

Editorial

Imphal, Saturday, September 3, 2016

2 days session; very short and abrogates peoples' issue

One more day is left. The monsoon session of the 10th Manipur Legislative Assembly which began yesterday and adjourned after 35 minutes sitting yesterday will be adjourned sine die on Monday. The *dhamaka* protest by BJP workers demanding revocation of the cancellation of the recruitment test for Manipur Police constable batch 2013, the bandh called by surrendered militants, the fury of the JCILPS Women's Wings volunteers at Keishampat area and the unsettled dispute to the introduction of a legislation to protect the indigenous people of the state will not be able to discuss in the session. Leave aside the demands or the differences, when matters which give direct impact to the common people who live on hand to mouth, when children are being forced to stay home without attending school, when government servant are barred from attending their offices due to the action of some groups placing demands to the government, then such thing is a serious matter and ignoring the situation by the legislators as well as by the government is nothing but a clear sign of failed governance.

It is known to every people that sidelining the issue for introduction of the Inner Line Permit system in the state and the differences between some sections of people from Churachandpur district to the need for a legislation of the kind, will keep the people of the state in the frying pan. People demanding an ILPS legislation in the state being spearheaded by the JCILPS is warning serious consequences if the ongoing Assembly Session adjourned sine die without bringing up a Bill for protection of the Indigenous people of the state. On the other hand a JAC formed against the passing of any such Bill is undergoing serious form of agitation at Churachandpur district by keeping the nine dead bodies at coffins for over a year.

This write up is not to discuss the politics in ILPS related issues, but the kind of subjugation of the issues of certain groups of people and the hardship of the common people by the Legislators. Even the three government Bills introduced by the state education minister on the first day need to be deliberated in the house. A hasty move and passing of it without proper debate may land the good initiative of the government to devastation. One wonders whether there will be adequate time to discuss the Bill on the last day due to time constraint as well as negligible presence of MLAs in the opposition bench.

State Legislative Assembly is considered as the temple of democracy where the elected representatives hold sitting to discuss for the welfare of the state as well as to look into the kind of problems being faced by the common people.

To someone who lives on hand to mouth, it is beyond their capacity to think on the future of the nation. Sections of people definitely are needed for voicing for the whole of the masses and the government needs to think over the kind of voices. Not only should the demands of the sections of people but also the hardship common people should be the priority in sitting like state assembly session.

Deliberately leaving aside the hot issues burning the state in the state Assembly Session will only show that the legislators are now no more the representatives of the people but have now converted themselves into dictators.

Shouting outside the house when they are capable of drawing the attention of the house is of no use as these day people are no fool. What makes the business advisory committee of the state legislative assembly decided to hold the session for only 2 days, when there are dozens of issues burning the state, is a matter that makes people ponder on how the government is running the state. Let's hope the temple of democracy be kept where the people trusted most.

Improving the quality of school education

By : Dr. Subhash C. Khuntia

The 21st Century global economy can thrive in an environment that has focus on skills around creativity and imagination, critical thinking and problem solving. Empirical analysis reveals a strong positive relationship between education and economic growth. India has a large population of 30.5 crore (Census 2011), in the school going age of 6-18, which is more than 25% of the total population. India has the full potential to use this demographic dividend to its advantage if the children can be imparted education that prepares them to face the real world with confidence.

With the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 2030 the focus now has shifted to Quality with Equity up to the Secondary level of Education.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, some months back, in one of his addresses through *Mann Ki Baat* emphasized the importance of quality in the following words: "So far, the government's focus was on spreading education across the country. But the time has now come to shift the focus on quality education. Now, the government should emphasise more on learning rather than schooling."

HRD Minister Shri Prakash Javedkar also announced that "Raising the quality of education in the country will be the top priority". This shift from schooling to learning would mean a shift in focus from inputs to outcomes.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by Government of India in partnership with State Governments, has achieved considerable success in universalising elementary education. Today, there are 19.67

crore children enrolled in 14.5 lakh elementary schools in the country. The dropout rate has reduced considerably, but is still high at 16% at primary and 32% at upper primary level, and needs to be reduced significantly. As per a survey, the number of out of school children has declined from 135 lakh in 2005 to 61 lakh children in 2014, all efforts must be made to bring the last child back to school.

As is evident, India has done well in terms of ensuring access and equity in schooling. However, the level of learning by the average student is a matter of concern. As per the recent report of the National Achievement Survey (NAS) for class 5 students, the percentage of students getting more than half the questions correct is only 36% for reading comprehension and the corresponding figures for mathematics and environmental studies are 37% and 46% respectively.

Both the Centre and the State Governments are devising comprehensive approaches and strategies to address the issue of improving quality of education in schools. Some of the key focus areas include working on issues related to Teachers, Classroom processes, Assessments and Evaluations of student's learning, School Infrastructure, School Effectiveness and Community participation.

A. Teachers
While children are at the centre of school education, it is the teacher who plays the most critical role in ensuring learning among children. Since inception of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 19.48 lakh additional teacher posts have been created for elementary classes; appointment of teachers against these posts has

resulted in improving the pupil teacher ratio from 42:1 to 24:1. However, there are still schools having single teachers or inadequate number of teachers. For this State governments need to redeploy teachers for equitable distribution and also have an annual schedule of recruitment of qualified teachers, so as to replace the retiring teachers.

Presently 85% of regular teachers in government schools are professionally qualified. In 20 States and UTs, all teachers have the requisite qualifications. Government is taking steps to ensure that over the next 2-3 years all teachers in the remaining 16 States/UTs would be fully qualified. As per the findings of a study done in 2013 by the Ministry, the average teacher attendance was found to be around 83%. This needs to be improved to close to 100%.

Need based professional development of teachers working in schools is being taken up under both Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan schemes. Online programmes are also on the anvil to supplement the efforts.

The school system needs to attract bright students to the teaching profession, 4-year integrated B.A. B.Ed and B.Sc B.Ed teacher programmes have been introduced by the National Council of Teacher Education and these programmes need to be popularized to catch the attention of those who are genuinely interested in nation building through a quality schooling system.

B. Classroom Processes
These have the strongest association with learning achievement of children, and include classroom management,

effective student teacher interactions, and quality of instruction; structured teaching and nature of activities focusing on learning. Ensuring regular attendance of students as well as teachers in the classroom is a pre-condition for the same. The model for improving learning outcomes needs to focus on clearly benchmarking expected learning outcomes for every class and every subject, easily understandable by teachers, school heads and widely disseminated among parents and community; ICT enabled teaching and learning.

Recognizing the need for a strong foundation for learning the Government launched *Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat* in 2014, with a framework emphasising the importance of learning to read with understanding. In order to build an interest and popularizing learning of Mathematics, Science and Technology this government launched the *Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan* in 2015. Through this initiative schools have an opportunity to be mentored by institutions like the IITs and NITs amongst others. The recent launch of Atal Innovation Mission and Atal Tinkering Lab would give a fillip to critical analysis, creativity and problem solving among students.

All the Government Secondary schools in the country are being ICT enabled so as to leverage ICT in teaching the children and also for improving IT literacy among them. The National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) and recently launched E-Pathshala are bringing together all digital and digitisable resources across all stages of school education and teacher education. *(To be contd...)*
(PIB Feature)

National & International News

Curfew in parts of Srinagar, restrictions in rest of Kashmir

PTI Srinagar, Sept 3: Curfew continued in parts of Srinagar today in view of the separatists' call for occupying Lal Chowk and Airport Road here while curfew-like restrictions remained in force in rest of Kashmir even as normal life remained paralysed for the 57th day. "Curfew remains in force in five police station areas of downtown Srinagar and Batamloo and Maisuma areas in uptown city," a police official said. He said curfew in these areas of the

summer capital continued as a precautionary measure in view of the call given by separatists asking people to occupy Airport Road, city centre Lal Chowk and district headquarters today and tomorrow to protest the visit of Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh-led all-party delegation to the Valley. However, the official said, curfew has been lifted from the towns where it was imposed yesterday. Curfew has been lifted from other areas of the Valley in view of the improving situation, the official

said. Authorities had yesterday reimposed curfew in Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian, Baramulla and Pattan towns apart from some areas of Srinagar in view of apprehensions of violence after Friday prayers. Curfew-like restrictions on the movement of people were in place in the rest of the Valley, official sources said. Meanwhile, normal life remained affected due to the separatist sponsored strike on 57th day as

educational institutions and private offices were closed, while public transport continued to be off the roads. The separatists have extended the shutdown programme till September 8. As many as 70 persons, including two police personnel, have been killed and several thousand others injured in the clashes between protesters and security forces in the Valley since Hizbul Mujahideen militant Burhan Wani was killed in an encounter in south Kashmir on July 8.

President Duterte declares 'state of lawlessness' after bomb kills 14 in Philippines

Davao, Sept. 3: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte declared a nationwide "state of lawlessness" on Saturday after suspected Abu Sayyaf extremists detonated a bomb that killed 14 people and wounded about 70 in his southern hometown. Duterte, who inspected the scene of Friday night's attack at a night market in downtown Davao city, said his declaration did not amount to an imposition of martial law. It would allow troops to be deployed in urban centers to back up the police in setting up checkpoints and increasing patrols, he said.

An Abu Sayyaf spokesman, Abu Rami, claimed responsibility for the blast near the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Davao University and a five-star hotel, but Duterte said investigators were looking at other possible suspects, including drug syndicates, which he has targeted in a bloody crackdown. "These are extraordinary times and I supposed that I'm authorised to allow the security forces of this country to do searches," Duterte told reporters at the scene of the attack, asking the public to cooperate and be vigilant.

"We're trying to cope up with a crisis now. There is a crisis in this country involving drugs, extrajudicial killings and there seems to be an environment of lawless violence," said Duterte, who served

as mayor of Davao for years before elected to the presidency in June. The attack came as Philippine forces were on alert amid an ongoing military offensive against Abu Sayyaf extremists in southern Sulu province, which intensified last week after the militants beheaded a kidnapped villager. The militants threatened to launch an unspecified attack after the military said 30 of the gunmen were killed in the weeklong offensive.

Rami, the Abu Sayyaf spokesman, is the son-in-law of Mohammad Said, an influential militant commander who used the nom de guerre Amah Maas and was killed in the ongoing Sulu offensive. Davao Vice Mayor Paulo Duterte, the president's son, also told reporters that militants linked to the Islamic State group had threatened the progressive city.

PTI New Delhi, Sept 3: CBI today carried out searches at the residences of former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda and a sitting UPSC member along with 18 other locations in a case of alleged irregularities in acquisition of land in Gurgaon in which farmers were cheated to the tune of Rs 1,500 crore. CBI sources said besides Hooda's residence, premises of the then Principal Secretary ML Tayal, UPSC member Chatter Singh, both former IAS officers, and a serving IAS SS Dhillon were also searched by the team.

"In an ongoing investigation, CBI carried out searches at 20 locations in Rohtak, Gurgaon, Panchukla and Delhi in connection with alleged irregularities in the purchase of land from farmers in Gurgaon," CBI

Some commanders of the Abu Sayyaf, which is blacklisted by the United States and the Philippines as a terrorist organisation for deadly bombings, ransom kidnappings and beheadings, have pledged allegiance to IS. The military, however, says there has been no evidence of a direct collaboration and militant action may have been aimed at bolstering their image after years of combat setbacks.

CBI searches residence of Hooda, 19 other locations

Spokesperson R K Gaur said. The agency had registered the case last year in September on allegations that private builders in conspiracy with unknown public servants of Haryana Government had purchased around 400 acres of land from farmers and land owners of village Manesar, Naurangpur & Lakhnola, District Gurgaon at throw away prices, showing the threat of acquisition by the government, during the period August 27, 2004 to August 24, 2007. It is alleged that in this process, initially, the Haryana Government had issued a notification under the Land Acquisition Act for acquisition of land measuring about 912 acres for setting up an Industrial Model Township at Villages Manesar, Naurangpur and Lakhnola in Gurgaon. After that, all the land had allegedly

been grabbed from the land owners by private builders under the threat of acquisition at meagre rates, CBI had said after registration of the case. It is alleged that an order was also passed by the competent authority i.e. the Director of Industries on August 24, 2007 releasing this land from the acquisition process and the land was released in violation of the government policy, in favour of the builders, their companies and agents, instead of the original land owners. The CBI has alleged in its FIR that in the said manner, land measuring about 400 acres whose market value at that time was above Rs 4 crore per acre approximately totalling about Rs 1,600 crore approximately was allegedly purchased by the private builders & others from the innocent land owners for only about Rs 100 crore.

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