

# THE BEACON

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## Nagaland to get \$68m edu loan from World Bank

Arakkal Shada Amina

India and the Nagaland government signed a \$68-million deal — titled the Nagaland: Enhancing Classroom Teaching and Resources Project — with the World Bank on Tuesday, February 23, to improve the education sector in the state of Nagaland, according to a statement from the Ministry of Finance.

Around 1.5 lakh students and 20,000 teachers throughout Nagaland are expected to benefit from this project, according to aforementioned statement.

The \$68-million loan, obtained from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), will mature in 14.5 years and will be awarded an additional grace period of five years.

The ministry statement also highlighted the objectives of the project, which includes enhancing governance, teaching practices and learning environments of schools in Nagaland.

At least 15 of the 44 existing higher-secondary schools in Nagaland are expected to be revamped as part of the project.

It also has provisions to improve technological advancements in schools, said the statement.

## India now focuses on wellness: PM

Vandana Nampoothiri

The current government treats health issues in a holistic manner rather than in a fragmented manner; therefore, the focus is on wellness and not just in treatment, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a webinar on Tuesday, February 23, on effective implementation of Budget provisions in the health sector.

The money allocated to the health sector in this year's budget "is unprecedented and shows the government's commitment to provide better healthcare to every citizen," he said.

The government's emphasis this time is not just on investment in the health



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sector but also on expansion and accessibility of health care in far flung areas of the country, according to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office.

"As per the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission, local bodies will get more than Rs

70,000 crore keeping health services in mind," said Modi. This investment is expected to increase the employment opportunities in the sector.

The government is reportedly focusing on a more "holistic and integrated approach," adopted from prevention-to-cure strategy.

announced that the World Health Organisation (WHO) is planning to establish a Global Centre of Traditional Medicine in India.

"This is the moment to take the accessibility and affordability of the health sector to its next level using modern technologies. The government's budget is for sure a catalytic agent, but things will only work out if we all work together," he said.

He congratulated the combined efforts of the Central government and private sector, recalling how the country was able to set up a network of 2,500 labs and how it could reach a milestone of 21 crore tests throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

A four-level strategy is also being reportedly formulated to focus on prevention of illness and promotion of wellness, cheap and effective treatment to the poor, and increase the quality of health infrastructure and healthcare professionals.

The prime minister also

## Teachers protest fee cut

Pavithra Prabhu

**BENGALURU:** At least 3,000 educators from across the city banded together to participate in a peaceful march from Bengaluru Central Railway Station to Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Tuesday, February 23, against the slashing of private school fees by 30 percent.

The protest, organised by the Karnataka Private School Managements, Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff Coordination Committee



Protest at the central railway station

Pavithra Prabhu

(KPMTCC), led to Karnataka Minister for Primary & Secondary Education, S Suresh Kumar, visiting the teachers and assuring them he would "talk to parents and school heads" on the issue.

"It is not right that the government is not supporting us. It is unfair treatment,"

said one teacher from Royal Concorde International School who was participating in the project.

Although the KPMTCC initially suggested a 15-percent cut, it was withdrawn and the organisation now demands that the order for 30 percent fee cut be revoked.

## Agreement reached: Australians to access news on Facebook

Alwin Benjamin Soji

Facebook on Tuesday, February 23, announced it had reached an agreement with the Australian government regarding viewing and sharing news on Facebook in Australia.

The agreement paved the way for Facebook to restore news on the social media platform for Australians in the coming days.

Campbell Brown, the Vice-President of Global News Partnerships at Facebook, said, "Going forward, the government has clarified we will retain the ability to decide if news appears on Facebook so that we won't automatically be subject to a forced negotiation."

She added that it has always been Facebook's intention to support journalism in

Australia and around the world, and that it ensured it will continue to invest in news globally and resist efforts by media conglomerates to advance regulatory frameworks that do not take into account the true value exchange between publishers and platforms like Facebook.

Australian publishers were restricted from sharing or posting any content on Facebook, while Australian users were unable to view or share Australian or international news on the social media website.

International publishers were able to publish news on Facebook but links and posts couldn't be viewed or shared by Australian users.

Also, the international community couldn't view or share Australian news on Facebook.

## Climate change hits low-income nations worst

Sudarshini

At least 24.9 million people from 140 countries were displaced and 34 million people across the globe were lacking sufficient quantities of nutritious and affordable food due to climate extremes in 2019, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has said in a statement.

"People living in low-income countries are at least four times more likely to be displaced by extreme weather compared to people in rich countries, despite being the



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FAO

least responsible for climate change," said OCHA.

The UN has issued a warning about climate extremes and said

anticipation and planning are required to deal with weather-related hazards.

These hazards have put millions of lives at risk and

they require urgent assistance.

As a result of human-induced climate change, natural disasters in the past 20 years have doubled and claimed nearly 1.23 million lives, it said.

Countries like Sudan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, and Bangladesh were dreadfully affected by climate change it claimed.

Sudan experienced devastating floods in 2020. Yemen and other countries in North Africa suffer from safe water shortage.

In 2018, many Afghans were displaced due to severe drought, said the statement.



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