

Editorial

Imphal, Wednesday, July 13, 2016

For the future

The greatest tragedy of our society, as it turned out, is the inconceivable reluctance to embrace change and accept the realities of life. What made it worse is the fact that there is an ever-present expectant air of anarchistic freedom. Perhaps, the public have got so attuned to the protracted disturbances and social unrest at a subconscious level that we have now come to accept these frequent social unrest and flare-ups as a way of life. There is no other plausible explanation for the innumerable acts of wanton violence and irrational destruction which apparently provides sadistic pleasures to the rapidly growing rank of perpetrators. The underlying current of uncertainty and uneasiness that has pervaded our society, even at the best of times, speaks more for the situation we all have come to experience and abhor, but have been forced to endure. One of the most affected section of the society during the present social flare-up, or any social unrest for that matter, has been the student community. One would be hard pressed to come up with a single year without the disturbances and interruptions in their academic activities. With such protracted disruptions year after year, do we now have the right to expect the students to perform to their optimum and to compete with students from the rest of the country and come up trumps? Don't we at least owe them the responsibility to shield and protect them from influences and disruptions which take them away from their main priorities to acquire and assimilate knowledge which will help them achieve their dreams and help in changing the society for the better? We need to provide them an atmosphere free of apprehensions and tensions- an ambience conducive to development of knowledge and progressive thinking. Students, especially those who are below the graduation level should not be made to indulge in agitations and protests, except under extreme circumstances when absolutely required. We have been increasingly witnessing the participation of very young students, some as young as primary level, either voluntarily or through coercion, in various demonstrations, protests and agitations. They need to be made to understand their priorities and be provided with enough space and support to realize their full potential. And contrary to popular argument, home schooling in the state is a concept whose time is yet to come. For now, schools remain the only practical option for imparting knowledge and teaching social interaction skills to the impressionable young minds. While it was announced that there is no objection or opposition to reopening of schools by any group, organizations or students' bodies, yet the school authorities are wary of resuming classes, lest some self-proclaimed crusaders of the people comes along and mete out instant justice which would invariably involve vandalizing and destroying the school properties. Meanwhile, the students are losing out on valuable time and opportunities. It would be the most prudent move for us all if we can ensure a disturbance-free atmosphere for the students in the state. We owe that much to ourselves and to the future of the state.

CBI ex-chief tried to influence probe into coal scam, says Supreme Court panel

New Delhi, July 13: In a vindication of dna's expose on former CBI director Ranjit Sinha, the Supreme Court appointed panel on Tuesday held that Ranjit Sinha's 2 Janpath diary is 'genuine', and that Sinha prima facie did try to influence investigations in coal blocks allocation scam. The 2 Janpath diary, as reported by dna first on September 2, 2014, maintains details of visitors at his residence. Among the visitors were top officials of the Anil Dhurubhai Ambani Group (ADAG), corporate honchos, a few politicians and several accused in coal scams. Following dna report, the Supreme Court had directed Sinha not to interfere and recuse himself from the 2G scam case. The panel or Special Investigating Team (SIT) headed by CBI former special director ML Sharma had submitted a 205-page report in a sealed cover before the three-judge

special bench led by Justice Madan B Lokur in April 2016. Attorney general (AG) Mukul Rohatgi was given the job to assess the report and inform the Supreme Court whether it should be made public. Rohatgi informed the court on Tuesday that the panel holds Sinha's diary genuine and indicates that Sinha tried to influence the investigation by meeting some high-profile accused in the coal scam. Rohatgi, however, said further evidence is required to determine correctness of entries in the visitors' diary in the court of law. "Unless there is evidence in court of law which says that the visitor's register is genuine, we may not be able to proceed in the matter," Rohatgi added. Taking note of the AG's submission on the panel's findings, the special bench said that it would pass the order on the future course of action against Sinha. Rohatgi, however, did not disclose content of the report.

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Discrimination of a "Pakka Indian"

By : Haobam Shyamsunder

Awarded the best airport in central Asia and the best airport staff in central Asia at the world airport awards 2015 Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi also stood first in the new rankings for 2015 airport service quality (ASQ) Awards by Airports Council International. So many laurels of IGI airport and yet an immigration officer at the IGI airport let down the prestigious airport as he harassed and humiliated Monika Khangembam from Manipur. Fed up and tired, Monika posted the incident on her facebook page: "The bloody racist immigration desk is at it again! Looks at my passport and says, "Indian to nahi lagti ho". I get that all the time so don't react much to it but then he goes on, "Pakka Indian ho?" with a smirk. I still don't react. What really got me was when he said "See...you yourself need to know your Indianness. How many states are there in India?" The lady at the next counter is giggling. I tell him I am really running late. He goes on "nahi nahi bolo bolo" I helplessly answer him as he is not proceeding with the process. And then he

carries on "kaha se ho". I said from Manipur and he is like, "so tell me how many states Manipur shares borders with, name them". I totally lose it and I look away and roll my eyes and don't answer. And he is still insisting me to answer. This moron has all the time to ask all this. I said I was really getting late and he goes like, "aircraft aapko chodke kahi nahi ja rahi. Aaram se jawab do". What a bully and never felt so humiliated. It was like it was his mission to make me realise my "Indianness" and he thought he was being funny. I was running late and I felt I was giving in to the bully. Spoilt my night. This incident could have happened to anyone from the north eastern part of India, where physical features have mongoloid traits and are distinctively dissimilar from the mainland Indians. There have been many incidents in the past where people from northeast were under attack, tortured, beaten up and even murdered on numerous occasions every year not only in the capital Delhi but also in other parts of India. The immigration officer could have verified if Monika's passport was

fake by using passport reader, if the passport check turned out to be authentic, then there would be no doubt on the nationality of the holder of the passport issued by the respective governments. It does not necessarily arise that one has to know either English or Hindi to get through immigration officers to go to a foreign country. Many talented cultural troupes has gone and performed abroad. Does it mean any individual of the team may be deferred travel merely on the grounds of suspicion that the person does not know Hindi or English and could not answer questions asked by the immigration officer at the departure terminal? What questions would be asked by the immigration officer to the Sadarjis, Chinese, Tamils, Keralites and Japanese who have become citizen of the United States when they visit India? Would he still ask "So tell me how many states your state shares borders with, name them?" just because they don't look like an American citizen? How, according to the immigration officer should a "pakka Indian" or a "pakka American" look like?

The sheer futility of police officers refraining to take FIRs in police stations is another grievance of the people from northeast which is happening every now and then. This creates a spirit of distrust, panic and irrational abhorrence against the mainland people as well as the police who should be the protector. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj tweeted "Monika Khangembam - I am sorry to know this. Immigration is not with me. I will speak to my senior colleague Shri @rajnathsingh ji to sensitise immigration officer at airport" on Sunday, 10th of July. Scrolling through the tweets of Sushma Swaraj, she seems to be a helping hand on a lot of occasions but which ministry is going to handle the Monika case? There still might have been many similar incidents of pestering which went unnoticed, some not courageous enough like Monika Khangembam or due to fear of social stigma or some other reasons not known. Let everyone come out daringly fight it out and root out this "Pakka Indian", "Alienation" and "Discrimination" faced by the people of Northeast.

National & International News

Lok Sabha Speaker to hold all party meet on July 17

ANI New Delhi, July 13: Ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament beginning July 18, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan will preside over an all party meeting on July 17 at 6.30 p.m. The all-party meeting assumes significance in the wake of the

NDA government's keen desire to ensure the passage of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill to create a common national market. The passage of this Bill has been delayed owing strident objections from the opposition over certain clauses which it feels require amendment. Once adopted, the GST will

dramatically alter India's indirect tax structure by replacing a string of central and local levies such as excise duty, value added tax and octroi into a single unified tax and stitch together a common national market. If Parliament fails to pass the Bill in this session, it will further delay the process of getting it

ratified in at least half of the state assemblies. Meanwhile, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Ananth Kumar, Ministers of State for Parliamentary Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and S. S. Ahluwalia will preside over a meeting of secretaries of all ministries at Parliament House today.

Curfew remains in force, toll in Kashmir violence climbs to 34

PTI Srinagar, July 13: Curfew remained in force in some parts of Kashmir Valley, including Pampore and Kupwara towns, while restrictions on movement of people were imposed in the rest of the Valley today as the death toll in clashes between protestors and security forces climbed to 34. Authorities confirmed death of seven more persons in the clashes that erupted Friday evening following killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani in an encounter. "The death toll now is 34 including

a policeman who was killed in mob violence. It also includes one civilian who succumbed to injuries at SKIMS Hospital this morning," a police official said. Mushtaq Ahmad Dar was injured on Saturday at Khudwani in Kulgam district and succumbed this morning. He said most of the deaths had occurred on Saturday when mobs attacked police and other security installations in south Kashmir but all the deaths could not be accounted for as the situation did not allow the law enforcing agencies to gather information.

Yesterday, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Asgar Samoon had said the civilian death toll in the clashes was 22. According to the latest figures available, most deaths have taken place in Anantnag district (16) followed by Kulgam (eight), Shopian (five), Pulwama (three), Srinagar and Kupwara (one each). Curfew continued in some parts of the Valley including Pampore town, Kupwara town and Anantnag while restrictions on movement of people were imposed in rest of the Valley, the official said. Normal life remained affected for

the fifth consecutive day today due to a strike called by separatist groups to protest the civilian killings in the clashes with security forces. Shops and business establishments remained closed while public and private transport remained off roads due to the strike. Mobile Internet and train services are still suspended while mobile telephony has been snapped in Kupwara area following the death of a youth during protests yesterday. Mobile telephony is partially suspended in south Kashmir's four districts.

Centre sets up task force to identify cross border crimes

PTI New Delhi, July 13: In the wake of recent terror attack in Bangladesh, the Centre tonight set up a task force comprising senior officers of border states and paramilitary forces to identify cross border crimes along Indo-Bangladesh border. The task force will be headed by DGP, West Bengal with ADG(Border), Assam and IGS of North Bengal, South Bengal and Guwahati Frontier of BSF as its members. The body has been created to strengthen the system at State level to identify the crime syndicate involved in Cross Border Crimes and to take action against such syndicates. The task force will submit its report within one month, a Home Ministry spokesperson said. As per the agreed Institutional Mechanism, DGPs of all bordering States will hold monthly meetings with IGS of BSFs in charge of that State regularly for effective coordination at State level to enhance security along the Indo-Bangladesh Border (IBB). This forum will ensure that FIRs are lodged by State police based on the complaints filed by BSF leading to arrest, investigation, charge sheet and conviction in border crimes. The decision has been taken at a high-level meeting convened by Ministry of Home Affairs which was attended by senior officials of five

bordering States on Indo-Bangladesh Border - Assam, West Bengal, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram. The meeting was chaired by Sushel Kumar, Secretary (Border Management). Home Secretary, Rajiv Mehriishi also gave his guidance to the States towards the end of the meeting. Secretary (BM) reviewed the situation in the light of heightened threat perception of infiltration. Issues of concern relating to the civil and police administration

discussed in the meeting included non-registration of FIRs in some States, arrest and investigation, charge sheet and conviction in border crimes, problem of forged identity cards, cattle smuggling, cultivation of poppy in border areas, cross border terrorism and smuggling. The issues related to fencing of border were also discussed. Data of Apprehension of Cross Border Criminals being maintained by BSF will be shared with State Police of West Bengal, Assam,

Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram to develop Institutional Mechanism for tracking of follow up action on such criminals, the spokesperson said. In order to mitigate the problem of Indian villages located between fence and border and to enhance security along IBB, it was decided that fence will be shifted towards the zero line to bring Indian villages within the fence. The State Governments were asked to expedite land acquisition for Border Infrastructure works. expected to arrive later from Andria. Passengers described being thrown forward violently at the moment of impact, and then trying to free themselves from the tangle of metal, body parts and debris in the scorching midday sun. "I don't know what happened, it all happened so quickly. I don't know," one woman, eight months pregnant, told The Associated Press. "I saw my mother on the ground, my father and my sister bleeding. I don't know, I don't know, even I don't know." One elderly couple described their ordeal to local television Telesvea. The man, his head covered in gauze, said he was knocked to the ground, while his wife, still barefoot, described how she came across body parts as she freed him.