

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, January 2, 2016

Welcome 2016: Will it be another happy days

2016 has arrived with the renewed hopes and aspirations of the much harried and harassed society. Wishes pour from all section of the society showing their aspiration of making the year a peaceful and prosperous one. But will it happened?? A detached and impersonal look at the present developments around us strongly suggests a growing tussle between a section of the society who are starting to assert their own natural freedom and spontaneity of right to life without the enforced support of any individual or group on the one hand and a group, while acutely aware of the disillusionment being increasingly felt by the long intimidated public, still conveniently ignore the subtle changes since the outgoing social order renders them smooth opportunists living off on the fear and insecurity of the common public who have been bearing the brunt of the undeclared war between the Government and the self declared emancipators of the society. The society is starting to wake up to the sordid reality behind the slogans and show of concern by the opposing parties who have been hemming in the collective enthusiasm and liberties for so long. This is a very positive and necessary turnaround-breakthrough of sorts. Fear of physical harm has been the one driving force behind the relentless search for improvements ever since the evolution of mankind which has been continued till the present day. Yet this very inherent insecurity has been used by a reckless and inconsiderate few to take advantage of others in various ways. Realizing the things that needs to be done inspite of the dangers posed by such threats and intimidations has made the society to take calculated risks and step up the efforts to progress and prosper. Fortifying our minds against such unwanted distractions and instead focusing on the tasks at hand, not only to sustain ourselves but also to make the future that little more efficient, developed and safer should be our common goal. All of us have a huge stake in this line of thought. Aberrations and exceptions notwithstanding, a concerted effort would bring about a desirable chain reaction of help and cooperation and sense of togetherness. Most of us are still wary of the next person. We all need to step out of this mental cocoon and try to reach out with sincerity and goodwill. The response will almost always be more pleasant and positive than we expect it to be. We only need to open up our minds and reach out in good faith. This is so much more necessary for those who are still harbouring hatred and revenge, their precious efforts and manpower being diverted towards scheming other's downfall. Live and let live.

Toll from suicide bombing in Afghanistan rises to 2

Kabul, Jan. 2: Afghanistan's Interior Ministry says the toll from a New Year's Day suicide bombing at a French restaurant in Kabul has risen to two. Spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said on Saturday that a 12-year-old boy and one of the security guards at the Le Jardin restaurant were killed and that another 18 people were wounded in the attack. Mr. Sediqqi says a second attacker,

who was arrested by police, was wearing a military uniform and carrying arms and grenades. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack and said the bomber targeted a restaurant belonging to foreigners. The Taliban have stepped up attacks across the country over the past year, following the formal end of the U.S. and NATO combat mission.

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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National/ International News

Lieutenant General Bipin Rawat takes over as army commander Southern command



Lt Col Ajay Kumar Sharma PRO (Defence)

Imphal, Jan 2: Lieutenant General BipinRawat arrived in Pune on 01 January to take over as General Officer Commanding in Chief, Southern Command. Immediately after arrival he laid wreath at the National War Memorial, Pune and paid homage to martyrs. Later he was given a Guard of Honour. The current assignment of the General Officer is a testimony of continued dedication to service which began on his commission on 16 December 1978 and award of 'Sword of Honour' at the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. Prior to current assignment, he was General Officer Commanding Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa Area located at Mumbai. An alumni of St Edward's School, Shimla, he was commissioned in the Fifth Battalion of the Eleven Gorkha Rifles from IMA, Dehradun. The officer has vast experience in high altitude warfare and counter insurgency operations. He has commanded an Infantry battalion, along the Line of Actual Control in the Eastern Sector; a Rashtriya Rifles Sector and an Infantry Division in the Kashmir Valley. His staff assignments include Instructional tenure at Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, General Staff Officer Grade 2, at the Military Operations Directorate; logistics staff officer of a RAPID in central India, Colonel Military Secretary and Deputy Military Secretary in the Military Secretary's Branch and Senior Instructor, Junior

Command Wing. He has also been Major General General Staff at HQ Eastern Command. The officer commanded a Multinational Brigade in a Chapter VII mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Lieutenant General BipinRawat is Graduate of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, the Higher Command Course at Fort Leavenworth, USA. The officer during the span of over 37 years of service has been awarded for gallantry and distinguished service with the AVSM, YSM, SM, VSM, COAS Commendation on two occasions and the Army Commander's Commendation. Whilst serving with the United Nations, he was twice awarded the Force Commander's Commendation. Academically inclined, he has authored numerous articles on National Security and Leadership which have been published in various journals and publications. Lt. General Bipin has completed his research on military media strategic studies and was awarded Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph d) from Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut in 2011. Married to Madhulika, who is an alumni of Scindia School Gwalior, they have two daughters, Kritika and Tarini. Madhulika is an honours Graduate in Psychology from Delhi University and is actively involved in social work, working in support of cancer patients. She now assumes charge as Regional President AWWA, Southern Command.

Terror attack on Air base, four terrorists, 2 IAF men killed

PII Pathankot, Jan 2: Suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists from Pakistan on Saturday attacked an Air Force base here, killing two air personnel while four terrorists were killed in an operation that lasted more than five hours, an attack that comes just a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an unscheduled visit to Lahore. The air base is located near the border with Pakistan. "The gunbattle between terrorists and security forces ended after more than five hours," Punjab Police ADGP (Law and Order) H S Dhillon "However, the area was not sanitised yet and the combing operation continues," he said. At least four to five militants, believed to be from the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist group, in army uniform launched the attack at 3:30 AM with an aim of destroying the air base, a top security official said Security forces are on the look out for a possible fifth terrorist so that no collateral damage is done, police said. The terrorists, with huge quantity

of RDX in their possession, made their way to the base from the back side where there is a jungle, they said. Authorities said helicopters and other equipment at the Air base are safe. The technical area of the Air Force station is safe, police said, adding the entire area has been cordoned off. Pathankot SSP R K Bakshi said four suspected militants were killed in the battle. Two jawans were also martyred and six sustained injuries. The attack was launched soon after a combing operation was carried out by the army on Friday in the area between Air base installation and Chakki river, police said. The attackers were met with strong resistance from the security personnel, who were already alert to the possibility of an attack, top sources said in Delhi, adding that the terrorists, therefore, could not enter the air base and managed to reach only to the larger area on the outside. Sources said that a co-ordinated counter operation supervised by NSA Ajit Doval was launched to neutralise the terrorists

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A perspective on Kabui marriage

The task of bringing wine (Lat Loi Jou) by the boy's family is of huge significance and is repeated several times during the whole marriage process. On yet another fixed date, the parties will be gathered again in which the boy's family will bring in the traditional cloth "Man-Phei" and is presumed to be the price of the bride. The intricately weaved traditional shawls are also to be distributed to most of the important elders of the girls' families. The delivery of "Man-Phei" known as "Man-Manmei" which undoubtedly assumes enormous significance will be taken as an approval from the side of the yet-to-be-bride's family. Henceforth, the girl can no longer fall in love with another person or be given as the wife to another man. The procedure will be pursued further on by choosing one girl and one boy, referred to as "Kajeb", to accompany the supposed couple to assist in the whole marriage process. Carrying out further, in yet another fixed day, the girls of the girl's dormitory (Tuna Kailiu or Luchu) and representatives from the boy's dormitory (Kangchui/ Kangchu) will get in together to get firewoods from nearby hillside so as to serve as the process of cooking for the upcoming grand feast. This celebratory occasion is known as "Manthing-Remmei" and could be avoided if necessary. Prior to the day of the marriage, representatives from both the girls' and boy's respective dormitories will head for the nearest hillock to pluck and gather certain leaves known as "Pong-Ring" in the Kabui dialect. The leaves are later braided to certain length to be hanged or decorated in front of the girls' and boys' dormitories. The braided items are regarded as farewell gifts from the side of the bride towards her beloved friends and relatives. The process is known as "Samphen Phenmei". Nonetheless, during the occasion, all those gathered at the hillside will engage in consuming wine and foods, to be followed by singing songs (Luchen-Lu). The bride will be brought down from the hill and let her place the braided items herself at the area where they are meant for. Accordingly, both the representatives of the dormitories will put on their traditional attires and costumes accompanied by the indigenous culture of dancing merrily and head for the Kangchu for the process known as "Baangeimei" after the oblation of wine (Joupaan Keime) is concluded wherein traditional liquors and foods brought by the girls' side are consumed as part of the event. During the Baangeimei process, the boys and girls will stand alternatively in a circle joining hands to sing the song "Baan-Gei Lu." The entire night is marked by singing and dancing known as "Lujaam-Lu" till the outbreak of the dawn. On the day of the marriage, the boys' side (dormitory) will head for the girl's residence where they will prepare the meals meant for the marriage feast. Others from the girls' dormitories will take the bride to the village pond and bath her with the products from certain shrubs known as "Khoi" in place of modern day soaps alongside with oil also called as "Katink" or Kangsubi in Manipuri language. The bride will then be dressed in the traditional attire "Langmu Pheiso" which is used as traditional dancing sarong. She will be taken to the girls' dormitory

where her friends will give her presents. Earlier, the presents were given in terms of necklaces, garlands, bangles, ear-rings and others. And so, the process is called "Tu-Ta Lokmei". Tu means necklace while Ta means bangle. Lokmei means giving away from the perspective of Kabui observation. After this, invited friends, relatives and villagers will have a grand farewell feast to be followed by counting of articles the bride will carry with her as bridal gifts. Generally, of the articles presented are included large woven baskets or bassinets called "khuk" (meant for keeping dresses), weaving implements, farming equipments and packages of cooked rice and meat which is to be consumed by the married couple and no one else. Another edible material (meat) are also distributed to the groom's side in the form of packages known as "Cha-dom". Interestingly, a peculiar characteristic of the marriage is the humours that the groom's side will be teased by refusing to let them enter the residence of the girl once or twice to symbolize that the bride will not be given easily. Nevertheless, when the grooms' side enters, they are seated and the ceremony "Pon-Lokmei" is performed during which the groom is to be frisked by the "Nouthanpou". Discovered items are then distributed to the children. Later, after receiving the blessings from the elders of both the sides, they head for her new husband family along with five of the married woman's friends. The sending off ceremony is known as "Noutime" which means giving away of the wife to her husband. When they reach the residence of the husband, they will be warmly welcomed in traditional manner, and the elders of the Village court (Pei) will initiate the marriage ceremony known as "Langdai-Mailaakmei." During the ceremony, the bride and the groom are supposed to sit on a bed meant for them, known as "Langdai." Later, a cock will be sacrificed and its limbs severed once the fowl are no longer alive biologically. Interestingly, it is assumed that the couple will bear a boy child if the cock's right leg is above the left side. If it happens to be on the contrasting side, the supposed presumption is that a girl child will be born first. Oblation of wine is then followed yet again proclaiming and revering the name of Tingkao Ravgang, an important deity of the Kabui community. The happiness for both the couple including prosperity and fertility are revoked during the process as well. Meanwhile, the women-folk will perform the "Meipui Lamkeo-Keomei". Regarded as a teasing gesture, the process will be followed till late in the night. Traditionally, the newly married couple does not share the same bed for the five days. The bride generally sleeps with her five friends who come to her on the marriage day. On the fifth day, the bride along with her five friends visits her paternal home accompanied by some individuals from the husband's side for a traditional feast from which day onwards the five of the bride's friends will stay behind. This form of marriage system is one of the various forms of Kabui traditional practices that exists but has become obsolete in recent times, but still is assumed to be the most honoured one.