

Editorial

Imphal, Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Need for shift in focus

The political drama that started weeks before the election of Imphal Municipal Corporation is evidently far from over even days after the declaration of results. A scuffle over the venue for the election of Mayor and deputy has ensued which presents every possibility of becoming yet another major political debacle given the increasingly evident display of vindictiveness of the present ruling party as well as the aura of growing strength and invincibility demonstrated by the BJP which is emerging as a strong contender to the seats of power of the state given the support from its parent national party at the helm of affairs at the centre. While the political parties as well as the opinionated public gets embroiled in the melee, the real purpose of the election seem to be the least of the bother for everyone. So what does a councillor do? For starters, Councillors have a number of different roles that must incorporate the interests of the whole municipality and those of their constituents. They play a vital leadership role in creating and implementing their community's vision, strategic direction and values. While the Local Government Act 1989 doesn't specify roles for individual councillors, it does state that they must adhere to particular standards of good conduct. It also states that their legal authority as councillors only exists when they are participating, as a member of the council, in a formal council meeting. Significantly, outside of the council meeting individual councillors have no such authority. As part of the council or Corporation as the case may be, councillors guide the development of local policies, set service standards and priorities, and monitor the performance of the organisation. Councillors are accountable to both the community and to their own constituents. As members of council, where the focus is necessarily on governing in the best interests of the entire municipality, councillors are accountable in multiple ways. These include acting in their roles as legislators, policy makers, strategists and financial overseers. They also have to represent their constituents on a wide range of issues. In doing so, Councillors must obey the law, including the principle of natural justice. Councillors must also deal with a range of requests and complaints from their constituents which they need to find ways to deal with, preferably in conjunction with the administration. The public should be aware of the responsibilities and roles of councillors and place strong pressures on them to act in their representative roles - that is, to represent their constituents' views in the decision-making process. Mediation has its own set of pressures, requirements and responsibilities, as does the administrative role as a member of the Responsible Authority. Councillors must be aware of and are clear about the particular role they are undertaking at any point in time - for the councillors, the administration and the community. The public should also provide feedback, interact and be aware of the activities of the Councillors so that a positive and productive relationship is fostered which can also reduce misunderstandings and frustration for everyone.

On the 3 Bill and the present imbroglio

By - T. Hangkhanpau, Ex-Minister, Govt. of Manipur

The present imbroglio pertaining to the 3 unpopular Bills passed fetter hobble by the Manipur Legislative Assembly in August, 2015 was undoubtedly conceived for the protection and prosperity of Manipur and its people. However, it turns into a bond of contention among groups of its people simply due to miscarriages in its passing and subsequent mishandling of its repercussions. The Governor could have assented it, had it not been protested by groups of people from within the state itself. Now, the fate of these bills rests upon the people of Manipur whether we need the bills seeing a new light with certain amendments or allow it to remain contentious. In my humble opinion, in order to give a fresh breathe to the 3 bills, people of Manipur must bring a change of hands (new hands) to deal with it and in fact, in all probability, a government without these present MLAs who tried to enact a very good law by be-fooling



its people and passed it by coercion has no moral right (anymore) to continue to govern the state and it's people. The emotional and geographical integrity of Manipur is put under threat by the present gov't's inept handling of the 3 bills issues right from its conception up-till it's submission to the Governor rather dangerously than the several non gov. actors purportedly yearning to slice it. The Dy. CM claimed to have met all ex-CMs including

Rishang Keishing. Out of this contention a question automatically emerges as to what group of people these ex-CMs represent. Will they help in bringing a solution in case if there's any untoward eventuality as it is now. Have they not ever consulted valley based CSOs like UCM, AMUCO, HERRICONS etc. And also, Have they not ever equally consulted hill based CSOs like KIM, UNC, ZC atleast on the eve of tabling it in the House? I know the gov't had a good

consultation of Legal experts from within and without the gov't. But, they forgot to consult the more undeniable important several CSOs of both the hill and valley. As such the stumbling block in all respects emanates from the masses whose immediate window for ventilating their angers is their respective CSOs.

Therefore, I would like to now place it before the people of Manipur that this Gov't under the leadership of Mr. O. Ibobi Singh has completely lost its credibility. So long as his leadership persists, there can't be a suitable venue created wherein all the concerned stakeholders feel free to come out to meet, to sit and to mingle with for finding an amicable solution first for according a hon'ble funeral to the 9 martyrs. Secondly, the core issue with the incumbent Leadership declaring an Assurance by laying his hands on the corpses that justice will be accorded to all concerned stakeholders or vice-versa.

National & International News

Mizoram govt order CBI probe into gold bar dacoity case

PTI Aizawl, June 15: Mizoram government has given formal consent to CBI investigation into the robbery of smuggled gold bars worth Rs 14.5 crore allegedly by Assam Rifles personnel and others near here on December 14 last. The notification in this regard was issued last evening, officials said today. The dacoity case, allegedly involving

suspended Commandant of the 39th Assam Rifles, eight other AR personnel and four civilians, was handed over to the CBI as the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the state police probing it faced various problems. The SIT officials faced problems like lack of modern equipment, involvement of Army officials and people outside the state and country, Home Minister R Lalzirliana said.

A vehicle carrying 52 smuggled gold bars worth Rs 14.5 crore was waylaid at the outskirts of Aizawl on December 14 by suspected personnel of the Assam Rifles who fled with the booty. The gold bars were concealed in the gearbox of the car. The owner and driver of the vehicle C Lalnunfela lodged an FIR on April 21 following which a case was registered at Kulikawn Police Station in Aizawl.

Lalzirliana said the SIT did a commendable job by arresting 13 accused including Colonel Singh, eight AR men and four civilians in connection with the case. "Apart from the problems being faced by the SIT in the investigation, rumours of highly-placed people getting involved in the case and also Col Singh's refusal to cooperate forced us to hand over the case to the CBI," he said.

Mobile Internet Services Suspended in Jammu

PTI Jammu, June 15: Mobile Internet services were Wednesday suspended in Jammu following protests in parts of the city after an ancient temple was allegedly desecrated by a "mentally disturbed" person. According to police officials, an ancient temple situated in Roop

Nagar area of Jammu was vandalised yesterday which led to protests across the city. "As a precautionary measure, we have decided to suspend mobile Internet services till the situation returns to normal", Deputy Commissioner (DC) Jammu, Simrandeep Singh told PTI. Singh said top police and civil

officials have been monitoring the situation since last night and the decision to suspend the mobile Internet services was taken to stop any further flare-up of the situation. He said if the situation remains normal, the suspension of mobile Internet services would be revoked in the evening. Adequate police deployment has

been made to thwart any untoward incident. Protestors had last night set three vehicles on fire and had resorted to stone pelting on police after the news of the desecration of the temple spread in the city. Police have arrested the man who allegedly vandalised the temple and have started the investigations.

One injured as bomb explodes in court complex??

PTI Kollam , June 15: A 61-year-old man was injured when a suspected country-made 'steel bomb' kept under an unused jeep exploded at the collectorate-cum-district courts complex here today. Sabu, hailing from nearby Kundara, was standing near the jeep belonging to the State Labour Department when the explosion occurred, police said. He has come to the court in connection with a case. Preliminary findings showed the explosion was caused by a 'steel bomb' (explosives packed in steel

pipe) planted beneath the parked vehicle, which was partially damaged under the impact of the blast, police said. Sabu suffered injury in his eye and nose and his condition was not serious, police said adding he had been hospitalised. Police suspect that explosive was deliberately placed under the jeep, which was not in use for a long time, so as to create a scare. Bomb squad and other forensic officials are at the spot. Police said they recovered gelatin sticks and 17 batteries and fuse materials from the jeep.

5 dead, 1 arrested in LA abandoned building fire

Los Angeles, June 15: A dispute between homeless people living together in an abandoned office building led one of them to set a fire that killed five others, authorities alleged. Just one man was declared dead during the fire on Monday night, but two more men and two women were found dead in the rubble by a search team with dogs yesterday afternoon, city fire officials said. The delay came because the badly damaged building was too unstable to search immediately, fire Chief Ralph Terrazas said. The bodies were found under a significant amount of debris. Before the new deaths were discovered, a man who also had been living there was arrested on suspicion of murder for starting the fire, said Billy Hayes, commanding

officer of the LAPD's Robbery-Homicide division. The man, Johnny Sanchez, 21, had been in a dispute with the others, Hayes said. "His intent was to light the fire with the hopes of killing these individuals, or at least one individual," Hayes said. Hayes said police will seek additional charges now that the death toll has grown. The four bodies, found on the upper floor, were being removed with a fire ladder truck. It took nearly 150 firefighters more than two hours to extinguish the fire in the green, two-story building that once was home to an acupuncture clinic. It is surrounded by strip malls and an apartment building in the Westlake District about a mile west of downtown LA.

The structure appeared to be singed and some of its windows were blown out. It did not appear seriously damaged from the outside, but the inside was badly burned and most of the roof was gone. Juan Galeas, 25, who lives near the building, said strangers who appeared to be in their 20s and 30s had frequented the abandoned building for the past two or three months. He said he saw five to 10 people moving about after midnight to do drugs. "Crystal meth," he said. "I've seen the little pipe they're using." Galeas said he was at work when the fire began but that his mother was at the window of their apartment, just off the alley. "She was right in the window so she saw the whole thing," Galeas

said. "She said it felt like an oven." There had been complaints of small alley fires next to the building recently, Terrazas said. Authorities had contacted the owner, who has sought a demolition permit for the building, about keeping people out. Interviews and evidence gathered Monday night pointed police to Sanchez as the suspect, Hayes said. He would not elaborate. Sanchez has a police record involving drugs and domestic violence, police said. He was being held on USD 1 million bail. It wasn't immediately clear if he has hired an attorney. Fire officials urged people to notify the city if they see unsecured abandoned buildings, and said firefighters would be making special checks in their districts to make sure other buildings are not similarly dangerous.

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Militant killed, jawan martyred in operation near LoC

Kupwara, June 15: In Jammu & Kashmir, a soldier was martyred and an unidentified militant was killed in an encounter in Machhil sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. The encounter broke out yesterday morning after the soldiers of 56 Rashtriya Rifles, who were manning the Line of Control, intercepted and challenged a militant group believed to had infiltrated into this side of Line of Control. The cordon and search operation by Army and State Police is in progress in Kupwara district. Four other soldiers sustained injuries in the day long gunfight

yesterday who were airlifted to Army's Srinagar hospital for treatment. Meanwhile, Army chief Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag arrived in Srinagar to oversee the security situation along the LoC and the hinterland. He had a meeting with Chief Minister in which overall security situation was discussed. The Kashmir valley has witnessed spurt in militant attacks in the recent days. Earlier this month, two policemen and three BSF troopers were shot dead by militants in two separate attacks in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

30 killed as bus falls into gorge in Meghalaya

Meghalaya, June 15: Thirty persons were killed and 10 others injured when the bus they were travelling in fell into a deep gorge at East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya. The mishap occurred near Sonapur temple at East Jaintia Hills at mid night, DGP, Meghalaya told AIR. Eleven bodies were recovered from the spot and injured passengers have been rushed to Civil Hospital, Jowai, he added. As per the information, the private bus running between Silchar-Guwahati skidded off the road and fell into a deep gorge last night. Meghalaya police, personnel of the 108 ambulance, BSF and the

locals have rushed to the spot to carry out rescue operations.

Jet Airways Bengaluru flight detects smoke, all passengers safe

ANI Bengaluru, June 15: A Jet Airways flight, which was going from Bangalore to Mangalore, returned to the Bangalore airport soon after departure on Wednesday as smoke was detected in the cabin. "Precautionary evacuation of guests and crew was carried out immediately on landing," a spokesperson of the Jet Airways flight 9W 2839 said in a statement.