

Editorial

Imphal Thursday, February 23, 2017

This election matters

They call this "festival of democracy". But when one revisits the meaning of democracy and that of the festival, the so call authority who calls this election as festival of democracy is perhaps the worst intellectual ever born in the history of India.

Merriam Webster define democracy as a government by the people and a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation periodically held free election. When defining it as government of the people it is a government specially ruled by the majority.

On the other hand Festival is defined as a periodic celebration or program of events or entertainment having a specified focus. Festival is not war monger curriculum, it is about happiness for bringing simile to the people who are taking part.

When this election witness interference from armed UG groups who are against the Indian system, when armed assailant who claimed themselves as revolutionaries threatened common man with their guns, and when armed rebel group, may be presently ensuing in peace talk with the government of India force the electorate to vote to the candidate they support, how could it be justified calling it as festival of democracy.

When victims of fake encounter or extra judicial killings still cry for justice, how could one say that this is a festival of democracy? Well, while we do not agree to call this election as festival of democracy but we do believe that this election will surely make the future generation accepting it as festival.

Well coming to this election, in public platform issues like corruption, nepotism, fake encounter killing, framework agreement signed between the NSCN-IM and the GoI followed by economic blockade and recently of AFSPA are some of the hard talk by leaders of almost all political parties while campaigning for the upcoming state assembly election. Every single soul in this erstwhile kingdom is concerned of these issues; however there are also many who are not happy to some of the political parties for forgetting about delivering justice to victims of fake encounter killing.

With just few days to go for poll, election euphoria has now fill the air, leave aside the print media, cable TV programme, talks about political parties and their candidates all busy discussing election. One way these are healthy discussion for election is a festival of democracy.

But the real things that matters and that is hovering to the mind of majority electorate is not actually what is being discussed. It is about those who provide them jobs, who are relatives and who are near and their one above these those who spend their day today needs.

It is time that every concern citizen make this election that will shape the future of our state.

7 dead, 20 injured in bomb attack in Pakistan's Lahore

PTI Lahore, Feb. 23: At least seven persons were killed and 20 others injured on Thursday in a powerful explosion that ripped through a building in a defence locality in this Pakistani city, the latest in a series of terror attacks in the country. Panic gripped the area a little before noon when the loud explosion resonated across Z-Block in Defence Housing Authority area in Lahore.

"Seven persons have been killed and 20 suffered injuries," officials said. The nature of the blast is yet to be determined and bomb disposal squad and forensic expert are collecting evidences from the spot. "It appears to be a planted device," Punjab police spokesman Niyab Haider told PTI.

The Z-block market houses restaurants frequented by young couples.

Several vehicles were also damaged in the blast. The injured are being shifted to different city hospitals.

The latest blast came as security has been tightened across Pakistan after a recent wave of terrorist strikes killed more than 100 people. On February 16, a suicide bomber killed 88 people at a famed Sufi shrine in Sindh province. Following the attack, the army launched an offensive against militants and claimed to have killed more than 130 terrorists across the country.

Earlier on 13 February, at least 14 people were killed in a suicide bombing near the Punjab Assembly.

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Semblance of Government Without The Real Substance

By : MC Dara

Metaphorically, Manipur has differently been described as "The Switzerland of the East" and "The another Kashmir". But it is not such a big state only 22,327 sqkm. in area with a population of about 23 lakhs. The population of the state is less than that of even Cassar, a small district of Assam. The population of Cassar has already touched 31 lakhs. On one sense, it is questionable on how the state is still doing in some way or another. Prices of goods reaching sky-high, killing and death, threat and intimidation, extortion of money, collection of percentage from development works in illegal forms, passing of bills only after doing the works on paper, terrorizing members of certain families-all these undesirable things engulf our state now. It is the work of a state organized group or else? Such an act of extorting money is happening everyday while the government is as much corrupted as possible. It is said that a post of ASI or SI can be bought at the rate of rupees more than 10 lakhs. It is talked about whether right or wrong. There is no limit in doing corruption. The government officers and employees are taking advantage of the insurgency problem. In this situation, the common people are just like being fried in a pan put on

the top of a fireplace. Meanwhile, some people very clever are looking at the public money at the cost of public welfare. The only people who are leading a comfortable life are the ministers, elected MLA's and some officers being protected by security personnel. Maintaining low and order means protecting only a few people belonging to this group. Whether the law and order situation is good or bad is assessed by their way of life. The government seems to be unconcerned about how hard a life the common people are living, finding no ways to employment generation. Bureaucrats and their coins are putting many efforts up to the way to make money without doing hard works and enjoying a comfortable way of life on the blood of common people. This is the situation in the state of Manipur. Would it say that the land is golden? Tripura has government as in Manipur. Would it say that the land is golden? Tripura has government as in Manipur, but their per capita income has increased to 24,000 while that of Manipur has remained as low as 11,000. In this state, corruption is almost nil. Mizoram is likely to progress a lot, far ahead of Manipur. In this state, standard airports are being constructed after levelling the hilly ground surfaces.

One steps have been taken up in the state to generate a source of income for the people. A lot of incentives have been encouraged among the people to work more.

The Mizo-youth and elders have gained the steps forward. All these come to happen truly, because of a cleaner election and a good governance. But in Manipur, there is a series of adverse administration due to lack of a good leadership. As the government of the same sort is continuing, there is no change in administration at all. Those elected representatives, who won the same election, promising 'welfare schemes' for the people, have now used up elastic money in order to scoop the public properties with their hands on the left and right. To this, people remain dumb spectators and are unable to stage a protest against them and the collaborators. A lot of people then would become sycophants to the winning candidates. Not this all, a priority should be given first in education system, health services and sound economy conditions. We can't say that how far we have achieved in this matter as a whole. More than six populace educated unemployed youths out of about 26 populace of the state have already crossed over a statistical margin, finding no job-oriented employment no job-oriented

employment and it is the permission that they see no hope for a bring future. Some are those who would stay away from their own homes when they become disappointed, frustrated and disillusioned with the negligence and ignorance of the government in launching rural development programme. It will not be a far wrong to say that in the rural areas people have no rights areas people have no rights to lead a decent life as a human being because the government seems to be clever and powerful in scooping public properties while the rural poor have forgotten that there is a governance. It is the duty of the state to eradicate poverty. Being a poor is not a sin. The poor can't live on charity. The government should try to protect their rights as they too have the right to life. Now, the people have come to accept that nothing can be done without corruption. The moral fibre of the present government is tenuous. Still, we have not seen the emergence of any good personalities in each of the government departments, offices, administrative units etc. So, the state is in chaos or turmoil. To this situation, might is right. The law seems to be in the hands of individuals and they do whatever they like. There is a sublime of government.

National & International News

Four killed and five soldiers injured in militant attack

Srinagar, Feb. 23: Three army men and a woman were killed while five army personnel were injured in a militant attack on wee hours of Thursday in Shopian district of South Kashmir.

The attack took place in Mulu Chitragam area of Shopian around 60kms from Srinagar, when militants ambushed a patrolling party of 44-RR at around 2:00am, when they were returning from cordon and search operation in a nearby village Kungnoo.

The party was returning without any arrest or recovery from Kungnoo, when militants opened fire at the government forces in Chitragam village.

Even though extra contingents of forces were rushed to spot, but militants managed to flee from the spot, after inflicting heavy losses on the government forces.

In the exchange of fire, according to initial reports, a bullet hit a local resident, Taja Begum, who was inside her house and she died.

The army personnel killed in the attack have been identified as Sreejit MJ, Vikas Kumar and Ghulam Muhammad Rafter, while the injured include Lt Col Mukesh Jha, Major Amardeep Singh, Surendra Kumar, Sumer Singh and Ajay Pal.

"While returning from Kungnoo, the CASO party was attacked by unknown militants at Mulu Chitragam at about 2 am resulting in injuries to six army personnel including two officers of whom three succumbed to their injuries," read the official statement of police. Former chief minister and opposition National Conference leader in response to the incident tweeted, "Tragic news & deeply

worrying situation in the valley. May the souls of the departed rest in peace."

Militancy is on a steep rise in Kashmir, especially after the killing of Hizb ul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani along with his two colleagues on July 8 last year.

According to official figures, 29 Armymen and 22 militants have been killed in first two months of this year, till now. The police figures claim that around 100 locals have joined militant ranks in last year and 59 of them joined after Wani was killed. More than 60 weapons have been snatched from police and other government forces in 2016.

"South Kashmir as whole is a major concern for us as for as militancy is concerned. However, Pulwama and Shopian area a major concern as we have both militancy and law

and order problem here," a senior police official told ET.

The counter militancy operations had completed stopped during five months of street protests, but resumed and are continuing at fast pace, as protests subsided since November last year.

J&K chief minister Mehbooba Mufti has urged J&K police to persuade local militants for surrender and manage their reentry into mainstream of development. Police claims that they were successful in persuading few militants for surrender. However the militants alleged that the government was harassing their families under the garb of surrender policy. Local Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militant, Zakir, in a video message, warned police of dire consequences, if latter continue to harass families of militants.

India hails UN initiative to create counter-terrorism office

PTI United Nations, Feb 23: India has welcomed an initiative by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to create a new office for counter-terrorism and stressed the nations should not allow "turf battles" to "hobble" the proposal.

"Every day our collective conscience is being ravaged by terrorists in some part of the world or other. It is in this background of growing concerns, that we greatly appreciate the Secretary General's initiative to promptly address the need to enhance coordination of the UN's Counter-Terrorism efforts," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin said.

Guterres mooted the proposal to move the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) Office and the UN Counter-Terrorism Centre out of the Department of Political Affairs and create a new office for counter-terrorism.

This office would be headed by a new Under-Secretary-General. The UN Chief said the only objective of the new body is to improve efficiency in combating terrorism and not to change the different mandates in the field of counter-terrorism.

Akbaruddin said India welcomes the initiative and fully supports the proposal for creation of the Office of

Counter-Terrorism, assuring all possible support in taking the proposal to its fruition. He however said that nations should not let differences impact the initiative and dent its credibility.

"So let us not allow turf battles to hobble this initiative, if we have to maintain its credibility," he said during an informal meeting on strengthening of the capability of the UN system in implementing Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy here yesterday.

"As terrorism thrives on and is sustained by its trans-boundary

networks for ideology, recruitment, propaganda, funding, arms, training and sanctuary, no single nation alone can tackle this menace decisively. There is no stronger case for more multilateral action, more coordination and more cooperation on any matter amongst all stakeholders than on terrorism," he said.

Akbaruddin said India envisages the Under-Secretary General for Counter-Terrorism to be able to take positions and speak on behalf of "all of UN" and develop a comprehensive narrative on terrorism including on

all issues relating to counter-terrorism. He added that there are differing mandates of various UN bodies and if the counter-terrorism coordinator is to have credibility, the individual needs to be seen as the UN's voice on counter-terrorism issues.

"Such differentiation of mandates is only known to those in this room or those who use this building as work space. It will never be comprehensible to the ordinary people at large," the Indian envoy said.

Former Delhi BJP MLA Vijay Jolly booked for rape after victim alleges he drugged her drink

New Delhi, Feb. 23: Former Delhi BJP MLA Vijay Jolly has been booked in a case of rape after a woman alleged that he drugged and assaulted her, police said today.

The former Saket legislator was booked under sections 376 (rape), 328 (causing hurt by means of poison, etc.) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code after the Delhi-based woman filed a complaint at a women's police station here on February 21.

The woman has alleged in her complaint that Jolly spiked her drink before sexually assaulting her at

Gurgaon's Aapno Ghar Resort on February 10.

Jolly, an MLA from 2003 to 2008, said he filed a police complaint against the woman, who he alleged was blackmailing and extorting him, on February 17. He told PTI that the allegations were fabricated, meant to defame him and tarnish his political image.

Jolly said that the woman was a member of the BJP's women's wing and had met him alone at the resort on February 10. There she tried to extort a sum of Rs 5 lakh from him and

threatened to file a rape case if he did not comply, he said.

An FIR under IPC sections 384 (extortion), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and other relevant sections had been lodged against the woman at Khidki Daula Police Station on the basis of Jolly's complaint, a senior police officer said. "When the woman and her husband came to know that I had filed a complaint against her for threatening and extorting me, she to divert police investigation and action against her, filed fabricated allegations against me," he alleged.