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THE HEADLINES:

- **President Droupadi Murmu highlights critical role of forest conservation in combating climate change.**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi stresses on investing in resilient infrastructure for better tomorrow.**
- **National colloquium on grassroots government marks National Panchayati Raj Day.**
- **Governor La Ganesan urges youth to embrace entrepreneurship and innovation to lead the rapidly evolving job market.**



President Droupadi Murmu highlighted the pressing issue of climate change and underscored the critical role of forest conservation in combating its effects. Addressing the convocation ceremony of Indian Forest Service Probationers at Forest Research Institute in Dehradun today, the President said mankind is deliberately making the mistake of forgetting the importance of forests. She stressed that humans are not the owners but the protectors of the earth's invaluable resources. The President encouraged probation officers to shoulder the vital duties of conserving, promoting, and nurturing forests. In the convocation ceremony, as many as 99 probationers, along with two trainee officers from Bhutan graduated from the academy's 2022-24 Course.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said it is important to invest in resilient infrastructure for a better tomorrow. Addressing the 6th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure via a video message, Modi highlighted that while disasters are often measured in monetary terms, their true toll is felt by individuals, families, and communities. He stressed the need for resilience to be incorporated into both new infrastructure projects and post-disaster reconstruction efforts. In a world where the impact of disasters transcends borders, Prime Minister Modi urged the necessity for collective resilience among nations.



Marking National Panchayati Raj Day today, the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj held a one-day National Colloquium on Grassroots Government in New Delhi. Speaking during the inaugural session, Ministry Secretary, Vivek Bharadwaj hailed the regularization of Panchayat elections as the most significant achievement of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. He also deliberated on the need for minimum qualifications for public representatives. Bharadwaj stressed on the importance of ensuring equal distribution of resources among all Panchayats. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on Panchayati Raj Day. In a social media post, he appreciated all those working at grassroots to transform rural India and ensure a better quality of life for the people. Modi said the government will continue to work to strengthen Panchayati Raj institutions and give wings to people's dreams.



Nagaland Governor La Ganesan today urged the youth to lead the change in the rapidly evolving job market. Embrace entrepreneurship and innovation, and be job creators rather than job seekers, he said. La Ganesan was addressing the Convocation program of ICFAI University in Sovima. The Governor encouraged the students to venture into paths unexplored, initiate startups, and be the architects of innovative solutions that are urgently required in the present society. He reminded the graduates of their moral obligations that span across both personal and societal dimensions, to use their knowledge and skills responsibly for the greater good. Noting that education empowers individuals and communities, the Governor urged the students to uphold high ethical standards in both their professional and personal lives. These involve honesty, integrity, and the courage to stand up for what is right, even in the face of opposition or personal cost, he said. As the future of the economy and society rests in the hands of the youth, La Ganesan expressed hopes that they will lead with responsibility, ethical conduct, and a commitment to societal progress. The event honored the achievements of 414 young scholars, 32 gold medalists and the recipient of the Certificate of Merit, a special commendation for exemplary performance.



Kohima Police yesterday rescued a kidnapped construction labourer from Pfütsero. An official release said, the night operation was carried out by a combined team of Kohima and Phek police. The operation set to motion following a complaint that unknown miscreants had kidnapped the non-tribal labourer from Kohima on Monday on the pretext of constructing a house. Subsequently, they started demanding 5 lakh rupees as ransom for release of the hostage, police said. Supported by

technical input, the operation also nabbed two accused individuals belonging to a Naga political group. In this regard, a case has been registered in North police station and further investigation is on.



The Supreme Court today reserved its verdict on a batch of petitions seeking a cent per cent cross-verification of the vote count in Electronic Voting machines (EVMs) with Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) paper slips. During the hearing, a Supreme Court Bench posed a series of questions to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to understand the working of EVMs and VVPATs and their security features. ECI assured that it is impossible to tamper with EVMs at any stage. It added that there have been 41,629 instances of random verification to date, and over four crore VVPAT paper slips were matched. While reposing faith in ECI, the Bench clarified that it would look into the possible reforms needed to strengthen the current polling system. The Supreme Court, however, disagreed with the idea of a return to paper ballots. ECI also asserted that the complete counting of VVPAT slips is not practically feasible. Currently, VVPAT slips of five randomly selected EVMs in every Assembly segment are verified.



The Reserve Bank of India, RBI, has directed Kotak Mahindra Bank to cease issue of fresh credit cards, with immediate effect. It has also restricted onboarding of new customers via online and mobile banking channels. The RBI said, these actions are necessitated based on significant concerns arising out of the central bank's examination of Kotak Mahindra Bank's IT systems for 2022 and 2023, and the

continued failure on the part of the bank to address these concerns in a comprehensive and timely manner. Among others, the assessment found significant deficiencies in the bank's IT system and non-compliances with RBI's guidelines. However, the RBI has allowed the bank to continue to provide services to its existing customers, including its credit card customers.



In Mizoram, the state is on high alert as the African Swine Fever strikes again, resulting in the death of as many as 174 pigs due to the outbreak of the disease. The outbreak has been confirmed in three districts - Aizawl, Champhai and Saitual. The Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department has put up strict measures including the prohibition of pig export or import from the infected zones, besides the sale or slaughter of both healthy and sick pigs.



Wokha will hold the Under-14 Catch Them Young Tournament in Sepaktakraw for both boys and girls on May 4. In this regard, the District Sports Office has asked interested schools and participants to register before end of this month. The District Sports Office said, the best team selected from the tournament will represent Wokha in the forthcoming State-Level under-14 Catch Them Young Tournament scheduled to be held from the 20th to 22nd of May at IG Stadium Kohima.

