

Editorial

Imphal, Friday, January 29, 2016

The trust deficit

The wrongdoer always comforts themselves by believing that nobody else saw them committing a sin. They always tried to pretend as if they are pious and honest persons in the eyes of others. Whatever may be the truth whether other saw his wrongful acts or not, the fact remains that because of his action he or she will fall down in his eyes. he will never be pardoned. The feeling of guilt will linger on his mind till the last.

After six years trust seems to be finally appeared on the public domain. It was speculation and media had tried time and again to prove it since the incident happened. This time too a concrete report of how the tragic encounter happened in broad daylight of July 23, 2009 at which a former cadre of the PLA was killed inside Maimu Pharmacy in BT road- one of the most crowded area in the state of Manipur.

The greatest tragedy of our state is that nothing seems to move until and unless extreme measures are resorted to: be it implementing rules of law or conveying the aspirations and needs of the public. Add to it the fact that we, as a collective, have yet to realize the undeniable truth that the centre is evidently more concerned with preserving its national territory rather than improving the welfare of its citizens when it comes to affairs of the north east region of the country, in effect, reducing the importance of the region to that of a mere geographical entity. Death, destruction and tragedy continue to be the only means of drawing attention of the high and mighty at the centre to the region. None of the national media considers it relevant to highlight the improvements, or whatever activities and changes that can be attributed as such that has occurred in the state.

Even the landmark decision by its government which led to the removal of AFSPA from Tripura was mentioned in the passing, even as the collective mind of the rest of the north east states still remain occupied and fascinated with the development, and the tantalizing possibility of it unfolding in their own states. Despite the blatant indifference and continued ignorance of the centre, it remains an intriguing issue as to the question of why the state government still remains a passive bystander at best and a perceived stooge for the centre, while pressing issues needing immediate attention has been put on the backburner or dismissed altogether. While it must be said in its defence that the governance of a volatile and inherently unpredictable state as Manipur is easier said than done, this very situation cannot be used as an excuse to shy away from the challenges that is staring it in the face. The peculiarity of the situations confronting Manipur: from its geopolitical to socio-economic conditions needs to be tackled in ways that involves innovative and unorthodox methods. This calls for a more alert, swifter and sterner government capable of dispensing its plans and proposals more smoothly and effectively. The frustrations being felt by the public for a long time now need to be addressed. Every aspect of public life and governance has been beset with corruptions, controversies, scandals, accusations of favoritism, despotism and cronyism. The sooner the present guardians of the state admit to the allegations and own up to such aberrations, the sooner it can address and rectify itself. Bringing in a system of governance that takes into confidence its people and their needs rather than dispensing administration by tweaking the system to suit its every whim will eventually prove to be the spark that lit up the fire of frustrations trampled expectations. The state government needs to stand with its people and work in synergy rather than to cloak its intentions and actions with the shroud of suspicion and mystery.

National & International News

Confident BJP will defeat Congress in Assam elections

PTI New Delhi, Jan. 29: Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal, who was on Thursday appointed as BJP's chief ministerial candidate for Assam, expressed confidence that the party would dethrone the Tarun Gogoi-led Congress government from the state. "I am confident that the BJP will defeat the Congress in the coming assembly election and will make history in Assam," he told PTI, hours after the BJP Parliamentary Board announced the decision.

Election to the 126 member Assam assembly will be held in April-May. Sonowal said that corruption was at its peak in Assam while there has been little development during the 15 years of Congress rule in the state. "We will provide a corruption-free, development oriented government to the people of Assam," he said.

The Union Minister for Sports expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP chief Amit Shah and other members of the BJP Parliamentary Board for bestowing him with the key responsibility. "With the blessings of the Prime Minister and other leaders, the BJP will win the assembly election in Assam," he said.

BJP had won seven Lok Sabha seats out of 14 in Assam in 2014 when Sonowal was the state union president. "The people of Assam know Sarbananda Sonowal as a 'national hero'. The parliamentary board has decided that the party will fight the Assam polls in his leadership...BJP is going to form its government in Assam," BJP General Secretary JP Nadda, accompanied by party's national secretary Shrikant Sharma,

said. The decision reflects a strategic shift in the party's approach to contesting state assembly elections after ignoring state leadership and excessive focus on central leaders was blamed by many for its debacle in Bihar polls. Barring the Delhi assembly polls, during which it had inducted Kiran Bedi into the party at the last minute and made her the chief ministerial candidate, BJP has not named a leader for state elections and instead sought votes in Modi's name after he emerged as its preeminent leader and Shah took over as its president.

Asked if the party will name chief ministerial candidates for other poll-bound states — West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry — as well, Nadda said the issue was deliberated upon on Thursday and a decision will be taken later.

DNA reported that of the five poll-bound states, it is Assam that the BJP is really hoping to win. The party has set a target of 84 seats, two-thirds seats, in the 126-strong assembly. A senior BJP leader told DNA that Sonowal's clean image means that everyone is willing to accept him. Sonowal (53) currently holds independent charge of Sports and Youth Affairs Ministry. Sonowal was All Assam Students Union president and AGP leader before joining BJP in 2011. He headed the party's Assam unit before he was made a minister in the Narendra Modi government. He was appointed Assam BJP chief in November.

Among the five states going to polls in a few months, Assam offers the best hope to the saffron outfit after it emerged as the single largest party there during the Lok Sabha elections in 2014.

Archery, SATball tournaments bring players together in Nagaland

ANI Dimapur, Jan. 29: The 4th edition of the All India Police Archery Championship was organized at Nagaland Armed Police Training Centre (NAPTC) Stadium at Chumukedima here.

In all twenty one state police and central police teams participated in the five-day long tournament organized by the Nagaland police.

In the men's category, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) team clinched the championship while ITBT team and Assam Rifles emerged the first and second runners-up respectively.

In the women's category, Manipur women police clinched the team title while ITBT and SSB teams were declared as first and second runners-up

respectively. Later, State Home Minister, Y Patton, gave away prizes to the winners.

"Overall all the performances are very good. The archers from all the teams played very well and the competition was very successful one. Last year champion was BSF but this year CRPF team won the tournament so, it is very competitive tournament. Hope, next time the competition will go up," said Bendang Lemtur, (IPS) IG and Organizing Secretary.

"I feel very good that we won the championship. We tried our best. Even the weather was good though it was raining in between the match but we gave our best and we won the trophy so I'm very happy and I want to thank to Nagaland police and the people of

Nagaland for organizing such event," said a player, CRPF team.

Meanwhile, the 6th edition of SATball running tournament was recently concluded in Dimapur.

Altogether, 14 sporting clubs participated in the three-day long tournament.

SATball is played by 5 players in each team without a goal keeper. The tournament was organized by Emporia Sporting Club supported by Nagaland SATball Association, Dimapur.

The Martyans FC emerged winners while Black Stars finished second.

"I want to encourage our youngsters who have participated in the tournament to have a bright future so that they will be able to go for national and international tournament and that

will be a good opportunity for all of us," said Mong, Player, Martyans FC. "We are the runners up but it's not about winning or losing but it is about participation and we will try our level best to win next year. SATball is very enjoyable and energetic game. We lost it but it does not mean we will stop playing we will give our best," said Meye, Player, Black Stars team.

Organizing such events will definitely help the local players to compete at the national and international levels.

Afghan national detained in Pathankot

ANI Amritsar, Jan. 29: An Afghan national has been detained at the Pathankot railway station today over visa validity issues.

The 25-year-old was on his way from Srinagar when he had an altercation with a passenger over travelling without a ticket.

The police was called after the scuffle broke out and the man was handed over to the police, where after questioning he revealed that he was from Kabul. The man came to India in 2013 and doubts remain over the validity of his Visa.

Bangladesh envoy says ties with India at zenith

ANI Agartala, Jan. 29: Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Muazzem Ali, who is on a three-day visit to Tripura, has said that ties with India are presently the best ever between the two nations, as a new platform based on mutual trust and confidence is in place to facilitate this.

Interacting with media at the Agartala Press Club here, Ali said both governments need to explore new project opportunities for mutual

benefit.

The Bangladesh envoy said, "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said she would show zero tolerance as far as terrorism is concerned, and she has kept her promise. She has not allowed any terrorist organisation to operate from Bangladesh. She has even handed over terrorists who have taken shelter in our place in the past. There has been a similar response from the Indian side as well. Nevertheless, the two borders are not very easily accessible, so, we

have to remain vigilant on both sides of the border so that these kinds of activities do not recur in the future."

"And, you have seen how sometimes some of the terrorist organisations have taken shelter also in India. They have been involved in some much publicised blasts and all these. So, we would like both sides to be more vigilant so that the basic principal on which we are building up our compromise, cooperation and future growth should not be disturbed," he added.

Contd. from previous issue

The Indo-Naga conflict: a question of internal Indian ethnic conflict or a conflict between two nations?

(Write up produced here is the lecture delivered at the Centre for Manipur Studies by Kaka D. Iralu)

Man held with contraband

PTI Maharajganj (UP), Jan 29: Sashstra Seema Bal has arrested a 54-year-old man along the Indo-Nepal border for allegedly possessing over 50 gm of smack.

Banwari Lal, hailing from Maharajganj, was arrested from Sonauli checkpoint yesterday night and the contraband worth Rs 10 lakh in the international market, was recovered from him. SSB Commandant KS Bankhoshi said here today.

Another member of the gang managed to escape and a hunt is on to nab him, Bankhoshi said.

Lal has been booked under the NDPS Act and investigation is on in the matter.

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THE NAGA LANDS AND THE NAGA RIGHTS

No nation on earth, no individual in human history has come into existence without a concrete geographical reference point. This is to say no nation on earth, no individual in the world has fallen into earth from outer space. All political histories of every nation have their origin from some concrete geographical lands. Within the boundaries of this geographical land the people of the land develop their national identity, their cultural identity and their political identity. The inhabitants of the land call the land their land. The Nagas, like any other nations on earth, call their geographical land Nagaland. Corresponding to this fact, there is a geographical land called Britain for the British, a geographical Russia for the Russians and a geographical India for the Indians. The Nagas on their part are not covetous of even an inch of anybody else's lands.

But by a tragic twist of history, Nagaland in the 20th century was severed in two through a treacherous betrayal by the British Government. Burma was gifted with half, and the other half fell under Indian dominion. Those areas that fell under Indian territory were further subdivided into four fragments, namely - Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Thus, within the Indian territory, large chunks of Naga lands and Naga people were put into three other states against the wishes of the Nagas. This was done to reduce the Naga political issue to the smallest possible geographical area. The present Indian State of Nagaland is comprised of only 16,57 sq. kms with a population of hardly over two million people. However, in actual fact, the greater

Nagaland including those areas in Myanmar is comprised of over 1,20,000 sq. kms. This area is located at 25° 60' and 27° 40' latitude North of equator and between the longitudinal lines 93° 20' E and 95° 15' E. The total population of the entire Naga people of the actual Nagaland would be about four million. Thus, the actual Naga territory for which all Nagas have been fighting for, for all these fifty years is almost five times the size of Israel with a population of about four million people. Throughout their history the Nagas had defended their lands against foreign invaders and aggressors. As far as her relationship with her neighbour India is concerned, prior to 1947, not to talk of Indian Kings or Princes having ruled the Nagas, no Indian King or Prince had ever even set foot on Naga territories. Also, prior to 1947, Nagas had no affinity with India whether racially, historically, politically, culturally, religiously or any other wise. Therefore Nagaland is not part of Indian territory neither are Nagas Indians.

Another point to be noted in this connection is that since all Naga territories never came under British suzerainty, the British had absolutely no right to hand over such territories to India or Burma after their departure from their South Asian empire in 1947. Similarly, India or Burma also has absolutely no legal right to claim these territories as their territories.

Even Jawaharlal Nehru understood this fact very clearly. On August 19, 1946, in connection with the proposed British Crown Colony plan, he described the Naga territories as:

The tribal areas are defined as being those long frontiers of India which are neither part of India nor Burma, nor of Indian States nor of any

foreign power.

(Quoted from Phizo's letter to Rajiv Gandhi, May 10, 1986, p. 6)

How these long stretches of frontiers (which were neither Burmese nor Indian territories) could simply disappear into India and Burma after 1947 is the issue that has caused the fifty four year Indo-Naga war. What Nagas have been asserting and fighting for, for fifty years is exactly what Nehru had described. When we say we are Nagas and not Indians, we also mean we are neither Burmese nor Russians nor Africans; for our people and our land had never belonged to India or Burma or any "other foreign power."

As far as the Nagas under Indian dominion are concerned, Nagaland is not in India, but India is presently in Nagaland by invasion and subjugation. All these historical and political facts showing that Nagas were not Indians and would not join the Indian Union were conveyed to India, Britain and the world by the Nagas long before the emergence of the present Indian Union in 1947. Also when India and Britain did not take notice of these communications, the Nagas declared their independence on 1st August 1947 - one day prior to India's declaration of her own independence.

The Nagas have been waging a war of self-defence for their geographical land for the past fifty-four years with India and Myanmar. This is because this land is their land and they want to live in their land without fear or domination as free citizens of a free country. The Nagas are fighting for their lands because they have no other lands on the whole face of the earth besides these 1,20,000 sq. kms. Therefore the question of surrender or retreat or migration to another country does not

arise simply because they have no other land on the whole face of this planet earth. To retreat or run away from their land and occupy another land would be to claim other people's land as their own. Hence the Nagas have no alternative but to stand and fight, even if to do so, could mean sure death. They have been fighting against India and Myanmar with courage born of desperation and against overwhelming odds for half a century.

Nagas not secessionists:

Contrary to India's allegations, the Nagas neither consider it criminal nor their actions unlawful activities when they fight in self-defence for their sovereignty. The Nagas had never voluntarily joined the Indian Union when it was offered to them prior to 1947. Their acts of self-defence are therefore not acts of secession. They are also neither guilty of breaking any Indian laws and thus deserving to be branded as perpetrators of unlawful activities by the Indian Government. As far as the Nagas are concerned the defence of their motherland is a moral and political duty. They owe it to themselves and their children and all future generations of Nagas to defend their God apportioned land with all their strength and might.

For them not to do so is tantamount to reducing themselves to refugees without a country to call as their own.

Hence they can never surrender their lands to India or Myanmar or any other nations on earth. India on her part must understand that Nagas are not secessionists or terrorists. The Nagas have absolutely no ill intentions of trying to destabilise India or create any problems for India. On their part they want to live in Peace with India as the most friendly neighbour.

(Concluded)