

Editorial

Thursday, December 6, 2018

Intimidation to media person

The advancement in information technology has made today's world a 'Global village' - the term first coined by Canadian-born author Marshall McLuhan. Man born at the extreme corner of Far East Asiatic countries knows, cry and pray for the kind of disasters that happen in Middle East countries or in Latin America. Installation of internet technologies to cell phones which every human being can afford makes the people of our Earth- whose circumference is estimated at about 40,075 Kilometer staying at a communicable distance. Now every human being equipped with cell phone can now talk or stay in touch with any of their friends or relatives staying thousand miles away. Point bringing here is about the changes in the theory of mass media in relevance to today's journalism. The very concept at which the older generation considered 'proximity' as a characteristic of news is somewhat losing its foot.

Professor M.L Stein, the then chairman of Department of Journalism, California State University, Long Beach, California in his book "Shaping the News" in 1974 wrote that people are more interested in what happens in their neighbours. The one time presumption that 'a dog fight on Main Street is of more interest to our readers than fifty thousand foreign troops killed in battle somewhere' seems to have no relevance in today's society. Readers are now interested about happenings at distance places if the subject matters is his or her interest.

However, another characteristic of news - 'Prominence' on the hand is becoming a matter of more interested subjects for almost all readers. People now want to know what had happen to their leaders, celebrity or the bureaucrats irrespective of where they stay or which country they reside. Every news readers are eager to know the story of successful personality.

Points bringing up here are not to lecture on what is news and what should be reported but this is an attempt to make some of our critic to understand on why the newspaper especially the kind of ours often published story about real heroes or events that happen far far away from our state. Sometimes a mere insignificant event at which some people are of vested interested are often left and the result is not always good for we in the media fraternity of Manipur state in particular. The other kind of pressure that the media persons sometimes remain helpless is their intentions to get publish their story.

Manipur or say Imphal is not a safe place for even VIPs who are escorted by security personnel days and night. It is an open secret that almost all the politicians including MLAs or Ministers or even the Chief Ministers have linked with the UGs, the only thing is that we don't have any proof.

So, what would be the security of those working with the media if in case, some of the individuals or rebels force us to publish stories of their interest. Being taken up in this profession, we always stand with our ethics and there is no question of compromising our ethics while publishing stories. But when the government said that this should not be published and this should be published then where is the freedom of speech provided under the constitution of our country. Government machineries can invite news editors and can discussed about the content on objectivity reason but should in no way dictate the media on what or what not to publish. Calls of bandh or blockade by any organisation are in some way an essential news items for media houses living in conflict zone - because it is for the safety and security of the common people that the government machineries cannot guarantee safety. We have PCI guidelines, local code of conduct and this should be respected.

One thing left out to mention is the threat intimidation to media persons using technique of different kind like the detention of TV journalist Kishorchand. This would only meant crumbling of the democracy.

Bottom line is that media should not be harassed at any cost for any reason because we chose this profession not merely to earn for living but with full intention to serve our nation.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times' can be sent to our e-mail : imphaltimes@gmail.com. For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-2452159 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.

Is "Jago Grahak Jago"-a Mockery In Manipur?

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh Khoijuman.

Among all living components on this Earth, only we human being are consumer not producer. We human being consumes the products produced by other fellow components on this mother Earth. Though we learnt so many things from our fellow components about consumerism, making so many rules and regulations about consumers right etc but who is taking care of consumers right in spite of being in the Constitution of India which were framed by our Godfathers or copy paste from our colonial masters? Let's see few incidents taken place in very recent time in our state about the fate and fiasco of consumers. It was brought in media discussion in one of the local TV channel about the Medical clinical result for a particular person from two different clinical labs, which were totally different as the person reported. The authorities of these two labs claimed that their result were very accurate and correct. Isn't wonderful that for a particular person, clinical result given by the two labs (sample taken

within a period of half an hour) different? Then result from which lab is to be believed? Isn't a serious case in public health? Or shall we remain silent? Who cares the prices of essential commodities in the Market? Who fixed the prices of these commodities? If Im not mistaken, the prices are being fixed by the traders or individual shopkeepers as they wish. We public also never cared about the MRP written on the packets, whatever the shopkeeper says, we simply pay and never see the date of manufacture, expiry date etc. In very recent time the prices of potatoes, onion, eggs etc changes every day, why and how nobody cares. It is also reported that actual price of an injection for heart attack is between Rs700 to Rs 900/- but in MRP it is Rs9000/-, the cost of medicine of a typhoid patient is about Rs25/in wholesale price but in Hospital it's Rs53/-, the cost of injection after dialysis for a kidney patient is about Rs1800/- but never found in pharmacy or wholesaler, it's found only with the Doctors

though actual price is Rs500/ and many others such as happening in Hospitals. What about the cost of clinical tests like MRI, Ultra sound, CT-scan etc in the clinical labs outside the Hospital? Who is looking after all these malpractices which forfeit the right of consumers? One very interesting incident happened few days ago in Travel / transport sector in Manipur which I never thought of. I went to drop my daughter at JIRI parking who had to travel to Mizoram for her official work. She went to one Travel agency ticket counter for her travel ticket, she took out one five hundred rupee note for the ticket. The person at the counter said, from today fare for Imphal - Jiri is increased to Rs1000/-. My daughter asked, why? The replied was very simple and casual. The person at the counter said, Local body (Panchayat) election in

ASSAM is on 9th December, so many vehicles from Manipur were seized for the election purpose because of which they hired private vehicle in the public interest so they are compelled to hike the fare. Is this reply justified without giving any prior public notification? What could happen to a passenger possessing only Rs1000/- just to reach his home place Jiribam? He has to travel in fasting all the way. Isn't again forfeiting the right of the passengers /consumers? My question is, who is looking after all these affairs? Is it the duty of Govt/ public? There may be many areas where anything is done at their wish by any individual/group of people/ organization because of which common people are the sole sufferer. So let's be aware of these and attention of authority is also drawn in public interest so that such malpractices may be curbed timely before it's too late.

Powerful Weapon

By: rambam Bebina Devi

Senior Research Fellow, Department of Adult Continuing Education and Extension.

In Manipur, the most powerful weapon is money. If we have money then we can buy certificates, jobs and also to caste in Manipur firm by launching one film production. But this is not the right system of producing any film, we should respect the film makers but nowadays there is no exact system in Manipur. For example in Education system too, if we want more/high marks in graduation then we need to go to some colleges which is not situated in greater Imphal. But

such students getting high percentage from such institutions could not get seats in Masters entrance conducted by Manipur University.

On the other hand some teachers thought that if we speak English fluently then we are well educated and eligible for any job in Manipur. But without certificated fluency in English is valueless.

If people have enough money then he/she can do anything whatever he/she wants. On the other hand, anything which can be brought by money there is one thing which can't buy by money i.e. education. We should have enough qualification to get

proper job in our concern subjects. There is always strict rule for driving two and four wheelers in Manipur, but this rule is only for the common people not for VIPs. Not only this, Nowadays getting OBCs certificate also depend on the relationship with the concern authority, for the common people it is done slowly and for those who has link with higher authorities can get easily.

There is a rule in Manipur Education system that is, teachers take one class in a month and get their salary and on the other hand others without taking classes get their salary at the last date of a month.

Nowadays teachers get their

salaries without taking their classes, but if we had to go for some donations for the welfare of students and teachers community, they were not willingly given money. But they get their salaries by taking two or three classes in a month.

To sum up, rule is for all it is not for the common people, so need to speak whichever we want to speak. Teachers also need to focus on students welfare not in their salary. After four months strike in any institutions salary of four months were credited to their respected accounts of teachers but they are unable to done one piece of their salary for the sake of students and teachers community or for the sake of society.

Issues in Governance and Politics of North-East India

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. Colloquially referred to the 'seven sister States', they are now joined by an eighth members, Sikkim, since it joined the Indian Union in 1975, though it is geographically interspersed from the region by a part of West Bengal. A frontier region, it borders Bhutan, China, Myanmar, and is linked with the rest of India by a narrow 20 km - wide corridor.

A complex mosaic of ethnic and linguistic groups, the region harbors more than 166 tribes living in ecologically diverse hilly and forested tracts. Often referred to as an 'ethnic cauldron', the region is characterized by marked cultural differences from the cultures of the mainland India in terms of linguistic, tribal, religious, and caste textures. Among the four linguistic families of India, Northeastern languages belong to the Tibeto-Burman stock.

In British India, Sikkim remained a protectorate and Manipur and Tripura princely states that merged with India in 1949, while the rest of the Northeast was amalgamated with Assam with incomplete integration, which is signaled by terms like 'excluded' or 'partially excluded' areas. Fuller integration of these excluded areas was attempted only by the independent Indian state with asymmetrical federal arrangements like 'Union Territories' graduating to full 'Statehood' and special provisions for administration and control of 'scheduled areas' and 'scheduled tribes' under the 5th and 6th Schedules of the Constitution of India. While the 5th Schedule is applicable to the scheduled tribal areas and scheduled tribes of the various States in India, the 6th Schedule is restricted to the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. Besides, Northeast region is probably the only political region in the country where

every large State is a region unto itself within a sub-continental nation. This uniqueness is signified by the facts of the legislations and institutions like the Northeastern Council Act, 1971, setting up a nodal agency for the economic development of the region, with a Secretariat of its own, and a separate Union Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region created since 2001.

Ethnic identities with tribal linguistic and religious markers in the Northeast have been historically as well as presently undergoing complex processes of discoveries and 'constructionism' (to differentiate the term from 'constructivism' in international relations theories) especially during colonial and postcolonial periods. Pre-existing discrete tribal self-perceptions have been undergoing a complex process of formation and reformation of identities indicated by Hinduisation, conversion to Christianity, endemic demands for official recognition as Scheduled Tribes, and assumed and asserted affinity to the Naga tribe, which itself was a convenient British colonial way of labeling the tribes in Lushai Hills areas. The closely related political phenomena are the endemic demands for separate Statehood, within and without India, with varying degrees of intensities and violent political mobilizations. This is not limited to larger tribal groups as there has been a 'proliferation of a particular kind of political mobilization in Assam by smaller groups, mostly tribal communities numbering in some cases just a few thousands, to demarcate territory and political space for themselves and their kind to the exclusion of others living in that space' (M.S. Prabhakara, 'Invention, Reinvention Contestation: Politics of Identity in Assam', in Sanjib Baruah, ed., *Ethnonationalism in India: A*

Reader, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010: Chapter 8).

The Northeast region has also been afflicted by persistent and vexatious illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in the whole region, especially in Assam, where there emerged a strong anti-foreigner movement in the late-1970s to the mid-1980s which was sought to be contained by the Assam Accord between the Assam Gana Parishad and the Union government under Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1985. The implementation of the terms of the Accord remained problematic and the solution of the problem of infiltration persists. The Supreme Court of India in the Sonowal case called it a 'virtual demographic aggression' but a political solution, despite the recent Indo-Bangladesh land transfer agreement, is yet to be seen.

The Naga question has proved to be the stickiest problem in the Northeast. Naga insurgency is also metaphorically often said by the Northeasters themselves as the 'Mother of all Insurgencies' in the region. The combination of federal democratic debt and use of security forces to coercively reject any challenge to the territorial national integrity of India, which has more or less worked in the rest of the region, gets bogged down in Nagaland. For the ethnonational demand of Nagas makes territorial claims on territories in Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur hills and across the international border in Myanmar. After years of impasse, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Narendra D. Modi were able to cut some ice and resume talks with the Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) but the splinter NSCN's Khaplang faction with its base in Myanmar has not been a part of this move. The outcome of the partial talks

themselves suggest some preparedness of the Naga rebels to accept the sovereignties of India and Myanmar, but mutually agreed deals on all issues are still in the future.

Though not exactly identical, there are some interesting parallels between the Northwest and the Northeast regions of India. Both regions present mixes of British Indian provinces and princely states in the colonial period, processes of federalization through devolution or accession and/or merger, asymmetrical federal arrangements in the post-colonial Constitution via Articles 370, 371 and the 5th and 6th Schedules, post-independence re-organization of States, demands for a new federal deal in terms of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of the Shiromani Akali Dal (1973 and 1978) and J & K Autonomy Committee Report (1999), and insurgencies contained and accommodated in a number of cases (e.g. Punjab, Mizoram, ULFA) or still awaiting resolution through works in progress (e.g. Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland-Manipur conflict.) A systematic comparative study of the two contexts and somewhat variable approaches of the Indian state in the two sectors is not available. Such a study, if attempted, must also look into strategies of fiscal federalism (e.g. 'Special Category States' of India's Finance Commission dispensation, which covered all the 10 sub-Himalayan States spanning from the Northwest to the Northeast but now stands practically abandoned by the 14th Finance Commission Report (2015-2020). The variable geopolitical contexts of the two regions must also be taken into account. This comparative study will offer important lessons to be learnt and unlearned in terms of strategies of civil society formation and strategies of economic development and state-capacity building in the two border regions. (Courtesy IIPA)