

**:: THE HEADLINES ::**

- President Droupadi Murmu confers Bharat Ratna on former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and others
- Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur says centre taking all steps to boost women empowerment
- No candidate opt to pull out of 18th Lok Sabha elections in Nagaland at the end of withdrawal period
- President Droupadi Murmu, Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio extend Easter greetings

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President Droupadi Murmu today conferred Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour, on former Prime Ministers P V Narasimha Rao and Chaudhary Charan Singh, agriculture scientist M S Swaminathan and two-time former Bihar chief minister Karpoori Thakur, posthumously at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. The President will present the top civilian award of India to former Deputy Prime Minister and veteran BJP leader L K Advani tomorrow. During the investiture ceremony, relatives of awardees received the awards. Bharat Ratna is awarded for exceptional service and performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi has lauded the contributions of all four leaders who were conferred upon Bharat Ratna today. Every Indian cherishes what PV Narasimha Rao has done for country, Modi said and commended Rao's extensive work for the country's progress and modernization. He said, Bharat Ratna is recognition of Chaudhary Charan Singh's contributions to country's progress, particularly in agriculture and rural development, and this honour will inspire future generations to uphold the values of hard work, dedication and public service. On Karpoori Thakur, Modi said, Thakur is known as a champion of the downtrodden, and his contributions to the upliftment of the marginalized and rights of the backward classes have left an indelible mark. Meanwhile, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan is widely admired for his pioneering work and research in the field of genetics and agricultural science, and his efforts propelled India from struggle to self-sufficiency in food production, Modi said.

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Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur has said that under the Modi government, all steps have been taken to increase the empowerment of women. He added that the Government is doing a lot to promote women in business and constantly striving to do better. Thakur was addressing the 40th Annual session of the FICCI Ladies Organisation in New Delhi yesterday. Thakur said that the government has provided Mudra loans

to 31 crore women in the country, and one crore women's income has crossed one lakh. Appreciating the efforts of the FICCI Ladies Organisation, the Minister said that over the past four decades, it has been at the forefront of empowering women and advocating for gender equality in India.

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The candidature withdrawal period for the upcoming 18th Lok Sabha elections in Nagaland ended today. Commissioner Nagaland and Returning Officer Office, Kohima informed that none of the candidates have opted to withdraw their candidature. With this, the confirmed candidates contesting for the lone seat in the upcoming elections in Nagaland are Dr. Chumben Murry from NDPP, S. Supongmeren Jamir from INC, and independent candidate Hayithung Tungoe Lotha. Voting will take place on 19th April, with the vote counting scheduled for 4th June.

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In view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024, first phase training for polling personnel was conducted at various districts in Nagaland today. In Longleng, District Commissioner & District Election Officer, Dharam Raj, expressed confidence that all polling personnel will perform their respective responsibility without failure, and called upon all eligible voters to participate in free and fair election. The training included hands-on EVMs, VVPATs demonstration. The next phase of training is scheduled for 9th April. Mon also commenced training for polling officials today. ADC Mon, K. Temjennaro Longkumer briefed on the roles and responsibilities of polling officers, and encouraged all trainees to work with dedication as a team for the successful conduct of the election. Meanwhile, a training of Sector Magistrate, Flying Squad Teams and Micro Observers was also conducted in Kiphire.

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Easter, also known as Resurrection Sunday, will be celebrated across the world tomorrow, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death. President Droupadi Murmu has greeted citizens living in India and abroad, especially the Christians on the eve of Easter. In her message, she said, this festival marks the celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection, and is a symbol of love and compassion. She said, Easter gives the message that truth is eternal and shows everyone the path of sacrifice and forgiveness. The President said, the teachings of Jesus Christ guide us on the path of peace and harmony.

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Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton have conveyed Easter wishes. Rio said Jesus' greatest act of love on Good Friday is followed by the greatest act of power on Easter Sunday, which is His resurrection. He wished that the miracle of Easter may bring renewed love, hope and joy in the lives of everyone. Deputy CM Y Patton recalled the significance of Easter Sunday saying Christ's resurrection opened the doors of salvation to

generations. Patton said, the supreme sacrifice on the cross is a manifestation of the true Gospel of Love.

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A Reproductive and Child Health outreach camp was conducted today at Auching Village under Sakshi Primary Health Centre in Longleng district. During the outreach camp, health services related to gynaecology, paediatric, dental and family planning methods were provided. A total of 86 individuals availed free medical services at the camp which was carried out under the initiative of District Health Society, Longleng. Auching is a far-flung village in Longleng bordering Tuensang with no health facilities.

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The Nagaland State Disaster Management Authority and the District Disaster Management Authorities (DDMAs) are extending relief to families and communities affected by downpour, hailstorm and heavy wind on March 26. The storm, which hit Peren, Niuland and Phek districts, damaged houses, crops and also caused minor injuries. Authorities are vigilantly monitoring, assessing damage and reaching out to the affected families and communities. Those affected who have not yet been reached by their DDMAs, may approach the concerned circle Administrative officers in order to obtain necessary assistance. The NSDMA has further informed the public to be vigilant as an extreme pre-monsoon weather event may occur in the coming days. In the event of any eventualities, public have been advised to stay alert and report for any eventualities to the DDMAs.

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India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast a fresh spell of intense rainfall and thunderstorms over Northeast India from today. IMD said isolated heavy rainfall and snowfall are likely over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. For Nagaland, moderate rain at many places and heavy rain at isolated places are very likely tomorrow. This will be accompanied by thunderstorm with lightning and gusty wind, with wind speed 30 to 40 kilometer per hour, the Weather office said.

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