

# Editorial

Imphal Thursday, December 15, 2016

## The mental equation

Times are a changing as everything ought to. Stuffs that were not even dreamt about are becoming devices and gadgets for everyday use. The peace of development and inventions is increasing at a dizzying pace and in a unbelievably complex manner. Every single gene in the human body can be identified, isolated and manipulated. Electricity can be transmitted without any wires or cables. Cars that run for more than a thousand kilometers with only a gallon of fuel is no more a fantasy today. Space travel or space tourism is here. Humans with embedded microchips can now manipulate and control his environment, well almost, as of now. Research and development in every field, being aided by sophisticated computers and robots, have quickened their pace and shortened their observation periods, leading to quicker results. It would not be much off the mark to say that the world as we know today is undergoing a paradigm shift in the way we live our lives. Through these radical changes and developments, one thing has withstood the test of time, proving to be an unseen and unaccounted yet determining factor that could make or mar everything else the human mentality. The workings of the human mind emotions and feelings that cannot be quantitatively ascertained or expressed as an exactable scientific expression or equation, has remained an enigma a mystery that has not been unraveled till date. Here in lies the genesis of every conflict and differences. Societies created laws and statutes based on the greater good of the citizens, and a system of checks and balances to arbitrate, enforce and amend them. It is a perfect set up on paper. Unfortunately, the better reality is so far removed from the system so envisaged. We, the ordinary citizens are arrested and harassed for raising our voice against what we feel is unjust and wrong even threatened and shot by those who purpose to serve our motherland, whatever form that might take. The powers that be proclaims to work according to the wishes of the people, while the voice is subdued with threats and intimidation, or worse still, let the voice die out and be forgotten with time. And who are we to turn to for help when the terrorists are the army and police who are drug traffickers who are extortionists who are the influential and powerful? For us mere mortals, complaints and appeals entail the inherent risk of losing limb and life. Is what we are experiencing a replica of the so called jungle law? I'd like to think that a jungle law would be a far better option each one would then have a place in the set up. But then again, we are born equal. A prime minister is as human as a sweeper or a carpenter or a scientist. Each one is doing their bit for the society. The president of India or the Chief Minister of Manipur needs a weaver to weave a piece of fabric which will be sewn into a cloth by a tailor and sold at the market form where it will be brought for his use. We need to accept and embrace one another as our equals. The powerful ones wouldn't have had a concrete mansion to hide within were it not for the masons and plumbers.

## Cyclone impact: Internet slows down in Pune

**Pune, Dec. 15:** In the damage unleashed by Cyclone Vardah, an undersea network cable, or submarine cable, was affected, which in turn impacted Internet connectivity in parts in the city. Airtel — and to an extent Reliance Jio — was affected while other service providers reported minimal disruption. Airtel had sent its customers a message apprising them of the issue. The company's spokesperson said connectivity has "largely improved" since. "The cyclone in Chennai has impacted one of our undersea network cables, which may affect your Internet speeds ... Our engineers are working to resolve the issue and services will be normalized shortly," Airtel — which owns the affected 121 cable network — said in a SMS blast to its

customers. A company spokesperson told TOI: "The situation has largely improved across the country, including Maharashtra, as we have made some alternative arrangements and also due to the speedy recovery from the damage which was caused due to Vardah." He also said their voice network was not affected as it was not built on the same "infrastructure backbone" as the Internet service. "Even the slightest of damages can cause disruption to the quality of network," he said, without specifying the extent of damage to the cable. He did, however, rule out any "massive damage." Vodafone and Idea spokespersons said that there the cyclone has had no impact on their operations in Maharashtra and Goa.

## National & International News

### Ban sale of liquor on all National, State Highways from 1 April: Supreme Court

**New Delhi, Dec. 15:** The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered a ban on all liquor shops on national as well as state highways across the country and made it clear that licenses of existing shops will not be renewed after 31 March next year. A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice T S Thakur also directed that all signages indicating presence of liquor vendors will be prohibited on national and state highways. The bench also comprising Justices D Y Chandrachud and L Nageswara Rao said the existing licenses of liquor shops across the highways will not be renewed after 31 March, 2017. The apex court in its order said all the licenses of liquor shops in and around the National Highways in all the states would be closed. Last week, the apex court had expressed concern over 1.5 lakh fatalities every year in road mishaps, saying it may direct closure of liquor

vends on national and state highways across the nation, besides removal of the signages indicating their location. The apex court, while reserving verdict on 7 December on a batch of pleas seeking a direction to amend excise laws to ensure that no liquor is sold alongside highways, came down heavily on the Punjab government for seeking relaxation and permitting liquor shops near highways if they are "elevated" ones and the vend are under or near it. "Look at the number of licenses you (Punjab) have given. Because the liquor lobby is so powerful, everyone is happy. The excise department is happy, the excise minister is happy and the state government is also happy if they are making money. If a person dies due to this, you give Rs one or 1.5 lakh. That is it. You should take a stand which is helpful for the society," the bench had said. Reminding the state government of

its constitutional obligation to prohibit liquor sale, the bench had asked the state to do something for general public considering that nearly 1.5 lakh people were dying every year. The bench had also expressed unhappiness over alleged inaction by various states in removing liquor shops alongside roads which give rise to drunken driving and consequential fatalities. It had said that revenue generation cannot be a "valid reason" for a state or a Union territory to give licence for liquor shops on highways and the authorities should adopt a positive attitude to remove the menace. The bench had also rapped the Centre for not doing anything concrete for the last 10 years forcing the court to "step in". Earlier, the court had sought a response from the Centre, states and Union territories on the pleas seeking

a direction to amend excise laws to ensure that no liquor is sold alongside highways. Several pleas have been filed on the issue including the one which referred to the 2015 report of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and said almost five lakh accidents occurred last year in India, killing 1,46,000 people and leaving thrice the number injured. It was alleged that despite recommendation of a committee to ban of sale of alcohol on state and national highways, states like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were sticking to their prevailing excise policies under which licences were being issued to liquor shops along the highways. "An analysis of road accident data 2015 reveals that around 1,374 accidents and 404 deaths take place every day on Indian roads, resulting in 57 accidents and loss of 17 lives on an average every hour.

### Contd. from yesterday issue

## Reviewing Unification Politics of Manipur Nagas through Ethnicisation of Education (2006-2008)

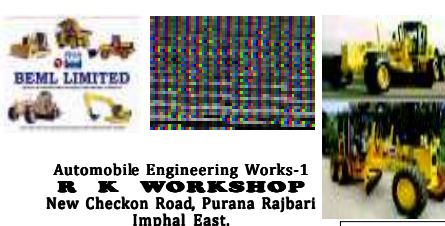
On Sept 2006, the Naga agitators favoring affiliation to NBSE began to target Government schools by ransacking Government schools, and offices of Zonal Educational Officers. On 8 September 2006, the ANSAM issued a stricture banning the CDs/video cassettes, audios in Meitei language in the four hill districts of Tamenglong, Senapati, Ukhrul and Chandel. ANSAM has also banned the use of Meitei Mayek (Meitei Script) in these four districts. In a statement ANSAM stated that the ban on Meitei Mayek in the four hill districts would be enforced immediately while the ban on Meitei language CDs/cassettes of audios and videos would become effective from September 17. Further it said that, in pursuance of NPC resolution adopted on November 4, 2005 and in concurrence with the directives from the office of the UNC of September 6, 2006, the ANSAM informs all the units and sub-ordinate bodies to implement the ban on Meitei language audio/video CDs/cassette in the hill districts of Tamenglong, Chandel, Ukhrul and Senapati with effect from September 17, 2006 and warned the violators with strict penalty. The UNC later justified the ban imposed on Meitei Mayek (script), films and songs by ANSAM, stating that it had become inevitable to check dilution of Nagas history from the impact of the Meitei endeavors Meitei films, songs and script influence the Nagas identity, tradition and culture thereby evoking the prohibitions. Moreover, it could also be construed as a part of the Nagas non-cooperation movement against Manipur Government as was adopted by the Naga Peoples Convention, it further stated while endorsing the ban. Further deepening the imbroglio of the NBSE affiliation issue, it came to light that Outer Manipur Parliamentarian MP, Mani Charemami had written to the Union Home Minister Shriyaji Patil as well as to the Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) in the middle of September that the BoSEM is harassing the Naga community in Manipur following the letter from the NCST seeking relevant information from the BoSEM within 30 days time. Charanami's letter to the NCST also mentioned that that ANSAM and Naga Students Federation had rejected the books prescribed by the BoSEM as the education system in Manipur had never been in the interest of the tribal communities, including the Nagas. The Naga students of Manipur, though separated by the imposed State boundaries have found the syllabus prescribed by the NBSE very friendly, owing to ethnic affinity, cultural and historical oneness. On many counts, the NBSE syllabus had been found learning friendly, the text books cover relevant topics pertaining to the history, social and cultural life of the Nagas. He further argued that the syllabus prescribed by the BoSEM, on the other hand, was too taxing and too tough for the poor and facilities starved tribal students of Manipur resulting to the rise in the number of school drop outs among the

tribal communities. The MP further accused the BoSEM of imposing Meitei language and Meitei script on the tribals allegedly as a policy to assimilate the minority communities into the culture of the majority community at the cost of their distinct identity, culture and languages. The Government of Manipur had also banned schools from seeking affiliation to CBSE and ICSE, amounting to violation of the rights of the tribals, the MP added. On 5 November 2006, NSF declared that all Naga student bodies have made necessary preparations to exert strong pressure on the Union Government to realise their mission to affiliate all schools in Naga areas of Manipur under NBSE. He further cautioned of massive stir at unprecedented level if the Union Government failed to honour the aspirations of Naga students. NSF, ANSAM and other Naga student bodies would press their points and urge the Union Government particularly Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh to resolve the issue of school affiliation according to the aspiration of Naga students, stating that Nagaland Government was quite supportive towards the move to affiliate all schools in Naga areas of Manipur under the NBSE and had been extending unstinted cooperation in the campaign, the NSF leader noted that the only impediment delaying resolution of the issue was the official approval from the Centre. On 14 November 2006, Nagaland School Education Minister Imkong L. Imchen said Union Human Resource Development Minister Arjun Singh had sent a letter mentioning the Centres inability to address the imbroglio between Nagaland and Manipur over the affiliation of schools to the NBSE stating that the matter should be resolved between the two States, Imchen said. He also said the students from Manipur were being allowed to appear for their examinations in view of the situation in Manipur by a collective Cabinet decision, taken after examining all aspects. One of the media report which came out on the eve of NBSE examination 2007 claimed that altogether 2500 students from the four hill districts of Manipur would be appearing the HSLC examination in Nagaland in three centres — one at Kohima (John High School, Viswema) and two at Dimapur. The Nagaland Government had also provided adequate security in all three centres following the threat from the NSCN-IM to conduct the examination without any disturbances. In connection with it, NSCN-IM afterwards alleged the Nagaland Government of spending more than Rs. 71 Lakhs for accommodation and protection of the Manipuri students appeared in HSLC and HSSLC examinations under Nagaland Board from the fund meant for the people of Nagaland. The NSCN-IM, had afterwards issued warning to the Nagaland Education minister to immediately submit the amount without fail, failing which the burden would be (borne) by his posterities, the

outfit stated adding that the issue has not been forgotten. Any act of defiance would be met with equal measure, the NSCN-IM cautioned. In the HSLC examination for the year 2007 starting from 12 March, over 23,000 students appeared matriculation examinations despite the disruption threat and avowed declaration of not allowing the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur, to hold matriculation examination in Ukhrul, Senapati, Chandel and Tamenglong districts by ANSAM, the examinations was held at 80 centres across nine districts of Manipur with over 2700 students appearing the examination at the ten examination centres in the four hill districts, where over 2,700 students would appear in the examination. One day ahead of the BoSEM HSLC 2007 examination, a senior official stated that there was no decrease in the number of students appearing in the BoSEM Exam authenticating that most of the students, who appeared in the examinations in Nagaland, were also appearing in the examination in Manipur. He further stated that several students from the four districts migrated to the valley after the Naga students campaign and they were appearing in the examinations at several valley schools. On 3 July 2007, in apparently well coordinated and clinically executed wanton acts of destruction, eight Government schools including one Government aided institution in the three hill districts of Senapati, Chandel and Ukhrul were set on fire in the intervening night. On 5 July 2007, ANSAM neither denying nor owning up the responsibility for the arson categorically stated that the news of the burning down of Government high schools in the hill districts of Manipur does not come as a surprise; it was bound to happen. Indignation and discontentment had been building up for decades. On 6 July 2007, UNC issued a statement endorsing the stand of ANSAM to affiliate all the private schools in the four hill districts of Manipur with the NBSE and also justifying the act of burning down 11 government schools. On 14 September 2007, the Nagaland government promulgated an ordinance allowing schools in Manipur to affiliate to the NBSE. The Manipur Cabinet in its effort to counter the move of the Nagaland Government met the same night to promulgate an ordinance prohibiting schools in the State from affiliating to any board outside the State. The Cabinet also decided to amend Section (1) of the Manipur Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1972 to make it mandatory for schools to obtain the governments permission for affiliation to any board outside the State. Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh rushed to New Delhi, the following day with a memorandum to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Union Home Minister Shriyaji Patil and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi for urging them to intervene on the sensitive issue. On 18 September 2007, the Nephthi Rio

government initiated a move to allow the NBSE to bring into its fold schools located outside the state, including Manipur. The notification to this effect was tabled in the fifteenth session of tenth assembly. It stated that in exercise of the powers conferred on NBSE may in selective cases extend the institutions located outside Nagaland and recognize the various internal promotion examinations conducted by them which will henceforth be called the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education Rules 2007 will come into force with immediate effect once enacted as a resolution. Leader of the opposition, Imkong also assured that Congress would support any legislation on the affiliation issue, as and when it is tabled by the government in the house. The bill was said to be eventually passed. The UNC, NWUM, NPMHR and ANSAM while lauding the passing of a legislation in Nagaland Assembly regarding the School board issue have also appreciated as a historic effort of the Nagaland Government. The Naga organisations also thanked the Naha Hoho and its tribe Hohos, Naga Mothers Association (NMA), NPMHR, NSF and its federating units and sub-ordinate organisations, Churches, schools, individuals and every Naga people for their understanding and co-operation in making the efforts of school affiliation a reality. We appeal to every section of society in the region to discourage and shun politicising the school affiliation issue because pursuit of education is universal. The ethnic minority seeking better and suitable syllabus according to the choice of the people under any school Board is a process of building quality education for the deprived, urged the UNC, NWUM, NPMHR and ANSAM. On 16 October 2007, ANSAM and others have sought from the Secretary of Education of Schools, government of Manipur to issue No Objection Certificate credentials to the private schools operating in the four hill districts in Manipur giving them the "privilege of writing HSLC Exam 2007 in Nagaland". However despite the multipronged effort involving the overground organizations, elected Nephthi Rio led DAN governments in Nagaland, and legislators and parliamentarian from Manipur, the movement for affiliation withmpered and gradually damp squibbed by 2008 and in the succeeding years the issue is as good as dead. Factor could be not an embrace of the issue by the public, for the true motive of the decision being taken to allow affiliation to NBSE by the DAN government in Nagaland as well as those who stir and swirl for it are not in the genuine interest of the students in terms of availing them with more appropriate syllabus, but guided by sheer ethnic politics of complying with the agenda of aspired Nagalim protagonized and espoused by a faction of the Naga ethnic armed group who are in peace talk with the GoI. Those who steadfastly pursued for the NBSE affiliation must have realized the futility of their effort and found it to be inconvenient and too bulky a baggage to be dragged further. (Concluded)

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