

# Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, November 21, 2015

## The great day for Manipur

Finally! the much anticipated extravaganza conceptualized to showcase and promote the diverse socio-cultural heritage and the rich traditional wealth of the state begins today without a glitch. That the State Government spared no expenses and efforts to make an impression to the visiting tourists would be an understatement. The Imphal city has been transformed within an incredibly short span of time into one which can be compared to any other mid-sized or tier II cities in the country - well almost. Despite the best efforts and undoubtedly noble intentions which had made tremendous improvements in the public facilities and certain infrastructures, a closer look into the activities brings to light various clear indications of the haphazard and rushed nature of it all. A huge portion of the work initiated has remained unfinished. For example the renovation works at Kanglapat. Now that the Sangai Festival is underway, one cannot help feeling apprehensive about the longevity of the commitment the State Government initiated towards beautification of Imphal City. If previous instances are any indications, we will be seeing a change in inertia and a visible drop in enthusiasm making the whole efforts an exercise in futility. The incredible potential for attracting tourism in the State has been well known and even documented. From the enchanting misty mountains to the incredibly beautiful ethnic handiworks and crafts, from the inherently hospitable people to the excellent climatic condition, the unbelievably beautiful and mysterious caves and lakes - this small state has it all, and in no small measures. This naturally endowed land has been wasted and neglected for centuries, our inability to see the big picture, occupied as we are in finding ways to secure our own personal lives through means fair or foul being the main reason. With the air connectivity with our neighboring Asian countries a reality now, it would be an act of utter foolishness not to cash in on the euphoria and enthusiasm such a development has created. Without going into the details of the nitty-gritty of tourism and its pros and cons, it is an undeniable truth that with proper planning, timely and effective checks and due diligence, tourism would only improve the economy, change the perceptions of the local people towards the visitors and their way of life, adopt a more tolerant view of things and most importantly help in propagating our cultures and traditions throughout the world. For all these to happen, basic infrastructures and basic amenities must be put in place and make the whole state a tourist friendly one. A lot more needs to be done to be where we want this State to be from where we are now. Only a dedicated, committed and sustained effort can make things possible. Working in fits and starts will get us nowhere.

### MSPDCL POWER DRIVE

A team of Manipur State Power Distribution Company Limited (MSPDCL) during one of its drives conducted on 19th November at different locations in Imphal caught the following defaulter power consumers for meter tapping and unauthorized connection.

#### IED - IIDEFAULTERS' LIST:

1. K. Meghachandra Singh from Uripok Achom Leikai Unauthorised Connection, Penalty amount Rs. 5000/-
2. Tulsu Motors from Thangmeiband Meter Bypass, Penalty amount Rs. 20000/-
3. Wahengbam Luwangba from Thangmeiband Meter Bypass, Penalty amount Rs. 5000/-
4. Pukhrabam Sunday Singh from Thangmeiband Tapping before Meter, Penalty amount Rs. 5000/-
5. K. Saratchandra Singh from Thangmeiband Tapping before Meter, Penalty amount Rs. 9000/-
6. Th. Sarat Singh from Thangmeiband Tapping before Meter, Penalty amount Rs. 9000/-
7. M/S Shantikumar Motors from Thangmeiband (P/C- 85/2) Temporarily disconnected for 6 months due to non-payment of penalty amount and outstanding dues.

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## My search for the Manipur Lok Ayukta

Cont. from yesterday

### Why do we need a Manipur Lok Ayukta?

The rot in Manipur's system has been exposed not by Lok Ayukta, but by Mother Nature. The serial collapses of Sekmai Dam and Chakpikarong Bridge recently exposed the nature of rot in the system.

The economic survey 2014-15 tabled in Parliament early this year exposed the 96% leakage (subsidized goods that do not reach any household) of rice in Manipur's Public Distribution System, the highest leakage in the country. Those are the food grains which should have been distributed to BPL families of Manipur at subsidised rates.

The power elite - politicians and government officials are shamelessly unconcerned. Huge wealth has come to accumulate in the hands of few, while the larger masses are driven increasingly to desperate poverty. We need an ombudsman institution like Lok Ayukta to check the official corruption by the public servants.

Often in the mornings in Bangalore, I used to see reports

in newspaper of investigation of cases of corruption by Santosh Hegde (former justice of the Supreme Court) who was the Lok Ayukta of Karnataka (from 2006-2011). (Santosh Hegde also headed the Supreme Court-appointed high-power commission, probing six cases of alleged extra-judicial killings in Manipur, and the commission reported that those cases were not genuine encounters and the victims did not have any criminal records.)

As a Lok Ayukta of Karnataka, Santosh Hegde had exposed major irregularities, uncovered major violations and systemic corruption in mines in Bellary. Four former chief ministers of Karnataka presently have cases pending before the Karnataka state Lok Ayukta. Hegde's first report on illegal mining had indicted former chief minister N Dharam Singh and 11 government servants including one IPS and 6 IAS officials in the illegal mining scam. His report in the latter part of 2011 resulted in the dismissal of Chief Minister Yeddyurappa and being jailed for 21 days in October 2011. Citizens in Karnataka reading such

news felt good to see something being done to check corruption. But, here in Manipur, we do not get to see such news!

### To the media fraternity, general public and civil society organisations

Our media can help in making the public aware of "what is Lok Ayukta" and how the public can be empowered against the corrupted politicians and government officials once we have a Lok Ayukta office set up.

We, the public, have lot of guts and courage to beat up petty thieves (nganu-hurbanas, activahurbanas etc), but hardly do we realise that there is a bigger picture before us that we all are unable to see - the bigger robberies of our money by the politicians and government officials. Our development is at the mercy of corruption which is rampant in the state.

It's high time that we as citizens of the state unite and raise our voice against corruption. On the part of our communal leaders, there is a need to direct our energies for the common good of the people towards development, rather than building up tensions amongst

communities. We have our rights, we are empowered with RTI (Right to Information), with PIL (Public Interest Litigation), but we hardly use them. Fear not, the politicians and government officials are beateable.

### To the Honourable Governor and Chief Minister of Manipur

Sweden established Ombudsman in 1809; other Scandinavian countries followed suit two centuries ago. Maharashtra set up their Lok Ayukta in 1971. The Lok Pal and Lok Ayuktas Act, 2013, which came into force from 16 January 2014, made it mandatory for all the states to set up Lok Ayuktas within one year of the passage of the Bill. It's been more than a year since we have the The Manipur Lok Ayukta Act, 2014. But our Manipur Government has not established the Manipur Lok Ayukta yet.

### Dear Honourable Governor and Chief Minister of Manipur, why have you not appointed Manipur's Lok Ayukta so far? Is the 'The Manipur Lok Ayukta Act, 2014' just for name sake?

(The writer Ringo Pebam, can be reached at [ringo.p@gmail.com](mailto:ringo.p@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/ringo.pebam](https://www.facebook.com/ringo.pebam))

## National & International News

# ASEAN-India Summit: Terrorism, trade, sea dispute to be top agenda

PII

**Kuala Lumpur, Nov 2:** Terrorism, trade and South China Sea dispute are expected to dominate discussions at the 13th ASEAN-India Summit likely to begin later on Saturday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other Southeast Asian leaders reviewing the ASEAN-India cooperation and charting out its future direction.

The Prime Minister arrived in Kuala Lumpur this morning to a film star's welcome when several ethnic Indians, who waited patiently outside his hotel for his motorcade to arrive from the airport, cheered loudly as he got out of the car while taking photos with their mobile phones.

India and the leaders of the 10 member grouping will review the new Plan of Action (2016-2020) to further enhance ASEAN-India cooperation along the politico-



security, economic and socio-cultural pillars. The two sides will also exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest or concern. The ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership has acquired further momentum after the Act-East Policy by Prime Minister Modi at

the 12th ASEAN-India Summit in Myanmar.

India and ASEAN have 30 dialogue mechanisms including a Summit and 7 Ministerial meetings in External Affairs, Commerce, Tourism, Agriculture, Environment, Renewable Energy and Telecommunications. ASEAN (Association of

Southeast Asian Nations) is India's fourth largest trading partner.

India is the sixth largest trade partner for ASEAN.

Trade between India and ASEAN stood at USD 76.52 billion in 2014-15. India's exports to ASEAN were USD 31.81 billion and its imports from the grouping were USD 44.71 billion. The ASEAN-India economic integration process got a boost with the creation of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area in July this year, after the entry into force of the ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements.

Negotiations on a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement involving the ASEAN countries and its 6 FTA partners including India have seen some breakthroughs and are expected to be concluded in 2016.

### Contd. from page 1

## Organic Arunachal clothes to hit national market soon

Appreciating the free distribution of yarns under CM's Loim Cloth scheme, Pangin said it is one of the innovative schemes of Chief Minister Nabam Tuki which would generate self-employment and make the rural weavers economically sound.

Asked about training facility, he said though the supervisor has been doing the job presently as trained manpower from outside hesitate to come to the state considering its remoteness. Thus, he urged the skill development and employment generation department (SDEGD) to tap a vocational training provider in the field and encourage the local youth to undergo such training for his industry to engage them.

Termining the skill development & employment generation through job melas as another unparallelled CM's innovative scheme, Pangin disclosed his plan to offer training to the local youth soon besides expanding marketing to other districts, the NE region and rest of

India gradually with products of all years. Rupali Perme, a class-XII pass girl, speaking to this editor, expressed her happiness, saying she was highly satisfied as the industry has been giving much more than her expectation. Tunng Perme, Nitumani Tayeng, Rani Saikia standing side by side only dilted Perme. Asked what would they do after marriage, Rupali questioned: Will a married person's tummy not be hungry? Who would fill it? The journey would continue even after marriage, why should I quit? Pangin, a multi-faceted personality, is into writing too and his first book 'Keerook and Other Stories from North East India' - showcasing a glimpse of rich cultural mosaic of NE India was released by Air Marshal (Retired) A K Gogoi, at Guwahati in November 2014.

The stories narrate tales about the unique way of life, customs and traditions of people inhabiting an area with similar terrain, weather, flora and fauna.

## Nitish reviews Bihar law and order situation with senior officials

ANI

**Patna, Nov.21:** A day after being sworn into office as Chief Minister of Bihar for the fifth time, Nitish Kumar called in senior officials of the state government to review the current law and order situation in the state.

The review meeting will be with the district magistrates and police superintendents of the districts via video conferencing. The state's Chief Secretary, Home Secretary and the Director General of Police (DGP) will also be present in the meeting.

Kumar will also hold the first meeting of his new cabinet on Saturday evening at the secretariat in Patna. According to reports, the cabinet would take its decision on calling of special session of 16th Bihar Legislative Assembly and will also

decide the date of a joint meeting of both the houses of Bihar legislature. Yesterday, in a grand event, Nitish Kumar swore in as the Chief Minister of Bihar for the fifth time at the Gandhi Maidan here.

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's son Tejaswi Yadav swore-in as the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar. He has also been given the additional responsibility of three ministries.

Lalu's elder son Tej Pratap Yadav has also been allocated three ministries in the Nitish Kumar-led Cabinet.

Senior RJD leader Abdul Bari Siddiqui will be the next Finance Minister of Bihar while JD(U)'s Vijendra Yadav will be Energy minister. Congress's Ashok Chaudhary is going to be the next Education and IT minister of Bihar.

## Wanted Sub-Editor

Imphal Times is looking for an English 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.