

THE HEADLINES:-

1. Nagaland joins global community to mark World TB Day
2. Election Commission of India working towards accessible voting
3. States, union territories asked to take urgent measures to prevent hospital fires during summer months
4. Centre extends export ban on onion until further orders



Joining the rest of the global community, the National Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination Programme (NTEP) Nagaland, under the Directorate of Health and Family Welfare, observed World TB Day today. Addressing the state-level programme at 10th NAP (IR) Zhadima, Director Health Services Dr. Akuo Sorhie challenged the people to take a pledge of fighting the preventable and curable disease as one's own individual responsibility in order to ensure a TB-free state. She commended the efforts of various health workers who are fighting tirelessly to end TB, through encouragement, education and treatment. Pointing out that Tuberculosis continues to be a threat to many lives, the society and the country, she called for concerted efforts to aggressively fight against the disease. Meanwhile, State TB Officer (NTEP) Dr. Vezokholu Theyo informed that Nagaland is pacing efforts towards achieving the national target to eliminate TB by 2025. She highlighted that during 2023, Nagaland had 4,284 active TB cases, with the highest cases at 2,044 in Dimapur, and Longleng with the lowest at 49. Dr. Theyo informed that 73 villages in the state have been declared TB-free for a year, which include 34 villages in Phek district alone.



Longleng district organised the National TB Elimination Programme today to mark World TB day. District TB Officer Dr. Temsusashi said the department alone cannot eradicate TB but can achieve the goal only with joint efforts of the community. Highlighting the central government's initiative for TB free declaration award, he informed that 19 villages under Longleng have been selected for the award. Meanwhile, in Noklak, MO District Hospital Noklak,

Dr. Tsongya shared on the significance of the Day and informed about Nikshay Poshan Yojana which provides 500 rupees every month for TB patients. Chief Medical Officer Noklak, Dr. Victor N. C, urged the people to go for check-ups as soon as any symptom appear. He said, cost of check-ups is free and Noklak District Hospital provides full course medication for TB. He also sought timely medical supply from the state. Dr. Victor further requested NGOs, churches, student bodies and leaders to help in disseminating information and awareness about TB.



The Election Commission of India has always focused on Accessible Voting with its motto of no voter is left behind. The Commission has announced that voters above 85 years of age and Persons with Disabilities with 40 percent benchmark disability can vote from home. Volunteers and wheelchairs will be available at every polling station. The poll body is also arranging transport facilities for Persons with Disabilities and the elderly. The ECI has launched Saksham App to facilitate easier voting for Persons with Disabilities and to avail facilities at Polling Stations. It is also pushing for permanent Assured Minimum Facilities in schools as a gift of election process to the students. These consist of drinking water, toilets, signage, a ramp or wheelchair, helpdesk, voter facilitation centre, sufficient light and shed.



Union Health Ministry has asked all states and union territories (UTs) to take urgent measures to prevent hospital fires during summer months. In a letter to the Chief Secretaries of all states and UTs, Health Secretary Apoorva Chandra said hospital fires become a more significant threat as temperatures escalate during the summer months. States and UTs have been requested to direct their respective Health Departments and Disaster Management Authorities to work in close collaboration to ensure that all accredited hospitals take immediate action to prevent fires. It said hospitals must regularly inspect fire-fighting equipment such as fire extinguishers, hydrants and alarms.



The central government has extended the export ban on onion until further orders. The decision has been taken to increase domestic availability and to keep prices of onion under check. Directorate General of Foreign Trade in a notification said that prohibition on export of onions was valid till 31st March 2024. The government had banned export of onions in December last year. However, it allowed the export of onions to friendly countries on a case-to-case basis.



External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar today said, Article 370 was a temporary measure of the Indian Constitution and extending it harmed the nation. Interacting with the Indian community in Singapore, Dr Jaishankar said that extending Article 370 created an ethos of separatism, violence and terrorism. He said it prevented very progressive laws from being extended to Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh at that point. Dr Jaishankar pointed out that today, the benefits of change are now visible.



President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have conveyed greetings to the people on the eve of Holi. The President said, Holi is a vibrant and joyous festival, which infuses hope and enthusiasm into people's lives. She said various colours of Holi symbolise the diversity of the country and this festival promotes the feelings of love, unity and brotherhood among the people. The President hoped that this festival of colours brings happiness in everyone's life and motivates everyone to work towards nation-building with new zeal. The Prime Minister said, he hoped that the festival of colours brings new energy and enthusiasm in everyone's life.



Holi, the festival of colours will be celebrated across the country tomorrow. Nagaland Governor La Ganesan has extended warm greetings to all the people on the occasion. He said Holi celebrates love, spring and victory of good over evil. Noting that the festival is an occasion where one sets aside rivalries of the past, he said it is a celebration of forgiveness and the renewal of relationships where people seek blessings from elders, exchange warm wishes and strengthen the bonds of friendships and camaraderie. The Governor called upon all to remember to unite people, forget differences and respect one another.



Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio has extended greetings and best wishes on the occasion of Holi. In a social media post, Rio wished that the festival of colours, which marks the arrival of spring and the triumph of good over evil, may strengthen harmony and fraternal bond among all sections of people.



India Meteorological Department has forecast enhanced rainfall with thunderstorms over Northeast India and Sub-Himalayan West Bengal till 26th of this month. It said light to moderate rain is very likely to occur at many places over all the Northeastern states. The weather body also cautioned that thunderstorms and lightning will continue at isolated places over these regions including Nagaland, till March 29.

