

# Editorial

Imphal Thursday, May 4, 2017

## A matter of understanding responsibilities

Man, being a social animal has to exist with and amongst other humans and in order to adjust and make co-existence possible certain laws and regulations are drawn up to safeguard the welfare of every member of the group or community, curtailing certain personal freedoms and liberties that might infringe on other person's welfare. This is the basic idea of a social set-up.

Leaders and arbitrators are then chosen to oversee the smooth working of the social system with adequate executive powers as deemed necessary to enforce the same- the Government as we know, create and accept in the contemporary world. A society, being made up of individual members, is bound to come up with conflicting interests and emotions. This is where the quality and the efficiency of the people entrusted to sort out these social issues are being tested. The problems being faced by our society as a collective whole in recent times is uncountable and varied- indeed an intimidating and daunting task for those entrusted to solve them. Public memory is short lived- or so it is believed. But sweeping away these problems under the carpet and shrouding them with silence, putting the theory about public memory to the test is not the right step towards easing the problems. Nor is the polished method of prolonging the issues and tiring out the protesting parties to buy time and making these matters fade out of the mind of the public the prudent way of resolving things. The recent assurances doled out to the different parties regarding their claims for parts of the state by the State Government smacks of the repeated and always successful modus operandi. Instead of finding a lasting solution and bringing peace in the State, the Government shouldn't be promising something impossible to deliver. It's better to call a spade a spade and wind up the matter before things become irreparably damaged. It needs to speed up the workings of its various departments and deliver the goods in time to avoid and prevent more problems. Genuine issues should be resolved before things get out of hand and "mob Justice" takes precedence for those whose voices has been gagged for so long and their grievances fallen on deaf ears. We are talking about eradication of corruption. Let the effort of the new govt. be not wasted by delaying in the introduction of Lok Ayukta.

## Kerala SSLC (Class 10) examination 2017 results expected tomorrow

HT Thiruvananthapuram, May 4: The results of the Kerala Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) examinations are likely to be announced on May 5. Students can check their results at these websites - www.kerala.gov.in, keralareults.nic.in and keralapareekhabhawan.in

This year 4,55,906 regular students and 2,588 private students appeared for the SSLC exam that was conducted in March at 2,933 centres in the state and 9 centres in Lakshadweep and the Middle-East region.

This year, the results were delayed after the mathematics question paper was leaked and the exam was rescheduled. At least 11 questions of the model exam were repeated in the final triggering a

controversy.

The embarrassed government later cancelled the exam conducted on March 20 and rescheduled it for March 30. It later announced a vigilance inquiry into the paper leak.

During the investigation, it was found that an alleged nexus between 2 teachers, who set the question paper, and a private tuition centre in Malappuram led to the leak.

State education secretary Usha Titus, who submitted a report to the government, recommended many changes in the present system and favoured an expert committee to overhaul examination sector.

Last year, the results were declared on April 27 and the pass percentage was 96.59%.

## 3 suspected Naxals, one juvenile arrested

Jharkhand, May 4: The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Chhattisgarh Police apprehended four suspected Naxals in connection with the deadly Sukma attack. One of the four arrested is a juvenile. The arrested suspects have been handed over to the state police.

On Wednesday, the CRPF troops along with the state police carried out a search operation at the forest area of Bulbul in Lohardaga district of

Jharkhand, following which a massive ammunition cache was recovered. Meanwhile, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Hansraj Gangaram Ahir visited the CRPF personnel injured in the deadly Sukma Naxal attack on Friday. "We are making efforts to prevent such kind of incidents in the future. We will try to finish this issue as soon as possible," said Ahir after meeting the soldiers in the hospital.

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# Healthcare has a new vision for all

By : K V Venkatasubramanian

India has made remarkable progress in healthcare; the nation is much healthier today. Several diseases including polio, smallpox and guinea worm have been eradicated successfully. Besides, there is a sharp reduction in IMR (infant mortality rate), MMR (maternal mortality ratio), low mortality due to TB and malaria and significant decrease in HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths.

Healthcare, one of the largest sectors, is growing at a brisk pace due to its strengthening of coverage, services and increasing expenditure by public and private players. Alongside, social trends and growing urbanisation are leading to rapid spread of non-communicable diseases such as heart ailment, diabetes and cancer.

With the population ageing, the elderly will account for nearly 11 percent of the citizenry in 2025. Consequently, there is a demand for greater access to quality care. But expensive treatment costs are making it difficult for uninsured citizens to afford care.

To reduce health inequities and improve healthcare infrastructure, the government recently launched the National Health Policy 2017. It aims at achieving universal health coverage and delivering quality health care to all at affordable cost. It intends to expand access to medical facilities, make it affordable by reducing treatment costs and improve quality. In a major departure from the past, the policy strongly recognises the role of the private sector in expanding healthcare.

The policy will provide a comprehensive primary healthcare package which includes major non-communicable diseases, mental health, geriatrics and also palliative and rehabilitative care. Primary

healthcare will get two-thirds of resources. Public spend on health will be raised to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025 (up from about 1.15 per cent, currently). It also addresses the challenges such as burden of diseases and availability of human resource.

The policy considers major changes, in terms of disease profile and epidemiology, which have taken place over the past 15 years. For the first time, the policy has set specific targets for elimination of certain diseases kala azar in 2017, leprosy by 2018 and the "very ambitious" target of eliminating TB by 2025. The government also plans to end indigenous transmission of malaria by 2030.

India's Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP), Mission Indradhanush, is one of the world's largest drives in terms of number of beneficiaries reached, quantity of vaccine used, number of immunisation sessions organised, geographical spread and diversity of areas covered. Launched in December 2014, it ensures that no child is left without the protection of full immunization, particularly in hard-to-reach districts.

Begun with six vaccines, the programme now protects children against 11 deadly diseases—with new vaccines against rotavirus diarrhoea, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) pneumonia and rubella being added in the last few years. A new vaccine against pneumonia and meningitis, the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV), is being launched in May.

Since its launch, more than 2.14 crore children and around 0.56 million pregnant women have been immunised, with routine immunisation coverage increasing by 5-7 percent over two years, compared to an average of 1 percent

during the past decade.

Several government interventions to reach and improve the quality of care of women, newborns and young children, under the National Health Mission (NHM), have led to a sharp 40.2 per cent rise in institutional births in ten years. These include the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), a direct cash transfer scheme, Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram (JSSK), Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan, a programme that provides ante-natal care, the JSSK entitles every woman delivering at a public health institution to free and cashless health services. The NHM also lays emphasis on a continuum of care for the newborn.

The government is launching the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana for cheaper medicines in hospitals. To provide health security, it will soon bring in a legal framework under which doctors will have to prescribe generic medicines, which are cheaper than equivalent branded drugs.

As an initial measure, prices of 700 medicines have been capped to enable poor people to get medicines at reasonable rates when they face chronic diseases. Rules have been framed in such a way that medicines which were available in the market at Rs 1,200 have been reduced to Rs. 70 to Rs. 80. The government has also capped the prices of stents used in heart ailments.

The government has just launched the "Test and Treat Policy for HIV" scheme under which anyone who is tested and found positive for HIV-AIDS will be provided with ART (Antiretroviral Therapy) irrespective of one's CD count or clinical stage. This will improve longevity and quality of life of those infected and will save them from

many opportunistic infections, especially TB.

India will soon develop a National Strategic Plan for HIV for next seven years which will be crucial for ending AIDS.

To facilitate reduction in stigma and discrimination, the government recently passed the HIV/AIDS Act—a historical step as very few countries have such a law to protect rights of people infected with HIV. Preventive healthcare has been accorded importance; people adopting it may not have to visit hospitals. The cleanliness campaign (Swachhata Abhiyan) is aimed at preventive healthcare as it has been proved that many diseases are contracted if we live in an unclean environment.

Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help maintain health and prevent spread of diseases. Of the 1.7 million people worldwide who die from unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene each year, more than 600,000 are in India. India's priority project Swachh Bharat has given a big push to combat one of the biggest causes of death—poor hygiene.

To accelerate efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to put focus on sanitation, the government launched the Swachh Bharat Mission on October 2, 2014. It aims to make urban India free from open defecation by October 2019 and achieve 100 percent scientific management of municipal solid waste in 4,041 statutory towns. The mission intends to generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health.

*Author is an independent journalist and columnist with four decades of experience in all media forms - print, online, radio and television. He writes on developmental issues.*

## National and International News

### Massive anti-terror operation launched in J&K's Shopian

TOI New Delhi, May 4: Security forces today launched a massive anti-terror operation in the Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir, in the wake of a surge in terrorist-related incidents in the past few days.

They cordoned off almost two dozen villages in the district today and are in the process of conducting a huge search

operation. Suspected terrorists barged into a police post guarding the court complex of southern Shopian late on Wednesday night, and decamped with five service rifles+. The terrorists also took away four INSAS rifles and an AK-47. Separately, in Pulwama, two banks were robbed on Wednesday in a span of two hours+.

Preliminary investigation had

established the involvement of terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba in the bank loot incidents, said Pulwama superintendent of police Rayees Mohammed Bhat.

"Until now, we have identified one militant each from Padgampora and Khagpura, which proves Lashkar's involvement in the incident," he had said.

"It is clear that terrorist organisations like these are short

of cash. We have also seen that they now carry more advanced technological gadgets. We are continuing the investigation," he added.

On May 1, terrorists killed five policemen and two bank officials while looting a cash van of a bank in Kulgam district of Kashmir. Police and the bank officials were dragged out of their vehicle and killed by the terrorists.

### Two suspected ISI agents arrested in Mumbai

PII Mumbai, May 4: Two suspected agents of Pakistan's spy agency ISI were arrested from the city in a joint operation by anti-terrorism squads of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, an official said today.

While one of them identified as Altaf Qureshi was arrested late last night from Masjid Bunder area in South Mumbai, the second operative identified as Javed Iqbal was taken into custody from Yusuf Manzil building at Agreepada this morning, the official said.

Qureshi (37) is a hawala operator and also allegedly worked for ISI. Iqbal is an aide of Qureshi, the official said. Qureshi had allegedly deposited money in the bank account of Afab Ali, another ISI agent, in Lucknow for

carrying out espionage activities, he said.

Aftab was arrested from Faizabad in UP yesterday.

ATS officials seized a cellphone and Rs 71.57 lakh in cash from the house of Qureshi, who was in hawala business at the behest of one Jawed Naviwala, the official said.

During the duo's interrogation, it was found that Javed used to get instructions from Pakistan and at his behest Qureshi often deposited money in Aftab's bank account, he said.

Javed was in constant touch with ISI officials in the neighbouring country, he said.

During their interrogation, names of some more persons cropped up, the official said, adding more arrests are likely.

Aftab, booked under the Official Secrets Act, had allegedly passed on information about Indian Army's movements to officers posted at Pakistan High Commission and also to ISI, the official claimed.

He had allegedly provided information

about the army's movements and units in Faizabad, Lucknow and Amritsar, he said.

Qureshi and Javed will be produced in a Mumbai court for transit remand and taken to Uttar Pradesh for further interrogation, the official said.

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