

Editorial

Traffic haunt

Driving or walking, it does make differences one suffers equally if it is in the street of Imphal. The comforts expected from driving a car is now a distant dream with traffic managers in the state had failed to prove their efficiency. The construction of Bir Tikendrajit Fly over and the widening of the roads seem to have no use with the authority failing to manage the situation. We do not simply blame the authority, the people too have responsibility. But it is the paid government authorities who are assigned for the job to make the traffic flow smoothly. The state of Manipur has been witnessing a phenomenal increase in the amount of vehicles- an indication of the rising social status of the public and improving economic conditions in the state. While these factors are a welcome sign, the fact remains that the concerned authorities have failed to keep pace with the times and the changing social scenario in the state resulting in heavy traffic jams and delays which needs to be addressed immediately. The short term policies and systems being implemented from time to time in an attempt to ease the congestions and traffic jams have not been able to alleviate the problem in any way, on the contrary these ad-hoc measures have managed to confuse the public and compound the problem the authorities have been trying to solve. The formation of Traffic regulation and parking committee has not been of much help, and one can only wonder if they are functioning at all. Queries put up to the concerned departments have only resulted in more bewildering responses- a classic example of the effectiveness of passing the buck around that has been at work in all government set ups. While formulation of policies and systems to control and regulate traffic may be a beginning in the right direction, the fact remains that the increasing number of vehicles need additional space to accommodate them and juggling acts of the traffic system by the experts, however efficient and experienced they may be, will not bear fruit. Construction of additional parking spaces at strategic locations, bypasses and flyovers, and most importantly providing subways at important and crowded junctions will go a long way in reducing these problems. Construction of public utilities does not automatically guarantee improvement- their proper usage is as important- an obvious example being the use of footpaths by the vendors and shopkeepers to stock and ply their goods forcing the pedestrians to walk on the road. The need to streamline and re-orient the traffic police personnels is also being felt by the public. Turning a blind eye to the irregularities being committed by the drivers of various public and commercial transport vehicles in consideration for a "quick handshake" has been well documented- despite the dangers and inconveniences such greedy acts causes. The present government ministers and high ranking officials may not be feeling the burden such traffic jams causes as they seem to have a prerogative of the right of use of the road over the common public but unless some concrete steps are taken up very soon, the only option that would be available to them would be to use their feet with their retinue of escorts and assistants wading through the impossible traffic- surely a distracting relief for the stranded common public on the road.

Patriarchy and poor conviction, policing behind rape: Experts

By: Trisha Mukherjee and Manish Sain

Three men rape a woman, flinging her child to a pavement. Another three rape a woman for eight hours in a vehicle. A jilted lover and his friend abduct, rape and kill a woman. A neighbour lures a child to a secluded spot, rapes, burns and kills her. Who are these seemingly ordinary people who turn into brutal violators and killers? Psychologists, lawyers and the police have been struggling to make sense of what is being described as a culture of rape, especially in Delhi and its neighbourhood. In Delhi, over six women are raped every day. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 95 per cent of all rapes in 2015 in the country were committed by a person known to the victim. A seven-year-old Chennai girl, for instance, was raped, burnt and killed by her neighbour in February. A spate of rapes in recent weeks - including in Maneousar, where a 19-year-old woman was raped in a van and her 9-month-old baby killed, in Sonapat, where the former lover raped, mutilated and killed the victim and the recent case of a woman who was picked up from Gurgaon and raped for almost eight hours in a moving vehicle - has turned the spotlight on the mind of the rapist, capable of unthinkable violence. he director of the Institute of Human

Behaviour & Allied Sciences, Nimesh Desai, attributes such criminal behaviour to factors like ingrained patriarchy and lack of gender sensitivity, as well as the internal distress and isolation of young men. Referring to gang rapes, he says a "high risk behaviour" functions in groups, encouraging negative instincts. "Anti-social and criminal behaviour happens more in groups. Groups provide the comfort, courage and a false sense of bravado and masculinity, resulting in a compromise in judgement," he says. He senior psychiatrist, however, warns against theories on the "psychology of the rapist", stressing that these can give the impression of the crime being justified. "When we try and explain the psychology of a rapist, the intentions are usually good, but what it does to the public mind is that it kind of sanctifies or justifies the act," he told PTI. But the sheer numbers of rapes in the country - the NCRB states 2,199 rape cases were reported in Delhi and 34,651 in India in 2015 - trigger questions on what makes rapists commit the most horrendous of acts - grievously molesting a child, mutilating a woman's body and raping her for hours in a gang. Sometimes, the rapists act under the

influence of alcohol or substance abuse, which Desai describes as "a ready recipe" for such crimes. But the experts stress there are larger issues at play here - such as ingrained patriarchal values. A male-dominated society "is not comfortable around an independent woman", says Supreme Court lawyer Shilpi Jain. "When men see an independent woman, it hurts their ego. So this is a way of overpowering her, to show her that 'you are under our control', to send a message to women that they may lead independent lives but if men want to control them, they can," says the defence lawyer, who fought the Bitti Mohanty case, in which a senior police officer's son was convicted of raping a German woman. What confounds activists and law-enforcement agencies is that strict laws - which include death - do not seem to deter the perpetrators. Mumbai-based psychologist Harish Shetty blames delayed convictions for this. "If you hear that for a rape, a person is convicted in a month's time, then it has an impact. But a death sentence after 20 years makes no sense," Shetty says. He adds that while there is more awareness about the law, "it has no teeth" unless judgements are on time. "Acquittals are very high and convictions are very low," he adds.

The NCRB report shows a conviction rate of 21.7 per cent in crimes against women in India during 2015. It means more than 7 out of 10 people accused of such crimes walked free. The December 16, 2012, case - when a physiotherapy intern was brutally raped and killed by a gang of men - evoked such nationwide horror that a court had sentenced the adult men to death in nine months. But this was a rare instance. A 13-year-old girl from Lucknow, who was gang raped in 2005, waited for 11 years for a verdict. The rape of a minor by two presidential guards in 2003 reached a trial court only in 2009. Jain believes the situation can change only if there is a "complete overhaul" of police structures that allow probes by the lowest ranks of officials. She also suggests expedition of cases in courts. Former Mumbai Police Joint Commissioner (Crime) M N Singh stresses the need for a "systemic change" to instill fear which he believes will act as a deterrent. To prevent 1 cases such as the gang rape in May of a group of women on the Jewar-Bulandshahr highway, he suggests increased police patrolling. "If social control and policing are lacking, then howsoever strict the law is, it will only have a limited impact," Singh says. (Courtesy: PTI)

National and International News

Modi visits Indian military cemetery in Haifa

Courtesy: Jerusalem Post
Jerusalem, July 6: Prime Minister Narendra Modi began his third and last day of his historic visit to Israel by paying respects at the Indian military cemetery in Haifa on Thursday morning. Modi mentioned the 1918 Battle of Haifa on Wednesday, during statements he gave following his meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "Around 150 kilometers from here, there is a slice of history in the city of Haifa in Israel that is very dear to my country," Modi said while in Jerusalem. "This is the final resting place for 44 of the Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives during World War I to liberate the city." Modi's visit is the first by a sitting Indian premier to the country. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu personally greeted Modi at Ben-Gurion Airport, Tuesday afternoon, along with the top tier of Israel's leadership - known as "segal alaph" - an honor afforded to only a few select leaders, such as US presidents

and popes. From the airport, the two men drove to Moshah Mishmar Hashiva, near Beit Dagan, and visited the Danziger "Dan" flower farm, one of Israel's leading floriculture companies, with approximately 80,000 square meters of state-of-the-art greenhouses specializing in reproduction of plants. Modi's first stop on his visit highlighted that one of Israel's key interests in closer cooperation with India is its expertise in agricultural technology. They were joined there by Israel's Agriculture Minister, Uri Ariel. Modi then traveled to Jerusalem's King David Hotel, where he will be staying, before making his way to Israel's Holocaust remembrance center Yad Vashem. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi described Israel's Holocaust remembrance center Yad Vashem as a "poignant reminder of unspeakable evil," following his tour of the museum on Tuesday. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu joined Modi on his tour, guided by

Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev. They visited the Hall of Names, participated in a memorial Ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance and toured the Children's Memorial. At the conclusion of his visit, Modi wrote in the Yad Vashem Guest Book: "I am deeply moved by my visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial museum. It is as such a poignant reminder of the unspeakable evil inflicted generations ago as it is a

symbol of the endurance and fortitude of the Jewish people. As we deal with conflict, intolerance, hatred and terror in our time, Yad Vashem serves as a mirror to society around the world. May we not forget the injustices of the past and its devastating toll on humanity and remembering the past. We may empower our children to make compassionate, just and righteous choices for their future."

"Atmosphere not right" for a Xi-Modi meet in Hamburg: China

By K J M Varma
Beijing, Jul 6 (PTI): China today said the "atmosphere" was "not right" for a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Hamburg, amidst a standoff between the armies of the two countries in the Sikkim section. The "atmosphere is not right" for a bilateral meeting between President

Xi and Prime Minister Modi, Chinese Foreign Ministry officials said ahead of the G20 Summit in the German city of Hamburg from tomorrow. China and India have been engaged in a standoff in the Doklam area near the Bhutan tri-junction for the past three weeks after a Chinese Army's construction party attempted to build a road. Doka La is the Indian name for the region which Bhutan recognises as Doklam, while China claims it as part of its Donglang region. There were reports that Modi and Xi may meet on the sidelines of the G20 Summit to resolve the standoff. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Geng Shuang expressed hope that "India can immediately withdraw the border troops to the Indian side of the boundary to uphold the peace tranquility of the China and India border areas". "I think this is the pre-condition for any meaningful peace talks between the two sides," he told a media briefing here when asked about the meeting between Modi and Xi on the sidelines of the G20 summit. Geng, however, said the BRICS leaders meeting which will be attended by Modi and Xi will take place on the sidelines of the summit tomorrow. On the possibility of a Xi-Modi meeting, Geng said relevant information will be released in a timely manner. China's state-run media yesterday had quoted Chinese analysts as saying that Beijing would be forced to use a "military way" to end the standoff in the Sikkim sector if India refuses to listen to the "historical lessons" being offered by it.

Chindwin River tops danger level in four Sagaing townships

By Myint Kay Thi
 Courtesy: Myanmar Times
Kalaywa, July 6: The height of the Chindwin River has exceeded the danger level in Hkamti, Homalin, Paungbyin, Mawlaik, Mingin and Monywa. The department issued flood warnings due to heavy rains in Kachin and Sagaing at the end of June," he said. The department issued the warning to people living in Homalin, Hkamti, Paungbyin, Mawlaik and Kalaywa. He said heavy rains are expected to continue in Sagaing and Kachin during the next two or three days. "Heavy rains or isolated heavy rain will continue in Kachin, Sagaing, Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and Bago due to the monsoon and clouds from the Himalayas," he said. "Some low-lying areas in the regions, such as some villages in Hkamti, could be flooded due to the heavy rain," he added. "People should cooperate with regional natural disaster management authorities in the event of flooding," he said. The department warned people who

live near or in low-lying areas of the Chindwin and Ayeyarwady River to be aware of the water level and flooding. The DMH said heavy rains or isolated heavy rain are expected in Nay Pyi Taw, upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Tanintharyi, Kachin, Rakhine, Chin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon. Winds of 30 to 35 miles per hour and 6ft to 9ft waves are expected in the coastal area. U Maung Kin, who does road work in Hkamti, said that floodwaters reached some low-lying areas of the township due to heavy rains last week. "There was no damage, but people have been inconvenienced by the floodwater," he said Wednesday. "Last year, I faced floodwaters for about two weeks but I didn't move because my house wasn't damaged. We always have flooding in the rainy season, so people tend to prepare themselves to move or to just live with it."

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