

Editorial

Imphal Tuesday, February 14, 2017

The unheard Calls

Newspapers in the state had time and again published reports about the existing scenario of Imphal city. Traffic control system, garbage management and problems of street vendors have been put to the attention of the government - may it be the traffic police or the Municipal authorities. However, the attitude of the authority is crystal clear as no follow-up has ever been done. Besides rainy seasons has begun to the relieved of the people who has been facing acute water shortage.

Imphal Times is very much concerned about the cleanliness of our city amongst other various issues.

We fear outbreak of highly communicable diseases from the garbage piled up at the roadsides of Khairamband Keithel. It is a known fact that the odours from the sanitary - sewage overflow of the Sulabh public toilet has ruined the beauty of foot paths in Khairamband Keithel area as people are disturbed by the unbearable smells.

To be frank Imphal is fast earning a notorious reputation as a city of garbage. An all-too familiar sight in marketplaces and roadsides, garbage is becoming a menace which seems to be getting out of control. One sees rotten and discarded vegetable matter, animal refuse and plastic wastes piled up outside nearly every bus stop in the capital city. One can never be too careful while walking on the footpaths and pedestrians walking gingerly on the footpaths is a common sight in market places.

With the beginning of the rainy season, it is likely that the people will start crying over the failed drainage system. The people will now face flood like situation with no proper drains.

Though many a cleanup campaign has been initiated, nothing seems to be working here in Manipur with authorities shying away from their duty.

Blaming the authorities alone is not a great idea, as this problem calls for an equal, if not greater measure of public cooperation with the authorities. It is observed that the vendors at the marketplaces are least bothered by the problem of piled-up garbage and contribute to it substantially. Houses too do not always cooperate in the segregation of degradable wastes from the non-degradable. This mindset needs to change and all concerned need to work hand in hand towards a clean and safe Imphal city. Awareness has to be spread and campaigns involving both the authorities and the public in equal measure worked out. Such measures are the need, not of tomorrow or the day after or the unseen future, but of TODAY, of NOW!

California crews rush to relieve dam before new storms hit

Oroville, Feb. 14: Stormwaters subsided on Monday behind the nation's tallest dam, in Northern California, as engineers raced to drain the rain-swollen reservoir and shore up a crumbling overflow channel before new storms sweep the region later this week.

Authorities said they averted the immediate danger of a catastrophic failure - one capable of unleashing a wall of water three stories tall on towns below.

A mandatory evacuation of about 188,000 residents remains in effect, Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said at a midday news conference. The potential danger for the Feather River valley below the Lake Oroville Dam, 65 miles (105 km) north of Sacramento, was still being reviewed, he said.

"We need to have time to make sure that before we allow people back into those areas it is safe to do so," he said.

Residents below the dam were abruptly ordered from their homes on Sunday when an emergency spillway that acts as an automatic overflow channel appeared in danger of imminent collapse from severe erosion.

Alfred Ybarra had gone down to the Feather River with his children on Sunday to watch the swollen waters.

"Within minutes the water was up to the tires on my car," Ybarra said. "I told my kids, 'You have to pray. It's the only thing that you can do.'"

Asked whether he thought officials had overreacted by ordering evacuations, Ybarra said, "Absolutely not."

The main spillway, a separate channel, is also damaged because part of its concrete lining fell apart last week. Both spillways are to the side of the dam, which has not been compromised, engineers said.

The situation grew less dire several hours later on Sunday as water levels subsided behind the dam, leaving the weakened unpaved emergency spillway largely intact. By Monday, the level of the lake had dropped enough so that water was no longer pouring over the hill.

Erosion caused by the hole in the side of the main spillway appeared to have abated by Monday, and it was back to more or less normal operations, officials said.

Luingaini and Naga Integration movement in Manipur

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Abstract

"Lui-Ngai-Ni", a unique festival Nagas in Manipur observed since 1988 was coined by amalgamating the initials 'Lui' from the Tangkhul festival, 'Lura'; 'Ngai' and 'Ni' respectively from the ending of the Rongmei festival 'Gaan Ngai' and the MaoMaram/Poumai festival, 'Chithuni'. Lui-Ngai-Ni represents only the three biggest communities in the present Naga fold, that also in head-tail order, the head represented by Tangkhul, as usual in other life-world of the Manipur Nagas. Lui-Ngai-Ni, in public notice, remains a political festival, observed only at the district headquarters where Naga Communities based lobby groups used its festive ambience to further their political machinations like severing of ties with state government, separate administration, or even hate campaign during the yesteryears ethnic conflict days etc. In this year 2016 also TR Zeliang, the Chief Minister of Nagaland took part in it going overboard explicitly with the agenda of Nag integration politics. Social-gatherings, songs, colorful dances, glittering fashion shows and rejoicing continuingly passes on to be the highlight of the Lui-Ngai-Ni. Even then, the festival in this present layout is no tribute to those who are now in heavenly abode or on their twilight years being in advancing old age, but in their prime time 30 years before or so, have contributed all what they have, their head, heart and hard labor in assembling Lui-Ngai-Ni so that the Manipur Nagas of the present generation joins the comity of nations with a common festival which will be the 'national festival' as it has not been filtered down to and no community at the present Naga fold observes it at the village level. The festival doesn't in anyway help in concretizing the Naga

identity which is still at the abstract level. With only three communities being represented in the etymology of Lui-Ngai-Ni, the issue of exclusion and inclusion is very much there. Correspondingly, it doesn't seem to serve any purpose in boosting the morale and strengthening the bond of Naga solidarity. Therefore, our fellow native brethren, the Manipur Nagas as people with unique history needs to review and scrutinize whether the present form of Lui-Ngai-Ni requires redefinition, reconfiguration or a reinvention of altogether new festival, with all the qualities of uniqueness so that all the tribes in the colorful Naga identity will not feel left out and collectively share and cherish an encompassing and inclusive feeling.

A representation submitted to the Manipur Chief Minister for reinstating 'Gaan Ngai' as State Holiday by Zeliangrong Union Clubs Association Manipur Valley (ZUCAMV) on 31st February 2002 allegedly stated 'Lui-Ngai-Ni' as 'artificial state sponsored festival'. The declaration of 'Lui-Ngai-Ni' as state general holiday during the Chief Ministership of Rishang Keishing in 1988, himself from Tangkhul community and his remaining in active politics as senior most Congress leader at the time of dropping Gaan Ngai from the holiday list perhaps prompted ZUCAMV to make such statement.

The endeavor for the invention of common festival of the 'Nagas' in Manipur started in the mid 1980s. Nagas being the most colorful people have been characterized by diversity. Some who now identify themselves as Nagas were classified by the earlier British colonial administrator as belonging to the Chin-Kuki-Mizo (CHIKIM). If that is the case then we can say 'Naga' is more of a political creed than a socio-cultural identity. Hobbsbawn and et al in *Invention of Tradition* says (reprint, 2002) 'traditions'

which appear or claimed to be old are often quite recent in its origin and sometimes invented. This contention seems equally valid in the case of Lui-ngai-ni. An introductory statement by Secretary, Organising Committee, in the *Souvenir*, Naga Lui-Ngai-Ni, the 15th February, 1988, Imphal says: 'of late, the Naga groups have emerged from their isolated doll-states and asserted their identity as one race in the comity of the Indian Nation which has been accepted by the Government of India. The Nagas do not have a common festival which could be called as the 'national festival'." This statement reflects the quest for concretizing the identity of the Manipur Nagas, which they perhaps felt it inevitably necessary to satisfy the political needs of the present generation.

Considering the need for a common festival of their own, Naga scholars, leaders and social workers considered to organize a seminar, to find out ways and means whereby a common festival of the Nagas could be formulated. Proceedings of the Seminar on the 'Manipur Naga festivals' held on 10th of May, 1986 at GM. Hall, Imphal resolved that the Nagas in Manipur should have a common festival day in a year. Names suggested in the Recommendation Committee of the seminar are:

Naga Seedling Day
Naga Cultural Awakening/Revival Day

Naga Festival Day
Naga Farmer's Day
Naga Seed Day
Naga New Year
Naga Seed Sowing Festival and so forth

The members recommended Naga Seed Sowing festival (NSSF) which is to be observed in the 15th of February every year as the most appropriate and decided to forward it to the state government for necessary implementation. NSSF was observed for the first time in 15th February 1987 with an appeal

to 'every sane Naga' to play their part to make it a permanent Naga festival for years to come for "a race without its own culture is a lost race beyond redemption". (*Lui-Ngai-Ni Souvenir*, 1988). The follow up seminars and consultations in the aftermath of the festival decided that the function shall hitherto be called Naga Lui-Ngai-Ni. Lui-Ngai-Ni has now been listed as one of the tourism festivals of India by the Ministry of Tourism, GoI. The nomenclature "Lui-Ngai-Ni" was coined by amalgamating the initials 'Lui' from the Tangkhul festival, 'Lura'; 'Ngai' and 'Ni' respectively from the ending of the Rongmei festival 'Gaan Ngai' and the MaoMaram/Poumai festival, 'Chithuni'.

The biggest and first festival of Tangkhuls in a calendar year, 'Lura' falls in February is celebrated to commemorate the first seed sowing of crops. Gaan-Ngai is the festival of the Zeliangrong which is also described as a New Year Festival. 'Gaan-Ngai' is also called 'Hegangi' among the 'Zeme' and 'Gin-Ngai' among the Liangmei. Gaan-Ngai which performs the production of fire, 'Mairampe' is usually celebrated between the month of October and December depending on the state of the progress of agricultural operation. Later, the Kabui Naga Association, the progenitor of the present Zeliangrong Union decided in 1947 that Gaan-Ngai be performed on the 13th day of the Meitei month of 'Wakching' a month which usually falls in the month of January as per the Meitei calendar of the lunar year. Since then, it has been performed on 13th of 'Wakching' onwards. 'Chithuni' is the biggest and most important festival among the MaoMaram/Poumai tribes of Manipur. It falls in the month of January (Chithunikhro). The festival in accordance with the significances attached to it can also be called as the festival of: the Harvesting; the New Year; and the Seed Sowing. (*To be contd.....*)

National & International News

3 jawans martyred, 1 terrorist killed in encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora

Bandipora, Feb. 14: Three army personnel were martyred and an unidentified terrorist was killed after an encounter broke out between security forces and militants in Bandipora district of Jammu and Kashmir. The encounter is underway in the Hajin area of the district, according to reports. Six other security personnel and a civilian also suffered injuries in the gunbattle that began in the wee hours today, a police official said. The militant was killed in the encounter in Parray Mohalla in Hajin area of the district. Nine security personnel were injured in the exchange of firing with the militants out of which three later



succumbed to injuries. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Parray Mohalla in Hajin area of the district this morning following specific intelligence

inputs about the presence of militants in the area, the official said. He said while the forces were conducting the search operation, the hiding militants fired upon them,

triggering an encounter. Firing was going on when last reports came in, the official said, adding that further details were awaited.

This comes days after four militants and two army jawans were killed in a fierce encounter in Kulgam district of south Kashmir, officials said. Two soldiers had succumbed to injuries that day before they could be evacuated for treatment, the official said adding three jawans were airlifted to Army's 92 base hospital here and their condition was stated to be stable. The security forces returned fire, ensuing in a fierce gun battle that lasted several hours in which four terrorists were killed, he had added.

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SC sends Sasikala to 4-year jail in DA case, dashes.....

In a separate but concurring judgement, Justice Amitava Roy said, "We have expressed deep concern about the escalating menace of corruption in society."

On June 7 last year, the apex court had reserved its verdict in the case after hearing detailed arguments from all the parties including the Karnataka government which was appealing the acquittal by the Karnataka High Court. On July 27, 2015, the apex court had issued notices on the Karnataka government's appeal seeking stay of the high court judgement on Jayalalithaa, Sasikala and her relatives.

The special court had in 2014 held Jayalalithaa guilty of corruption and sentenced her to four years imprisonment and imposed a fine of

Rs 100 crore. Jayalalithaa and three others were accused of allegedly amassing disproportionate assets to the tune of Rs 66.65 crore during her first term as Chief Minister from 1991 to 1996. Sasikala has been involved in a long and protracted power struggle with acting Chief Minister O Panneerselvam for the CM's post, following Jayalalithaa's death. ANI reports suggested that Sasikala would appoint one of her loyalists as leader of the AIADMK Legislature Party, following her conviction. She is holding a meeting with MLAs at Golden Bay resort to decide the name. Meanwhile, the numbers in Panneerselvam's camp continue to boost, with Mettur MLA Semmalai backing the CM. OPS now has 10 MLAs in his camp

apart from himself. Sasikala still holds the majority, with 123 of 134 MLAs still in her camp. She has moved a number of MLAs

to Koovathur resort near Chennai, where they have been staying for several days. Sasikala on Monday stayed overnight at the resort.

Sasikala holds talks with MLAs

Chennai, Feb. 14: After the Supreme Court upheld a trial court verdict in the disproportionate assets case in which she is an accused, AIADMK general secretary V K Sasikala was holding talks with MLAs lodged in the Golden Bay Resort+ on Tuesday.

AIADMK sources said Sasikala might choose one of her loyalists to the Tamil Nadu chief minister post. There were reports earlier that former minister K A Sengottaiyan and another senior AIADMK have been

handpicked by Sasikala for the top post if the Supreme Court convicted her.

Police strengthened vigil as soon as the verdict was pronounced+. More than 500 policemen have been deployed in and around the resort for bandobust duty.

Police diverted vehicles on the East Coast Road, barring TNSCTC buses, at Marakanam via Tindivanam to reach Chennai. Similarly, vehicles were diverted from Koovathur junction to reach Chennai via Maduranthangam.

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