



Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we must strive for today, begins where competition leaves off.
-Franklin D. Roosevelt

Freebies on offer from schools Understanding competition

In line with what has been happening in the last few years, so not surprising at all. With the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur (BOSEM) declaring the results of the Class X examination, many private schools specialising in the plus two stage and the Science stream have started advertising the achievements of their past students and offering freebies to the meritorious students. Here it is all about marks, the marks scored in the board examination of Class X. And the marks too have been compartmentalised. The freebies are generally categorised for the rank holders, meaning those who are in the top 25 positions; those who have scored 85 percent and more but not rank holders; those who have scored above 80 pc but below 85 percent etc etc. The freebies offered include free admission fee, free tuition fee, free transport fee, free hostel accommodation, free coaching fee in hostel tutorial classes, etc etc. The competition amongst the top schools to attract the best is understood and welcome and this competition will greatly be welcomed by parents and elders of family. However important to keep in mind that making the toppers in the Class X examination, toppers again two years hence when they appear for the Class XII examinations conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education, Manipur (COHEM), should not be such a hard act to follow. It would be so encouraging and nice if any school can publicise how they have made a student who scored 75 or 80 percent in the Class X examination, to be amongst the top 25 position holders in the Class XII examination. This would be the real challenge for the schools and here is hoping that one day Manipur will see such a school emerging in the coming days. Mould the young students and take him or her from the stage of 'good performance' to 'excellent performance,' and this should be the ultimate test of an educational institution.

The silver lining in this year's Class X examination results is obviously the report that two students from Government schools have made it to the list of position holders. This is perhaps the best push that can be given to the other Government schools and if two schools can feature in the merit list then others too can. The excellent performance of the two students should send out the message that if they can, there is no reason why the others cannot follow their excellent showing. This is where it becomes important for the private schools offering freebies to the meritorious students to sincerely study what they can offer to the sincere and hard working students from Government schools. As in the past, this time too, it is schools from Imphal which have hogged the limelight and it would be so much nicer if schools located at the other district headquarters can seriously work and offer competition to the schools located at Imphal. Remember there was a time when the merit list used to be the sole prerogative of mission schools, but today other private schools have started offering tough competition to the mission schools and this augurs well for the people of Manipur. Let schools located at the other district headquarters, particularly the hill districts, start challenging the near complete monopoly enjoyed by the schools of Imphal. This will certainly go a long way in ensuring more competition and competition undoubtedly brings out the best in everyone. This is what education should be all about.

Scholarship programme

Scholarship Name 1: CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) Bhatnagar Fellowship 2020

Eligibility: Indian Scientist/Technologist working as an associate with a mission or trust area program of CSIR or an area of interest to CSIR, below the age of 67 years, can apply for this fellowship; **Prizes & Rewards:** The selected fellows will be awarded monthly fellowship of INR 50,000 and multiple other benefits; **Last Date to Apply:** Round The Year; **Application mode:** Apply Online; **Short Url:** www.b4s.in/tse/CRB4

Scholarship Name 2: CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research) Nehru Science Postdoctoral Research Fellowship 2020

Eligibility: Indian researchers below the age of 32 years with a PhD degree can apply for this fellowship; **Prizes & Rewards:** The selected fellows will get a consolidated fellowship of INR 65,000 per month, House Rent Allowance (HRA) as admissible and a contingency grant of INR 3 lakh per annum; **Last Date to Apply:** Round The Year; **Application mode:** Apply Online; **Short Url:** www.b4s.in/tse/NPE3

Scholarship Name 3: SERB Ramanujan Fellowship 2020

Description: Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), India is offering this fellowship for outstanding engineers and scientists across the world who want to take up scientific research positions in India and especially, for those engineers or scientists who want to return to India; **Eligibility:** Scientist or engineers below the age of 40 years who holds a higher degree or equivalent, such as PhD in Science/Engineering, Masters in Engineering or Technology/MD in Medicine, etc. and have adequate professional experience can apply for this fellowship; **Prizes & Rewards:** Selected fellows will get fellowship of INR 1,35,000 per month, a research grant of INR 7 lakh per annum, INR 60,000 per annum as overhead charges and various other benefits; **Last Date to Apply:** Round the year; **Application mode:** Dr Monika Agarwal, Science and Engineering Research Board 5 & 5A, Lower Ground Floor, Vasant Square Mall, Plot No. A, Community Centre, Sector-5, Pocket-5, Vasant Kunj New Delhi-110070; **Short Url:** www.b4s.in/tse/RFA7

New essential norms must include reproductive health services

Anjali Roy, Ankit Kumar, Anurag Ratan, KS Lakshmi Narayan, Kaustubh Jain, Sartaj Singh

The bottom line of today's world, which applies to every person on this planet - irrespective of their social, economical or geographical positions - can be simply jotted down in a few words: "COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed our lives" as said by Dr Jameel Zamir, Director of Programmes at International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), East and Southeast Asia and Oceania region.

Dr Jameel Zamir was among the panellists for World Health Day Webinar which also launched the Sustainable Development e-Talks (#SDGTalks), co-hosted by Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Indore and CNS.

Menstruation does not stop during pandemics

During emergency or other crisis situations, safe pregnancy care, safe abortion or menstrual hygiene becomes even more vital, so we have to ensure that women's health and wellness does not slip down the priority in responding to the crisis. Products related to menstrual hygiene, such as, sanitary napkins, tampons, etc are very important for ensuring women's menstrual hygiene. Hence, they ought to be considered as essential commodities. In many societies, openly talking about menstrual hygiene is still considered a taboo and many a young girls and women in countries like India still use unhygienic products (rags, paper, etc) during menstruation. Many organisations like Sustainable Health Enterprise (SHE), Goonj, Code Red, among others, are working towards providing women with proper affordable and accessible sanitary napkins. During the lockdown to contain COVID-19 pandemic in India, several local groups had to step up their efforts to address the need for sanitary napkins and contraceptives. One such group is Asha Parivar led by Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Dr Sandeep Pandey.

While the world eagerly and desperately waits for scientific breakthroughs to prevent and cure COVID-19, we also need to review the reasons for not being able to fully translate earlier scientific breakthroughs into public health gains without delay. For example, even routine immunization is not reaching every child in the country. That is why it becomes even more critical to address these barriers which prevent communities across the nation to access quality healthcare in a rights-based manner.

When it comes to sexual and reproductive health, there are gender-specific barriers that aggravate the disparities in access to options to prevent unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and HIV. In National Family Health Survey (NFHS-IV), the unmet need for family planning was 12.9% and contraceptive prevalence rate was 47.8%. Teenage marriages were 26.8% and teenage pregnancies were 7.9%. Despite male sterilization being a non-surgical reversible procedure, only 48,000 male sterilizations were done during 2018-2019 as compared to over 33 lakhs female sterilizations. Abysmally low utilization of male condoms and very poor programmatic uptake of female condoms is yet another reminder of deep-rooted gender-disparities and stereotypes.



In these unprecedented times of COVID-19 pandemic, it becomes far more important to outline what actually are essential services for us as human beings. As said by Dr Jameel Zamir to Citizen News Service (CNS), some services which are essential in our day-to-day lives are being neglected because of excess demand and shortage of supply - such as availability of contraceptives and other essential reproductive health services have taken a backseat. Indeed it is important and rather quintessential to put the sexual and reproductive health services under the essential services' list, though these are swept away under the carpet many times as a nonessential service.

The lockdown has proven to provide some sort of relief to stopping humongous spread of COVID-19 but it is a double-edged sword, especially when one sees that healthcare for non-COVID-19 related illnesses or conditions is severely impacted. Children and women's health is also an essential part of health security.

"With the continuance of lockdown, the importance of midwives, nurses, and doctors who assist the birth of children is also highlighted. In a dire situation like this, infants and mothers can be at risk if not treated properly", said Dr Zamir.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has constituted a task force for COVID-19, especially for 121 countries where sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services have been severely affected. This task force is working to strengthen community education and awareness about COVID-19, ensure continuity of essential SRH services, secure essential supplies of SRH related products and ensuring safety of suppliers and agents who provide these services. In order to analyze the results, they did a survey in 121 countries. In 25 countries, across the East and Southeast Asia and the Pacific, shortage of SRH services was reported.

Dr Zamir shared that IPPF, which is a federation of national family planning associations, has several member associations (like those in Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, China) which are finding solutions to advance rights-based access to sexual and reproductive healthcare in the pandemic situation. Such innovations include tele-medicines and even home delivery of sexual and reproductive healthcare services/products in Malaysia (such as contracep-

tives).

The World Health Organization (WHO) has released multiple guidelines for the people to be aware of the problems they could face during the time of the pandemic and how to combat them. One of the most important aspects of these guidelines is the act of self-care. Along with regular measures such as social distancing and respiratory hygiene, people are also advised to maintain proper sexual and reproductive health without the help of any external support - such as a health worker - in a pandemic related lockdown situation. These guideline address multiple issues such as family planning, pregnancy, childbirth, newborn care, safe abortion etc.

The WHO also highlights the importance of proper care and nutrition of pregnant women and new mothers, along with proper hygiene and precautions while breast-feeding. It also suggests the use of contraceptives to reduce unintended pregnancy, and other life-saving measures to avert maternal mortality.

The COVID-19 related lockdown has also precipitated a deeply entrenched human rights violation in the form of sexual and other forms of gender-based violence. In the initial few weeks of the lockdown itself, the government of India's National Commission of Women (NCW) reported, "From February 27 to March 22, a total of 396 offences (including all types of abuses) related to women were reported to the NCW, while from March 23 to April 16, as many as 587 such complaints were received."

Dr Zamir rightly points out that those suffering due to sexual and gender-based violence struggle to report it. Reporting it during the lockdown becomes even more difficult. In such days of lockdown, which is implicitly a home quarantine, it becomes rather more difficult for women who face domestic violence to come out.

Healthcare for non-COVID-19 related problems has slipped down the priority. Routine immunization came to a halt and services for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) became more difficult to access. People living with HIV or those on anti-TB medicines were struggling to ensure uninterrupted treatment during the lockdown. Dr Zamir shared that "One of the biggest impacts of COVID-19 is that it has profoundly impacted on the accessory family planning information, services and sexual and reproductive health and rights."

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be a test for not only the basic structures of society but also of the complex social and health networks that need to bear the brunt more than any other industry which have direct implications on people, especially women. Sexual and reproductive health services are always at the centre of health responses and become even more critical during crisis situations.

(The authors are students of Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Indore, India and part of the internship at CNS-Citizen News Service)

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought: Let's combat desertification for sustainability

Can the soil ask for help? Well, this is something interesting as why soil would ask for help but there is a concern yet to be addressed at large scale when it comes to environment and its protection is combating desertification. It is the degradation of land in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. It is caused primarily by human activities and climatic variations.

Desertification does not refer to the expansion of existing deserts. It occurs because dryland ecosystems, which cover over one third of the world's land area, are extremely vulnerable to over-exploitation and inappropriate land use.

Desertification is a phenomenon that ranks among the greatest environmental challenges of our time. Today, more than two billion hectares of previously productive land is degraded. By 2030, food production will require an additional 300 million hectares of land. It is a global issue, with serious implications worldwide for biodiversity, eco-safety, poverty eradication, socio-economic stability and sustainable development.

The issue of desertification is not new though - it played a significant role in human history, contributing to the collapse of several large empires, and the displacement of local population. But today, the pace of arable land degradation is estimated at 30 to 35 times the historical rate.

The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (WCDD) is observed on 17th June every year to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification. The day is a unique moment to remind everyone that land degradation neutrality is achievable through problem-solving, strong community involvement and co-operation at all levels.

All three passed out from St. Anthony's School, Shillong, Meghalaya

Dossers Urge are David, Gideon, Romeo Kom. Three of them are all brothers residing in Shillong though their origin is from Manipur.

Dossers Urge simply means the urge to make music constantly, also because all the good catchy names were taken and we think it sounded different.

It's a band known for electrifying live shows with stage presence, genre is a mixture of Punk, Psychedelic, Garage Pop, Indie, Math, Sample, Dance, etc.

Three of them have been playing music at a very initial stage, getting introduced to western music from friends during school days and church as well. Attending uncountable concerts also the idea of band entertaining through live music inspired us. We started off by playing at different tribal fresher's meet held in the city, later we started writing our own songs and changed the name.

Like any other artists, David said that our vision is that we like to make music, go play to avid music followers, festivals, inspire and enjoy the perks of being a musician. So basically speaking, there is no mission or objective as such but rather a constant process of producing music.

Dossers Urge said, "We would play in couple of competitions only because we required funds to upgrade gears but later we stopped participating once gears got upgraded."

Dossers Urge have performed in countless numbers of festivals across the country from Indie Earth Exchange to Nh7 Weekender, Vh1 Supersonics. Sharing the stage with Megadeth, Steven Wilson, Incubus has been phenomenal!

Converse selects an artist from India to record at rubber-tracks studio in Brooklyn, New York. Selection was based on artist music content, personality and the ability to execute live performance.

David said that he had sent their three brothers' content

Contd from prev issue

'Tension Bomb is more dangerous than Nuclear Bomb'

We know that in Second World War when atom bombs were exploded in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 5 to 6 lakhs of people died on the spot, and another 3 to 4 lakhs afterwards due to its after effect. But this happened once only. Since then no atomic bomb were exploded, nor there is any likelihood. But very few are really aware that there is one main reason which is killing billions of people every year all over the World without any distinction of caste or race or religion or nationality, and that is Tension or Stress Bomb. WHO health report says every year fifteen million people die due to stress oriented problems like Heart disease, diabetes, cancer etc. And this figure is going to raise to 4 to 5 times by 2020.

It has been conclusively proud that these diseases are mainly due to faulty life style namely -

- Life full of uncontrolled mental tension

Ranjan K Baruah



This year's theme is "Food. Feed. Fibre. - the links between consumption and land."

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Two years later, in 1994, the General Assembly established the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management, and declared 17 June "WCDD" by its resolution A/RES/49/115.

Food, feed and fibre must also compete with expanding cities and the fuel industry. The end result is that land is being con-

verted and degraded at unsustainable rates, damaging production, ecosystems and biodiversity. With changes in consumer and corporate behaviour, and the adoption of more efficient planning and sustainable practices, there could be enough land to meet the demand. If every consumer were to buy products that do not degrade the land, suppliers would cut back the flow of these products and send a powerful signal to producers and policy makers.

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of UN on his message on the occasion said that "we can reverse this trend and bring solutions to a wide range of challenges, from forced migration and hunger to climate change". On this day, Secretary General called for a new contract for nature. He also added that "through international action and solidarity, we can scale up land restoration and nature-based solutions for climate action and the benefit of future generations and by doing so, we can deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and leave no one behind."

As it is a challenge for all of us, so, we have to find out ways to combat desertification and droughts. Every individual may contribute in this regard when they consume sustainably and responsibly. We must encourage reforestation and tree regeneration and make sure that we plan trees every year. Every small step is counted and contributes towards sustainable development. We should not limit ourselves to mere awareness but take action which shall bring positive tangible transformation for us and for the generation to come.

(With direct inputs from UN publication and feedback may be sent to bkranjjan@gmail.com)

Dossers Urge: Who are they?

Sanjoo Thangjam



after which they were selected at rubber-tracks studio, Brooklyn, New York.

However, prior to their selection, they had to undergo several screening procedures.

First, in Guwahati, then they got them to Mumbai, following where Converse along with influential musicians scene persons from all over India choose Dossers Urge amongst thousands other bands.

Dossers Urge stated that we are glad that we Dossers URGE, a brothers' band could track the album ' HONEST RAGE' with world class engineers and producers which had made them to showcase their abilities both musically and mentally.

After recording sessions in New York, "We made some friends and ended up spending a month hitch hiking across Manhattan, Philly, New Jersey, Atlantic etc experiencing and

adapting the lifestyle and music scenes of America.

Dossers Urge's future plan is to create more contend and then figure out how to channel their brand of music to youth as they think the music they created is freely or rather easily accessible. They said that perhaps it will take some time to come out in the mainstream.

David said this to Special Correspondent, "Government & Politics leaving it to you". What does he really meant, I myself do not know.

From which part of country is the Dossers Urge from? Parents are from Manipur. Mom is house wife. She used to sing and still does & Dad, retired from Indian Army.

Dossier Urge said, "We are all self taught musicians thou at times, learned from friends and also had taken classes in Music schools."

Dossers Urge's opinion on music scene in North East David said, "I think the current music scene in the north east is not great but also it is not very bad either. Thanks to few festivals. Will definitely like to come and introduce Dossers Urge there. Message to upcoming musicians would be to go out and play for people, just find a way anyhow."

Dossers Urge stated that Shillong is a place where we like to make music, not stating that one cannot make music anywhere else because for Dossers Urge, it would be illogical to move elsewhere to create music given the logistics to be covered to move elsewhere. Also this depends on time and project that they are planning to undertake.

Last but not least, David said, "No, I do not think people in Manipur discriminate us because I don't see any reason why? And even if it does, it does not bother me from an artist point of view claiming that we are artists because as I feel that understanding music is universal."

(The writer is a Special Correspondent of Indian Observer Post)

Yoga-A need of the hour

Dr Sagolsem Kulachandra Singh

-Faulty diet namely diet full of dairy products, Bakery products, Animal products/processed, refined bottled or tinned food and beverages

-Increasing vices like tobacco, liquor

-Lack of physical exercises, sedentary habits leading to obesity

-Increasing pollution in Air, Water and Food

These are called as "RISK" factors

So, it is obviously one wants to avoid these diseases one has to change his life style from high tension to tranquillity, take proper type of food, Exercise, rest and abstain from vices.

Here comes the role of Yoga :

The science of Ashtanga Yoga is the greatest contribution

of the ancient Indian culture to humanity.

One of the aims of Yogic practice is to understand the mind and discipline it. It helps to develop control over the mind activities and produces on state of Harmony or integration, what is called as Samadhi this state of balance between body mind - spirit so called 'I'. This harmony is essential for the health. This harmony which is mainly disturbed by mind actively produces a state called as Vyadhi or Vikshepa or a state of Diseased i.e." Not at ease."

In Yoga this state has been described on feeling of sorrow, weakness nervousness, increase in breathing rate are signs of Vikshepa or what we called as stress. This stress or Vikshepa condition is produced due to the production of negative emotional impulses like Anger, Fear, Anxiety, Frustration, Greed, Jealousy. So basic attempt is needed to stop producing negative emotional impulses, and convert the same into positive emotional pattern like love, friendship, companion, sharing delight and capacity to Pardon. (to be continued)