

# Editorial

Imphal, Thursday, June 9, 2016

## An opportune breather

While the valley area of the state is just about starting to limp back towards what one could expectantly term as relative normalcy, the tribals who are against the alleged Anti-Tribal Bills have imposed a total shutdown on all tribal areas of Manipur - a vindictive move often carried out to counter any movement or process the tribal bodies contend are against their interest. The protracted tussle between the different communities residing in the state has rendered any progressive activities incomplete and untenable, not to mention the deepening social chasm that is threatening to tear the fragile social fabric beyond repair. The past few months in the buildup to the all political party delegation heading to the national capital to obtain assent of the three Bills from the president of India has been a chaotic and disturbing one, to put it mildly. Now that two of the Bills - The Manipur Land Reform and Land Revenue (Seventh Amendment) Bill 2015 and The Shops & Establishment (2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment) Bill 2015 are currently being examined by a panel of experts for reasonable conclusion, while the third and the real object of contention - The Protection of Manipur People Bill 2015 have been handed down without the assent of the President of India to be re-examined by legal & Constitutional experts for a new legislation to protect and preserve the indigenous people of Manipur looking into all aspects of Hill and Valley people of Manipur. While the opposing parties have their reservations about the whole outcome evident in the way both reacted to the development, the bewildered public is still at a loss as to what to make of it all. Has the announcement of a cease-work strike just after news of the outcome in the national capital mean that the whole movement and the months of agitations and relentless protests have been in vain? Or is the total shutdown of all tribal areas in Manipur a way of demonstrating the frustrations of the tribal people who would have nothing of the use of a device to safeguard the interests and the very future of the indigenous inhabitants of the land? If there has to be any sort of progress or hope of a breakthrough from the rut the much maligned and contended Bill have been stuck in, now is the perfect time, and the state government should abstain from politicizing the issue which will rake up more and unwanted distractions proving the whole process an exercise in futility, and more frighteningly, might possibly turn out to be that spark igniting the dormant social tensions and exploding into an uncontrollable intercommunal feud wiping out the very future for which the social movement is being launched. Now that the points of contention from both the opposing parties have been laid bare, the state government and the central government should take proactive steps to allay the fears of the people in the state and make earnest efforts to resolve the issue in the interest of the public which has been at the receiving end for as long as anyone cared to remember.

## 11 killed in Baghdad suicide attacks

**Baghdad, June 9:** At least 11 persons were killed and 40 others wounded on Thursday in two suicide bomb attacks in Iraq's capital Baghdad, police said. In one attack, a suicide bomber detonated his car bomb amid a big crowd near a cinema building in al-Jadida district, killing at least seven persons and injuring 30 others, Xinhua news agency reported. The other attack occurred when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive vest at the entrance of a military base in Taji area, killing four soldiers and wounding 10 others, police added.

## Two Maoist cadres, 6 other armed activists surrender

**Malkangiri, June 9:** Two hardcore Maoist cadres carrying rewards on their head and six other armed activists surrendered before the police in Odisha's Malkangiri district today. The eight, mostly from Kalimela area of the Naxal-hit district, were involved in Maoist activities for last few years and named in several cases. Superintendent of Police Mirabhanu Mohapatra said. The two Maoists were identified as Unga Madkani and Adma Kartami from Kalimela Police Station jurisdiction area. They carried Rs one lakh reward on head each, he said adding both were involved in a number of crimes including murder and blasting of panchayat buildings. The six other activists also took part in rebel activities but were not regular Maoist cadre, the SP said. The six were identified as Rama Urami, Padia Urami, Irma Madkani, Naka Madkani, Deba Sodi and Lachu Padiami, all aged 22-26 years. The ultras stated they decided to surrender as they realised that the red rebels had deviated from their ideology and indulged in activities detrimental to the interests of the poor and tribal, the SP said.

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# Manipur is heading for ethnic conflict

By Shiamchingthang Tungpo

As the peace-talk between Government of India (GoI) and NSCN-IM seems to be nearing its final solution, Manipur is burning up gradually. The Manipur Nagas are adamant to their demand of 'Alternative Arrangement'. Zo armed groups of the UPF demanded AHS. On the other hand, the Kukis came up with a fervent demand of "Kuki State" within Manipur, without breaking the present day boundaries of the State. This demand was spearheaded by the Kuki State Demand Committee (KSDC). Since the Central assured the Kuki groups to start political dialogue, KSDC has withdrawn the 'Public Blockade in Kuki Areas' recently. The Central assured the Kuki groups to start political dialogue, KSDC has withdrawn the 'Public Blockade in Kuki Areas' recently. The Nagas opposed the 'Kuki State Map' which was demanded by the Kukis in Manipur. According to media reports, the Nagas objected the Kuki's Map claiming it has fabricated the Naga inhabited areas into Kuki areas. Manipur State Cabinet held its meeting at the Chief Minister's Bungalow, in which the GoI with KNO, and Manipur Government and Central Government has been extended for one year. The cabinet meeting also decided the Disturbed Area status imposed in the State, excluding the seven assembly constituency of Imphal Municipal areas has also been extended for another one year. The cabinet meeting also decided the Disturbed Area status imposed in the State, excluding the seven

assembly constituency of Imphal Municipal areas has also been extended for another one year. The first SoO was signed between Army and constituents of UPF and KNO on August 1, 2005. Later it was agreed between Govt of India, Govt of Manipur and KNO and UPF to formalize this agreement and cease hostilities with effect from August 22, 2008. Since the Kuki militants came under this tripartite agreement, there was no hostility between the Indian Security Forces and Zoarmed groups. Cadres were kept in government's designated camps in Manipur. However, the political situation is worsening each passing day and moving towards a fierce battling in daily newspapers in the form of press statements by both the ethnic groups. KNO has criticized the NSCN (IM), saying, NSCN (IM) butchered 900 innocent Kukis and forcibly uprooted over 350 Kuki villages during the 1990s. Now the strong contention between the KNO and NSCN-IM is 'Kuki State Map'. The Nagas strongly opposed the Kuki Map terming it "a bogus map". While the KNO stood staunchly in supporting the map as 'genuine which covers the present Kuki inhabited areas'. In a press reports the NSCN (IM) stated: "The inappropriety of playing with history will never stand the test of time". There is no ending in the Naga-Kuki political discontentment. The Central Government, the mother of all states, is treating Manipur in a step-motherly treatment. The Central seems to be playing its card in the midst of Kuki and Naga claims. There is little attention from the

Central. The most significant bone of contention between the two groups is land dispute. The Kuki National Front (KNF), later joined by the Kuki National Organization (KNO), demands Kukiland to be carved out of the five hill districts of Manipur - Churachandpur, Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul. The demand for Kukiland is a direct challenge to a demand for greater or southern Nagaland by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland - Isak Muivah (NSCN-IM). The goal of the Naga militant outfit is to amalgamate the four hill districts of Manipur - Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul - and to form greater Nagaland by merging with neighboring Nagaland state. The intention to drive out Kukis from the four hill districts led to "ethnic cleansing" by the NSCN-IM. Though the initial violence was triggered by militant outfits in Chandel district, it spread over to other parts of the state, and to Nagaland state and Myanmar as well. To restore peace and normalcy, KIM puts forward two important demands to the Nagas and the Indian government. First, it demands the Nagas, especially the NSCN-IM, to formally apologize for their heinous crimes of the 1990s and perform Kuki customary rites such as paying Luogumang (corpse price) and Tol-theh (cleaning the house for shedding human blood). Second, KIM demands the Indian government to rehabilitate the loss of lives and properties and provide adequate compensation to thousands of

displaced victims. Naga leaders, particularly the NSCN-IM, have not responded to the demands of KIM. It is unclear if the Naga leaders, particularly the United Naga Council (UNC), apex civil body of the Nagas in Manipur, and NSCN-IM, have the intention to make similar demands from the Kukis to perform Naga customary rites for their own deaths. While the Meiteis oppose creation of either Kuki homeland or greater Nagaland, the Thadou-Kukis and Nagas are evidently unable to establish any kind of coordination or cooperation. This is partly due to the simmering tension remaining in the aftermath of the 1992-1997 clashes. The wounds of past miseries are apparently yet to be healed. The tension has become deeply communal now and has reached a point of mutual distrust that makes it difficult for civil society organizations to initiate any congenial dialogue between the two groups. It is pertinent to ask whether the government sees the conflict as an internal matter for the concerned ethnic groups to resolve among themselves or considers this a too-insignificant issue to intervene. While the tension lingers, the Indian government engages in a political dialogue with the NSCN-IM, ignoring calls by the Kuki armed groups for political dialogue despite maintaining Suspension of Operation since 2005. It remains unclear whether this is an institutional problem on the part of the Kuki armed organizations, or another manifestation of one-sided treatment toward the NSCN-IM.

## National & International News

# PM Modi heads home after wrapping up 5-nation tour

**Mexico City, June 9:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi today left for home after wrapping up a brief visit to Mexico on the final leg of his five-nation tour, which also took him to the US and Afghanistan. "Thank you Mexico. A new era in India-Mexico ties has begun and

this relationship is going to benefit our people and the entire world," Modi tweeted. "Five days, five countries! After a productive visit to Mexico, the last leg of his journey, PM departs for Delhi," External Affairs Minister Vikas Swarup tweeted.

The tour, that began on June 4, saw Modi visiting Afghanistan, Qatar, Switzerland, the US and Mexico with an aim to bolster ties. Besides addressing a joint sitting of the US Congress, Modi received the backing of two key Nuclear Suppliers Group members -

Switzerland and Mexico - for its bid to secure the membership of the 48-nation bloc. He also held wide-ranging talks with President Barack Obama at the White House following which the US recognised India as a "major defence partner".

# Somalia: al Shabaab militants kill over 40 Ethiopian soldiers at African Union's AMISOM camp

**Mogadishu, June 9:** Somali al Shabaab militants said their fighters rammed a suicide car bomb into a base of Ethiopian troops serving with the African Union's AMISOM force, stormed inside and killed 43 soldiers on Thursday. Residents near the base in the central town of Haglan said they heard a huge explosion and then heavy exchanges of gunfire shortly before dawn. Shots rang out at least an hour after the initial blast, they added. There was no immediate comment

from AMISOM, which is made up of troops from African nations supporting Somalia's Western-backed government in its fight against the al Qaeda-linked militants. AMISOM usually says it is up to troop-contributing countries to announce casualties. In the past, casualty figures cited by al Shabaab have been much higher than official numbers. "Our fighters stormed the Halgan base of AMISOM," al Shabaab's military operations spokesman Abdiasis Abu Musab told

Reuters. He said the group used a suicide car bomb and then militants had exchanged fire with Ethiopian troops there. He said "several" al Shabaab fighters died, but did not give a number. "It was a huge blast. It destroyed the gate and parts of the base," the spokesman said, adding al Shabaab fighters overran the base and drove out the Ethiopian troops before withdrawing. Al Shabaab fighters also repelled a counter attack by Djibouti troops deployed from another

base in the area, he said. The group often launches gun and bomb attacks on officials. Somali security forces and AMISOM in a bid to topple the government and impose its own strict interpretation of Islam on Somalia. In January, Kenyan troops serving with AMISOM suffered heavy losses when al Shabaab made a dawn raid on their camp in El Adde, near the Kenyan border. Al Shabaab said it killed more than 100 soldiers but Kenya gave no exact casualty figure.

# Ara Deputy Mayor shot at, seriously injured

**Ara, June 9:** Two motorcycle-borne miscreants today shot at and seriously injured Ara Municipal Corporation Deputy Mayor Basant Singh near his house in Ara, the headquarter town of Bihar's Bhojpur district. Superintendent of Police Kshatraneel Singh said the incident occurred when the Deputy Mayor stepped out of his house, located in Old Police Line area under Nawada police station limits, for a morning walk. Singh, who sustained serious injuries, was first admitted to a nearby private clinic from where he was taken to Ara Sadar hospital. The doctors then referred him to Patna Medical College and Hospital, (PMCH) Patna, the SP said. The motive behind the incident could not be known, he said. Two persons have been detained

for interrogation in this regard. Police are investigating the matter from all angles, the SP said, adding that the motive may be a land dispute at his native village, his

transport business and political reasons. Angry local people blocked the Ara-Buxar main road in protest against the incident for half an hour.

# Earthquake of magnitude 6.2 hits Indonesia's Lombok

**ANI New Delhi, June 9:** A strong earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale struck off the Indonesian island of Lombok on Thursday. According to the USGS, the quake, centered at a depth of 29km, hit at a distance of 284km south of Kuta, Indonesia. The earthquake was widely felt by residents throughout the region, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. On June 8, an earthquake measuring 6.3-magnitude on the Richter scale

had struck in the Molucca Sea in off northern Indonesia.

**2 day session of Delhi Assembly to begin today**  
**New Delhi, June 9:** The two-day session of Delhi Assembly begins today. During the session urgent public issues, including cleanliness in the national capital will be discussed. It will also hold discussion on the alleged irregularities in the functioning of the Municipal Corporations of Delhi. The session will conclude on 10th of this month.

# Two tourists killed in Himachal

**Shimla, June 9:** Two tourists from Punjab's Jalandhar town were killed when a tree fell on their tent at a resort in Himachal Pradesh's Narkanda town on Thursday, police said. A third person was injured. The tourists were staying in a Nature Camp run by the Himachal Pradesh Forest Development Corp Ltd. Ashok Sidhu, 45, and Rajesh Kumar, 36, died on the spot while Gagan Kumar, 32, was admitted to the Indira Gandhi Medical College and Hospital in Shimla. The camping site is located at an altitude of 8,500 feet and some 65 km from here. The tourists were sleeping when a tree got dislodged due to rains. All three belonged to Jalandhar, a police official told IANS.