

Editorial

Friday, December 1, 2017

Celebrating World AIDS Day

The world over, this day has been designated the World Aids Day and is celebrated since 1988 to raise the public awareness about AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome), a pandemic disease caused due to the infection of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). World AIDS Day is important because it reminds the public and Government that HIV has not gone away - there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education. The day is celebrated by the government organizations, NGOs, civil society and other health officials by organizing the speeches or forums discussion related to the AIDS.

According to a 2012 UNAIDS report, globally there are an estimated 34.4 million people living with HIV/AIDS and out of this 2.1 million are children while the rest are adults: males and females, and 2.5 million are newly infected with HIV as of December 2012. Despite the virus only being identified in 1984, more than 35 million people have died of HIV or AIDS, making it one of the most destructive pandemics in history. Today, scientific advances have been made in HIV treatment, there are laws to protect people living with HIV and we understand so much more about the condition. Despite this, people do not know the facts about how to protect themselves and others, and stigma and discrimination remain a reality for many people living with the condition.

Manipur is one of the six high prevalence states in India with HIV prevalence rate among pregnant women attending ANC being 1.4% (Sentinel Surveillance 2006). Manipur with hardly 0.2% of India's population is contributing nearly 8% of India's total HIV positive cases. More and more interior and hill areas are affected and are yet to be covered. Interestingly, while the State AIDS Policy was adopted by the State Government on 3rd October, 1996 and became the first State in India to have a State AIDS Policy, a slogan on the webpage of Manipur Aids Control Society (MACS) reads "Let's aids each other to combat AIDS". It is also evidently clear from the figures given on the website that it has been a few years since any significant update or studies have been made regarding the current status of the state vis-a-vis the dreaded affliction.

While the picture on the state front is not satisfactory or inspiring to say the least, there are positive developments elsewhere which indicate that there might very well be a new hope in the fight against AIDS. A new clinical trial has been launched in South Africa Wednesday on an experimental vaccine that could prevent HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The latest trial is only the seventh full-scale human trial for a virus that infects more than 2 million people and kills over 1 million every year worldwide. According to a statement from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), HVTN 702 is the largest and most advanced HIV vaccine clinical trial to be undertaken in South Africa, where more than 1,000 people are infected with HIV in a day. The first participant of the new trial was enrolled on Oct. 26, and the results of the clinical trial are expected in 2020. The new study is based on an earlier trial - RV 144 - conducted in Thailand in 2009 which showed 31 percent drop in infections which, while not significant, paved the way for further investigations and improvements.

While the world is pressing forwards in the search for a cure to the dreaded disease, the best possible means for the public to stay safe is to be aware of HIV/AIDS, and to treat those living with the condition with understanding and empathy, for nothing works against the efforts to contain and control the spread of HIV/AIDS than to stigmatise and show them contempt. The state government and its implementing agency needs to monitor and update information and data regarding HIV/AIDS on a regular basis so that concerned public can get a better picture of the situation in the state.

National and International News

Gunrunner charge sheeted by NIA appointed NSCN-IM military chief

Courtesy: Hindustan Times  
**Kohima, Dec. 1:** A Naga extremist leader charge-sheeted by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) seven years ago for gunrunning, has been made the military chief of the Isak-Muivah faction of National Socialist Council of Nagaland that has been on ceasefire mode since July 1997. The NSCN-IM had late Tuesday evening said 'Lieutenant General' Anthony Ningkhon Shimray has been made the 'longvibu' or commander-in-chief of the Naga army. The outfit's vice-president Kholi announced this via an 'order'.



Shimray, a 56-year-old Tangkhul Naga from Manipur's Ukhrul district, replaces Phungthing Shimrang, who was formerly the convener of the ceasefire monitoring cell. The NSCN-IM did not specify the removal of Shimrang, also a Tangkhul from Manipur. The outfit's general secretary Thuingaleng Muivah belongs to

the same tribe too. Expected to take charge within a week, Shimray has been the head of NSCN-IM's foreign affairs. He was arrested in Nepal's Kathmandu in September 2010 allegedly for negotiating an arms deal with a Chinese company, and lodged in New Delhi's Tihar jail on charges of gunrunning and trying to

wage war against India. On 4 August 2016, a special court of NIA released Shimray on bail in interest of the peace negotiation between the Indian government and the NSCN-IM and six other Naga extremist groups. RN Ravi, the Centre's interlocutor in the Naga peace talks, played a key role in securing bail for Shimray. A spokesperson of NSCN-IM said Shimray is an easy-going person, is a post-graduate and has the kind of communication skills that helped the outfit garner global support during the days of conflict with New Delhi. Shimray's military exploits include commanding the Naga rebels in their hideout in Bangladesh three decades ago. The NSCN-IM which is active in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland, is believed to have cadre strength of more than 5,000. It signed a Framework Agreement with the Narendra Modi government in 2015, but the contents of this peace deal have not been revealed yet.

SC notice to govt on plea to ban convicts from heading parties

**PTI New Delhi, Dec. 1:** The Supreme Court on Friday sought the responses of the government and the Election Commission on a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) seeking to restrain convicted politicians from running and holding posts in political parties.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud agreed to examine the validity and contours of Section 29A in the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Registration of associations and bodies as political parties with the Election Commission are dealt under this section. Senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay who has filed the PIL on the issue, said convicted politicians are barred under the law from contesting elections but they can still run a political party and hold posts in them, besides deciding as to who will become a lawmaker. The plea has sought directions to the Centre and the Election Commission of India to frame guidelines to decriminalise the electoral system and ensure inner-party democracy as proposed by the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC).

The petition has named several top political leaders who have been convicted or have charges framed against them and were holding the highest political posts and "wielding political power." It claimed that now even a person who has been convicted for heinous crimes like murder, rape, smuggling, money laundering, loot, sedition, or dacoity can form a political party and become its president.

It also said that proliferation of political parties has become a major concern as Section 29A of the Act allows a small group of people to form a party by making a very simple declaration.

Taliban, disguised in burqas, attack Peshawar Agriculture College

**Reuters Peshawar, Dec. 1:** Taliban gunmen disguised in burqas stormed the campus of an agriculture university in Pakistan on Friday, wounding at least five people, police said. Police and army troops summoned to the scene killed all of the attackers at the Directorate of Agriculture Institute in the northwestern city of Peshawar about two hours into the attack, the military's press wing said. The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, saying in message from spokesman Mohammad

Khorasani that they had targeted a safe house of the military's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency. The gunmen arrived at the campus in an auto-rickshaw and disguised in the burqas. Peshawar police chief Tahir Khan said. They shot and wounded a guard before entering the campus, he said, adding that five wounded people had been taken to hospital. A wounded student, Ahteshan ul-Haq, told Reuters that the university hostel usually houses nearly 400 students, but most of them had gone home for a long holiday weekend and only about 120 students remained. "We were sleeping when we heard

gunshots. I got up and within seconds everybody was running and shouting 'the Taliban have attacked'," he said. In December 2014, Pakistani Taliban gunmen killed 134 children at Peshawar's Army Public School, one of the single deadliest attacks in the country's history. The Pakistani Taliban are fighting to topple the government and install a strict interpretation of Islamic law. They are loosely allied with the Afghan Taliban insurgents who ruled most of Afghanistan until they were overthrown by U.S.-backed military action in 2001.

Myanmar's Suu Kyi visits China as crackdown criticism grows

**AP Beijing, Dec 1:** Myanmar civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi was set to meet President Xi Jinping on a visit to friendly neighbor China starting Friday as international criticism over her country's persecution of Rohingya Muslims continues to grow. China has studiously avoided criticizing the crisis and Suu Kyi can be expected to receive a warm welcome when she meets with Xi. China will also likely push for Myanmar to restart a dam project suspended after overwhelming local opposition. Suu Kyi is in

Beijing to attend a gathering of delegates from more than 200 political parties from around the world hosted by China's ruling Communist Party. It wasn't clear whether the Nobel Peace Prize laureate would speak at the gathering or when she would meet with Xi, who was reappointed last month to a second five-year term as Communist Party general secretary. China was a longstanding friend of Myanmar during the Southeast Asian country's isolation from the West, and has been helping shield it from criticism over the crisis that has seen more than 620,000 Rohingya flee Myanmar over the last few months. Myanmar's military

has conducted a scorched earth campaign against the Rohingya that the United Nations and United States describe as "ethnic cleansing." Refugees living in squalid conditions in camps in Bangladesh have described indiscriminate attacks by Myanmar security forces and Buddhist mobs, including killings, rapes and the torching of entire villages. Suu Kyi, who spent 15 years under house arrest during the nation's long era of military rule, has come under widespread criticism for not speaking out against the violence, with some calling for her Nobel prize to be revoked.

210 cartons of illicit liquor seized; one held

**PTI Muzaffarnagar, Dec 1:** Police said today they have seized 210 cartons of illicit liquor worth around Rs 10 lakh from a house in Mukandpur village in Muzaffarnagar district. According to Titawi police station SHO Sube Singh, a man was arrested in connection with the seizure, while two others managed to escape during the raid last evening. A manhunt has been launched to arrest them, Singh said.

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ONE DAY SYMPOSIUM COMPETITION

ON

“CLEAN INDIA MISSION CAMPAIGN IN THE MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL AND ITS IMPORTANCE”

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Please do contact us for further details:

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