

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, February 27, 2016

Changing Manipur - which direction?

Times are a changing- but the sort of changes happening in our state is nothing to write home about- or rather everything that should be made public. It has become a breeding ground for unscrupulous elements where the name of the game is "instant wealth". Gone are the days when enterprising people, by dint of their sheer tenacity and unwavering pursuit made fame and fortune. The "get rich quick" mantra being increasingly subscribed to by the younger generation has begun to bear fruit- rapes, murders, extortions, thieves and burglary, drug trafficking and corruption- the list growing longer by the day. The race to amass wealth- even at the cost of giving up one's peace of mind and the health and home have taken precedence over the concept of a peaceful and fruitful easy life. Conscience and morality have been shoved off to the furthest corner of one's mind- shedding the last remnants of humility to enter the temple of mammon. The result is a society where might is right and truth is relative. Honesty and sincerity is at a premium and the ideology of high thinking - simple living having been replaced by the reckless aim to attain power and influence. Humility and respectfulness has begun to be looked down upon and is being equated with weakness- a trait to be avoided. Truths are being sold and brought at a price and the collective mentality has started to revert back to the Stone Age where survival of the fittest holds true. Making things worst are the growing number of indolent youths accustomed to luxury and exhibitionism influenced in no small measure by the western cultures but failing to capture the essence of the dignity of work and the regard for fellow humans that underlines the basic principles of these western societies. Abusing the powers entrusted to them and turning their official domain into their personal fiefdom is the order of the day for bureaucrats and politicians while the common people are left in the lurch with a feeling of betrayal and alienation in their minds. This has created a chasm that is growing wider with each passing day leading to a feeling of suspicion and getting cynical of the steps the Government is taking up for the professed good of the public. This social turmoil paves the way for a breed of human parasites living off the sweat of another's labour- intimidation and fear being their weapon of choice and not thinking twice about taking lives if their whims are not catered to. Shouts of negligence and deprivation trying to drown out the screams of the unfortunate public destined to lead a life of uncertainty and fear. Tolerance is no longer a virtue and wealth is the benchmark of a person's worth- never mind the means one used to acquire it. Public memory has inexplicably shrunk to let matters pass- if only to wash their hands off the trouble of facing the bitter reality or to rectify it. Rationality has succumbed to power and ethics is an alien notion. A bleak future is in the offing- it is for us to stand up and stand fast- for the life we lead the way we want to. It is in us to walk with our heads held high and taste the sweat and the fruit of our own labour. At the end of the day what really matters is an unburdened mind and a good sound sleep.

One person killed in crude bomb explosion

PTI
Suri (WB), Feb 27: One person was killed and another injured when crude bombs went off at Shibpur village in Birbhum district today. A part of the thatched shed where the bombs were being made was also damaged. Birbhum Superintendent of Police Mukesh Kumar said, "A body was recovered, another man was found injured. Probably some very low intensity blast occurred. "Some materials used to make crude bombs were found scattered. But how the man was killed is yet to be investigated. Their identity is to be confirmed," he said. The place where the incident took place falls under Lokpur Police Station limits.

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The root causes for emergence of regionalism and unrest in northeast India

By : Prof. M. Horam

The North East India is a miniature of India where the region is inhabited by various people of different origins, speaking different languages, having many religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and many tribal religions. Some of the ethnic and the linguistic groups have a concentration of population in certain areas which they regard as their own. These groups are primarily interested in the economic development of their areas coupled with the notion of preserving their cultural identity and wanting to prevent other communities settling down in their respective areas. Some of the causes for emergence of regionalism are as follows.

IMMIGRATION AND LANGUAGE CONFLICT

Immigration is the biggest problem which Assam and the other parts of North East India are facing today. There are immigrations of both foreigners and native Indians from other states into all the states of North East India. However, two areas namely, Assam and Tripura have more immigrants compared to those in other states of North East. The immigrants that come to this region may be broadly classified into two categories; foreign and Indian. These two may be grouped into 5(five) classes; Viz, land hungry peasants, Nepalis, refugees from Bangla Desh, traders from Indian communities specially from Bihar and Uter Pradesh. There are also communities coming from Andhra, Kerala, Punjab who come as businessmen. It cannot ascertain the accurate percentage of immigrant population because opinion differs on this issue. Immigration has considerable impact on the social geography of the region. Erstwhile sparsely

populated areas have become densely populated ones. New areas are brought under cultivation, agricultural and agro-industrial production has become into existence; new crops and new method of cultivation are introduced. The influx of immigration is also responsible for urbanization in the region though large areas of Assam and North East India still remain rural and agriculture in character. Another important impact of the immigration is ethnic consolidation based on language. This has turned to ethnic and linguistic conflict, and the best examples are the areas inhabited by the Bengali speaking community on the one hand, the Assamese speaking and Tribal language speaking on the other. Immigration is also responsible for the exploitation of the local people by unscrupulous immigrants; the money lenders, the businessmen and the land grabbers. Whenever the immigrants settled down permanently in this region, there are serious social tensions and fears. The sources of such tensions are; to mention but a few linguistic, religious and political. **LANGUAGE CONFLICT** Language conflict in the North East is a century old. For example, the Assamese and Bengali; when Assam was annexed to the British Empire, Assamese was the language of the courts for nearly two decades. However, one reason or the other, Assamese was replaced by Bengali and Bengali became the language of the courts and the medium of instruction in schools of Assam. The Assamese agitated that Assamese should be the language of courts and schools. These debates went on for several years. When Assamese was declared official language in

Assam, non-Assamese speaking communities revolted: Assam was cut to size on account of language conflict.

In no part of the India sub-continent are the ethnic difference so great as in North East India. For example, in Manipur there are 33 recognised tribes, 6 scheduled castes besides the Meitei Hindus and Muslims (Pangan). In Arunachal Pradesh, there are as many as 14 major tribes which can be sub-divided in 37 sub-tribes. In Tripura there are 19 scheduled tribes. In Assam plains, there are two distinct Communities the Assamese and the Bengali speaking. Even among the Assamese there are people of Ahom Origin and the non-Ahoms besides there are other communities. Imposition of language on the minor communities is one of the most volatile political unrest in the North East.

SONS OF THE SOIL THEORY

During the past few years, there have been interesting development in the North East, namely the growth of what might be called Identity Crisis. This identity has been termed by some imaginative persons as 'Little nationalism' or 'Sub-nationalism'. This 'ism' is sustained by the concept 'Sons of the Soil'. This nationalism has been expressed through armed insurgencies. There have been insurgencies in Assam Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura and the aim of all these insurgencies is in the liberation of the respective areas from the foreign rule-outsiders. When the framers of the Constitution framed Constitution they never realised that they were making a provision for the 'Sons of the Soil' which would cut at the very root of national integration in the Country. Unintentionally

perhaps, certain provisions have been inserted in the Constitution which have been used by certain politicians to advance the cause of 'Sons of the Soil' theory. Some of the provisions are as follow:

a) Residence as a Basis of Admission in Educational Institution

One of the major causes for the development of localism, regionalism and 'sons of the soil' theory is the admission policy of the State government in the educational institutions of higher learning, particularly in Medical and Engineering Colleges and University Departments. The word 'residence' is inserted in the Article 15 of the Constitution which is responsible for the development of local and regional feelings of the country. Taking advantage of this provision, the State start reserving seats in educational institutions on the basis of domicile.

b) Residence within the state: A condition for Employment

Article 16 of the Constitution provided for equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and prevents discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, sex, caste, descent, place of birth and residence on the one hand, (Art. 16(2)) but provides for residential qualifications within the State for employment on the other, (Art. 16(3)). It is worthwhile mentioning a few examples: that state like Meghalaya has passed Legislation namely - Meghalaya Employment Regulation Act for regulating employment even in private sector to promote the economic interest of the "Sons of the Soil". Even in Assam, the then Chief Minister openly supported the agitation started by AASU the theory of the 'Sons of the Soil'.
(To be contd.....)

National & International News

Indian Army to organise mega veteran rally at Pathankot

ANI
Jammu, Feb. 27: In an effort to reach out to its veterans and Veer Naris and resolve the problems faced by them, a mega veterans rally is being organised by the Rising Star Corps at Pathankot on March 5. The rally is expected to be attended by a large number of veterans and Veer Naris covering from Jammu, Samba, Kathua,

Pathankot and Kangra districts of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. While being aware of the fact that the veterans have an important role to play in nation building and nurturing the future generation, the Army reaffirms its resolve to look after its veterans, Veer Naris and their next of kin. The rally is being organised by the Indian Army in close

coordination with the state government and the Rajya Sainik Board. The focus of the rally is to resolve and mitigate the issues with respect to pension anomalies, land and legal cases being faced by the veterans and Veer Naris. A number of stalls from various welfare functionaries and organisations of the army and civil establishments are being set

up at the venue of the rally. A medical camp, employment fair and Sainik Bhoj will also be organised during the rally. Approximately, 3500 veterans and Veer Naris are likely to attend the rally. To ensure maximum participation in the rally buses for conveyance to and from the rally site for the veterans and Veer Naris are also being organised by the army.

IAF wants more security for Srinagar Airport

ANI
Srinagar, Feb. 27: Indian Air Force (IAF) authorities at the Srinagar International Airport have sought increased presence of police in sensitive villages located around the airfield, citing security reasons. According to sources, the matter was taken up by senior IAF officers with Kashmir's Divisional Commissioner during a meeting recently. Air Force officers suggested the use of the state police's Special Operation Group (SOG) for this purpose. Srinagar International Airport is also known as Sheikh-ul-Alam Airport (after 15th century Kashmiri mystic Sheikh Noor-ud-din Wali). The airport was granted international status by the Union Cabinet on January 27, 2005. The first international flight to land at the airport was an Air India flight from New Delhi on February 14, 2009. The airport is jointly operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Strike disrupts normal life in Kashmir Valley

PTI
Srinagar, Feb 27: Normal life was disrupted in Kashmir Valley today due to a strike called by separatist groups against the arrest of ex-Delhi University Professor S A R Geelani and JNU students on charges of sedition following the Afzal Guru event in the varsity. Most of the shops, business establishments, petrol pumps and offices were shut in and around the Lal Chowk city centre and in many areas elsewhere in the city, while government offices witnessed thin

attendance, officials said. They said public transport was off the roads, however, private cars, cabs, and auto-rickshaws were seen plying at many places. Similar reports were received from other district headquarters of the Valley, the officials said. Banks were closed on account of the fourth Saturday, while educational institutions were shut due to the ongoing winter vacations. Separatist groups including hardline Hurriyat Conference and JKLF had

called for protests yesterday and general strike today against arrest Geelani and JNU students. Meanwhile, a police spokesman said police and paramilitary CRPF have been deployed in strength in sensitive areas of the city like Maisuma and other downtown areas to maintain law and order. Hardline Hurriyat Conference chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani has termed the registration of sedition charges against the ex-Delhi University Professor as an "unjust crackdown of Delhi Police".

Suicide bomber kills at least 10 in eastern Afghanistan

AFP
Jalalabad, Feb. 27: At least 10 people were killed and over 40 injured in a suicide bombing in Afghanistan's eastern province of Kunar today, officials said. "A suicide bomber riding a motorcycle detonated his explosives in a market in Asadabad the provincial capital, 10 people were killed and over 40 were injured," Ghani Mosamem, spokesman for the provincial governor, told AFP. Sayed Maqsood Pacha, deputy provincial police chief, put the death toll slightly higher at 11. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but

Taliban insurgents, who have been waging a 14 year-long bloody insurgency in the country, have been blamed for such attacks in the past. The incident comes as direct peace talks with the Taliban are due to take place next week. A witness to the blast, who did not want to be named, told AFP that an influential tribal elder, Haji Khan Jan, was the target of the attack and was killed. Jan had led a local uprising against the Taliban in the past, the witness added. Kunar is a restive and remote province that shares a long border with neighbouring Pakistan - which

the Afghan government has accused in the past of harbouring Taliban militants. Delegates from Afghanistan, China, the US and Pakistan met in the Kabul last week for a fourth round of talks aimed at forming a path back to the nascent peace process, which was interrupted by last summer's announcement that Taliban leader Mullah Omar had died. The fresh peace initiative comes as the insurgents wage an unprecedented winter campaign of violence across Afghanistan, underscoring a worsening security situation more than 14 years after they were driven out of power by US-led NATO forces.