

# Editorial

Imphal, Monday, February 29, 2016

## Haste makes waste

Just as abruptly as it was decided just four days before to suspend the cops involved in the alleged mistreatment of students belonging to Naga Students' Federation, the very decision has been revoked as abruptly today. Chief Minister Ibobi Singh is once again in a Dilemma he cannot deny being partly responsible for. The alacrity with which the state government took a very serious decision, and the manner in which the very same has been made void bears testimony to the indecisive nature of the present government, bowing to undue pressure and trying to take the easy way out. The pressure from the NSF and other supporting groups holding the state at ransom, and the subsequent counter pressure from the state security forces when they are made to bear the brunt of the power tussle clearly demonstrates the utilization of the most effective means of cornering the state government- an exercise, rather an indulgence that is increasingly turning out to be both dangerous and potentially disastrous for every stakeholders in the society. The last straw, however, happened to be the ultimatum declared by 20 of the members of the Legislative Assembly who incidentally happened to belong to the ruling party. The practice of the state government of giving in to social pressures and demands fuelled by emotions rather than cold hard facts has set a dangerous precedent, one which has acquired the nature of an epidemic at present.

The Chief Minister has reportedly stated that the order for suspension of the 5 cops was given on his insistence and not on his deputy's who is also in charge of Home. This brought to the fore the report Imphal Times carried regarding the response of the Deputy Chief Minister during the Demand Discussion for police on Friday Assembly Session. The Home Minister has elaborated on the extremely sensitive and complex nature of dealing with the Law and Order situation in the state, saying that an action on any issue based on emotions and other personal and social sentiments might result in catastrophe and uproar, and that he personally is of the opinion that it would be better to hide a truth which, if exposed, would cause the disintegration of the state. He was stating the obvious that hasty decisions in the state however relevant and correct it might seem at that point, might very well turn out to be more damaging and detrimental in the long run. Haphazard resolutions and decisions also portrays a fickle and indecisive administration, one which cannot stick to its own decisions and eventually undermines the credibility of the state government. Decisions need to be well thought-out, deliberated and discussed and debated with all stakeholders concerned before being announced. But it does not mean that such decisions should take its own sweet time, after all, the state government is elected to protect the interests of the people of the state, and that should clearly be the guiding principle in formulating all decisions. "A hasty judgment is a first step to recantation": Roman Quote.

## Assam CM Gogoi to lay foundation stone of metro rail project today

**Guwahati, Feb. 29:** Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi on Monday will lay the foundation stone of much awaited metro rail project in Guwahati today. Assam government approved the formation of special purpose vehicle namely Guwahati metro rail corporation limited for implementing the project. The 203 kilometre Metro Corridor is expected to be completed in three phases forecasts traffic demand up

to the year 2045. The detailed project report for Phase-I has been prepared for a total length 61.4 kilometres. There will be four corridors and total of 54 stations in Phase-1. The total cost of the project will be over 18 thousand crore rupees and the project will be completed in five years. The Centre and the Assam government will bear 40 percent of total cost while nearly 58 per cent of cost will be funded through soft loans.

### Wanted Sub-Editor

Imphal Times is looking for an experience sub editor with excellent writing skill in English who can read Bengali written script. Working hour is 12 noon till 3 pm. Honorarium is Rs. 3000 p/m. Preference will be given to candidate who had already work in English daily as desk editor. Age no bar, and Imphal Times have no problem with those candidates working in other newspaper at night shift.

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## Union Finance Minister Present Budget estimate for 2016-17

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presents his third Union Budget. With an eye on supporting the small tax-payer and the small investor, the Minister announced a slew of schemes, and income tax exemptions.

**Highlights of the Budget**

- GDP growth at 7.6% despite slowdown in Global economy from 3.4% to 3.1%. CPI inflation down to 5.4%
- CAD from \$18.4 billion in first half of last year to \$14.4 billion this year, projected to be 1.4% of GDP end of FY16
- To double income of farmers by 2022, sets aside Rs 35, 984 crore for the purpose; to bring 28.5 lakh hectare under irrigation at a cost of Rs 17,000 crore
- Only 46% of 141 hectares of net cultivable area is irrigated, target 28.5 lakh ha to be brought under irrigation, at Rs 17,000 cr next year
- Rural Sadak Yojana allocation at Rs 19,000 cr for FY17 representing 60% of central funding, rest 40% to come from states, taking total allocation to Rs 27,000 cr; 100 km road construction per day

currently to be stepped up

- Provision of Rs 15,000 crore to ease burden on loan repayment in form of interest subvention for farmers
- Proposed Rs 5,500 cr for crop schemes, and income tax exemptions
- Rs 2.87 lakh crore as aid to Gram Panchayats as recommended by Finance Commission; quantum jump of 228%
- Rs 38,500 cr allocated for MGNREGA, highest amount ever

### Union Budget 2016-17

erased in FY 2017. Every new scheme to have sunset date and outcome review

- Relief to small tax payer earning less than 5,00,000 ppa, additional relief of 87A from Rs 200 to Rs 500
- Relief to those living in rented houses and not getting HRA from employers to go up from Rs 24,000 to Rs 60,000
- Corporate tax: Effective rate of tax comes to 24.8%. Accelerated depreciation limited to 40% for first year. IT rate for FY17 of relatively small enterprises, with turnover of less than Rs 5 crore limited to 29%

plus cess

- 10% tax on dividends in excess of Rs 10 lakh received by individuals, HUFs; this will be in addition to DDT; LTCG period for unlisted firms reduced to 2 years
- Withdrawal up to 40% of corpus from Pension to be made tax-exempt
- For first-time homebuyers, add Rs 50,000 tax exemption for houses under Rs 50 lakh
- Infra cess of 1% on all diesel cars of certain capacity, SUVs, some other cars as part of pollution control measure
- 45% tax (30% tax + 7.5% surcharge + 7.5% penalty) on undisclosed income declared under new window between June 1 and September 30, with no provision of scrutiny of books
- Retrospective Tax: High level committee headed by Revenue Secretary to allay fears
- Higher rate of TDS on NRIs not having a PAN card will no longer apply if they produce a suitable alternate document
- Direct Tax proposals to entail loss of Rs 1,000 crore Indirect proposals to yield Rs 20,000 cr; Net gain: Rs 19,000 cr

## National & International News

### Pakistan hangs former governor Salmaan Taseer's assassin, Mumtaz Qadri

**AP Islamabad, Feb. 29:** Pakistan Monday hanged the assassin of a governor who sought reform of the country's blasphemy law, officials and supporters told AFP, saying Mumtaz Qadri was feted as a hero by Islamist supporters — had been executed at a prison in Rawalpindi. "I can confirm that Qadri was hanged in Adiala jail early Monday morning," senior local police official Sajid Gondal told AFP. A prison official confirmed the execution of Qadri, a former police bodyguard who killed liberal Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer in 2011. Around 50 Rangers and police in riot gear as well as ambulances and dozens of police vehicles were stationed outside Qadri's home in the city early Monday, an AFP reporter there said, blocking the street and refusing to allow people to enter. Armed Rangers could be seen stationed on the roof of the building housing Qadri's residence and some roads in the neighbourhood were closed. Cries were heard from inside the house as around 20 people gathered, apparently family members, and mosques could be heard broadcasting news of the execution. "We have beefed up security in Rawalpindi to maintain law and order and to deal with any untoward situation," Gondal said. He said the hanging took place after a final meeting between Qadri and his family late Sunday, and that the body had been sent to his relatives. Qadri shot Taseer 28 times in broad

daylight in an upscale market in the capital Islamabad. He later admitted the killing, saying he objected to the politician's calls to reform Pakistan's controversial blasphemy laws. Taseer had also been vocal in his support of Asia Bibi, a Christian woman who has been on death row since 2010 after being found guilty of insulting the Prophet Mohammed. Blasphemy is a hugely sensitive issue in Pakistan, an Islamic republic of some 200 million, and Qadri has been hailed as a hero by many conservatives eager to drown out any calls to soften the legislation. Critics including European governments say Pakistan's blasphemy laws are largely misused, with hundreds of people languishing in jails under false charges. Qadri's lawyers drew on Islamic texts to argue that he was justified in killing Taseer, saying that by criticising the law the politician was himself guilty of blasphemy — an argument rejected by the lead judge. Qadri lost a petition for the Supreme Court to review his sentence in December last year. The decision came after the court warned in October that in Islam a false accusation can be as serious as the blasphemy itself, and that calls for blasphemy law reform "ought not to be mistaken as a call to bring down with that law". The court's decision to uphold the sentence sparked rallies in which Islamist groups said that if Qadri were executed those responsible should also be put to death.

### Baghdad twin bombings: At least 70 killed, nearly 100 wounded by IS militants in eastern city of Sadr

**AP Baghdad, Feb. 29:** Militants attacked an outdoor market on Sunday in eastern Baghdad, killing at least 70 people and wounding nearly 100, said officials. A bomb ripped through the crowded Medri market in the Shiite district of Sadr City, said a police officer. Minutes later, a suicide bomber blew himself up amid the crowd that had gathered at the site of the first bombing, he added. Interior Ministry spokesman Sad Main said the bombings killed 68 people and wounded another 62. Multiple hospital officials later increased the casualty toll to 70 dead and 95 wounded. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release information. The attack was the deadliest in a wave of recent explosions that have targeted commercial areas in and outside Baghdad. In the town of Mahmoudiya, about 30 kilometers (20 miles) south of Baghdad, three shoppers were killed and 10 wounded in a bomb explosion, another police officer said. Four others were killed in a separate bomb attack in Baghdad's southern Dora neighborhood, he added.

The attacks came hours after security forces repelled an attack by IS militants on the capital's western suburb of Abu Ghraib, said officials. Three suicide car bombers struck a security force barracks as gunmen opened fire, according to two police officers. At least 12 members of government and paramilitary security forces were killed and 35 wounded, they added. The clashes left a silo on fire, they said. The commander of military operations in western Baghdad, Maj. Gen Saad Harbiya, said the situation is "under control" and a local curfew has been imposed. Abu Ghraib, about 18 miles (29 kilometers) from downtown Baghdad, is the location of a prison of the same name where U.S. troops committed notorious abuses against Iraqi detainees following the 2003 invasion. Citing the unstable security situation in the surrounding area, Iraqi authorities closed the prison in April 2014. It is halfway between Baghdad and Fallujah, which is controlled by the IS group. Security forces prevented IS from seizing Abu Ghraib when the extremists swept across northern and western Iraq in the summer of 2014.

### Brief uproar in LS over privilege motion vs Smriti

**PTI New Delhi, Feb. 29:** The issue of privilege motion against HRD Minister Smriti Irani created a brief uproar in the Lok Sabha before Finance Minister Arun Jaitley started presenting the Union Budget 2016-17 today. Opposition members were on their feet seeking to know the status of their notices against Irani for "misleading" the House on the Rohith Vemula issue. "I have received notices raising the question of privilege dated February 26 and 29 respectively against Smriti Irani. The matter is under my consideration," Speaker Sumitra Mahajan said, seeking to pacify the Opposition. After the brief uproar and Mahajan's statement, order was restored and Jaitley began his budget speech. Congress, Left and the JD(U) had announced plans of bringing a Privilege Motion against Irani, who is in the eye of a storm following her remarks in Parliament on the issue last week.

### 5 live bombs found along LoC in Poonch

**PTI Jammu, Feb. 29:** A major tragedy has averted after security forces detected and defused five live bombs in a village along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district. The five bombs were found at village Azmabad close to the LoC in Mandi area of the district yesterday, a police officer said here today. On Friday, two children identified as Tahir (11) and Wasim (8) were injured when they were fiddling with an object which turned out to be bomb following which security forces launched an operation to clear the area, the officer said. After the recovery of five live bombs, the bomb disposal squad took them to a safe area and defused them. "A major tragedy has been averted with the recovery of the bombs", the officer said.

### Lok Sabha adjourned till tomorrow

**ANI New Delhi, Feb. 29:** The Lok Sabha has been adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow after the presentation of General Budget for 2016-17 by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the Parliament. Presenting the budget earlier, Jaitley said the agenda for the next year is to undertake transformative measures based on nine pillars for India. Outlining the nine pillars for transforming India, the Finance Minister said agriculture, rural sector, social sector, education, skill and job creation to make India a knowledge based and productive economy, infrastructure investment, financial sector reforms, governance reforms and ease of doing business, fiscal discipline and tax reforms to reduce compliance burden would be focus areas.