

Editorial

Imphal, Wednesday, May 4, 2016

Responsibility matters

Man, being a social animal has to exist with and amongst other humans and in order to adjust and make co-existence possible certain laws and regulations are drawn up to safeguard the welfare of every member of the group or community, curtailing certain personal freedoms and liberties that might infringe on other person's welfare. This is the basic idea of a social set-up.

Leaders and arbitrators are then chosen to oversee the smooth working of the social system with adequate executive powers as deemed necessary to enforce the same - the Government as we know, create and accept in the contemporary world. A society, being made up of individual members, is bound to come up with conflicting interests and emotions. This is where the quality and the efficiency of the people entrusted to sort out these social issues are being tested. The problems being faced by our society as a collective whole in recent times is uncountable and varied - indeed an intimidating and daunting task for those entrusted to solve them. Public memory is short lived - or so it is believed. But sweeping away these problems under the carpet and shrouding them with silence, putting the theory about public memory to the test is not the right step towards easing the problems. Nor is the polished method of prolonging the issues and tiring out the protesting parties to buy time and making these matters fade out of the mind of the public the prudent way of resolving things. The recent assurances doled out to the different parties regarding their claims for parts of the state by the State Government smacks of the repeated and always successful modus operandi. Instead of finding a lasting solution and bringing peace in the State, the Government shouldn't be promising something impossible to deliver. It's better to call a spade a spade and wind up the matter before things become irreparably damaged. It needs to speed up the workings of its various departments and deliver the goods in time to avoid and prevent more problems. Genuine issues should be resolved before things get out of hand and "mob Justice" takes precedence for those whose voices has been gagged for so long and their grievances fallen on deaf ears. Justice delayed is justice denied.

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British family pays respects to

In this part of France one can travel no further than a few hundred yards without seeing a cemetery ranging from those that contain only a handful of graves to those with hundreds or even thousands. Our next stop was at NeuveChapelle where the impressive Indian Memorial is situated. Still bookmarked with bullet and shrapnel scars from World War II, the circular white stone walls, modelled on the enclosures of Indian shrines, contain the carved names of over four and a half thousand Indian soldiers who travelled five thousand miles from home to die in the muddy battlefields of France. (A similar number are commemorated on the Menin Gate mentioned above.) Here we placed a poppy wreath in memory of those brave Indian soldiers and signed the visitors book before moving on to our final destination of the pilgrimage.

where nearly a hundred unarmed prisoners were murdered. During the British retreat to Dunkirk in May 1940 elements of the regiment were surrounded and taken prisoner of war. The German SS marched the men to a local farm and machine-gunned them down. Some of the bullets can still be seen imbedded in the wall of the barn. At this spot we laid a wreath and drank a toast to those men. My father George Johnson would have known some of them as he was in the same regiment though thankfully not with them at the time.

With our duties completed we headed home happy in the knowledge of a successful Pilgrimage of Remembrance. Already we are planning our next one when we can visit more of Manipur's forgotten men that lay in the cemeteries in France.

Those who partook in the Pilgrimage were Christopher Johnson, Harry Johnson, Andrew Westgate, David Westgate, Ken Westgate.

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National and International News

U'khand political crisis: SC adjourns hearing till May 6

ANI
New Delhi, May 4: The Supreme Court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing till May 6 on the Centre's plea against the Uttarakhand High Court's order revoking President's rule in the hill state.
 Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi told the apex court that the Centre is seriously considering its suggestion to hold floor test in Uttarakhand.

"The court made it clear that the floor test can only take place of Harish Rawat. The court will hear the matter on May 6," Additional Advocate General Mukesh Giri told the media here.
 "Mukul Rohatgi said there is no scope of a negative outcome as they have seriously considered it. Harish Rawat's lawyer Abhishek Singhvi, Kapil Sibal and Rajiv Dhawan clearly said there is not an issue of five-judges, all issues

have been settled and it is not a case of the reference," he added. A bench comprising Justices Dipak Misra and Shiva Kirti Singh yesterday asked the Centre to explore the feasibility of holding a floor test in the Uttarakhand Assembly under the apex court's supervision.
 The apex court asked the Attorney General to take instructions from the Centre in this regard and respond to the court.

The apex court had on April 27 directed to continue the President's rule for the while. The two-judge division bench had also asked several questions to the Centre asking it to justify the imposition of President's rule in Uttarakhand.

The Centre had imposed the President's rule in Uttarakhand on March 27, a day before ousted chief minister Harish Rawat was to take a trust vote in the assembly.

CBI and UP STF arrest prime accused in Vyapam scam

New Delhi, May 4 (PTI) In a joint operation, Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force and CBI today arrested from Kanpur one of the prime accused in the Vyapam scam Ramesh Shivhare, who had been absconding for the last three years. "We have arrested Shivhare this morning. He is wanted by CBI in several cases in the Vyapam scam," Uttar Pradesh DGP Javed Ahmed told PTI over phone.
 CBI sources said here that Shivhare is wanted in five cases probed by it which are related to alleged irregularities in the conduct of Madhya Pradesh Professional

Examination Board also known as Vyapam. They said Shivhare was absconding for the last three years and carried a reward of Rs 10,000. A native of Uttar Pradesh, Shivhare's wife was a local body member in Mahoba. They said Shivhare was one of the kingpins of the scam and was nabbed in a joint operation by UPSTF and CBI from Avas Vikas colony in Kalyanpur area of Kanpur. He will be produced before a competent court today after which he will be taken to Bhopal, they said. Shivhare allegedly acted as a

middleman and arranged for impostors and dummy candidates to appear in the examination carried out by Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board for a certain amount. A resident of Uttar Pradesh, Shivhare has been evading questioning by authorities probing the case. His application for anticipatory bail was also turned down by the Madhya Pradesh High Court in 2014. "There is material to indicate the involvement of applicant in the commission of the crime, for which reason, the Investigating Officer has been insisting for attendance of the

applicant for quite some time but in vain," a bench of Chief Justice AM Khanwilkar and Justice Alok Aradhad has said.

Uttarakhand HC Chief Justice KM Joseph transferred to Andhra Pradesh HC

New Delhi, May 4: KM Joseph, the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court, has been transferred to the Andhra Pradesh High Court set up in Hyderabad, news agency ANI has reported.

A bench headed by Joseph had recently quashed President's Rule in Uttarakhand where the Congress government headed by Chief Minister Harish Rawat has been in the midst of severe factionalism. Joseph, who passed out of the Government Law College in Ernakulam, enrolled as an advocate in Delhi in 1982 and has practiced at the Kerala High Court as well. In July 2014, Joseph assumed charge as the Chief Justice of Uttarakhand. At the same time, Acting Chief Justice Dilip B Bhosale of the Hyderabad High Court has been posted as the Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

12 suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists arrested during raids in Delhi, bomb making materials recovered

New Delhi, May 4: At least 12 suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists were on Wednesday morning arrested during a raid by the Intelligence Bureau and Delhi police special cell. The police have detained suspects from Delhi, NCR region and Deoband in Uttar Pradesh. According to reports, eight people have been arrested from Delhi, while four of them were picked up from Deoband. "Bomb making materials were seized from the 12 suspected JeM Terrorists, they are presently being questioned by

police," reported ANI quoting sources. "While a team of the force's anti-terror unit Special Cell zeroed in on two of the youths, while they were allegedly in the process of making improvised explosive device, from east Delhi's Gokulpuri area, names of the others emerged during their questioning and they were tracked down one after another in the wee hours today, a senior official told PTI. All of them are suspected to be members of a sleeper unit of a terror outfit, planning an attack in the national capital and other

cities, the official said. According to TOI, the special cell has registered an FIR against the suspects for being members of an unlawful group (Unlawful Activities and Prevention Act, UAPA) and under the Explosives Act and for criminal conspiracy. "On interrogation it was found that they had been in touch with JeM leader Yousuf Al Hindi, and also claimed to be the terror outfit's activists themselves," said news18.com. Special Cell teams are conducting raids in Delhi and UP, and several arrests are likely in the next 24 hours.

Contd. from yesterday's issue

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

By: *Ningmbam Bupenda Meitei*

Or, there could be a possibility of accepting that all, the Meitei and the other tribes, are the children of the same common ancestor, and they are all tribal, but the Indian Constitution recognizes the other tribes as tribe under Scheduled Tribe List while the Meiteis, also being a tribe, are yet to be recognized as a tribe under Scheduled Tribe List, approved by the Parliament of India. It is in this scenario that the notion of "the children of the same common ancestor" is accepted and Meiteis too, though accepted by the other tribes as one of them, but can not enjoy the rights and privileges of being a constitutional beneficiary of being listed under Scheduled Tribe category. The larger query is - can such understanding of accepting the two notions: "the children of the same common ancestor, and hence all are the original inhabitants of the same land of Manipur" and "Meiteis were tribal like other tribes in the past but can not and should not be given ST status under the Indian Constitution at present" go together?
 How can there be a simultaneous acceptance and agreement of two contradicting premises: "All the children, the Meiteis and other tribes, of Manipur are of the same common ancestor" and "Meiteis can not come under ST as they are not a tribe like other children, who are tribes, of the same common ancestor"? What could be the conclusion of such contradicting premises? The inherent fallacy in the argument itself is evident merely because there can not be an acceptance of two contradictions, because such acceptance will only tantamount to the inconsistency of the logical arguments, therefore, either of the two premises has to be taken and both can not be chosen either simultaneously at the same time or even differently at different points of time for a convenient use in different contexts and background. Two such antagonistic

premises can not be forcefully joined as the truth of Manipur. The truth can never be two. The truth has to be only one. The choice of the truth may be uneasy. But, the truth has to be true only because it can not be false. Hence, truth, which is not the sum of two false, has to bring a light to the present scenario of whether to accept that Meitei civilization of 32,000 years is true, and if true, then whether the civilization was of tribal in nature, and if yes, then, Meiteis should be given a constitutionally recognized tribal status, and if no, then Meiteis should, in fact, be also not given the status of 'Other Backward Classes' as Meitei civilization can not be a product of the world of 'other backward classes' in its civilizational, linguistic, cultural, sociological, economic and educational sense. Therefore, Meiteis should demand for going back to its pre - OBC category era, or Unreserved category, which is popularly known as 'General category' in 2016. Why should Meiteis allow themselves to be in OBC when Meiteis have such a great ancient civilization of 32,000 years? If Meiteis have accepted themselves as 'backward' in OBC, does it mean that it is far more honourable to accept the status of 'backwardness' instead of taking the tag of 'tribal' in 2016? Have Meiteis forgotten the 32,000 years old of their ancient civilization, which exists till today, when they were listed under OBC category under the Indian Constitution? If the same logic of great Meitei mental, physical, cultural, economical and social calibre is applied and appreciated, and therefore, the Meiteis should not claim for Scheduled Tribe category, then the same logic should also not be forgotten and hence be applied equally, with the same motivation and pride, to the present Meiteis who are under OBC, as Meitei is a community which is constitutionally recognized as 'backward' by the Constitution, and therefore, Meiteis,

instead of enjoying the rights and constitutional privileges being in OBC, should protest against the inclusion of the Meiteis in OBC, afresh in 2016, so that the pride and history of Meiteis is retained in the 21st century. Therefore, the Meiteis should again demand not for ST, but rather to remove OBC from the community and get back to the pre - OBC era category called 'Unreserved' or 'General' category for the Meiteis because the Meiteis, of the 21st century, can compete anywhere in the world, and therefore, the same Meiteis too can compete anywhere in India, which is governed strictly by its reservation policy, which is not a regressive but an affirmative policy of a vibrant democracy.
 So, where should Meiteis go? Whether should they demand ST (Scheduled Tribe) because they were tribe like any other tribe, who is now under ST category under the Indian Constitution, of Manipur? Whether should they protest against the inclusion of Meitei as ST because Meiteis were never a tribe in the past? Whether should they demand for the reversion of OBC category of backward Meiteis to the Unreserved or General category of forward, progressive and highly competent Meiteis? Whether should they accept the 32,000 years old Meitei civilization benefit of tribalism? Whether should they consider that the first original inhabitant of Manipur, the Pleistocene modern human who sowed the 32,000 years of Meitei civilization, was tribal? Whether should they accept that all the children of Manipur had a common ancestor? Are Meiteis the descendants of the first original inhabitant of Manipur in 30,000 BCE? Should Meiteis realize the 21st century scenario? Should Meiteis live with its ancient civilization for the coming hundreds of centuries in future? Is the question - "Is 32,000 years of Meitei

civilization a sign of tribalism?" - a source of pragmatism in today's world economy and fast moving and shifting domestic national and regional politico-administrative and social fabric? Could there be a middle path which takes both the ancient civilization and the realities of the 21st century together in harmony? Can such middle path be possible in a democracy? Can such middle path exist in today's world of rationalism, logic and science? Can Meitei's philosophical quest of logic and science resolve the classic argumentative inquiry of whether Meitei should be given Scheduled Tribe category or not under the Indian Constitution in the 21st century? Is today's demand of Meiteis for ST also a litmus test of accepting the same common ancestor of Manipur and hence all its children are the original inhabitants of the land of Manipur? The people, in a democracy, and its democratically elected government in Manipur can not choose to remain silent like Buddha's noble silence when Buddha was asked transcendental questions. But, both the people and the government of Okram Ibobi Singh must, democratically, farsightedly, pragmatically and maturely, look forward to Buddha's middle path in such a critical juncture of a history in making for the future generations of Manipur so that the future generations of the state live in their best possible harmony among themselves with Mother Nature. The silence of Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh, in this case, can not be equated with that of Buddha's noble silence, as the silence of the elected Leader of Manipur will only help in building trust deficit among the people and therefore, the Chief Minister must proactively discuss the issue in its utmost seriousness without any delay, whether the state Cabinet should recommend Meitei for Scheduled Tribe or not in 2016.

(Concluded)