

Editorial

Imphal Wednesday, April 5, 2017

Worsening antecedence

With the initial euphoria ignited by the change of guard in the state gradually subsiding, the uncomfortable truths that have been plaguing the state and are silently yet virulently eating away at the core values of the system are beginning to rear their ugly heads once again. The protracted and much discussed and debated issue of appointment of a regular Director for the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) despite the oft publicized bottlenecks and delays caused by the absence of a regular Director of the institute for almost three years now has turned a new chapter with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare alleged to have flouted the relevant rules of the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in the process of appointing the institute's officiating Director IAS (Manipur-2000) RK Dinesh on April 3. The medical community is up in arms against the latest appointment as various prominent and senior medical practitioners voiced their concerns over the possibility of degrading the morale of the present and future medical practitioners since the appointment is allegedly made by flaunting the rules and regulations regarding appointments as well as the undesirable likelihood of such controversial decisions making a dangerous precedence.

The extent of damage to the administration and management of the premier medical institute of the North Eastern region can be felt in the worsening manner of functioning of almost every department with failed power backups, increasing cancellation of OPDs due to prolonged power failure, unavailability of necessary medical supplies to name a few which has created untold misery and inconvenience to the thousands of sick and infirm thronging to the hospital in the hope of having their ailments treated and cured with significantly reduced financial burden as the mushrooming private hospitals and clinics are beyond the reach of most of the people in the state. It is a foregone conclusion that if the continuing appointment imbroglio drags on any longer, the hospital faces possible degradation and defunct. The inexplicable inaction and neglect of the concerned authorities to the crying issue should not be let off easy. But that might just prove easier said than done. By the looks of it, no authority which can delve into the matter and settle the issue looks the least concerned, and the sick might have to look at other options to save themselves.

No institute, organisation, party or group can hope to function properly and maintain the system in the absence of a leader to steer the whole entity, and those who have been entrusted with the authority to make the necessary changes should be the ones to understand this undeniable fact the best. Sadly, such a vital matter has evidently been overlooked, and considerations other than effective and efficient treatment of the sick which should be the ultimate objective for which such hospitals were set up have been given precedence. And while the dirty game of politicking have effectively pervaded the hallowed corridors of the administration of this institute, at stake are the lives of lakhs of less privileged people in need of affordable medical treatment not only in the state but in the region as a whole.

Union Home Minister to be on three-day visit to Andaman and Nicobar Islands from tomorrow

New Delhi, April 5: The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh is visiting Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, from April 06-08, 2016.

During the visit, the Home Minister will lay the wreath at Martyr's column at National Memorial, Cellular Jail, Port Blair and meet the Lt Governor and senior officers of Andaman & Nicobar UT Administration.

Next day, Shri Rajnath Singh will lay foundation stone for Solar Power Plant at Guptapara village. He will also lay the wreath at graveyard of Late Bishop John Richardson at

Mus Church. The Home Minister will lay the wreath and also view the gallery at Tsunami Memorial, Car Nicobar. Shri Rajnath Singh will inaugurate the new building of Union Secondary School at Malacca and hold meeting with Tribal Council captains and other tribal leaders at Malacca. He will pay visit to Ross Island and witness Light and Sound show there. He will also attend the Civic reception by Port Blair Municipal Council at ITF Ground, Port Blair. On the last day of his visit, the Home Minister will pay a visit to Havelock Island.

WHENEVER YOU SEE CONSTRUCTION AND MINING EQUIPMENTS, JUST THINK OF US

A SOLUTION FOR EVERY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT



Automobile Engineering Works-1
R K WORKSHOP
New Checkon Road, Purana Rajbari
Imphal East,
Manipur - 795 001

Authorised dealer **BEML Limited**
(A Government of India Mini Ratna Company under Ministry of Defence)

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : imphaltimes@gmail.com. For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (O)

National & International News

Namami Brahmaputra: A festival like never before in Assam

Courtesy India Today
Guwahati, April 5: Even heavy rainfalls have not been able to dampen the spirit of celebrating the river Brahmaputra in Assam. Lakhs of visitors from across the state and the country are already visiting Guwahati and various locations identified for celebrating 'Namami Brahmaputra', the festival of the river.

'The Namami Brahmaputra River Festival', the biggest river festival of India in the North East was inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee in presence of Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and Chief Minister of Assam Sarbananda Sonowal. The Namami Brahmaputra Festival which will continue till April 4 will comprise of several cultural programmes including traditional exhibitions and film shows.

This river festival is organised in the 21 districts of Assam through



which the mighty Brahmaputra river flows.

The river is intrinsic to the economic and socio-cultural aspects of the state.

An overwhelmed Sarbananda

Sonowal could not stop thanking the 14th Dalai Lama for gracing the festival and blessing the people and state of Assam.

Himanta Biswa Sarma, Finance, Education, Tourism, Health and

Family Welfare Minister of Assam said, 'What incredibly delightful enthusiasm of the people of Assam. We are indebted to the mighty Brahmaputra for nurturing our culture and enriching Assam's lifeline. In reverence, we celebrate Namami Brahmaputra.' The cost of the festival has already run into several crores and landed the festivities into controversy too.

Former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has questioned the use of public money for such events.

'Namami Ganga Festival was celebrated to accelerate the cleaning of the sewage and industrial wastes from the Ganga river so that people could benefit from it but here, Namami Festival is organised just for the sake of merry making. Brahmaputra is responsible for erosion, floods and making thousands of people homeless, landless leading to deaths in the area. It affects the whole economy. Assam's economy has been badly affected by Brahmaputra floods and every year we lose around 8000 hectares of land. Already, we have lost around 4 lakh hectares of land.

We do not want a festival but a rejuvenation of Brahmaputra so that the Assam economy gets benefited, people get benefitted in navigation as well as in river transportation," said Tarun Gogoi.

Senior IAS officer at the helm of affairs of the entire festivities Ashutosh Agnihotri exclaimed, 'The gathering on the banks of river Brahmaputra across the state is unseen and unheard of in the history of Assam. This is a new and beautiful beginning of paying more respect to the river and nature.' The entire city of Guwahati is illuminated and streets are full of people celebrating the life and livelihood the river has given them over the centuries.

With a guest list of international stature and 'aarti' performances by priests from various temple towns of the country, including Varanasi, this is perhaps a unique way of connecting the north-east to the rest of the country. Despite the political differences between the political parties, this festival is a victory of the river and not the reversed.

Six killed, 18 injured in Lahore blast

PTI Lahore, April 5: Four Pakistani soldiers were among six people killed and 18 injured in a targeted attack on army men escorting a census team by a young suicide bomber here, the latest in a series of bombings to hit the country.

The blast happened near a Cantonment area in Lahore, the provincial capital of Punjab province. "Six people, including four army men, have been killed in the suicide attack. Over a dozen injured have been shifted to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) and General Hospital Lahore," Punjab government spokesman Malik Muhammad Khan confirmed.

TV footage and photographs from the scene showed two vans and a motorcycle damaged in the blast. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast so far.

Khan said the area has been cordoned off and law enforcement

agencies were at the site collecting evidence.

The blast struck when the army personnel accompanied a team carrying out Pakistan's first census in 19 years and launched in March. Security has been put on high alert in Lahore.

A Lahore police source told PTI the young suicide bomber came near the army vehicle on foot and then blew himself up.

"The severed head of the suicide bomber has been found. It appears that some eight to 10 kilogrammes explosives were used," the source said.

An eyewitness, Taimur Shahid, said he was heading to a shop near the blast site to get groceries when he heard a loud bang metres away.

"I moved to the blast site and saw a number of soldiers lying in a pool of blood. The locals moved them to a nearby hospital. Later, rescue and army personnel reached the spot and

cordoned off the area," he said.

Punjab Health Minister Imran Nazir said four of the injured were critical. He said an official of the Pakistan Air Force, who was passing with his wife on a motorcycle at the time of blast, was among the four soldiers dead.

Lahore Corps Commander Sadiq Ali said the people would not be shocked down by such cowardly attacks. "The war against terror will continue," he said.

Law Minister Rana Sanaullah said terrorism in Pakistan could not end till the terror camps of Jammatal Ahrar and other terror groups are not eliminated in Afghanistan.

On February 23, a suicide blast in an upscale area in Lahore killed eight people and injured 30 people.

Another blast targeting police officers at a demonstration in the city in the same month killed 13 people, six of them police men. Jammatal Ahrar had claimed its responsibility.

Unlike His Predecessors... Chinese Media Slams PM Narendra Modi On Dalai Lama

Courtesy NDTV

Beijing, April 5: Enraged by the Dalai Lama's visit to Arunachal Pradesh, China has said that the trip has "severely damaged China-India relations." Hours before China's Foreign Ministry made this statement, China's official state media published an article in which it wrote, "Unlike his predecessors, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi seems to have taken a different stance on the Dalai issue, raising public engagements with the monk and challenging Beijing's bottom line." Amid the escalating tension, the Dalai Lama told NDTV, "India has never used me against China." China claims Arunachal Pradesh as "South Tibet"; India has repeatedly said the border state is an integral part of its territory. India yesterday made it clear that China is creating "an artificial controversy" over the Dalai Lama's week-long visit to Arunachal Pradesh, which began yesterday.

Junior Home Minister Kiren Rijiju, who is from the state, said, "Arunachal Pradesh is an inseparable part of India, and China should not object to his visit and interfere in India's internal affairs." India has stressed that the Dalai Lama's visit to the state is religious, not political. China considers the Dalai Lama a dangerous "separatist" who wants to free Tibet from China. The spiritual leader told NDTV today, "Tibet is a part of China but needs more development." China, however, said it "expresses firm opposition to this (the Arunachal visit) and will lodge stern



representations with the Indian side." Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular briefing in the Chinese capital. By ignoring China's concerns and persisting in arranging the trip, India had "severely damaged China's interests and China-India relations," she said.

The Global Times, a state-run newspaper in Beijing known for its nationalistic posturing, warned, "New Delhi may have underestimated Beijing's determination to safeguard its core interests...China doesn't allow India to free ride on its economic growth while jeopardising Beijing's core interests."

The Dalai Lama, who is 81, will offer teachings at the remote Tawang monastery among other places. As a young monk, he fled Tibet in 1959 in fear of his life, after China poured troops into the region to crush an uprising. He entered India

through Arunachal Pradesh after a 13-day trek through the Himalayas, disguised as a soldier to evade detection by Chinese troops who had marched into Tibet. India offered him a base in the hill town of Dharamasala, where he was allowed to set up a government-in-exile. "I am India's longest-standing guest," he joked today, describing Tibet as "culturally a part of India." A few days ago he had also said, "Physically and mentally I am an Indian."

The Global Times said that India is upset over being kept out, partly as a result of China's efforts, of the 48-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group, and over Beijing repeatedly blocking India's attempt to have Pakistani terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar blacklisted by the UN Security Council, which would lead to an international travel ban on the terrorist and freeze all his assets.

72 dead in suspected Syria chemical attack: new toll

AFP Beirut, April 5: The death toll on a suspected chemical weapons attack on a rebel-held Syrian town has risen to 72, 20 of them children, a monitoring group said today.

"There were also 17 women among the dead and the death toll could rise further because there are people missing," the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Name Change

I, Miss T. Geetambala Devi, wife of L/NK Waikhom Saratchandra Singh, No. 4371245 -X of 8th Assam Regiment, a permanent Resident of Bamol Leikai, P.O/P/S Thoubal, Thoubal District, Manipur - 795001, has as per the affidavit sworn before the Deputy Commissioner Thoubal on April 2017, to hereby change my name Mrs. T. Geetambala Devi as Waikhom (O) Geetambala Devi. I shall hence forth be known only as Waikhom (O) Geetambala Devi.

Sd/-
Waikhom Geetambala Devi (W/o Waikhom Saratchandra Singh Bamol Leikai.