

Editorial

Imphal, Friday, March 18, 2016

The bout is already set: BJP, Congress is not in position to kick-starts campaign

According to political analyst, it is likely that the 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly will be held either in the month of January or February of 2017, which is only about 10 months from today. The emergence of popularity of any political parties -beyond doubt is proved by the rise in the number of elected members either it may be in the local body election or Municipal election. The more the specific political party get elected the more is the popularity of that specific political party. So, it is important for each and every political party in the state to get more seats in the upcoming Imphal Municipal Election which is scheduled in May this year. 10 months is a very short period for any political party to campaign for election and besides it is already late to kick start for the upcoming IMC election which is not even 4 months from now. For three consecutive terms, the congress party in the competent leadership of Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh had ruled the state. The last perhaps is a headache for Mr. Chief Minister as the number of elected member crossed beyond expectations that the number to elect an opposition leader in the house did not reach. Besides, the mergers of some elected members from some political party had reduced the number of non congress MLA to only few demoralising the spirit of being opposition MLA in the house. Thanks to the people of Thangmeiband Assembly constituency and Thonju Assembly constituency by sending up two BJP candidates as their representatives to represent in the State Legislative Assembly even though it is in the bye election. In democracy number matters but the presence of the two MLAs heard healthy functioning of a democracy in the recently concluded 13 sessions of the state assembly. People now realised that sending up qualified candidates not necessarily from the ruling party but rather from other party capable of playing the role of opposition is equally important. This should be turning point for the electors. And it is time that we ponder upon whom to elect irrespective of whether the person we elected will be in the government or not. Now, everyone knows - the real opponents in the political arena this time will be between the Congress and the BJP. Analysts are of the opinion that the election this time bi-party system in nature as the final outcome will be political parties favouring the Congress and the others, favouring the BJP. The question of emerging a third party is not in the card with regard to the present political scenario in the state. March 19, that is tomorrow, will be significant date for BJP Manipur Pradesh , the tussle which stands as an obstacle to proceed campaign for the party is being put on hold with euphoria of centre electing a new state president. Party workers are seen talking, arguing and even debating despite of engaging themselves to expand the party on whom to appoint the next president. On the other hand, the Congress too is in dilemma. The revolt inside the party by 25 congress MLAs is a real problem. Every politician has a dream of becoming a MLA and then Ministers. The moment when Ibobi government was expanded he had promised to reshuffle the ministry after 2 and half year and the assurance turn out another political gimmick to keep the MLAs quiet. It is not reasonable if the matter is the real factor to revolt inside the party. But the demand that the dissident MLAs put up this time seems rather reasonable and the party high command had reason to take the matter seriously. It is about one man one post. But the unfortunate part is that the person they are targeting is Deputy Chief Minister Gaikhangam, who is also the President of the MPCC. Imphal Times term it unfortunate because Mr. Gaikhangam is significantly playing its role taking advantage of his being a Kabui tribe to protect the territorial integrity of the state. It is an open secret that NSCN-IM has been demanding a separate state by carving out portion of Manipur , Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. The magic word or say the mantra of the NSCN-IM is the word Naga - at which only two communities are mentioned in the gazette of Manipur Government. Of the 33 tribes only two are mention as kacha Naga and Naga. It is also a fact that Meitei - the majority community is the main target and it is easy for the NSCN-IM to push up their demand if someone from among the Meitei has been projected for the post. Gaikhangam 's position as the President of the MPCC and Home Minister is the need of the hour if each so called dissident MLAs love to protect the state territorial integrity. It is election time and those in politics should left no stone upturn to protect the so call motherland Manipur.

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National and International News

Defiant North Korea fires ballistic missile into sea, Japan protests

Reuter
Seoul, March 18: North Korea fired at least one ballistic missile on Friday, which flew about 800 km (500 miles) before hitting the sea off its east coast, South Korea's military said, as the isolated state stepped up its defiance of tough new UN and US sanctions. South Korea's Yonhap news agency said the missile was likely a medium-range Rodong-missile. If confirmed, it would mark North Korea's first test of a medium range missile, capable of reaching Japan, since 2014. The launch comes amid heightened tension on the Korean peninsula after the North rejected UN Security Council sanctions imposed earlier in the month in response to a nuclear test conducted in January and the United States issued fresh sanctions this week. The missile was launched from north of the capital, Pyongyang, flying across the peninsula and into the sea off the east coast early

Friday morning, the South's Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement. It appeared the North may have fired a second missile soon after from the same region, with a projectile disappearing from radar at an altitude of about 17 km, it added. South Korea did not confirm the type of the missiles. But 800 km was likely beyond the range of most short-range missiles in the North's arsenal. The North's Rodong missile has an estimated maximum range of 1,300 km, according to the South's defence ministry. A US official told Reuters in Washington that it appeared to be a medium-range missile fired from a road-mobile launcher. The US State Department said in a statement it was closely monitoring the situation and urged North Korea to focus on taking concrete steps toward fulfilling its international commitments and obligations.

JAPAN CONCERNED
 Japan quickly condemned the launch, lodging a protest with North Korea through its embassy in Beijing, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told parliament. "Japan strongly demands North Korea to exercise self-restraint and will take all necessary measures, such as warning and surveillance activity, to be able to respond to any situations," Abe said. Last week, the North fired two short-range missiles into the sea off its east coast and its leader Kim Jong Un ordered more nuclear weapons tests and missile tests to improve attack capability. North Korea often fires missiles at periods of tension on the Korean peninsula or when it comes under pressure to curb its defiance and abandon its weapons programmes. New US sanctions on Pyongyang were issued on Wednesday aiming to expand its blockade by blacklisting individuals and entities that deal

with the North's economy. The North has also reacted angrily to annual joint military drills by U.S. and South Korean troops that began on March 7, calling the exercises "nuclear war moves" and threatening to wipe out its enemies. South Korea and US officials began discussions this month on deploying the advanced anti-missile Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system to the US military in the South, despite Chinese and Russian objection. Japan has previously said it was considering THAAD to beef up its defenses. North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test in Jan. 6 and launched a long-range rocket on Feb. 7 in defiance of existing U.N. Security Council resolutions. On Wednesday, North Korea's supreme court sentenced a visiting American student to 15 years of hard labour for crimes against the state, a punishment Washington condemned as politically motivated.

Republican party headed for open convention:

PTI
Washington March 16: The Republican party is headed for an open convention that could see a faceoff between rival camps to pick a presidential nominee, House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan said, suggesting frontrunner Donald Trump might not get the required delegates by the July gathering. "This is more likely to become an open convention than we thought before," said Ryan, who is also the chairman of the convention to be held in Cleveland in July, yesterday. At this convention, Republican party's 2,472 delegates elected from across the country through primaries and caucuses nominate their presidential candidate with a majority vote. As of now, controversial real-estate tycoon Donald Trump has the most (673) delegates. He is followed by Senator Ted Cruz (411) and Ohio Governor John Kasich (143).

To cross the half-way mark, Trump needs to win a little over 50 per cent of the delegates left in contention, while the figure climbs up to 80 per cent for Cruz and an impossible 114 per cent for Kasich. Political pundits say there is a possibility of Trump not reaching the halfway mark, as a result of which the nominee would be elected at the convention? a rare development in the party. The last contested convention was in 1976. Such a convention is called "open" or "brokered" or "contested" convention as after the first round of voting the delegates are open to vote for any candidate. Many also fear horse-trading during the convention. "We are getting our minds around the idea that this could very well become a reality, and therefore those of us who are involved in the convention need to respect that," Ryan said. "I will have to obviously bone up

on all the rules and all of those things," he said. "My goal is to be dispassionate and to be Switzerland — to be neutral and dispassionate, and to make sure that the rule of law prevails, and to make sure that the delegates make their decision however the rules require them to do that. I will acquaint myself with these things at the right time," Ryan said. However, the Trump campaign thinks they would be able to get through the necessary number of delegates before the convention and as such there would be no need of a contested convention. Reince Priebus, chairman of the Republican National Committee, hoped there is unlikely to be a brokered convention. "I would tell you it is that if someone gets the majority of delegates, of bound delegates before the convention, they're going to be the nominee. There's no doubt about that," Priebus told Fox News.

Mathematics exam or third degree torture? Lok Sabha takes up issue, CBSE responds

Agency
New Delhi, March 18: On 14 March, Class XII students who appeared for their CBSE mathematics examination were upset, afraid and worried — why? The mathematics paper was termed one of the toughest in nearly a decade. Social media has been abuzz with complaints against the difficult mathematics question paper since the day of the exam. The students were so distressed by the paper that a petition was created on Change.org, addressing the chairman of the CBSE, citing that the paper was "unreasonably difficult" and "the lack of direct questions and the papers ridiculous length left many students in tears, despite the hard work that they put in for an entire year." As many has 3,400 people have signed the petition so far. Sahil Jangra commented on the petition saying, "I didn't think that am gonna write IIT JEE paper." It was hell tough (sic)." Vishruta Vijay wrote, "Cbse ruining normal lives. Studying is a process of learning, not torture night and day."

No understanding with Congress in West Bengal elections, says CPI

Agency
Kolkata, March 16: CPI has decided to contest 16 seats in West Bengal, S Sudhakar Reddy said. Assembly polls in West Bengal will be spread over six phases starting from April 4. Striking a discordant note, CPI on Tuesday said though it will be a part of the Left Front in West Bengal it will have no understanding with Congress in the assembly polls as planned by the lead partner CPI(M) to put up a joint fight against the ruling TMC. "As far as we are concerned, we are part of the Left Front (in West Bengal) and we are not having any adjustment with Congress. We have no discussions. As per our knowledge, discussions have not taken place between Left Front and Congress," CPI General Secretary S Sudhakar Reddy told reporters here. He was replying to a query on Left Front chairman Biman Bose's announcement on Monday that it had reached an "understanding" with Congress to fight jointly the ruling Trinamool Congress in the West Bengal elections. Announcing the names of 116 candidates out of a total 294 seats, Bose had said, "we have welcomed an understanding with Congress to remove Trinamool from the state, while making it clear that "front, alliance and understanding are not the same thing." "Such news reports (understanding between Left and Congress) came earlier and today," Reddy said. Asked if CPI would accept if the CPI(M) went ahead with its understanding with the Congress, he said, "We (CPI) are contesting

CPI has decided to contest 16 seats in West Bengal, S Reddy said. Assembly polls in West Bengal will be spread over six phases starting from April 4.

as part of Left Front. Naturally, we have no alliance with Congress in any seat. We don't support Congress in any seat. We don't expect Congress to support us". CPI has decided to contest 16 seats in West Bengal, he said. Assembly polls in West Bengal will be spread over six phases starting from April 4. In Kerala which goes to polls on May 16, CPI would contest 29 or 30 assembly seats, where the final understanding among the LDF partners would be announced in a couple of days, he said. Claiming that the ruling UDF has got "defamed", he felt that the LDF's

chances to come to power in Kerala are bright. The alliance in Tamil Nadu comprising CPI, CPI(M), MDMK and VCK has got encouraging response, Reddy claimed, adding that more parties would join the coalition in the run-up to the polls on May 16. CPI has identified 65 constituencies to contest in Tamil Nadu but is ready to adjust for the sake of friendly parties. Except SUCI, all other Left parties have decided to fight together in the two-phased Assam assembly polls (April 4 and 11), in which CPI would contest 18 constituencies.

Two foreign guerrillas killed in Kashmir gunfight

IANS
Srinagar, March 18: Two foreign guerrillas were killed on Friday in a gunfight with the security forces in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. A senior police officer told IANS here on Friday: "Two foreign terrorists were killed in an encounter with the police and other security forces in Waderbala area of Handwara tehsil." "Acting on specific information about the presence of terrorists, Handwara police, assisted by 21 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), started

cordon and search operation in Waderbala area under the jurisdiction of Police Station Handwara," he said. During the searches, the terrorists fired upon the joint party of police and security forces, he said. The firing was retaliated and, in the ensuing encounter, two foreign terrorists were killed, the police officer said. "Two AK-47 rifles, six AK magazines, four Under-Barrel Grenade Launchers (UBGL), 46 AK rounds and two wireless sets were recovered from the encounter site."

1,200 new list of drugs to be banned in India by regulator

New Delhi: Earlier this week, Indian Health Ministry took a significant step by banning more than 350 fixed-dose combinations (FDCs) in the country for safety reasons. According to a report in Hindustan Times, recently a new list of 1,200 fixed-dose combinations (FDCs) has been sent for probe by Drug Controller General of India (DGCI) to the panel that banned about 350 drugs last week. Fixed dose combination or FDC drugs contain two or more active pharmaceutical ingredients in fixed proportions in a single pill and also contain codeine which causes lethal damage to brain and psyche. So far about 6,600 FDCs has been reviewed by the Kokate Committee and have classified them under four categories of irrational, require further deliberations, rational and require additional data generation, as reported. "Under the irrational category, there were 963 FDCs, out of which 350 have been announced, and the list has been dismantled. We have moved to the 'require further deliberations' category, where the final list is expected to come in six months," an official at the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) was quoted as saying in the report.