

Sunday Poetry

Words

By- Varavara Rao

Translated in English by D. Venkat Rao

Words, smothered in the folds of the self,

Must be stirred awake,
Made to amble and watch
See if wings can bear aloft
The crippled limbs
And soar into the sky.

Like the first showers after the drought
To my parched ears, my own worlds,
Not any other's, remain strange.

Like the marvel of the sky
Discovering its lost monsoon
I long to sprout on a soil
In the vibrations of a sonorous world.

Once again I yearn to learn the utterance
At school and on the commune,
From pupils and plebeians
I dream of seizing syllables
From each of history's furrows.

Without this voicing peal
How will this silence,
Loaded for so long in the self,
Explode?

Without this booming resonance
How will this scene,
Cryptic for so long in the eyes,
Scintillate?

Once again I must learn to utter
In communing with and listening to
Our people;
I must be tethered to the word and abide by it
What's man's legacy after betraying the word?

Nothing debases the word:
In the blazing furnaces of time
Under the plummeting hammer clangs,
This, as the fittest moment,
I go on forging expressions.

(Courtesy- Poetry International Web)

Money bag lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my money bag with my Aadhar Card, Service ID Card, Driving Licence, Voter ID and vehicle card on the way between Heirangoithong to Singjamei on 7/4/2018.

Finder are requested to kindly handover the same to the undersigned. Sd/-
Mayengbam Ranjan Singh
S/o M. Ibochou Singh
Khagempalli Panthak
Contact No. 8794562718

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : imphaltimes@gmail.com. For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (0)

National & International News

Fresh raids pound Syria's rebel Douma after talks falter

Agency Beirut, April 8

Renewed air strikes have hit the last opposition holdout in Syria's Eastern Ghouta, leaving 70 civilians dead in around 24 hours, as regime troops pressed an offensive to pressure rebels to withdraw. Eleven people also suffered breathing problems in Douma, the last rebel-held pocket of Eastern Ghouta, with first responders accusing forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad of using "poisonous chlorine gas". State media, quoting an official source, said yesterday the reports were rebel "fabrications". The regime has used a combination of a fierce military onslaught and two negotiated withdrawals to empty out 95 percent of the enclave near Damascus, but rebels are still entrenched in its largest town of Douma. Bombing had subsided as Moscow pursued talks with Jaish al-Islam, the Islamist faction that holds Douma, putting military operations seemingly on hold for about 10 days. But the negotiations crumbled this week and air strikes resumed on Friday, killing 40 civilians according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The Britain-based monitor said 30 civilians, including eight children, were killed on Saturday in similar raids. "The bombing has not stopped.

We can't even count all the wounded," said Mohammed, a young doctor inside Douma. "There are some wounded who we couldn't operate on in time, and they died," he told AFP. Footage published by the White Helmets civil defence showed rescuers using their bare hands to pull back dirt and tiles in a bombed-out house, eventually freeing a young man trapped underneath. As they stood him up, the rescuers looked up at the sky where the roar of a warplane could be heard. Syrian troops matched their renewed bombing with a ground operation in the orchards surrounding Douma, with state TV saying they had "stormed" the fields. "The regime is trying to tighten the noose around Douma from the west, east, and south," said Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman. Six civilians were also killed and dozens more wounded as Douma rebels shelled the capital Damascus on Saturday, Syrian state media said. State television broadcast live footage from a hospital in Damascus, where pools of blood stained the floor and wounded could be heard wailing in pain. Jaish al-Islam spokesman Hamza Bayraqdar said in a statement Saturday that the rebels had not targeted any neighbourhoods in Damascus, and that the regime had "violated the ceasefire decided during previous negotiations".

Assad is keen to recapture Ghouta to eliminate the opposition from the outskirts of Damascus and end years of rocket fire on the capital. Abbas, a retired 57-year-old Syrian man, said his neighbourhood in the capital's west was hit hard on Saturday. "It looks like Douma is the end of the story, and endings are always hard," he told AFP. "We've been waiting for this for years, whether in Ghouta or in Damascus," said Abbas. Since February 18, the regime's Ghouta offensive has killed more than 1,600 civilians and sliced the area into three isolated pockets, each held by different rebel factions. The first two were evacuated under Russian-brokered deals last month that saw more than 46,000 rebels and civilians bussed to opposition-held Idlib province in the northwest. Tens of thousands also fled into government-controlled territory through safe passages opened by Russia and Syrian troops. Moscow also stepped in to negotiate a deal for Douma, the third and final pocket where Jaish al-Islam had been angling for a reconciliation agreement that would allow its members to remain as a police force. Jaish al-Islam's Bayraqdar told AFP that "the negotiations have not stopped" with the Russians, and that the rebel group was still demanding to stay in Ghouta. "We are attached to our land and revolutionary principles, and we

have already refused ... to leave Ghouta," he said. Following a preliminary accord announced by Russia on Sunday, nearly 3,000 fighters and civilians were evacuated from Douma to northern Syria. But as talks dragged on, Syria and its Russian ally threatened Jaish al-Islam with a renewed military assault if the group did not agree to withdraw. It remains unclear exactly why the talks fell apart this week. SANA said they faltered when the rebel group refused to release detainees it is holding in Douma, warning the military assault would only stop if hostages are released. A Russian army official quoted by Russian news agencies accused Jaish al-Islam of "violating the implementation of agreements, blocking the exit of civilians, fighters and members of their families from the city of Douma." Others have pointed to internal rebel divisions over the withdrawal process. Top Jaish al-Islam political figure Mohammad Alouh on Friday said the talks had been going "well" until a power struggle emerged between the regime's allies. Nawar Oliver, an analyst at the Omran Institute, told AFP the rebel group was facing "massive" military pressure. "The negotiations failed and the regime wants its conditions — the air strikes are a taste of what could happen if its conditions are not implemented," he said.

Fire breaks out at Trump Tower, kills one, injures four

Agency New York, April 8

An elderly man died late Saturday and four firefighters were injured after a blaze erupted on the 50th floor of Trump Tower in New York, officials said. The New York Police Department said 67-year-old Todd Brassner was found "unconscious and unresponsive" when officers arrived at the scene.

Brassner — a Trump Tower resident identified by US media as an art dealer — was pronounced dead after being taken to Mount Sinai Roosevelt Hospital, according to police, which said the medical examiner's office would determine the cause of death as part of an ongoing investigation. "This was a very difficult fire. As you can imagine, the apartment is quite large, we are 50 stories

up. The rest of the building had a considerable amount of smoke," the New York City Fire Department said. It said the four firefighters had "non-life threatening" injuries and the blaze had been brought under control. Smoke began rising from the skyscraper in Midtown Manhattan around 6:00 pm (2200 GMT). The building, which is owned by US President Donald Trump,

serves as the headquarters for The Trump Organization and houses the president's penthouse. Surrounding streets were closed off as tourists snapped pictures on their phones. The fire department earlier tweeted a picture of the building with several windows of the 50th floor ablaze. Trump himself said the blaze had been extinguished.

Railways to run 5 metre-gauge lines as heritage stretches

Agency New Delhi, April 8

The railways has decided to preserve five of its metre-gauge lines across the country and run them as heritage lines, in a shift from its plans to convert all of them in to broad-gauge ones, sources in the ministry said. The lines to be preserved include sections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Sources said these lines are linked to tourist destinations and were earlier identified for gauge conversion, but now will be retained as heritage lines. Among them is the around 30-

km-long Mhow-Kalakund rail line in Madhya Pradesh, which, the sources said, will be used solely for tourism purposes. This rail route passes through the picturesque hills and the valleys of the Vindhya mountain range and will draw tourists to the Patalpani waterfall, officials said. "The Patalpani waterfalls has the potential to draw tourists. But very few people, save Indore and neighbouring districts, come here. Promoting this line will help tourism and also generate jobs among the tribals," said a source. Another line which has been identified by the ministry as

having the potential to be developed as a tourism line is the 171-km Nanpara-Mailani section in Uttar Pradesh. It runs through the Dudhwa national park. Around a 50-km meter-gauge line which passes through the Gir Forest in Gujarat will also be preserved, sources said, along with about a 70-km Marwar-Udaipur metre-gauge railway section falling in the biodiversity sanctuary of Todgarh Raoli. "These are picturesque stretches which can be enjoyed by tourists and are unique to India. Maybe an eco-tourism safari can be planned around it. All these sections have sharp bends,

tunnels which have immense tourism potential," said the source. Sources say that the ministry is also contemplating if these heritage trains can be such that tourists can enjoy the scenery through large glass windows and ceilings like those in Switzerland. Another 120-km section has been identified in Assam — the Mahur-Harangajao meter gauge — in the hill station of the North Cachar Hill district (now called Dima Hasao district). The line, which will now be preserved, is unique for the presence of numerous tunnels in the section that still stand out as architectural marvels.

NCP MLA among 4 arrested in Ahmednagar for double murder of Shiv Sena leaders

Agency Pune, April 8

Police booked 31 people and arrested four men among them including an MLA of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) early Sunday after two local Shiv Sena leaders were murdered Saturday evening. NCP MLA Sangram Jagtap was arrested along with Sandeep Gunjal, Balasaheb Kotkar and Bhanudas Kotkar, police said. Gunjal is the prime suspect. The Ahmednagar police booked the four under various sections of the Indian penal code (IPC)

including Section 302 for murder. Jagtap's arrest infuriated NCP workers who stormed the office and of the superintendent of police and ransacked it. There is heavy police deployment to prevent a deterioration of law and order situation but the city continues to be tense. "There is a law and order situation in the area and I cannot reveal many details to you," said police inspector A Parmar of Kotwali police station who is investigating the double murder. Shiv Sena deputy head in Kedgaon, Sanjay Kotkar and

another leader Vasant Thube were killed after being shot and attacked with sharp weapons on Saturday evening. The murder sparked off tension in the Shahunagar area of Kedgaon and shops and commercial establishments quickly downed their shutters. Shiv Sena supporters staged a protest at the murder site for hours and blocked the police from removing the bodies before they eventually relented. Traffic on Pune-Ahmednagar bypass was stopped for a short while after the attack after Sena members held a

rasta-roko protest on Saturday evening. The double murder came on the heels of Congress leader Vishal Kotkar winning the civic bypoll for Ward 32 (Kedgaon) of the Ahmednagar Municipal Corporation. The bypoll was necessitated after the mayor former mayor Sandeep Kotkar, also Congress member, was convicted in a 2008 murder case. The shops in the main market area of Kedgaon like Manik Chowk and Bhagwan Chowk remained shut on Sunday following a bandh called by the Shiv Sena's local unit.