

August 2020

মহাশয়ীয়া সূচী

Vol. XLI. 3



MANIPUR TODAY

74th Independence Day Special Issue, 2020

Manipur
Fights
Against
COVID-19



Manipur Chief Minister inaugurates 5 Water Supply projects

- Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on 8 July inaugurated 5 Water Supply projects, 1 office building of Weight and Measures Department and Rapid Antigen Detection Testing Centre at Jiribam through video conferencing from the Chief Minister's Secretariat, Imphal.
- The 5 Water Supply projects located at different districts of Manipur were constructed with the total cost of 48.39 crore rupees having total capacity of more than 26.15 millions of liters per day.

মহাশয়ীৰ ১৫৪°
MANIPUR
TODAY

*Happy
Independence
Day*

INDEPENDENCE DAY
2020

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



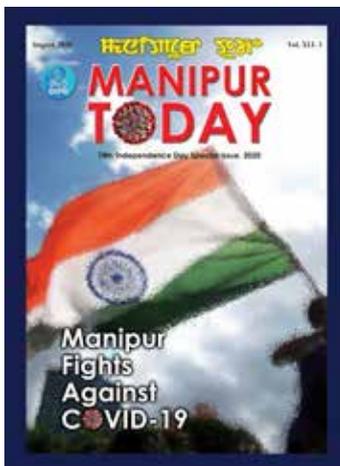
Today, the whole world is engulfed with Covid-19 pandemic. No nation is spared. Socio-economic life of mankind has been back burned. The global death toll has crossed more than seven lakh. India recorded the first case of Covid-19 pandemic in later part of January, 2020.

Gradually, it spread its tentacles to the States and Union Territories of the country. The first case of Covid-19 pandemic was reported in Manipur on 24 March 2020. Prior to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in Manipur, the State Government under the leadership of Shri

N. Biren Singh, Chief Minister, Manipur has taken up several initiatives and precautionary measures such as border fencing and shielding of Indo-Myanmar borders at Moreh and Behiang, strict vigil and screening at inter-state borders to regulate the inflow of tourists, passengers and truckers, daily screening of passengers at Imphal International Airport etc. Despite such advanced actions, Manipur witnessed its tryst with corona virus positive cases and occurrence of intermittent casualties so far.

Ahead of the first case of Covid-19 pandemic, the State Government declared JNIMS Hospital as a testing centre and doctors, nurses, health workers, para medical staffs as frontline workers were deployed. In due course of time, extension of testing and treatment facilities for Covid-19 infected patients at RIMS Hospital, selected district hospitals, opening of community and institutional quarantine centres have been taken up to combat and contain the outbreak of corona virus. The latest addition in the fight against Covid-19 is opening of a 300 bedded Covid Care Centre at Manipur Trade & Expo Centre, Imphal.

People of Manipur endured series of shutdowns and lockdowns since the beginning of the pandemic and those who belonged to the poorest sections of the society are worst affected. As required under the protocol and SOPs issued by the Government of India, the State Government has been constantly urging the people to stay at their homes and maintain social distancing as it is the key to combat the dreaded disease. Besides, the State Government has taken up all necessary measures to provide essential commodities and grocery items to the public while ensuring that there is no shortage of essential items like groceries, fuel and medicines in the State.



The global fight against the corona virus is a multi pronged approach. Enforcement of lockdown, home and community quarantine, regular testing, segregation of infected persons, containment zones, medical treatment, staggered relaxation of lockdown for pursuing economic activities, hectic medical research to find a solution to end the contagion, etc. are the manifestations of the global fight. In all circumstances, we cannot avoid the virus until an effective panacea is invented. Till then, stay home, stay safe, be alert, control the virus and save lives.


(Heisnam Balkrisna Singh)

Content

Chief Editor

Heisnam Balkrisna Singh, MCS
Director, IPR

Senior Editor

L. Ashok Kumar Singh, Deputy Director
Ramesh Tongbram, Deputy Director

Editor

Sagolsem Snehrabha, DIO

Editorial Board

Seema Sanjenbam, PRO
L. Roshan Singh, PRO
N. Bidyananda Singh, Translator
Oinam Shyamo, Translator
Maringmei Gaijinmeilu, Translator

News

Inputs from NEWS Section, DIPR

Photographs

DIPR Photo Section

Cover & Design

Banabanta Ngangom, DEO

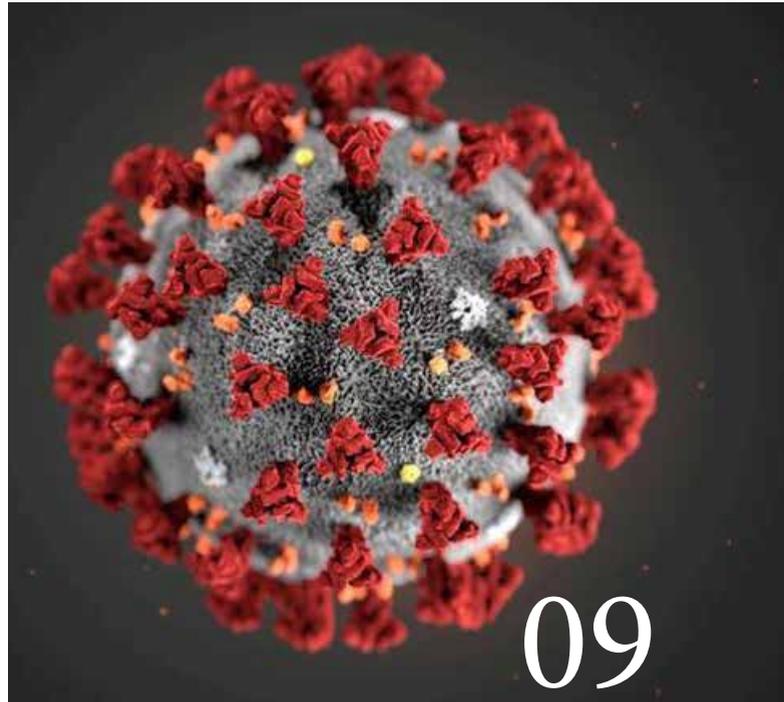
Contact

DIPR Manipur
Nityaipat Chuthek, Airport Road
Imphal, Manipur
email: editormn2day@gmail.com
www.diprmanipur.in

Printed at

NEST Advertising, Babupara

No. of Copies: 2000



32 Forest Minister flags off Manipur
Van Dhan Naturals

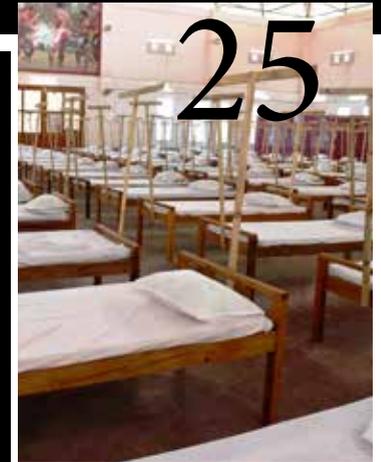
33 Salient Feature of
Sewerage Project - Phase - I

35
INITIATIVES
TAKEN UNDER
IMPHAL EAST

51 Regional
Manifestation of
Indian National
Movement



27
SAVE
NAMBUL



25



23



57

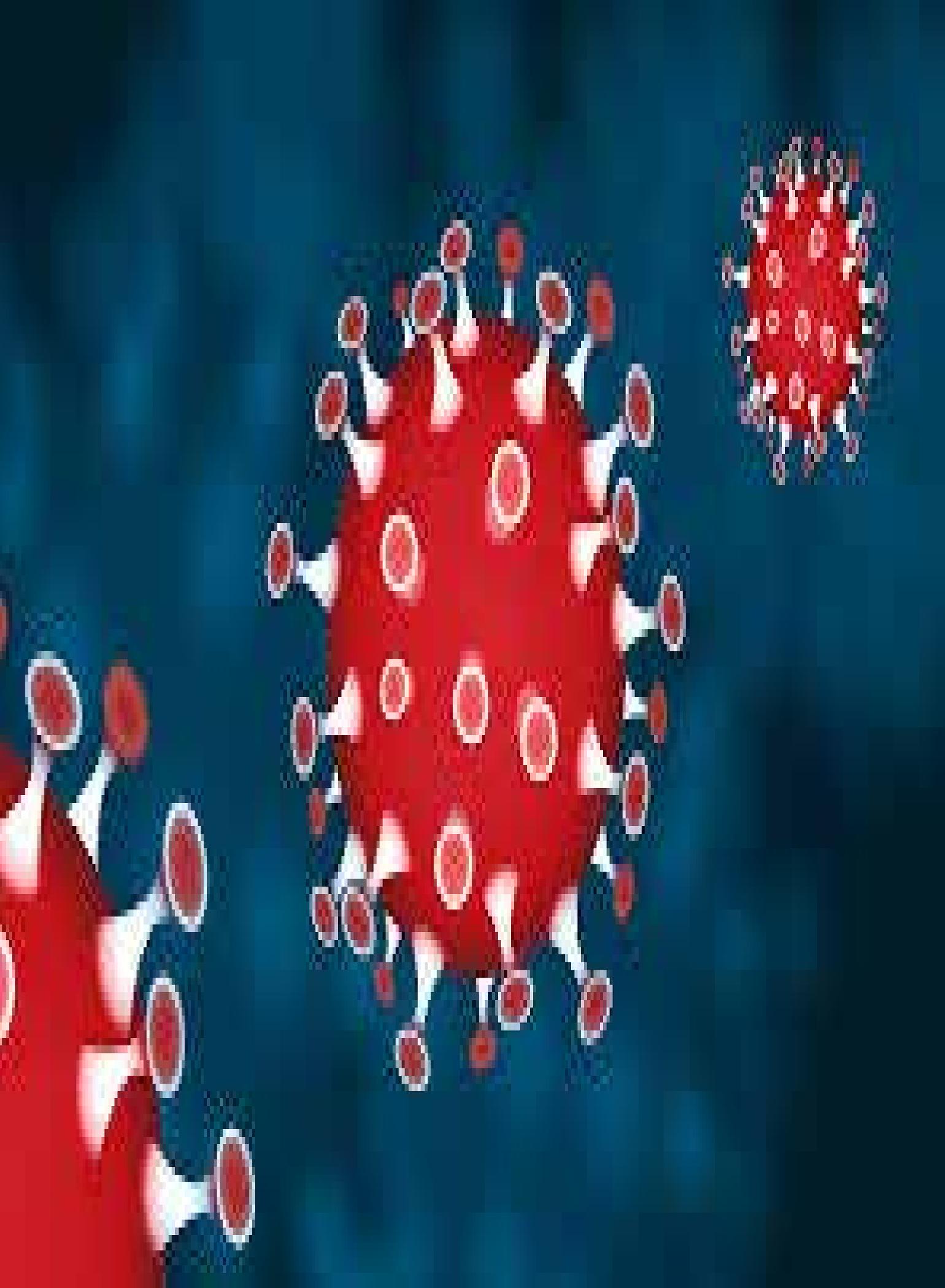


PROSPECTS OF
TRADITIONAL
SKILLS

42



31



COVID-19 IN MANIPUR

A TIMELINE AS THE PANDEMIC CROSSES 3000 MARK

The COVID-19 outbreak has infected more than 3,000 people in Manipur. The North Eastern State recorded its biggest single-day spike of 249 Covid-19 cases including 165 personnel from Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), bringing the state's total infection tally to 3,466 (general population-2765 and CAPF-701) on 7th August 2020. Of this, 1,530 – nearly 44% – are currently active while 1,926 (56%) have recovered and 10 have died.

As on 7th August 2020 at 7.00 pm, 694 persons have been confirmed as locally transmitted non-returnees, Covid-19 positive cases. The rate of locally transmitted cases among all positives is 20%.

A timeline of how the virus spread in Manipur and the various measures adopted by the State Government against the pandemic.

March 24: The first case of the COVID-19 pandemic in India was reported on 30th January 2020 in Kerala. Slowly, the pandemic spread to various states and union territories including the state of Manipur. The region's first case was reported on 24 March 2020. The 23-year-old student with a travel history to the United Kingdom became the first person to have contracted COVID-19 in the North East.

March 29: Chief Minister N.Biren Singh launched the website www.tengbang.in to address the grievances and help the Manipuri who are stranded outside the State due to the nationwide lockdown caused by COVID-19 pandemic at Chief Minister's Secretariat, Imphal on 29th March 2020.

April 1: One more person tested positive for coronavirus, the second case in Manipur on 1st April, after the 65 year-old contracted the virus following his return from the Tablighi Jamaat congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz in New Delhi.

The State Government has ordered all schools (Government, Government Aided Schools and private schools), coaching classes, tuition centres, boarding in the State to remain closed until further orders on 1st April 2020.

April 7: The State Government has resolved to transfer financial assistance of Rs.2000/- to the people of the state who have been stranded outside the state during the lockdown from the Chief Minister's COVID -19 Relief Fund on 7th April 2020. .

April 12: Manipur's first Covid-19 case, which,

was reported on March 24 following which she was treated at JNIMS, was discharged on April 12 after being cured.

April 14: After Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Nationwide lockdown will be extended till 3rd May, Chief Minister N Biren Singh has appealed to all the people of the State to support and abide by the decision of the Central Government to win this war against COVID-19. The lockdown, effective 25 March, was to end on 14 April.

April 19: Chief Minister N Biren Singh opened Home Delivery Supplies Management Control Room at Dharmasala, Thangal Bazar on 19th April to help procure home delivery of essential commodities in view of the protracted lockdown which has been extended till 3rd May.

April 21: Manipur's second Covid-19 patient was discharged after he tested negative since undergoing treatment on 21st April.

May 2: Manipuri people who were stranded at Manipur Bhavan, Guwahati on account of the country-wide lockdown have been brought to Imphal. The 87 people stranded at Guwahati were brought to Imphal in four buses and they have been quarantined at Imphal Valley Academy, Ghari on 2nd May.

May 4: With the entire Manipur listed under the green zone, the State Government on 4th May 2020 further relaxed the COVID-19-induced lockdown in more sectors. As per the new guidelines, issued by the then chief secretary of Manipur, markets

were allowed to open from 6 am to 4 pm throughout the entire state except for the three historic Ima Markets. Earlier the relaxation was confined on locality-based retail shops dealing with essential commodities like groceries for daily use, vegetables, fruits, poultry meat, and fish from 6am to 2pm on all days except Sundays.

May 13: Departing Chennai on May 10, the Shramik Special train carrying 1,140 stranded Manipuris reached Jiribam on Shramik Special train on 13th May. The returning natives left for Imphal by buses arranged by the State Government after going through the mandatory medical screening on arrival.

May 14: A 31 year old man who went to Mumbai for medical treatment of his father has been tested positive for COVID-19 on 14th May, thereby taking the State's total positive cases to 3. Notably, the mother of the man died of COVID-19 on 5th May at Mumbai.

He left Mumbai in a car on 9th May and reached Mao on 13th May.

May 15: A 21 year old nurse from Kamjong district tested positive for the virus at JNIMS taking the State's active case to two on 15th May.

The nurse had recently returned to Manipur from Kolkata, where she was working as a nurse by bus.

May 16: As on 16th May, the State's COVID-19 active cases is five, taking the total positive cases to seven. The five positive cases, included a 22 year old girl from Churachandpur who returned from Chennai by train arranged by the State Government.

Following the spike in the number of positive cases, the State Government has stopped issuing of pass to people who wish to return to the State.

May 18: With the Centre extending the lockdown till May 31 with relaxations that are aimed at re-opening the economy with the operation of all the markets, offices, industries and business, the State Government too has issued its own guidelines to be effective in Manipur.

Total curfew in Imphal city and all other district headquarters till May 31 will be in force from 6 pm to 6 am every day.

As per an order issued by the Chief Secretary, the lists of prohibited activities include--flight services, schools and colleges, training and coaching centres, hotels, restaurants, cinema halls, shopping malls, theatres, sports, entertainment, all religious places, places of worship and religious congregations.

May 25: Following resumption of domestic flight service, 448 people came to Imphal in four different flights on 25th May. On landing at Bir Tikendrajit International Airport, all the passengers were screened by medical teams using full body scanner.

May 31: Chief Minister N Biren Singh has announced that the lockdown would be extended till 30th June in the State. As on 31st May, the cumulative tally is 76 and total number of active cases, which included Bangkok Asian Games 1998 boxing gold medallist Ngangom Dingko, stands at 65 following recovery of 11 patients.

Notably, Dingko, 41, went to Delhi for medical treatment and returned by bus recently.

June 03: As of 3rd June 2020, the total number of cases in Manipur was 121. There are 83 active cases currently in isolation wards of RIMS and JNIMS. The State is seeing a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases since it started evacuation missions to bring back stranded natives affected by the lockdown from cities across India.

Significantly all the cases detected till now in the State are returnees.

June 04: For the first time in the state of Manipur, a 40-year-old female nurse, working at Churachandpur district hospital with no travel history has been tested positive with Novel Coronavirus on 4th June 2020.

June 05: The State Cabinet has given its consent for purchasing necessary medical equipment and supplies for the COVID Care Centre to be opened at UNACCO School, Meitram.

As of 5 June 2020, the total number of cases in Manipur was 157. There are 105 active cases and 52 have fully recovered from the virus.

June 07: As of 7th June, the total number of cases is 172, including 120 active cases and 52 recoveries.

June 08: Further relaxing the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown, the State Government has allowed shops

dealing in certain items to re-open from 9th June on rotational basis. The arrangement will continue till 15th June and shops will open from 6 am to 2 pm.

June 11: Chief Minister N Biren Singh handed over a cash amount of Rs 1,10,000/- to Laibi Oinam, a street vendor / auto driver who volunteered to drop a recovered COVID-19 patient from JNIMS, Imphal East to Kamjong district covering 8 hours of journey on the intervening night of 31st May and 1st June 2020.

June 15: The Manipur government asked the Centre to stop flights to Imphal for 10 days to enable it to clear a backlog of COVID-19 tests of incoming passengers on 15th June.

June 16: The total number of positive cases in Manipur now stands at 500 and the number of active cases is 341, the total number of recovered cases is 159 and the recovery rate is 31.8%

June 22: With the closure of all educational institutions following the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Education Department has notified that school fees should be collected only upto the month of March 2020 without any hike, while admission fees may be collected.

June 25: The total number of COVID-19 positive cases in the State has crossed 1000 mark. The total number positive cases stands at 1056, including 702 active cases and 354 recoveries. The recovery rate from COVID-19 in the State is 33.52%.

Two TrueNat machines were installed at the District Hospital, Senapati on 25th June. PHED Minister Losii Dikho had donated 2000 COVID-19 testing kits along with the said machines.

Earlier, only RIMS and JNIMS had the facilities to conduct COVID tests.

July 02: Churachandpur district got its first Covid Care Centre on 2nd July. Deputy Commissioner Pawan Yadav inaugurated the 50 bedded Covid Care Centre at NIELIT (National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology), Tuibong.

July 03: 27 personnel of Jiribam district police and VDF have tested positive for COVID-19 after an ASI involved in screening people who returned by train from different parts of the country to Jiribam was tested positive earlier on 30th June. The total

number of COVID-19 positive cases has reached 1316 in the State.

July 06: The examination for the remaining subjects of the class 12 examination conducted by Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur resumed from with 3618 students appearing at 51 centres on 6th July.

As of 6th July, the total number of cases was 1390, including 656 active cases and 734 recoveries. The recovery rate from COVID-19 in the State is 52.80%.

July 08: Chief Minister N Biren Singh inaugurated the Rapid Antigen Detection Testing Centre at Jiribam through video conference on 8th July. Rapid testing has started at the district which has become an area of concern following detection of COVID-19 among numerous police and VDF personnel.

July 14: The State's recovery rate has improved to 61.00% with as many as 1020 persons have recovered from the disease till 14th July. The State's COVID-19 tally has reached 1,672, of which 652 are active cases.

July 20: One attendant of the Department of Respiratory Medicine, RIMS has been tested positive for COVID-19 on 20th July. The total number of COVID-19 positive cases in the State has reached 1925 and these include 605 active cases and 1320 recovered cases.

July 21: The cumulative number of positive cases is 2015. The number of active and recovered cases are 631 and 1384 respectively. The recovery rate is 68.68%.

July 23: Taking serious note of the rising cases of COVID-19, the State Government has imposed a total lockdown for 7 days as well as curfew to make the lockdown more effective from 23rd July. The lockdown and curfew will be relaxed for medical, power, drinking water, fire services, police, media and other essential services.

July 24: The State's COVID-19 tally has reached 2146 with 655 active cases. 1491 have recovered from the disease and the State's recovery rate now stands at 69.47%.

July 25: One National Health Mission (NHM) staff engaged with the COVID-19 Common Control

Room opened at the Chief Minister's Secretariat was reported to be positive. As of 25 July, the total number of cases was 2176, including 656 active cases and 1520 recoveries. The State's recovery rate now stands at 68.85%.

July 26: The number of COVID-19 positive cases in the state is 2235. 1521 have recovered from the disease and the State's recovery rate now stands at 68.05%.

July 28: 22 without travel history tested positive on 28th July 2020. The State's total COVID-19 positive tally has now reached 2317. These include 702 active cases and 1615 recovered cases which puts the recovery rate at 69.70%

July 29: COVID-19 claimed its first victim in Manipur as a 56-year-old person from Khongjom Sapam in Thoubal district died at RIMS on 29th July. He was admitted at RIMS on 22nd May with multiple health issues like chronic kidney failure, long standing Type-2 Diabetes Melitus, Urosepsis and hypertension. He was found COVID-19 positive on July 26. The cumulative number of positive cases is 2458.

July 30: Three more COVID-19 patients have succumbed to the virus taking the total number of COVID-19 fatality to four in the State on 30th July. The State's COVID-19 tally has reached 2,505. The number of active and recovered cases are 829 and 1672 respectively.

In view of the rising number of COVID-19 cases among people with no travel history in the State, Government has extended the lockdown till 6th August.

July 31: One more COVID-19 patient died at JNIMS taking the toll to five in the State on 13 July. The cumulative number of positive cases is 2621. The number of active and recovered cases are 931 and 1689 respectively. The recovery rate is 64.44%.

August 01: COVID-19 has claimed one more life in the State and as many as 135 persons including 80 CAPF personnel tested positive for coronavirus, spiking the number of total cases in the State to 2756, said a report of the COVID-19 Common Control Room. The total number of active and discharged cases are 1051 and 1699 respectively.

With the latest death of a 77 year-old man from

Chandel district, the total death toll in the State has reached 6. The 77 year-old man who died at CMC Koirengai, was suffering from hypertension, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

August 02: A 20 year old girl has died from COVID-19 on 2nd August marking the 7th death in Manipur. The State's COVID-19 tally has reached 2831, with 1087 active cases, 1737 recoveries and 7 deaths.

August 03: Chief Minister N Biren Singh inaugurated a 300 bedded COVID Care Centre (CCC) at Manipur Trade and Expo Centre, Lamboikhong-nang-khong in Imphal West district on 3rd August.

Tally now inches close to 3000 mark. Out of 84 people tested positive for COVID-19 on 3rd August, 80 have no history of travelling outside the State. The total number of positive cases is 2920 and these include 1147 positive cases and 1766 recovered cases and 7 deaths.

August 04: As on 4th August the total number of cases now stands at 3018. The number of active cases is 1197 while the number of recovered cases has reached 1814 and 7 deaths. The recovery rate is 60.10%.

August 06: The State Government has extended the ongoing complete lockdown in the entire State till August 15.

The COVID-19 death toll in the State has reached eight and the latest victim is a 15 year old boy from Phubala, Bishnupur district. As of 6 August, the total number of cases is 3217, including 1304 active cases and 1905 recoveries and 8 deaths. Among the positives reported on 6th August, 94 of them have no history of travelling outside the State.

August 07: Two more COVID-19 positive people died at JNIMS and Chandel district hospital, taking the COVID-19 death toll to 10 in the State.

In the wake of the death of an expectant mother due to denial of treatment by both Government and private hospitals, Health Department has opened a 24x7 toll-free helpline number 1800-103-2015 so as to ensure that no one is denied health care service. A press release issued by Principal Secretary (Health & Family Welfare) V Vumlunmang said that any person denied treatment by a hospital can immediately call the helpline number.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Updated on 7 August 07:00 PM

New Cases

249

Confirmed Cases

3,466

Recovered

1,926

Recovery Rate

55.6%

Active Cases

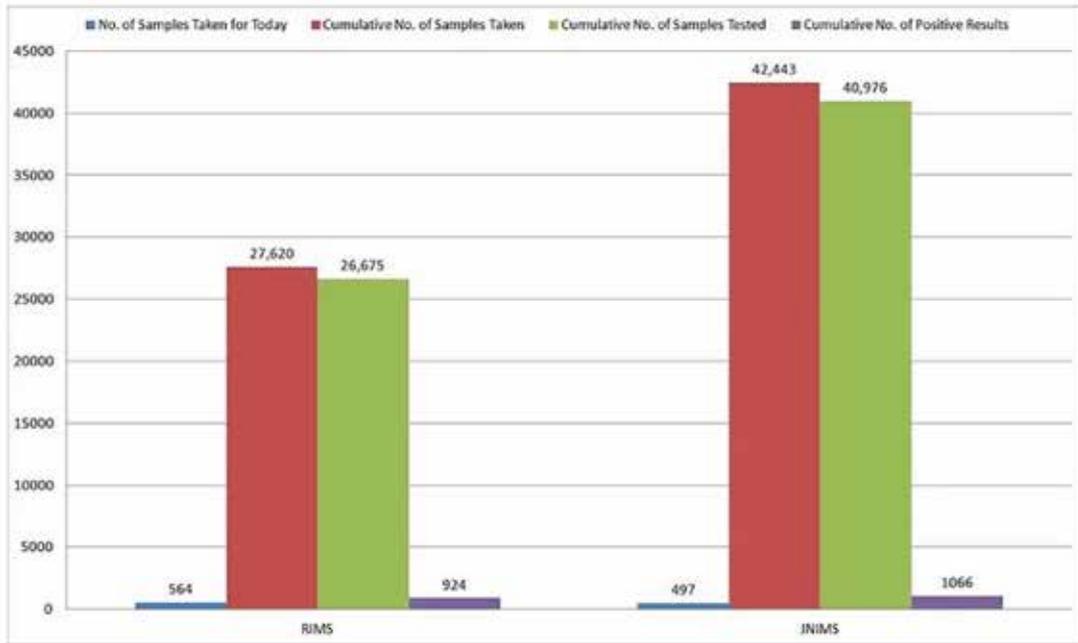
1,530

Death

10

District Wise COVID-19 Cases 7 August 07:00 PM

District	Total Cases	Recoveries	Death	Active	Recovery Rate
Bishnupur	102	86	1	16	84.3%
Chandel	73	35	3	38	47.9%
Churachandpur	378	159	0	219	42.1%
Imphal East	276	62	0	214	22.5%
Imphal West	554	210	0	344	37.9%
Jiribam	129	74	0	55	57.4%
Kakching	170	109	0	61	64.1%
Kamjong	144	122	0	22	84.7%
Kangpokpi	338	177	3	161	52.4%
Noney	25	25	0	0	100.0%
Pherzawl	32	32	0	0	100.0%
Senapati	253	204	0	49	80.6%
Tamenglong	244	203	0	41	83.2%
Tengnoupal	20	16	0	4	80.0%
Thoubal	405	132	3	273	32.6%
Ukhrul	423	246	0	77	76.2%



Note: RIMS figures does not include Juibam, Kakching and Thoubal

CHIEF MINISTER'S COVID-19 RELIEF FUND CREATED

The Manipur government has created 'Chief Minister's Covid-19 Relief Fund' for making available funds during an emergency with a corpus fund of Rs 10 crore following a State Cabinet decision on 23rd March 2020.

The state government appealed to the people that they may make contributions to this Fund for which an account has been opened with the Manipur State Co-operative Bank Ltd.

The Cabinet further resolved that all Cabinet ministers will donate a month's salary to the Manipur State Covid-19 Fund. The Cabinet further appealed to all the government servants to donate a day's salary to Manipur the State COVID-19 Fund, it added.

MANIPUR LEADS A VALIANT FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Abhishek Dayal, Director, PIB Imphal



The unprecedented global pandemic, Covid19, has tested the resolve and efficiency of all the governments across the world. India's fight against the pandemic, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, began even before it was known to most people what this infection was all about. Since then, hundreds of path breaking decisions have been taken, relating to lockdown, social distancing, economic revival, assistance to the poorer sections, movement of migrant labour force and most important, tuning the medial health system to deal with the pandemic.

Manipur government has managed the difficult situation with alacrity and firmness. This is evident in its interventions and decisions in almost all spheres of our common fight against the spread of the pandemic. The situation is being monitored

at the level of Chief Minister who oversees the efforts of Covid19 Task Force, State Consultative Committee and 12 specialised Covid19 response teams.

Border Fencing, state border management and lockdowns

The first crucial action taken by Manipur government was shielding and fencing of Indo-Myanmar international borders at Moreh and Behiang and strict vigil and screening at inter-state borders such as Mao, Jiribam, Jessami and other places along the porous Indo-Myanmar border at Ukhrul and Kamjong districts to regulate the inflow of tourists, passengers, and truckers. Daily screening of passengers at Mao and Jiribam and Imphal International Airport started right at the start of the pandemic in the country. All these steps

were taken at the time when there were Zero cases in the whole of the North East region.

On the direction of the Central government, Manipur imposed a complete and successful lockdown all over the state on 24th March. Exceptions were given only for the movement and opening of essential services and essential goods. In later phases of lockdown, farming activities and limited commercial activities were started under strict social distancing norms. With the imposition of total lockdown, dedicated helplines were opened to receive queries and disseminate information to the general public. At no time were the citizens left helpless and without access to important information. It is to be noted that the people responded with responsibly and did their utmost at individual and community levels to make the lockdown a success.

The extent of involvement of State Government in managing the lockdown efficiently is reflected in the series of orders and regulations on physical distancing, strict enforcement of curfew, restricting movement of the public at various hotspots, penalising violators of curfew orders, relaxation of curfew, sanitization of cities and towns, spreading awareness through social media, print and electronic media, staggered opening of markets, and so on.

Health care

JNIMS Hospital was made the first Covid19 testing centre by upgrading its existing infrastructures. In the first week of March itself, the State Health Department geared up with the deployment of its Covid warriors - doctors, nurses, health workers, para medical staffs as frontline workers to combat the outbreak of virus. Later, RIMS Hospital and district hospitals of Bishnupur and Churachandpur districts were also upgraded as Covid-19 testing centres. The testing capacity of the state is being constantly ramped up, and as on date over 2500 tests are being done on a daily basis and now there is no backlog of tests.

Despite growing number of positive cases - the figure has crossed four digits - health care system has been able to cope up very well in the state. The rising numbers is not due to community

transmission but due to the huge number of returnees who have brought the infection from worst affected parts of the country. The recovery rate is high and there has been no mortality so far. The frontline health workers have done a really excellent job of taking care of the patients despite threat to their own safety.

During the second week of June, 2020, the State Government established a 100 bedded COVID Care Centre at UNACCO School, a private school in Imphal West District, with admission of 19 patients being treated in this centre. The government plans for increasing the number of beds from 100 to 300. Necessary manpower is in place at the newly opened centre for proper care and treatment of patients.

Welfare and Economic Security

As can be appreciated, the poor are the most vulnerable at a time when earning opportunities come to a sudden halt. Central government initiated a massive Economic Welfare Package that not only directly helped the people but also gave money to state governments to work for the weakest sections of the society. Central government released Rs 6,195 crores to 14 state governments on June 10 as the third tranche of equated monthly instalment of post devolution revenue deficit grant. The government had released similar amounts as first and second instalments on April 3 and May 11 under Disaster Management Relief Fund to enable states to set up quarantine centres, facilitate testing, buy PPEs for Covid warriors and for other emergent needs. In April, Rs. 11,092 crores were given to states as first instalment of State Disaster Risk Management Fund.

Needs of Agriculture and MSMEs were especially kept in mind while designing the unprecedented Economic Package as they are linked to the livelihood of millions of people. Fundamental policy changes were also made in these sectors to revive them and make them vibrant. These sectors are very important for a state like Manipur. There are many aspects of this economic intervention by the state, some of which can be noted here.

One of the significant highlight of the activities of Manipur Government during this period has been

free distribution of PDS items and other essential commodities to the general public. Monitoring committees have been constituted for each assembly segment wherein the local MLA is the chairman. Each and every district administrator has established food banks where the affluent locals contribute food grains, essential edible items and vegetables to keep in buffer stock and later distributed to the poor and under privileged sections of the society. The regular supply of food grains and edible items to the general public is still continuing uninterrupted.

During the last week of March, 2020, the State Government appointed cabinet ministers in charge of 16 districts in order to physically monitor and ensure distribution of PDS rice and supplies of other essential commodities to the general public of sixteen districts. During this critical period, the State's Horticulture Department opened outlets where organic vegetables, fruits and other edible items are sold to the public. One of the most striking events was exchange of edible items like food grains, vegetables and other essential items between the hill and valley people which led to emotional bondings and communal harmony.

“Chief Minister's Covid-19 Relief Fund” was created for proper maintenance of affected public during the lockdown period. Deduction of one day's salary from each government employee was made mandatory. Civil society organizations, business houses, social workers and Manipuri diaspora from abroad have generously donated to the relief fund. The fund is just a part of the huge economic relief efforts of the government during this time of crisis.

Migrant Population

The very nature of lockdown made migrant workers - both in Manipur and of citizens of Manipur in other parts of the country - anxious to return to their homes. The State Government declared Manipur Bhawans at Guwahati and Kolkata as designated places for providing food and shelter for people who got stranded due to sudden lockdown. It was done free of cost and transportation arrangements were made for ferrying them to Imphal. Hundreds of Manipuri citizens in places like national capital were helped with free food and provisions by the state government officials.

In the middle week of March, 2020, a web portal Tengbang.com was opened to assess, monitor and redress the grievances of stranded Manipuris outside the State. The people are encouraged to register on the website and they were then helped in their homecoming through special trains from different cities of India upto Jiribam, a border town neighbouring Assam. Through this web portal, the State Government also transferred financial assistance to thousands of stranded students. So far, about forty-five thousand returnees from different cities of India have been transported by special trains as a result of the State Government's initiative.

Management of returning population has been a challenging task. Daily screening of passengers at the designated places at Mao, Jiribam and Imphal International Airport started from the first week of March itself. Quarantine centres and isolation wards were opened before the outbreak of the pandemic in the State. Later, several community quarantine centres and institutional quarantine centres have been opened to cater the increasing number of returnees from outside the state. Management of quarantine centres is important and each MLA is appointed as the chairman of the quarantine centres and several committees constituting the Deputy Commissioner of the district, district police, sub-divisional officers, medical officers and staff.

The valiant fight of Manipuri people and the State government will ensure that the pandemic is contained and defeated with minimum distress to the people. It can be readily admitted that in these difficult times, the mettle of the people of Manipur has been sorely tested and that they have succeeded with flying colours.

With inputs from DIPR, Manipur Government

C S O T V O I R D I | E 19 S

CM LAUNCHES WEB PORTAL TO TRACK COVID-19 STORIES

Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh launched a web portal manipurcovidstories.org, a platform to share Covid-19 related stories and track volunteering activities in the State, at a solemn function held at Chief Minister's Secretariat, Imphal on 4th July 2020.

The web portal features crowd-sourced stories collected from people who have been Covid-19 positive and recovered, volunteers who have worked at quarantine centres, selfless work carried out by individuals, NGOs, Civil Society Organisations, and medical professionals, among others. The stories are segregated in the form of texts, photo features, and videos.

The website is managed by Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Manipur, and conceptualized and designed by Fluorescence Communications.

GOVT WILL BEAR TRAIN FARE EXPENSES TO BRING BACK STRANDED PERSONS

The State Cabinet approved that the passenger's fare for bringing back stranded persons to Manipur by train will be borne by the government. The decision was taken in a Cabinet meeting held with Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh in the chair at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on 6th May 2020.

The Cabinet also decided that the costs for other modes of travel will be met by passengers themselves. The State Government will issue necessary passes for facilitating their movement in this regard.

CM REVIEWS COVID-19 SITUATION IN THE STATE

Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh took stock of the COVID-19 situation in the State in a meeting of the COVID-19 Task Force held at Chief Minister's Secretariat on 26th June 26, 2020. He instructed the concerned officials to concentrate their energy in tackling COVID-19. The Chief Minister said that he would be available 24x7 for any issue relating to the pandemic.

In a positive development, the State has witnessed considerable increase in the daily testing capacity during the month of June. Now, the testing labs of the State can test 2000-2500 samples every day. As

such, there has been a drastic fall in the number of samples awaiting results. As on June 26, the State has tested more than 45,000 samples and the positivity rate stands at 2.33 %.

24/7 CONTROL ROOM OPENED AT CM'S SECRETARIAT

As decided by the State Cabinet on 23rd March 2020, a Central COVID-19 Control Room, which will be operational round the clock, has been opened at Chief Minister's Secretariat Complex, Imphal.

The Control Room would be manned by the personnel from various departments including the Police Department. People may contact at toll-free number 1800-345-3818 for any query regarding Covid-19.

CM LAUNCHES WEBSITE WWW.TENGBANG.IN

To address the grievances and help the Manipuris who are stranded outside the State due to the nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh launched the website www.tengbang.in at a simple function held at Chief Minister's Secretariat on 29th March 2020. The website is developed by CubeTen in coordination with IT Department, Government of Manipur free of cost as their CSR activity.

Chief Minister said the website is integrated with a payment gateway so that people who wish to contribute to the Chief Minister's COVID-19 Relief Fund can donate online.

FINANCIAL AID GIVEN TO ABOVE 12,000 STRANDED MANIPURIS

After the Manipur Government decided to extend one-time financial assistance to those Manipuris who have been stranded in various parts of the country, the state government has transferred Rs. 2000 each to 12,561 individuals as of 18th April 2020.

Out of 16,172 individuals who have registered through <https://tengbang.in/>, the amount has been transferred to the bank accounts of 12,561 individuals after due verification. The government will further extend financial assistance to those remaining individuals shortly.

CM LAUNCHES CONTROL ROOM FOR HOME DELIVERY OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS

To address the grievances and hardships faced by the people of the State in procuring the essential items amid nationwide lockdown, Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh launched the Home Delivery Supplies Management Control Room at Dharmasala, Than-gal Bazar, Imphal on 19th April 2020.

The Chief Minister stated that any individual or groups can contact the toll-free number 1800-313-8171 from 9:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily and added that such initiative would reduce the crowd and help in maintaining social distancing in the State. The Control room will strengthen the home delivery services being offered by various agencies in the State. Initially, the control room will be operational for the Imphal East and Imphal West and the remaining districts would be covered shortly. Officials of different Government departments and Chamber of Commerce have been deputed to attend the grievances of the people, he added.

CM LAUNCHES NEW PATROL CARS OF MANIPUR POLICE

Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh launched the new patrol cars of Manipur Police at Chief Minister's Secretariat on 4th April 2020. The Chief Minister, who also holds the Home portfolio, handed over the keys to Imphal East SP Shri Haobijam Jogeshchandra and Imphal West SP Shri K. Meghachandra to mark the launching of the newly acquired fleet of Toyota Innova patrol cars.

CM RELEASES MUSIC VIDEO ON CORONAVIRUS AWARENESS

A music video based on Corona-virus awareness entitled 'Akiba Laanda Amani' was released by Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh in the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Shri Y. Joykumar Singh, Ministers, and MLAs at the lawns of Chief Minister's Bungalow on 8th April 2020.

The Chief Minister praised the efforts of music fraternity and different sections of the society in creating awareness regarding Coronavirus.

The album is produced by M. Chanu Imoinu of Sileima Productions. The song is written by noted lyricist Shri Narendra Ningomba and sung by playback singer Shri Oinam Swamikumar. The music director of the song is Shri Rhythm Thiyam.

EDUCATION MINISTER LAUNCHES E-TEXTBOOKS

Education Minister Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam launched E-Textbooks for Class 8-10 at his Office Chamber at New Secretariat, Imphal on April 16, 2020.

The Minister expressed that making the textbooks available in electronic format is one of the many initiatives to address the shortcomings and problems due to the prevailing situation in education because of the nationwide lockdown.

The initiative was taken up by the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM). BOSEM does the printing and sale of Textbooks for Class 1-10. Books meant for class 1-8 are prepared by SCERT and the printing; sale takes place in BOSEM, while Books for Class 9-10 are within the domain of BOSEM.

He also said the textbooks will be available at bosembook.in website. The textbooks can also be accessed through the mobile application “Bosem eBook” and can be downloaded from Google Play store.

Besides, the webpage will have other features as such year-wise instruction to examiners, Blue print, Teachers guide book, and scan copies of answer scripts of toppers and subject toppers. The website and the mobile application were designed and developed by Xtreme Wave.

ONLINE CLASSES FOR PG STUDENTS STARTED: EDUCATION MINISTER

Education Minister Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam said that online classes for postgraduate students in respect of Dhanamanjuri University and the 6th Semester of Manipur Technical University have already started on 8th March 2020. He added that extra classes for students belonging to lower classes from Class I – XII will be conducted during the summer vacation.

The Minister was addressing the media personnel at his office chamber at New Secretariat, Imphal.

During the press briefing, he highlighted the steps and measures taken up by the Government to address the concerns arising due to the shutdown of the educational institutions in the state because of the lockdown imposed to break the chain of infec-

tion and control the spread of coronavirus disease COVID-19.

Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam said classes in the Higher Education and Technical University has started through ZOOM App MOODLE – Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. The teachers are assigned to prepare study material that will be provided to the students through online classes, e-mail, and WhatsApp. He added that the students will also be allotted assignment topics for self-study which will be submitted by the students through email and Whatsapp.

ELECTRONIC FORMAT COMIC TEXTBOOKS LAUNCHED

Education Minister Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam launched the electronic format of comic textbooks for Class III, IV and V respectively on 14 th April 2020. The electronic format comic textbook for each class comprises three subjects namely Mathematics, Environmental Studies, and English Language in a single electronic comic textbook format.

He stated that as steps and measures to make up the gaps for the academic situation especially for the schools, the Department of Education (S) has initiated for the electronic format comic textbooks for Class III, IV, and V.

Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam said that the decisions were made after thorough discussion and analysis with the experts and officials concerned of the Department of Education. He explained that the 3 in 1 electronic format comic textbook for these three classes will have three to four chapters of each subject to a total of ten to twelve chapters in each book.

The launching of the textbooks was held at his office chamber at New Secretariat, Imphal. The comic textbooks can be availed from the website www.manipureducation.gov.in.

RURAL BASED INDUSTRIES IN MANIPUR TO RESUME WORK FROM 20TH APRIL

Trade, Commerce and Industries Minister Shri Thongam Biswajit Singh has said that following a directive from the Central Ministry, industries based in rural areas of the State including all Micro Small and Medium Enterprises can resume operation from 20th April,2020.

Addressing a meeting with officials of the Trade Commerce and Industries Directorate and a group of entrepreneurs, Shri Biswajit said that the move has been announced following the government's announcement of some relaxation in some sectors including industries from the complete lockdown. This, he said, has been undertaken to help the rural population to sustain their daily livelihood.

During the meeting held at his New Secretariat office, the Minister instructed the Directorate's officials to submit all requirements of the entrepreneurs for the resumption of the industry sector.

RD&PR SCHEMES TO RESUME IMPLEMENTATION ABIDING STRICT GOVERNMENT DIRECTIVES

Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Shri Thongam Biswajit Singh have instructed officials of the RD and PR Department to resume implementation of all schemes implemented in rural areas including the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on 25th April 2020.

Addressing a meeting with Panchayat elected members and officials of the department at his office, the Minister also instructed that proper guidelines and protocols as instructed by the government are maintained while resuming work under MGNREGS.

He also instructed the Adhyakshas to ensure that adequate masks and hand sanitizers are distributed to the job-card holders to be utilised during the implementation of the scheme. He also said that any implementation of the schemes should follow all guidelines and protocols including social distancing and use of face mask.

Shri Biswajit also said that the department has already opened a toll-free number (1800-345-3872) for anyone who has a complaint or grievances regarding implementation of the scheme in the State. He urged all concerned to use this toll-free number to highlight or apprise the officials of any grievances or complaints.

MANIPUR OBSERVES JANATA (PUBLIC) CURFEW

As part of observance of the "Janata (Public) Curfew" announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on 22nd March, 2020 from 7

a.m. to 9 p.m., a one-minute siren was played at 5 pm from GM Hall, Imphal.

Shri J. Suresh Babu, Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur has fervently appealed the general public of Imphal City in particular to get themselves ready two minutes ahead of 5.00pm at the balcony and porch of their respective residences and clap loudly in appreciation and mark of gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and paramedics who are rendering great services for prevention of pandemic caused by coronavirus in Manipur.

MINISTER LETPAO HAOKIP ENSURES AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL ITEMS TO INDO-MYANMAR BORDER VILLAGES

YAS and Water Resources Minister Shri Letpao-Haokip ensured that any rice consuming person (non-infants) above the age of 2 years be given 5kg of rice per head in his constituency during the current critical times because of the lockdown of COVID-19 on 23rd April 2020. He also revealed that apart from the existing quarantine centres, he will push the government to set up more quarantine facilities as the districts of Chandel and Tengnoupal is a high-risk area because of its proximity with the international-border.

The remote villages lying along the Indo-Myanmar border and innermost recesses of Chandel and Tengnoupal have been facing extreme hardship to get essential commodities owing to the lockdown.

Apart from the rice distributed under PMGKAY and OMSS schemes, he had arranged personally from his local MLA FUND and some additional fund amounting to 9 lakhs from his pocket to distribute rice to the 50 thousand-plus persons of his 41-Chandel AC.

The minister reached personally to the remote villages of Chandel district such as Khambarol, Khengjoi, Sajik Tampak Kana Area and Sugnu Hill Area to distribute rice and other essential items.

Minister Shri Letpao Haokip had also chaired a review meeting of the COVID-19 tackling measures being implemented in the two districts of Chandel and Tengnoupal, in the attendance of DCs, SPs and DLOs at the Chandel DC Complex on 21st April.

ANGANWADI WORKERS DISTRIBUTES HOT COOKED MEAL ITEMS THROUGH HOME VISITS

Social Welfare Minister Smt. Nemcha Kipgen informed that the Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur is distributing Hot Cooked Meal items in the form of 'Take Home Ration' through home visits by the Anganwadi Workers on 14 th April, 2020. This is to ensure that the beneficiaries are not deprived of the nutritional foods distributed under Supplementary Nutrition Programme during the present total lockdown, she asserted.

Under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur has been distributing Hot Cooked Meal items under Supplementary Nutrition Programme to eligible beneficiaries viz. 6 months-6 years children, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers as per the guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.

As part of precautionary measures to contain/prevent the possible spread of COVID-19 (Novel Corona Virus disease) and the advisory issued by the Ministry of Health, Government of India as well as by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Manipur, all the Anganwadi Centres was closed since 20th March, 2020.

FUNDS FOR CMST BENEFICIARIES RELEASED: MINISTER NEMCHA KIPGEN

Social Welfare Minister Smt. Nemcha Kipgen announced that funds for Care Giver Allowance to the Persons with Disabilities under Chief Ministergi Shotharabasingi Tengbang (CMST) have been released through Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) on April 07, 2020.

The funds released are for June 2019 to January 2020 for the year 2019-20. Altogether, 4879 beneficiaries will be receiving the amount in their respective bank accounts, Minister informed.

Social Welfare Minister reiterated that funds for most of the schemes of the department are now given through DBT to avoid any misappropriation of funds by any third party and to directly reach the funds of the beneficiaries in their bank accounts.

DIPR PROVIDES SAFETY ITEMS FOR MEDIA PERSONNELS

To ensure safety and as part of its endeavour to prevent the spread of COVID 19 while collecting information by the media personnels in the state, Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Manipur provided 200 each of hand sanitizers and face masks for media persons on 15 th April 2020.

Commissioner (IPR) Shri M. Joy handed over the items to Shri Bijoy Kakchingtabam, President, All Manipur Working Journalist Union (AMWJU) in a simple function held at DIPR complex, Nityapat Chuthek, Imphal.

The hand santizers were procured by DIPR while the face masks were provided by the Health Department.

MINISTER NEMCHA KIPGEN ANNOUNCED EX-GRATIA OF Rs.500 FOR NSAP PENSIONERS

Social Welfare Minister Smt. Nemcha Kipgen announced that ex-gratia of Rs. 500 under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) will be disbursed for the beneficiaries of Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGN-WPS) and Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) to help them fight the battle against COVID-19 on 8th April 2020.

Minister Smt Nemcha informed that the total amount of Rs. 309.87 lakh (Three Crore Nine Lakh and Eighty Seven Thousand) have been released by the Ministry of Rural Development (NSAP Section) for the state of Manipur. The funds will be released to the pensioners through Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) to the respective bank accounts of the beneficiaries, she asserted.

To combat the economic impact on the poor and needy during this lockdown period, PM Narendra Modi led government on 26 March, 2020 announced 'Relief Package' of ₹1.7 lakh crore under PMGKY. The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) was launched by the Government of India in 2016.

THIS HAPPENED WHEN YOU WERE AT HOME

National Doctors' Day

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has greeted the doctors on the occasion of National Doctors' Day which is being celebrated under the aegis of Indian Medical Association across the Nation on 1st July 2020.

In his greetings, chief minister said that the celebration of the Doctors' Day underscores the value of the medical community. It offers an opportunity to express gratitude towards the community for the life-saving service they offer, he said.

In the current times of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has realized the importance of doctors more than ever. While we are self-isolating, it is the doctors who are constantly fighting for the lives of the people who have been infected with the deadly virus, he added. He also appealed to all to respect and appreciate medical fraternity for their selfless contribution in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic.

For the first time in the state of Manipur, a 40-year-old female nurse, working at Churachandpur district hospital with no travel history has been tested positive with Novel Coronavirus on 4th June 2020.

Auto Driver Laibi Honoured By Chief Minister

Smt. Laibi Oinam, a street vendor cum auto driver, who volunteered to drop off a recovered Covid-19 patient from Imphal to her home in Kamjong district bordering Myanmar, has won laurels and a cash prize.

Recognising her efforts, Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, along with a group of MLAs, and other well-wishers, awarded Laibi with a cash reward of Rs 1.10 lakh on 11th June 2020. The cash reward was sponsored by some entrepreneurs from Mani-

pur along with the Manipuri diasporas from US, UK, Canada and Singapore as an encouragement for her humane and heroic act and service.



Smt. Laibi Oinam volunteered to drop the recovered COVID-19 patient from JNIMS, Imphal East to Kamjong district covering an eight-hour journey on night of 31st May 2020.

Laibi Oinam, a resident of Pangei Bazaar, Imphal East, is a mother of two sons and is the sole breadwinner of the family. In 2015, a documentary "Auto Driver", based on her life, had won several awards including best social issue film in the non-feature category at the 63rd National Film Awards in 2015 and Best Short Documentary in the Audience Choice category at the 2017 Women's Voices Now Film Festival.

Manipur Launches Website For Skill Mapping Of Covid-19 Returnees Of The State

Labour & Employment Minister, Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam launched the website www.mssd.in at his New Secretariat Office Chamber on 5th July. He said that the website has been developed for online data collection of skills/work experience of the COVID-19 returnees of the State.

The skill mapping exercise will be conducted by Manipur Society for Skill Development (MSSD) under the Department of Labour & Employment, Government of Manipur.

The Minister said that it is a crucial time for the state as challenges of economic downturn are being faced due to COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed that the website will be focused towards skill mapping of the citizens of Manipur who have returned back to the state, after giving up their respective jobs, due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Imphal East District Administration Introduces Food Bank To Help The Needy

Imphal East District Administration has introduced a new initiative to provide immediate aid in the form of free food to the poor and needy. Titled "Food Bank" under the theme, "Help End Hunger Today", the initiative was started on 9th April 2020. The initiative comes after the successful introduction of Home Delivery of essential commodities for Imphal East District due to the long Statewide lockdown in view of the threat of Coronavirus disease (Covid-19).

The Deputy Commissioner, Imphal East in a Public Notice issued vide No.DC(IE)/COVID-19/FB/2020 dated 8th April 2020, welcomes any willing donor to donate any essential items at their disposal like dry ration (rice, aata, maida, daal, edible oil, salt, potato, onions etc.), Milk, Biscuits, packages drinking water, and Non-food items like Hygiene and Sanitation related items like soaps, Hand wash, Household cleaning supplies, diapers, sanitary pads, sanitizers and medical aid items like Masks, Gloves, and PPEs etc. for further distribution to the poor and needy affected by shutdown due to threat of Covid-19.

Besides Shri Mangminlian Vaiphei, AC to DC, Imphal East (Contact No. 8132817540) is appointed as Nodal Officer, Food Bank, who will be overall in charge of the collection and distribution of all the items, and Ms. Pinky Lukram, Branch Officer (Contact No.8787437529) and Shri Dhananjoy Singh, Branch Officer (Contact No. 7005705260) shall assist the Nodal Officer. The Food Bank at Imphal East DC Office Complex, Porompat conceived under the guidance of Dr. Rangitabali Waik-

hom, Deputy Commissioner, Imphal East District aims to ensure faster coordination and better logistics to supply food and essential items to the needy affected by the lockdown.

The Food Bank has distributed 372 kgs of Rice, 56 Kgs of Daal, 120 Kgs of Potatoes, 36 Kgs of Salt, 15 bottles of Sanitizers and Face Masks to various sections of people such as People Living with HIV (PLHIV) of VIHAAN, AHANA and RUSA Organisations, persons at Drug Rehabilitation Centres like Nirvana Foundation, Reborn Drug De-Addiction Centre, Hope Ministry Rehabilitation Centre, Serenity Foundation Institute of Addiction and Alcoholism and poor and needy people from Yaingangpokpi, Gwaltabi, Thamnepokpi and Sanasabi as on 11th April 2020.

Many needy ones have applied through concerned Nodal Organisations to the Food Bank for help and they will be given the needed items after proper verifications, added Mangminlian Vaiphei, Nodal officer, Food Bank. The DC also expressed hearty gratitude to those willing donors, and welcomes any donor in the future to help the Food Bank, Imphal East District and help end hunger of the poor and needy during these State wide Lockdown.

Earlier the District Administration in compliance with the directives of the State Government to keep members of the community safe at home and to lessen inconvenience faced by general public concerning supply of essential items amid lockdown has come up with Home Delivery of essential commodities to the doorsteps for the District.

Imphal West District Administration Provides Assistance To More Than 10,000 Stranded Migrants

The Imphal West District Administration has provided 10,360 verified stranded migrant population with rations such as rice, dal, salt and cooking oil as on April 12, 2020 in the wake of COVID-19 lockdown. The migrant workers are mostly engaged as daily wage earners, barbers, motias, rickshawpuller among others. In the district 1,285 workers have also been given shelter and food by employers/industry where they are working.

Helping the Imphal West District Administration towards providing assistance are more than

200 employees of the district administration and volunteers from Red Cross, NYK among others, working round the clock helping the needy. Free rations are also provided to Children Home, Old Age Home, and Rehab Centres.

It may be also be mentioned that the district administration provided assistance to a total of 18824 Households/Families and 3402.60 quintal of rice under PMGKAY on April 12, 2020. Under OMSS, 195.75 quintal of rice was also provided to 2123 Households/Families for the district.

Churachandpur Police-Periodic Health Check-Up

Churachandpur District Police has started conducting periodic Health Check-up of its officers & personnel at all the Police Stations and Outposts to determine their health status and take maximum health care on 19th April 2020.

“As we have been out on duty for strict enforcement of lockdown and to ensure social distancing, balancing it out with facilitating public to get essential commodities, the health of our officers and men is of primary concern, as our exposure is to the maximum number of persons who we come in close contact with while carrying out our duty,” said Ms. Amrita Sinha, SP, Churachandpur.

“Police is doing its best so that we can serve the Public better,” she added.

This exercise is being carried out to evaluate the health status and will be done in a periodic manner, the SP informed.

“Stay at home, stay safe, stay healthy is what we have been requesting people and it is the cooperation from the public that we have been able to keep the place safe, so far,” she said.

CM Inaugurates Covid Care Centre Lamboikhongnangkong

Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh inaugurated a 300 bedded Covid Care Centre (CCC) at Manipur Trade and Expo Centre, Lamboikhongnangkong in Imphal West District, on 3rd August 2020.

Briefing the media persons, Chief Minister stated that there is evidence of local transmission of



COVID-19, however there is no community transmission of the disease in the State. He maintained that awareness among the people is very much needed to contain further spread of the disease. He also appealed to the people to come out openly for early treatment instead of concealing their COVID-19 status if tested positive.

The Chief Minister said that presently, a total of 300 beds have been installed in the CCC, Lamboikhongnangkong and it will be upgraded to a 1000-bedded Centre as it has enough space for extension. He appreciated the Health Department and other officials for setting up the Covid Care Centre so that infected people can get timely treatment.

PM Lays Foundation Stone For Manipur Water Supply Project

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Manipur Water Supply Project through a video conference on July 23, 2020.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister said that the Rs. 3050 crores Manipur Water Supply Project would reduce the water problems of the state and would be especially providing a huge relief to the women of the State. He maintained that apart from Greater Imphal, the project would benefit 25 small towns and 1700 villages in the state.

Prime Minister stated that about 25 lakh poor people in Manipur have received free food grains under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY). Similarly, more than 1.5 lakh women in Manipur have been given the facility of free cooking gas under the Ujjwala scheme, he added. He appreciated the Manipur Government for making all the necessary arrangements during the



lockdown and special arrangements for the return of natives to the State.

In his welcome speech, Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh said that with such project, potable drinking water would be provided to every household of the State by 2024. He mentioned that the New Development Bank (NDB) funded project of Rs. 3054 crores is the largest single compact project ever sanctioned by the Government of India for Manipur.

The Chief Minister said that under the leadership and guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, there has been visible positive change in Manipur in the last three years. He mentioned that with the support and co-operation of the people, there has been a cohesive and peaceful environment in the State under the present regime. He mentioned that various developmental activities are being taken up in the State for the welfare of the people of Manipur. With the blessings of the Prime Minister, the government could build women's market in every district of the State, he added.

The Government of India initiated the Jal Jeevan Mission to provide safe and adequate quantity drinking water to every rural household of the country by 2024 with the motto "Har Ghar Jal".

Governor of Manipur Dr. Najma Heptulla, Union Minister for Jal Shakti Shri Gajendra Singh Sekhawat, Minister of State for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Deputy Chief Minister, Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Chief Secretary and other high ranking officials were present during the function.

Manipur's Titular King Leishemba Sanajaoba Sworn In As Rs Member

The titular king of Manipur, Shri Leishemba Sana-

jaoba, was sworn in as a Member of Parliament at Rajya Sabha in New Delhi on 22nd July 2020. Of the 61 members, 45 newly elected ones took oath as members of the upper house.

Dressed in royal traditional attire, the titular king took the oath in his Manipuri language and vowed to uphold the Indian Constituency by taking the name of Lainingthou Sanamahi, Ibudhou Pakhangba and Shri Shri Govindaji.

As per media reports, Rajya Sabha Chairperson M Venkaiah Naidu administered the oath to 45 of 61 newly elected Members of the Upper House. The oath taking ceremony was held inside the Rajya Sabha chambers.

A BJP candidate, Sanajaoba won the lone seat of Rajya Sabha by defeating Congress candidate T Mangibabu with two votes on 22nd June 2020.

Two From Manipur Clear UPSC Civil Services Exam 2019

Two youths from Manipur have cleared the Civil Services Exam (CSE) 2019, conducted by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), results of which were declared on 4th August 2020.

Nongjai Mohd Ali Akram Shah, a resident of Khergao Nongjai Leikai Kshetrigao in Imphal East district and Parikshit Thoudam, of Uripok Cheirap Maning in Imphal West district made it to the list of successful candidates. While Ali Akram Shah secured the 188 position, Parikshit was ranked 373.

Ali Akram Shah completed his B.Tech in Computer Science from National Institute Technology (NIT), Manipur and Parikshit completed an integrated Master's programme for five years from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Bhopal in 2018.

According to North East Today, a total of ten candidates from Northeast India successfully cleared the 2019 Civil Services Examination including Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) conducted by UPSC.

From Assam, four candidates made it to the list; two each from Manipur and Sikkim and one each from Tripura and Nagaland..

'SAVE NAMBUL RIVER' MEDIA CAMPAIGN

In a move to create public awareness in saving the dying rivers of Manipur particularly Nambul River, a day-long media campaign, titled 'Save Nambul River' was held on 2nd July 2020. The campaign was organized by All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU) in collaboration with the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change.

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Shri Awangbow Newmai flagged off the one day media campaign at Thong Nambonbi, Imphal West.

Minister Awangbow Newmai appealed to the general public for cooperation in all the projects initiated by the Government. Minister Awangbow Newmai also said that the historically relevant Nambul River has been immensely polluted in the last 40-50 years. He reminded that Chief Minister Shri N. Biren Singh on March last year had launched the 'Rejuvenation and Conservation of Nambul River' project under the National River Conservation Plan of the Ministry.

Stating that he was surprised to learn that the participants of the 'Save Nambul River' media campaign will visit upto Loktak using boats; he said it is indeed a great initiative taken up for mass awareness for rejuvenation and conservation effort of the Nambul River.

Shri M. Joy, Commissioner, Information and Public Relations (IPR), Dr Y Nabachandra, Director, Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, Shri Khogendra Khomdram, President, Editors Guild Manipur, Shri Bijoy Kakchingtabam, President, AMWJU among others attended the flag-off ceremony.



The Rejuvenation and Conservation of Nambul River is a project under the National River Conservation Plan of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change with project cost of Rs 97.72 crore to be completed in three years in phase wise manner. Directorate of Environment and Climate Change will implement the project with line departments Water Resources, Public Health Engineering, MAHUD (IMC) and Manipur State Pollution Control Board.

Loktak Lake

A GEM PERISHING IN FRONT OF OUR EYES

Shri M. Asnikumar Singh



The 5th of June marks the World Environment Day. The simple meaning of an environment comes up as, “the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates.”

I grew up in humble and serene surroundings of a village called Keibul Lamjao with our state’s gem, the Loktak Lake in the background. After two and a half decades of having lived in

the hustle and bustle of Imphal city one can’t help but admire the ingenuity and charm of the lake, whenever the chance arrives. But this charm and ingenuity is on the brink of fading into oblivion due to some short-sighted decisions taken 47 years ago. Atoning for that is perhaps the biggest will we can leave behind for our children.

Loktak Lake, the largest freshwater lake of Manipur, is the lifebelt for the people of the



state. But it has an emotional and spiritual connection with the fishermen community. This lake is their primary source of livelihood. But now it has become a fight for survival for the fishermen. Government policies announced to conserve the lake constitute huge threats to the fishermen as most of them lack alternative livelihood skills.

According to the jewel of India's folklore, Loktak was formed when gods sought the support of the valley's people. The lake has

seen the very notion of Manipur take form. It was on its shores that the beloved Meitei folklore of princess Thoibi and Khamba and their timeless romance came to life. Poubi Lai, a mythical creature integral to the Meitei belief system, is believed to inhabit the heart of the lake.

Encompassing an area of about 26,000 hectares, the Loktak lake is our state's largest fishery resource, accounting for more than 50% of the fish producing area. About 12% of the state's population depend on its resources. No wonder, it is referred to as 'Mother' by our fishing community.

Something which we often ignore while discussing our state's climate is that the lake serves as a generating base for bio energy of the region, particularly for our state. It synchronizes climatic conditions and stimulates different ethos, cultural fabrics in the area.

In a sense the Loktak Lake itself is a generator of all kinds of cultural and ethnic endemism for the people of Manipur, particularly the fishing community in and around the periphery of the lake. Of which it may be cited one of the best and remarkable points is the technique of 'Phum Namba' which is still in vogue for the livelihood of the region.

The term Phum Namba is known in the region since time immemorial.

It may be described as follows: The people of the region particularly fishing community and the community of the Thanga island and people of the peripheral area of the Loktak lake who practise this technique (basically the fishing community) cultivate water weed in the form of circular as well as semi-circular just at the water level of the lake.

This particular Phum Namba will be preserved for about a year. During this period the local indigenous fish species sanitise in and around the Phum.

The fishing community also feed a plethora of local nutrients to the area every day. These

nutrients are mainly derived from rice husking powder and some other aquatic vegetables.

So, as in and around, the Phum will always concentrate inside the core of the planted Phum, all these Phums will be harvested during the lean season of the year, which commences from October and concludes in the month of March.

This type of harvesting is known as Phum Namba. It is also reported that there are more than 1000 floating Phum hut dwellers. Their basis cultivation is the cultivation of Phum and to above, i.e Phum Namba for their livelihood.

There are other techniques of fishing other than Phum Namba techniques are namely:

1. Trapping by net (Lang Thakpa)
2. Bamboo Trap (Lu Thumba)
3. Pulling of Fishing Net (In Chingba)
4. Ancling and Longthinba

However, the removal of a large number of fish culture ponds from the core area of the lake has led to massive economic deracination.

In the 70s, the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (NHPC) pitched an ambitious project to the then government of Manipur; a power station to harness the hydropower potential of the Loktak Lake. The 105 MW capacity power station would provide cheap electricity to Manipur and its neighbouring States. It would also provide lift irrigation for 23,000 hectares of land in the valley. The State government approved the project without making any effort to study its impact on the lake's ecosystem and on livelihoods dependent on the lake.

In 1983, NHPC constructed a barrage at the conflux of the Manipur and Khuga rivers — two of the five major rivers that drain into Loktak Lake — near Ithai village. The Ithai Barrage was to act as a barrier and create an artificial reservoir with the water level maintained at 768.5 metres throughout the year, much higher than Loktak's water level.

The barrage became operational that year. First, Loktak's perimeter broke. Then thousands of hectares of agricultural land around the lake was flooded and thousands of people lost their lands and homes overnight. Farmers became fishermen. And the fishermen now became too many.

Loktak and the 20 other wetlands became one water body for good; seasonal changes in the water level stopped and the ecosystem started crumbling.

From time to time, the fishing community are rendered unable to practice their traditional technique. Before the implementation of the Loktak National Hydro Electric Project and the commissioning of Ithai Barrage there were two different seasons of fishing to all the surrounding fishing areas; viz one on the arising of the Loktak level and another in the following of the Loktak water level and another in the following of the Loktak water level during the lean seasons.

Now, as a consequence of the Loktak Hydel project, the lake's water level remains high throughout the year. Hence, the two seasons of fishing in the region has already been spoiled in an irreplaceable condition: over and above most of endemic plants of Loktak has also been seriously endangered.

In all honesty, the lake is slowly but surely dying in all forms.

There's a saying, "We realise the value of certain things once we lose it". Let us not be known as the generation that did nothing while perhaps our most precious resource perished slowly right in front of our eyes. This world environment day, let us all; the people of Sanaleibak, take a pledge to contribute in concrete, meaningful efforts to save this god given treasure, whose immense value we have often ignored.

(Writer is an Environmentalist, Secretary, Manipur Thinkers Forum and also a prominent political activist)

STATE OBSERVES WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2020



As World Environment Day 2020 is being observed across the State, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh led others in tree plantation at Samadhi of Maharaj Gambhir Singh, Bir Tikendrajit Park and Rani Gaidinliu Park on 5th June 2020.

Chief Minister said that the essence of celebrating World Environment Day is to save human lives by protecting and preserving the environment. He maintained that natural disasters, global warming, climate change etc. are the consequences of the destruction of nature. Humans need nature for survival and nature doesn't need us, he added.

Stating the importance of preserving forest and wildlife, the Chief Minister stated that we must take necessary measures to save the earth. The Chief Minister said that the government has initiated Green Manipur Mission so as to conserve and preserve the forest area of the State. Mass plantation drives are being taken up in various parts of the State, he added. He appealed to the people of the State to accomplish the mission.

Minister for Forest and Environment Shri Awangbow Newmai, Minister for CAD&PD Shri Karamshyam, Deputy Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly Shri K. Robindro, Chairman of LDA Shri L. Susindro, Chairman of Manipur Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board Shri H. Dingo, Advisor to CM Shri K. Leishiyo, MLA of Yaikul AC Shri Th. Satyabrata Singh, Addl. Chief Secretary (Forest) Shri M.H. Khan and others attended the function.

The State Level World Environment Day 2020 is organized by Directorate of Environment and Climate Change under the theme 'Biodiversity'.

FOREST MINISTER FLAGS OFF MANIPUR VAN DHAN NATURALS TO TRIBES INDIA OUTLETS

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Shri Awangbow Newmai flagged off Manipur Van Dhan Naturals to Tribes India Outlets through TRIFED Regional offices at Guwahati and Delhi on June 17, 2020. He also launched Nature Learning Centre (NLC) website under National Mission on Himalayan Studies, inspected the museum and Interpretation Centre at NLC and later met senior forests officers at the Mantipukhri Forest Complex.

Following brief introduction, the Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) addressed their grievances to the Minister and senior officers. They informed that most of the offices in the districts were facing staff shortage, lack of infrastructure, no marked land for divisional offices, no quarter for DFOs, encroachment issue, frequent transfer and posting, no patrolling vehicle especially in the border area, need for arms for the field staff, need for legal advisor due to various court cases in the higher court as well as in lower court among other issues.

While addressing the officers, Minister Shri Awangbow Newmai said the entire exercise and activities of the department are all about protecting the nature for healthy environment and for ecological balance. Apart from it, the department also helps the Government under permissible rules to bring revenues which is why various assignments and tasks are assigned to different officers of the department, he added.

Regarding the issues addressed by the DFOs, he said by sharing the problems the DFOs have shown that they have been working seriously, carrying out their respective assignments diligently. He said he is proud to learn that the Manipur Forest Department is ahead in many areas in comparison to their counter parts in neighbouring states.

Additional Chief Secretary Shri MH Khan informed the officers that he will accompany the Forest Minister and inspect each divisional forest offices in order to take stock of the situation and address to the grievances faced by the staff of the respective offices. He opined that there should be strong synergy between all levels of the staff and officers within the department.

He also suggested that there is a need for permanent building or complex of the Forest Office across the different divisions in the State. In addition to the legal advisor at Secretariat who is dealing with court cases of the department, he suggested that two legal advisors (one for hills and one for valley) can be hired to deal with the court cases in the districts which can be collaborated with the DFOs.

MH Khan further suggested providing computers/tablets in all the offices to access the online portal. Stating that supervision and monitoring is very important, he said some vehicles should be provided which can be used for surveillance.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Head of Forest Force (PCCF and HoFF) Shri K Angami informed that for initial phase a proposal has been sent to provide arms to 100 field staffs, to which to ease the financial burden. Additional Chief Secretary Shri MH Khan suggested procurement of old guns from the Police Department as they are on modernizing their weapons.

He said after looking at the financial constraints of some of the staffs, the department has submitted a proposal that the Forest staff starting from Forest Guard to Deputy Range Officers should be given 13 months pay and ration money as they are doing all round field duty. He also said the department has proposal to procure additional vehicles (4X4) and strengthen the strength of the staff.

SALIENT FEATURE

IMPHAL SEWERAGE PROJECT PHASE I

1.	Name of Project	Imphal Sewerage Project Phase I
2.	Capacity	27 MLD
3.	Location	Lamphelpat, Imphal West District
4.	Project Cost	345.43 crore
5.	Source of Fund	EAP: 41.54 crore, State Plan: 303.89 crore
6.	Area to be covered	Imphal Municipal ward nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14,15, 24, 25 and 26
7.	Population to be benefited	1,73,245 inhabitants
8.	Treatment components	Primary & Secondary Treatment Plants, methods : Extended aeration Process with Sludge dewatering using belt filters
9.	Date of Start	2005
10.	Date of Completion	June 2017
11.	Implementing Agency	Simplex Project Ltd.
12.	Brief Note	The original estimate was sanctioned on 11/11/2005 for Rs. 93.21 crore excluding an EAP portion of Rs. 41.54 crore. Now the total revised cost of the project is 445.43 crore. Imphal sewage treatment plant is the only sewage treatment plant in the whole North East India. The capacity of Treatment Plant is 27 MLD. The treatment technology is with Extended Aeration Process with Sludge dewatering using belt filters. The final product of sludge is in the form of sludge cakes. The total sewerage system consists of 25.30 km primary network including HDPE Pipe with trenchless technology for 3.04 km and 44.14 kms secondary sewer lines. So far, 3000 domestic households out of targeted 12,000 households including Imphal bazar areas, Govt. Quarters, CRPF Colony, RIMS hospital, Lamphel Supermarket Complex etc. have already been benefitted.

SALIENT FEATURE

INTEGRATED WATER SUPPLY PROJECT FOR IMPHAL PLANNING AREA PH-I

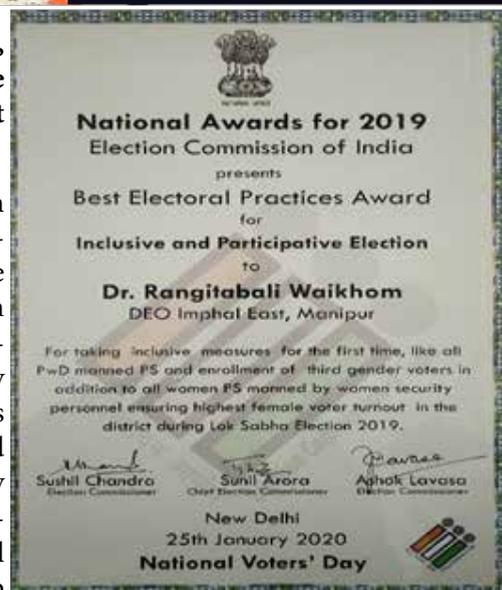
1	Name of Project	Integrated Water Supply Project for Imphal Planning Area Ph-I
2	Capacity	9.00 ML
3	Location	Iroisemba Hilltop, Imphal West District
4	Project Cost	Rs. 736.77 lakhs
5	Source of Fund	RIDF under NABARD
6	Source of Water	Kangchup Treatment Plant
7	Area to be covered	Imphal City: viz: Lamphelpat, Iroisemba and Uripok area, Nagamapal, parts of Wahengbam Leikai and Salam Leikai, Thangal Bazar, Paona Bazar, Bir Tikendrajit Road, Old Lambulane, Old and New Secretariat, upto Telephone Bhawan, filling of Langjing Zonal Reservoir
8	Population to be benefitted	About 1,60,000 heads
9	Treatment Components	RCC Master Reservoir of Capacity 9.00 Million Litres
10	Date of Start	April 2018
11	Date of Completion	December 2019
12	Implementing Agency	M/s Alinsons Impex & Construction Company Pvt. Ltd.
	Brief Note	The New 9.0 ML RCC Master Reservoir will be filled by gravity from Kangchup Treatment Plants of capacities 14.53 MLD and 9.08 MLD at Kangchup. The existing old reservoirs at Iroisemba (2x1.5 ML and 2x0.45 ML) with a total capacity of 3.90 ML which were commissioned around 1965 could no longer meet the ever increasing demands for potable water. The area to be supplied by this reservoir includes major parts of Imphal City viz: Lamphelpat, Iroisemba and Uripok area, Nagamapal, parts of Wahengbam Leikai and Salam Leikai, Thangal Bazar, Paona Bazar, Bir Tikendrajit Road, Old Lambulane, Old and New Secretariat upto Telephone Bhawan at Babupara, filling of Langjing Hilltop Zonal Reservoir etc.

INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT IN 2019-20



National Awards For 2019, Election Commission of India, best electoral practices award for inclusive and participative election to District Election Officer, Imphal East, Manipur at New Delhi on 25th January, 2020.

During the Lok Sabha Election 2019, district administration Imphal East had taken up numerous innovative initiatives towards inclusive and participative election. For the first time 14-Yaiskul Assembly Constituency in the Lok Sabha Election 2019 was manned by women only named as EETA polling stations. Some of these EETA polling stations were manned by women police officials only. Selective EETA polling stations were made model polling stations with various provisions and amenities like crèche, selfie points for the voters, children play corner, senior citizens corner, health check up counters, persons with disability friendly polling stations etc. Apart from all women manned Yaiskul AC, EETA polling stations were set up in four polling stations in Thongju AC, four polling stations in Kshetrigao AC, three polling stations in Heingang AC, six polling stations in Khurai AC too. The EETA poll-



ing stations were lively, peaceful, huge voter turnout and successful. All Persons with Disabilities for the first time manned a polling station in Wangkhei AC. The district worked for the Transgender Upliftment and for the first timetransgender community was identified and enrolled and obtained 52% transgender voter turnout which is higher than the state transgender voter turnout. For these tremendous efforts toward inclusive and participative election, Election Commission of India presented the National Awards for 2019 “Best Electoral Practices award” to District Election Officer, Imphal East District, Manipur consisting of Citation, Certificate and Cash reward of Rs. 50,000.

NATIONAL e-GOVERNANCE SILVER AWARD 2019-2020 TO LOUCHAPATHAP ONLINE LAND RECORD COMPUTERISATION AND NATIONAL GENERIC DOCUMENT REGISTRATION SYSTEM OF IMPHAL EAST DISTRICT OF MANIPUR IN NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON e-GOVERNANCE HELD AT MUMBAI ON 7th& 8th FEBRUARY 2020s



Imphal East district is recognized with National e-Governance 2020 Silver Award in Category III –“Excellence in District level initiative in e-Governance for North-East States” for the implementation of “Loucha Pathap” and NGDRS. Loucha Pathap is the online land record computerization initiated under Digital India Land Record Modernisation Programme. Loucha Pathap is implemented in the entire district thereby making land record data available online for all the seven circles in the district. Imphal East has also started adopting NGDRS at the Office of Sub Registrar Porompat so that citizen can do online calculation of land valuation and online submission of registration applications. Imphal East is selected for the silver award in recognition of the initiatives and reforms in strengthening land record administration.

The award consisting of Certificate, Trophy and Cash award of Rs. 1 lakh is handed over to Imphal East District at the National Confer-

ence on e-Governance held in Mumbai on 7th and 8th February 2020 at National Sports Club of India, Lala Lajpat Rai Marg, Worli, Mumbai in the presence of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State, Secretary Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Secretary MEITY, Addl. Secy. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Principal Secy. Department of Information Technology Government of Maharashtra and various other senior officers from Central and State Governments.

POSHAN MAAH

Imphal East District had taken up various initiatives under the Poshan Maah as a Jan Andolan campaign in the whole month of September 2019. The District through various activities reached out this movement of safe food, eat right, eat healthy, stay healthy, Anemia free Imphal East, grow herbs, groom kitchen gardens, eat sustainable etc in collaboration with food safety, Ayushman Bharat, Swatch Bharat Nirman etc across all sections of the communities with the highest number of activities and outreach in real time data updation in the Poshan Abhiyan Monitoring Dashboard. For this remarkable achievement and in recognition of the outstanding performance Imphal East District received numerous awards from Department of Social Welfare, Government of Manipur.

Deputy Commissioner, Imphal East was awarded outstanding performance for Best District and Best Deputy Commissioner with certificate, trophy and cash award. ICDS project Imphal East-I, Sawombung was honored with Best Project with certificate, trophy and cash award.



MATRU VANDANA SAPTAH

During the observation of “MATRU VANDANA SAPTAH” from 2nd to 15th December 2019, under ICDS, Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Manipur (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India), Imphal East District reached out to target beneficiaries especially pregnant women and lactating mothers through convergence with various Departments. Special Aadhar and Bank opening camps were organized at various villages to facilitate beneficiaries for opening of bank accounts and Aadhar enrolment. Massive community mobilization through involvement of PRIs and ULBs was held across all villages in the district. The District performed exceptionally well by attaining the highest beneficiaries enrolment in the scheme. This further impacted the performance of the State in “MATRU VANDANA SAPTAH” observation in the National Level.



- 1.) Deputy Commissioner, Imphal East was awarded for Best District and Best Deputy Commissioner by Social Welfare Department Government of Manipur for achieving the highest number of Beneficiaries enrolment in PMMVY.
- 2) DPO, ICDS CELL, Imphal District, was awarded with Best DPO in the same category.
- 3) CDPO, ICDS Project Imphal East-I, Sawombung was awarded for the Best Project in the same category.

A NEW HORIZON: NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

Wangjam Devendra Singh,
Public Relations officer, Manipur University

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020



Universalization of Education from pre-school to secondary level with **100% GER in school education by 2030**



GER in higher education to be raised to **50% by 2035**; **3.5 crore seats** to be added in higher education

NEP 2020 will bring **2 crore** out of school children back into the main stream

New **5+3+3+4** school curriculum with **12 years** of schooling and **3 years** of Anganwadi/ Pre-schooling

No rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools

Vocational Education to start from **Class 6 with Internships**

Teaching upto at least **Grade 5** to be in **mother tongue/regional language**

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the National Education Policy 2020 on 29th July 2020, unfolding a New Horizons for transformational reforms in education systems in the country, replacing the 34 year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986.

This new education policy rooted in Indian ethos is aligned to the self-reliant India for Sustainable Development and aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge

superpower by making both school and higher education more holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs and aimed at bringing out the unique capabilities of each student, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen.

The important highlights of the NEP 2020.

School Education

- New Policy aims for universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level with 100 % Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030.

- NEP 2020 will bring 2 crore out of school children back into the main stream through open schooling system.
- The current 10+2 system to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively. This will bring the hitherto uncovered age group of 3-6 years under school curriculum, which has been recognized globally as the crucial stage for development of mental faculties of a child. The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre schooling.
- Emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools ; Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships
- Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/ regional language. No language will be imposed on any student.
- Assessment reforms with 360 degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes
- A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree .

Higher Education

- Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to be raised to 50 % by 2035 ; 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education.
- The policy envisages broad based, multi-disciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education and multiple entry and exit points with appropriate certification. UG education can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period.
- Academic Bank of Credits to be established to facilitate Transfer of Credits

- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
- The National Research Foundation will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.
- Higher Education Commission of India(HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. HECI to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council(NAC) for accreditation. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.
- Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges. Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an Autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

Others

- An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.
- NEP 2020 emphasizes setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups
- New Policy promotes Multilingualism in both schools and higher education. National Institute for Pali, Persian and Prakrit , Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation to be set up
- The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

EDUCATION MINISTER MEETS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS FOR CONSTITUTION OF TASK FORCE FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEP, 2020



Education Minister Dr. Thokchom Radheshyam held a review meeting with the officials of Education Department to chalk out modalities and constitute a task force consisting of all core functionaries at the earliest for effective implementation of the National Education Policy, (NEP), 2020 in letter and in spirit on August 6, 2020

The Minister said that the main objective for constituting the task force is to prepare a roadmap for effective implementation of the new education policy. With the approval of the National Education Policy, (NEP), 2020 by the Union Cabinet, he said that the states have been directed for implementation of the policy. Brainstorming sessions will be held for analysing and understanding the National Education Policy, (NEP), 2020 and constitute the task force.

The task force will prepare the roadmap by identifying the challenges and concerns that may arise during the implementation of the new education policy. As such the need for translating the textbooks may be required especially for students of upto grade 5 as the learning and teaching will now be carried out through home/local language, he added.



HSLC, 2020 RESULT

Two Government School Students Ranked In Top 25 Position

The result of the High School Leaving Certificate Examination, 2020 conducted by the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM) was declared on 15th June 2020. Altogether 25,084 students were declared pass. 38,390 students including 18,860 male and 19,530 female students took part in the exam out of 38,664 enrolled this year. This year the pass percentage was recorded at 65.34%.

Two students from Government School were ranked amongst the first 25 position holders. Chabungbam Ishwarchandra Singh, S/o Ch. Shwamichandra Singh and Ch Nirmala Devi of Phubala Awang Maning Leikai of Moirang Multipurpose Higher Secondary School, Moirang was ranked seventh (securing 565 out of 600) and Satmunchon Kipge, S/o Ngamlal Kipgen and Ngahboi Kipgen of S.Jalenmol of Eklavya Model Residential School, Gamnom Saparmeina was ranked 11th position (securing 561 out of 600 marks).

Dr. Radheshyam also said that this year the exams were conducted with an aim to reduce unfair practices and provide a fair evaluation for which certain measures were introduced. The measures include introduction of online form fill up and admit card generation, changes in answer booklets, claims and objections towards the answer keys, uploading of toppers answer booklets in the website, strict vigilance of officials and people involved in conduct of the examination and evaluation.

Dr. Radheshyam also explained the struggles and hardships faced during evaluation of papers this year due to the present pandemic. Numbers of examiners, tabulators and staff utilised were reduced by 30-40% due to restrictions in movement and transportation constraints.

Reshmi Nandeibam, D/o Nandeibam Rishinanda Singh and Rajkumari Sanahanbi Devi of Khongman Zone-V, Imphal East of Pitambara English School, Kwakeithel ranked first (securing 579 out of 600 marks). Huidrom Rohid Singh, S/o H.Premjit Singh and H (o) Sumila Devi of Ishok Mayai Leikai of St.John's English High School, Nambol ranked second position (securing 578 out of 600 marks).

Khumanthem Bobosana Singh, S/o Khumanthem Sharat Singh and Khumanthem (o) Asha Devi

of Chairel Thoubaltabi of Eureka Academy, Thounaojam and Rahul Naorem S/o Naorem Jibol Singh and Athokpam Shantibala Devi of Arapti Mayai Leikai of Catholic School, Canchipur both ranked third position (securing 572 out of 600 marks).

Out of the 9008 Government School students appearing in the exam, 1106 students passed in first division, 2383 in second division and 173 in third division. 1891 students of Aided Schools appeared in the examination out of which 312 students passed in the first division, 623 students in second division and 40 passed in the third division.

Thoubal and Kakching were the Best Performing districts with a pass percentage of 77.50.



Twelve-year-old Isaac Paulallungmuan Vaiphei from Churachandpur district in Manipur has become the youngest candidate to clear the Class X board exams ever in the state.

According to media reports, Isaac secured first division marks (72%) in the recently declared results of the High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) examinations conducted by the Board of Secondary Education Manipur (BOSEM).

Of the total 38,390 candidates who appeared in the exams, Isaac was among the 11,884 who secured first division out of the 25,084 students who cleared this year.

A resident of Kangvai village, Issac, who was born in November 10, 2007, is the eldest among four siblings. The 12 year-old secured 73 in Mathematics, 53 in Science, 86 in English subjects. Overall, he scored 432 out of 600 marks

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF TRADITIONAL SKILLS

A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TOWARDS SKILL DEVELOPMENT



*Dr Naorem Nishikanta Singh
(M.A. Mass Com., Ph.D. Manipur University)
Guest Faculty, Dept. of Law
Assam University*

INTRODUCTION

It is certainly irrefutable that due to advancement in large scale industry and technology, the traditional skills and the way of life based on traditional values is gradually dying out. Undeniably there are changes in agriculture system, handicrafts, infrastructure and research, and this array of changes have indeed made human life more comfortable, and lifestyle these days are different from that of our ancestors. Some feels that, as the technology of a country develops, there is no point practicing the traditional skills. Looking from the other perspective, it would be wrong to completely turn down the importance of traditional skills, instead the better option is maintaining a balance between the use of technology and traditional methods. Moreover in Northeast India except in few cities and town, maximum of the population are enduring in traditional way of living within limited connectivity and narrow exposure to technology. According to 2011 census the population of Northeast India is about 45.5 million with several ethnic groups and different religions- Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Animism (Sanamahism, Seng Khasi, Donyi-Polo) etc. Each ethnic group is having their own culture and tradition wherein several traditional knowledge are incorporate and passing

down through generation to generation rendering an option to sustainable development.

Traditional knowledge plays a crucial role in establishing sustainable relationship between man and nature in the society more dependent on natural environment for their varied needs. The products nonetheless consume more time in making, are less hazard to environment, for instance cane and bamboo products. Artists and craftsmen from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura, over generations have produced rich varieties of handlooms and handicrafts. For them, it has been a means of livelihood, albeit a meager one. The region remains isolated, mainly owing to lack of sound communication and transport network. The lifestyle of the rural population demonstrates the example of sustainable living through traditional skills against leafs and bound of new technologies. These traditional skills happened to be a means to livelihood to many but recurrence replacement of the skills by technology drop-off this precious knowledge in today's generation. Practicing the inherent skills by the younger generation is the primary motif wherefore participation in extremely important. The fact of the matter is that participation is not a fixed state of affairs; it is a process through which

people become involved, to a lesser or a greater degree, in development processes (Geilfus, 2008).

Northeast India

Northeast India was made a part of Bengal Province from 1839 to 1873, when Assam became its own province. After Indian Independence from British Rule in 1947, the Northeastern region of British India consisted of Assam and the princely states of Manipur and Tripura. Subsequently, Nagaland in 1963, Meghalaya in 1972, Arunachal Pradesh in 1975 and Mizoram in 1987 were formed out of the large territory of Assam. Manipur and Tripura remained as Union Territories of India between 1956 until 1972, when they attained fully-fledged statehood. Sikkim was integrated as the eighth North Eastern Council state in 2002. The Northeast India states are officially recognized under the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for the development of the contiguous Seven Sister states and Sikkim. This region of about 2,62,000 square kilometers shares highly porous and sensitive frontiers of more than 4,500 kilometers (2,800 miles) of international border (about 90 per cent of its entire border area) with China (southern Tibet) in the north, Myanmar in the east, Bangladesh in the southwest, and Bhutan to the northwest.

Northeast India is the one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse regions in India with over 220 ethnic groups as well as equal number of dialects. This region comprising of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura is inhabited by a large number of tribals having their distinct cultures and traditions. It is the home to a number of primitive societies like Abor, Garo, Dafla, Khasi, Kuki, Mishi, Rabha, Naga, Apatani etc. (Biswas and Chopra, 1982; Jamir, 1989, 1990, 1991) as well as several tribes for instance Adivasi, Assamese, Bhutia, Bishnupriya Manipuri, Biaste, Bodo, Chakma, Chhetri, Dimasa, Garo, Gurung, Hajong, Hmar, Jamatia, Karbi, Koch, Kom, Paite, Vaiphei, Zou, Teddim, Simte, Gangte, Lepcha, Meitei, Mishing, Mizo, Poumai, Mao, Maram, Tangkhul, Anāl, Monsang, Naotia, Paite, Pnar, Purvottar Maithili, Reang, Rongmei, Singpho, Sylheti, Tamang, Tiwa, Tripuri, Zeme Naga, Chorei and Limbu are different ethnic groups inhabiting the region. Even in Manipur there are 33 government-recognized scheduled tribes of different ethnic. These ethnic communities are rich in traditional knowledge and practicing them since time immemorial. Traditional skills neither always perform all the same functions, nor do they all fall into the same category. Each of them has their own field of expertise.

Table No. 1 Demographic data

State	Population	Literacy %	Rural Population	Urban Population	Area (km ²)
Arunachal Pradesh	1,383,727	65.38	870,087	227,881	83,743
Assam	31,205,576	72.19	23,216,288	3,439,240	78,438
Manipur	2,570,390	79.21	1,590,820	575,968	22,327
Meghalaya	2,966,889	74.43	1,864,711	454,111	22,429
Mizoram	1,097,206	91.33	447,567	441,006	21,081
Nagaland	1,978,502	79.55	1,647,249	342,787	16,579
Sikkim	610,577	81.42	480,981	59,870	7,096
Tripura	3,673,917	87.22	2,653,453	545,750	10,486

Source: Economic Survey Manipur 2012-2013. Directorate of Economic & Statistics, Government of Manipur.

The traditional knowledge and skills of the ethnic community of northeast India has been profoundly appreciated and recognized in the society. There wisdoms and native skills span from cultivating and harvesting techniques, fermentation to culinary skills, weaving and knitting skills, dyeing flora to medicine plants, wood and bamboo crafts etc. has been supplementing since ages for local economy subsistence. These people have all the potentials to carry on entrepreneurial venture and even establish business of their own, notwithstanding the so called socio-cultural advantages adhere to the community, they are deprived and remains as unexplored talent. Several factors lead to the poverty and helplessness of these multi-talented communities.

Faith of Traditional Skills

From the outset of human civilizations certain activities were in practice to supplement the taste of day-to-day actions which later developed as skills. Such skills profoundly helped them meeting the basic demands and subsequently kept on passing from one generation to another. It was like a culture to read those knowledge, make use of it, preserve through generations which ultimately turned into what we termed as 'traditional skills' or 'traditional knowledge'. Thus the term is defined as

“know-how, skills and practices that are developed, sustained and passed on from generation to generation within a community, often forming part of its cultural or spiritual identity”.

These skills are embedded in the culture of regional, indigenous, or local communities for instance painting, tools and techniques for agriculture or hunting, animal rearing, midwifery, traditional medicine, wood carving, knitting, iron-smith, pottery, celestial navigation, climate reading and so on. The culture, belief and spiritual aspects are intrinsically attached with these skills. In many cases, traditional skills has been orally passed (story letting, puzzles, folklore, ritual, songs and drama) or preserved through practice and informal education. The uniqueness of traditional skills is the “sustainability” and “environment-friendly” as the newest big trends of the future, for many centuries, innumerable arts and crafts have existed in harmony with nature. Some things so subtle that they do not glare out, yet so vivid that one cannot help but appreciate the aesthetics in their creation. Ironically three to four million farmers dependent on coconut and areca nut farms in the country are in desperate need of traditional climbers. In Karnataka, one has to go hunting for a climber who charges Rs 400-500 per day, which farmers find difficult to pay as they do not earn much (May 30, 2008, Hindustan Times).

Table No. 2 Categorization of few Traditional Skills

S I . No.	Nature of Traditional Skill	Item/Product	Specialization	Region
1	Weaving / Knitting	Shawls, caps, borders, pattoo, muffler, patti, thobi, numdha, gudma,	Durability, finishing, charming colours and smoothness.	Himalayan region, Kerela
		Palm leaf-Basket, flower pot, fibre-brush/broom, box		Tamil Nadu
		Handicrafts	Hunting and fishing	Ang tribes, Andaman
2	Spinning	Fibre-linen, jute, cotton, silk, bamboo, hemp, coir, banana	B i o d e g r a d a b l e , Charaka	No specific

3	Printing	Ajarkh- hammocks and bed-sheets to duppattas, scarves,	Resist print-hand and wooden block-washing the fabric over and over again with natural dyes and mordants such as harda, lime, alizarin, indigo and even camel dung.	Gujarat (traced back to Indus Valley Civilization)
4	Blacksmith	Cultivation tools, garden tools, kitchen tools		No specific
5	Supernatural	Diviner-Priest, Purohit, Shaman	Can reach God, foretell one's future.	No specific
6	Songs, Dance & Drama	Bhangra, Rouff, Garba, Kalbelia, Lavani, Chhau, Bihu, Raut Nacha, Pulikali, Ghumura, Umang-Lai Haraoba	Religious and seasonal festivals in several regions	
7	Carpentry / Wood & bamboo carving	Sculpture on furniture and home decor items		No specific
8	Agriculture	Seed preservation, harvesting	Social gathering	No specific
9	Sculpture/Pottery/ Painting	Metal casting, earthen wares, house painting (Meena Art, Indian folk art Mural)	Meena Art-Gujarat, Rajasthan, Odisha	No specific
10	Food preservation/ processing	Bamboo shoot	Anti-oxidant fermentation	Southeast Asian countries, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nepal, Mizoram, Tripura.
		Fish	Drying, Smoking, Salting	No specific
		Soya bean/ Soybean	Naturally Fermented	Asian countries, Northeast India

Since time immemorial people were supposed to engaged to certain occupations for a sustainable life and such occupations turned out to be a yardstick to classify people and manifest their identity in almost all the civilizations. Even in numerous villages in India, communities used to carry a suffix title like lohar (blacksmith community) and

Badhae (carpenter community) and so on sans any complain. But the present generation's motive and view about a sustainable life began broaden and these traditional occupations acquired from their forefathers can no more bind them now. There are numerous possible reasons why these knowledge are dying out and the age old paradigm began to shift.

Table No. 3 Factors responsible for dying out of Traditional Skills

Migration	People left their occupations (traditional skills based) looking for better opportunity.
Urbanization	Conditional and systematic change to the traditional occupation.
Loss of resources	Deforestation, loss of fiber plants.
Replacement	Cane, Bamboo and woods by plastic and herbal medicines by synthetic medicine.
New Technology	Agriculture methods, genetic modification, scientific food preservation.
Education	People switch their caste occupation to wage/salary work (Aujis: who played musical instrument in wedding party, Blacksmith etc.)
Social status	People feel themselves inferior with traditional occupations.
Market value/ taste	Choice of customer goes to bright and colorful but not dull (natural dye)
Unorganized/ Semi-organized sector	Most traditional knowledge based occupations are either unorganized or semi-organized.

Depletion of resources is one of the reasons for decline - for example, less cotton is grown now, so weaving and spinning cloth has decreased; deforestation has affected the carpentry trade; and the reduction in biodiversity has affected those practicing herbal medicine and natural dye. New agricultural methods have also had an impact: reliance on modern seeds and inputs is rendering obsolete some of women's skill in preserving seeds and storing crops in special vessels with natural pesticides. This is one of the areas currently undergoing revival, with the Save the Traditional Seeds movement. Education has had some impact too, as people, especially from lower castes, opt for waged work instead of continuing with their caste occupation in order to distance themselves from their caste status.

Most people, though, clearly took pride in the old self-sufficiency and many express regret that they rely so much more on mass-produced products now. Traditional woodcarving system is quite popular among the Wancho tribe of Arunachal Pradesh and this skills is closely associated with their age-old religious beliefs and cultural practices, which are evident through their traditional institutions in the form of Morung (Bachelor dormitory), funeral rites, fertility cult and human head hunting. Unfortunately, this traditional art has suffered a setback in recent decades. As a result, local artisans, who solely depend on woodcarving

industry for the sustenance of their livelihood, are in dwindling position.

Prospect and practise of traditional skill

The activity of preparing a wide range of products was originated to suffice local needs and moreover it is an indispensable part of the lives of rural people. Traditional based products and knowledge seems dying out during recent few decades and various reasons have been stated responsible for the cause by researchers in rural regions throughout the country. Certain reasons are like a necessary thing that no one can avoid, for instance, industrialization wherefrom the demand of populous India can meet. Another factor is economic liberalization. Opening of another door to the foreign capitalist dramatically drop down the utility and demand of traditional products and knowledge which subsequently compel traditional practitioner to switch their occupation. The most regrettable responsible factor (author's view) for trimming down the traditional practises is being the traditional skills were in unorganised sector or semi-organised sector. Nevertheless some practises are still profoundly preserved and performed although possess few alteration, for instance activities of Maiba and Maibi (Shaman) in Lai Haraoba- worship of traditional deities and ancestors to revere them and to prosperous the community and also in ritual prayer. They also analyze the causes of specific events and

interpret the messages of the ancestors. They use divination objects and they explain the unknown by means of their particular mediumistic powers. Their vocation is mainly that of divination, but they often also provide the medication for the specific case they have diagnosed.

Amidst the gradual crumble of the traditional knowledge, few people are fighting off either individually or together to defend such traditional knowledge which are in verge of extinction. Fortunately those knowledge which are being adhere with rituals are being preserve through the traditional strict structure of our society for instance chanting of mantras during ritual performance without which evil will look upon us, as we believe. Owing to environment friendly few traditional skills like ancient craft, Ajrak, is slowly gaining visibility among the cosmopolitan. But such success stories are rare.

Survival hasn't been easy for thousands of artisan families in the Northeast mainly because their produces haven't been marketed properly. The circumstances compelled the local weavers, for instance, besides following their ancestral traditions and skills are intentionally making some alterations in the designs and motifs to cater to the needs of modern buyers. People living in remote areas and dependent on traditional resources have developed appreciating knowledge and skill in weaving and making crafts for their subsistence livelihood in mountain ecosystems, for instance Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh (Singh A & Singh R.K., 2007). Varieties of culturally and traditionally important dresses are weaved by Adi women and they are competent in selecting diverse plant biodiversity used in making entire set of gekong-galong (handloom), which requires years of experience. Weaving is one of the major traditional sources of income and livelihood, but younger generation does not show considerable interest in learning and continuing such culturally important practices.

A mission mode integrated effort would be required to conserve women wisdom of weaving and making this profession economically viable through value addition, entrepreneurship development, chaining market and economic empowerment. Among the loom weaving, Throw shuttle

weaving of Lakkundi, Karnataka can be named as the weaving goes date back since 1916 and even before. Coimbatore sheep wool blanket is one such product through traditional method. Unfortunately the Indian caste system binds the skills within the caste and hardly gives any chance to merchandise the products instead remains as traditionally plied the trade. Such traditions are now conserving only in museum and sometime publicize during Trade fair. Kakching, a recent district of Manipur almost lost their identity as iron-smelting community but remains in epitaph. The people used to extract iron from its ore in their own method during 19th century. But the process was banned by the then King of Manipur for he is worried that this people may rise against the king by using modern weapons made from the iron they extracted. So the tradition is preserve in Peoples' Museum, Kakching which was established under the pioneering effort of Mayanglambam Gourachandra Singh.

Pottery making is an age-old traditional occupation of the human civilization. The women folk of the Hira society of the lower Brahmaputra valley of Assam and Thongjao village of Manipur are practicing the pottery making without wheel since centuries ago as their traditional occupation. It is their hereditary pursuits through female line, which has still retained its importance, aesthetic appeal, unique technique and skill but they live under the shroud poverty and unless urgent measures are taken this inherent craft will not survive.

Espousing the ancestral vocation of art and craft, Irenbam Surbala and Renubala Devi, are two-industrious women artisan from Kwakeithel, Imphal, who have been struggling to reveal their mastery in field of 'Kouna(reed)-craft'. Manipur is one such state which is fond of reed craft. This particular trade has been practicing since decades back and the art thus carried down to them from their forefathers, and it is their main ancestral-vocation granting life-line, till now. They supply Kouna's Phak (mat) and Mora (stools) and also ladies' fashionable items and interior designing products made from kouna, like multi-coloured bags and jewellery boxes to Guwahati (IIE), Bangalore (in a showroom), metro cities and other parts of the NE states like Shillong and Dimapur etc. earning 2-3 lakhs a year.

Jambili Athon is an extraordinary woodcraft of the Karbis, whose origin and making of the craft is strictly based on legends. It is exhibited during socio-religio-cultural festival, Chomkan, during crowning ceremony of social chief, the Lindokpo and also to honour great persons. Jambili Athon has no parallel with any crafts or symbols of other tribes of Northeast India and is claimed as the symbol of pride and cultural identity by Karbis. It covers the philosophy of life & death, social institutions and religious practices of the people. Further, Jambili Athon is often used in logos of many institutions and organizations in Karbi Anglong and also as designs on textiles. A miniature Jambili Athon is usually kept as an artefact in almost every household. Likewise wood carving in Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal is one of the traditional skills with modern taste on the products as one comes across a bewildering array of functional wood based products - utensils, spoons, forks and furniture. Sculptures in Manipur bear legendary story which are interwoven with the society, its culture and tradition, for instance Nupi-lal, Hi-yang-Hirel, Pakhangba, Dhari Moorti etc. Beyond sculpture certain varieties of wood and plants are used by Gondu and Korku tribes of Vidarbha, Maharashtra for manufacturing musical instruments include drums, flute, dholki and small cymbals, etc. is an ethnobotanical approach.

The people of Indo-Burmese region, have been using indigenous dyestuffs from plants since time immemorial, in handicrafts, handlooms, fine arts, etc. And it is reported that there are more than 50 plants species in the region, which are used as dyes right from ancient times, for instance the Maring tribes (Naga community) in Manipur still uses the fruit of *Melastoma malabathricum* for staining teeth in dark blackish red; it strengthens the teeth and protects from gum diseases and cavities (Potsangbam L., Ningombam S. & Laitonjam W., 2005). Biodiversity rich regions are fond of using medicinal plant and preparation of dyestuff. Remote villages situate in communication and transportation bottle-neck regions are still in practice of such traditional values. They are the right target to let multiply these activities for a sustainable development. These people and their knowledge is the asset of modern civilization to save the skill as

well as the environment. The nearly lost practice of food preservation and processing like techniques involve in production of sun-dry fish, smoked-fish and salting etc. are in need to be promoted.

Mainstreaming the marginalized traditional skills

A large number of Indian populations depend on traditional crafts for their livelihood. These traditional skills are now the key for sustainable development in both rural and urban. The Government has also been organizing fairs in urban centers for the last couple of years to promote Northeastern art and craft. Apart from one major annual exhibition, the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) now arranges small-scale events regularly, the objectives being: To provide neglected artisans with a platform for displaying their art in mainland India. To provide market support by giving assistance in linking producers and artisans with customers and also providing market information to the artisans and producers. Market orientation is one such factor to mainstream the traditional skills. Concern over this was raised at the National Technical Consultation on Employment Policy by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Ministry of Labour and Employment recently.

“Make in Northeast” is one such initiative taken up by the central government to provide livelihood to thousands of rural women and thereby prevent unsafe migration and trafficking of women in the region by rendering training in handicraft. Upgradation of Skills and Training in Ancestral Arts/Crafts for Development (USTTAD) is a government initiative for minor community to preserve and promote traditional skills and ensure wider market access launched by Union Minister for Minority Affairs, Najma Heptullah in 2015. USTTAD was launched in Varanasi of being a traditional home to the famous Banarasi saree, while nearby Bhadohi is the hub for carpet weaving and trading. One of the most attractive facilities under this initiative is USTTAD Fellowship for Research and Development through which UGC grants as much as Rs. 18,000 p.m. for first two years and Rs. 20,000 p.m. for the third year to Senior Research Fellow.

The persistent approach of Impulse Social Enter-

prise, a Shillong-based firm, gave the local women's products the brand name "Empower", collaborated with trendy boutiques and joints to promote them outside the region, now plans to cover another 5,000-plus rural women artisan. Impulse NGO Network in 1993, rescued poor women from the Northeast, eliminating the socio-economic problems by providing sustainable livelihood, who had fallen prey to traffickers, rescued children working in coal mines and launched campaigns against trafficking by providing livelihood to women. The project aims to add value to indigenous skills and products, add modern touch and market them in both national and international markets as well. It is the vital responsibility of both government and private initiative with utmost involvement of public to safeguard the traditional skills as a part of cultural promoter and subsistence economy. Indigenous traditional knowledge will remain jeopardy unless they have been reorganized and established into a publicly recognized sector.

Participatory approach

Participatory approaches are a product of long lasting interaction between researchers, development workers, government agents and local populations. The history of participatory methods in development co-operation began in the late 1970s with the introduction of a new research approach called "Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)" wherein gathering of first-hand data from the local people about their perceptions of their local environments and living conditions initiates building on close collaboration with local populations in rural areas. The approach was extractive. RRA come up with further fine-tuned approaches called Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA) in 1980s following the same principles as RRA, however, sharing of results of analysis, decisions and planning efforts among the community members by open and public presentation were apparent.

Generally speaking, participation is a collective action aimed at achieving a common objective- it means "taking part" and "getting involved", purely a River Code role-play exercise. Participation re-defines how local communities, indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices are involved in planning, executing and decision-making pro-

cesses. The elements of participatory approach are as follows:

Learning attitude: open to adopt new ideas from the persons or groups they are working with.

Recognition of idea: there exists multiple descriptions and interpretations of real world phenomena, events and actions.

Transparency: Constructive co-operation and transparency by all stakeholders to avoid hidden agendas and suspicion.

Positive working style: openness to actively listen to other points of view and sharing of opinions without taking reactive or reactionary positions.

To understand the host jurisdiction's laws and regulations regarding indigenous peoples including constitutional rights, relevant legislation, policy statements, and recent practices is the prime grandness. Moreover National and local governments need to be willing and able to engage with local and indigenous communities, and to appreciate and respect the body of traditional knowledge and practices, and facilitate ongoing two-way communication.

Realizing the need for some urgent steps to revive the craft, the government has decided to review and reorient the existing schemes for Northeast handicrafts. The self-help groups of artisans, especially women, are in need of support vigorously henceforth. Apart from one major annual exhibition, the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) now arranges small-scale events regularly to promote Northeastern art and craft. The approach is basically firmed with bottom-up process and empowering the grassroots. Artisans facilitate many training programmes on Kouna-craft as an Instructor within and outside the state for few NGOs and Govt. Institutes like Women Income Generation Centre (WIGC) through initiatives taken up by State government. Participating in National and International Trade fairs helps artisans expose the products to the other people and make develop new business contacts.

'**Madhushree**' a brand name marched her way forward to carve a niche in the global market started with five looms and over the period of last more

than 25 years, she has built up 50 looms. Almost 200 women are employed and they all have become the part of the family to create the brand of Madhushree. This is a success story of women entrepreneurship and the key concept here is participation by the women folk. Similarly Kos Zhasa of Nagaland, redefine and redesign handloom and handicraft products so that they are in tune with today's world and made a significant mark in India International Trade Fair (IITF). "Eikhoigee Pothapham" loose translated as "Our Rest House" is purely an abode of opportunity to marginalized traditional weavers in Manipur.

Owing to the devoted work culture and persistent hands-on, the traditional skills' products has been recognized and put forward at the mainstream by felicitating through Awards. The State Kala Award and National Award by several Ministries is one of the vantage points for participatory approach. State or National awardees are the role model to influence the young learners by elaborating the achievements and facilitating the art. Under Guru Shiksha, a six months programme, awardees are promoting these traditional skills through participatory approach wherein trainees are well equipped with techniques, innovation and self appraisal. However, it creates a platform to express and expose the talent of the participants and are encouraged. For instance, Mukta Shoes Industry, an individual initiative that turns out a medium entrepreneurship today, was started in 1990 by knitting a woolen pair of shoes on the sole of torn shoes. That accidental incident let her impart training to women of her locality expanding the unit of the industry; she ought to regenerate the long gone unused skills.

Conclusion

In the social and community spheres, however, we have seen the development of a number of broader participatory methods for appraisal, planning, monitoring large institutions, training and awareness building. Greater emphasis here has been on the importance of participation not only to hold others accountable, but also as a self-development process, starting with the articulation of grassroots needs and priorities, and building popular form of organization. Participatory approach is a person's active involvement in interaction, dialog, sharing, consensual decision-making and action-taking. Empowering the people to express themselves, develop their human potential, and begin to seize opportunities to lift themselves out of poverty and become a person valuable to the self and the community, has been the ultimate outcome of the participation process.

Keeping in mind the ethnography and cultural aspects; contribution of indigenous based knowledge in planning, implementation of projects and decision making is a necessary part in public participation. Partnership between localized indigenous knowledge and expert knowledge subsequently develops a new knowledge or a new paradigm that imbibes with a sense of self confidence. Empower the people through team work skills increases the confidence level and capacity building. Opportunity to surmount the practices of traditional knowledge and skills is recognition as organized sector as well as true participation from public. Henceforth, let us keep put into practice the relevant traditional skills through participation and take the advantage of its prospects.

REGIONAL MANIFESTATION OF INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

THE MANIPUR EXPERIENCE

*Prof. N. Lokendra Singh
Manipur University*

As were the situations in many other provinces and native states, consequent upon the defeat in the Anglo-Manipuri war' of 1891, Manipur had been drawn into the vortex of Colonialism and a number of new socio-economic measures were introduced resulting to an almost transformation of the traditional socio-economic structures of the place. The introduction of an absolutely new colonial economic and property system i.e. 'Patta System' in land, government reservation of many of the traditional sources of livelihood like forests, lakes, rivers and imposition of various vexatious taxes generated new social forces and that set into motion dynamics of market economy and colonial trade. An equally important aspect of Manipur society during this period was the Britisher's encouragement of the Raja's active role in the religio-cultural life thereby generating strong currents of an obsessive indulgence in religious activities. A pervasive form of socio-religious oppression carried on by the 'Brahma Sabha' and its close associates followed thereafter.

As a result of the then prevailing chronic socio-economic and religio-cultural problems the Manipuri educated middle class, an offshoot of colonial education system began systematic campaign against the various social problems. By vir-

tue of their training and exposure either in Dacca, Calcutta or Guwahati, the early Manipuri-educated elites turned out to be a very articulate and expressive group of the people. A cursory reference to some of the contemporary publications like 'Yakairol', 'Lalit Manipuri Patrika' and 'Deinik Manipur Patrika' not only reveal their deep insight into many of the complex social problems but also reflected their clarity of thought as well as firm commitment to social issues. The educated elite, became a recognisable social force by the 1930's but due to the colonial traditions of encouraging literature and philosophy, rather than science and technology in the educational institutions, the educated elites of Manipur were very religio-cultural oriented in their attitudes to life and reformist in outlook for social activities. This coupled with their agrarian roots and heavy Vaishnavite influence made them focus their attention towards religio-cultural change, educational development and political democratisation as the three core criteria for combating the problems afflicting the society. However, within such a broad framework for the modernisation of the state a radical section of the middle class took up issues for the development of Manipuri script, martial art and also the reconstruction of ancient and medieval history of the state as they considered these issues to be vital for the future growth and development of the people of the state.

The earliest evidence of national consciousness is seen in the case of N. Phullo of Cachar (Assam) who was trying to oppose the various socio-religious discriminations that the Manipuris settled in Cachar faced in the hands of the oppressive upper caste Hindus. The trend usually known as 'Sanamahi' movement' had semi-revivalistic character. Phullo who was earlier working as an Assistant Sub-Inspector in the Railway police began to realise the necessity of reviving the traditional 'Sanamahi religion'. The gripping economic problems of the Manipuri peasantry enforced by heavy land tax along with the religious and cultural arrogance of the high caste people made Phullo leave his job and launched programmes for the socio-economic regeneration of the Manipuris. Phullo's magnum opus 'Eigi Wareng' and 'Meiteigi Haorakpham' despite a few methodological problems not only raised some fundamental issues related to the exploitative as well as expensive rites and rituals of Hinduism but also pointed out the relevance of seeking the historical identity of the Manipuris. He founded the 'Apokpa marup' in Cachar in 1930. The Marup tried to revive the practice of worshipping the traditional gods like 'Pakhangba', 'Sanamahi', 'Leimaren' etc. and emphasized the relevance of the traditional Meitei religion for the socio-economic and religio-cultural developments of the Meiteis. The Marup began to establish links with many isolated packets of non-Hindu Meiteis. While attempting to simplify many of the expensive Hindu religious practices, they also devoted themselves to the discovery of ancient Manipuri manuscripts, popularisations of Meitei script and pre-Hindu religious beliefs. The Apokpa marup while attempting to de-sanskritise Manipur history questioned the theories of Manipur connected with Mahabharata. Since then there has been continuous attempts on the part of the Manipuri middle class to reconstruct the Ancient Manipuri history through the marshalling of tremendous amount of indigenous source materials. The endeavours of the Apokpa

Marup and similar such groups thus represented a distinct genre of cultural nationalism as they tried to re-invent the ancient Manipuri history through the use of indigenous manuscripts, cultural relics and other rites and rituals. Although the ideas and activities of Apokpa Marup reached Manipur in the early 1930s, the movement could not attract popular support.

Pandit Atombabu Sharma, a contemporary of Phullo, on the other hand, used an absolutely different strategy and working system in trying to provide a more religious way of life among the Manipuris. While attempting to rectify many of the distorted religious practices, Pandit Atombabu Sharma, one of the pioneer thinker and social reformer of the time took up the herculean task of translating original texts of Goudiya-Vaishnavism into Manipuri. In addition to the attempt of giving an Aryan origin of the Meiteis through his magnum opus 'Manipur Itihas' and 'Pakhangba' based on a totally set of source materials, Atombabu Sharma also tried to regulate the vaishnav life of the Manipuris. Each and every issue of the contemporary publication of 'Yaikairol' and 'Lalit Manipuri Patrika' invariably used to carry certain write-ups either on 'Achar' or classical dance or commentaries on some Hindu religious texts. It is therefore not a surprise that the early educated Meiteis were well conversant with many of the vaishnavic rituals, classical Manipuri dance, Sankirtans and others cultural idioms. They

were also the exponents of the history of Manipur related with Mahabharat.

A noticeable gap in the awareness of the Manipuri intellectuals during those days however, was the issue of anti British movement which was sweeping over the Indian sub continent. Even though there used to be occasional reportings and write ups on anti-colonial political processes in and around Assam, the intricacies of the politics of Indian national movement did not form the main agenda of the political activities of Manipur mid-

dle class during the 1930's and 1940's, May be the strong anti-congress attitude of the colonial officers and the Maharaja discouraged them from taking up any form of political moves related with Indian National Congress.

Despite such obvious limitations, propelled by the intensifying decolonisation processes in Assam and neighbouring areas, there was further development in the consciousness as well as socio-political activities of some of the more active and radical members of the Manipuri Middle class. The members of the groups, particularly Hijam Irabot, Kojiam Amubi Singh, Nongmeikapam Gopal Singh and Lalita Madhava Sharma took active role in the formation of Nikhil Manipuri Hindu Mahasabha, a socio-political organization of the state in 1934 (L. Yaima and R.K. Maipaksana, Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha). It was in the inaugural session of the first Conference at Imphal that Hijam Irabot had used the term 'Manipuri Jati' (Manipuri Nationality) in an unprecedented way and appealed to delegates from Burma, Srikhat, Tripura, Silchar and Sibsagar to deliberate on issues related with the unity and development of Manipuri nationality. He underlined the necessity of developing Manipuri language and the script for the ultimate growth and advancement of the Manipuri community. The twenty two resolutions adopted in the Conference were more or less related to concerns of the delegates for the all round development of Manipuri community particularly its language, literature, script, history, religion and economy. In a carefully worded but significant way the conference underlined the necessity for a peaceful resolution of the prevailing social conflict between the Bishnupriya and Manipuris of the Surma Valley. The leaders of the conference understood the complex implications of the issue in the greater cause of Manipuri national development. The Silchar session of the Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Maha Sabha (1936), in view of the importance of language, literature and script for the preservation of the identity of

the Manipuris, reiterated its earlier resolutions. By this time Mutum Jhulon Singh had prepared the manuscript on 'Bijoy panchali' while Rajkumar Sanahal Singh had also submitted his draft on 'Satjal' (Traditional Manipuri Marital Art) for publication. In the Mandalay session of the Maha Sabha in 1937 the delegates took special resolution to request the Burmese authority for setting up vernacular Primary as well as Middle schools at Manipuri inhabited areas to enable them maintain their ethnic identities. To further consolidate the unity and harmony of the Manipuri community in the region, another resolution demanding sufficient provisions for easy and constant commercial interactions of the Burmese Manipuris with those of their ethnic counterparts in Manipur, Tripura, Assam and Bengal was also unanimously adopted by the delegates. Copies of the resolutions were to be submitted to the authorities in Burma as well as in India.

By 1938, the political perceptions of many of the important leaders of the Manipuri middle class was further broadened. The Maha Sabha became more secular in outlook and in its 4th session at Chinga, the delegates unanimously resolved to drop the work 'Hindu' from its nomenclature to accommodate people from other ethnic and religious groups. In another significant development the conference also demanded immediate release of Rani Gaidinliu who was arrested and imprisoned in Shillong Jail after a protracted struggle against the Britishers. All these activities were given a further boost when Maharaja Churachand Singh a product of Mayo College had, in view of the popular sentiment to safeguard the historical boundary of the state, submitted a comprehensive representation to the Government of India for retrocession of Kobo Valley which the British Indian government had given away to the Burmese in return for an annual compensation of Rs. 6000. Although the representation had incorporated authentic reports provided by Captain Pemberton in favour of Manipur during the prolonged Kobo

Valley dispute days (1832- 34) the British Indian Government ignored the issue as a settled case due to the greater British imperial interests.

Another significant issue worthy of discussion was the general intellectual orientation of many of the literary personnel of the state during the 1920s and 30s. The literary products of the time directly or indirectly reflected a strong a nationalistic sensibility although most of them were artistically inclined. While 'Thainagi Leirang' of Kh. Chaoba contains many poems chiefly inspired by the glories that was Manipur; his historical novel 'Labang Lata' recalled the pomp and grandeur of the reign of King Khangemba depicted through the romantic relationship between 'Labanga', a soldier and 'Kunjalata', the princes. H. Angahal's 'Khamba Thoibi Sheireng, an epic containing 38 thousand lines reflected the life and dreams as well as the hopes and despairs of the ancient Manipuris as are found in the legends of Moirang. Most of the important themes of the early writers were invariably the mythological and historical past of Manipur. Most of the novelist and playwright dealt either with the exploits of many ancient and medieval heroes of Manipur or the mythological characters from the inexhaustible stock Moirang Kangleiron. 'Nara Singh' of L. Ibungohal' 'Moirang Thoibi' of A. Dorendra Singh, 'Bir Tikendrajit' of M. Bira (1951), 'Chingu Khongnang Thaba' of Biraman-gol; 'Kege Lamja' of Bormanani etc. tried to appeal to the nationalistic sensibilities of the masses. It must in this context be pointed out that by the 3rd decade of the 20th century, the consciousness of the Manipuri people were already stirred by the ballad (Khongiom parva) singers who enthralled the masses by their rendering from the episodes of either Anglo-Manipur war or the 'Moirang Kangleiron'. Clearer perception of Manipuri national question is however, discernible in the prison writings of Hijam Irabot who on the basis of his awareness of a complex national and

international socio-political cross currents com-

posed the popular 'Emagi Puja. 'The book essentially reflected the poet's love for Manipur and her ancient glories. In 'Dikhoughi Torbanda' the poet expressed his unwavering respect for pakhangba embodied flag (Lin Tongba Phiran) flying across the bank of Dikhou River during the reign of King Chingthang Khomba. In another poem 'Koumuda' Irabot eulogised the height of Manipuri national pride during the reign of King Garibniwas, who had extended Manipuri's territory deep inside Burma. In yet two other poems 'Meitei Leima' and 'Matribhumi' Irabot expressed his boundless love for Manipur. He also felt that Manipuris should be widely exposed to enable them to work for her cause. Again in 'Uchekmakta Oirammabasu', Irabot expressed his strong yearning to hear and know the conditions of Manipur and her citizens during the hard and tumultuous 2nd World War period.

During the 2nd World War the Manipuri middle class took advantage of the war time economy and strengthened their socio-economic bases. After the war many former members of the Maha Sabha despite their earlier anti feudal and anti colonial stances started craving for opportunities and power. A few of the more committed members of the Maha Sabha, however, decided to work for proper democratisation of Manipur society. The intrigues in the formation of Manipur State Congress in 1946 without Hijam Irabot and his supporters in 'Krishak Sabha' and 'Praja Sangha' clearly indicated an irreconcilable organisational as well as ideological difference between the two sections of Manipuri middle class. While the supporters of Manipur State Congress were clearly from the upper echelons of society in an round Imphal supported by village landlords, village chowkidars, members of Panchayats, etc. people of humbler socio-economic background particularly the mass peasant proprietors and other share croppers supported Praja Sangha and Krishak Sabha. The latter two organizations launched intensive peasant

mobilisations programmes by organising meeting at many village of Eastern and Southern Imphal, while the Manipur State Congress was visibly entering into collaboration with the British officers in the formation of the Constitution Making Committee (1947) and Manipur State Council (1947).

It must however, be noted that the Manipuri middle class despite internal differences on ideological and organisational issues were unanimous on the question of the political democratisation, territorial integrity and ethnic harmony of the state. Maharaja Budhachandra Singh, a product of Rajkumar College Raipur while addressing the inaugural session of the

first Manipur Assembly on 18th Oct., 1948 dwelt extensively on Manipur's historical boundary as well as the problems and possibilities of economic development of the state. Referring to a common historical destiny of the hill and plain people of Manipur, the Maharaja said "all these times when Manipur was in the height of her power, hill and valley were one and this oneness defended Manipur against all invasions ... Now since the withdrawal of British Paramourtry... (We) have strengthened the Union of Hill and Valley (and) Providence has bound our fate together indissolubly" (Maharaja Budhachandra's inaugural address of the 1st Assembly of Manipur) By this time, Hijam Irabot had become very secular in his outlook and in one of his editorial notes in 'Anouba Yug' (10th April 1947) it was argued that every ethnic group must be given their right to practice and pursue any religion of their choice. It may also be relevant to point out that in a public meetings held at 'Aryan Theatre' on 4th August 1947 to protest against the undemocratic way of forming the Manipur State Council representatives of 'Naga Association' and the 'Tangkhul Long' took an active role (Anouba Yug, 3rd August 1947). Again in late 1947 when some of the Naga political activists penetrated into certain areas of Manipur Hijam

Irabot with M.K. Shimray and Kakhangai Kabui attempted to form a united front of a number of parties including Tangkhul Long, Kabui Association, KNA and Meitei Marup. (Anouba Yug, 1st December, 1947).

There was a lot of political re-alignments at Manipur hills too. In 1946, when the Mao Nagas under the leadership of A. Daiho started a movement for a distinct political future of Manipur hills, to accommodate the aspirations of the hill people, the Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947 had incorporated a separate regulation 'Manipur state hill peoples Regulation' and with that the earlier colonial policies of dividing the people through separate hill and valley administration had been put to a complete halt. A part from accommodating a few of the more popular hill elites particularly 1. Mr. R. Suisa (Tangkhul tribe), 2. T.C. Tiangkham (Kuki tribe), 3. V. Thangopao Kipgen (Kuki tribe), 4. A. Daiho (Mao Tribe), and 5. Teba Kilong (Kuki tribe) in the 15 member constitution making committee, R. Khathing (Tangkhul tribe) and T.C. Tiangkham (Kuki tribe) were again inducted as ministers in the newly created Manipur State Council in 1947. It must also be noted that while the British Indian Govt, was toying with the idea of 'Crown Colony' comprising the hill areas of north east India and upper Burma, there was a simultaneous process of ethnic consolidation in Manipur. The numerous tribal organizations like Kabui Naga Association, the Tangkhul Long, the Kuki National Assembly, the Khul Union, the Gangte Tribal Union, Hmar National Union, Vaiphei National Union, Paite National Union etc. unlike their counterparts - i.e Naga National Council (NNC) of Naga Hills, or Mizo Union of Mizo hills were not demanding for any form of trans-boundary ethnic union. Rather there was an enthusiastic and active participation of the tribal educated leaders in the formulation of the democratic constitution of Manipur. Perhaps it was because of this wise policy that the tribal people's attitude towards the NNC and Mizo Union

was one of indifference. Indeed, for the first time in their long history of struggle for survival against British colonialism and feudal rule, the hill people were given the opportunity of exercising the democratic franchise for selecting their own representatives. Under the Manipur Constitution Act, 1947, altogether 18 MLA's were elected from the hills and in the process many of them had felt the real essence of freedom and democracy and they really wanted a successful working of the democratic system.

On the question of the political status of Manipur immediately after India's independence many political groups particularly Krisak Sabha and Praja Sangha took a clear a political stand. As early as 1947 Hijam Irabot and Bodhachandra Singh had openly rejected the idea of the formation of a Crown Colony' mooted in an inter community meeting hold at Shillong (Anouba Yug 1947). Almost a similar political line was again adopted when the 'Praja Sangha' and Krishak Sabha opposed the proposal of 'Poorvanchal pradesh', a bilingual congress province consisting of the states of Tripura, Manipur and Cachar. On the issue of merger of Manipur into India also Hijam Irabot as usual took a clear stand. The proceedings of a joint meeting of Nikhil Manipuri Maha Sabha and Praja Mandal (published by Hijam Irabot) held on 5th April 1946 had resolved to demand for Manipur the status of an independent state in independent India.

'Bhagyabati Patrika', a contemporary newspaper wrote strongly against the hegemonic policy of the Dominion of India and for that the paper was forced to stop its circulation for some time. Many of the MLAs including MR.T.C. Tiangkham had also suggested that the issue of merger of Manipur into Indian Union should be discussed in the state Assembly. It was therefore no secret that except for the Manipur State Congress, the Praja Shanti Party, hill MLA's, the Muslim community and a large number of Manipuri people preferred

a respectable political status of Manipur although Maharaja BodhChandra Singh signed the merger agreement on 21st Sept. 1949 allegedly under strong coercion.

The new political developments, however, disillusioned a number of Manipur hill leaders. The deprivation of their new found rights given under the Manipur Constitution Act 1947 was indeed a great loss for them. When Manipur became a Part C states and was put under central rule through a Chief Commissioner, many of them felt absolutely frustrated although quite a few of the leader including R. Khathing (former Hill Minister) T.C. Tiangkham (former speaker) and A. Daiho (former leader of Mao agitation) were accommodated in the new bureaucratic structure. In terms of their political orientation as well as activities during those days the Nagas of Manipur were broadly divided into two groups (G. Kabui, 'Ethnic responses to Merger Issue'). Whereas Mr Rishang Keishing who got elected to the Lok Sabha in 1952 on the 'Socialist Party' ticket mobilised a large number of hill people in the popular struggle for statehood in the 1960s, Mr. R. Suisa who also got elected to the Lok Sabha in 1957 formed the 'Manipur Naga Council' in 1960 along with a few like minded people and made preparation for joining Z. Phizo's Politics of Naga National Council. Thus the period of Chief Commissioner's rule which did not have any opportunity for popular democratic politics, provided the necessary objective conditions for the emergence of Naga Nationalist politics among a few alienated Naga elites although the large mass of the moderate elements in the hills joined many of the National and Regional parties and participated in the political movement for Territorial Council (1957), Territorial Assembly (1963) and also the movement for the establishment of a full-fledged state (1972).

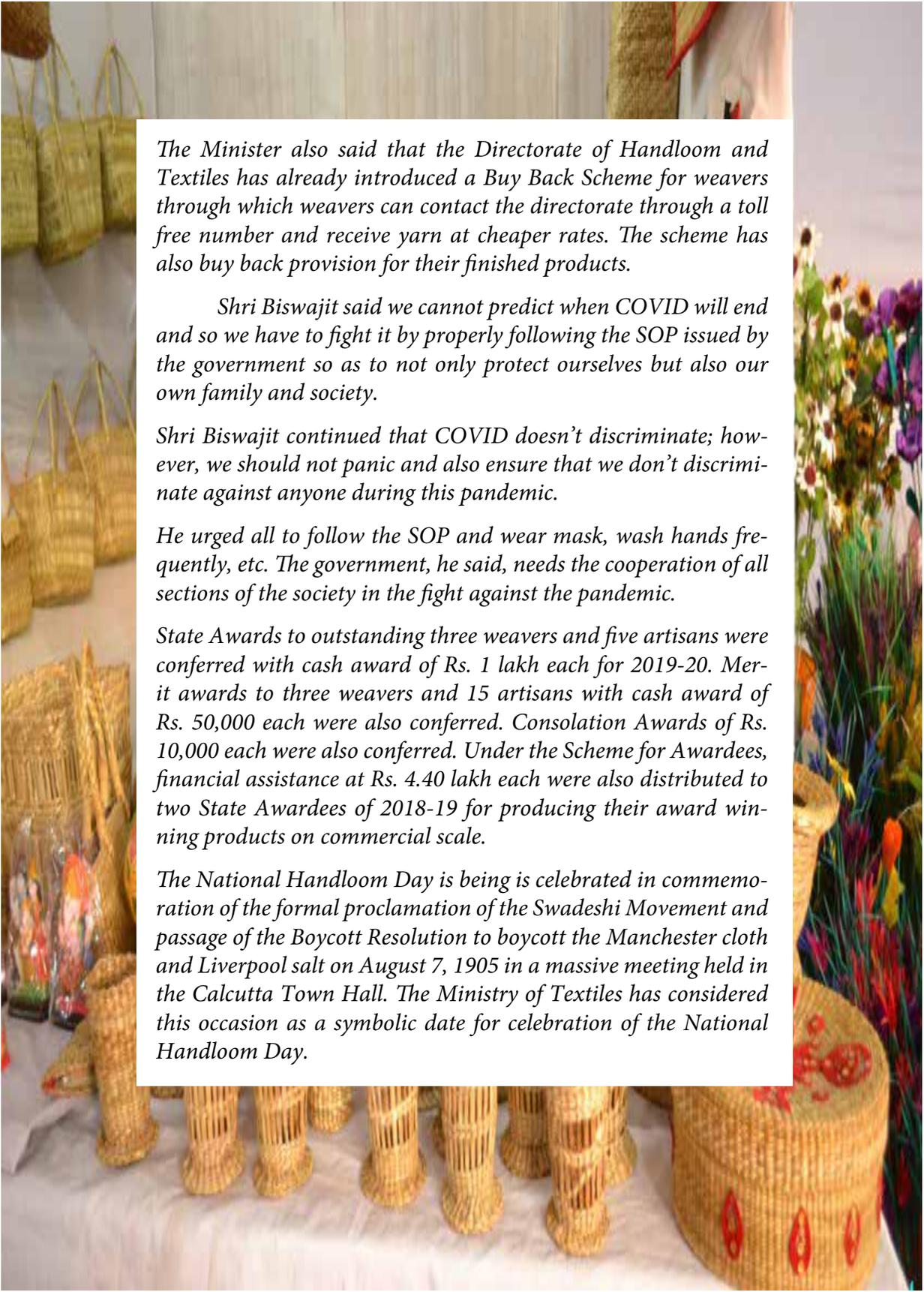
6TH NATIONAL HANDLOOM DAY CELEBRATED



The directorate of Handloom and Textiles celebrated the 6th National Handloom Day at the Conference Hall, Manipur Secretariat with Textiles, Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Thongam Biswajit Singh as the chief guest on 7th August 2020.

As part of the celebration the State Award for Handloom and Handicrafts were also distributed. And a coffee table book on Manipur Handloom & Handicrafts and a guideline book for Exports of textile Materials was also released.

Shri Biswajit said that celebrating the day alone is not enough and that we should also understand why the day is being celebrated. The main objective of this celebration is to create awareness on handloom, its importance, usage and employment generation.



The Minister also said that the Directorate of Handloom and Textiles has already introduced a Buy Back Scheme for weavers through which weavers can contact the directorate through a toll free number and receive yarn at cheaper rates. The scheme has also buy back provision for their finished products.

Shri Biswajit said we cannot predict when COVID will end and so we have to fight it by properly following the SOP issued by the government so as to not only protect ourselves but also our own family and society.

Shri Biswajit continued that COVID doesn't discriminate; however, we should not panic and also ensure that we don't discriminate against anyone during this pandemic.

He urged all to follow the SOP and wear mask, wash hands frequently, etc. The government, he said, needs the cooperation of all sections of the society in the fight against the pandemic.

State Awards to outstanding three weavers and five artisans were conferred with cash award of Rs. 1 lakh each for 2019-20. Merit awards to three weavers and 15 artisans with cash award of Rs. 50,000 each were also conferred. Consolation Awards of Rs. 10,000 each were also conferred. Under the Scheme for Awardees, financial assistance at Rs. 4.40 lakh each were also distributed to two State Awardees of 2018-19 for producing their award winning products on commercial scale.

The National Handloom Day is being celebrated in commemoration of the formal proclamation of the Swadeshi Movement and passage of the Boycott Resolution to boycott the Manchester cloth and Liverpool salt on August 7, 1905 in a massive meeting held in the Calcutta Town Hall. The Ministry of Textiles has considered this occasion as a symbolic date for celebration of the National Handloom Day.



