

Editorial
Imphal, Monday, May 16, 2016

IMC ELECTION FEVER:

ILP, ST burning issues; AFSPA off the radar

The Battle line is clearly drawn now. It is once again the resurgent BJP pitted against the battle hardened Congress. Some even likened this upcoming election of the Imphal Municipal Corporation to the semi-final bout of the 2017 general election. Election for the 27 wards of IMC will go on poll on June 2. Filing of nominations will close tomorrow. Both the congress party and the BJP are equally strong in this local body election. This is stated because Congress is ruling the state with absolute majority in the state assembly and BJP on the other hand is leading the government at the center with absolute majority. The contenders could not have been any other. Clearly, it is the Congress and the BJP in the two opposing corners of this ensuing political bout. As for the congress, the party is fielding candidates in all the 27 wards, similarly the BJP is also fielding candidates in all the wards. As for the BJP the party is having problem announcing the name of the candidate for ward No. 3 in Thangmeiband Assembly constituency. No matter a solution will be sorted out soon and before the closing of the nomination filing the BJP is expected to finalise its candidate.

With the notification, election fever has once more spread across the state. This IMC election is getting tougher, the ruling congress party which is having absolute majority in the 60 member Manipur State Legislative Assembly house has to spend more energy and efforts than ever before.

Election is mandatory and essential for a democratic country like India. It is during election time that most of the crucial issues are put up and some of the political party even put some of the issues as their election manifesto, whether they fulfilled whatever was promised or not.

For sure, some of the star campaigners of both the congress and the BJP will bring up the hot issue about the ILPS, some may go for the ST demand issue. But one thing sure: neither of the two parties will put the issue of AFSPA and fake encounter case in their manifestoes- the glaringly undeniable reason being that both the national parties have little interest to the protracted issue of Manipur. Their larger interest is getting more candidates. The candidates and the star campaigners will go all out to make their candidates win more seats and the mechanism will be on how tactful they are in buying the voters.

It is for sure the election campaign will reach its peak in the coming days and subsequently the burning issues of the state which disrupted the normal life of many people including complete shutdown of educational institutions will be dissected, discussed and judged.

As for the Okram Ibobi Singh- led administration, this is a sign of relief- a much needed and timely distraction. All those hue and cries will vanish as IMC election reaches its fevered pitch.

Lost

I have lost my work order, bill of quantity, negotiation letter and completion certificate for AIRPORT AUTHORITY OF INDIA, National Airport Division, Ref. No. AAI/GT/IMP/Ext. T. Bldg./W.O.57/07-08/5426-37. Name of work : Extension & modification of Terminal building at Imphal Airport issued on 18-02-2008. Ref. : (1) My tender dated 22-01-2008

(2) Authority letter No. AAI/GT/IMP/Ext.T. Bldg./07-08/5321-28 dt. 08.02.08 & AAI/GT/IMP/Ext.T. Bldg./07-08/5355-61 dated 12.02.08

(3) My negotiation letter No. Nil, dt. 11 dt. 11.02.08 & 13.02.08. My negotiation rates totalling - Rs. 4,30,02,837.80/- (Rupees Four Crores Thirty Lakhs Two Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Seven and Paise Eighty) only.

Completion Certificate : Completion Certificate of the relevant work thereby certifying the completion on 26.09.2013 issued by JE(E), Mgr.(Engg-Civil), SM(Eng-Elect) AGM(Engg-Civil), AAI Imphal Airport which is stipulated date of start of work : 28.02.2008. Actual date of start of work : 28.02.2008. Stipulated date of completion of work : 27.12.2008. Actual date of completion of work : 26.09.2013, total work done value (Civil+Electrical) : Rs. 4,26,90,437.00 (Cvtil) + Rs. 26,11,448,000 (Elect) =Rs. 4,53,01,885.00 On the way between Neikalong, Thangmeiband to Samakheih, Lamphel dated 11/05/2016 and in spite of having minute searches the same is untraceable till date. Finders are requested to handover it to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Jesse Kamei
Neikalong Thangmeiband, Imphal PO & P.S, Lamphel, Imphal West District, Manipur

MARK SHEET LOST

I have lost my original marksheet for BEC Examination, conducted by Manipur University bearing Roll No 21224 of 2004 on the way between Khagempalli to Keishampat. Finders are requested to handover the same at the undersigned.

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Debika Thokchom
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National & International News

Congress corners Centre over Malegoan blast U-turn

ANI
New Delhi, May 16: Asserting that the sudden turnaround by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in the 2008 Malegoan blasts case has only made matters murkier, the Congress on Monday trained its guns on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi led-NDA government and asked it to cite a single incident of serious terrorist case where charges were dropped by the investigative agencies before the law could take its course. Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi told ANI that after NIA gave a clean chit to

Sadhvi Pragya and other saffron leaders India has become a laughing stock in front of the world. "The nations wants to know from the PMO, from the BJP government, from the Prime Minister in many cases so far please site a single incident of serious terrorist case where charges have been dropped by the prosecuting agencies even before the court has decided whether to frame charges or not," Singhvi said. "I can't think of a single case where in this cheap political manner a federal agency NIA is fighting with

a premier state agency each casting serious suspicions on each other. Please tell us are we not becoming a laughing stock of terrorists around the world? Who see these two premier anti-terrorist agencies fighting like cats and dogs," he added. Singhvi further accused the Centre and said, "How has this change occurred after eight years when there is a new dispensation." The NIA now contends that prime accused in the Malegoan blasts were framed by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) which planted evidence against him.

The NIA last week gave a clean chit to accused Sadhvi Pragya Thakur and five others by stating lack of evidence to justify their prosecution in the case. NIA said out that witnesses against accused had retracted their statements. The Malegoan 2008 blast case was a first case in which Hindu extremists, including Lt. Colonel Prasad Shrikant Purohit and Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur were chargesheeted in 2009 by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad. The NIA took over the case in 2011.

BSF suspends 7 troops after B'deshi killed along IB

PTI
New Delhi, May 16: BSF has suspended its seven troops posted along the Indo-Bangla frontier, including an officer, after ordering a Staff Court of Inquiry into the killing of a Bangladeshi national suspected to be part of a group of cross-border gold smugglers, last week. Officials said the incident took place on May 14 at about 10 AM along the Banpur border post in Krishnanagar district of West Bengal when a group of suspected smugglers surrounded a Border Security force patrol and the force party subsequently fired from a non-lethal gun to disperse them. Later, they said, a teenager who received the gun shot from the pump action gun succumbed to injuries on the other side of the border. "The Staff Court of Inquiry will go into the details of the incident. The seven personnel including an Assistant Commandant of the 113th battalion have been placed under suspension pending inquiry," a senior official said.

3 missing in Sri Lanka flash floods; alert issued

PTI
Colombo, May 16 : At least three persons were missing in torrential rains and flash floods lashing Sri Lanka for the last two days, prompting authorities to issue an alert, officials said today. "Three people are reported missing in Dehiowita area," Disaster Management Centre spokesman Pradeep Kodippilly said. Relief operations are well underway even the military had been deployed in the hill country areas to provide relief, he said, adding that the men went missing from the countrys southwestern district of Kegalle. Rains lashed the country throughout yesterday, flooding most of the roads in Colombo. Besides, several roads have been cut off due to floods with the Sri Lanka Red Cross saying its employees have been placed on alert to assist anyone who may be affected by the bad weather. The armed forces have also been put on alert. As many as eight districts have been issued landslide warnings. Katunayake, just outside Colombo, had recorded the highest rain fall,

over 260 millimeters between 0830 hours Sunday to 0530 Hrs Monday, Meteorology Department said. However the rains were to ease somewhat today. "The low pressure area is moving away from Sri Lanka so the rainy conditions over the island will be reduced to some extent, but strong wind conditions will continue for a few more days," Malinda Millagoda, a meteorologist said. Yesterday, three international flights were diverted to Kochi in India due to bad weather conditions prevailing in Sri Lanka, Airport officials said.

ISIS commander killed in Afghanistan airstrike

ANI
Kabul, May : A top commander of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group in Afghanistan was killed in an Afghan Air Force air strike. Khamma Press quoted the Ministry of Defense (MoD), as saying that the air strike was carried out in Wata Pur district of eastern Kunar province. The 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan National Army in a statement said the airstrike was carried out by the U.S. forces using an unmanned aerial vehicle. A statement said Shafiq Abbas was

a commander of the Taliban group and was involved in major terrorist activities in Wata Pur district. Following major blows in some of their strongholds in eastern Nangarhar province, the insurgent group have recently started operations in the restive Kunar province. On Sunday, at least eight ISIS loyalists were killed in an airstrike in Achin district. The Afghan forces have stepped up operations to eliminate the insurgent groups amid concerns that it is attempting to expand foothold in the country.

Contd. from previous issue

Reflections on the Conflicts of our Times :
Attempt at Common Sense reading of the Manipur Experience

As soon as the Bills were passed on the 31st August, another sudden, unexpected agitation erupted in the Western hills where nine protestors were killed again in the firing by the police and the security forces, and the agitation was against the passing of the three bills. The three bills were condemned as an anti-tribal measure and the dead bodies were still unburied and last rites not being performed till date. The agitation spread throughout the hill areas of the Manipur state. Passions were aroused, and a new slogan which earlier remained at subterranean levels of public visibility surfaced as direct, forthright statement of intent by major ethnic groups of the state. The demand was for separate administrations of the Hill regions as differentiated from the valley. Earlier a civil society organization from the North-western Hills of Manipur, named the United Naga Committee (UNC), established since 1981 had been propagating an Alternative Arrangement for the separate administration for Naga inhabited areas since 2010, when the crisis that occurred through the State Government's measure to prevent the NSCN (IM)'s General Secretary Th. Muivah's visit to his home village in Ukhrul, where police firing resulted to the killing of two Mao students. Since then the demands for complete severing of relationships with the 'communal' government of Manipur, and the call for Autonomous District Council Elections to be declared 'Null and Void' were their main agendas. As for the neighbouring Kukis, there has been a long democratic history of demands for the establishment of a Kuki state since the 1960s. Various memorandums had been sent to the Central authorities, with varying emphasis on the nature of the Kuki communities relationship with the Central Government, along with their attitude towards the neighbouring communities. The event of 1992-1998 reckoned as the Ethnic Cleansing campaign of the NSCN (IM) which resulted to severe loss of lives and properties had changed the dynamics of ethnic relationship in Manipur. Some

1000 Kuki citizens were reported to have been killed, leading to retaliatory violence by the Kukis against the Nagas, with a resultant impact of simultaneous arming of ethnic communities for protection of their respective identities, as well as heightening of ethnic insurgencies in the state. The environment of ethnic violence, mutual mistrust of the other, with occasional proposals for sharing of resources and advantages as well as attempts at alliances and agreements became a blinding feature of ethnic relations in the state. The Kukis, by virtue of a little better history of sharing of powers on their lands and resources in the pre-colonial times, and of a better form of alliance for mutual protection and help with the Meitei rulers of the state resulted to the Kuki peoples' nearness to the polity and more desire to help protect the territorial integrity of the state. Though the Naga independence movement was prolonged, it made more serious impact on the consciousness of the Manipur Nagas, and more particularly of a strong Tangkhul presence in the NSCN (IM) hierarchy. The Kuki consciousness were more geographically bound in the Manipur state, in spite of a large presence of their kin in the Chin state of Myanmar. The movement for identity for a Pan Chin-Kuki-Mizo consciousness of these kindred tribes were also in the ascendant in cultural and democratic spaces, but the ethnic armies who became pre-dominant in local as well as trans-geographical spaces in politics had been active in the Manipur hills, whose dynamics it is extremely difficult to identify in the current state of confusion and semi-anarchic configurations of ethnic politics. It is learnt that the NSCN (IM) sought an alliance with the Kuki identity movements, a settlement of earlier unfortunate violence and massacres, and came to a palpable understanding to spite of the 'communal' majority of the Meiteis in the valley. A proposal that was circulated in August last year secretly by the Kuki National

Organization to the NSCN (IM) for parcelling out the hills of Manipur as Nagalim and a Kuki State (Zalengam) was learnt to have fizzled out. Since the Kukis and Nagas had not yet got rid of the accumulated passions and revenge motifs accumulated from mutual hurt and violence during the Kuki Naga clashes. The Kuki Impi (Kuki government) which was revived in 1993 in earnest from earlier existences had been demanding justice against the NSCN (IM) in many memorandums and appeals to the Central Government. "The NSCN (IM) preferred and cheated worldwide that they were sovereign nation now revealing their true colours of trying to snatch other peoples lands by (1) invading, killing innocent thousands, uprooting hundreds of villages, but failed (2) Now NSCN (IM) is asking the mighty Government of India to parcel out lands belonging to others, including Kuki land, give them to NSCN (IM)."

No single ethnic group has the authority or is authorized to talk and break the territory." (Ibid 2010). However the contemporary tension however saw certain transformations and twists in positions by the major ethnic communities, when the Kuki and the Nagas came into a certain understanding in the midst of the crisis created by the passing of the bills. Resistances mounted with opposition to the bills, complaints lodged to the Central authorities and pressures from civil society bodies both national and international and the national medias also noticed the violence and complexities thrown up by the issue. However the last six months from the beginning of the anti bill agitation in August-September last year, sparked off by the sacrifice of the nine martyrs had remain unsettled and grievances of the hill people remained unassuaged. Many waters had flown under the current of ethnic cleavages which still remained a tense feature of public life in the state. The Government of Manipur was reported to have attempted to compromise with the agitators by acknowledging the customary laws of the Kukis (Hangkham) and having had a few rounds of talks with those responsible for the widespread agitation. Not much of progress was reported about a solution to the issue. Inter and Intra-community Rupture? It seems the dynamics of the ethnic relations between the very participants of the agitation was intricately marked by differences of opinions and worldviews amongst the groups themselves. There were major differences and incompatibilities between the Kuki point of view with those of the Paite community, who also constitute a large share of ethnic population in Churachandpur (six of these were killed through police firing were Paite's). The Paite had an earlier experience also having lost ten lives back in 1997-98, in the Kuki-Paite clashes of a severe nature, when the latter refused to pay house-tax to some Kuki underground outfits, leading to the subsequent killing of the Paite villagers. (To be contd.....)