

Editorial

Imphal Friday, May 5, 2017

Insincerity syndrome creates insecure future

Man's greed knows no bound. The urge to take in that bit more than what is rightfully ours has been the genesis of so much evils and ills in the society. Such a habit also infringes on other's rights and privileges. Yet almost always, it turns out that it is those who are more knowledgeable and informed individuals who are doing the dirty deeds of infringing. The issues of kickbacks and underhand deals in Government contracts and supplies are nothing new. It has been the bane of many otherwise respectful and well-meaning leaders and powerful figures. But when such issues do break out, it never fails to elicit amazement and anger from the public, and are also a source of amusement for many, given the efforts and thoughts that is being invested in pulling out such schemes and also the ingenious ways employed for the same- tactics, had these been utilized legally and for the good, would have definitely made a visible positive impact on the development of the society.

One such crafty scheme being brought out in the open by Imphal Times recently is that of the irregularities and excesses committed in the implementation of the raw water transmission work from Mapithel to Chingkei Ching by the IFCD of the state government. The sheer disregard for regulations and procedures of implementing the scheme from the beginning is going to bring no good to the society.

A few in power and influence has bypassed the law of the land went ahead- with an arrangement which would definitely have enriched them and their near ones who were privy to the whole operation. Handouts must have been made to ensure silence. It would not be possible to carry out such a feat without the consent and collusion of minister/s and departmental heads. The sheer audacity of laying the pipeline without following the proper guidelines signals a deep and critical rot in the quality control and management that has been going on for years, if not decades. The public, which are left seething with anger are waiting and watching for the damage control exercises that is bound to follow suit, for now, and it would be foolish and physically risky for the Government and the perpetrators to assume that they will continue to be mute spectators forever. There had been instances when the public spontaneously decided to set things in the right order, unable to wait for the dragging enforcers and judiciary to sit up and act. These instances clearly underlines the inefficient and ineffective methods of reigning in it's own employees and controlling the affairs of the state. There has not been any exemplary punishments which only emboldens the unscrupulous people to commit bigger and more serious hoaxes and crimes. The onus to prove it's honest intentions of bringing in a better Governance should be put squarely on the Government. There had been enough promises and empty assurances. It is time to shut up and act out. The public now will not have it any other way.

Letter to editor

Dear sir,

Its good and appreciating to see the present Government of Manipur taking up initiatives with different approaches to bring changes in our trouble torn state and also taking steps to bridge the gap between the hill and valley people. So taking this platform, as a concerned youth I would like to draw the kind attention of the present Government to frame or include special policies or programmes to control drugs menace of our state. The very fact is, our present society is infested with drugs abuse especially among the young and dynamic youths. They are indulged with drugs in every corner of our state leading to a doomsday of their future. Our state being corridor to Myanmar and also proximity to the golden triangle, there are high trafficking of drugs and also other contraband substances into our state which destroys many precious lives and the outcome is malignant which also gives a drastic impact on the socio-economic condition of our people. The uses of drugs among the youths are in rapid growth day by day and its a serious issue of our state. Uses of drugs is also one factor for spreading communicable diseases in our state and it has become rampant in our state. So, it's a high time to control this drug menace of our state before its too late.

Lastly, I would also like to request the NGOs, civil society organisations, voluntary organisations, philanthropists etc to intervene in this drug menace which is infested and plagued in our beautiful state Manipur. Anticipating for positive outcome.

Yours faithfully,
Gofort Langhu,
Former President,
Anal Students' Union, Imphal.

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Flagship schemes firing up aspiration among masses

By : Prakash Chawla
A review of the flagship schemes of the NDA Government, as it completes three years in office, throws a crucial common denominator in the form of a citizen who rightfully finds himself or herself among the top claimants on the national resources. And why not? After all, it is the bottom of the pyramid which had not really reaped the fruits of the development even though India had emerged as a USD two trillion economy, finding a front-rank place among the world's Emerging Markets.

It is this person who is now being empowered through the flagship schemes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi so much so that he or she would start asserting her/his claim on the government which is the main custodian of the country's wealth. In fact, a new political economy seems to be unfolding which works like this: the government reaches out to masses and not classes, resulting into a bondage between those at the top of the governance pyramid and those at the bottom. In a way, it is technology in the middle which facilitates the mind-blowing linkages. It works both ways; helping the state machinery to identify and reach out to the right target and empowering the last person in the queue who does not want to keep standing there and is impatient to move ahead.

This is how, the high beta branded schemes have been designed; they are much more than simple and plain government programmes. They

would redefine the way the welfare state has to perform.

Whether it is Prime Minister's Jan Dhan Yojana, Bima Suraksha Yojana, Atal Pension or Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme, the objective has been quite clear: Make development inclusive in the real sense of the meaning, wherein a domestic help, security guard, farm labourer or an unskilled construction worker feels empowered to walk into a bank, get his or her account opened, unfolding manifold opportunities. Linked to his unique ID Aadhar number, a single bank account is doing wonders for those who had been left out of the economic mainstream.

The bank account and the Aadhar ID are the most efficient vehicles for reaching the benefits to the target groups, without being pocketed. In fact, every other scheme including the pensions, crop insurance, DBT for LPG subsidy or promoting the girl child, is being implemented through the financial inclusion programme which has been also recognised by several multilateral agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Those 28 crore account holders under the Jan Dhan Yojana, having about Rs 64,000 crore to their credit, need not depend on the brick and mortar bank branches. Given the kind of financial literacy being spread through smart phones and other devices, the banking is being done via a good mix of technology and financial products like

RuPay cards which can be swiped at the ATMs by a farm worker or a domestic help with as much ease and confidence as an educated urban upper class citizen. Besides, a strong force of 3.75 lakh bank 'Mitras' and banking correspondents would reach financial products at the door step of those near and far. The exclusive club, in a way, is shrinking, as every Indian becomes aspirational and is asserting himself or herself.

While those passing out of the IITs and top end engineering colleges may have walked away with some of the start-up headlines, the small and medium entrepreneurs are a lot more active in financial inclusions thanks to initiatives like Mudra Yojana, under which loans of Rs 2.34 lakh crore have been disbursed without collaterals or guarantees in the last years of its launch.

It is one thing to preach about ending the gender bias which has worked against women and the girl child, resulting into a skewed female ratio. The issue is being addressed by several schemes like Sukanya Samridhi Yojana. As much as Rs 11,000 crore have been deposited in one crore such bank accounts which carry higher interest rates than normal deposits. These schemes are a double edged weapon to end the discrimination against the girl child.

Through a slew of plans both for the rural and urban citizens, a culture of insurance and pensions is being developed even for those who work outside the organised

sectors of the economy. Anyone in the age groups defined in the respective schemes, can be member of the Surakasha Bima Yojana, Jeevan Jyoti Yojana and Atal Pension Yojana.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the most ambitious and challenging at the same time is the Swachh Bharat scheme which is building its own corpus. The scheme must be seen well beyond the optics of brooms and bins. It encompasses cleanliness through sanitation in both rural and urban areas with focus on toilets, urban waste management and cleaning of rivers and water bodies. It would go a long way in making the country men and women, particularly children a lot more healthy. The costs would be recovered many times over in the form of a healthy India and a better human resource.

There are also schemes like Stand up India for entrepreneurs and Make in India to make the country a global manufacturing hub, so that we become a net exporting, rather than importing country, creating millions of jobs, which are the most pressing need for a vast demography which must be nurtured well for the much-touted dividend. Dividend would surely come by with effective implementation of the flagship schemes both at the Central and state levels with active participation of people.

Prakash Chawla is a senior journalist and commentator. He mostly writes on political-economy and global economic issues.

National and International News

Dikchow Banat Palaax receives National Film Award

Guwahati, May 5: Critically acclaimed Assamese feature film **Dikchow Banat Palaax**, which was released in September last year, has been awarded the **Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration** at the 64th National Film Awards in New Delhi on Wednesday by President Pranab Mukherjee on the 104th anniversary of Indian cinema. Information and Broadcasting Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu and MoS Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore were also present on the occasion. Produced by Assam Film (Finance & Development) Corporation Ltd and Utpal Kumar Das of Canvascope, Dikchow Banat Palaax was written, scripted and directed by National Award winning filmmaker Sanjib Sabhapandit.

After receiving the award from the President of India, **Utpal Das, Executive Producer of Dikchow Banat Palaax**, said, "I really feel proud that Assam could bag 6 national awards. I believe that in the coming years, Assamese films will excel not only in India but in the international arena as well. My sincere gratitude to the Assam Film Finance Development Corporation for their cooperation in this regard. Hope many more good films will be done in the near future with the help of Assam Film Finance and Development Corporation."

Dikchow Banat Palaax explores the relationship of a freedom fighter and a Naga woman through decades of separation. Set in 1946, the film portrays the journey of a young Assamese man, who is



banished from his home district by the British empire, as he wanders to the Naga Hills. Love blooms and a Naga damsel gave him a few coins for his sustenance. But the love birds get separated, until the protagonist recollects memories of his past in the year 2000, when he decides to revisit the place just as he returns those coins to the lady.

Canvascope, a film production banner by Utpal Kumar Das, has produced many critically acclaimed feature films like *Jaangfaai Jooaak*, *Jeeyaa Jurir Xubaax* and several short films and documentaries. An engineer and real estate businessman, Das is also an art enthusiastic and has promoted several art projects.

3 killed, 17 injured in cross-border firing by Afghan forces

PTI Islamabad, May: Afghan forces today opened fire on Pakistani security personnel in the restive Balochistan province, killing at least three persons, including a woman, and injuring 17 others, officials said.

The Afghan troops started shelling in Kali Luqman and Kali Jahangir area of Chaman district. Security officials said that the purpose was to target two Pakistani check posts in the area. Pakistan forces retaliated to the fire.

Medical Superintendent of Chaman Civil Hospital Akhtar said three persons including a woman died and 17 others were injured in the firing from the

Afghan side.

Pakistan army's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), earlier released a statement saying Afghan Border Police opened fire on Frontier Corps (FC) personnel detailed for the security of a census team in Chaman.

It was not known immediately why the firing started. Some reports suggested that intermittent firing was still going on.

Pakistan sealed the Friendship Gate at the Chaman border crossing for all kinds of transportation due to the firing. It was the second time this year that the Chaman border crossing was sealed.

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