

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, April 9, 2016

Cautious expectations

The opening paragraph of the Preamble of THE INDUSTRIAL AND INVESTMENT POLICY OF MANIPUR, 2013, (IIPM, 2013) states: The Government of Manipur aims to drive industrial growth by attracting private investments and provide an investment climate with better regulation by removing barriers to competition and growth. The investment climate is central to growth and outcomes for betterment of the society.

In line with the stated objectives of the state government, the announcement of Union Cabinet Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Kalraj Mishra of approving every proposal for MSME projects from the state serves as a much needed impetus for the floundering social, political and financial atmosphere of the state. That the state abounds in potential would be an obvious understatement. There has never been a dearth of enterprising individuals and groups in Manipur, and the fact that despite the violent and almost hostile elements working overtime to squeeze and suck the life out of almost every budding enterprises for their personal profits, the state now is becoming a viable destination for new and innovative startups, thanks to the never-say-die attitude and unwavering belief in their dreams of the entrepreneurs, risking limb and life to pursue their goal. That such a positive turnaround has been achieved in spite of the uncooperative and dismissive government fomenting an atmosphere chronically non-conducive for business and enterprises for so long is a testimony to the resilience and relentless strive for progress by the people of the state.

However, there still remains the very ominous threat of the promising development being hijacked by vested interest with connections and in cahoots with those that can influence and alter the course of the whole exercise. The promise for approval of projects should not be confused or construed as an end in itself. It is rather the point from which the actual groundwork needs to be implemented, and therein lies the danger of the lurking hyenas diving in for their undeserved share of the spoil. In order for the state government to implement the promised projects the way it ought to be, a number of things need to be put in place- things most of which are still non-existent in the state. Foremost of these needs is an actually working Business and Entrepreneurs' Incubation Chamber where first time and aspiring entrepreneurs needs to be led through the intricacies of every aspect of business operations by experienced and successful hands and intellectuals in the respective fields. Existence of means of financing the projects and enterprises and, more importantly creating an easy and hassle-free means to access the funds as and when required is equally important if the government earnestly hopes to develop the Micro, Small and Medium enterprises in the state.

In all, the positive feelers and the renewed interest in the state for the development of small scale industries should be taken as a crucial step towards the speedy progress and an opportunity for the people of Manipur to economically catch up with the rest of the country. But for the promises to be realized, the state government should be proactive in creating an atmosphere conducive and viable for the rising number of entrepreneurs and businesspersons. Such opportunities which could kickstart the recovery and progress of the state should not be allowed to be wasted or misused for the benefit of a few vested interests. Everybody has a stake in making this work. Everybody owes it to the future of Manipur.

122 Naxals surrender before Chhattisgarh Police

Sukma (Chhattisgarh), April 9: As many as 122 Naxals, including 11 women on Saturday surrendered before the police in Sukma District of Chhattisgarh. This is till date the biggest surrender in Bastar. The Naxals surrendered before Bastar Inspector General S.R.P Kalluri, Sukma district collector Neeraj Bansod, Sukma Superintendent of Police D. Shrawan and Bastar Aryan Das.

Corrigendum

Advertisement column appeared in this newspaper on February 12, 2015, Volume 3, Issue 35, under the heading "Gun License Lost" of Rajkumar Chandro Singh, S/o (L) Rajkumar Premanand Singh of Sagolband Bijoy Govinda, Imphal West District, the date of lost published on the newspaper was wrongly 9/3/2013. The date of lost should be 9/3/2015. Rajkumar Chandro lost the gun license on the way between Sagolband Bijoy Govinda to Lamphol Super Market, Imphal West on the day (9/3/2015).

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National & International News

Assam polls: Only 8.6 pc women candidates in fray

PTI Guwahati, April 9: They may have pipped men in the turnout for the first phase of the Assembly elections in Assam, but women make up an abysmal 8.6 per cent of the total candidates in the fray with all the major parties having given fewer tickets to them this time as compared to the 2011 polls. The number of women in the electoral arena in these polls is only six more than that in 2011, when 85 of them had entered as contestants and 14—all from Congress—made it to the state legislature. All the major parties—Congress,

BJP and its allies AGP and BPF, and the AIUDF have given fewer tickets to women candidates this time than in the last elections. The ruling Congress has fielded 16 women candidates, including 12 sitting MLAs, as against 19 in the last polls. Two sitting Congress MLAs—Mandira Roy from Algaipur and Amiya Gogoi from Duliagan—were denied tickets while four new faces—Bobbeta Sharma from Gauhati (East), Dr Jury Sarma Bordoloi from Gauhati (West), Angkita Dutta from Amguri and Pallabi Saikia Gogoi from Teok have earned nominations

for the polls this year. BJP, which is contesting in 89 seats, has given fewer tickets to female candidates, fielding only six of them as against nine in 2011. Similar is the case with AGP, which has put up only two women candidates as against eight in the last polls. The other BJP ally, BPF, which had fielded three women contestants in 2011 has given tickets to only two of them this time. AIUDF, the principal opposition party in the Assembly, is contesting 74 Assembly seats and has given tickets to five women candidates. There is only one woman candidate

each fielded by CPI(M), CPI(ML), Samajwadi Party, Trinamool Congress and the United Peoples Party, while SUCI has fielded three women candidates. Women voters registered a higher polling percentage than men in the first phase of elections for 65 Assembly seats in Assam on April 4. Election data said the turnout of women was 82.58 per cent while that of men was 81.84 per cent. In the last assembly polls, 77.02 per cent male voted as against 75 per cent of women. The Assam legislature has 126 seats.

Demand of outstation students for shifting NIT rejected

PTI Srinagar, April 9: HRD Ministry officials have rejected the demand of outstation students of NIT Srinagar for shifting the institute out of Kashmir but assured them of addressing their "genuine" issues. A group of outstation students of the NIT met Deputy Chief Minister Nirmal Singh and Education Minister Naeem Akhtar along with officials from Union HRD ministry last night to discuss the situation at the institute.

"The demand for shifting the NIT out of Kashmir has been outrightly rejected by the HRD ministry officials. It has been made clear to the students," official sources said today. The sources said the Ministers and HRD officials however assured the students that their genuine demands like better amenities inside the campus and improving the academic atmosphere will be addressed. "The Board of Governors of the

NITs will be meeting on April 11 where all these issues will be addressed," the sources said. They said the ministers told the students that security has never been an issue at the NIT but the state government will ensure that concerns on this front will also be addressed. "The ministers asserted that students of the institute have been here at the peak of militancy and no one has ever been harmed," the sources said.

Meanwhile, an official of the NIT said the meeting was a positive development as the situation inside the campus was improving. The situation is calm but the outstation students are seemingly still on protest, Registrar, NIT Srinagar, Fayaz Ahmad Mir told PTI. Mir said as there were no protests at the campus this morning. The students are in their hostels as there was no class work today as Saturday and Sunday are off days, he said.

Modi attacks Gogoi, says Congress running Assam with remote control

Agencies Guwahati, April 9: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday attacked the Tarun Gogoi-led Congress government in Assam for its alleged misuse and neglecting the people of the northeastern state. Addressing a huge rally here, PM Modi said, "I am confident you will vote in large numbers in Phase 11 and elect the BJP and our allies in Assam." PM Modi also emphasised on need for a stable government in Assam, saying "the nation has suffered

due to back seat driving." Don't give the remote control to your state in someone's hands, PM Modi urged the gathering. Coming down heavily on the Tarun Gogoi government, PM said, "Assam has neither implemented MNREGA programme efficiently nor built homes for poor." PM Modi had earlier offered prayers at Shakti Peeth Kamakhya Temple on the first day of the spring season and New Year's Day of the traditional Hindu calendar based on the beginning of new

moon. After offering prayers at the famous temple, the Prime Minister had tweeted: "After many years, on the first day of Navratri, getting an opportunity to visit Kamakhya Temple and offer prayers to Maa Kamakhya. Feeling blessed." Earlier in the day, PM Modi tweeted his wishes saying, "greetings to people across India celebrating the advent of the New Year. May this new year bring joy & prosperity." Dedicated to Maa Kamakhya, the

essence of female energy, it is one of the most important ancient Indian temples and is situated about 8 kilometers towards the western side of the city of Guwahati on the Nilachal Hill. Campaigning for the Bharatiya Janata Party in Assam, the Prime Minister will address several election rallies in the state today, where polling will be held on Monday in the second and final phase of Assembly elections. He will campaign in Raha, Rangia, Sarbhog and Guwahati.

North Korea leader supervises test of new engine for missile: State media

Seoul, April 9: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised a successful test of a new engine for an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), state media said on Saturday, in their latest report of advances in an arms programme that has attracted U.N. sanctions. South Korea and the United States have shown scepticism over the North's statements about rapid progress in its nuclear and missile programmes ahead of a ruling party congress in May, where analysts expect it to declare itself a major nuclear weapons state. Tension has remained high on the Korean peninsula after the North's nuclear test and a long-range rocket launch earlier in the year and South Korea and U.S. troops conducted

large-scale joint drills amid harsh rhetoric from both rival Koreas. The engine was ignited at Kim's command and released a fiery blast, and the test showed the indigenously designed rocket fulfilled all required conditions, the North's official KCNA news agency said. "Dear Comrade Kim Jong Un said now we can mount an ever more powerful nuclear warhead on a new intercontinental ballistic rocket and put the den of evil in the United States, and all over the world, within our strike range," the agency said. The test was conducted at the North's missile station near its west coast, where, in February, the country launched a long-range

rocket that put an object into space orbit, KCNA said. South Korea's defence officials did not immediately provide comment on the authenticity of Saturday's report. The North said in March it had miniaturised a nuclear warhead to be mounted on ballistic missiles and conducted a simulated re-entry test of a ballistic missile, which could indicate advances in its ICBM programme, if true. But South Korean officials questioned those assertions and said the North was several years away from developing an ICBM. The United States said there was no proof of the North's statements and urged Pyongyang to halt actions that fuel tension.

The North conducted its fourth nuclear test in January and the rocket launch in February, in defiance of international warnings and past U.N. sanctions, triggering a new Security Council resolution that imposed more punishment. Despite its assertions, the North has yet to conduct a flight-test of a long-range missile or an ICBM and show mastery of the technology needed to bring a missile back into the atmosphere and hit a target with precision. The North said its January nuclear test was a successful hydrogen bomb test, but many experts and officials in the South and the United States said the blast was too small to have been from a successful test of such a weapon.

Paris attacks suspect Mohamed Abrini arrested in Belgium

ANI Brussels, April 9: Mohamed Abrini, a key suspect wanted in connection with the Paris attacks last November along with four others have been arrested in Belgium. Abrini was arrested in the borough of Anderlecht, in Brussels, next to the western district of Molenbeek, while the two other suspects were detained at the same time as Abrini, and two further arrests made in an undisclosed location in Brussels. Abrini was arrested with two others in the Anderlecht operation, CNN quoted Belgian federal prosecutor's spokesman Thierry Werts as saying. Abrini, 31, is being looked by the prosecutors as the suspect, the 'man in the hat' who fled Brussels airport after two accomplices blew themselves up in co-ordinated attacks in the Molenbeek airport and metro on March 22, which killed over 32 people and left several injured, reports the Guardian. Days before the Paris attacks, he was seen on the city road, but disappeared before attackers killed 130 people in coordinated assaults

at the national stadium, bars, restaurants and the Bataclan concert hall. Abrini had travelled to Paris with his friend Salah Abdeslam, another Paris attacks prime suspect who was arrested last month in Brussels. Both had rented an apartment in Alfortville in the Paris suburbs that some of the suicide bombers used as a base before the attacks on the French capital. The two other men detained in connection with the Brussels attacks were identified as Osama K, alias Naim Al Ahmed, and Herve BM. The investigators are now trying to verify whether Osama was the man who accompanied Khalid el-Bakraoui, who blew himself up at Maelbeek metro station. Najim Laachraoui, 24, one of two jihadis who blew themselves up at Brussels airport was also a suspected ISIS recruiter and bomb-maker whose DNA was found on two explosive belts used in the Paris attacks. Khalid el-Bakraoui, 27, who blew himself up on the Brussels metro one hour later after his elder brother Ibrahim had detonated a suicide vest

at Brussels airport, was also suspected of playing some kind of logistics role in the Paris attacks. Meanwhile, the Belgian investigation has already established links

between a large group of men identified as friends or brothers, who are suspected of playing different roles in both the Paris attacks and Brussels attacks.

Congress slams BJP for appointing 'tainted' Yeddyurappa as its Karnataka chief

New Delhi, April 9: Criticising the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for appointing former chief minister BS Yeddyurappa as its Karnataka state president, the Congress Party on Saturday said that the move showed the saffron party has got nothing to do with 'honesty' in politics. "Appointing Yeddyurappa as the party chief in Karnataka shows that they are bothered only about politics. They have nothing to do with honesty in politics. Yeddyurappa is facing serious charges of corruption and yet he has been such a responsibility. Only time will now tell as to what happens when such a tainted person is given such a responsibility," Congress leader P.L. Punia told ANI.

The Janata Dal (Secular) and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) had also slammed the BJP over Yeddyurappa's appointment, with JD(S) leader Danish Ali, saying the saffron party is patronising the corrupt and criminals in the party. Yeddyurappa had quit the BJP after being accused of corruption and later rejoined it. The Lingayat strongman, who is credited with providing the BJP its first success in South India, faced a tough tenure as chief minister from 2008 onwards after a Lokayukta report accused him of corruption. He was then forced to resign and formed the Karnataka Janata Paksha in 2012. He was brought back to the BJP just before the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.