

Editorial

Friday, December 8, 2017

Hopes for a new future

Great revolutions seldom start with a bang. They evolved and came into being according to the needs and necessities to salvage or turn around a particular situation. It involves various radical changes and often is seen as a turning point - a step towards the untrodden path, a new approach and thoughts. An element of calculated risk is inherent in such revolutions. The recent proactive steps taken up by the Education Minister to turn around the declining state of education in the state, especially those of the State-run educational institutions can be viewed as nothing short of a revolution in the spheres of education in the State. Different experimental changes have been mooted, some implemented, and despite objections and disturbances from certain quarters for the unorthodox approach in the search for an answer to the ailing system of education, the bold and earnest nature of the steps taken, even to the point of risking his popularity and position is an altogether uncommon and commendable display of courage of conviction. But the tag of "do or die" to the steps being taken up, as reported in various dailies reeks of desperation and a last ditch effort on the part of the concerned authorities to salvage the last remaining shreds of pride and position. The new initiatives, in order for it to show the desired results, should be pursued relentlessly. While the media may seem unjustly critical of the various development works being planned and carried out in the State, the stand may be attributed to the dismal show of commitment and lack of follow-up in almost all the public projects and developmental works carried out so far. The onus to prove everyone wrong lies squarely on the shoulders of those empowered to carry out these projects. It is common knowledge that the education scene in the state is being increasingly dominated by the private players and institutions, in spite of the high tuition and admission fees collected by them which shows the level of confidence and demand they command. Meanwhile, the scene within the state run educational institutions is in stark contrast to the ones being witnessed amongst the private educational institutions. A lackadaisical attitude, lack of enthusiasm and an almost negligible student participation and attendance marks these schools and institutions. The very thought of starting a massive turnaround of these maladies is indeed a daunting task. To draw up the courage to actually implement these changes is indeed a mark of unstinted sacrifice and a willingness to take risks for a higher purpose. The rest of those in the helm of power need to wake up to the commendable deeds of such extraordinary leaders, and to try and better them. It remains to be seen as to the dedication and tenacity with which the leaders pursue these steps. Instilling a sense of achievement and encouraging incentives coupled with a system of rewards could pave the way for a changed attitude amongst the overpaid and underperforming government appointed teachers of the state. A concerted effort from everyone involved in the system needs to be made in order for the new initiatives to effect any real and sustained change in the State. It would seem too early to warrant a guess about the outcome of the whole exercise, but the initial picture is a rosy one. Hope the good run continues.

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After Water Woes: Designing A Residential Settlement

By: JN Lai (Asst. Prof. International College, the University of Suwon, S Korea)

The woe of recent flood triggered me an idea of possible alternatives to avoid or mitigate the recurrent of the same difficulties in future. As we know, there are multifold factors and causes of such frequent water worries in Manipur. They are unattended deforestation in the catchments, anarchical drainage system, chaotic residential occupation, mindless garbage dumping into the rivers, discriminatory Ithai barrage and Loktak Project. On top of this the tragic burial of Pats/lakes and wetlands in and around Imphal is crucial.

Therefore, logical response to the situation towards transforming the flood bottleneck is to attack all the factors and causes. In the meantime, one project idea floating in my mind that connects to the solution not only to the flood but also to other current issues of sustainable development is - build model villages along the foothills of Manipur. By doing this, finally flood will not be able to touch us.

This could be postulated on the two grounds. First, decades ago Manipur valley was dwelled by many wetlands and we may give back them some. Second, we desire to leave our frayed and unrecognizable dens of Imphal and the Leikais of the other towns.

Although restoring the Pats to their former form, appears kind of difficulty at the moment, still there will be better side of trade off. Because it will help to resurface natural flora and fauna,

and can lower the global warming effect in Manipur. The aesthetic landscape of Manipur will be elevated in some ways, economic beneficial will also come along.

Many of us living in and around Imphal and other towns feel stuffy, smelly which repels us to settle away somewhere afresh. Also ours is such a hawire unplanned town, the renovation and rebuilding may be possibly costly and ungraceful.

New Residential Shift: In the earlier years of mine, whenever I was travelling along the Tiddim Road from Imphal to my village, I was always lost in the thought, looking from the bus window at western side of valley I saw something new and different. There are really beautiful spaces in the green and fresh air foothills of Manipur. The location is not only lovely in scenic landscape but much ideal for compounding reasons for residential settlements. In a nutshell, this will be a better endeavor for socio economic political alternative. The provincial Government of Manipur is always in the principal position to extend a committing help to the new minds in transforming the foothills to a sustainable and environment friendly residential settlements. All around the valley, there are plenty of such sites which can also be reconciled by streams for water supply and fertile soil for kitchen garden.

Sovereign Livelihood: For this project philosophy, the Government is crucially desired to allocate land to group or community. One of the foremost beautiful segment of this design is to restore the sovereignty of

self-sustained livelihood and make it operational in the world of 21st century. A different and meaningful live in a community setting where social harmony prevails, organic healthy food are not bought from the outside and maximum clean energy generates within independently. The sewage will be managed in low scale volume as it will be converted into the source of biogas for electricity and other useful purposes. A gas plant will be installed for each household or groupwise towards producing electricity and cooking gas. Solar energy installation and micro hydel power plants can be very functional for the village. It will be independent at the maximum in terms food, water and power.

Family and Community: The families and individuals who are taking into account the prevailing difficulties and very much willing to avoid the existing inconvenience, can be part of this new idea and be members of this new model village. Their understanding and volunteerism will be of great help in shifting to a new environment. The community in this village may be at the average of thirty families and can include some single individuals. Should be a village of multi ethnic community. Therefore, mandatory to include Meetei, Naga, Kuki, Pangal and others. Any religious family or individual can be in the community. They can entertain liberty to go to and join the religious ceremonies and occasions outside the village anytime anywhere. There will be no public shrine, church, mosque and temple in the village. However

a community centre will be to provide space for occasional social events. The family rituals and prayers should be restricted to their respective houses without undesirable effect to their neighbors.

Housing and Farming: The shape of the village can be a linear cluster of the houses with about one kilometer in width. It may be so for administrative and other functional convenience. Each family can build their own house with a minimum and convenient budget yet scientific, hygienic and lovely one. They can accomplish it with a fair share and the support from the Government's schemes. The assistant can be in the form of either housing materials or monetary kind. Each family is going to commit to kitchen garden farming for maximum food sovereignty. Therefore they have to own an ideal land space. The farming will include seasonal vegetables, corns, cereals, fruits, other life stock of fowls, dairy especially indigenous breed. There can be as big as medium size farming towards extensive purposes for individuals and groups' economic activities. The vegetables and other plants will be grown nearby, in and around the family houses. For animal husbandry, it may be set out at a reasonable distance, at the fringe of the village in order to avoid smelly disturbances and unhygienic contents.

Education: The families of the village will be in need of a good education input for their young hearts and minds in such fresh village lifestyle. The Government has to extend infrastructural supports at least for elementary and middle schools, equip them with productive teachers. Interested individuals but qualified ones from the community can volunteer in teaching the children as well. The community members can also extend voluntary in designing learning curriculum for children.

Transport and communication: An unumpy approach road free from dust and pot-holes, and flanked with cycle way and footpath is required to stretch from the main roads to the village. Also there will be one inter village road to connect the model villages one another. A public transport set up at least with a bus in tuning with timely frequency will be plying up and down. Since the Government has got reasonable fund and budget for such purposes they must take the responsibility. The community also will use the private cars at the least and optimize the cycling and walking.

Security: A small number of 5-7 selected, active security persons either from police or VDF will be deployed to take care of the day to day crimes and violence of theft, robbery and other nuisances tend to occur in around the village. In case of the requirement of reinforcement in certain situation, they will coordinate with the police station and Superintendent of Police concerned.

In the beginning for trial experience, about five villages can be set up. Once the villages are in places and run accordingly then hundreds will be followed in no time. Because such is Manipur to copy new things. This could also be an ideal aspect for meaningful tourism in Manipur. This model village will yield home-stay facility for tourists from within and outside. Again, in order to make a meaningful accomplishment a good few supports and assistance from the Government and relevant experts are prerequisite. Best and healthiest farming methodologies, effective maintenance of sewage and drainage technology are much beneficial.

Regional News

India on course for clean sweep in South Asian Regional Badminton Tournament

By: Monsum Hazarika
Guwahati, Dec. 8: Indian contingent stayed on course for a clean sweep in the 1st South Asian Regional Badminton Tournament with all the shuttlers in action making it to the finals here at the Tarun Ram Phookan Indoor Stadium on Thursday.

In the men's singles competition top seeded Aryaman Tandon beat fourth seeded Nabin Shrestha of Nepal in a grueling three game match. Aryaman began on an aggressive note and won the opening game 21-6. However, the Nepalese shuttler came back stronger to seal the second game 21-19. With the match tied 1-1, both the players were on top of their game and took the match to the wire with the Indian finally prevailing 21-19.

He will now face his compatriot Arintap Dasgupta in the finals tomorrow. Taking on the second seeded Dipesh Dhami of Nepal, the third seeded Indian went down 20-22 in the first game. The Indian launched a strong comeback and won the next two games 21-15, 21-14 to run away with the win. The girls' singles competition will also be an All Indian affair with Aakarshi Kashyap and local star Ashmita Chaliha both winning their respective matches. Top seeded Aakarshi posted a rather comfortable 21-1, 21-3 victory over Jessica Gurung 21-1, 21-3, while unseeded Ashmita pulled off a stunning upset 21-6, 21-5 win over the second seeded Nafha Nasrullah of Maldives.

In the men's doubles, Arintap paired up with Krishna Prasad to beat Bangladeshi duo of Jumar Ali Amin Amin and Gaurav Singh 21-11, 21-13 to cruise into the finals. They will now face the top seeded Nepalese duo of Dipesh Dhami and Nabin Shrestha.



Results

Boys' singles - Aryaman Tandon (1), India bt Nabin Shrestha (4), Nepal 21-6, 19-21, 21-19, Arintap Dasgupta (3), India bt Dipesh Dhami (2), Nepal 20-22, 21-15, 21-14

Girls' singles - Aakarshi Kashyap (1), India bt Jessica Gurung (3), Nepal 21-1, 21-3, Ashmita Chaliha, India bt Nafha Nasrullah (2), Maldives 21-6, 21-5

Boys' doubles - Arintap Dasgupta/Krishna Parsad (2), India bt Jumar Ali Amin Amin/Gaurav Singh, Bangladesh 21-11, 21-13

Girls' doubles - Fathmath Nabaaha / Aminath Nabeeha (1), Maldives bt Reshma Akhter/Urmi Akhter, Bangladesh 21-14, 21-15, Ashmita Chaliha/Mithulla U K (2), India bt Jessica Gurung/Sunayna Mukhiya, Nepal 21-11, 21-12

Mixed doubles - Krishna Parsad G/Mithulla U K (1), India bt Gautam Kathayat/Rasila Maharjan, Nepal 21-3, 21-11, Jumar Ali Amin Amin/Urmi Akhter, Bangladesh bt Arsalan Ali/Aminath Nabeeha, Maldives 21-14, 21-13

The second seeded girls' double pair of Ashmita and Mithulla U K prevailed over Jessica Gurung and Sunayna Mukhiya of Nepal 21-11, 21-12 to advance into the finals. They will be up take on top seeded Maldivian team of Fathmath Nabaaha and Aminath Nabeeha who got the better of Reshma Akhter and Urmi Akhter of Bangladesh 21-14,

21-15. In the mixed doubles event, Krishna Parsad and Mithulla U K, seeded first beat Gautam Kathayat and Rashila Maharjan of Nepal 21-11, 21-12 to set up a final date with Bangladesh's Jumar Ali Amin Amin and Urmi Akhter who beat Arsalan Ali and Aminath Nabeeha of Maldives 21-14, 21-13.