbone of the regulation without which the implementation of the BEFR 1873 in Manipur is meaningless.

Section 7 (as amended vide The Adaptation of Laws (Amendment) Order, 2019) states: "It shall not be lawful for any person, not being a Native of the States comprised in the preamble of this Regulation, to acquire any interest in land or the product of land beyond the said 'inner line' without the sanction of the State Government or such officer as the State Government shall appoint in this behalf.

Any interest so acquired may be dealt with as the State Government or the said officer shall direct.

The State Government may also by notification in the Offi-

cial Gazette extend prohibition contained in this section to any class of persons, Natives of the said States, and may from time to time in like manner cancel or vary such extension."

Notably, the Manipur Government issued an Office Memorandum on January 10, 2020 and published in a Gazette Notification on January 13, 2020 giving a blanket suspension of registration of sale and purchase of land and property temporarily till the finalization of the Guidelines citing that "The Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 has been extended to the whole state of Manipur vide The Adaptation of Laws (Amendment) Order, 2019 dated 11/12/2019 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and published in the Gazette of India. Section 7 of this Regulation relates to restriction and curtailment of rights on land and its produce which are within the state of Manipur."

However, the State Government had lifted the temporary suspension according to an office memorandum issued in July 2021 by the Deputy Secretary (Revenue) and registration of transaction (sale, and purchase) of land among the permanent residents of the State is allowed on the production of PRC (Permanent Residence Certificate) of the buyer issued by the concerned District Magistrate, police verification in respect of the buyer through concerned District Magistrate and on confirmation by Cabinet Sub Committee consisting of Revenue Minister as Chairperson and Law and Agriculture Ministers as members.

Therefore, to protect the land from the non-natives, defining who are the permanent residents of Manipur is key to effectively implementing the Inner Line Permit System under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 because the Regulation is not to simply issue ILP to the migrants from other states and allow them to settle permanently. The Regulation provides to punish those who stay beyond the permit. The Regulation also provides a Gazette Notification not to allow non-natives to own landed properties in the State. In short, the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873 doesn't permit non-natives permanent residency and land ownership in Manipur.

(Rajkumar Bobichand is a Senior Editor at Imphal Review of Arts and Politics)

PPFA demands quality night bus service in Guwahati

IT Correspondent
Guwahati, Jan 8:

Patriotic People's Front Assam (PPFA), while appreciating the State minister of housing & urban affairs Ashok Singhal for taking a ride in city buses recently to understand the problems of daily commuters, urged the minister to focus on the quality night bus service in the city as well. Singhal in his statement assured that he would maintain a consistent effort to streamline connectivity in Guwahati under the guidance of State chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma (who recently flagged

off 100 new compressed natural gas run city buses), said the forum of nationalist citizens.

"Question that arises, why the State government in general and transport department in particular can not ensure regular (and timely) city bus service after the dusk as the law & order situation has improved in the last few years. Why the Guwahatians can not enjoy a city bus ride after 9 pm in various routes? How long do they have to wait for a consistent bus service till midnight? If the private owners are immediately not ready to operate during night hours, why not the department run their

own buses?," said a PPFA statement.

It also cited an example for kind attention of CM Sarma requesting his office to engage someone at the Chandmari point to observe if there are sufficient buses towards Guwahati Club after 8 pm. When thousands of enthusiasts are visiting Assam Book Fair at AEI filed (most of them depend on the public transport), should not the concerned department ensure quality night city bus services towards Maligaon-Jalukbari, Narengi, Beltola-Basistha, ISBT, Hatigaon, Kahilipara, Khanapara, Panjabari, etc,

questioned the forum.

"As Guwahati is developing as a major city in eastern India waiting to connect many south Asian nations, it must be alive till late night hours. Presently, hundreds of young people work in different commercial establishments including shopping malls, restaurants, hospitals, etc till the night hours. They can not afford private vehicle services. Moreover, once the decent night bus service is in place, all kinds of commuters can plan their evening activities accordingly. And it should happen fast," concluded the statement.

Sports

'I'm innocent but have faced this trauma before': Sanjita Chanu faces appeal dilemma after failed dope test

Agency
New Delhi, Jan 8:

Indian weightlifter Khumukcham Sanjita Chanu once again finds herself embroiled in a dope controversy and while the two-time Commonwealth Games champion claims innocence, she is faced with the dilemma of whether to appeal and relive the similar trauma she faced years ago.

Sanjita has been handed a provisional suspension by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) after she tested positive for an anabolic steroid — Drostanolone Metabolite — that features in the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) prohibited list, during the in-competition test at the National Games in September-October last year.

The 2011 Asian Championship bronze medalist had been banned by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) in 2018 after she tested positive for anabolic steroid testosterone carried out by the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) prior to the World Championships in America in November 2017.

In 2020, the world body had, however, dropped the



doping charge against Chanu due to "non-conformities" in the handling of her sample.

"I have been in this situation before. But I am not able to understand how this has happened. Since that incident, I have been very careful about my diet and everything. I check my supplements carefully and ask if they are free of all dope free," Sanjita told PTI from Guwahati.

"I don't know how this substance has entered my urine. I don't know if someone has put this in on purpose or what has happened. I can't understand. I have checked the supplements I have consumed, and this is not in that," she added.

Sanjita, who was told about the result a month ago, was absolutely convinced that the result was a false posi-

tive and asked her 'B' Sample to be analysed, which also came positive.

"I sent a mail to NADA saying I can't believe this and requested to check the B Sample. I went to Delhi and stayed there all day to get the B Sample checked in front of me but that also tested positive. I am not able to understand how this has happened." The two years between 2018 and 2020 had been tough for Sanjita, who had been pushed to the brink of quitting the sport.

"Last time this happened I lost so much, my reputation, the chance to compete in the Olympics, Asian Games, etc. So, I was extra cautious as I was aiming for Paris and Asian Games. I got a good result in the National Games and now again this doping incident has happened." "I thought to file a case that someone has mixed something in my food but I don't know who will do such a thing. I trained in Manipur and then for 10 days in a Mumbai camp before going," she added.

Sanjita will now have to appear before NADA's anti-doping disciplinary panel of the National Anti-Doping Agency to prove her innocence and if she is found

guilty, she can get a four-year suspension for the offense. She will also be stripped of her National Games silver medal.

"I have already experienced this why will I dope again? I don't know if I want to appeal or not. In both cases I will lose. If I appeal it will take time to clear my name and I will lose out on the chance to qualify for the Olympics and Asian Games, if I don't I will be suspended.

"I have already lost all my savings before to clear my name. The B Sample has also tested positive, so how will I prove my innocence," a tearful Sanjita said.

The 29-year-old from Manipur has written to the NADA, asking for a "faster and simpler" way to prove her innocence.

"With due respect to the integrity of NDTL & NADA, I still want to declare myself innocent and I did not consume any banned substance," she wrote in her letter to NADA, a copy of which is in possession of PTI.

"Keeping my previous controversial dope case resolution experience in mind, I would like to find a simple and faster way to prove my innocence and resolve my case."