

Editorial

Imphal, Thursday, April 21, 2016

Rebels now become the last refuge of scoundrels

Greed- either for power or money drives people to commit unimaginable acts- acts that are neither worthwhile nor justifiable. Such acts feed the ego, and very well may satisfy some contorted minds. Coupled this with a false sense of superiority, we have a picture of a human with a warped sense of right and wrong- who cannot rationalize their behavior however hard they may try, and who does not give in to reason. Such people, more often than not extols issues and put up lofty ideals to mask their real motives that drives them to commit the atrocities.

With time, they began to feel invincible, indestructible and always invariably come to believe in the system that caters to their primal animal instincts- kill or be killed- the beginning of an irreversible journey of their own moral decay and rot.

The recent incident, one amongst many, a truck carrying vegetable traders being looted by armed miscreants who called themselves rebels at Keithelmanbi area along the National High Way in Senapati district can only be attributed to be the handiwork of such sick minds. The fact that the miscreants wielded sophisticated weapons, to a far deeper implication of an organized and systematic rot that is infecting certain groups of humans. It was lucky that one among the vegetable traders manage to escape after the mini truck that they came met an accident. This was the first, earlier too vegetable traders from Mao were facing tough time they transported their product towards Imphal and there were cases that some self imposed rebels had collected tax for crossing the Keithelmanbi area.

When such mentally disoriented person comes in touch with other like-minded individuals to reassure themselves of the righteousness of their deeds, therein lies the danger of a much virulent problem of the whole society of which these conceited humans are a part of being infected. What makes them to commit such a despicable act? What good does their action serve? How much did they gain, or rather how enriched are they- either of materials or fame from that act? The only word that a sane reasoning human can come up with that vaguely describes such an action is- cowardice. Why else would they shoot dead an unarmed man, even when they have outnumbered the unfortunate driver and his handyman? One can only imagine how afraid they must be, with all the sophisticated weapons in their hands that could not embolden their tiny hearts. It is these fearless drivers, lest we forget, that trudges on through night and day, through sun and storm, the dust, snow and the omnipresent robbers and thieves such as the ones he encountered on the fateful day, to bring us our daily requirements without a break. These robbers and thieves who may call themselves rebels does not have a reason or cause, save to rob and earn their livelihood the easy way instead of doing something beneficial to the society that does not harm their dignity- if only they have some! The medieval claim of 'I'm king does not hold water any longer. Now is the time to live for a cause- a genuine one, even if only to feed oneself.

2 militants killed in gun battle in Kashmir



Srinagar, April 21: Two unidentified militants were killed today in an encounter with security forces in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, the army said. Acting on specific information about the presence of militants in Putshai area of Lolab in the district, security forces cordoned off the area and began a search operation today, an army official said.

He said as the search operation was going on, militants who were hiding there fired upon the forces resulting in a gun battle. Two militants have been killed in the operation so far, the official said. He said the identity of the slain militants could not be immediately ascertained. The operation was still ongoing.

National and International News

Uttarakhand Judges 'Pained', Centre Says No Guarantee on President's Rule

Dehradun, April 21: The Centre today received a fresh burst of criticism from the top court in Uttarakhand, which has spent the last few weeks in chum over a major political crisis.

"We are pained that you can behave like this," said the Uttarakhand High Court, when the centre said it cannot guarantee whether President's Rule will be revoked for the hill state.

The court is deciding whether the centre correctly decided in March that Uttarakhand would be

governed by its representative, Governor KK Paul. The move meant that Harish Rawat of the Congress was removed as Chief Minister along with his government in its fifth year.

The court wants President's Rule to remain in effect till it reaches a verdict. If that does not happen, judges said, they are worried that the BJP will be given a chance to prove it has enough support among legislators to form the new government.

"Tomorrow, if you revoke

President's Rule and invite somebody (to form the government), it will be a travesty of justice. Is the (union) government a private party?" asked the judges today.

In hearings this week, judges have been fierce in their criticism of the "hurry" with which the union government introduced President's Rule. Mr Rawat has gone to court, accusing the centre of unfairly evicting the elected government of an opposition party. But the centre has said that Mr Rawat had lost his

majority in the legislature in March, as evidenced by the fact that nine of his own party members voted against the budget he presented for the state.

President's Rule was controversially introduced just a day before Mr Rawat was scheduled to take a trust vote. To win it, he would need at least 36 votes in his favour. Without his nine rebels, the Congress has 27 members. But Mr Rawat says that with the support of independents, he can prove his right to lead the government.

One person killed in poll violence in Murshidabad district

PTI Berhampore, April 21: A 35-year-old CPI(M) supporter was today killed and his body was found lying outside a polling booth at Shibapara area under Domkal Assembly seat in Murshidabad district where polling for the third phase is underway.

CPI(M) candidate and former minister Anisur Rahman said that the man identified as Tahidur Islam was killed when bombs were hurled outside the polling booth. Murshidabad Superintendent of police C Sudhakar, however, said the murder was not related to polls.

Tahidur was stabbed somewhere else and his body was dumped

near the booth, the SP said. Rahman also alleged jamming of booths by Trinamool Congress supporters.

Congress candidate of Hariharpara Assembly seat in the same district Mir Alam Gir alleged that two party supporters were beaten up allegedly by Trinamool Congress workers at Hosseimpur. Trinamool Congress, however, denied the charges.

Polling is being held in 22 Assembly constituencies of the district out of the total 62 seats, where polling is underway.

In Burdwan district where third phase Assembly election is on in 16 seats, four persons were injured in separate incidents in

polling booths under Ketugram Assembly constituency.

The ear of a CPI(M) worker identified as Seltu Sheikh was slashed and leg of another CPI(M) man was fractured after an altercation led to a scuffle in front of booth no 78.

Both the injured were rushed to Ketugram Block Primary Health Centre.

District returning officer Soumitra Mohan said four persons have been arrested in this connection.

In another incident, two CPI(M) workers were injured at booth no 48 under Ketugram Assembly seat when bombs were allegedly hurled. The injured were taken to Ketugram Block Primary Health Centre.

While CPI(M) alleged that Trinamool Congress supporters were involved in the incident, the latter denied the charge.

In a separate incident, Central Forces obstructed Trinamool Congress candidate in Purbasthali Uttar seat of the district, Tapan Chattopadhyay, from entering booth no 20 due to a "communication gap".

He was later allowed to enter after he showed valid papers.

Two EVM machines were replaced after it started malfunctioning at a polling booth under ward no 3 of Katwa Assembly seat.

Polling was delayed by 45 minutes as a result of this, district election official said.

BJP leader Anurag Thakur to raise Ishrat Jahan encounter case in Parliament

New Delhi, April 21: In a bid to corner the Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party MP Anurag Thakur will raise the Ishrat Jahan encounter case in the upcoming Parliament session.

BJP MP Kirit Somayya today gave a notice to discuss the same in the Lok Sabha today.

The BJP has alleged that the Congress had connived to get a political rival, then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi, eliminated in Gujarat.

Citing a media report which claimed that Chidambaram had in fact signed the first affidavit, which declared Ishrat and three others as terrorists, but gave all

four a clean chit a month later as serious amendments were made in the second affidavit also signed by him, Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said Congress, especially Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi, should take responsibility because Chidambaram did so as the party found it not strong enough to fight Modi politically.

"You underplayed a terror plot that could eliminate (Modi). You are clearly admitting that you cannot fight this politically. So eliminate or allow to eliminate or encourage elimination of the

leader who you are mortified of fighting politically," she said.

Reacting to BJP's charges, the Congress on Wednesday said party president Sonia Gandhi and her deputy Rahul Gandhi had never intervened in any administrative matter including the 'Ishrat Jahan case' during the party-led UPA government, and clarified that it did not seek to distance itself from former home minister P Chidambaram in the case.

The first affidavit in the encounter case stated that Ishrat was a LeT operative, who was part of a plot to assassinate the then Gujarat chief minister

Narendra Modi.

Chidambaram had initially claimed that the first affidavit declaring Ishrat and three others as terrorists was filed in the court without his approval, adding that he had made some editorial changes to avoid misinterpretation when the matter was brought to his notice. Chidambaram, however, completely altered his stance in the second affidavit, saying that intelligence inputs on Ishrat and the three others did not constitute conclusive proof and favoured a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe in the encounter.

Mumbai blast case: Two convicts file appeals against conviction

ANI Mumbai, April 21: Two convicts of 2002-03 Mumbai blast case-Atif Mulla and Hasib Mulla filed appeals on Thursday against their conviction in the Bombay High Court. They also filed bail applications. The Bombay High Court admitted the pleas for hearing and issued notices to the Government of

Maharashtra and others on bail pleas of the two blasts case convicts.

The notices are returnable in two weeks. Both Atif Mulla and Hasib Mulla are sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in the case.

A Special Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) court on April 6 awarded life imprisonment to three of the 10

convicts in the 2002-2003 Mumbai blasts that killed 12 people and injured 27 others between December 2002 and March 2003.

Four convicts, including key accused Saquib Nahan, were sentenced to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment.

Three other convicts, who have already served around eight years in jail, got two years of

simple imprisonment.

There were three explosions in Mumbai in four months starting with the first blast on December 6, 2002 at the McDonald's at Mumbai Central Railway Station. The second blast occurred on January 27, 2003 at Vile Parle East market and the third blast took place in a local train at the Mulund Railway Station on March 13, 2003.

Indian Bank senior official held in cheating case

PTI Chennai, April 20: A CBI court today sentenced a senior official of city-based public sector Indian Bank to one year rigorous imprisonment in connection with a case of cheating that caused loss of Rs 13.30 lakh to the bank. Indian Bank Senior Manager V Balakrishnan had sanctioned credit facility to two people in 1991 causing Rs 13.30 lakh loss to the bank's Anna Nagar branch without making any prior verification, a CBI release said. The CBI Anti-Corruption wing filed the case against Balakrishnan, Indian Overseas Bank Manager, Thiruvottiyur branch, P A Kumaradevan, Indian Bank paper valuer, R Venkatchalapathy, one Dhobi Raju and maid Santhammal.

The release said Kumaradevan availed credit facility in the names of Raju and Santhammal to the tune of Rs 13.30 lakh.

The loans were based on inflated valuation report prepared by Venakatchalapathy

based on which Balakrishnan sanctioned it without verification, it said.

The charges against Kumaradevan and Raju were "abated" as the duo died during the course of investigation, it said.

On completion of trial, Additional Special Judge for CBI Cases, K Venkatasamy, sentenced Balakrishnan to undergo one year rigorous imprisonment besides imposing a fine of Rs 15,000.

Three killed in Veracruz petrochemical plant blast

ANI Mexico City, April 21: An explosion ripped through a petrochemical plant in Mexican state of Veracruz on the southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, killing at least three people and injuring 136 others.

The blast, sending a toxin-filled cloud into the air, hit a facility owned by Mexico's state oil company Pemex in the port city of Coatzacoacoas. Hundreds of people have been

evacuated and schools closed. Footage showed a large fire and vast plumes of smoke, reports ABC news.

Veracruz Governor Javier Duarte said the blast was felt as far as six miles away, adding that more than 2,000 people were evacuated from the area as a precautionary measure.

The plant produces vinyl chloride, a hazardous industrial chemical, which is used to make PVC pipes

and for other purposes.

The Veracruz State Health Department said in a statement that two patients were in grave condition after suffering burns to their air passages from toxic gases.

Others were being treated for injuries, including minor burns, contusions and broken bones.

The cause of the blast is unclear. Several explosions have been reported at Pemex facilities in recent years.

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