

Editorial

Imphal, Monday, November 30, 2015

The incredible heritage park at Sangai Festival

Sangai festival will conclude today. The speedy works for making Imphal city a place of attraction for every tourist visiting the state will now be slowed down again. Reason - there is less money in the state exchequer. It has been reported that around 2.5 crores has been spend for this festival that aims to promote tourism in the state. Even though the state is under serious financial crisis, it is indeed a wise decision for Mr. Okram Ibbi to sanction such a huge amount for promotion of tourism in the state.

Now, as soon as the Sangai festival winds up today, most of the infrastructures built to attract the tourists both domestic and foreign at the Festival venue at Hatta Kanjeibung in Imphal West will be dismantled. Even the flowers planted in the middle of the road will be again lifted and renovation of the road median as well as the Kanglapat is likely to stop. This is being stated so because we have witness the kind of act in the last 2/3 Sangai Festival.

Unlike, yesteryear festival, the State tourism department needs to be appreciated this time. The Sangai Tourism this time is unique this time with the inclusion of many item that were never during the last festival. The Asian theater Festival, The Film Festival, The Sumang Leela, Opening of the World War Museum, Opening of Legal clinic and most importantly the permanent like structures of traditional houses build at the heritage park.

It is being learnt that around 1 crores rupees has been spent for constricting the temporary Heritage park with permanent like structures. The traditional houses of almost all ethnic communities of the state are indeed appreciative and the man behind the idea of construction such an authentic park should be appreciated by each and every one of us.

Unfortunate part is that these structures of pride will be dismantled in a few days from now. Imphal Times suggest that let the construction at Heritage Park be left for some times with proper protection.

Most of the constructions are not less than permanent structures and there is no harm in keeping the park for some few more months if possible until next Sangai festival. It can be if proper maintenance is being done be collecting fees from visitors after the Sangai festival. Now all is left to the wisdom of our government especially to our Chief Minister, who deserves credit for the successful conduct of Sangai festival.

Russian airstrikes reportedly kill 18 people in Syria

ANI London, Nov. 30: A monitoring group reports that around 18 people have been killed in a Russian airstrike on a Syrian town that has been held by insurgents. According to the Guardian, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), and the Local Coordination Committees report that the airstrikes were on the town of Ariha, where heavy casualties were caused as a busy market was hit in the airstrikes. The SOHR says three buildings in the town centre and the Ariha

town Facebook page states the airstrikes were carried out by Russian planes where 40 people were killed and more than 70 left wounded.

The SOHR also claims that the airstrikes by Russia have killed more than 400 civilians, including 166 women and children, according to the daily.

The US along with other allies, including Turkey, has joined in carrying out air strikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and other terror groups.

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 ship.

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 Check Road, Purana Rajbari
Imphal East.
Manipur - 795 001

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)

Media in armed conflict situation: Manipur Perspective

Contd. from yesterday
Covering Manipur: Reporters' paradise versus Pandora's Box

Manipur is an armed conflict torn state. The problem has hit every aspect of life here. Whether it is development work taken up by the government for the welfare of the people or an entrepreneurial venture started individually for his or her own livelihood, nothing is left untouched by it. Encounter and fake encounter, ransom and kidnap, attack and retaliation, ambush and booby trap, extortion and threatening at gun points are becoming daily news stuff whenever someone picks up a newspaper published in Manipur or tunes the news bulletin of local radio and local television news programmes. Government offices are sometimes locked during office hours by unknown persons. Corruption is rampant, nepotism and discrimination is at its high point, justice and fair play is at its depths of despair. The problem has gone from bad to worse with the escalation of armed conflict in the state from the early nineteen eighties.

The prevailing situation obviously provides good fodder for the media. Whenever they go, journalists get meaty news stories and eye catching photographs. Unfortunately, the situation is also ripe with dangerous possibilities concerning the security of everyone including the journalists. There are possibilities of journalists offending while reporting on the

happenings in this situation of armed conflict. This may, in turn, invite the wrath of a powerful group or an influential individual. Subsequently, this may again open up a Pandora's Box for the journalists, and they shall have to contend with the consequences. This has compelled many a media person to think twice before publishing a news report that ought to be there in the front pages of daily newspapers lest it offends some powerful group or individual for the best known reasons.

Vulnerability of Media persons in Manipur:

In Manipur, three newspaper editors Rajkumar Sanatomba (1993) of the Manipuri monthly *Kangla Lanpung*, Lalrohlu Hmar (1999) of the dialect daily newspaper *the Shan* and Thounaojam Brajamani Singh (2000) of the English daily newspaper *the Manipur News* and an electronic media journalist Yambem Megha (2002) had been shot death by unidentified gunmen.

The grim reality of the safety and security of the journalists being seriously endangered in the armed conflict situation in the state had been once again appallingly reminded when K. Rishikanta Singh, the junior sub-editor of the *Imphal Free Press* was shot dead by unknown miscreants at Langol in Imphal on 17 November, 2008. Only in the case of Lalrohlu Hmar Revolutionary Front (HRF), an

underground organization operating in the southern part of the state claimed that the outfit was responsible for it. Others went unclaimed and state government has been so far not successful even in uncovering who is responsible for the murder cases.

Thangjam Dwijamani alias Nanao Imphal Correspondent of Guwahati-based Prime Time TV news channel was killed on 23 December, 2012 when police fired live rounds to disperse agitators at the foothills of Cheiraoching at Thangmeiband Sinam Leikai in Imphal. He breathed his last while covering an indefinite bandh called by several organizations of the state demanding arrest of self styled Lt. Col. Livingstone Anal of the NSCN (IM) for molesting and assaulting a Manipuri film during a musical concert at Chandel on 18 December, 2012.

In 2007, L. Chinkhalian, editor of the *Manipur Express*, had a narrow escape when gunmen opened a fusillade of fire at his car. In another case of attempted to murder, the then General Secretary of the AMWJU, Ratan Luwancha was targeted by some activists of an underground group within zero mile from the state capital, Imphal with ten rounds of bullet at his own home in the morning while he was reading newspaper in 2006. Paonam Labango, editor of the evening Manipuri daily *Kangla Pao* also faced a bullet attack near his evening office, that too

By : Dr. Aribam Ibomcha Sharma (HS)
News Editor, All India Radio

in Imphal. Former Minister of the State Bijooy Kojiam had also luckily survived from a life attempt in 1993 when he was working as a journalist. An insurgent group also bombarded the office of an upcoming daily newspaper, Lamyancha again in Imphal and Irengbam Arun, the editor designate of the daily had to run and hide for life. He was spared only after much clarification in 2000. On 31 July 2007, some militants presented as a gift, a well-packed powerful bomb in the office of the *Sangai Express* as a warning to all newspapers as they failed to publish a press release by a faction of an underground outfit. Following the incident, the All Manipur Working Journalists Union (AMWJU) had passed a resolution not to entertain press releases from the then faction-ridden outfit which was responsible for the unfortunate episode. Militants belonging to the faction of the proscribed organization telephoned the newspaper editors to say that if they fail to publish the faction's press releases all editors, journalists and other staff would be killed. The rival faction, on its part, informed the shocked editors that they would face dire consequences if they published the press release.

(To be contd.....)

National & International News

Jawan injured after unidentified persons fire at CRPF post

ANI Jammu, Nov. 30: A Central Reserve Police Force jawan was injured early on Monday morning after unidentified persons fired at a CRPF post in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

"A trooper was injured in a firing incident at a CRPF picket in Malhar (Billawar) area on Monday morning," a police official told IANS in Jammu.

The injured paramilitary trooper was shifted to a hospital, police said.

"Further details are waited as reinforcements have been rushed to the spot."

It was not immediately clear if it was a militant attack, although security forces have launched a massive search operation to nab the culprits.

Bihar assembly adjourned following death of RLSP MLA

ANI Patna, Nov. 30: The Bihar State Assembly was adjourned on Monday following the sudden demise of Rashtriya Lok Samata Party (RLSP) MLA Basant Kushwaha.

Kushwaha died this morning of a heart attack. He was 54. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar paid tributes to the leader whose body was brought to Patna and kept at the party office for people to offer their last respects. "This is very unfortunate. I pay my condolences and I pray that he rests

in peace. This is the first incident of a leader that has died just before the session and the taking of oath. There has been tradition that when a leader passes away, then the Vidhan Sabha proceedings are suspended," said Kumar while paying tribute to Kushwaha.

More state News

Ningol Chakouba observed in Barak valley

Silchar, Nov. 30: All Assam Manipuri Students' Union (AAMSU) Silchar unit in collaboration with Manipur Chronicle observed Ningol Chakouba festival at the premises of Rongpur High School in Rongpur part-II of the town on Saturday. The programme started with a traditional lighting of lamp ceremony which was attended by all the invited guests. Seram Herajit Singh, president of AAMSU, who presided over the programme, said that people of all communities irrespective of caste, creed and religion attend this festival. It is being organised for the second time in Barak Valley. The event will be larger with participation of other communities in future, he informed. Singh also appealed to people of this region to support peace and stand against all kinds of antisocial activities while speaking on the day.



Talking about the festival S Kamalakanta Sinha, former principal of D N N K Girls Higher Secondary School, said, Ningol Chakouba is a festival mostly celebrated in Manipur and other parts of the northeast where married women sisters and daughters are invited to parental house. Women dress themselves with traditional attire where the family arranges grand feast for them. In Manipuri language 'Ningol' means married and 'Chakouba' means invitation for

chief-guest of the event praeside AAMSU for taking the initiative to celebrate this traditional festival. He also suggested the members of AAMSU to involve the other tribal communities of this region. "In Barak Valley there are more than 17 tribal residing along with Bengali community and it will be a good step if we can bring all the communities together with this festival," Choudhury said. Poet and social activist Chandrima Dutta who was also invited guest of the event said, "Women centric occasion like this is rare in our society and this kind of celebration gives us immense pleasure with a good social message." Besides, S Jayanti Devi, president of Meira Paibi, N Dhojo Singh, general secretary of Barak Valley Manipuri Development Council, M Churamony Singha, former principal of Gurucharan College and Peri Gongmei were the given guest of honour at the programme. The entire event was sponsored by Manipur Chronicle.