

Mirabai Chanu named BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2022

Agency
New Delhi, Mar 6:

Tokyo Olympic Games silver-medallist weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has bagged the 2022 'BBC Indian Sportswoman Of The Year' award after a public vote.

The 28-year-old weightlifter from Manipur became the first athlete to win the award twice in a row after bagging it in 2021 as well.

At the Tokyo Games, she had become the first Indian to win a silver in the sport. Last year, she went on to secure gold at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. She

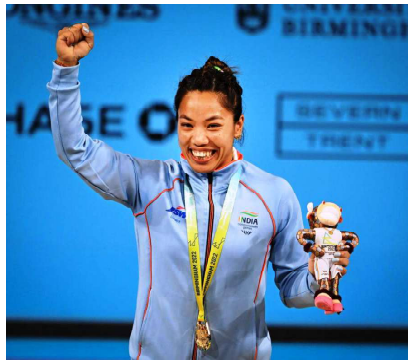
also won a silver medal at the World Weightlifting Championships in 2022.

"I am really excited and want to say that I will be working even harder for the forthcoming games and win more medals for India," said Chanu.

The other short-listed contenders for the award were wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik, boxer Nikhat Zareen and badminton player PV Sindhu.

Table tennis player Bhavina Patel won the 'BBC Para Sportswoman of the Year' award, a category introduced this year.

She won a silver at the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo,



becoming the first Indian paddler to achieve the feat. Bhavina also won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

"It is indeed a gratifying feeling to win this prestigious award which is part of a wonderful initiative empowering women and sportspersons. It is also commendable to see BBC focusing on para-sports and making India more inclusive," said Bhavina.

Former captain of the Indian women's hockey team Pritam Siwach was conferred with the 'BBC Lifetime Achievement Award' for her contribution to Indian sports and for inspiring generations

of players.

Siwach was the first woman hockey coach to be given the Dronacharya Award, the highest national award for coaches.

"This award has been conferred upon eminent sportswomen in the past three years. I was very happy to know that this year, I will be getting the award. The speciality of this award is that it is given to women. It motivates us when we get such awards," said Siwach.

Boxer Nitu Ghanghas was chosen as the 'BBC Emerging Player of the Year'. She is a two-time youth world champion and

Commonwealth Games medallist. She won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in the minimum weight category.

The women's lawn bowls team of Lovely Choubey, Rupa Rani Tirkey, Pinki and Nayanmoni Saikia, which won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games — India's first-ever medal in the sport — was given the 'BBC Changemaker of the Year Award'.

BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year Award was launched in 2019 to celebrate sportswomen in India who have made their mark on the world stage.

Assam Rifles is working for growth & development of North East: Governor

IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

Governor of Manipur Sushri Anusuiya Uikey has said that Assam Rifles is always working for growth and development of people living in North East. She was speaking at the flagging-in ceremony of National Integration Tour held today at IGAR (South) Headquarters at Mantripukhri in Imphal. 20 students from Machi Government High School, Tengnoupal district, two teachers and one officer from Assam Rifles took part in the tour to Kolkata which was conducted by 21 Assam Rifles under 26 Sector of IGAR (South).

Governor said, the role of Assam Rifles in nation building is unforgettable and their contribution is immense even to the students. She said, organising National Integration Tour showed that Assam Rifles is working as an inspiration for the people. During



the 13 days tour, students will get the advantage of meeting people from different thinking, scientists and other institutional heads. Governor continued that through such integration tours, students from north east will have the chance of meeting people from different parts of the country, understanding their languages, lifestyle, food habits, costumes etc. This will inspire them to understand the culture of the nation-unity in diversity and also to strengthen the sense of har-

mony and brotherhood. Such programmes will also enhance the mental, social and intellectual development of the students.

Terming Kolkata as City of Joy, Governor said, it is one of the historical cities in the country and it has a pride inherent culture and traditions. She said, students will experience the prosperous culture, tradition and also the sense of modernisation which will help in overall development too. Governor asked the students and teachers to share their ex-

periences and knowledge to their friends and families so that they can even enjoy the advantages. She wished the students for a bright future and thanked Assam Rifles for their endeavour towards nation building. Governor also interacted with the students, teachers and parents.

IGAR (South) Major General Rajan Sharawat while thanking the Governor said, Assam Rifles has been organising such tours regularly for the students. He said, the tour was flagged-off on 22nd February from Imphal and the students visited many places like Victoria Memorial, India Museum, Birla Planetarium etc. in Kolkata. The team also met Governor of West Bengal CV Ananda Bose and also visited Eastern Command Headquarters. They also visited INS Netaji Subhas, he added. Commander, 26 Sector, AR, Brigadier Ved Pal Yadav, officers and jawans attended the ceremony.

Governor and others greet on Yaoshang

IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

Anusuiya Uikey, Governor of Manipur sends greetings to the people of Manipur on occasion of Yaoshang festival. "I heartily greet the people of Manipur on this happy and auspicious occasion of Yaoshang which will be celebrated from 7th to 11th of March this year 2023. The festival of Holi known as "Yaoshang" in the State is celebrated in the onset of spring every year by the Vaishnavites of the State. It is a celebration symbolising the rejuvenation of the very spirit of life and the young and the alike take part in this festival of colours.

The festival is marked by fun and gaiety imbued with spiritualism, leaving behind the past and looking forward to a new day with full of hope. It exhorts one and all to forget their differences and strengthen their bond of unity irrespective of caste, creed or religion. The festival of "Yaoshang" has now

become a sports movement in as much as various sporting activities take place in every locality during the entire period of festival. Enthused with the spirit of "Yaoshang", the emphasis in these sports is more on participating by all irrespective of age or sex. Let us all celebrate Yaoshang in its true spirit with the participation of all communities and resolve to make Manipur a better and peaceful State where mutual respect and love prevail among all communities.

Th. Satyabrata Singh, Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly also sends his greetings and good wishes on occasion of Yaoshang. "Yaoshang" or "Holi" is a great festival of Hindus where people in all walks of life enjoy celebrates. A festival symbolizing merriment and joy in life which starts on the full moon day, celebrating the onset of Spring season. I wish the people of Manipur a Happy Holi and also to cherish it with peace and tranquility.

Awangbow Newmai, Minister, Water Resources, Relief and Disaster Management also wished the people of the state on Yaoshang. "I convey my heartiest greetings to the people of Manipur, on the auspicious occasion of Yaoshang, 2023. Yaoshang festival is celebrated on the full moon day of the month of Lamta on the onset of spring. The festival is not only for young people, but all the people take part in the celebration irrespective of the caste, age and gender. From purely being a festival, we have seen changes in the festival, sports have become a part of the spirit of Yaoshang.

May this festival also form a platform a harness peace and harmony among the diverse ethnic communities of the state. Let us all observe the festival in its true spirit.

I, once again, extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to all the people of Manipur for joyful Yaoshang."

CM flags off Yuva Sangam Exposure Trip of Youth



IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

Chief Minister N. Biren today flagged off an exposure visit of youth from the State to Punjab under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Yuva Sangam from the Chief Minister's Secretariat. The tour will conclude on March 12, 2023.

Speaking on the sidelines of the flagging off ceremony, the Chief Minister said the exposure visit is an initiative under the far-sighted vision of the

Prime Minister's Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat (EBSB) to strengthen people-to-people connect and bridge the communication gap between people of the region and other parts of the country. The team will visit Punjab and a team from Punjab will visit the State in order to encourage interaction between the youth to Make India One, he added.

The Chief Minister further extended his best wishes to the team which includes 30 students and three teachers.

The 30 students are from different institutes from across the State and are being led by the three teachers. The tour is organized by the paired universities of Manipur University and Central University, Punjab. Earlier, another team of students led by the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) - Manipur had visited Nagpur in Maharashtra and a team of students from Nagpur had visited Manipur under the Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Yuva Sangam.

Chief Minister N. Biren attends ESM Rally at Koirengei



IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said today that the Indian Army is the protector and they have put everything behind including their families to protect and serve the country, and it is the responsibility of the people to show them respect, honour and to support them.

N. Biren Singh was speaking as the Chief Guest at the Mega Ex-servicemen Rally, Koirengei today.

Stressing on Prime Minister

Shri Narendra Modi's 'Nation First' message, the Chief Minister said that each citizen should understand that we are safe when the country is safe and so we must always think of the nation first.

A girls' only Sainik School will be opened soon in the State at Bishnupur district, Shri N. Biren Singh said acknowledging Manipuri women's power, sacrificing spirit, commitment and conviction.

Further recounting the sacrifices and contribution of the Army personnel from the State

including Major Jotin's sacrifice at Afghanistan and Major Bob Khathing's contribution in nation building, the Chief Minister said that the State government has earmarked Rs. 3 crore to set up a Martyrs' Memorial at the ex-servicemen office complex so that people can show their respect and pay homage to the martyrs every year.

N. Biren Singh also thanked Home Minister Shri Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for giving approval to the conduct of Agniveer Recruitment Rally in Manipur. He also

said that the State Cabinet has also approved to give priority during government job recruitment to Agniveers on their retirement.

Speaking of the changing times in the State, the Chief Minister said today the relation between the people and security forces has improved tremendously and there is harmony.

Brig Neil John, SM, Dy GOC, 57 Mtn Div said Manipur, a vibrant region with a rich culture of 2000 years has historically been a land of valour and sacrifice. The contribution of the brave sons and daughters of Manipur in nation-building and the Indian Army is unparalleled and second to none, he said.

The event was also participated by Lt Gen LN Singh, VSM (Retd), serving and retired senior officers, Veer Nari's and ESM among others.

Meanwhile, as part of the event, the Chief Minister also felicitated the Veer Nari, veterans, widows and families.

Concept of E-Learning



By: Vijay GarG

The concept of e-learning is not new to the education sector. However, the outbreak of COVID-19 has fuelled schools' need to leverage the technology platforms to drive learning initiatives. There is heightened demand for schools to provide learning solutions to students using online platforms as the advantages far outweigh the demerits. In simple terms, e-learning is the act of learning or educating via digital resources such as software programmes, mobile devices and the internet.

The use of digital platforms for learning is vividly changing our education system. Traditional classroom training days are slowly coming to an end due to high-speed internet and technology advancement. The pandemic has grown the importance of e-learning globally.

Any crisis makes room for experimentation, and it is time to realise the full potential of technology for learning. In the wake of the medical emergency, school stakeholders are endorsing online learning for student's safety and enhancing the quality of education.

As part of the coordinated worldwide education response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank had surveyed National Education Responses to school closures. The first round of the survey conducted in 118 countries and the second in 149 countries revealed that almost every country included online learning in its education response to the on-going crisis. 89% of the countries introduced at least one measure to enhance access to online learning devices and connectivity.

The survey is enough to indicate the significance of e-learning, specifically after 2020. As per a World Bank study, the school closure has led to a shift to e-learning, with about 700 million students still studying from home. E-learning is so ubiquitous and massive that it is difficult to articulate a brief outline that indeed does justice to it. Unlike the conventional chalk and board teaching method, online learning makes learning convenient, where lessons can be accessed remotely from anywhere.

"Technology is not a silver bullet. It's only as good as the teachers... using it as one more tool to help inspire, and teach, and work through problems."

How is LEAD making E-Learning effective?

The Purpose of E-Learning redefined

The word e-learning is used as a synonym for online education. It is revamping the style of providing and receiving education. With a year of COVID-19 outbreak, e-learning has made its place firmly in the sector, transforming the education sector. The idea behind electronic learning is to empower learners to study without attending the school with better organisation and quality curricula.

Psychologists also believe that this audio-visual form of learning is effective in engaging students. It is versatile and plenty to suit all learning methods. The Global Education Monitoring Report of 2020 by UNESCO indicates the significance of technology. The study shows that technology has considerable but largely unused potential to support inclusive education. E-learning is accessible to all and can reach even the remotest areas.

A drastic shift to electronic learning after the pandemic has brought limitless advantages to students. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology identifies online learning as an essential tool for imparting education. The advancement of technology has made access to information quicker.

Let's decode how e-learning is creating an impact in the education sector:

Accommodates the needs of every student

Online learning caters to the needs of each student. The digital revolution has led to remarkable changes in how we access content. Students can learn on the go irrespective of their location.

Access to lectures any number of times

Unlike classroom teaching, students can access the e-learning content any number of times. It is beneficial when preparing for the exam. Through online learning, you can access the lecture whenever you want as per your convenience and revisit lessons any number of times.

Updated Content

The e-learning platforms provide access to updated content. It makes sure that you are in synchrony with the modern learners.

Quick Delivery of Lessons

Post-2020, students have adapted the e-learning concept completely. One of the reasons for it is quick access to lessons. In comparison to the traditional teaching mode, online learning has relatively faster delivery access. The time required to learn through online lessons is reduced to 25% to 60% of what is the need in traditional learning.

Scalability

Online learning helps students to create and communicate new ideas. You get the chance to uplift your skills and gain knowledge apart from school education. One of the prime importance of e-learning is that it helps students and teachers develop advanced skills.

As per the KPMG report, India's online education industry will see a growth of about 6 times by 2021. Surprisingly, the number of users enrolling in e-learning may touch 9.6 million users by 2021, from 1.6 million users in 2016. Estimates indicate that the eLearning market worldwide will grow immensely to the tune of more than 243 billion U.S. dollars by 2022. These forecasts indicate that eLearning is all set to become a global trend, and more and more people may go for it over traditional classroom settings.

LEAD Teacher

How is LEAD making E-Learning effective?

LEAD is the only platform in India that makes learning interactive and fun for young minds. LEAD-powered schools impart lessons via world-class teachers through an app with detailed audio-visual resources. Being not just 'smart' but the 'best', LEAD ensures perfect sync between teachers, students and parents to reach the unified goal of a child's academic excellence.

In the LEAD system, students get to learn via three modes of teaching: Through videos and slides that teachers show from their teacher app. Through activities, they do use material from the School Excellence Kit. And through books and workbooks they get from LEAD.

The education space was considered to be the most stable sector for decades. However, it screeched to a halt recently, giving way to reliable education modes such as an integrated academic system.

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By: Er. Prabhat Kishore

India is the country of festivals, which symbolises its enriched culture, tradition and civilisation. The festivals are based on geological happenings, mythological beliefs, happiness and joy, changes of seasons and various other factors. Holi is one of such a festival, which is called Rangotsava (festival of colours), Basantotsava (festival of spring) or Premotsava (festival of love). It is celebrated over two days. The first day, called Chhoti Holi or Holika Dahan and the second day, called main Holi, are celebrated with enthusiasm and fun.

Holika Dahan falls on Purnima of the Phalgun Shukla Paksha and symbolises the victory of good over evil. The Purnima deals that on this day Bhagwan Vishnu in the form of Narsingham, who was half Nar (human) and half Singh (lion) killed the Demon King Hiranyakashipu for his evil deeds and saved the life of His disciple Prahlad. People lit bonfires in order to remove negativity from their lives and pray for the wellbeing of the family and society. To remove negativity from the house, its cleanliness is necessary. According to the Panchang, Holika Dahan is

Holi : Festival of Colours

performed during the Pradosh Kaal (which starts after sunset) while the Purnamasi Tithi prevails, while Holi is celebrated on Chaitra Krishna Paksha Pratipada.

Holi is an ancient Sanatan Dharma festival with its cultural rituals, which has been dealt in Pura, Daskumar Charit, Kalidas's writings. It is also mythologically related to Bhagwan Krishna and Radha. It has special significance in Braj Bhoomi, the birth place of Krishna and in Barsana, the village of Radha. The Lathmar Holi of Barsana is famous world-wide. The women (as Gopis) use lathi (sticks) to beat the men (as Gops), who protect themselves with Dhals (Shields). It is also related to Bhagwan Ram in Tretayug, which reflects in the folk song "Holi Khele Raghuwira Awadh Mein".

Holi celebrates the arrival of summer and end of winter season in Indian Sub-continent. It is also an invocation for a good harvest spring season. It is also known as Phagwa (named after Phalgun month), Rangwali Holi, Dhulendi, Dhuleti, Dol Purnima, Dol Jatra, Pali etc. Outside India, it is famous and celebrated in Nepal, Bangla Desh, Surinam, Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Jamaica and other countries with great zeal.

On the day of Holi, people apply Coloured powder solutions (Gulal) in the day-time and Abir in the evening. The custom and celebration vary with regions. It marks an occasion to renew ruptured relationship, eliminate conflicts, and get rid of ourselves from emotional impurities from the past.

Sikhs have traditionally celebrated the festival with its historic texts referring to it as Holi. Shri Guru Govind Singhji Maharaj modified Holi with three day Holi Mohalla extension festival of Martial Arts. The extension started the day after the Holi festival in Anandpur Sahib where the Sikh soldiers would train in various military exercises.



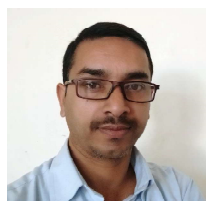
People must be aware of their wealthy health as well as environment. Hence, they should celebrate eco-friendly Holi by using natural and herbal colours & gulal instead of chemical-based synthetic colours & gulal. Herbal gulal is made from flowers, fruits, leaves and locally available ingredients. Palak (Spinach) and Mehendi is used for preparing green colour, Rose for pink colour, Haldi and Flowers of Palas and Genda (Marigold) for yellow and saffron colour, Chukandar (beetroot) for red colour. Chandan (Sandalwood) and other flowers and leaves are used for preparation of various other natural colours.

In addition to real life, the festival has been portrayed in reel-life of movies & serials too. The big as well as small screens acted as a catalyst to spread the festival vibes among the people. Several movies have become hit only because of Holi scenes and its melodious songs. Numerous melodious famous songs like " Rang Barse Binge Chunarwali Rang Barse ", " Holi Khele Raghuwira Awadh Mein ", " Ang Se Ang Lagana Sajan ", " Holi Ke Din Dil Khil Jate Hain ", " Aaj Na Chhondenge Bas Hamjol iKhelenge Ham Holi ", " Apne Rang Mein Rang De Mujhko ", " Mal De Gulal Mohe, Aaye Holi Aaye Re ", " Jogira Holi Khelet Nandalao Re Aao Khelen Holi Brij Mein ", " Holi Aaye Re Kanhaiyye ", " Mohe Chhedo Na Nand Ke Lala ", " Tan Rang Lo Jee Aaj Man Rang Lo ", etc. are powerful enough to make people emotional.

Now in the age of globalisation, Holi is not limited to a particular religion and belief, but is open to all communities and humankind. It represents arrival of spring, season of love, and forgiving others for past wrongdoings. It is the symbol of joy, humour, friendship, and positivity in human life.

(The Author is a technocrat and educationist)

One More Saffron Surge Before The Finals



By: M.R. Lahu

Just a year before the National Elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) proved its thickening significance once again in the northeastern part of India. Emerging victorious in three key states, the party, under the efficient leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has all reasons to rejoice. Small they are compared to the states that are going to polls this year but for the BJP its battle readiness makes it all the same.

For the party, its efforts and plans will be the same in every corner of the country that goes into the polls. That is the biggest merit of the BJP. It has a reason to gather its resources to give the best. More importantly, the leadership of the party is convinced of the requirements and the amount of dedication and resource mobilization that the party establishment is in need of in the form of its cadre from the grassroots to the upper layer. You will see a party that is restless with its plan of campaign reaching out to the last man in the line irrespective of the intricacy of the locality. From the dryness of the deserts to the frozen pockets of Jammu and Kashmir to the green patches of Kerala to everywhere in the country, it has well structured its party cadre.

Its victory in the northeastern states of Tripura and Nagaland can be called as a segment of the semi finals. Parts of the semifinals are due in some big states. The BJP has to sharpen its claws further for retaining power in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. And to wrest power from the Congress in Rajasthan and

Chhattisgarh will be of tremendous importance. Both Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in real terms would not give a giggle of satisfaction to the party as the leadership in these saffron bastions are stung by anti-incumbency on the ground. Whatever, at present, the morale of the party workers is high and the country's G20 presidency and the eminence of the Prime Minister going beyond the boundaries of India bring the workforce of the party golden subjects for campaign. The BJP's victory in Nagaland, a state with a huge Christian population sends positive signals to states where this minority community makes a significant presence.

Results in the northeastern states must worry the opposition parties who are restless in substantiating a united opposition against the Modi fiefdom. Tripura sent shockwaves across party lines as the opposition unity between the Congress and the Left parties fell apart. The coalition failed to engrave its presence in the state and the BJP with the Prime Minister jumping into the fray came out with a comfortable margin. The weakening element for the Congress is that the celebrated Bharat Jodo Yatra and the much acclaimed renewed vigor of the party could not get translated into electoral gain. The Prime Minister's popularity seems to be engulfing all the parties that accuse him of scams and scandals. The recent wildfire of accusations leveled against him in connection with the Adani meltdown also did not help the opposition to win votes. Modi seems to be gaining confidence from the millions of beneficiaries of his schemes across the country. He clearly indicates in real terms as to what gives him the strength to keep the ball rolling. When Modi says "Instead of a dynasty, I am a member of the family of 140 crore Indians", he is referring to the chord that he could successfully draw between every Indian and him through his welfare schemes. A connection he believes will not be possible to break with baseless allega-

tions alone.

The warring opponents of Narendra Modi are claiming the need of framing an amicable course correction by unifying a coalition against the BJP. Their plans seem to be losing ground when they start strategizing their priorities. Frantic calls for opposition unity can be heard from various parties. Ambitious leaders like Nitish Kumar are taking the lead to stitch alliances among like-minded parties. Ruling out any pre-poll alliance for 2024, Mamata Banerjee decided to go solo. With more regional leaders seemingly trying to pull the strings for coalition leadership of an emboldened alliance, a still weakening Congress would turn out to be a liability. Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra could not cut much vice with the regional parties. Their disbelief in his leadership capabilities would keep the Congress an underdog. Minimizing chances of a major coalition among the opposition, the BJP is expected to attract some fence sitters to its fold. A diplomatic outreach to some regional parties, an essential emergence of a pre-poll alliance, can be expected from the saffron side.

For much of the nine years since Narendra Modi took over as Prime Minister, the eminent notion of his popularity is seen polarized with a large number of Indians calling him a messiah or a redeemer of India, while his political opposition heavily comes on him in India and abroad. Rahul Gandhi's demeanor in Cambridge should be seen as a self-inflicted ideological blow on its own image as the Congress approaches the elections. His party's ideological ineptness is vividly displayed in his anti-Modi rhetoric at the foreign institution. While 'crying wolf in the foreign soil', Rahul Gandhi once again proved his incompetence as a matured political leader. His usual 'democracy under attack in India' would satisfy his foreign masters who are willing to pump money for destabilizing India's social unity. Would the Indian polity accept

Rahul Gandhi's extreme anti-Modi stand which at times turn against the collective interest of the country? The essential point is that the Congress and the BJP are fighting an ideological war on the idea of India. When the former deliberately presents India as a union of states drawing theoretical description from the constitution, the latter is trying to see India as a unified cultural entity which though different in linguistic expressions, holds a common cultural lineage.

Modi's frequent visit to the Northeast in the last nine years helped his party capture power in almost all the states in the region. The BJP's bonhomie with small regional parties in the area has widened its scope for the National Elections. With the region receiving a huge push in infrastructure, Modi knows the area is not far away from the country's capital. Like any other mainstream state, every northeastern state bubbles with great patriotic fervor. Disregarded for decades by the successive governments since independence, the area suffered a despicable alienation. Narendra Modi's 'look-east policy' not only revamped this beautiful landscape with greater facilities but helped it tap the real potentiality of tourism development. The political opposition of the ruling BJP is putting its arithmetics into perspective for holding Narendra Modi from entering a third term. With its 45 per cent votes the saffron party ruled the country almost a decade now. More than 50 per cent of the votes were polled against the Modi rise but got split against numerous parties and this is the key element, the strength of the BJP - a divided opposition. But the real ghost that haunts the political imagination of the anti-Modi camp is that they lack leaders who can capture the gist of the moment as evocatively as the Modi persona does. It's a bona fide challenge.

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

Manish Sisodia's CBI custody ends, to be produced in court today



Agency
New Delhi, Mar 6:

Former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who was sent to CBI custody while being produced in court on Monday following his arrest in the Delhi excise policy case.

He was arrested by the investigative agency in a case pertaining to alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of the excise policy of the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD).

Following the arrest, he resigned from his post as the Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi on February 28.

Meanwhile, on March 4, the Rouse Avenue Court extended the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) remand of Sisodia in the Delhi liquor scam case. The Special Judge MK Nagpal granted two more days

of remand of Manish Sisodia to CBI.

The Court also issued notice to CBI on bail moved by Sisodia and listed the matter for March 10.

While seeking further remand of Sisodia, CBI counsel had stated, "He's still non-cooperative and we need his further custody to confront him with two persons." "A lot of time went in his medicals. One whole day went in the petition he filed in the Supreme Court which was dismissed," CBI had told the Court.

Senior Advocate Dayan Krishnan had appeared for Sisodia opposing the CBI application seeking an extension of remand and submitted that "What is the difference between what was on day 1 and today? Raids were conducted at my house and my office too... keeping me in CBI custody would produce a docu-

ment, is this logical???"

Senior Advocate Mohit Mathur had also appeared for Sisodia and submitted that while considering all of this my wife's medical condition is being kept aside. "The man who is not going to run away has to be seen that way too," he said.

During the hearing, Manish Sisodia himself submitted in the court that CBI officials are taking care of me, treating me respectfully and giving all things and not using any third degree. "But they are making me sit so long 9-10 hours daily and asking the same questions again and again... it is not less not mental harassment," he said. On that, Court directed CBI not to ask repetitive questions.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader his bail petition in a trial court stated that no fruitful purpose would be

served keeping him in custody as all the recoveries have already been made.

Sisodia also stated that he has joined the investigation as and when called for by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The other accused persons arrested in this case have already been granted bail. Sisodia further stated that he holds the important constitutional post of Deputy CM of Delhi and has deep roots in the society.

Rouse Avenue Court earlier while sending Sisodia to CBI remand directed that the interrogation of the accused during the remand period shall be conducted at some place having CCTV coverage in accordance with guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court and the said footage shall be preserved by the CBI.

While sending Sisodia to CBI remand, the trial court observed that the accused had joined the investigation of this case on two earlier occasions, but it has also been observed that he has failed to provide satisfactory answers to most of the questions put to him during his examination and interrogation conducted and has thus, failed to legitimately explain the incriminating evidence which has allegedly surfaced against him in the investigation conducted so far.

It is true that he cannot be expected to make self-incriminating statements, but the interests of justice and of a fair investigation require that he should come up with some legitimate answers to the questions which are being put to him by the Investigation officer, said the court.

Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio, Assam CM meet Shah, Nadda ahead of swearing-in ceremony



Agency
Kohima, Mar 6:

Ahead of the swearing-in ceremony of the new government to be held on Tuesday in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Kohima, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and outgoing Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national president JP Nadda in New Delhi.

"Hon CM of Nagaland Mr @Neiphiu_Rio met Hon Home Minister of India @AmitShah ji & @BJP4India National Presi-

dent Adarniya @JPNadda ji to express his gratitude for their support during Nagaland Assembly polls. He further invited both of them to his oath-taking ceremony on 7 March," Sarma wrote on Twitter.

Neiphiu Rio and Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is the convenor of the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA), rushed to Delhi after Rio submitted his resignation as the Chief Minister. After the high-profile meeting, the Neiphiu Rio-led Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) is expected to sit for a joint meeting with its alliance partner BJP before the swearing-in of

the new government.

Notably, the NDPP-BJP, which entered into a pre-poll alliance in 2018, continued with the alliance in the 2023 assembly polls on a 40:20 seat-sharing formula. While BJP retained 12 seats, the same number of seats it won in 2018, the NDPP took a lead with 25 seats in the recently concluded election from 18 in 2018. The alliance partner secured a total of 37 seats but is yet to stake a claim in forming a new government.

While the NDPP had endorsed Rio as the party's leader, the BJP has so far made no mention of the leader of the legislature party.

Drones banned in Guwahati ahead of PM Modi's visit to Northeast

Agency
Guwahati, Mar 6:

In view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the Northeast, the Assam government has imposed a ban on drones and flying activities in Guwahati on March 7 and 8 in view of PM Modi's visit, said an official.

In Nagaland, the ruling NDPP-BJP alliance retained power with 37 seats in the 60-member assembly.

Neiphiu Rio, the longest-serving Chief Minister of the state, is all set to retain his office for the fifth consecutive term after winning the North-east Angami-II seat.

In Meghalaya, the National People's Party (NPP) led by Conrad Sangma failed to se-

cure a majority but will be part of the government as the BJP extended support.

As a result, Conrad Sangma will be sworn in as the Chief Minister of Meghalaya on Tuesday. The Election Commission declared the results for all 60 seats in Tripura and the BJP-IPFT alliance won 33 seats, leading to Manik Saha continuing as the Chief Minister of Tripura for the second consecutive term.

With the Prime Minister's visit to the Northeast, security measures are being put in place in Guwahati, including the ban on drones and flying activities in the city on March 7 and 8.

India consistently trying to minimise dependence on foreign countries in health sector: PM Modi

Agency
New Delhi, Mar 6:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that life-savers like medicines, vaccines and medical devices were weaponised during the COVID-19 pandemic, and asserted that his government has been consistently trying to minimise India's dependence on foreign countries in the health sector.

Addressing a post-budget webinar on 'Health and Medical Research', Modi said India's health sector was marred by a

lack of an integrated approach and long-term vision for decades but his government has not confined it to the health ministry alone and has dealt with it with the "whole of government" outlook.

Our entrepreneurs should ensure India doesn't have to import any technology and becomes self-reliant, he said, highlighting various measures taken by his government to boost entrepreneurship in the field.

The prime minister said making treatment affordable has been a top priority, adding

that the 'Ayushman Bharat', a government health insurance scheme, and 'Jan Aushadhi' centres, where medicines are sold at cheaper rates, have saved citizens Rs 80,000 crore and Rs 20,000 crore respectively.

The country's pharma sector earned global confidence during the pandemic, Modi said, urging the sector to build and capitalise on the trust.

The health sector should be seen with a pre-Covid and post-Covid dividing line, he said, noting that the pandemic showed that even developed

systems of prosperous countries are destroyed during such a crisis.

His government is not focusing on health care alone but overall wellness of citizens, he said.

Now critical health care infrastructure is being taken to tier 2 cities and smaller habitations, leading to the development of a health ecosystem there, he said.

The government is also focussing on ensuring that people get treatment, including testing facilities, near their homes, he added.

59 MLAs take oath during special session in Meghalaya



Agency
Shillong, Mar 6:

The newly-elected members of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly took their oath of affirmation during a special session at the Assembly in Shillong on Monday.

The Election Commission's notification constituting the 11th Assembly was placed on the table of the House by the Commissioner and Sec-

retary of the Legislative Assembly.

It may be mentioned that Meghalaya is set to have a new government after Conrad Sangma managed to stitch together a coalition of 45 MLAs and enjoy the backing of the BJP.

Sangma's National People's Party (NPP) emerged as the single largest party with 26 seats and he resigned as Chief Minister to

stake a claim for the post.

On Thursday, the House will sit again to elect the Speaker, as well as take a vote of confidence.

Conrad Sangma is also scheduled to take oath as the Chief Minister of the state for another term.

As per the latest updates, Sangma now has support from BJP, UDP, HSPDP, PDF and Independent MLAs.

Centre releases guidelines for celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers on social media platform

PIB
New Delhi, Mar 6:

The Department of Consumer Affairs, under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, has released a set of guidelines called "Endorsements Know-hows!" for celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers on social media platforms. The guidelines aims to ensure that individuals do not mislead their audiences when endorsing products or services and that they are in compliance with the Consumer Protection Act and any associ-

ated rules or guidelines.

The guidelines state that endorsements must be made in simple, clear language, and terms such as "advertisement," "sponsored," "collaboration," or "paid promotion" can be used. Individuals must not endorse any product or service that they have not personally used or experienced or in which due diligence has not been done by them.

The department has observed that there is confusion regarding which disclosure word to use for what kind of partnership. Therefore, for paid

or barter brand endorsement, any of the following disclosures may be used: "advertisement," "ad," "sponsored," "collaboration," or "partnership." However, the term must be indicated as hashtag or headline text.

The guidelines specify that individuals or groups who have access to an audience and the power to affect their audiences' purchasing decisions or opinions about a product, service, brand, or experience, because of the influencer's celebrity's authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with their audience, must disclose.

The guidelines state that the disclosure must be placed in the endorsement message in a manner that is clear, prominent, and extremely hard to miss. Disclosures should not be mixed with a group of hashtags or links. For endorsements in a picture, disclosures should be superimposed over the image enough for viewers to notice. For endorsements in a video or a live stream, disclosures should be made in both audio and video format and displayed continuously and prominently during the entire stream.

Toll Tax at Highways, Expressways Across India to Become Costlier by 5-10% From April 1

Agency
New Delhi, Mar 6:

Travelling on national highways and expressways could become a bit more expensive from April 1 as the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) is preparing to increase the toll tax, reports said on Sunday. The toll tax will increase by 5-10 per cent.

The tariff revision is an annual affair as per the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection) Rules, 2008. The proposal for revised toll rates will be sent from NHAI's all Project Implementation Unit (PIU) by March 25, according to a report by ABP news. The new rates will be implemented from April 1 after the approval of the Ministry of Road and Transport, it added.

Cars and light vehicles will be charged an additional 5 per cent per trip and the toll tax for heavy vehicles may increase by 10 per cent.

In 2022, the toll tax range was hiked between 10 and 15 per cent, increasing the tariff prices of all types of vehicles plying on national highways by Rs 10 and Rs 60.

Currently, the toll tax is being collected on the expressway at Rs 2.19 per kilometre.

The 135 km long, six-lane 'Eastern Peripheral Expressway' and Delhi-Meerut Expressway will also witness a hike in toll rates.

Monthly Pass
The monthly pass facility, a cheaper provision given to those residing in an area of 20 kilometers of the toll plaza, will also be increased by 10 per cent, according to a report by the Mint.

According to the National Roads Fee Regulations 2008, there is no provision for exemption for people who live within a particular radius of a user fee plaza. However, a person who owns a vehicle registered for non-commercial use and lives within 20 kilometres

of the charge plaza is eligible for a monthly pass at the rate of Rs 315 per month for financial year 2022-23 for unlimited travels via a fee plaza under the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and Collection Regulations, 2008), provided a service road or alternative route is not available for usage. Moreover, this rule does not cover a closed user fee collection system.

Rise in National Highway Toll Collection

During the financial year 2022, the toll collected on National Highways was Rs 33,881.22 crore, at least 21 per cent more than the collection the previous year, data analysed by News18 showed. Since 2018-19, the amount of toll collected across national highways in the country has reported a 32 per cent rise with 1,48,405.30 crore total tariff collected.

According to the ministry of road transport and highways (MoRTH), the total toll

collection through FASTag on fee plazas on both national and state highways in 2022 was Rs 50,855 crore or Rs 139.32 crore per day on average. FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion. FASTag (RFID Tag) is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables a customer to make the toll payments directly from the account which is linked to it.

In December last year, the Delhi High Court sought the response of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Centre to a plea challenging the rule making it compulsory for vehicles without FASTag to pay double the toll tax.

The high court had granted four weeks to the authorities to file their replies and listed the matter for further hearing on April 18.

Shija treats benign tumor

IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

A 42 years old gentleman from Thoubal was diagnosed with a benign tumor of the mandible, known as ameloblastoma. It was involving the left body of the lower jaw (mandible). He went outside the state of Manipur to seek treatment. He was told that the operation would incur an expenditure of approximately Rupees four and a half lakhs (Rs.

4,50,000 /-), which his family found a bit difficult to afford. He was therefore advised to go to RIMS, Imphal and meet the doctors in the Department of Plastic Surgery. He was investigated thoroughly and planning for excision of the mandible tumor, followed by reconstruction done.

A team of doctors of the Department of Plastic Surgery headed by Dr. Akoijam Ibohah Singh performed the marathon operation lasting 8 hours on

Wednesday, the 1st March 2023. Dr. Pebam Manisana Singh, Dr. Angelica Laiphrahkram, Dr. Nehar Sinam and Dr. Manish Rajpurohit were also in the operating team. The general anaesthesia was administered by Dr. L. Chaoba Singh, Dr. Irengbam Joyshankar and Dr. L. Satyajit Roy.

The patient was monitored closely for 48 hours in the Post-operative Trauma ICU, and transferred out to the Plastic Surgery Ward in the Burn Unit.

District Skill Mela held

IT News
Imphal, Mar 6:

In an attempt to give exposure to unemployed youth, job seekers and students to several skill development programmes under various schemes and departments, the District Skill Committee, Churachandpur organised a one day District Skill Mela, 2023 under Sankalp Scheme to day at Multipurpose Hall, DC Complex, Tuibong.

Addressing the gathering as the Chief Guest, Thienlaljoy Gangte, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Churachandpur

highlighted the importance of skilling and encouraged the youths, especially students, to benefit the programme by enrolling themselves in skilling/ training courses to enhance their overall employability in all available avenues.

Such type of skill development programme assumes greater significance as all job seekers cannot rely on government job alone. As such, students should explore avenue in entrepreneurship too. For this, they should prioritise on skill development, he said.

The Chief Guest also inspected the stalls and in-

teracted with the participants.

About 24 firms, including some government departments opened stalls wherein they reached out to job seekers, potential entrepreneurs and students.

Sharing of experiences by successful entrepreneurs and interaction with firm representatives marked the event.

SDO/BDOs, DLOs, representatives from different firms, public sector undertakings and different government departments, and students from various institutions in town attended the Mela.

PM addresses Post Budget Webinar on Health and Medical Research

PIB
New Delhi, Mar 6:

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, addressed a Post Budget Webinar on the subject of 'Health and Medical Research'. It is the ninth of a series of 12 post-budget webinars organized by the government to seek ideas and suggestions for effectively implementing the initiatives announced in the Union Budget 2023.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said that health care could be seen in terms of pre and post-Covid pandemic systems. He said that the pandemic tested even prosperous nations. He pointed out, as the pandemic focused the global attention on health, India went a step further and focused on wellness. "That is why we

have put forward a vision before the world - One Earth One Health. This involves holistic healthcare for all creatures - humans, animals or plants.

The Prime Minister reiterated the lessons learnt with regard to supply chain during the pandemic and said that it has become a matter of great concern. He lamented the fact that life-saving equipment like medicines, vaccines and medical devices were weaponised when the pandemic was at its peak. The Prime Minister underlined that in previous years' budgets, the government has constantly tried to reduce India's dependence on foreign nations and emphasized the role of all stakeholders in this.

The Prime Minister noted the absence of an integrated long-term vision for health for many decades after Independence. The Prime Minister said

that we are now pushing the whole-of-the-government approach instead of limiting the subject of health to just the Health Ministry. "Making medical treatment affordable has been the top-most priority of our government", said the Prime Minister, informing that through Ayushman Bharat, about 80 thousand crore rupees of the poor patients were saved due to free treatment under the scheme. Noting tomorrow i.e. 7th March is observed as Jan Aushadhi Diwas, the Prime Minister pointed out that affordable medicines through 9000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras have saved about 20 thousand crore rupees of the poor and middle classes all over the country. This means that just these two schemes saved one lakh crore rupees of the citizens.

The Prime Minister under-

lined the importance of strong health infrastructure for the treatment of serious ailments. Highlighting the prime focus of the government, the Prime Minister informed that more than 1.5 lakh health centres are being developed in close proximity to homes across the country so that testing centres and first aid are available. He also informed that facilities for screening serious ailments like diabetes, cancer and heart-related issues will also be available at these centres. The Prime Minister underlined that Critical health infrastructure is being made accessible to small towns and villages under the PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission which is not only giving rise to new hospitals but it is also creating a new and complete health ecosystem. As a result, the Prime Minister noted that many op-

portunities are being created for health entrepreneurs, investors and professionals.

Regarding human resources in the sector, the Prime Minister informed that more than 260 new medical colleges have been opened in the last few years. This has doubled the medical seats in graduate and postgraduate medical courses as compared to 2014. The Prime Minister underlined the emphasis on the nursing field in this year's Budget. "Opening 157 nursing colleges in the vicinity of the medical colleges is a huge step in the direction of medical human resources. This may be useful in fulfilling global demand, not just the domestic need", he added.

The Prime Minister highlighted the role of technology in constantly making medical services accessible and afford-

able and elaborated on the government's focus on the implementation of technology in the sector. "We want to give timely healthcare to the citizens through the facility of Digital Health ID. 10 crore people have already benefited by teleconsultation through schemes like e-Sanjivini", he said. 5 G is creating new opportunities in this sector for startups. Drones are bringing revolutionary changes in medicine delivery and testing services. "This is a great opportunity for the entrepreneurs and will give a push to our efforts for universal healthcare", he said, exhorting the entrepreneurs to avoid the import of any technology. The Prime Minister listed the required institutional response in this regard. He informed about the new schemes in the medical device sector. He mentioned

Bulk drug parks, medical device parks, more than 30 thousand crores on PLI schemes and said that the last few years have witnessed 12-14 per cent growth in medical devices. He informed that this market is reaching rupees 4 lakh crore in coming years. The Prime Minister also said that India has started work on skilled manpower for future medical technology and high-end manufacturing and research. He said, in institutions like IIT, courses like biomedical engineering will be run. He asked the participants to find ways of industry-academia and government collaboration.

Highlighting the growing confidence of the world in the pharma sector of India, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to capitalize on this and work towards protecting this image.

Sports

Karnataka end 54-year Santosh Trophy drought in Riyadh

Agency
Riyadh, Mar 6:

Karnataka scripted history on Saturday ending their 54-year wait to win the Santosh Trophy after trouncing Meghalaya in a thrilling 3-2 win at the King Fahd International Stadium in the Saudi Arabian Capital.

In December last year, when Karnataka went down to Delhi in the concluding preliminary Group 1 league match of the 76th National Football Championship for the Santosh Trophy in Delhi, they weren't sure about making the next stage as there were too many calculations involved in it.

Yet, on Saturday night, Karnataka not only emerged the proud champions with a hard-fought win over Meghalaya but also ended their 54-year wait for the title that remained elusive to them since the 1968-69 Nationals in Bangalore.

But then, it was a different era with different names in those days. The state that won

the trophy beating Bengal in the final after two days of intense struggle was Mysore, not Karnataka.

The match was played in Bangalore, the garden city, which is now known as Bengaluru. Since then, the Santosh Trophy could never return to the Karnataka State Football Association's cupboard, despite the state being one of the major producers of quality footballers in the country.

In between, some of the finest names in Indian football, starting from Iliyas Pasha, Rehamatullah, Babu Mani, Carlton Chapman to Shanmugam Venkatesh and many others, served the National Team with distinction, but the coveted trophy for the National Football Championship always travelled elsewhere after every meet.

Not even the staunchest supporters of Karnataka could perhaps ever imagine that the state team would have to travel more than 3,000 kilometres from Bengaluru to bring back the



Santosh Trophy after five decades.

But it happened like that and watching the final at one of the continent's finest venues one may have clearly felt the youngsters from Karnataka, on Saturday night, were eager to make sure the trophy doesn't give them a slip once again.

There were reasons to believe this. Karnataka simply began with a bang, scoring in the second minute when Sunil Kumar's angular volley from the right was deflected off a defender before finding the corner of the Meghalaya net.

The backlash was sharp and quick. Meghalaya came with a vengeance and in the

ninth minute, Sheen Stevenson Sohtkung was brought down inside the box and Brolington Warlarph made no mistake from the resultant spot kick with a strong and confident shot.

Karnataka were not ready to feel bogged down, not this time, at least. In the 19th minute, Sunil Kumar was once again in the thick of things - he passed

the ball for Bekey Oram, who tapped it in amidst confusion in the Meghalaya defence.

Three minutes before the half-time, Robin Yadav, who was later adjudged the Player of the Championship, took a free-kick from around 25 yards that dipped into the Meghalaya goal leaving the custodian Rajat Paul Lyngdoh visibly frustrated.

After a rousing display in the first half, Karnataka defence laid 15 minutes after the change of ends. Their defenders would find it hard to explain why Sheen was left unmarked in the box and the Meghalaya striker took full advantage of it to pull one back.

It did turn the last half an hour of the game into a more exciting one, but Karnataka thereafter remained cautious despite feeling pressure from the rivals from both wings.

The battle for third place between Services and Punjab was no cliff-hanger as the former struck once in each half to win the game 2-0.

Not that the winners had overwhelming dominance on the outing, but their ability to strike when the opportunities arose, made all the difference. Shafeel PP put Services in the lead in the seventh minute when his rather innocuous attempt eluded the Punjab custodian Rajat Kumar, much to the frustration of his teammates and the bench.

Punjab did make some forays in the rival half, but the second goal at the hour mark broke their resistance. P Christopher Kemei took a long ranger that didn't have the required sting, but the ball somehow managed to make its way into the Punjab goal.

A few minutes later, the losing team's custodian took matters rather lightly while trying to clear the ball and only a last-minute clearance by a defender saved the Punjab goal from falling for the third time.

Robin Yadav was named the 'Player of the Championship' while Rajat Paul Lyngdoh was adjudged 'Goalkeeper of the Championship'.