

# Editorial

Imphal Tuesday, February 7, 2017

## Drama in real life

Candidates of different political parties had geared up its poll campaign after the announcement of candidate lists by the respective political parties. With just a nearly a month to go for poll people across the state have now been completely driven into illusion of the largest festival of democracy. Ironically, the prolonged economic blockade called by UNC, the fury of the JCLPS volunteers at various stages and the unsettled dispute to the introduction of a legislation to protect the indigenous people of the state will as well as other demands for the cause of the nation will be now put to complete silence. Leave aside the demands or the differences, when matters which give direct impact to the common people who live on hand to mouth, when children are being forced to stay home without attending school, when government servant are barred from attending their offices due to the action of some groups placing demands to the government, then such thing is a serious matter. But people will make no differences. Majority will now be intoxicated with election fever. The prolonged social tensions and manifestations of discontents have taken various shades and hues with the course of time. What is becoming more apparent with each passing day is not the clarity for the expressed demands, but for the implications of such agitations. The increasing rigidity of the stances of the opposing parties has increased the necessity for an effective and speedy intervention. The ruling party in the state however, having found themselves caught in the middle as always, has started the process of implementing its tried and tested formula of dumping the whole issue with the centre, or at least making it seem like so. Meanwhile, the adamancy of the extremists in sticking to their ends of the issue has elevated the present imbroglio up another notch in complexity. But for all the wise talks and fervent campaigns, the very fact remains that political boundaries and areas are never constant, and can be changed. Separation of East Timor from Indonesian occupation and, closer home, formation of Telangana state from Andhra Pradesh drives home the point. What is also an undeniable fact is that these separations have been at huge costs to lives and properties. Choosing to ignore the fact would be living in self denial and will eventually cost us more than we can afford to lose. There still is, however, a faint ray of hope for the beleaguered people of the state. History bears witness to the fact that the people of the state have endured unimaginable sufferings and extreme torments in the hands of the neighbouring Burmese invaders. That the very reason for the survival and continued existence of the people of the state irrespective of their community, customs, language or beliefs was the cooperation, support and solace extended and exchanged during the darkest days without the consideration for caste or creed. Are we ready to discard the very attribute which ensured the collective survival of our varied communities and cultures in the most trying of times? The history of Manipur is one which is made up of the myriad cultures and customs being practiced in various forms and regions. It would indeed be a great insult to our forefathers in whose name we are preparing to take up the cudgel, if we are to part ways for the sake of our different cultures and customs. But if ever things have to come to such a pass, the prospect of bidding loving farewell is a distant dream. For those who are hatching the plots, there is more to life than a few acres of land or a few thousands worth of freebies. Who knows, the rest of the world might even leave their countries with us for more prospective planets while we are still drawing and redrawing our claims.

## Election and Voting in Indian Democracy

**Introduction:** The people of India elect their representatives and these representatives form a government. So, election in a democratic country like India is of utmost importance.

**Meaning of 'democracy', 'election', and 'voting':** The word democracy has its origin in two Greek words 'demos' and 'krasis'. Demos means 'the people' and Krasis means 'power to rule'. So, **democracy** refers to the power of the common people of the land.

The word **Election** comes from the Latin word 'eligere'. 'Eligere' means "to choose, select or pick". To elect, or vote, means to select or to make a choice.

The word voting is derived from Latin word 'votum' meaning 'to wish for'. **Voting** refers to the process of choosing or electing a candidate to run the government's affairs, usually through a ballot.

**Election in India:** In Democratic India, general elections take place every five years. All those who are eighteen years of age have a right to vote. A number of candidates seek the election. They move from door to door. They hold public meetings and explain the programs of their parties. If they get majority of votes, they win; but if they do not, they lose. An election, therefore, is like a battle. But this battle is fought in a peaceful way. It is a battle of ballots, not a battle of bullets.

But in one sense an election is a kind of examination. Good students prepare hard for their examinations. Those who work hard get good marks. But those who never care for their books, fail. This is true of elections, too. There are good and honest leaders. They care for the welfare of the people. They never forget their voters. So, they get elected without much difficulty. But there are also those who never care for these voters. Their only business is to earn as much as possible. They take bribe and help black-marketers. They never say 'no' to their voters but they never fulfill any promise. They remember their promises and their voters only when another election knocks at the door. Such leaders are like playful boys. Bad boys care for their examination only when it comes too near. How nervous they feel, then! They labor day and night for a month. But still they fail.

**Importance of Voting:** Voting is

important because:

- It empowers the common people to choose their rulers.

- Common people have an indirect control over the functioning of the government.

- There remains no room for oppressive government. General public have power to change government in the upcoming elections, if they are not satisfied with the performance of the government.

- People have the power to raise voice against social evils and come together as a society.

- In a democracy like India, everyone's vote is considered equal. An examination, however, is not always a true test of merit. This is true of elections as well. Even bad persons very often win and good persons lose, why? Our voters do not know the importance of vote. A ballot paper we know is not just a piece of paper. It is a very powerful weapon. It changes a government without shedding even a drop of blood. But do the people always make a right use of their ballot paper? No, not always. They vote for a candidate in the name of some group or caste.

It is time to realize the true potential of the power of voting by every section of the society – the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate, the young and the old.

**Voting: Its Meaning and Importance**  
**Voting** refers to the right to vote for the purpose of electing a candidate. The citizens of any democratic country enjoy the privilege of voting rights and this should not go wasted. Electing government representatives is an important task for every citizen of a democratic country. The government is set up for the proper functioning of country and should always uphold the betterment of its citizens.

When citizens vote, they get to have a say in the formation of their country's law making body and thus they indirectly participate in law making themselves. Elective rights should be taken seriously. Citizens who take their citizenship for granted and do not cast their vote, are said to be irresponsible citizens of the country. Voting is for public involvement in creating their country's government. In democracy, public welfare is also indirectly decided by the public itself. People should eagerly wait for

coming of age, so that they get to vote. Such should be the attitude among democratic citizens. Failing to vote is failing to live up to the country's expectations. Citizens who do not cast their electoral vote, but always criticize the government, are imbeciles. A country's fate can be decided by its citizens through their right to vote.

Voting rights if not utilized, make the very word "democracy" useless. The voting power is a great power, which is bestowed upon citizens of a democratic country. Eligible voters who do not vote do not realize the importance of this power, which people in non-democratic nations crave to earn.

Voting gives voice to every citizen and makes them an important asset of a country. Their decisions and choices decide the fate of their country. The importance of voting need to be realized by every citizen, so that they ritually follow their responsibilities towards their country.

### Importance of Voting

**1. Human right:** Voting right is a basic human right for all citizens living in a democratic nation. People have fought for this right for many years and earned it. This should be respected and the right should be available at any cost. If we fail to vote, we disrespect our entire system.

**2. Choice:** Voting gives us the right to voice out our choice. We get to pick and choose our government and its representatives. This choice should be made wisely. This is an important decision which should be unbiased and should be done after thinking of the greater good of the country. Short-term advantages should not be looked at and long term benefits should be focused on, before making the choice. Voting is basically asking our preference and we should prefer the best, which is right for our country and its citizens.

**3. Responsibility:** We should vote responsibly since the country's future lies in our decision. Electing the right candidate who is not corrupt and will not exploit his or her power, is very much important. Electing the wrong candidates without proper survey and research will wreak havoc and will take the development of our country downhill.

**4. Involvement:** Voting system ensures the involvement of every

adult citizen in forming any administrative body. No leader can be elected autonomously without our majority voting. This sense of involvement should be treated with pride. The dutiful execution of casting our votes lies in our hands. No one will force us to vote, it is us who have to take the initiative and involve ourselves in our administrative system.

**5. Empowerment:** Voting gives a sense of empowerment to every individual. The very act of voting is empowerment personified. Also, to know that our opinion counts for the future of our country, is a different sense of accomplishment altogether. Educated or uneducated, every vote counts.

**6. Prevent electoral fraud:** If we do not cast our vote, corrupt officials might choose to impersonate our votes illegally. This is a type of electoral fraud, which we will indirectly encourage if we choose to ignore the voting system. This is completely wrong since corruption will win and all the responsible citizens who actually voted, their majority will go in vain. Thus, to prevent frauds like this, we should make sure that we never miss to cast our vote.

**7. Administrative operation:** Governmental policies and operations impact every sphere of our lives. From healthcare to education, everything is at the mercy of governmental policies. Thus, to ensure that the government functions for the people, it is elected by the people. We should never let go of this privilege for our own sake. By voting, we put forward our valuable opinion as to how the government should operate. This can only be a reality if we vote for an ideal leader from an efficient political party.

**Conclusion:** People in urban areas tend to take things lightly when it comes to voting. Since not casting your vote does not seem to cause any immediate or visible harm, its long-term latent consequences are casually ignored. It is important for everyone to realize the advantages of voting and the disadvantages of not voting. Only then will people take their voting right in all the seriousness that it deserves. Voting is essential and is a trait of a responsible and proud citizen of any country.

(Courtesy: <http://www.importantindia.com>)

## 5.8 magnitude earthquake hits Uttarakhand

**Delhi, Feb. 7:** A moderate intensity earthquake measuring 5 (point)8 on Richter scale hit Uttarakhand last night, with tremors also felt in Delhi and other parts of northern India. Operations head at National Seismological Bureau J.L. Gautam said, the epicentre of the quake was Rudrapur district in Uttarakhand. He said the depth of the quake was 33 km and it occurred at 10:33 PM. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat said that one person injured when a house partially collapsed. He said, all departments in the state have been put on high alert. Tremors were also felt across Punjab,

Haryana, Chandigarh and Noida in Uttar Pradesh after which many people rushed out of their homes. In Haryana, tremors were felt at many places including Gurugram, Faridabad, Rohtak, Ambala, Panchkula, Sonapat, Panipat and Karnal. In Punjab, tremors were felt at places like Mohali, Patiala, Ropar, Ludhiana and Jalandhar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the situation after the earthquake. In a tweet, Mr Modi said Prime Minister's Office is in touch with officials in Uttarakhand. The Prime Minister also prayed for everyone's safety and wellbeing.

## National & International News

## ISI agent Shamshul Huda, prime suspect in Kanpur train derailment, arrested in Nepal

**Kathmandu, Feb. 7:** A special team of the Nepal Police has arrested one of the key suspects of a train derailment in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, which took place last year. Pakistan's spying agency Inter-Services Intelligence's (ISI) Dubai-based agent Shamshul Huda is also a known operative of fake Indian currency and has a network in Nepal.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday confirmed Huda's arrest.

Huda was arrested along with three others as soon as he landed at the Tribhuvan International Airport yesterday, said Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Pashupati Upadhyaya.

"We have heard that Huda was wanted in a railway accident that took place in Kanpur last year killing 150 people," Upadhyaya said.

"Nepal Police will also work in close coordination with the Indian Police for Huda's alleged involvement in criminal activities in India," he said. The three others arrested are identified as Brij Kishor Giri, Ashish Singh, and Umesh Kumar Kurmi, all from Kalaiya district in southern Nepal.

The police have brought Huda and three other accused criminals to Nepal from Dubai in coordination with the Interpol, Upadhyaya told

PTI. Huda is the mastermind of a twin murder in Bara district of Nepal, the police said.

Huda has links with international criminal groups and he has been involved in a number of criminal activities in Nepal and India, Upadhyaya said.

A case has already been registered against him in Bara District Court, he added.

Meanwhile, a senior NIA official told news agency IANS on the condition of anonymity that the agency is in touch with the Nepalese authority to seek access for his questioning.

Notably, the NIA is investigating the role of ISI in the derailment of Indore-Patna Express train on November 20 last year in Kanpur in which 150 people lost their lives. The agency is also probing into the train derailments in Kunderi in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar's Ghorasahan case in which an IED was found near a rail track.

The Bihar Police had earlier arrested three suspected criminals – Moti Paswan, Uma Shankar Patel, and Mukesh Yadav – in connection with the case and had claimed that ISI had conspired to carry out a spate of train derailments in India. During interrogation, the Bihar Police said that the three accused

confessed to receiving Rs 3 lakh from Nepal citizen Brajesh Giri, who is allegedly connected with the ISI, for planting the bomb on rail tracks at Ghorasahan in East Champaran district on October 1 last year to

cause an accident. The tragedy was, however, averted.

The police said Paswan revealed during interrogation that the money was routed through Shamshul Huda to carry out the derailments.

## Security guard guns down Afghan diplomat in Karachi

**AN Karachi, Feb. 7:** A security guard, deputised inside the consulate building in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi, gunned down a senior Afghan diplomat on Monday.

The Dawn quoted Deputy Inspector General (DIG) South, Azad Khan as saying that the guard opened fire on third secretary Muhammad Zaki Abdullah in the lobby of the Afghan consulate.

Abdullah died of his wounds shortly after the shooting, according to the consulate's spokesman, Haris Khan. "We were working at our office when we heard gunshots," he said. "Everybody was running in panic."

The guard was taken into custody following the incident. Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan Hazrat Omar Zakhiwal was quoted by an Afghan media outlet as saying that the "firing inside Afghan Consulate General in Karachi has

been carried out by an Afghan guard." The motive behind the killing was not immediately clear. The Afghan Embassy in Islamabad said it was waiting further details.

"It seems the guard had some sort of personal grudge with the diplomat," Azad Khan said.

"We are collecting evidence and will obtain CCTV footage in order to investigate the incident," the DIG said. A delegation of Afghan and Pakistani officials will jointly investigate the killing of the diplomat in Karachi, as reported by Afghan media.

The Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said a delegation comprising officials from the Embassy of Afghanistan in Islamabad and Pakistani officials had been formed to probe the incident.

The delegation has been sent to Karachi city to jointly probe the killing of the diplomat, the Afghan MoFA said.

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