

Editorial

Imphal, Monday, May 2, 2016

Diminishing credibility

The air is thick with anticipation of the arriving festivals in this State with a perennial presence of occasions for celebrations. That the people pour their hearts out in their celebrations might very well be a manifestation of their frustrations and hopelessness of the present situation. Wishes and messages of peace and harmony, not to forget development and progress will be doled out to the public with unerring accuracy and seemingly empathic statements, both by the ruling leaders elected by the people, as well as by those who have taken over the cause of fighting against the injustice and independence of the people upon themselves. The ideologies, have they been practiced as propagated, could have propelled this small state into a league of its own, one which the rest of the world would have looked up to for inspiration and guidance. The reality that lay around us couldn't be more different or ironic. In spite of so many patriots and pioneers of freedom and justice, why is the common man in Manipur still could not live a decent life? Why is efficiency and hard work not being regarded with the same veneration as the ability to cozy up to power and riches? Why is fear and violence being viewed as the preferred mode of getting things done for those who can, or profess to have the power, to unleash them? What is the meaning of peace and independence when the common people, far removed from the company of the powerful government and the relentless insurgents, live in fear and uncertainty, deprived of their rightful stakes, their share of the benefits being utilized, albeit without their consent or knowledge, by the bureaucrats and heads of departments as well as those fighting for independence to further their professed cause of development, justice and independence? Why, despite the teeming guardians of truth and equality, the majority of the public is still reeling under injustice and oppression? Is extortion and use of force - lethal force at times a prerequisite for attainment of peace, freedom and independence? How do these opposing forces, purportedly working towards the same goal, envisage the participation of the public for which they are supposedly carrying out their pursuits when the trust and empathy have all but evaporated into thin air? The frightened feelings and uncertainty of the people should be allayed first. The present practice of holding a gun to the head of the public while enquiring their allegiance will not work in the long run. The spawning of a breed of self-styled insurgents and protectors of freedom and progress who are taking advantage of the naivety and unsure state of mind of the common public, while carrying on with extortion, demanding huge exacting amounts as donations, and conniving with the powerful whose faults are conveniently overlooked as long as their purpose are being served, should be put to a complete halt. The Government should cleanse itself to regain that dwindling confidence of the people. A new beginning is still possible. It is not lofty ideals or poetic words that will win the hearts of the public. It is the cold hard facts of their deeds which will determine the outcome of their professed goals.

Red Shield Division apprehends UG Cadres

PIB Defence
Imphal, May 2: Red Shield Division apprehended one active cadre of Thadou Peoples Liberation Army (TPLA), the newly formed underground group, in operation carried out on April 28. A PIB statement said that based on specific inputs regarding presence of a suspected cadre of Thadou People Liberation Army (TPLA) carrying out extortion at Saparamma market, an operation was launched by troops of Jwalamukhi Battalion. The suspected individual standing at one shop tried to run away from the location on seeing the approaching troops. However he was chased down and apprehended. The apprehended cadre identified as chungminlin khongsai, age 44 years, s/o Seikhonjiang khongsai resident of village Bongmol, PS-KPI, District Senapati (Manipur). He confessed that he is an active cadre of Thadou

Peoples Liberation Army (TPLA) and has been involved in extortion and kidnapping activities in Saparamma, KPI and Motbung. The insurgent has been handed over to Imphal police Station for further investigations. On the other hand one active cadre of KNP(P) was also apprehended by another troops of Red Shield division in an operation carried out on April 27. The person was stated to have been responsible for carrying out firing at Shantipur, PS Sekmai, Imphal West and injuring a non local resident Ramesh s/o MadanSaha on April 22. The apprehended cadre was identified as PaominthangSingson @ Zames, aged 35yrs, s/o Sakhohensingson, resident of village Kaitihelmani of Senapati district, One 9mm Pistol and three live rounds were recovered from him. The apprehended cadre along with the recoveries has been handed over to Imphal police station for further investigation.

Is 32,000 years of Meitei civilization a sign of tribalism?

By: Ningsbam Bupenda Meitei

In 30,000 BCE (Before Common Era), or same as 30,000 BC (Before Christ) which is used in Christian world, when Sydney Australia was occupied by Aboriginal Australians, which is also evidenced from radio carbon dating, and when Japan had the first ground stone tools, Manipur had its first evidence of Pleistocene man. The Manipuri Pleistocene humans were not Neanderthals, of Neander valley near Dusseldorf, Germany, but early *Homo sapiens* or modern humans. The two important early modern *Homo sapiens* sites which were close to Manipur were Annamite Mountains (Laos), with the fossils of modern humans dated 63,000 years ago, and Lijiang (China) with its date of fossils as 139,000-111,000 years ago. The study to discover whether Manipuri Pleistocene humans came from Annamite Mountains of Laos or Lijiang of China could be of immense contribution to the making of modern humans as Lijiang man, who is a late Pleistocene *Homo sapiens sapiens* like Manipuri Pleistocene man, is concluded to be as one of the earliest modern humans in East Asia by a scientific team led by a geologist Guanjuan Shea of Nanjing (China) Normal University, or the study could also find the trace of Manipuri Pleistocene humans to Annamite Mountains - a mountain range of eastern Indochina that extends to Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. There is no scientific record, till date, to show that any other form of *Homo*, or prior to the first recorded Pleistocene man, was found in Manipur. There could also be a possibility that Manipuri Pleistocene modern humans came from Manipur *Homo erectus* who further got evolved from archaic Manipuri humans. This possibility is of the nature which is supported and accepted in the case of Lijiang man by Regional Continuity Model (or Multi Regional Evolution Model) - a model that proposes that modern humans evolved more or less simultaneously in all major regions of the Old World from local archaic humans - unlike Replacement Model, which discusses that the origin of modern humans came from the archaic humans in Africa and later got migrated to the rest of the world. But, the question is - where is the scientific evidence of Manipuri *Homo erectus* or archaic Manipuri human? Having no such evidence also can not conclude, as of now, that the possibility of such archaic Manipuri human will be absent forever, unless there is a rigorous scientific attempt to explore.

If Meiteis, who are the original inhabitant of Manipur, had a written history since 33 AD, then there is also a question - how has the writing of the royal history begun suddenly in 33 AD? Whether or not the writing by Meiteis existed before 33 AD, and if so, then whether the Meitei civilization began much before 33 AD? - are the queries of deep interest in today's world of scientific research. If Meitei civilization began in 33 AD, then how and from where such great civilization originated? Whether such ancient civilization, which has a continuity, if it

had, since the pre - 33 AD, is a point to reflect on. It is in this regard that the proposition that Meitei civilization existed much before 33AD becomes valid if Meiteis are the descendants of the Manipuri Pleistocene man, who was born 32,000 years ago. Meiteis had to exist even much before 3000 BCE in Manipur. Since the Manipuri Pleistocene man is recorded as the first modern human of Manipur in Manipur, therefore the genetics and lineage of that Manipuri Pleistocene modern human must be in Meiteis, of today, because Meiteis are the present living evidence of being the original inhabitant of Manipur since the first modern human settlement in Manipur. Till now, scientifically, there is an evidence that Manipuri Pleistocene man is the first original inhabitant of Manipur. If Meiteis are not the descendants of the first Manipuri - the first Manipuri Pleistocene modern human, then from whom modern humans Meiteis have descended and whether Meiteis can claim as the first modern humans inhabiting in Manipur by accepting that Meiteis are not the descendants of the first settler of Manipur - the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human. In order to state that Meiteis are the original inhabitant of Manipur, they can not claim that they are not the descendant of the first original inhabitant of Manipur - the first Manipuri in the form of the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human. If Meiteis claim that they are not the descendant of the first Manipuri - the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human, then Meiteis can not conclude that they are the original inhabitant of Manipur because they accept that they are not the descendant of the first inhabitant of Manipur - the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human. By accepting that a modern human is not the descendant of the first inhabitant of a geographical location bound by its space and time, the modern human is admitting that he or she is not entitled to claim as also the first original inhabitant of the very same geographical location. By accepting that the modern human is the descendant of the first inhabitant of the geographical location, the modern human is entitled to claim that he or she is, inherently, the original inhabitant of the very same geographical location. The descendants must show their lineage and genetics continuously flowing down from their common ancestor, and their common ancestor can not be diverse and considered to have existed in different times of human evolution because any diversity destroys the status of having a common ancestor. The attempt to dismantle a common ancestor could lead to a series of complexities in understanding and locating one's origin of civilization, and thereby any civilization without its proper origin could be heavily criticized. The beginning of such criticism could also be the beginning to spell confusion and ask further question - has such civilization, whose origin is not clear, ever existed or not? The birth of such uneasy question could be a serious attempt to ridicule and belittle the descendants who have

been the preserver, protector, admirer and follower of that very civilization. Such an attempt could be a dawn of further making the young descendants drawn in the whirlpool of dilemma when the young descendants ask for their original ancestor who gave birth to such a great civilization. A scientific approach to ensure that such a dawn becomes a dusk soon so that a new morning sunrise will make the civilization enlightens more is the inner proactive call of today's young descendants of the great civilization.

The further question is - if Meiteis are the descendants of the first original inhabitant of Manipur, the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human, then who are the ancestor of the other tribes of Manipur? Can the same common modern human, the first original inhabitant of Manipur - the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human, be also the common ancestor of the other tribes of Manipur? If yes, then it shows that Meiteis and other tribes, who are also the descendants of the first original inhabitant of Manipur, are the descendants from the same common ancestor? Having the same common ancestor must also mean that Meiteis and other tribes are children of the same ancestor, thereby meaning that what Meiteis should be entitled to, the same should also be similarly entitled to among the other tribes, and vice - versa. In the case of vice - versa, what is or are entitled to the other tribes, the similar must be entitled to among the Meiteis, and if this is the case, then the status of tribal which is entitled to the other tribes must also be given to the Meiteis. The larger question is, if Meiteis claim that they are not tribal before like the other tribes of today in Manipur, then it also connotes that Meiteis and the other tribes are not the descendants of the same common ancestor - the first Manipuri namely, the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human. If this is the case, then, the further question is - if Meiteis claim that they were not tribal in the past, then it also means that they do not share the genetics and lineage of the other tribes who claim their tribal status in the past, because the sharing of the same lineage can only take place if they all have a common ancestor who is the first original inhabitant of Manipur. If Meiteis and the other tribes do not have the common ancestor - the Pleistocene modern human, then from where the other tribes have come? Whether the other tribes had another ancestor or not - is also a point to reflect on. If the other tribes had their ancestor who was not the same as that of the ancestor of the Meiteis, then who is that ancestor of the other tribes? Can that ancestor of the other tribes be also the same ancestor - the first original Manipuri Pleistocene modern human - of the Meiteis? If it is not, then there has to be another different ancestor of the other tribes, or it could also be many ancestors of the other tribes, but the question is also - who is the first original inhabitant of Manipur; whether the ancestor of the Meiteis or the ancestor or ancestors of the other tribes? There

could also be a possibility to posit that the other tribes had the same common ancestor who is none other than the first original inhabitant of Manipur, the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human. But, the moment when such proposition begins, the problem is whether the other tribes could show the continuity of lineage of the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human in terms of their civilization or written history, etc. It is in this regard that to claim that the lineage is valid, the presence and presentation of continual recorded history and civilization would play a critical role. Therefore, the other tribes, without a continual civilization since 30,000 BCE, to claim that they are the true descendants of the first original inhabitant, the Manipuri Pleistocene modern human, will be extremely difficult to be resolved by modern natural sciences of today's modern physics, chemistry and biology. But, the other tribes too could very much be a part of Meitei civilization with its continual written records and history backed by scientific verification, and therefore, the Meiteis and the other tribes could, perhaps, be understood as the children of the same ancestor. If the proposition of 'the children of the same ancestor' is accepted, then today's Meiteis can also not fully claim that Meitei civilization is a continual process and human evolution contributed by the Meiteis only because the other tribes, who are also the children of the same ancestor, did contribute to the making of the great Meitei civilization. Having stated this, it also does not mean that the other tribes were not significantly recognized of their contribution to the making of Meitei civilization, but rather the entire combined civilization, which is known as 'Meitei civilization' today, could be the result of the civilization of the entire children of the same common ancestor. But, then, the question is - if it is the result of the combined effort, then why is it named as 'Meitei civilization' after 'Meiteis' only? The nomenclature or naming or indeed, giving a name to that very civilization has to be studied further. Who first coined the name 'Meitei civilization'? But, the larger issue is, besides the name, even if 'Meitei civilization' is not named as such and it is named as 'X civilization' or 'Y civilization', the larger contribution to that very civilization will be, undoubtedly, Meiteis who have been continuously protecting the civilization, and therefore, it is in this sense, that calling that civilization as 'Meitei civilization' would be more appropriate. Stating this notion of appropriateness, in ancient texts of Meitei civilization, the contribution of the other tribes too is also evidenced, and therefore, the idea of only Meiteis for Meitei civilization is great but more than greater than it could be the entire children of the common ancestor for Meitei civilization, which is nothing but their shared common ancient civilization which is given a name 'Meitei civilization'.

(To be contd...)

Ningsbam Bupenda Meitei is a poet, author and orator.

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Make in Manipur - Employment generation for unemployed youths of Manipur

The state being gateway to South East Asia, entrepreneurship in Aromatic & Medicinal plants has a tremendous potential. M/S Manipur Food Industries Corporation, an undertaking of the Department is working out a model to where farmers grow aromatic and medicinal plants in their own land with financial assistance from banks and supplying planting materials. To facilitate supply of planting materials, Gene Bank has been developed in Chothe Village in Bishnupur District. The firm is targeting a total area of 500 acre in the first phase all over the state for plantation of plants like stevia, lemon grass, ginger, turmeric and aims to generate employment to at least 2000 persons on a sustainable basis. For processing and value addition, Livelihood Business Incubators have been established in every District Industries Centre. Handloom industry is one of the main income generation industry in the state, involving women mostly. To promote this industry, National Handloom Development Programme was newly introduced in 2015-16 by merging all other general schemes. Under this scheme, Clusters will be set up at Block level, having concentration of handlooms at a cost of Rs. 2.00 each. Government of India has approved and sanction 10 Nos.

of Block Level Handloom Clusters in each in Manipur in 2015-16 at a total cost of Rs.16 crore to cover a target of 18500 weavers of Manipur. The Government of Manipur has allotted 5 acres of land at Food Park, Nilakuthi in Imphal East on lease to MSME-DI, Imphal for setting up one Technology Centre by Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC) Kannauj, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Govt. of India. Proposed infrastructures include Administrative Building, Quality Assessment Laboratory, Processing and Valuation of Essential Oils, Training & Hostel, Library, Aromatic Gardens etc. The World Bank has, in principle, agreed to finance the project. In addition, 30.00 acre of land has been acquired at Ningthoukhong Awang in Bishnupur District for cultivation of Aromatic & Medicinal plants and providing of demonstration/ training and oil distillation units. To developed manpower for above activities, 25 fresh post graduate students have been selected through campus recruitment from different institutions and trained at the Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre, Kannauj, these are in addition to 36 persons trained earlier from each district as Master Trainers at FFDC. After completion of their training,

they will be rendering their services in the Technology Centre which may be rename as I-Camp (Imphal Centre for Aromatic & Medicinal Plant Processing). The Department of Commerce & Industries organized the 1st Manipur Industrial Expo from 4th-10th April, 2016 at Lambi Khongnangklong to promote and showcase the local products such as textiles, handloom, food, sericulture, bamboos, flowers and handicrafts of the state. During the seventh day long expo, the Technology Centre was jointly inaugurated by Shri Kalraj Mishra, Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise, Govt. of India and Shri O.Ibobi Singh, Chief Minister, Manipur on 9th April, 2016. A Skill Fair (Kausal Mela) was also organized at City Convention Centre as a part of the programme. The Expo was participated by foreign traders - in addition to some from other states of India. To promote trade with Asean countries, NE-ASEAN Business Summit Session on Agro and Food Processing: Potential & Challenges in NE & Buyer-Seller Meet was organized on 8th April, 2016 at City Convention Centre. The main attraction of the event was the beauty contest: Jewel Queen 2016 under the theme Promotion of Handloom, Handicrafts, Silk Fabric & Products of entire North East.

More state News

Awareness camp held


IT News
Imphal, May 2: Center for Women Development (CWD), Manipur has organised an awareness programme under the theme 'Combating Desertification Land Degradation & Drought' at its Elangbam Leikai office on May 1. As part of the awareness programme, president of CWD, Ningthoujam Jeevanlata Devi along with members of Youth Progressive and Athletic Club, Keishamthong Elangbam Leikai have also planted sapling at the river bank of Nambul River and its surroundings.

AMWJU GB

IT News
Imphal, May 2: Annual general Body meeting of the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union (AMWJU) cum prize distribution function of the Journalists' Sports Meet was held yesterday at Manipur Press Club. Advisor of AMWJU and Senior Journalist N. Tombirai graced the occasion as chief guest while President of AMWJU V. Shamji presided over it. Imphal Times Resident editor Jeet Akojiam, Staff Reporter Rena, Staff Reporter Mary among others received awards for their performance in the sports meet.

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