

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, December 19, 2015

Seeds of positive change

"We want the world to act with urgency. We want a comprehensive, equitable and durable agreement in Paris, which must lead us to restore the balance between humanity and nature and between what we have inherited and what we will leave behind" - urged Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India to the leaders of more than 190 countries- the largest gathering of world leaders- in his address during the World Climate Change Conference 2015. The summit, popularly known as the COP (Conference of the Parties) 21 Climate Change Summit in Paris is the result of the realization that climate change is a very real and serious threat to the very existence of the world, and leaders of the world must come together and share responsibility in a united effort to reverse the impending catastrophe. The problems of environmental degradation have been on the rise, and the increasing threat to the very survival and continuity of the world has been staring us in the face for long. The manifestations can no longer be ignored- upto 17 degrees rise in temperatures in frozen Antarctica, floods in the arid Atacama desert of Chile, four concurrent cyclones in the eastern hemisphere, and closer home, the worst flood in more than a century in Chennai. The year 2015 saw the hottest year in the history of the planet, but will almost certainly be beaten by 2016. There had been reports of experts predicting droughts in the North-Eastern region of the country in the year 2016, and further deterioration in the amount of rainfall and availability of water with a concurrent rise in temperature. The warnings are dire and consequences unthinkable.

According to experts, a 2-degree Celsius increase in global temperature from the current level will be catastrophic, but at the current rate of emission, the world will be warmer by 3.6 degree Celsius by the middle of the century thereby making Global Warming irreversible. The vital question that begs an answer, then, is: what-if there ever is one- can we, as individuals do to mitigate and reverse climate change? The answer, unfortunately, is not so simple or straightforward. More importantly, we need to delve deep into the details and understand the genesis, the present scenario and the consequences of the rapidly changing climate and the increasing imbalance of nature and ecology. However, simple everyday acts do go a long way in reducing emissions which are the biggest cause of climate change and Global Warming. Some of them are: switching off unnecessary electrical and electronic appliances, reducing use of cooking gas, coal, fossil fuels etc, switching to LED bulbs, adopting solar energy harnessing equipments, planting trees and greeneries, reducing trash, using hybrid vehicles if affordable, buying energy-efficient gadgets and appliances, using public transport or bicycles whenever possible etc. We can sow the seeds of positive change if we conscientiously make small yet consistent efforts on our parts without waiting for the government or the authorities to act. In closing, the following line might just spur us to sit up and start acting today: "We don't have a Plan B to save the earth". Prince Charles.

Lost

I, the undersigned have lost my Pan Card, Adhaar Card and ATM Card of ICICI Bank on the way between Malom and Thangal Bazar, Imphal on 18/12/2015.
Finders are requested to kindly hand over it to the undersigned.

Sukhveer Singh Shekhawat (aged 28 years)
Address:- A-105, 3rd Floor, Gate No. 2
Freedom Fighter Colony
Neb Sarai Saket, New Delhi
Contact No. - 09873828191

Wanted Sub-Editor

Imphal Times is looking for an experience sub editor with excellent writing skill in English who can read Bengali written script. Working hour is 12 noon till 3 pm. Honorarium is Rs. 3000 p.m. Preference will be given to candidate who had already work in English daily as desk editor. Age no bar, and Imphal Times have no problem with those candidates working in other newspaper at night shift.

WHENEVER YOU SEE CONSTRUCTION AND MINING EQUIPMENTS, JUST THINK OF US
A SOLUTION FOR EVERY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT



Automobile Engineering Works-1
B K WORKSHOP
New Checkon Road, Purana Rajbari
Imphal East.
Manipur - 795 001

ALL KINDS OF SPARE PARTS AVAILABLE
AFTER SALES SERVICE TO YOUR SATISFACTION

Authorised dealer **BEML Limited**
(A Government of India Mini Ratna Company under Ministry of Defence)

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail: imphaltimes@gmail.com.
For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (O)

National & International News

Major reform bills coming in last 3 days of winter session: Jaitley

PTI New Delhi, Dec 19: Indicating that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill may not go through in the current session of Parliament, finance minister Arun Jaitley on Saturday said the Bill was being delayed for "collateral reasons".

However, the minister added that the government will push for other reform bills in the Rajya Sabha in the remaining three days of the Winter Session, which ends on Wednesday. The bills include amendment to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, a legislation to set up commercial courts and bankruptcy code.

Addressing the annual general meeting of industry chamber Ficci, Jaitley said, "I have no doubt in my mind that attempt to delay (GST) is entirely for collateral reasons. And the only collateral reason I suspect is if I couldn't do it, then why should somebody else do it?"

Politics should not become a hurdle to larger interest of the country, he said, adding that it would not be possible for the government to accept Congress party's demand of prescribing GST tariff in the Constitution itself. "A delayed GST is better than a flawed GST," he said.



The GST Bill is stuck in the Rajya Sabha where the ruling NDA government does not have a majority as well as stiff opposition by the Congress.

The government had planned to roll out GST from April 1, 2016. The Bill, which is being touted as the biggest reform in indirect taxation since Independence, is unlikely to be taken in the remaining three days of the Winter Session.

The Lok Sabha has already passed the Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts Bill and Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill. These are likely to be taken up in the Rajya Sabha next week.

Contd. from page 1

Reverine Ecosystem of the Chakpi River

The role of the Chakpi River in the geomorphic formation of the Manipur Valley is scientifically a significant one. The course of the Manipur River near Sugu Nungthong is tectonically uplifted and known as Sugu Hump the River act as antecedent flow has been created. Simultaneously the Chakpi River act as obsequent tributary join the Manipur River and as a result the Manipur River water had continuously been impounded to form a vast sheet of water, before the present Manipur valley landscape has been transformed. Therefore, some of the renowned geomorphologies, claimed, the Valley of Manipur are fluvial lacustrine origin. This kind of scientific finding of the Chakpi River and formation of Manipur Valley and the legendary wisdom of the Wangbren's touring route both in the Chakpi and in the upward flow of the Manipur River is a unique trend of the creation of Manipur Valley and its evolution of the human settlement in the vicinity of these riverine eco-system. Knowing and fully realizing the significance of the Sugu Hump, the then Kingdom of Manipur worshipped the Hump as Sugu Nungthong, locking it with iron log and key annually by Royal Court 'Maiba' (Priest) and 'Maibi' (Priestess). Similarly Valley dwellers of Manipur believed that the upward impounding of Manipur River flow from Sugu taken symbolically as the visit of Sugu Hanjaba (Prophet of Wangbren Shrine) to Capital Kangla signifies the Wangbren visit to Kangla the then capital of Manipur. During the period of Sugu Hanjaba's visit towards Imphal people were forbidden from accessing water bodies and Rivers as it signifies the visit of the Wangbren God. However, after the commission of Ethai Barrage intervention to this genetical functioning of its hydrological regime has been deformed irreparably. Now we are encountering with adverse consequences caused by the fatal alteration of the drainage systems of the Manipur Valley. Micro-eco-system of Loktak, Pumen Ecope, Kharungpat etc has been seriously degraded. As a result many of the native flora and fauna are now in the impending danger of becoming extinct and some have already become extinct from the territorial space of the state permanently. Currently the Government of Manipur is attempting the ancestral holy river Chakpi with the so called developmental intervention like Chakpi Dam project. The process of construction of Chakpi Hydel Electric Project which started and ensued without the prior informed consent of the communities of the Chakpi Basin has all the potential to become disastrously such. This project will affect 65 villages and more than 600 sq.km of land in the catchment area will permanently submerged under water of the proposed dam. It will not only completely wipe out their livelihood, but also their traditional, Natural and Cultural Heritages will be lost permanently and gone forever. Today, we are observing India Rivers Day with the conviction of preserving our natural resources and cultural heritage to sustain the riverine eco-system of the Chakpi River. Let the Chakpi River flow freely nurturing and nourishing the growth of biodiversity in the basin.

Contd. from yesterday issue

Significance of the Anglo-Kuki war 1917-1919 AD

The situation turned from bad to worse. Fear Psychosis, tensions, rumors and nervousness shook the valley and also the hilly regions. Anarchy that developed in Manipur was now extended to the Naga Hills, in the North, North Cachar Hills in the North West, Lushai Hills in the South and South West, Chin Hills and Chindwind valley in Myanmar and the Somra tracts in the North east of Manipur.¹² The development of anarchy almost in the entire North East India compelled the British Government to hand over the Administration from the civil authority to the Army to curtail the Kukis who defied the Independence that they had.

The Army took over the war on November 7, 1918 with 5400 combatant force both from India and Myanmar, following the meeting of the chief Commissioner of Assam, Colonel Shakespeare and the commander-in-chief of the British Indian Army in June 1918 at Shimla.¹³ The combined force of two countries, British India and British Burma (now Myanmar), after modification and transferring powers and administration to the Army revised their mighty campaign against the Kukis from November 25, 1918. With this the war entered the second phase. The formation of the British Army area wise much resembled that of the Kuki strategy during the second phase. By deploying various ranks of military officers not below the rank of 2nd lieutenant numbering 118 in Manipur and Myanmar, who commanded five thousand four hundred troops, crushed the Kuki movement for independence within a short time. The mighty military campaign against the Kuki came to an end on 20 May 1919 after the subjugation of the Kuki. Therefore, following the Great Anglo-Kuki War, the hill people who were independent were for the first time brought under the intensive political and administrative control of the imperial power.

Perhaps, during the military campaign under the civil administration, the British had underestimated the war strategy of the Kuki causing several casualties, death and shame in the hands of the Kuki which they thought as barbaric and uncivilized. Yet, they came to know how the Kuki chiefs could command, lead and protect their people since time immemorial. The search to identify the head clans of the Kuki remind us how the British admired and respected the Kuki traditions, the base

of their chieftainship. Based on the sources available so far we are certain that the Great Anglo-Kuki War 1917-1919 AD was the greatest war directed against the British colonialism, in the North-East India, whose epicentre was rooted in Manipur's Hilly regions. We are certain today that the war was part of the great Indian National movement and partly it was a part of First World War. According to Sir Robert Reid, "The most serious in the history of Manipur...".¹⁴ And to DK Palit the war broke out due to the influence of the Bengali Nationalists. "Mention has been made earlier that the Kukis had been encouraged by emissaries from Bengali Nationalists in Assam...".¹⁵ According to H.K. Borpujan "... the German spies had a secret hand in fomenting the war... and that the Kukis were under the influence of the activists of the revolutionaries of Bengal."¹⁶ The war exposed to the world how the hilly regions of Manipur in particular and other areas in general were much neglected by the government. One can see that the annual expenditure of the hill areas was below 18,000, eight thousand, which is about a quarter of the house tax paid by the tribal of Manipur.

In fact, the war broke out and peoples of past and the present share the negative and positive aspects of the war. Here we are concerned more about the significance of it. The War had brought drastic changes in the colonial history and post colonial history of Manipur in the form of administrative reforms besides many others. The most significant result of the War was the overall reorganization of the administration and the kind of concession made to the state, Manipur. After the war, Cosgrave, political Agent of Manipur, wanted to put the hill administration exclusively under his office. But the chief commissioner of Assam thought it to be too drastic, and proposed to put under the personal management of the Malajanga, who was guided by the political agent. He suggested for "reconstruction". His scheme of reconstruction to improve the Government and Hill people relations was accepted by the Government of India.¹⁷ Accordingly under the new scheme, three new Subdivisions were formed.¹⁸ Each subdivision was under the charge of a European Sub divisional officer who was directly accountable to the president of the Durbar. These officers were appointed from the Association

of Provincial Civil Service whose designations were equal to that of Sub-Divisional magistrate, who were first class magistrate under the Indian Criminal procedure code, 1898.¹⁹ Once appointed they were entitled to receive similar allowances, provided the total pay and allowances did not exceed Rs.800/- per month.²⁰ Accordingly the South-west area with headquarters at Songpi, later changed to Churachandpur after the name of Maharaja Churachand Singh was placed under BC Gasper's charge. For the Tamenglong Subdivision of the north west area with temporary headquarters at Tamenglong itself, William Shaw was appointed and for the north east area, with headquarters at Ukhrul, L.L. Peter was appointed. To implement the new administration scheme the following concessions were made to Manipur so that the durbar could meet the increased cost to run the hilly region not covered under the Headquarter, Imphal. Some scholars and the Kukis feel that these concessions were granted for the loyalty shown by the durbar and the ruler to the British. However, the following measures had been adopted. I) That the annual installment of Rs. 60,000 towards the liquidations of the loan of Rs.2,75,000 granted to the state in 1917 was reduced to 30,000 II) That the annual tribute of Rs. 50,000 payable by the durbar was reduced to 5000 only from the current financial year.

III) The state Manipur was relieved from the contribution of Rs. 30,000 per annum towards the maintenance of Mao Imphal Road. In addition to these concessions separate budget for the hilly region was introduced for the first time in Manipur by the local authorities. The legacy of the Anglo-Kuki results can be still felt in the Manipur State Assembly, in the form of setting up of Hill Area Committee, headed by a Chairman, not below the rank of Cabinet. The historical significance lies in the fact that it established strong and valuable local custom and tradition of resistance to the British. The British learned the social structure of the Kuki's, which was based on the clans and kinship. The importance, power and position that the Kuki chief, had enjoyed by this time gave an ample room to the British to split and divide the Kuki society along the line of genealogy, based on clans thereby causing confusion over the head clan. It also consolidated the Kuki traditional chieftainship by issuing land rights to

the chief. It is now difficult to root them from the society by modern government. The Manipur legislative Assembly had passed chief-ship acquisition Acts but they are still not effective.²¹ The war had both negative and positive impact among the people of Manipur. Negative impacts were much on the Kuki community and positive impacts go to the general population, particularly who have shown loyalty to the British during the war. It shattered the Kuki society into pieces, disintegrating and fragmenting them to the extent that they never come together as they did during and before the war. It germinated spirit of nationalism to the people of Manipur. We are also certain that the kind of administrative reforms that the British had introduced did not satisfy the people of Manipur in general and the Hill population in particular. The tribal's unsatisfactory upon the colonial regime came to light again in the form of Kabui rebellion, the Nupial and also during the Second World War again, when many people from Manipur join INA and fought the British once again. This time more determined to drive out the perpetrators of crime against the community of Manipur. Despite all the sufferings said and unsaid, the Great Anglo-Kuki War of 1917-1919 laid the foundation for fighting the colonial administration in Manipur in the form of armed struggle. We feel the core value of the Great Anglo-Kuki War should be focused on the younger generation for political posterity of the next generation. It will not be possible to hide away its significance in the age of information technology and also when the world is moving toward a global village. The great Anglo-Kuki war was purely anti-Imperialism, defending their political rights- independently. This war has also reflected how the Kukis were very advanced in technology at least in making gun powder, and some sophisticated weapons. It lays the foundation in the history of arm struggle against the British. But one of the saddest parts of the movement was that, no man came forward or shared sufferings of the prisoners during this time many of whom were humiliated, brutalized and consequently killed by the British. The significance of the Kuki war will keep becomong the youth for greater and yet greater sacrifice for the Kuki nationality. (Concluded)