

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, July 9, 2016

AFSPA - an aberration

The Supreme Court in a landmark observation on Friday said that indefinite deployment of armed forces in the name of restoring normalcy under AFSPA "would mock at our democratic process", apart from symbolising a failure of the civil administration and the armed forces. The court also said that "ordinarily our armed forces should not be used against our countrymen and women" and that "every person carrying a weapon in a disturbed area cannot be labelled a militant or terrorist or insurgent" and be killed without any inquiry. Raising serious questions on deployment of security forces in Manipur under the AFSPA since 1958, a bench of Justice Madan B Lokur and Justice Uday U Lalit reminded the central and state governments that the purpose behind deployment of armed forces was to ensure normalcy would be restored within a reasonable period. Indeed, like the ancient evils of numerous mythologies that can never be completely defeated, only subdued for a brief spell before rising up to create upheaval and chaos, a very recent and man-made phenomenon that has been the bane of people living in the periphery of this great nation, a sort of mark that points out to the armed forces of their freedom to engage such people in any manner they deem appropriate- even to the point of shooting down anyone from the region of The North East India and the States of Jammu and Kashmir in particular on the slightest suspicion of being an armed revolutionary, without any consideration to the right to representation and right to life which the constitution granted to every citizen of India, is once again raring up its ugly head, threatening to claim more lives and unsettle the already volatile society further. The ominous sounding and aptly named Armed Forces Special Powers Act. (AFSPA) 1958, described as an archaic, irrelevant and draconian law that only serves to shield the armed forces personnel from the beastly crimes and atrocities perpetrated in the name of protecting the Country. An essential requisite for a state or a region to come under the purview of AFSPA is for the region to be declared a "disturbed area". A very heartening development in the light of the present situation in the state is the implied indication of the representatives of the people in their collective decision to put the onus of declaring the "disturbed" status of the state squarely on the shoulder of the Chief Minister. It should not be a difficult decision, given the fact that the O Ibbi led present Government haven't lost none of the opportunities to highlight the improvements in the law and order situation in the state- or will those words prove to be mere lip service, empty rhetoric to buy time and delay the inevitable that must surely be coming- the price for deceiving the trust and respect of the gullible yet unforgiving public? Furthermore, a comparative study of the law and order situation of the Maoist nexals dominated areas of Bihar, Chattisgarh, West Bengal and Odisha with that of our State in the present scenario would surely elicit the responsive question of what has been preventing the central Government- or the respective State Governments from declaring these States as "disturbed areas"? The ground situation in these areas is far worse than in our present State, yet the State Governments still haven't even considered discussing the "disturbed area" issue- or is it a deliberate slight from the Centre- a veiled message of the dual yardsticks and double standards it has been adopting on matters of governance and appraisals? The Disturbed area tag has been removed from parts of the state capital for a while now- has the law and order situation worsened for it? The public feels the opposite. The result of the bold and risky step taken by the Chief Minister has paid off. This also points to a rather unusual revelation- problems of terrorism/ armed reactionaries/ revolutionaries/ extortions/fake encounters/ extrajudicial killings and even Army brutalities decreased when the ruling Government tightens the reigns of governance and accountability to the public. The equation worked out as expected. The ball is in the court of Ibbi. How he plays determines the future- for the people of this state, for himself and for the Party.

4 killed during demolition drive in Meerut

Meerut, July 9: Four persons were killed today after they were buried under the debris of an "illegal" multi-storey building in Meerut cantonment area as it was being demolished by civil authorities this morning, officials said.

Bungalow No 210, was demolished by the Cantonment Board authorities during an anti-encroachment drive

during which a few people, who apparently were still in the building, were buried under the rubble. Four of them died while three were injured. They have been admitted to a hospital, Meerut Division Commissioner, Alok Sinha said. Rescue operation is underway as at least six other persons are feared trapped under the debris.

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National & International News

Hizb poster boy killed in encounter

PTI Srinagar, July 8: In a big blow to militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, Hizbul Mujahideen's 21-year-old poster boy Burhan Muzafar Wani was shot dead today by security forces along with two of his accomplices in Kokernag area, 83 km from here. The killing of Burhan, son of a headmaster and a school dropout, was described by Director General of J and K Police K Rajendra as a major success for the security forces because he was allegedly instrumental in brainwashing many local boys to take up the gun. "Yes," was Rajendra's cryptic reply to a question whether Burhan was killed in an encounter with security personnel. Immediately after the news of Burhan's death spread, pro-Pakistan slogans were heard in downtown Srinagar with people coming out on the roads and burning tyres. Curfew

like restrictions were imposed in the area tonight. Giving details, highly-placed sources in the state government said the encounter followed a pinpointed information received about the presence of three highly-trained militants in Bumdoora village at Kokernag in South Kashmir. Police parties swung into action and laid an outer cordon along with army and moved into the village after sealing every exit point, they said, adding after a brief resistance by locals who resorted to stone pelting, the security forces moved in at 3 PM. The security forces had gathered information about the presence of one Hizbul Mujahideen militant Sartaz raising hopes that Burhan may also be present as earlier intelligence inputs suggested that both used to move together. At around 6.15 PM, the encounter

ended and scenes of jubilation among the security forces were witnessed after it was found that Burhan, who shot to fame with series of videos and pictures on social networking sites asking youths to join militancy, was among the three dead, the sources said. A resident of Tral, in the outskirts of Srinagar city, Burhan carried a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh on his head while Sartaz, who was a recycled terrorist, was involved in many terror related incidents. The identity of the third militant was yet to be established. Burhan's last video had appeared on the social network after the killing of three policemen at Anantnag in South Kashmir last month in which he had threatened to carry out more attacks. Burhan is believed to have taken to the gun to avenge his elder brother's humiliation by the

security forces who made him do squats after picking him up apparently without any basis. Several images of Burhan and posts extolling him were uploaded on social networking sites like Facebook which the security agencies had got removed but that did not dent his popularity. Considered as a 'Poster Boy' of Hizbul Mujahideen terror group for wooing Kashmiri youths to militancy, Burhan had joined the militant outfit in 2010 when he was just 15 years of age. He introduced a new wave of tech-savvy militants who used social media platform to find recruits and influence Kashmiri youth. Pro-Pakistan Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani has given a call for bandh tomorrow as security agencies were preparing for a law and order situation which may arise in the Valley especially in his hometown Tral.

Pakistan, Afghanistan border peace a priority: Army Chief

ANI Peshawar, July 9: Asserting that peace and stability along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border is the top priority of Pakistan military, Army Chief General Raheel Sharif said this is a commitment. General Raheel made the statement on a visit to the forward lines in North and South Waziristan agencies Eid-ul-Fitr. "Border management and dignified

repatriation of Afghan refugees are important enablers for lasting peace," the Express Tribune quoted him as saying. "Our efforts for peace in Afghanistan have been acknowledged while we are committed to facilitating the reconciliation process with sincerity, commitment and resolve. We expect Afghanistan's territory is not used

against Pakistan," he added. General Raheel said that Islamabad would not anyone to use its soil against Afghanistan. "As consolidation efforts go on and operational dividends are optimised for the Pak-Afghan border region, Pakistan will not allow anyone to use its soil against Afghanistan and the law enforcers would take concrete measures against violators," he

said. Highlighting that Pakistan and its army had paid a huge price in eliminating terrorists and restoring peace, he said the sacrifices will not go in vain. "We will not let these sacrifices go to waste.. With Fata cleared and terrorists being chased across the country, we are determined not to allow them to return and reverse our gains," he added.

At least 15 Kerala's youths go missing, families suspect IS links

Thiruvananthapuram, July 9: At least 15 youths from Kerala's Kasaragod and Palakkad districts who had travelled to the Middle East have gone missing for the last one month and their families suspect they may have joined the Islamic State. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has directed the police to launch a probe into the matter urgently, Kasaragod MP P Karunakaran said. The families of the youths, including a couple, have not heard from them for the past one month and fear that they have been radicalised after having gone to the Middle East for religious studies. Kasaragod District Panchayat member V P P Mustafa said that during Eid, the parents of two missing youths received 'Whatsapp' messages saying "we are not coming back. Here there is Divine Rule. You also should join us". "We have joined IS to fight US for attacking Muslims", read another

message, he said adding the veracity of the messages has to be checked. On being approached by the families, Karunakaran, Thrikaripur MLA M Rajagopalan and Mustafa informed the Chief Minister about the matter. Rajagopal told PTI that all those missing were below the age of 30 and highly qualified. "The Chief minister has asked police to launch a probe into the matter urgently," Karunakaran said today. He said the family members of the missing youths met him yesterday and brought the matter to his notice. Hakim, father of Hafesuddin who is among those missing from Kasaragod, told television channels that his son had left a month ago and there was no news from him. "If he returns as a good man, I will welcome him. If not, I do not want to see even his dead body," he said. Karunakaran said the family members

told him that the youths had left for Middle East a month ago stating that they were going for religious studies. But for the last one month, their families had no communication from them and so they were suspicious, he said.

The youths hail from Padna and Thrikaripur in Kasaragod district and Palakkad district. While 11 hail from Padna and Thrikaripur in the northernmost Kasaragod district of Kerala, others are from Palakkad district.

Villagers killed during combing operation in Odisha's Kandhamal

Kandhamal, July 9: In an unfortunate incident, five villagers, including three women and a baby, were reportedly killed during exchange of fire between CRPF personnel and Maoists near Gumudumaha village under Baliguda police limits in Odisha's Kandhamal district last night. Former Naib Sarpanch Kukal Dugal and a five-months-old child were among the deceased, reports said. According to sources, the incident took place during a

combing operation by the security forces. There was an exchange of fire between CRPF personnel and Maoists at Malapanga forest. The villagers who were going through a nearby road got killed in the firing, sources added. "A search operation is in progress after the firing incident. We are yet to receive detailed information about the matter. CRPF jawans have been deployed at the spot," said Kandhamal SP Pinak Mishra.

Contd. from previous issue

Manipur Education Policy, (A draft framework proposal)

8. Teaching of English as foreign Language : In this age of globalization and liberalization, every nation is looking towards teaching of English Language as foreign language. The European countries and countries like Japan and China have recently realized the need for teaching English as a foreign language. Too much dependence on native India's role in supplying largest human resource in the field of information technology to the foreign countries are mainly due to its education in English medium. Thus, the countries which were too much depended on mother tongue education has now turning towards teaching English as foreign language. In Manipur, even though English has been taught right from the pre school up to the university level, most of our student cannot communicate in English fluently. In one sense, they cannot communicate in native standard. It is generally accepted that a foreign language can be mastered in 2/3 years. Thus it is clear that the teaching of English language in Manipur is not as a foreign language but as a subject. Moreover, the

teaching is based on textual, grammar and translation method leaving the speaking and listening part. Learning of a foreign language without capability of speaking is useless. The internationally accepted level of understanding a foreign language is native standard. To achieve the native standard, teaching of English should be based on linguistic point of view and should be stressed on speaking and listening. The Board of Secondary Education, Manipur knowing this facts, introduced the speaking and listening course in English in classes I and II. However, as the course were introduced as non credit course, school authorities are not taking much interest in it. It is proposed that Manipur as foreign language with due emphasis in linguistics and speaking and listening. In the South East Asian countries, there is heavy demand for English Language teachers as these countries are culturally apart from English culture. Moreover, the British and Americans are not interested in teaching English in this region

because of the cultural gap and low employed in this region. Moreover, if good institutes for teaching English language are established, Manipur will be an educational hub in the South East Asian region. 9. Appointment of Teachers : Quality of good teachers are the parameter for measuring standard of education in a state. A good educational system will not work unless, there are good and qualified teachers. Teachers are role models of the students who are authority in their subject area and who adore the teaching profession as an art and living. In recent years after the coming of the SSA and RMSA, the appointment of teachers by merit has somehow enabled appointment of good teachers in the state. In most of the countries of the world, nation wide selection test for teachers and giving of teacher ship certificate is done far and wide. The recent system of Teachers Eligibility Test conducted by the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur is encouraging but it will be more appropriate if a test for practice teaching is conducted for those selected in the written part. This will

By : Ph. Nandakumar Sharma, Joint Secretary, Board of Secondary Education Manipur

enable to judge the classroom teaching ability of the candidate. There are good students who are excellent in theory by failed in practice class room teaching. Teaching is an art which will motivate the student to learn. It is suggested that the Government may institute a Selection Commission for Teachers specially designed for the purpose. Last but not the least, as State Level Educational Advisory Board (EAB) may be constituted to advice the Education Minister and the Government on the issues of education from time to time. Generally, curriculum and syllabus are reviewed every five years and update to suit the changing scenario of the society and world around us. The EAB will be a permanent body which will look into the changes and report to the Government. Members may be selected from amongst the Academician, educationist and other fields.