

Editorial

Blame game and you

Manipuri are blessed people. These people are blessed with rich culture, traditions and literature. Above all they are talented, few among them had already sets record in the field of Astro Physics, Sports, culture, cinema and theatre. There is hardly any place across the globe that is left for Manipuris to visit. From Washington DC in the west, to Nom Phyein in the Far East Asia, Manipuris had travelled worked and occupied space with dignity. This small community, which is not even 5% of the total population of the India Subcontinent, understand the life of the most developed nation and the most underdeveloped nation too.

But when it comes to the state where the Manipuris are staying - i.e. Manipur, one wander why the state is far behind when compare with other states in India.

If one dissects to find out on what went wrong, it is the history that is being blamed. It is because that the shattered sovereignty of the erstwhile kingdom and the fear of losing the identity. It is because of the frustration of the wrongs in the course of history that the region has been kept in the frying pan for so many years. But won't it be wrong to obstruct the development of the region just because something went wrong in the course of history.

Nobody ever think of about the mistrust that has been existing among the people of this region. After its merger to the Indian union, the state has felt to witness any leader to lead which the people trusted. The region was then a learning zone for Indian administrators, then become a place for experimenting combats and then a place for experiment of draconian laws. All this have not been possible had there been trust among the people of the state.

A leader, which the state was in serious need, had never come. After the dead of Hijam Irabot the people of the region are desperate for a true leader, but then again the people only wait but never think of making one from among themselves.

Fortunately, with the changing of the political scenario of the Indian Nation, Manipur too has been impacted and people witness a government which was not same as before. However, the expectation of the people seems to going vein with the passing of times as the same regalia of the previous government restored.

The cry for justice by educated youngster has never been listened, the cry for punishment for those who committed most heinous crime are still let free. Should we again blame the democratic form of government for a one man push for changing the system? Some good effort initiated by this new government has been put on halt creating a stumbling block, perhaps by few near and dear ones. It is by destiny that a person becomes a chief minister and such a position he halt should be respected by rendering service for the people and by winning the heart of almost all the people. Only few people are given the opportunity to make himself remembered in the history for the good deed. Let's not waste the opportunity. Prove that you are a leader of ours which is next to Hijam Irabot.

Media Advisor to former PM P V Narasimha Rao dies

Hyderabad, Aug 21: Retired IAS officer P V R K Prasad, who was Additional Secretary and Media Advisor to former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, passed away in the wee hours today.

He was 77. Prasad died of cardiac arrest at a super-speciality hospital here, sources close to him said.

Prasad, an IAS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, held several important responsibilities, including Executive Officer of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and Chairman of Vizag Port Trust, during his illustrious career.

Under his leadership as Executive Officer during 1978-82 and later as

an Advisor post-retirement, the TTD, the body that administers the Lord Venkateswara temple at Tirumati, took up several reforms and important projects.

Prasad, who served as Media Advisor to Narasimha Rao, was a close aide of the former Prime Minister.

Prasad authored several popular books in Telugu, including 'Naham Kartha', 'Asalem Jarigindante' (Wheels behind the veil), 'Tirumala Leelamrutham' and 'Tirumala Charitramutam'.

He is survived by wife, a daughter and a son. The cremation would take place here today, the sources said.

The struggle so far..

"then in that case, let the result be declared". this was a sentence that cut deep wounds. I still remember sitting in the front row of the visitor's area inside the court. Yes, I am talking about the ongoing case against MPSC. I can still recap the look on the judge's face while he was giving his statement, though he was not directly looking at the audience. Let me clarify here, that the case was due and the merit of the case was still left to be discussed. The hope that we aspirants had on that morning was shattered. Allow me to take you down the memory lane and enlighten you on some of the struggles we faced since the birth of our group.

When the result was declared hastily, I knew that there was something fishy. This feeling was reaffirmed when I saw around 200 people coming to MPSC office, to file RTI applications for their answer papers, the very next day after the declaration of the result. During that time, we all came together and took a pledge to form a group and file a case against MPSC. Thus was the birth of **"The Group Of Aspirants"**. Since that very day, we started having regular meetings. We were determined, enthusiastic, energetic and huge in number. We started piling up ideas and strategies from different angles. The meetings almost lasted from morning till late

evenings. The struggle was on! As the court cases started, we were so involved in it that we had to sacrifice our studies and personal matters so as to further the case. One important struggle that we faced, still we do, was the lack of funds. As we are still students and almost all of us are from middle class families, the lack of funds gave terrible nightmares. Also, some looked down upon us as miscreants and obstructionists whose mission is to disrupt only because we could not get through the exam. I cannot remember when the ideas of becoming a social activist came to me, for just a month before, I was merely a student preparing for the exam. So were my fellow mates, but everyone was starting to develop the feeling that, **"we should do something to change the system"**. We went to our opposition leaders, asking for help. We had to wait for so long and it was already late at night, but we kept our patience and finally got to meet one of them. We were assured that they would lend their support and we came back happy and contended, but much to our surprise the assurances were never fulfilled. On another note, the BJYM helped us in our struggle by storming the MPSC gate and obstructing the interview process of the said exam. They also made certain promises before the

election, but then again, their promises still remain unfulfilled even after they have come to power. After the result was declared, many members from our group left. Funds and man power were scarce, but there was much to be done. Someone aptly visualized our predicament, **"it was an evening on the Loktak lake, a fisherman alone on his boat, returning home, which was still far. As Dusk presented itself, a mighty storm was also on its way towards the fisherman"**. We were running out of money, energy, time and encouragement.

However, the few persons who remained, did not lose **"hope"**. It was a hard time for us running from pillar to post, raising funds, asking for help. Most of us who had never entered the arena of press, started holding press conferences. Our confidence was mounting. Little did we know that we were moulding ourselves for the better. This went on for months. The houseie we organised, the press conferences, the sit in protest, etc, took whole of our energies and time. **But it was a sacrifice we were willing to make.** It has been nine months since we started our struggle. However, we saw light at the end of the tunnel, when some of us got our RTI copies. Much to our expectations, there were many irregularities, for example, **tampering of marks, absence of**

examiner's signatures, totalling errors, etc. With this, the momentum of our struggle began to rise again. People, who were once sceptical, have also started supporting us. When we went to the offices of DC and the SP, the people working there were so supportive of our cause that they even helped us draft the application seeking permission from the DC to hold a sit in protest against the malpractices of MPSC.

Now our struggle has seen an interesting turn of events. People near and far, have started supporting our cause, monetarily and morally. The diasporas, the parents, and other citizens have started showing their appreciations. With the new evidences pointing fingers against MPSC, we are all the stronger. We always knew it would be a mighty task, for we are challenging the system and **corruption**, to be particular. **One has to stand up, sacrifice and take up the challenge, and we did!**

Now that the fresh petition has been admitted, we shall surely see some positive results in days and months to come. Salute to all those nameless faces, who believed that we can still change the system, for without them, we would never have reached this far. The only thing that kept us running and bonded till now is **HOPE**.

Mourning for Gurumayum Shyamsunder Sharma, sculptor artist of Three Mothers Art Gallery of Manipur

By Minica Ingudum

As we are nearing the completion of five years of FindingTheVoices, I was reflecting on moments that made FindingTheVoices real, moments that gave meaning to my quest and vision to continue FindingTheVoices.

Yesterday I shared a picture in Facebook sharing a moment "It broke my heart to see the crumbling condition of Three Mothers Art Gallery in Imphal, Manipur."

Then I shared another picture of another moment "I was truly touched and felt connected by the way Gurumayum Shyamsunder Sharma, sculpture artist of Three Mothers Art Gallery calling me "Sana" instead of my name. Sana, literal meaning is gold but it's a way of addressing someone with love in Manipur. And I had forgotten this beautiful way of addressing." I remember my mother fondly sharing about her childhood "Oh, when I grew up, I was Ebermma at home." Staying away from Manipur for 25 years now, I have missed experiencing many of the beautiful ways of life in Manipur. The journey of FindingTheVoices have been very fruitful and enriching to me as a person, striking a deep chord in taking pride of my origin and roots.



Sir Laba Yambem commented on the post sharing the news about the passing of the main artist of Three Mothers Art Gallery.

I got confirmation of the sad, very sad news that Gurumayum Shyamsunder Sharma passed away on August 12, 2017. He was born on September 24, 1955. The news filled me with such grief, regret and anger. His passing is a big loss to Manipur, a big loss to the community of sculptor artists of the world.

It is my deepest regret that we have failed him in recognizing his talent and giving him the support to nurture his inborn gifted talent. It

gave me goosebumps when he shared about seeing the vision of what to carve when he sees the raw roots at nights and hence he worked mostly at nights. He didn't have a blue print for any of his sculptures, it was all in his mind which he carved. I saw a true artist seeing the blessing of such talents in Manipur. His sculptures conveyed the deepest meaning in art form with important relevance to the history and people of Manipur. But it broke my heart to see the crumbling gallery, the beautiful artwork smudged with dust from the fallen ceiling. It made me think of the art gallery in other places where artwork are kept with such

value, boxed within glasses, guards closely monitoring the many lined up visitors from touching the artwork.

His vision of what he wanted to carve is truly inspirational but we have failed him to provide a platform and nurture his talent.

If you haven't heard about Three Mothers Art Gallery, that is the first failure point. Why haven't you heard about it? Why don't you know about the artist? Where are the visitors lining up to see his artwork? Why is his artwork not promoted? Where are the promotions? Why is his gallery crumpled? Shouldn't his artwork display be one of the main display for tourist spot in Manipur? Gurumayum Shyamsunder Sharma (September 24, 1955- August 12, 2017) gifted sculptor artist of Three Mothers Art Gallery, Manipur passed away. He was just 61 years old. He had dreams, many unfulfilled dreams. I have failed him. The people have failed him. Manipur has failed him. India has failed him.

I implore you to visit Three Mothers Art Gallery, Wangkhlei, Thangapat Mapal Palace Compound, Imphal East, Manipur. **Courtesy: Finding The Voice**

National & International News

China's army conducts military exercises 'to strike awe in India'

New Delhi, Aug. 21: China's People's Liberation Army's (PLA) conducted military exercises in an unknown location to "strike awe in India", said the state-backed Global Times, said the state-backed Global Times on Monday, citing a China Central Television report and another Chinese newspaper report from late last week. Global Times made sure to mention that the drills were conducted "amid tensions in Doklam" to "lay the ground for plateau warfare". More than 10 PLA units from the 'western theater command' participated in the drills. The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which is closest to India, is where the 'western theater command' is most prominent. The units included aviation and armoured forces, said the TV report.

China Central Television is the official mouthpiece of China's Communist Party. Global Times is run by the People's Daily, also a mouthpiece of the same party.

The TV station reportedly aired a five-minute-long video that showed tanks firing at targets on hills and helicopters firing missiles at ground targets. In the first week of August, China Central Television broadcast video it said showed an army unit in an unidentified part of Tibet carrying out live-fire firing exercises, reported the Associated Press (AP). Troops were shown loading and firing their missiles, some of which landed in fiery explosions. The report, which was also carried in other state media, didn't mention the dispute with India and said the unit has been training for three months, said AP.

Similar drills were conducted in July in Tibet. The brigade that conducted the drills was from the PLA's Tibet Military Command and is one of China's two plateau mountain brigades. Global Times reported at the time. A video posted online showed soldiers using anti-tank

grenades and missiles against bunkers and howitzers for artillery coverage, reported PTI. The video also showed radar units identifying enemy aircraft and soldiers using anti-aircraft artillery to destroy targets. PLA troops violated the border into Doklam in Bhutan on June 16 when they began construction of a road in violation of a 2012 agreement. Indian troops stopped the road

construction. China claimed that they were constructing the road within their territory and has been demanding immediate pull-out of the Indian troops from the disputed Doklam plateau. New Delhi has expressed concern over the road building, apprehending that it may allow Chinese troops to cut India's access to its northeastern states.

Thousands celebrate at India Day Parade in New York

New York, Aug 21: Thousands of people from the Indian diaspora converged in the heart of New York in their traditional finery to celebrate India's 71st Independence Day at one of the largest parades outside India attended by 'Baahubali' actors Rana Daggubati and Tamannaah Bhatia. The 37th India Day Parade organised by

the Federation of Indian Associations - New York, New Jersey, Connecticut - ran through several streets in Madison Avenue in Manhattan yesterday and featured tableaux by several Indian-American organisations, marching bands, police contingents and cultural performances by young Indian-American children.

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