

## Old Assembly Secretariat to be converted into Museum

### Photos of legislators including 1<sup>st</sup> Speaker T.C. Tiyangkham to be displayed

**IT News**  
**Imphal, June 10:** Hectic renovation work is underway for conversion of the Old Assembly Secretariat Building to state Assembly Museum.

During an interaction programme with state journalists at State Assembly Secretariat complex, Chingmeirong, Speaker of the Manipur Legislative Assembly Yumnam Khemchand said that photos of all legislators including the first Speaker of the Manipur Legislative Assembly T.C. Tiyangkham have been collected for preserving in the museum. T.C. Tiyangkham, a representative from Churachandpur was the first Speaker of the Manipur Legislative Assembly in the year 1948. Then Manipur was

an Independent Kingdom until it merged to the Indian Union in 1949.

The Speaker said that the state Legislative Assembly is planning to hold a seminar followed by logo competition for use in the Manipur Legislative Assembly Museum. Y. Khemchand further said that Meitei Mayek Script will also be introduced in the assembly session from the next session and all proceedings including the

Governor speech will be made available in Meitei Mayek Script in addition to the Bangali script and the English version.

The interaction programme with journalists was organised in connection with the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the North East Region Common Wealth Parliamentary Association which will be held from June 14 to June 18. Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly

appealed the journalists of the state to extend support to the annual meet.

In-order to strengthen better relationship between media and the State Legislative Assembly, a media advisory committee will be established, Khemchand said. He further added that the committee will comprise selected journalists from all sections including Manipur Hills Journalists' Union, Editors' Guild Manipur and AMWJU.

"After setting up of the Media Advisory Committee, all problems faced by the journalists will be discussed and as suggested by some senior journalists, we are planning to hold seminar for reporters, sub-editors and editors on Parliamentary reporting", Speaker Y. Khemchand added. He also added that state assembly will sent selected journalist for Parliamentary reporting at the Parliament house.

## Arambam Samarendra remembered

(With inputs from NENA)

**Imphal, June 10:** Tributes were paid to Arambam Samarendra, a playwright and lyricist, on his 17<sup>th</sup> death anniversary on Saturday.

People from different parts of the state, relatives, dear ones and friends of the noted writer paid floral tributes to him at his life size statue located at the site close to Khurai Salanthong in Imphal where he died.

The Arambam Samarendra Memorial Trust also organised the 17<sup>th</sup> Arambam Samarendra Martyrdom Anniversary and 12<sup>th</sup> Arambam Samarendra Memorial Lecture at Lamyamba Shanglein, Palace Compound.

Professor Soyam Lokendrajit, deliver speech on the topic "Peoples' Resistance Movement against Demographic Invasions in the

North -East: The Manipur Experience. Prof. Soyam elaborated on the present threats to the indigenous people of the state due to the influx of illegal migrants.

Before the lecture programme begins many resource persons at the event spoke on the life and contributions of Arambam Samarendra who also fought for upliftment of women, equality of the farming community and for unity and integrity of the state.

The United People's Front (UPF) also observed the death anniversary of Arambam Samarendra at GM Hall, Imphal where it organised a state level patriotic song competition to mark the day. The day was also observed at different places of the state under the aegis of local clubs.

## 'Repeated flash floods a gift of deforestation'

**IT News**

**Thoubal, June 10:** Indigenous and traditional knowledge of forest management and water harvesting need to be promoted in Manipur to prevent environmental issues like repeated flash floods, drying up of rivers, unseasonal rainfall and receding underground water reserve.

The statement was made during the one-day seminar on sustainable agro-forestry management by deputy director of Environment and Ecological Wing T Brajakumar who talked at length about fresh environmental challenges confronting the state linking many of them to

the gradual disappearance of forest cover.

Deforestation has destroyed the catchment areas of rivers especially in hills. With no forest to retain and absorb water and hinders its flow, fast streams of unimpeded rain water is causing repeated flash floods in Manipur, he said.

Another problem in the hills is the drying up of streams due to which perennial rivers like Nambul, Imphal and Iril have become seasonal rivers, where there is no flow during winter, he stated. Places like Siroi in Ukhrul too which used to have abundant in water is experiencing water scarcity, Brajakumar

mentioned emphasizing the need to focus on ways to store water in the hills. Spring sheds should be set up with due ownership and management by communities especially in hill areas and traditional methods of water management should be promoted, he added.

Brajakumar mentioned that there had been increased incidents of water shortages in ponds, rivers and wetlands due to fast receding underground water reserve and suggested that top water harvesting will be a viable solution.

He expressed his worry that after experiencing heavy rains in April and May, if the

state experience more rain in July and August during the height of the agricultural season it will lead to unwanted consequences.

Chief conservator of forest Th Mahendra Pratap stressed on the need to take up forestation exercise by planting trees that generates moisture and incomes for the farmers like Jackfruit, olive, amla, guava etc.

The present challenges to the forest are shifting cultivation, burning of forest land and hunting practices, he said adding that the Indian Forest Act is very weak in imposing punishment to people who are guilty of destroying forests.

## GSI team visits Kalikhola

**NENA**

**Imphal, June 10:** An expert team from the geological Survey of India (GSI) today visited and inspected Kangpokpi district's Kalikhola where several homes have been destroyed and many more rendered uninhabitable by a major earth crack. The GSI team visited the affected village for a spot verification, official sources said.

The earth crack has already affected a stretch of over 5 Km radius approximately in the village area with the fissure widening every passing hour.

A total of 76 houses of over 400 residents have been affected by the fissure. Most of the victims are now taking shelter at temporary relief camps. But they are facing water and power shortage and other difficulties.

The origin of the earth fissure is below J Songtun village and it slid down towards Kalikhola village developing larger fissure in the area and has expanded to a radius of over 5 km now.

## 'Receding agricultural land a curse to food sovereignty'

**IT News**

**Thoubal, June 10:** Occupation of once agricultural lands to take up commercial projects like setting up brick fields and offices is one of the major banes in the pursuit of self-sufficient food production and food sovereignty, observed key speakers at the one-day seminar on sustainable agro forestry management held at Manipur Dramatic Union here today.

President of AMUCO Ph Devan said the level of aggression and targeting of agricultural lands by rich people for their personal gains and commercial interest led to conscription of the lands for non-productive and non-agricultural activities. This

worsened the food dependency of the state on outsiders.

Longjam Memchoubi, president of Poirai Leimorai said procurement of agricultural lands for running business and forced acquisition have landed the state's agriculture system in a crisis. She went on to urge the public to take a major role in promoting food sovereignty, stating that defense of agricultural land and ensuring agricultural growth will bring peace and prosperity in the state.

Devan described the current situation of gradual acquisition of agricultural land as a ploy by the government of India to ensure that the food dependency on outside remains.

"Earlier, the Centre used to say that Manipur is underdeveloped and poor in terms of resources and blamed the people. Today, Manipur is full of resources and the oil companies are being granted permission by the Indian government to loot and plunder these resources without people's consultation and consent," he alleged.

He foresees major losses for the state if the planned drilling of oil in places of Manipur is allowed to go ahead.

"Oil exploration will lead to contamination of our land and also worsen seismic impacts. No one knows who gave permission and on what terms and conditions. It is clear the companies and the Government of India will

benefit while the people of Manipur will be at a loss, with contamination of our land, water and forest," he stated. The efforts by oil companies to drill oil using the Indian army in Manipur will lead to much resistance from the people of Manipur. The Central government will face a public struggle like that of the June 18, 2001 incident.

President of Irabot Foundation, Rishikesh, spoke on the role of Hijam Irabot in promoting farmers rights and food sovereignty in Manipur. It is high time we focus on appropriate initiatives to foster food sovereignty in Manipur and end food dependency on others, he added.

## 12 hour bandh in Thangmeiband

**IT News**

**Imphal, June 10:** 12 hours bandh called in Thangmeiband Assembly constituency which began at 6 am today morning demanding resignation of MLA Dingo has partially affected normal life at

Thangmeiband area. During the bandh called Vehicular movements from

Khuyathong till Chingmeirong has been put to halt and almost all shops and business establishment at the constituency remain closed.

## Ibotombi Memorial Pension

**IT News**

**Thoubal, June 10:** Moirangthem Ibotombi Memorial Trust today distributed Ibotombi Memorial Pension to 900 aged people of Heirok Assembly Constituency. The pension is distributed to aged people every six months.

Former Minister Moirangthem Okendro, who is also the president of the Moirangthem Ibotombi Memorial Trust while speaking during the pension distribution function said that the pension is being distributed to aged people of

Heirok Assembly constituency who are living below poverty line every six months.

The pension scheme is made possible by the contributions from well wishers of the Moirangthem Ibotombi Memorial Trust, Oken added and said that besides taking up the pension scheme around 200 cancer patients has been provided monetary assistance. The amount distributed for six month as pension is Rs. 1200 for each beneficiaries.

## BJP Kisan Morcha

**NENA**

**Imphal, June 10:** Yumnam Jageshwar Singh from Manipur has been selected as a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Kisan Morcha.

Yumnam Jageshwar is a resident of Upokpi in Bishnupur district. The BJP Kisan Morcha is the farmers wing of the saffron party, the largest political party in India.

## Khaplang's Death Doesn't End Insurgency Challenge in North-East

By: Nitin A Ghokhale

(Courtsey: BharatShakti.in)

Indian intelligence officials, with the active help of Myanmar Army, are keeping a close watch on the funeral of veteran Naga insurgent leader, SS Khaplang, who died on Friday at Taga in the Saging Division of Myanmar, top sources have told BharatShakti.in from India's north-east. The reason: They expect Paresh Barua, the head of the recalcitrant faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and Khaplang's closest ally in recent years, to try and attend the last rites of the Heimi Naga insurgent leader who had formed an anti-India alliance aided and abetted by Chinese intelligence officials since early 2010.

Baruah, who is believed to be based in Ruili—on the Myanmar-China border, in North-east Myanmar—is apparently being assisted by Chinese intelligence operatives to reach Taga, a stronghold of Naga insurgent group—the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) or NSCN (K)—led so far by Khaplang since 1988. Villages around Taga are considered more or less a 'liberated' zone where the writ of the Myanmar government or the Tatmadaw (the Myanmar armed forces) is absent.

It however remains to be seen if Baruah makes it to the funeral. He and Khaplang, among others had formed the United Liberation Front of Western South East Asia (UNLFW) earlier this decade. The UNLFW claimed responsibility of the 4 June 2015 ambush in Manipur that had killed 20 Indian soldiers and had triggered an Indian cross border raid on a common camp of the alliance near Momo and Onzia villages inside Myanmar, just four-five km from the border on 9 June 2015.

The raid carried out by the 21 Para (SF) of the Indian Army had killed at least 40-45 insurgents and had sparked off a minor diplomatic crisis between India and Myanmar until India's National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar rushed to Nai Payi Taw in the immediate aftermath of the Indian forces raid. After the Generals were mollified by Doval-Jaishankar duo, intelligence and military cooperation between India and Myanmar has been stepped up in the past two years. Indian Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat was the latest high ranking Indian official to have visited Myanmar in the last fortnight.

Khaplang had co-founded NSCN in 1980 with two senior comrades-in-arms, Th. Muivah and Issac Chisi Swu after they had rejected the largely farcical Shillong Accord

signed in 1975 between the Indian government and the Naga insurgency leadership.

However, in 1988, Khaplang split from Muivah and Swu and formed his own faction and held sway in Nagaland districts of Mon, Tuensang and partly Mokokchung besides making inroads into the two eastern Arunachal districts of Tirap and Changlang. The Issac-Muivah faction came to be known as the NSCN (I-M) since 1988 and was considered more powerful and influential. In fact, according one of the topmost Meitei (Manipur) insurgent leaders, Rajkumar Meghen alias Sana Yaima, leader of the UNLF (the United Nationalist Liberation Front), Khaplang and his men had almost succeeded in assassinating Muivah and Swu at a large common camp NSCN used to share with other insurgent groups on the India-Myanmar border.

Alerted in the nick of time by their own followers, Muivah and Swu, among other top leaders of the NSCN, escaped by a whisker in the pre-dawn raid Khaplang loyalists. They were given shelter and protection by the UNLF. Sana Yaima had recounted to this reporter more than a decade ago. Sana Yaima is currently in jail after he was caught in Bangladesh by Indian sleuths with the active assistance of their Bangladeshi counterparts in 2010.

With the passing away of Khaplang and the death of Issac Swu in June 2016, only Th-Muivah, among the most influential, second generation Naga insurgent leaders, remains active and alive. Muivah and Swu had entered into a ceasefire agreement with the Indian government in July-August 1997 followed by the NSCN (K) in 2001. While the government has signed a framework agreement with the NSCN (I-M) in August 2015, Khaplang walked out of the ceasefire in early 2015 and decided to team up with the Paresh Baruah faction of the ULFA and KYKL (a Manipur insurgent group).

Khaplang's death will force Baruah to take on the mantle of leadership of the group in coming weeks. This will also mean that the Chinese, who have been supporting and facilitating Baruah's movements, will consolidate their grip over this anti-India grouping currently active three states—Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal. Earlier this week, an Indian Army major was killed while three ULFA cadres were eliminated in an encounter in Mon district of Nagaland bordering Myanmar.

Khaplang may have gone from the scene but the challenge he posed to the Indian state all these years, is far from over.