

Editorial

Friday, December 22, 2017

Losing faith to the promises

The State of Manipur and other North Eastern region have quite a few common socially accepted and sanctioned practices which would definitely sound peculiar and rather unnecessary to the rest of the country.

The socially proactive people had come to learn to fend for themselves, to not depend on the promises and assurances doles out with such generosity and frequently and to voice their plight and frustrations in no uncertain terms and in many ingenious ways and means.

The announcement for repairing a stretch of dilapidated and severely damaged road along the National Highway 37 is just another example of the many instances of volunteerism of the people of this State. Indeed everyone involved in the exercise ought to be applauded in public for their heroic efforts and selfless conduct. But such acts also brought out questions that would be uncomfortable for those in the thick of things to answer.

What prompted the volunteers to take up such extreme steps? Was it necessary if those who are supposed to look after the welfare and maintenance of these roads have done their bit to keep it in good condition? The State is witnessing such extreme steps in every sphere of our lives be it with the repairing or replacement of transformers in the localities when they go bust, forcing the residents to suffer months of darkness or with water supply where the people are forced to dig up and repair the faults with resources pooled in by themselves or even with schools and community centres in most far flung places where the villagers had to share the burden of building the infrastructures and utilizing them. It seems more convincing with each passing year about the allegations of the Government relying on these very characteristics to shy away from their sworn duties. Such social norms had become a convenient ploy that the Government has so effectively been using to turn a blind eye to the happenings in the State.

The State of the National Highways especially the Imphal Jiri road (NH37) has been reported for the past so many years now and the Government has been reporting the advances made yet the recent report reveals otherwise lying bare the blatant lie and face saving techniques employed to while away the inevitable facts that would surface one day. Unforgettable comments of those who had the bad fortune of travelling on this road like the participants of the ASEAN Car Rally who describe the road as an impossibly damaged road or the lone Japanese tourist having crossed some of the most treacherous and hostile terrains describing the Imphal-Jiribam road as the worst one he came across the seven continents. It is also clearly evident that the Government does not think much about the feeling of it's people even less about their well being.

Is it that the development funds being doled out by the centre from time to time has more appeal and utility, albeit for a different purpose than the earnings a developed and industrialized Manipur could provide for them? Why is the State Government hell bent on keeping the State in this sordid condition?

The answers still elude the common man. What is certain is that these acts of volunteerism are indications of the public reaching the breaking point of having had enough of the apathy and indifferent attitude of the authorities. It would be prudent to note that another practice of the common people of making their frustrations and angst known to those who matters is still to come. It would be wiser and more beneficial to get things going and address the needs of the people before another spontaneous upheaval would bring the State and those who are lording over to their arthritic knees proving these roads to be their roads to perdition.

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES, COMMERCE & INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE OF HANDLOOMS & TEXTILES NOTICE

Imphal, the 13th of December, 2017

No.HL-67/H&T/2017: It is notified that WORKSHOP ON INTRODUCTION OF MANIPUR TEXTILES POLICY will be held on 29th of December, 2017 11.00am at City Convention Centre, Palace Gate, Imphal, Manipur. The workshop will discuss on the constructive formulation of Textile Policy in Manipur.

All interested well-wishers, Entrepreneurs and Weavers are invited to attend the workshop on 29th of December, 2017 11.00am at City Convention Centre, Palace Gate, Imphal, Manipur.

Sd/-
(K. Lamlee Kamei)
Directorate of Handlooms & Textiles
Manipur

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Journalism is a 'Unique Vocation' to serve the truth

PIB Delhi

The Vice President of India, Shri. M. Venkaiah Naidu has said that Journalism is a 'unique vocation' to serve the truth and hold a mirror to the contemporary happenings in a society. He was addressing the gathering after inaugurating the Delhi School of Journalism in Delhi University, here today.

The Vice President said that he was heartened to know the due importance is being given to Sanskrit – an epitome of our rich classical linguistic traditions, in the course curriculum. He further said that Journalism has always been looked upon as a mission to serve people – Primarily, it is a public service. It should be remembered that the Freedom of Speech and Expression enshrined in our constitution is not absolute, but bound by reasonable restrictions, he added.

The Vice President said that in view of the critical role journalism plays in protecting democracy and in serving the larger good of the society, the profession must maintain highest ethical, moral and reporting standards. He further said that Journalists must never shirk from the core principles of journalism like independence and objectivity and shun unhealthy practices such as sensationalism. Of late, the undesirable practices of mixing news with views, partisan reportage and paid news have crept into journalism, he added.

The Vice President suggested 10 qualities to the budding journalists to be successful in JOURNALISM. They are:

- Be Joyful
- Be Objective
- Be Unbiased
- Be Responsible
- Be a Nationalist
- Be Artistic
- Be a Lifelong Learner
- Be Inquisitive
- Be Strong
- Be Mindful

The Vice President wished the Delhi School of Journalism to become one of the top global journalism schools in the near

future. Collective efforts of the university officials, teachers and students will definitely yield results, he added.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

"I am extremely happy to formally inaugurate the Delhi School of Journalism (DSJ), a much awaited academic venture of the University of Delhi. University of Delhi is one of the premiere universities not only in India, but also in the entire South Asian region. In fact, many eminent people from different walks of life were associated with this university.

Delhi School of Journalism is the most recent addition to the rich academic legacy of the University of Delhi. Establishing this exclusive Journalism School is an obvious sign of institutional growth and maturity. I admit that it is a proud moment for me also as the Chancellor of this University. As I understand, the uniqueness of the course offered at DSJ is that it integrates both graduate and post graduate programs—Bachelor of Journalism and Master of Journalism. The very structure of the Five Year Integrated Program in two languages – English and Hindi, will enable the students to have an in-depth understanding of the media landscape and acquire professional skills in media and communication. Journalism course in Hindi medium will create new opportunities for students from the Hindi heartland.

Inclusion of optional Indian and foreign languages will add value to this course. It will impart multilingual capabilities to the students and broaden their knowledge horizons. I am heartened to know the due importance is being given to Sanskrit – an epitome of our rich classical linguistic traditions, in the course curriculum. Apart from this, the serene and picturesque campus of DSJ in the University Sports Complex will add an aesthetic dimension.

In front of this august audience, I wish to share certain thoughts on contemporary journalistic

practices. Journalism has always been looked upon as a mission to serve people—Primarily, it is a public service. Journalism is ultimately a 'unique vocation' to serve the truth and hold a mirror to the contemporary happenings in a society. The press has been described as the 'Fourth Pillar' and 'Watchdog of Democracy' because of the critical role it can play in protecting the interests of the people and moulding public opinion.

While the press and journalists enjoy certain privileges like easy access to the corridors of power, these privileges reciprocally demand responsibilities from the Press and the journalists. They may make constructive criticism of the governmental policies, but at the same time they are morally and constitutionally obliged to strengthen the democratic institutions and respect the socio-cultural ethos. It should be remembered that the Freedom of Speech and Expression enshrined in our constitution is not absolute, but bound by reasonable restrictions.

Before independence, the press played a pivotal role in mobilising public opinion against the colonial British rule. In the post-independent India, the press has played a remarkable role in sustaining and strengthening democracy, except during the Emergency when barring a few newspapers, the rest did not raise their voice.

Over the years, the media has grown and the present media landscape is full of varieties and driven by market, competition and technology. In this new 'smart media environment' with unprecedented flood of information, we need to be 'smart media consumers'!

In view of the critical role journalism plays in protecting democracy and in serving the larger good of the society, the profession must maintain highest ethical, moral and reporting standards. Journalists must never

- Vice President

shirk from the core principles of journalism like independence and objectivity and shun unhealthy practices such as sensationalism. Of late, the undesirable practices of mixing news with views, partisan reportage and paid news have crept into journalism. The sooner such practices are eliminated the better it would be for journalists and the society at large. There should not be any compromise on the core values of journalism and practitioners of this profession must carry out their duties without fear or favour.

At this platform, I would like to suggest 10 qualities to the budding journalists to be successful in JOURNALISM. They are:

- Be Joyful
- Be Objective
- Be Unbiased
- Be Responsible
- Be a Nationalist
- Be Artistic
- Be a Lifelong Learner
- Be Inquisitive
- Be Strong
- Be Mindful

Although, these qualities are self-explanatory, I want to emphasize that "A journalist must be a Joyful, Objective, Unbiased and Responsible individual, with Nationalist moorings and Artistic skills. He or she must be a Lifelong Learner with Inquisitive mind, Strong Will and Mindfulness". I hope that these values will be cultivated at the Delhi School of Journalism.

Let us dream big. I would like the Delhi School of Journalism to become one of the top global journalism schools in the near future. Collective efforts of the university officials, teachers and students will definitely yield results.

Let this institution be instrumental in producing some of the dedicated, creative and highly skilled journalists and communication professionals, who can contribute significantly to the growth of the nation and in creating a 'New India' where the aspirations of the people are fulfilled.

National & International News

SC to hear today plea on pictorial warning on tobacco products

PTI New Delhi, Dec 22: The Supreme Court agreed to hear today itself a batch of petitions challenging the Karnataka High Court order which quashed the government regulation that packets of tobacco products must carry pictorial warning covering 85 per cent of packaging space.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul considered the submission for urgent hearing on the appeals filed against the high court verdict and said it would hear the plea at 3.30 PM.

Several petitions including the one filed by NGO Health for Millions Trust have challenged the high

court verdict. The high court had on December 15 struck down the 2014 amendment rules that mandated pictorial health warnings to cover 85 per cent of tobacco product packaging space, holding that they violated Constitutional norms.

The high court had, however, made it clear that the 40 per cent pictorial health warning rule, which existed prior to the amendment rules, would remain in force.

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Packaging and Labelling) Amendment Rules, 2014 (COTPA) came into effect from April 1 last year.

In May last year, the Supreme Court had transferred all petitions against the 85 per cent rule filed in various high courts to the Karnataka High Court and asked it to hear and dispose of them.

Passing its orders, the high court had held that the Union Health Ministry does not have any jurisdictional power to make such rules.

From the perspective of tobacco growers, such a rule violated the Right To Equality under Article 14 of the Constitution because there was no connection between the images and the warnings, the high court had observed.

The petitioners, the Tobacco Institute of India and others, had

challenged enforcement of the COTPA which required printing of pictorial health warnings covering 85 per cent of tobacco product packages.

The petitioners argued the rules were impractical and would boost smuggling of imported cigarettes. The tobacco industry had said there was no evidence to show smoking causes the diseases depicted in the "extremely gruesome and unreasonable" pictures. The bench observed that the rules cannot be made to scare people but to issue notifications.

The industry also said the global average size for graphic health warnings (GHWs) was only about 30 per cent of the principal display area.

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