

Editorial

Imphal, Tuesday, August 9, 2016

Sharmila's announcement to contest election has left Imphal Times in state of dementia unable to see hopes of our future. For we have no words we left our editorial column blank to show our readers that we don't have any words to her decision.

Alluri Seetha Rama Raju: A Folk Hero of Rampa Rebellion

By - K V Kurmanath

Alluri Seetharama Raju was one of the greatest sons that India produced. He laid down his life to break the shackles of the mother land. The awe-inspiring heroics of Rama Raju still inspire Telugus. Though his battle with the British lasted only for two years, he made an indelible mark in the history of the Indian Freedom Struggle and found a permanent place in the hearts of the countrymen. Historian Sumit Sarkar had chronicled the heroic rebellion of Rama Raju in his book *Modern India 1885-1947*: "The most striking evidence of continued popular militancy came from the ever-restive semi-tribal Rampa region in north of the Godavari, scene of a veritable guerrilla war between August 1922 and May 1924 led by Sitarama Raju, - a truly remarkable man who has become a folk hero in Andhra."

Sarkar also acknowledged the fact he was not given his due in the national history books. "...but (he) is almost unknown elsewhere." Born on July 4, 1897, into a humble middle-class family in a small village near the Coastal city of Visakhapatnam, Rama Raju was strongly influenced by patriotic discourse quite early in his life. When a friend gave him a handful of badges with King George's picture on it, the 13-year-old Raju threw all but one. He pinned it up on his shirt and would say: "To wear them is to flaunt our servitude. But I pinned it on my shirt near my heart to remind all of you that a foreign ruler is crushing our lives." Following the death of his father, his schooling got disrupted and he went on a pilgrimage and toured the Western, North-Western, North and North-eastern India during his teens. The social-economic conditions in the country under

the British regime, particularly in the tribal areas, deeply moved him. During these journeys, he met revolutionaries in Chittagong (now in Bangladesh).

Rama Raju made up his mind to build a movement against the British. He made Adivasi areas in the Eastern Ghats (the forest area along the Visakhapatnam and Godavari district) his home and decided to work for the Adivasis, who were living in abject poverty and being fleeced by police, forest and revenue officials, in 'Manyam' (forest area). He started working amongst them and helped them by educating them and providing medical help, using the vast knowledge he gained from his extensive travels. He decided to make this area the hub for his fight against the British.

He began to organise Adivasis against the atrocities by the police, the forest and revenue officials and extensively toured the 'Manyam' area. He told them that they were the sole owners of the forest produce and prepared them to fight against the oppressive Madras Forest Act, 1882. A slew of initial successes gave a lot of hope and confidence among the Adivasis and people in the surrounding villages and more and more of them began to rally behind Rama Raju. He was so confident of the path he chose that he told a reporter (incidentally the only interview he ever gave to a reporter) that he could overthrow the British in two years.

As he organised them to defend their rights on the produce, he gained tremendous understanding of the terrain that had helped him in great deal in his future guerrilla war against the British forces. He would appear at one place this moment and disappear in moment to appear somewhere else in no time,

giving sleepless nights to the British forces. Legends on his attacks and exploits on the police stations in the region have become part of the folklore. He built a strong team of followers from the area, who built a formidable army sporting traditional weapons like bow-and-arrow and spears and achieved spectacular successes against the British forces.

He learnt from the Adivasis, the time-tested methods of war and added his own tactics to put up a formidable fight against the British. For instance, his team used whistles and beatings of the drums to exchange messages amongst the revolutionaries. He soon realised that the traditional weaponry would be of no use against the heavily armed the British forces. He thought the best way is to snatch them from the enemy and launched attacks on police stations with a lightning speed.

The first of such attacks was made on Chintapalli police station in Visakhapatnam Agency area on August 22, 1922, with over 300 revolutionaries under the leadership of Raju taking part in it. Subsequently, similar attacks were made on Krishnadevi Peta police station and Raja Ommangi police station. They snatched weapons and armoury in all such attacks. A large contingent of Reserve Police personnel from Visakhapatnam, Rajahmundry, Parvatipuram and Koraput were rushed to these areas led by British officers. Two of the officers - Scot and Heiter were killed in battles with revolutionaries on September 24, 1922, and several others wounded.

All the attacks were concluded by a trademark letter signed by Raju himself, giving details of the booty in the station diary. Another hallmark of his attacks was that he would announce the date and time

of the attack. The Agency Commissioner J R Higgins had announced a prize of Rs 10,000 for Rama Raju's head and Rs 1,000 each on his lieutenants Gantam Dora and Mallu Dora. It deployed hundreds of soldiers from Malabar Special Police and the Assam Rifles, led by top British officers, to crush the movement. Officers like Sanders and Forbes were on the back foot several times as Raju dared them to stop him and his followers from carrying out certain attacks.

Unable to contain the 'Manyam' uprising, the British Government deputed T G Rutherford in April 1924 to quell the movement. Rutherford resorted to violence and torture to get to know the whereabouts of Raju and his key followers.

After a relentless chase by British forces, Rama Raju was caught and martyred on May 7, 1924. This was followed by untold repression and violence that witnessed killings of scores of Raju's followers in the weeks that followed his martyrdom. Over 400 activists were booked under several charges, including treason.

Rama Raju won the grudging admiration of the British as a formidable guerrilla tactician. That the Government had to spend over Rs 40 lakhs in those days to defeat the rebellion speaks volumes about the success of the Rampa rebellion. Unfortunately, there is not much research done on Rama Raju's life and movement. As the nation gears up to celebrate the 70th Independence Day, it is time to revisit his life and movement and pay rich tributes to him. His remains are buried at Krishnadevi Peta in Visakhapatnam. The nation could do better by building a memorial in the memory of this great patriot. (PIB Feature)

National & International News

Nagasaki marks 71st atomic bombing anniversary

Tokyo, Aug. 9: The Japanese city of Nagasaki on Tuesday marked 71 years since its destruction by a US atomic bomb, with its mayor lauding a visit by US President Barack Obama to Hiroshima earlier this year.

A bell tolled as thousands of people, including ageing survivors and relatives of victims, observed a minute's silence at 11:02 am (0732 IST), the exact moment the of the blast.

Some 74,000 people died in the initial explosion, while thousands of others perished months or years later from radiation sickness. The attack came three days after the US dropped the first ever atomic bomb

on Hiroshima, which ultimately killed 140,000 people.

Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Tera lauded Obama's landmark May visit to Hiroshima — the first ever by a sitting US president. "Knowing the facts becomes the starting point for thinking about a future free of nuclear weapons," Tera said, calling on other world leaders to visit his city.

Local officials and those who survived the bombing called for strict adherence to Japan's post-war tradition of pacifism and were critical of the Japanese government.

"The government of Japan, while advocating nuclear weapons abolition, still relies on nuclear

deterrence," the mayor said, calling it a "contradictory state of affairs". Hiroshima mayor Kazumi Matsui on Saturday marked the commemoration of the bombing of his city, also citing Obama's visit. He said the visit was proof of the US President shared his city's view of the "absolute evil" of nuclear weapons.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in his address in Nagasaki, called on world leaders to honour the global Nuclear Non-

proliferation Treaty. "We must not allow a repeat of the horrible experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that happened 71 years ago," Abe said.

Abe has moved to extend the scope of Japan's military and deepen the nation's alliance with Washington in the face of threats from China's expanding military strength and unpredictable North Korea. North Korea last week test fired a ballistic missile that landed in waters off Japan's coast for the first time.

Two million at risk of siege in Syria's Aleppo: UN

Damascus, Aug 9: More than two million people in Syria's Aleppo are in danger of coming under total siege, the United Nations has warned, calling for immediate access to the heavily bombed city. Ferocious fighting has rocked divided Aleppo in recent weeks, with rebels and regime forces seizing rival access routes and cutting off residents.

In a statement yesterday, the UN's top humanitarian official in Syria, Yacoub El Hillo, and regional coordinator Kevin Kennedy called for a "humanitarian pause" in the hostilities. Two million people in the city are living in fear of besiegement, including up to 275,000 people trapped in east Aleppo, the statement said.

The fighting in Aleppo is reported to have killed at least 130 civilians since the end of July, and has damaged hospitals, clinics, and the city's power and water networks. "The UN stands ready to assist the civilian population of Aleppo, a city now united in its suffering," the statement read.

"At a minimum, the UN requires a full-fledged ceasefire or weekly 48-hour humanitarian pauses to reach

the millions of people in need throughout Aleppo and replenish the food and medicine stocks, which are running dangerously low."

Fighting in Aleppo, Syria's former economic powerhouse, flared in late June when government forces closed in on the Castello Road, the last route into rebel-held parts of the city.

The road was severed in mid-July, sparking food shortages and skyrocketing prices in the eastern districts.

In a major push last week, a coalition of rebels, Islamists, and jihadists cut off the regime's own main access road on the southern edges of the city.

Each side has used their newly acquired territory to bring food and other supplies into neighbourhoods of the city they control, but the roads are still not safe for civilians to use.

"When used to intentionally deprive people of food and other items essential to their survival, siege tactics constitute a war crime," the UN statement said.

More than 290,000 people have been killed since Syria's conflict erupted in March 2011.

Closure report in Maneka's case on Sept 26

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 8: A Special Court has fixed September 26 to consider a CBI report favouring closure of a case lodged against Union Minister Maneka Gandhi and two others for sanctioning Rs 50 lakh grant to a trust allegedly in a "fraudulent" manner in 2001. The court had earlier refused to accept the closure filed by the probe agency in the case in 2008 and had asked the CBI to further investigate the matter.

However, the CBI had again approached the court saying "allegations levelled against Gandhi and two others could not be substantiated".

Senior BJP leader Maneka Gandhi is now the Women and Child Development Minister. An FIR was lodged by CBI in 2006 against Maneka Gandhi, Dr F U Siddiqui, former secretary of Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) and Dr Vijay Sharma, former Managing Trustee of Gandhi Rural Welfare

Trust (GRWT).

The FIR alleged that Maneka, in conspiracy with Siddiqui, had sanctioned a grant of Rs 50 lakh to GRWT from MAEF in an irregular manner to construct a nursing college building at Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh and caused undue favour to Sharma.

CBI alleged that further an amount of Rs 10.40 lakh was sanctioned to GRWT by S K Verma, the then District Magistrate of Pilibhit, from Maneka's MPLADS (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme) funds for purchase of two ambulances and the fund was released to Ramakant Rampal, the Managing Trustee of GRWT.

It had alleged that Rampal had purchased two jeeps which had cost much less than the approved models and failed to get them certified by the chief medical officer. The vehicles were also used for personal works by the managing trustee.

Passbook Lost

I have lost my SBI bank passbook bearing A/C No.35146843785 on the way between Wangjing to Thoubal on 1st August, 2016.

Finders are requested to hand over the same to undersigned.

Sd/-

Kshetrimayum Minda Singh
Kairembikhok Awang Leikai
Contact No. #9615891470

Document Lost

I have lost my original Admit Card and Certificate of HSLC Exam 2012 Bearing Roll No.25728 and HSSLC Exam 2014 bearing Roll No.6590 issued by Board of Secondary Education Manipur and Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur on the way between Imphal to Wangjing On 11-4-2016.

Finders are requested to hand over the same to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Moirangthem Millan Singh
Wangjing Hodamba Awang Leikai

Admit Card Lost

I have lost my original admit card of BA 1st Sem. and BA 2nd Sem exam, 2015-16 bearing roll no.5211152 issued by Manipur University on the way between Thoubal Bazar to Wangjing Bazar on 29-7-16.

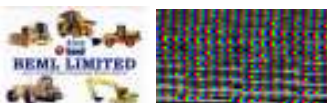
Finders are requested to hand over the same to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Moirangthem Henry Meitei
Tentha Heibung Mayai Leikai,

WHENEVER YOU SEE CONSTRUCTION AND MINING EQUIPMENTS, JUST THINK OF US

A SOLUTION FOR EVERY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT



Automobile Engineering Works-1
R K WORKSHOP
New Checkon Road, Purana Rajbari
Imphal East,
Manipur - 795 001

ALL KINDS OF SPARE PARTS AVAILABLE

AFTER SALES SERVICE TO YOUR SATISFACTION

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)