

Editorial

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

Prohibition against peoples' will: Why not we take a referendum and decide

Laws are made for the convenience of the people. If the law that become no more relevance or in other word if it is not supported by majority - than it is better take a referendum and change it. Yes it is a spirited defence for drinks.

Drinking is a vice- so said a few men considered wise and pious.

Though it stands agreeable, on further consideration and deliberation on the matter, exhausting a few more of the sparse grey matter than ever done before of which yours truly is endowed with in the process, things began to look more confusing and complex. What exactly is it that makes drinking a vice- is it the type of drink, or the amount of drink that one consumes, or the manner in which it is consumed or is it the ingredient or the content in a drink that is considered bad?

The unanimous response to this poser would be 'Alcohol'. Granted, alcohol induces an altered state of mind and a decrease in the motor coordination of a person (an amusing sight any given day).

Yet, does every person who drinks behaves and is affected in the same way? Is there nothing positive or beneficial to say or write about for the humble spirit? What about the irrefutable claims by various researchers and scientists of the uncountable benefits of having wine regularly- a drink that contains mostly alcohol? Wasn't gods supposed to have enjoyed wine? How could something the gods themselves imbibe be so bad? Or is it that the gods are after all just as vice loving as humans? Technicalities aside, one fails to understand the ruckus over drinking.

The State has been a dry state for more than a decade, yet prohibition has not done much to dissuade people from drinking, nor has it hampered the ease of procuring the chosen brand or type. The only real benefit prohibition provides is to the bootleggers and black marketers who are running a well oiled network of lucrative business. A very huge source of income for the fund crunched State like ours is not being tapped.

The people running the state has conceded as much when he says prohibition is not working in the State and precious funds and taxes from the liquor trade is not being collected in the State due to the Dry State status in effect.

Total prohibition will never be possible in our state. Prohibition has not had any effect on the consumption pattern of the people. Crimes related to drinking hasn't seen much significant change, there are more pressing challenges of the drugs in the state - a problem which needs immediate attention and remedy.

Crime in the states where there is no prohibition in effect isn't necessarily higher than in our state. The above instances demand an immediate removal of the dry state status from the state. It is not the drink that is bad, but the person taking the drink is the one which needs to be controlled, and control will only be possible when a systematic and strict enforcement is implemented regarding the type and availability of alcohol rather than to let the present situation continue.

A firmly regulated sales policy will ensure improvement for a social indulgence which simply will not be wished away. There are far more serious and heinous atrocities being perpetrated in our society for which the social organizations, the media and the Government agencies should be working in unison and channelize their efforts.

A consistent awareness drive against the evils of excessive drinking, coupled with intensive enforcement of the rules and regulations being implemented can control the crimes and problems related to drinking to a great degree, while providing a pragmatic solution to the baffling and disputed issue of the practicality and the effectiveness of prohibition in the state. The Chief Minister should make that call, however difficult it may seem, based on his beliefs and for the betterment of the State. There won't be a dearth of supporters and well wishers who will be raising a toast to such a decisive decision.

Lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my driving license No. MN-0620010007174 issued by the DTO Imphal East, Adhaar Card, 1 ATM Card issued by State Bank of India and 2 ATM cards issued by Punjab national Bank and Pan Card on the way between North AOC to Wangkhei Andro Parking on 2/4/2018. Finders are requested to handover it to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Asem Joykumar Singh
S/o (late) A Gambhi Singh
Langdum Mamang leikai
Contact No: 9774090850

Lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my Identity Card issued by Excise Department bearing I-Card no NIE No/02 Mjon No. 096511 on the way between Takyeil to Tera Bazar on 2/4/2018. Finders are requested to handover it to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Pebam Joychandra Singh
S/o (L) Pebam Thoiba Singh
Sagolband Sayang Kurao Makhong

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National & International News

Air India delays payment of salaries for March, but employees have yet to be informed, say sources

Agency Vadodra, April 4: Disinvestment-bound Air India has delayed the payment of salaries for the month of March and is yet to intimate the employees about reasons for the delay, sources said.

The debt-laden carrier has over 21,000 employees, including more than 11,000 permanent staff on its rolls.

Generally, salaries are paid by the 30th or 31st of every month and in the case of bank holidays around these dates, then payments are

made in advance.

Sources at the airline told *PTI* that March salaries remain unpaid till today and that employees have not received any communication from the management as to when the salaries would be disbursed.

"Since the banks were closed till Monday, we were expecting the salary payment by today, though the practice is of making the salary payments in advance in the eventuality of banks being closed around 30 or 31st of the month," one of the sources said.

When contacted, an Air India spokesperson said salaries for March are likely to be paid by Thursday.

On 28 March, the Civil Aviation Ministry came out with the preliminary information memorandum for seeking Expression of Interest (EoI) for the strategic disinvestment of Air India.

Air India had 11,214 permanent employees as on December 1, 2017, as per the memorandum. The government has proposed

selling 76 percent stake in the airline, as well as transferring control over its management, to private players. Besides, Air India would divest 100 percent stake in Air India Express and 50 percent shareholding in AISATS, an equal joint venture with Singapore-based SATS, according to the memorandum.

Last month, full service carrier Jet Airways had informed its employees that it was postponing payments of March salaries, citing "circumstances beyond its control."

Indian envoy calls on Pak NSA after Delhi-Islamabad diplomatic stand-off ends

Agency New Delhi, April 4: Days after India and Pakistan reached a rapprochement which ended the diplomatic stand-off over harassment of diplomats, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Ajay Bisaria called on Pakistan's National Security Advisor (NSA) Nasser Khan Janjua.

While both sides said that constructive conversation took place on improving bilateral relations, their versions varied regarding the contents of the meeting.

Sources in India said, "The Indian High Commissioner sensitized the Pak NSA on issues of India's concern. Constructive discussions

took place on improving the bilateral relationship."

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, on the other hand, put out a press release wherein the NSA welcomed the Indian envoy as this was his first call-on after assuming charge but remained focused on one subject alone-Kashmir.

NSA Janjua expressed serious concerns over the ongoing situation in Kashmir. He said, "The use of force alone can lead us no where. It rather diminishes hope, injures the society and further worsens the fragile situation... Pakistan is deeply committed to the cause of Kashmir and supports to resolve this issue politically and according to the aspirations of Kashmiri people.

Process of dialogue is the only way forward to resolve our disputes. It is by way of peaceful resolution of our disputes which can enable both the countries to belong to the future."

Ajay Bisaria was quoted by the Pakistani Foreign Ministry as saying, "Both countries have immense potential to improve the relationship, and cater to each other's needs", suggesting to work on taking small steps for improving the bilateral relations including exchange of prisoners, visits of medical teams and trade initiatives to take the relationship towards normalcy.

Both sides agreed to explore the possibilities of more cooperation and improving bilateral relations to

ultimately take it towards comprehensive process of dialogue, the statement read.

The meeting between the Indian High Commissioner and the Pakistani NSA was scheduled a week ago, although sources say that the two have met on various social occasions.

The Indian envoy was in constant touch at all diplomatic and political levels to bring to an end the tension that arose between the two nations over the ill treatment of diplomats in both the countries.

The matter was resolved on March 30 under the 1992 Code of Conduct (CoC) for the treatment of diplomatic/ consular personnel in India and Pakistan.

Chandrababu Naidu meets Arvind Kejriwal, seeks support for no-confidence vote

Agency New Delhi, April 4: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu met his Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday, amid his attempts to garner support for the no-confidence motion moved by his party TDP against the Centre.

The TDP leader discussed the issue of Special Category Status and the "injustice" met out to his

state by the Centre during the meeting.

"The Delhi chief minister said he would offer support to the TDP through members from his party in both houses of Parliament," Telugu Desam Party's Rajya Sabha MP C M Ramesh told reporters.

Last month, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) had pulled out of the NDA after the Centre expressed its inability to grant Special Category

Status to Andhra Pradesh. Mr Naidu's party also moved a no-confidence motion against the Narendra Modi government over the issue.

The AAP has four MPs in the Lok Sabha.

Since his arrival in Delhi on Tuesday, the Andhra Pradesh chief minister has met leaders from the Congress, Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, AIADMK,

DMK and Shiv Sena to drum up support for his demands.

The meetings were aimed at garnering support for the no-confidence motion against the NDA government.

Mr Naidu also met National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC), D Raja (CPI), V Maitreyan (AIADMK), Anupriya Patel (Apna Dal) and Ram Gopal Yadav (Samajwadi Party).

SC dismisses pleas challenging CBSE's retest decision

Agency New Delhi, April 4: The Supreme Court today dismissed five petitions challenging the CBSE's decision to conduct a re-examination of the Class 12 economics paper after an alleged leak.

The top court said it is the discretion of the Central Board of Secondary Education to conduct the re-examination and can't be challenged in the court.

A bench of Justices S A Bobde and L Nageswara Rao asked the students who had challenged the CBSE's decision to appear in the

examination if conducted.

Several petitions were filed before the apex court after the CBSE said on March 28 that the Class 10 maths and Class 12 economics paper had allegedly leaked.

The CBSE said yesterday that it has found after assessment there was no impact of alleged paper leak of Class 10 maths paper and no re-examination would be held.

Besides challenging the CBSE's decision, the petitioners also wanted a CBI probe into the alleged paper leak, saying several incidents were reported from various states

and Delhi Police was not competent to hold the nation-wide probe.

Besides seeking an independent probe into the leak, one of the petitioners, 15-year-old Rohan Mathew, also sought a direction to the CBSE to declare the results on the basis of the examinations already conducted.

The CBSE, on March 30, had announced that it would re-conduct the examination for economics for Class 12 throughout the country on April 25.

Mathew and two others have moved the top court seeking quashing of the CBSE's decision to re-conduct the Class 10 mathematics examination on several grounds, including violation of their fundamental

rights.

Earlier, another plea was filed in the apex court by Reepak Kansal, a resident of Shakarpur here, challenging the decision of the CBSE to cancel and re-conduct the two papers.

"It is to be noted that this year, 16,38,428 students are appearing for the Class 10 and 11,86,306 students for Class 12 in the CBSE examinations.

"And therefore, to penalise the student community for an incident which is under investigation and without completion of that investigation/enquiry and issuing a notice on March 28, 2018 (for re-exams), affects the fundamental rights of students which is arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional," the plea said.

Condolence meeting

A condolence meeting was held over the sad demise of Khelen Thokchom, Special Correspondent of the Telegraph in the office of the United News of India, Imphal here today.

All the staff of UNI observed two minute silence as a mark of respect to the departed soul. The contributions made by Khelen Thokchom during his long service as a journalist were remembered. The UNI staff who spoke on the occasion felt Khelen was a dedicated journalist who worked as a true journalist till his last breath. An uncompromising and a straight person Khelen set an example of how a journalist should work in today's world.

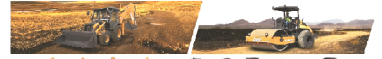
The media fraternity has lost a shining star of journalism and a towering figure whose demise has left a huge vacuum which will hard to fill it was stated.

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