

Editorial

Imphal, Friday, September 16, 2016

The inadvertent fallout

The tenacity of the people of Manipur to cling on to concepts of normalcy while actually indulging in acts that reaps results to the contrary can only be marvelled at. We profess unity while setting up and supporting ethnically intolerant groups. We demand peace while burning and inciting violence. We insist on freedom even when we are indulging in extortions and intimidations, and we ask understanding of others according to our own terms and views. We publicly donate only to claim it back in private. Perhaps the present social churning threatening to alter the social fabric of the state is an event whose time has come. Maybe we all have been contributing, albeit unwittingly, to its present condition. But all is not so dark or dismal. There are changes, unintended fallouts that promise to yank the people from the stupor and the self-deceiving delusions of superiority.

There are signs of the people awakening to the realities staring them back in the face, even if that reality is not very savoury or one everyone has expected or desired. We have come to participate in social discussions and debates, and have slowly yet surely started to learn to air our vows, never mind fact that, more often than not, a large number of such views and personal opinions reflect the underlying ethnic leanings and are unnecessarily abrasive and harmful. This is, after all, a starting phase to the trend of social participation and will hopefully learn from the mistakes, and with time, to polish up on one's thoughts and outlooks. The most significant outcome is perhaps the increased awareness not only of one's own history, tradition and customs, but also of other communities as well. There is also a tangible change in the manner in which the public consume resources. The sustained lack of facilities have evidently stirred the curiosity and raised the enthusiasm of the public. There is an increased effort by various groups and individuals to usher in self reliance, especially with regards to food. If the well-meaning but clueless state government can harness the present agitations and unrest, then perhaps we can channelize the energy into something productive instead of playing the reluctant leader. It may be hard to admit for a lot of self-appointed leaders and undeserving representatives, but one cannot deny the fact that at the root of the present turmoil is economic considerations. The sooner we admit and understand that, the easier will it be to work out a solution. Times are changing, hopefully for the better. With increased awareness, participation and enthusiasm, it is now the duty of everyone in the state to take up the cudgel and wield it productively, and not to batter each other until nothing remains. Every life is precious, and in order for all of us to make our existence worthwhile, we first need to snap out of the illusion of superiority of language, caste, creed, clan, religion and customs.

Maoists ranked fourth dreaded terrorist outfit after Taliban

New Delhi, Sept 16: In a major cause of concern for the Indian authorities, a US-sponsored study has now claimed that the banned CPL-Maoists are the fourth dreaded terrorist outfit in the world after Taliban, Islamic State and Boko Haram.

As per the figures, which are part of the data collected by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism contracted with the US State Department, India witnessed a total of 791 terror attacks in 2015, of which 43% were carried out by

Naxalites, in which 289 people died. The report further claimed that the CPI (Maoist) carried out a total of 343 attacks in 2015 killing 176 Indians. Taliban were involved in a massive 1,093 terror attacks, which took 4,512 lives.

The study found that as many as 28,328 people were killed and 35,320 injured in the 11,774 terror attacks witnessed by the world in 2015.

Shockingly, the study claimed that India was the fourth worst-affected country after Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The educated youths are terribly frustrated to see the level of corruption in Manipur. This has led to failure of governance as well as for increasing magnitude of scams in the state including siphoning off of allowances and dues amounting to crores of rupees, PDS rice scam, scams over Loktak Lake and Mapithel Dam, etc. and finally the present fiasco over the recruitment of the police constables. He concluded by stating that the academia and activist alike cannot remain silent but have to work together to root out the evil practice so that the deserving can get a chance, then only there shall be meaning in governance and development.

Prof. W. Nabakumar Singh stated that corruption has become a household word in our day-today lives. Every aspect of our life is affected by this practice. There is no supersaturated stage for corruption, it goes on and on. Every solution has the mechanism of dissolving the solutes but not corruption. It corrodes the fabric of the society and nation. He remarked that such a kind of seminar will discuss the varied aspects of corruption in Northeast and work towards finding a solution. He explained corruption in the line of materialistic perspective. According to him, different layers of culture do not go hand in hand in Northeast. In other words, the material foundation of ways of life of the society does not go hand in hand with the cultural ideologies. Consumption behaviour of the people of our society has progressed a lot. Today the status of a person is best exemplified by his consumption pattern. Consumption economy occupies an important role in our society and determines the status of a person. The brand of a commodity a person possesses/wears has become the status of a person. In such a way our ideology has gone far ahead but the change in means of production has not affected the ideology of the people.

To drive the point, he cited the poem "Wonder thrust", which expressed the wish of the poet to travel around the world with a penny in his pocket. But such a notion today can only be a blind wish, simply impossible in the post-modern nations of the South East Asia (SEA). He observed that people in SEA, in these newly independent states, there exists a gap between

means and ends. People are facing inverse culture lack, a crisis arising out of the gap between their cultural moorings and ideology (which is changing very fast) and their means of production (which has remained static). Precisely, this gap between the ends and means is the root cause of corruption in which people resort to using unfair means to get their ends.

According to him, the same phenomenon exists in Manipur. Governance has lost its meaning and we are not able to get the fruits of democracy. The novarich class has become rich fortnight and they are the same who has become interested in politics. They have become the fittest in our society in the Darwinian sense of the word. But this is obviously having a drastic effect on the society and likely to have a negative impact in the future of the society. It carries every potential to tear up the fabric of the society and the nation. However, he inserted that one cannot blame the Government only, people are also equally responsible and to be blamed. The people including the academia has to apply their minds when electing our representatives. It is time to think beyond Darwinism; it is our task to root out corruption.

Khaidem Mani began by defining what corruption is. He said that it is the abuse of public office for personal gains. It is not only about the wrong use of money but also of power. He stressed that corruption violates human rights and it has become an industry in Northeast. He then explained what governance entails and stressed that it includes execution of public policy in an accountable manner and management of resources as per needs of the people transparently. He stated that India is a democracy which is based on the will of the people. But for a corrupt democracy it depends on the will of the rulers. In Manipur there is no democracy but one finds a corrupt state which is marked by "vulture culture" or "a dog eat dog world". Corruption runs from the grassroot level such as Panchayati Raj and ADC to the State level machinery. He cited the recent-most example of recruitment of police constable. The hill-valley divide that resonates in Manipur today is a result of corruption among the leaders in both the spaces and on account of mis-governance. He concluded by stressing that one cannot remain silent in both the hills

and the valley. The culture of silence needs to be abandoned as well as the so called tolerant culture if we have to eradicate corruption. Only then, governance can thrive, unity forged and Manipur truly can become a democratic society.

Kim Gangte stated that corruption begins from selfishness. He cited the example corruption by Suresh Kamaldi during the Common Wealth Games held in Delhi and how he was arrested. But she reiterated that if Suresh Kamaldi had taken training on corruption in Manipur he would have never been arrested! She shared her experience when she was a politician. In valley areas, during elections, women folk gathers in group to wait for the candidates to turn up so that they can demand money. In hill areas, those who have guns and are power frisk away the ballot boxes. According to her, this is the root cause of corruption, and we cannot solely blame the politicians. Post election, when villagers from far away remote areas come to meet the Minister or MLAs, the politicians is never present in the offices. Or otherwise, on one excuse or the other they refrain from meeting the villagers. So, it is the cycle of neglect, mis-governance and corruption which is destroying the very foundation of Manipur.

Thangso Baite, Chief Guest of the function, remarked that since the objective of the seminar is to get an academic understating of the phenomenon of corruption, it should not be directed against any individual, department or ministry. According to him, Manipur is not corruption. When only a single person or few are corrupted, it shall be unwise to generalise and infer that all Manipuris are corrupted. There is a due process of law which ultimately punishes the corrupted. He remarked that it would be wrong to jump to conclusion even in the most cited case of the recruitment of the constables. According to him, the Government has already accepted the "errors": it can be corruption or irregularity or any other form of mistake. But it would be wrong to conclude it as mere case of corruption. Issues, which he believes would be deliberated during seminar are strengthening political institutions, accountability, transparency, governance and most important of all to stop social corruption, for example, the issue of mob justice

rampant in both the hills and valley. According to him, the traditional Manipuri culture was marked by peace and cordiality. However, violence has torn apart the social stability. Further, he stated that corruption is an international phenomenon. But the issue is, every Government is working towards controlling it, how to nip at the bud and what kind of law to be legislated, etc. Most important of all, public also needs to be oriented about the evils of corruption. It will be possible to stop the phenomenon only with active participation of the public. He concluded by stating that just as charity begins at home, transformation has to begin from the family. Finally, he appealed to those who engages in *bandhs* and *blockades* (he encountered three "stops" at three different points on the way to the venue of the Seminar) to get the attention of the Government to repair roads, etc. to kindly approach the concerned authority. Beginning of social justice begins not only from knowing the about entitled right but also from knowing approach to be adopted without disturbing others.

Dr. Ng Ngalengnam acknowledged that the theme of the seminar is unique as it touches upon right issues affecting the lives of the people in Manipur. He observed that it is the responsibility of the Government to provide security and basic needs to the people. In instances where the Government fails, one can rightly say that the Government is anti-people. It also reveals that it is a corrupt government. According to him, corruption begins from the top (the representatives) and moves down to the lowest level of the society. The Job market in Manipur is afflicted with corruption. Developmental activities are also equally affected. He stressed that everyone is familiar with the story of percentage cuts practiced by the Ministers when it comes to development works. He concluded by emphasising that more pertinent issues will be discussed during the seminar and many of findings can be forwarded to Government for policy formulations to control corruption.

Dr. Hanjabam Shukhdeba Sharma, Department of Social Work, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Regional Campus, Manipur proposed the Vote of Thanks.

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3- Days Regional Seminar on corruption and governance in Northeast India begins

National & International News

Swedish court upholds arrest warrant for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange

AFP Stockholm, Sept 16: A Swedish appeals court on Friday upheld an arrest warrant for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange over a 2010 rape accusation, rejecting his request to have it lifted. The court announced in a statement that Assange "is still detained in absentia", adding that it "shares the assessment of the (lower) district court that Julian Assange is still suspected on probable cause of rape... and that there is a risk that he will evade legal proceedings or a penalty."

Assange has always refused to travel to Stockholm for questioning over the allegation, which he denies, due to concerns Sweden will extradite him to the United States over WikiLeaks' release of 500,000 secret military files from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Friday's hearing was the eighth time the European arrest warrant was tested in a Swedish court, with all



seven previous rulings having gone against him. The 45-year-old Australian sought refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy in London in June 2012 after exhausting all his legal options in Britain against extradition to Sweden. The hearing came a day after WikiLeaks released medical records claiming Assange's mental health was at risk if he remained confined in the embassy.

Two teens gangraped in front of friends in outer Delhi's Aman Vihar, four held

New Delhi, Sept 16: Two teenage girls, including a minor, were allegedly gangraped by five youths in outer Delhi's Aman Vihar area Wednesday, said police. The girls, 18 and 17 years old, had gone to a government park in the area with two friends when the accused targeted them around 6 pm, police added.

"The girls and their friends (both boys) were chatting when the accused arrived and misbehaved with the girls. When the boys with

them objected, the accused assaulted and overpowered them. Then they raped the girls in front of them," said a police officer. "The incident happened in an open agricultural field beside the park," the officer added.

The girls fainted due to the sexual assault and the five accused fled from the spot, said police. Their friends called up the police and informed them about the crime, police added. In the meantime, people from the locality also gathered at the spot.

Lok Sabha seeks views and suggestions on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016

New Delhi, Sept 16: Lok Sabha has sought views and suggestions from individual and association on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The bill is available on Lok Sabha Website. The views and suggestion may be sent to Lok Sabha Secretariat

by 30th of this month. The Bill has been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee of both the Houses, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Satyapal Singh for examination and presenting a Report to the Parliament.

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