

# Editorial

Imphal Wednesday, December 21, 2016

## Act or perish

The system that has been running the state of Manipur is crumbling, and the present state of affairs isn't something that is totally unexpected. The situation, however undesirable, is set to worsen if the past is any indication. The wheels of disintegration was set in motion a long time back when the powers that be in the state deliberately ignored the tell-tale signs of an impending surge in armed activism with unconfirmed reports of these gun-toting extremists being used by those at the helm of affairs to further their personal and political objectives which was to the benefit of everyone involved in the nexus. In the not too distant past, the public witnessed the impunity with which the state security forces abused their authority, and the state government, instead of curtailing and punishing those responsible for the unwarranted spree of the reign of terror unleashed on the innocent and defenceless public, chose to applaud and award them. The mollicolled security fraternity has had it too easy to realize the extent of decay in their discipline and conduct, as a result of which dangerous elements encroaching upon the security and safety of the people of the state has been overlooked and neglected. A minor infection which should have been nipped at the bud and done away with has now become a major concern for everyone not only in the state but in the whole of the north east region threatening to disintegrate and bifurcate the society on ethnic and communal lines.

The public who for long has been harboring a simmering discontent over the inactions of the state government have now shed their restraints and are taking things into their own hands a dangerous precedent which should be addressed before it is too late and the state spirals into uncontrollable chaos and anarchy which presents the very distinct possibility of the beginning of the end of what we now know and hold dear as the state of Manipur. Pressing more armed security personnel to quell the public unrest and rising anger will only add fuel to fire, nor will blocking means of communications and gagging exchange of information bring the desired result.

The bottomline- the patience of the enraged and disgruntled public have now reached the tipping point. The state government should not waste anymore time in deliberations and distractions. What must be done has to be done now to prevent further escalation of unwanted and potentially dangerous uprising. The long suffering public needs a leadership strong and brave enough to lead the way and take the state towards radical changes which would foster enduring peace and lasting progress. The disillusioned public has had to prod and push those at the helm of affairs to take steps far too long. Digression and dithering will only spell doom for the society.

## Blaze in South Mumbai, fireman among 2 injured

**PTI Mumbai, Dec 21:** Two persons, including a fireman, were injured in a major fire that broke out in the hutments of Sankli street at Madanpura area in South Mumbai, a senior fire brigade official said today. "Our control received a call at around 10.20 PM yesterday and 14 fire tenders were rushed to the spot," fire brigade chief of Mumbai civic body P S Rahangdale said. The blaze got escalated due to blast in LPG cylinders, he said adding that the fire has been brought under control.

"The fire affected 50 to 60 structures on the ground-floor, and three floors above it in the area having various footwear and bag manufacturing units, scrap godowns, shops and residential structures. A few temporary structures also collapsed due to the blaze," Rahangdale said. "The fire engulfed the electric

wiring, some installations, household articles, LPG cylinders and other valuables. During the incident, three gas cylinders exploded.

Besides, leakage was found in two LPG cylinders which were later handed over to a gas agency," he said.

According to Rahangdale, "nuisance by public" and "vehicles parked on both sides of the road" posed difficulties for fire brigade personnel to reach the spot.

In the mishap, fireman Ashok Bane sustained head injury while a local resident got suffocated due to the smoke.

Both have been admitted to Nair hospital, officials said. Earlier, a fire had broken out yesterday in the iconic Air India building at Nariman Point in South Mumbai, but there was no casualty or major damage as the blaze-hit floor on the premises was empty at that time.

# Transformation of government into governance in manipur (Changing complexion of civil society: an assessment)

**Dhanabir Laishram**

Basically, the state itself is a society. Which can be divided into two - one is the political society and another is civil society. So, civil society means society minus government. But in democratic institution people's partnership with government in order to make policy and implementation for the welfare of the greatest number is imperative today. The voice of the people should be channelised through mass media, political parties and civil society organizations from political environment. If the state is fragile, no one could get the positive response. So the role of CS in these critical days of the state is really significant. In connection with this, to examine the response of the government towards democratic politics is really worthy because the root cause of all the political violence in NE in general particularly in Manipur is related with this.

The growing importance of civil society has also brought with it a variety of constraints and pressures. In reiteration of some of the maladies that have afflicted civil society, it can be pointed out that the civil society has not been conceptualized tightly, that is why varied perspectives on its meaning, nature and composition have come to camouflage its very essence. It has been observed by Neera Chandhoke that just as the attention paid to the state has failed to account for civil society, the focus on civil society fails to

comprehend its complex relationship with the State. For instance, in Manipur like other Indian states, civil society is seen by most intellectuals as a hot-blooded association of social groupings, which are based on ethnic interest or on religious mobilization by conceiving the idea that they are assimilated coercively. The genesis of this problem is mainly colonial legacy of British and capitalist economy of India. In this economic system, privileged groups whether they may be from hill or valley got maximum values. So people always claimed that they are periphery from centre. But because of identity politics, instead of reacting against the structural injustice they also give their aspiration as periphery within periphery. Civil society of the majority community tried to minimize such trust deficits. On the other hand government tries to make more and more voluminous of internal contradiction within them.

Ethnic identities have always been fluid in Manipur. This fluidity gives considerable scope for political entrepreneurs to reshape the boundary and the concerns of the identity of a community. In recent years, the process of modernization and participatory politics and access to media, and other technological devices have actually increased the mobilization potential and sharpened the self-image of splinter ethnic groups and sub-national identities, quite contrary to homogenizing efforts

of modernizing elite. For instance, civil society groups like United Naga Council (UNC) in Manipur always asserted only the interest of Manipuri Nagas and Kuki Inpi for only Kukis while All Manipur United Clubs Organisation tried to bring unity among all the ethnic groups in the process of unity-criticism-unity. AMUCO had already launched campaign for unity, development and peace. According to AMUCO, it could be brought by fighting together against the State if the state can't give economic justice evenly in order to have living together and growing together.

But assertion of ethnic interest and reaction of each other make conflict situation in spiral. Even they have their ethnic army and fighting each other. That is the product of Globalisation, which associates with three fundamentalists, religious fundamentalists, ethnic fundamentalists and market fundamentalists. In that case robotically the complexity of civil society will be more and more in bottomless.

When civil society is seen as tradition, the internal contradictions between communities and within communities is completely overlooked. Andre Beteilil argues that the well-being of modern institutions can be guaranteed only if civil societies are understood as comprising truly autonomous bodies. In the view of Dipankar Gupta, there is a need to

be wary of giving in to traditional solidarities and associations, as they are unfavourable to the modern institutions.

Civil society by itself, Observes Neera Chandhoke, has no technological virtue, unless it is accompanied both by an interrogation of the sphere of civil society itself and a project for democratizing civil society. And a call for rolling back the state has no particular virtue, unless it is accompanied by a determination that the oppressions of civil society will be dismantled. The ability of civil society to prevent the state from exercising absolute control is an essential but not a sufficient condition for democracy. The existence of civil society as a sphere of participation, deliberation, dialogue and contestation is no indication of the capacities of individuals to participate in all these activities.

Critics have even pointed out the various limitations of the idea of 'social capital' in explaining State-society interactions in the context of developing countries. It has been felt that there are a few potential problems associated with the development of civil society institutions that would nurture social capital. Looking at the State-civil society institutions develop in an authoritarian environment and what the State can do in enabling the growth and expansion of those institutions, the emphasis is on the 'recursive cycles' of the interaction between the State and civil society actors. (To be contd..)

## National & International News

### At least 29 dead, 70 hurt in Mexico fireworks market blast

**AFP Tultepec, Dec 21:** A massive explosion gutted Mexico's biggest fireworks market, killing at least 29 people and injuring 70, authorities said.

The conflagration, in the Mexico City suburb of Tultepec, set off a quick-fire series of multicoloured blasts and sent a vast cloud of smoke billowing over the capital city yesterday.

The market had been packed with customers buying pyrotechnics for traditional end-of-year festivities. Christmas and New Year's parties in many Latin American countries often wrap up with clattering firework blasts.

From a few kilometres away, the multiple explosions that started at 2:50 pm (local time) almost looked

festive, alight in blue, red and white. They were anything but.

"We recovered 26 bodies at the scene of the incident. And three more have died in the hospital, for a total of 29 dead," Mexico state's governor Eruviel Avila said.

Federal police said on Twitter that 70 people were hurt and were transported to emergency rooms. Fire crews struggled for three hours before bringing the blaze under control.

The head of the civil protection service, Luis Felipe Puente, said crews had to wait for all the fireworks to finish exploding before they could extinguish the flames.

"The entire market is gone," he said. He added that several of the injured were in "delicate condition," and searches were under way for more

casualties in the scorched area that looked like a scene from a post-apocalyptic film, with little left standing in the smoldering ruins.

Homes and vehicles nearby were also severely damaged. In some areas, authorities were gently probing for survivors under heaps of charred and twisted roofing material.

People desperately searching for family and friends shouted and gestured to rescuers about where they hoped their missing loved one might be found.

Most of those being picked up by rescuers had severe burns, many over their entire bodies.

The military, which is in charge of issuing fireworks sales permits, was deployed to help emergency crews transport casualties to hospitals by

ambulance and helicopter. Ambulances, fire trucks, police vehicles and army trucks all crowded the sprawling blast area.

Mexico's President Enrique Pena Nieto tweeted his condolences to the families of those killed and his wishes for recovery for those hurt. The cause of the blast was under investigation. Some speculated it could have been mishandling of gunpowder or other fireworks components.

That was the cause of a September 15, 2005 explosion at another fireworks market set up ahead of the Independence Day holiday. That market was destroyed.

The following year, another explosion destroyed more than 200 sellers' stands. Both incidents left dozens of injured, but no fatalities.

### RBI withdraws Rs 5000 deposit limit for KYC-compliant accounts

**New Delhi, Dec. 21:** In a sharp U-turn by the Reserve Bank of India, the restrictions imposed on bank deposits exceeding Rs 5000 in old notes have now been withdrawn by the central bank. In a circular issued to banks on Wednesday, the RBI said it was revoking the restrictions after reviewing the case. On Monday, the RBI announced that deposits in old notes will be limited to Rs 5000, and those exceeding the sum will come under scrutiny. "Tenders of specified bank notes (SBN) in excess of Rs. 5000 into a bank account will be received for credit only once during the remaining period till December 30, 2016," RBI said. It said that customers would have to answer questions such as why they couldn't deposit the demonetised currency so far. Only after receiving a satisfactory reply would the bank credit the amount to the individual's account, RBI said. It also added that deposits less than Rs 5000, but cumulatively exceeding the limit, will also be duly scrutinised. And the money deposited would be only credited to KYC complaint accounts, it said. RBI set December

30 as the deadline for making the deposits.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, however, clarified that deposits made in one go would not attract questions from bank and tax authorities, but repeated deposits by same account holder might raise questions. This further compounded the confusion over the initial notification issued due to the contradicting statements coming from the government and RBI. The fresh directive by the RBI came under heavy criticism from the Opposition, with Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi tweeting "RBI is changing rules like the PM changes his clothes".

**Full text of the RBI circular issued today:** "Please refer to our circular DCM (Plg) No. 1859/10.27.00/2016-17 dated December 19, 2016. On a review of the above, we advise that the provisions of the above circular at sub para (i) and (ii) will not apply to fully KYC compliant accounts." **Here is the first circular:** "On a review of the provisions ii, iii and iv at C of Para 3 dealing with credit of the value of SBNs into

bank accounts it has been decided to place certain restrictions on deposits of SBNs into bank accounts while encouraging the deposits of the same under the Taxation and Investment Regime for the Pradhan Mantri Garib

### PM Modi to visit Varanasi tomorrow, interact with booth-level

**PTI Varanasi, Dec 21:** With the crucial assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh just around the corner, the BJP's grassroots level cadre in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok Sabha constituency here shall be looking forward to receiving from him the mantra for electoral success during his tour of the ancient temple town tomorrow. Interaction with nearly 20,000 booth-level party workers at the Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) premises forms a major part of the Prime Minister's itinerary here.

### 17-year-old girl shot dead in Delhi

**New Delhi, Dec. 21:** A 17-year-old girl was shot dead by her friend inside his car in Najafgarh area of southwest Delhi on Tuesday night. While the cops have recovered the weapon from the spot, the suspect friend, Shubham, is absconding. The victim and her two male friends had gone to Rajouri Garden to have lunch. On their way back, they stopped at Dwarka for shopping, police said.

The girl's mother called her up around 7:30pm asking her to return soon. The trio reached near her house after which one of the friends came out of the car but the girl and the suspect friend remained seated. After a few minutes, the mother heard a loud noise and rushed towards the car and found her daughter in a pool of blood. Shubham and his friend absconded. The girl was rushed to the hospital where she was declared brought dead.

An FIR under section 302 of IPC has been registered and a manhunt launched to nab Shubham and his friend.

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