

Editorial

Expanding live of Imphal: the need of the hour

Manipur will witness the most awaited Night Life from today evening. "Imphal Evening" which will open from 7 pm to 10 pm every Saturday and Sunday evenings will be inaugurated by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh and MAHUD Minister Th. Shyamkumar. The changing world needs such an initiative in Manipur too. Most developed states around the globe had already started the night life to improve the economic condition of the people as well as to improve the revenue of the state government. The impact of such ventures, as had been witnessed the world across, goes much beyond the intended economic considerations. The efforts being taken up by the government needs to be applauded by all of us here in the state of Manipur for one reason: officially recognised working hours for both government officials and those running small time business will be extended for another 4 hours at least on weekdays.

Life in Manipur unofficially starts as early as from 2 pm for some people who are engaged in distribution of morning newspapers, and for some Khwairamband Keithel women vendors, life starts as early as 4 am. If one would visit Khwairamband Keithel here in the middle of the city at these wee hours, traffic jam will be witnessed as there are no traffic control police at the time. Vegetable vendors start selling as early as 4.30 am to 5 am in an unorganised manner as there are no authorities to control during these times. And almost all public transports take rest by 7 pm (except a negligible few) and the women vendors had to hurry and pack up their goods to return home. Shops and business establishments in Paona Keithel and the Thangal Keithel including the Restaurants closed before 6 pm, as there are no buyers or customers coming after the hour. For those in the government offices which are entrusted with the responsibility of running the state, their time starts from 7 am in the morning (traffic control police) and after 7 pm no traffic control police are seen on any of the roads except some police men assigned at some areas where high ranking officials or elected representatives reside. The government offices starts at 10 am and ends at 4 pm. (Excluding Police department) School colleges and all banks close by 4 pm. Transaction works of most of the bank winds up at 2 pm.

While on the topic of opening "Imphal Evening" on an experimental basis, it is also recommended that the early morning life which is very popular in Khwairamband Keithel be encouraged. Traffic control police authorities should be deployed as early as 3 am before the vehicles transporting goods from every nook and corners of the state gather and jam the area. We can't impose any rules on private passenger service providers to be on service for specific period of time, but at least the city bus service introduced recently by the state government needs to be on road till late in the evening so that the women vendors which were coming from far flung villages do not have to worry on how late they can sell their goods.

Mindsets of many people of the state have changed a lot. Most people wanted to earn for a living and it is the limited lifestyle of the city that is posing to be a hindrance to such economic aspirations.

Opening of Night schools and colleges will also be a great fillip to the efforts of the state government to increase literacy rate in the state.

Imphal today is experiencing the most terrible traffic congestions during office hours. If these office hours of government departments are not put at the same timing then there might be some relief to the road traffic. For example banks do not necessarily need to open at the same timing with other government offices but can be open 3 hours late from the Secretariat and other government offices by extending 3 hours. Schools here need not necessarily open at 9 or 10 am but it can begin from either 6 am or 7 am so that students have more time study in the evening.

The changes of working hours at various offices, both government and private establishment will not only give opportunity for many people to engage in work but also will definitely help in reducing the road traffic congestion. And definitely the life of Imphalites will be extended.

Officially Imphalites begin life at 9 am and end at 4 pm which means, Imphal City is alive for only 7 hours out of the 24 hours. We almost wasted 17 hours. In a month we have 4 Sundays and a Second Saturday, which means in a month we have only 25 working days effectively. So 24x5 which is 120 hours plus 17 x 15 or 255 hours that is a total of 375 hours is dormant in a month that is around 15 days official life in Imphal is dormant for around 15 days. Excluding holidays, in one year the state remain dormant for 15x 12 days that is equal to 180 days or half the year. If holidays are included it will be more. That definitely is one of the reasons for why we are lagging behind.

Hopefully The Imphal Evening will bring some positive changes and hope the government will usher in more and much needed radical changes to make Manipur a developed state.

Name changed

I, the undersigned, **Koijam Indurekha Devi**, of Thangmeiband Maisnam leikai, Imphal West district do hereby declare that, I have wholly renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of old name **Koijam Indurekha**, as I have assumed my new name **Koijam Indurekha Devi**.

Sd/-
Koijam Indurekha Devi
hangmeiband Maisnam leikai,
Imphal West district

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For Gandhi Non-violence was akin to Swacchta

By: Sudhrendra Sharma

India's decisive battle against cleanliness and hygiene has got a fillip through 'Swachhata Hi Seva'. Cleanliness is Service, which draws attention to making sanitation a shared responsibility. Embedded in the idea of this top-up initiative to the already ongoing 'Swachh Bharat Mission' (SBM) is a clear invocation for the masses to shun the entrenched notion that cleanliness is but the task of the 'others' who have historically been performing it on behalf of the rest of 'us'.

Nothing could be closer to the Mahatma who on numerous occasions in his checkered life had demonstrated a clear but distinct relationship between sanitation and service, by presenting himself as a living example that "everyone be his own scavenger". Convinced that he will not allow "anyone walk through his mind with their dirty feet", Gandhi had held the broom firmly in his hands through his life without missing a single occasion to extend his 'service as a scavenger'.

From the Phoenix in South Africa to Sewagram in India, Gandhi's ashrams were lived-in examples of what service meant in the quest for cleanliness. More than an act in symbolism, cleanliness was perceived as a noble service in which all the *ashramites* used to engage on a daily basis. It is evident that for the Father of the Nation the service for *swacchta* was a social tool that he used to cut across class

and caste barriers that hindered cleanliness. It has continued to remain relevant till this day.

However, it is intriguing how the Mahatma had kept alive his message of cleanliness throughout his non-violent crusade for attaining freedom. Even during the ultimate test of his idea and practice of non-violence following the Noakhali massacre, which had accounted for the lives of 5,000 people in the worst communal riots before independence, Gandhi had not missed out an opportunity to convey the message that sanitation and non-violence were two faces of the same coin.

One day during the peace mission through the troubled areas in Noakhali he encountered filth and dirt deliberately strewn on the unpaved street aimed at thwarting his march to spread his message of peace among the affected populace. Not deterred by it, the Mahatma used it as an opportunity to do what only he could do. Pulling some twigs from nearby bushes and converting it into brooms, the apostle of peace and non-violence had swept the street of its opposition, from inciting further violence.

For him 'a healthy mind in a healthy body' was not a physical manifestation but a deep-rooted philosophical message. Could an individual harbor non-violent thought if his actions were violent towards nature and fellow beings? That cleanliness was viewed as an integral part of his political

campaign for freedom, there is little doubt that lack of cleanliness was clearly equated to an act of violence. It indeed is as lack of hygiene continues to cause death to millions of children in the country.

No wonder, lack of sanitation remains an invisible killer. Manifest in it is the worst form of violence, Gandhi had long perceived. Therefore sanitation was made an uncontested metaphor for non-violence, a co-traveler in the quest for both social and political freedom. Having observed scrupulous rules about cleanliness in the west, Gandhi could not resist applying the same in his life, and in the lives of millions who followed him. Much of his work remains unfinished, though.

"I learnt years ago that a lavatory must be as clean as a drawing-room", Gandhi had once remarked. Taking his learning to a higher level, Gandhi had made his toilet (in his ashram in Sewagram at Wardha) literally a place of worship - cleanliness is close to godliness. Only by elevating it to the high pedestal can the value of a toilet be understood by the masses. This calls for a significant shift in our perception of living amid filth, wherein sanitation has remained more of an exception than a norm.

The ambitious target of making the country open defecation free by October 2, 2019 is the first step in that direction, and a formidable undertaking in giving a functional

toilet each to over 50 million households in the country. However, converting a 'toilet movement' into a 'social movement' wherein actual toilet usage becomes a norm will call for pulling lessons from the life of Gandhi. Among other factors, reluctance of villagers to clean toilets and empty sewage pits remains a socio-cultural taboo.

No one could foresee this problem more than Gandhi himself. Kasturba had once expressed her disgust when asked to carry and clean the chamber-pots. Gandhi had rebuked her and told her to leave the house if she wanted not to observe the practice of being a scavenger herself. In doing so, Gandhi had expressed a violent behaviour *albeit* for a short moment, to inculcate the greater value of non-violence through an act of cleanliness. In many ways, *swacchta* to him was akin to non-violence or sometimes perhaps above it.

This small but significant episode from the life of Gandhi harbors a valuable message. By practicing it through the rest of her life, Kasturba had inadvertently demonstrated *Swachhata Hi Vyavhaar*, Cleanliness is Behaviour. It could be the message for the top-up campaign next year. After all, it is the behavioural change that SBM is trying to inculcate amongst millions.

Dr Sudhrendra Sharma is an independent writer, researcher and academic (Courtesy PIB Feature)

National & International News

Mexico quake toll 361; 8 still missing in collapsed building

AP Mexico City, Oct. 2: The death toll from Mexico's magnitude 7.1 earthquake rose to 361 after another casualty was confirmed in the capital, where a search continued at the site of a collapsed seven-story office building in a central neighborhood. National Civil Defense chief Luis Felipe Puente reported on Twitter that the dead include 220 people killed in Mexico City by the September 19 quake. The rest were in Morelos, Puebla and three other states.

The toll has continued to climb gradually nearly two weeks after the earthquake as bodies keep being pulled from the rubble. Mexico City Mayor Miguel Angel Mancera said eight people were still believed to be missing inside the wreckage of the office building, one of 38 structures that collapsed in the capital. Rescuers "continue to work intensely" at the site, Mancera said yesterday in a briefing on rescue and recovery efforts. He also confirmed the latest figure of 220 dead in his city and said all

but one had been identified. Female victims outnumbered male victims 136 to 84, and 29 of the dead were children. Mancera said 25 people remained hospitalised, including four whose condition was given as "red" and 21 listed as "yellow." Thousands of civilians formed volunteer brigades to clear rubble and offer other help at the collapsed sites, and many more have donated money, medicines and supplies at collection centers. Mancera said officials were in the process of compiling a database of

those volunteers to create a kind of "emergency corps in Mexico City where we know who to call, who to activate, who to contact" in a future crisis. He said it would still be strictly on a volunteer basis. "The response of solidarity that Mexico City has had from civil society should not be cast aside," the mayor said. Mancera added that he would present a "digital risk atlas" in the coming days for the city, much of which lies on the soft soil of a former lakebed and is particularly vulnerable to earthquakes.

10-year-old boy, teenage girl killed in ceasefire violation in J-K's Poonch

Jammu, Oct. 2: Two minors, a 10-year-old boy and a 15-year-old girl, were killed and five members of two families, including a 5-year-old girl, were among nine civilians injured as Pakistani troops on Monday resorted to mortar shelling, besides small and automatic weapons fire at various places along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Sources said a boy was killed and five others got injured after Pakistani mortar shells pounded

residential areas at Qasba and Bagialdara villages in Kerri sector. Identifying the deceased as Israr Ahmed of Qasba, they said the injured included Reshma Bi, 55, and her son Mohammad Rafiq, 31, both residents of Qasba, besides Yasir Hussain, 13, Mohammad Sadiq, 13 and Mohammad Sadiq, 54, all residents of Bagialdara. The victims were rushed to government district hospital at Poonch. The firing from the other side began last evening and stopped by 9.30

pm after retaliation by the Indian troops. However, Pakistani troops resumed mortar shelling in Digwar area around 10.25 am on Monday, killing a 15-year-old Jasmin Akhtar. Her mother and two sisters were among four people injured. They included Zobia Gohar, 5, Tazam Akhtar, 18, and their mother Sehima Bi, all residents of Digwar Terwain village. Another person, Mohammad Sajad, 30, was injured at Banpat.

had resorted to mortar shelling on civilian areas in Balakote and Manjakote sectors of Poonch and Rajouri districts, respectively, injuring two civilians including a 50-year-old woman. The Indian troops were retaliating. Sources said people were staying indoors in view of mortar shelling from across the LoC. Sources called the frequent incidents of ceasefire violations by Pakistan as desperate attempts to push in armed terrorists into the state before the onset of winter when mountainous passes get closed due to snowfall. The BSF troops in Arnia sector had last Saturday detected an incomplete cross-border tunnel from the Pakistan side of the international border.

2 children killed as Pakistan violates ceasefire

PTI Jammu, Oct. 2: A nine-year-old boy and a teenage girl were today killed while nine other civilians injured as Pakistani troops opened fire and lobbed mortars at dozens of villages and posts along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Indian troops guarding the border effectively retaliated, a police spokesman said. The spokesman said Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked and heavy firing and shelling from across the border in Dhigwar, Kerri and Shahpur sectors around 0650 hours. A nine-year-old boy and 15-year-old girl were killed and nine other civilians were injured in the Pakistani firing targeting different villages, he said.

The deceased have been identified as Asrar Ahmad of Mohallah Qasba and Yasmeen Akhtar of Kerri village of Dighwar. The condition of three of the injured was critical. The critically injured persons were referred to the Government Medical College Hospital here for specialised treatment, the spokesman said. The firing and shelling by Pakistan sparked panic among border residents. The year 2017 has seen a sharp increase in ceasefire violations by Pakistan. Till August 1, there were 285 violations by Pakistani forces while in 2016, the number was significantly less at 228 for the entire year, according to Army figures.

Sources said apart from firing at forward Indian positions along the LoC, the Pakistani troops were also targeting civilian areas in Degwar, Shahpur, Kerri and Qasba. The casualties occurred as some of the shells fell in Kerri village. On September 27, Pakistani troops

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