

Editorial

Imphal, Tuesday, September 13, 2016

Looking beyond the obvious

In what comes off as a clear case of impotent rage and indignation, the ruling party of the state issued a hasty order expelling sitting MLA Y Erabot from the primary membership of the Indian National Congress for six years with immediate effect, an act of retribution which is a tad too late as the sitting MLA of Wangkhei AC has already announced his decision not only to quit the ruling party but also give up his membership of the state Legislative Assembly days ago. The final act of defiance was the subsequent joining of the 'expelled' member to BJP. Erabot has been considered an opposition within the ruling party for his uncompromising views and forthright opinions for long, one who took immense personal risks to set things right. It was also reported that the reason behind his decision to quit his rank and membership from the ruling party is the increasingly despotic political system as well as the deliberate scheme to set up a dynastic administrative setup within the Congress party compounded by its wanton indulgence in corrupt practices, examples of which are too many to list down. What has sparked the interest and speculation of the public regarding the political future of the state is the fact that while the one party considered the best bet to maintain administrative stability and implement political reforms have evidently started cracking at the seams and is showing irrefutable signs of internal damage and rot, the alternative is nothing to cheer about either, with more or less the same players donning different team jersey but harboring the same intent and attitude taking centre stage.

And while the state has been thrown into a cauldron of turmoil and chaos largely due to the incoherent and abrupt approach towards administrative matters by the government, those at the helm of affairs in the state are still nonchalant of the issues burning up the state- from communal to employment to education to infrastructure. Perhaps the false sense of invincibility that evidently crept in as a result of the consecutive victories in the general elections have lulled them into disregarding the emergent issues and are drifting away from the reality that the state is reeling in today. Cronies and hangers-on of the rich and the powerful have started to assert their connections and are flaunting it like badges of honour.

The tantalizing wait for change and development in the state have not happened so far, and is unlikely to happen within the tenure of the present government, saddled as it is with problems and controversies which are mostly of its own making. The society is approaching a crossroad and are about to make that vital decision which will have a bearing not only on our everyday lives but on the lives of our future generations. It is time to look beyond the few thousand rupees being passed around to entice our sympathy.

Afghan prez Ashraf Ghani's 2-day India visit starts tomorrow

New Delhi, Sept. 13: Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani will arrive here tomorrow on a two-day visit to hold "close consultations" on key issues with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during which India is likely to accede to Kabul's demand for increased military assistance.

Announcing the visit, the External Affairs Ministry said the discussions between Ghani and Modi will cover a wide range of "matters of mutual interest". "The upcoming visit will provide an opportunity to continue the close and frequent consultations between the two friendly neighbours, including at the highest level.

"Such interaction is the hallmark of

their strategic partnership and has guided the strengthening of all-round cooperation between the two countries," the Ministry had said in a statement on Saturday.

Afghanistan has been demanding increased defence supplies, including lethal weapons from India, which for the first time gave four Mi-25 attack helicopters to the war-torn country last year. According to sources, India may accede to the demand and announce such assistance.

Apart from holding discussions with Modi, who will also host a lunch in his honour, Ghani during his working visit will also interact with the business community and deliver an address at a prominent think tank in New Delhi.

When will Manipur have IISc, IISER, AIIMS, IIT, IIM and SPA?

By: Ningombam Bupenda Meitei
Manipur is a state with one INI (Institute of National Importance), namely - National Institute of Technology, Manipur, while Manipur University and Central Agricultural University are central universities in Manipur. Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (Madhya Pradesh), which is a central university, has its regional campus in Manipur.

India's INIs and 1 INI (NIT) in Manipur

Institutes of National Importance are premier higher education institutions, set up by an Act of Parliament, in India. They include all IITs (Indian Institute of Technology), IISERs (Indian Institute of Science and Educational Research), AIIMSs (All India Institute of Medical Sciences), NITs (National Institute of Technology) and SPAs (School of Planning and Architecture). IIMs (Indian Institute of Management), initiated by the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, set up under Indian Societies Registration Act, are autonomous, in day-to-day affairs, but administratively and strategically overseen by the IIM Council.

At present, India has 20 IIMs (19 working IIMs and 1 IIM Jammu which is yet to come up), 23 functioning IITs, 17 AIIMSs (7 functioning AIIMSs and 10 proposed AIIMSs), 7 IISERs (all 7 IISERs are functioning), 3 SPAs (all 3 SPAs are functioning) and 31 NITs (all 31 NITs are functioning). In total, India has 81 Institutes of National Importance and 20 IIMs, and out of such 101 (81 INIs + 20 IIMs) premier institutions Manipur has got only one - NIT Manipur.

Why do young minds leave Manipur after schooling?

With one INI in Manipur, the young minds of Manipur have no choice but to leave their own state after their schooling in search of getting admission to such premier institutes of global excellence. The students, particularly school students, of

Manipur are academically strong and mentally tough as schooling in Manipur is still concerned about having a deeper and stronger fundamental foundation of every student. Teachers, in schools of Manipur, are traditionally interested in clearing the basic concepts of students so that the school educational, particularly 'academic', training is imparted with an utmost seriousness and dedication. A school student from a school in Manipur can compete, in many ways, with any school student from anywhere in India; but, any college/university student from a college/university in Manipur finds not comfortably empowered to compete with his/her counterpart from anywhere, like IIT or IISc or AIIMS, in India.

With a large population of young minds leaving Manipur to pursue their undergraduate program there is a drain of economic wealth from the state of Manipur to the rest of India, where the students are heading to. Had those INIs, IIM and other premier institutes been there in Manipur, they will not only attract the best minds from the rest of the country but also accelerate the economic activities in and increase the flow of wealth, both in terms of intellectual and economy, to Manipur. Manipur, with IISc (Indian Institute of Science), IISER, AIIMS, IIT, IIM and SPA, will be a developed Manipur; and that "developed Manipur" will, truly, be the symbol of an inclusive growth and development of an emerging economy and global player called India.

Act East: Why India needs IISc, INIs, IIM in Manipur

Why Manipur needs INIs, IISc and IIM is not merely because it is a state, and therefore it has to get them. It does not only need them but their presence in the state is a necessity of India, as that presence would become a sign of presenting a new India in Manipur when the world of South East Asian countries come to

Manipur through "Act East". Before the East Asia meets the rest of India, Manipur - being the natural Gateway of India to East and South East Asia - must be well equipped with all the INIs, IISc and IIM so that the idea of modern India becomes functional and vibrantly working right from Manipur. The Presidents and the Prime Ministers of South East Asian countries may fly to New Delhi but the people from these countries will encounter India, mostly, by visiting Imphal firstly. If Imphal cannot become the testimony of a new developed India, how will India instill faith and confidence to the people of South East Asia for the exchange of minds, cultures, goods and wealth with India?

Many from the state of Manipur have gone out and excelled in all such INIs, IIMs, IISc, TIFR and other premier institutes of India. Many have also made their academic mark in Oxbridge universities and Ivy League institutions. Shall not the establishment of INIs, IISc and IIM, in Manipur, motivate those, from Manipur, who are working in world renowned universities, in India and abroad, to come back and become a part of the making of a new developed Manipur, which is also very much a part of the making of a new developed India?

Can PM Modi and Amit Shah do it before 2017?

Can Amit Shah, who is arriving in Imphal on 15th September, 2016, declare "if BJP comes to power in Manipur, there will be IISc, IISER, IIT, IIM, AIIMS and SPA in Manipur within a year"? If BJP cannot form its government in the state, should it mean that Prime Minister Modi will never be interested in setting up institutes of national importance (which are different from central universities that are under UGC)? If BJP and PM Modi are indeed genuinely interested, then such institutes will be established afresh, meaning without upgrading or converting any existing institution in Manipur to become IISc, IISER,

IIT, IIM or AIIMS. In upgrading/ converting an existing institution to become institutes of national importance, there is hardly any new infrastructure and a space for new minds. It becomes an old wine in a new bottle. It is just a change of nomenclature, morphologically, with the same old faculty members, old buildings and infrastructure, same old redundant research and academic environment, same old nexus and nepotism and yet with a new pay structure for the same old faculty members who would become faculty members by the virtue of the upgradation.

Manipur needs new space in modern time

Manipur needs new infrastructure and technology, new young minds and new scientific and academic research-oriented environment, with the 21st century's instrumentation, which can have an impact in the global research arena. Re-changing names and establishing institutions by using the already existing crowded infrastructure are not the solution to do justice either to that very new institution, being established, or to the making of a developed Manipur. Manipur is popular for establishing many new institutions by borrowing and using the already available infrastructure which is already being used for the utility of some other existing old institution. It could, to some extent, make sense if such new institutions came up in the post independent India's Manipur, in 1950s or 1960s, but not in the 21st century India, and certainly never in 2016 or post 2016.

The question to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi is: whether the Prime Minister and his government, in New Delhi, are serious enough to establish IISc, IISER, IIT, AIIMS, IIM and SPA in Manipur before 2019, and whether his party, through its President Amit Shah, can announce the establishment of the aforementioned institutions before Manipur Assembly elections in 2017?

National & International News

2 dead, 30 injured in clashes across Valley; strict curfew imposed

Srinagar, Sept. 13: Two youth were killed and at least 30 people injured in clashes that were reported Tuesday in Kashmir's south Bijnbehara, Bandipora, Shopian and Kulgam.

Mustafa Ahmed Mir, a 19-year-old, was killed on the spot after he was hit by a tear shell during clashes with security personnel in Bandipora. In Shopian, where clashes also emerged, Shahid Ahmad Shah, succumbed to pellet injuries to his hand and heart. Three people were also injured.

Clashes were also reported at Batamaloo in Srinagar after prayers were offered. Eight people were injured in pellet firing in Kulgam, while four were injured in Pattan in north Kashmir.

With curfew imposed across Kashmir, security personnel refused to all people to step out and offer prayers on Eid. With masjid sealed and protests erupting in the Valley, both - Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti and former CM Omar Abdullah have not offered prayers on Eid.×

The clashes, that began at around 8 am this morning, is still underway.

Curfew imposed Tuesday is the strictest across Srinagar since curfew was first imposed in July this year. This is also the first time in history that all major mosques and shrines are closed on Eid in Kashmir. Locals, however, will be allowed to offer prayers from small mosques in their locality. Restrictions across the districts of Kashmir were imposed by the authorities in view of a call by

Separatists for a march to the local offices of the United Nations, coinciding with the global body's opening of its 71st Session of the UN General Assembly at UN headquarters in New York.

Security personnel have pressed helicopters and drones into service that are keeping a bird's eye vigil from the skies. On Monday, the government ordered a shutdown of Internet services of all telecom networks and also mobile services except that of the state-run BSNL for 72 hours.

Rajiv Gandhi assassination convict attacked in prison

Chennai, Sept. 13: One of the convicts jailed for life in former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, A.G. Perarivalan on Tuesday was attacked by a fellow convict in the Vellore prison, said a top district official. "Perarivalan was attacked with a log by a fellow convict. He suffered minor wound on his forehead and medical attention was immediately provided. The wound was closed with some

stitches," S.A. Raman, Vellore District Collector told IANS over phone.

Perarivalan was attacked by Rajesh Khanna. The two were housed in the same cell till recently.

According to Raman, what provoked Rajesh to attack Perarivalan was not clear and an inquiry will be held. Meanwhile, PMK founder S. Ramadoss condemning the

attack, said Khanna was earlier housed in the same cell with Perarivalan and was recently shifted to a different cell. Ramadoss said the prison authorities' version, that Khanna felt that Perarivalan was behind his cell change and attacked him, was not convincing.

The PMK leader said there were no answers as to how Rajesh got hold of the log to attack

Perarivalan and why his cell was changed.

Perarivalan and six other convicts have been in prison since 1991, the year a woman Tamil Tiger suicide bomber blew up Gandhi at an election rally near Chennai.

Constable injured in Kashmir I-day attack dies at AIIMS

PTI New Delhi, Sep 13: A policeman injured in a militant attack on security forces on Independence Day in Kashmir today died at AIIMS here.

Constable Rous Ahmed had sustained injuries in the terror attack in Srinagar's Nowhatta area. He succumbed to injuries at the hospital this morning, a police official said.

A CRPF officer and two militants were killed while nine security personnel were injured when militants attacked security forces at Nowhatta in downtown Srinagar.

Man shot dead by three in UP

PTI Baghat, Sep 13: A 25-year-old man was shot dead in Tikri village of Doghat area here by three assailants, police said today.

The incident took place last evening when the accused opened fire on Vivek at a shop, killing him on the spot, they said.

An FIR has been registered in this connection against Raju, Niti and Bittu.

Investigation is underway, however, no arrests have been made so far.

Five Indians held at airport in China for drug smuggling

PTI Beijing, Sep 13: Five Indians have been arrested by Chinese immigration officials at an airport in Yunnan province for allegedly smuggling about 18 kgs of cannabis from India.

The five accused who had kept cannabis in food packets and laptop bags were held at Kunming airport after they came from Kolkata on September 7, officials said. The drug packets were discovered by the scanners at the airport.

Their arrests have been notified to Indian officials and they have been granted counsellor access on September 21, the officials said.

Currently, seven Indians are held in prisons at Guangxi and Guangzhou on drug smuggling charges. Drug smuggling in China is treated as a serious offence and in some cases the crime attracts death penalty or long prison terms. In July, a Colombian model was sentenced to 15 years in jail for drug smuggling in China.

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