

Editorial

Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018

Think of connectivity with new technology

Connectivity is a serious concern for all who desires to see their state ahead of others. But one thing that stands true is that in the field of road connectivity Manipur is some 100 years behind when compared with other big states in India. As it remains a fact that road connectivity in our state will take more time we need to explore to an alternative connectivity means to compete with the world today.

Neighbouring Assam is far ahead when it comes to Road infrastructure. There is no doubt in saying that connectivity is all that is required to develop a state. The more the connectivity is improved the more the development will come. Unfit road connectivity, inability to make road connectivity with all villages of the state due to certain factors including topographical and geographical states have now become a real hurdle for state like Manipur.

Almost all people know, any government, whichever comes to power, irrespective political parties knows the difficulties and reality of constructing road connectivity for all villages in the state like Manipur, leaving aside the commitments and sincerity. With the kind of debate and discussion heard among the legislators during the ongoing state assembly session. The way the legislatures debated showed that it will take some few years to make sure that the state have proper road infrastructure at present. Even the ongoing construction or repairing work at both National Highways will take some more months or perhaps years due to nature's obstruction.

During question hour in the ongoing Assembly session yesterday Revenue Minister K. Shyam assured to operate Samahmung Sub Divisional Office from the office building of Mini Secretariat Ukhrul district Head Quarter.

Among the many Govt. officers sub-divisional office is one of the most important govt. office to assure that there is governance in the area. As per the Minister Revenue one SDO+3 staffs have been posted and that the SDO posted also acted as BDO so literally the govt. assumed of post functional. The sub divisional staffs are posted before establishing a proper office infrastructure as per requirement.

But what is surprising is the thinking mentality of the govt. authority who felt that sending staff is all enough for opening of a sub divisional office. Besides office infrastructure one important reason for the MLA Alfred to urge the Minister for making the SDO office from Mini Secretariat Ukhrul is also because of the unfit road infrastructure.

Well and good but what is disappointing is that our present day legislatures seems to have completely forgotten is that - the world is changing and it is not changing because of not only the better road connectivity but because of the advancement of connectivity through technology.

One advantage of newly develop technology to connect people is that it is more like sitting together on the same bench no matter how far the distance they stayed. When it remain as a fact that connectivity matters for running of the administration so at least the government should now consider for improvement of better connectivity using all the high tech technology. For example the sub divisional HQ if provided internet connectivity so that the officials can keep in touch with dist. HQ authority for 24 hour, than there is no need for them to travel.

It is now time that the govt. decides working by using connectivity through technology in addition to the development of road connectivity.

Army Chief's Comment "Not Political Or Religious", Say Sources Amid Row

Agency

New Delhi, Feb. 22: Army Chief General Bipin Rawat's comments on the rise of a political party that champions the cause of Muslims in the northeast have set up a controversy. At a seminar on Wednesday, General Rawat also warned against the influx of people from Bangladesh, calling it proxy war by Pakistan with help from China. In comments that have provoked political reactions, General Rawat referred to what he said were reports of an increase in the Muslim population in several districts of Assam and talked about the rise of the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) led by Badruddin Ajmal.

"There is a party called AIUDF. If you look at it, they have grown in a faster time-frame than the BJP grew over the years," he said, adding that the BJP won only two seats in the 1984 national election. "The AIUDF is moving at a faster pace in Assam." The AIUDF, formed in 2005, has three members in parliament and 13 state legislators.

"I do not think you can now change the population dynamics of the area. If it was five districts to eight to nine, inversion has taken place whichever

be the government," he said, referring to districts in Assam that have a Muslim majority.

The Army Chief also said the influx of people from Bangladesh into the Northeast was "planned" and part of proxy warfare by Pakistan with support from China.

"A planned immigration is taking place because of our western neighbour. They will always try and ensure that this area is taken over, playing the proxy dimension of warfare. I think the proxy game is very well played by our western neighbour, supported by our northern border (China) to keep the area disturbed. We will continue to see some migration happening. The solution lies in identifying the problem and holistically looking at it," he said.

To check the influx of Bangladeshis, Assam is coming out with a national register of citizens.

General Rawat said the centre was "seriously taking several measures to ensure development of the region", which would "take care of a lot of things".

Efforts should be to "amalgamate" the people living in the region, he said, and then try and "start identifying those creating trouble for us".

National & International News

India ranks 81st in global corruption perception index

Agency

New Delhi, Feb 22: India has been ranked 81st in the global corruption perception index for 2017, released by Transparency International, which named the country among the "worst offenders" in terms of graft and press freedom in the Asia Pacific region.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, placed India at the 81st place. In the 2016 India was in the 79th place among 176 countries.

The index uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

India's score in the latest ranking, however, remained unchanged at 40. In 2015, the score was 38.

Transparency International further said, "in some countries across the region (Asia Pacific), journalists,

activists, opposition leaders and even staff of law enforcement or watchdog agencies are threatened, and in the worst cases, even murdered".

"Philippines, India and the Maldives are among the worst regional offenders in this respect. These countries score high for corruption and have fewer press freedoms and higher numbers of journalist deaths," it added.

In the last six years, 15 journalists working on corruption stories in these countries were murdered, as reported by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

In the latest ranking New Zealand and Denmark were placed the highest, with scores of 89 and 88, respectively. On the other hand Syria, South Sudan and Somalia were ranked lowest with scores of

14, 12 and 9, respectively.

Meanwhile, China with a score of 41 was ranked 77th on the list, while Brazil was placed at 96th with a score of 37 and Russia was at the 135th place with a score of 29.

Further analysis of the results indicates that countries with the least protection for press and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also tend to have the worst rates of corruption.

The analysis, which incorporates data from CPJ, showed that in the last six years, 9 out of 10 journalists were killed in countries that score 45 or less on the index.

"No activist or reporter should have to fear for their lives when speaking out against corruption. Given current crackdowns on both civil society and the media worldwide, we need to do more to protect those who

speak up," Transparency International Managing Director Patricia Moreira said.

Pak troops target Indian posts along LoC

Agency

Srinagar, Feb 22: Pakistani troops today fired at Indian posts along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir, prompting Indian soldiers to retaliate, an Army official said. The Pakistani troops opened unprovoked firing at Indian posts in the Hajipera area of the Uri sector in Baramulla district this morning, the official said.

He said Indian soldiers are retaliating the aggression from across the LoC effectively and in equal measure. No casualties have been reported in the incident so far, he added.

Contd. from yesteryday issue

Phases of Manipur Culture: A Historical Perspective

By **Hareshwar Goshwami, MCS(Reid)**

Religious Syncretism: It is little or no wonder that Garinbiwaz is treated as religious fanatic by many of his critics. Still there are aspects that could be taken as considerate to some extent. Examples may be cited to the worship of royal deities like *Nongshaba*, *Panhoibi*, and *Taibang Khaiba (Sanamah)* by Brahmins, indicating that there was still room left for religious syncretism and cultures. Though Hindu festivals replaced the traditional festivals, the hill people were allowed to practice their own culture and religion. The killing of animals for food during *Mera Haachongba* known as *Mera Sanduba* was allowed in the capital, which shows cultural toleration and pluralism. *Haomachal* Loishang was reorganized and properly maintained. Muslims who had already settled in the kingdom were not forced into conversion. It shows his tolerance and forbearance towards other beliefs and religion.

The accession of Meidingu Chingthangkhaba popularly known as *Rajarishi Bheigyachandra* (1763-1798 AD), signalled the promotion of a cultural syncretism that is found even today. The Chaitanya school of Vaishnavism replaced the Ramandi cult propounded by Garinbiwaz and his preceptor Shanti Das Mahanta. He was formally initiated to Goudiya Vaishnavism by Shri Rup Parmannanda Thakur. He installed the idol of Govindadevi in 1776 and introduced Ras Lila, a combination of traditional Meitei dance form and Vaishnavite theme. It is said that there are many similarities between traditional 'Maibi Jagoi' and 'Bhang Jagoi' of the Ras Lila. The pattern of 'Champra Okpi', 'Champra Khaibi' of the Bhang dance is said to be adopted from 'Lei-hekpa' 'Lei-khaiba' of the 'Lei Haraoba' of the Meiteis. Meiteis being lover of dance and music found

expression of their sentiment and emotion in devotional songs in Shri Govindadevi and *Natasankriti*.

The Manipuri Vaisnavism as propounded by Bheigyachandra cannot be described as a purely transplanted brand of religion from Bengal. It was formed to suit the local taste and ideas. Thus a socio-religious syncretism occurred resulting to the emergence of present culture of the Meitei-Hindus.

Modern Period: Towards Inclusive Composite Culture (1826 - 1972)

This period witnessed the resurgence of a composite culture in the Manipuri society. Random contact with the British had already begun since the time of Raja Jai Singh (Bheigyachandra). However, direct link commenced after the signing of Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. The meddling of the British Raj in Manipur's politics is clearly visible in the matter of cessation of Kabaw Valley to Burma in 1834. After the first Anglo-Burmese War, the British felt it necessary to establish a Political Agency in Manipur. Captain Gordon (1835-1844) was appointed as first Political Agent.

The constructive part of British contact with Manipur was the introduction of western education. Among the pioneers, mention may be made of Major General W.F. Nuthall, Dr. L. Brown (1867-1875), Sir James Johnstone, Rev. Pettigrew. Nuthall-Brown's vernacular school was established in 1872. Though not successful it paved way for future western education in the State. As a result, in 1920 Manipur went outside the state for obtaining western education with State Scholarship. The arrival of western education acted as an agent of social change, altering existing outlooks and beliefs, and leading to the emergence of an elite group that wanted progress and

modernization.

The outcome was the birth of various movements like revivalist, social reformation, and revolutionary movements in Manipur in the first and second half of the twentieth century. The revivalist movement was spearheaded by an educated teacher called Naorem Phullo popularly known as Naoria Phullo born in 1888 at Laishram Khullen Jaribong, of the then Cachar District. The movement aims at reviving the traditional religion, custom, culture and usages of the Meiteis. But the leader who had awakened the Manipuris from its long slumber and defied colonialism and feudalism was Lamyamba Hijam Irawat Singh, born on 30th March 1896. He was an educated leader of high social status who once became a Darbar Member.

After the defeat of Manipur in 1891, the British taught and trained the Maharaja to be rapacious and cruel against his subjects. They enabled him to collect taxes and revenues effectively so as to fulfill their colonial aspiration. As a result, various obnoxious taxes like Hajamnapet, Kang-thouri, Chabok-wangol, Chandal-senkhai, Jalsambhandhi and harsh and compulsory duties like Yarek-santri were imposed on the common people. Above all, there prevailed many evil social systems like, 'Mangba-sengba', 'Inthokpaloushinba' etc. However, with the emergence of educated middle class, the authority of the king, his nobility and priestly class were questioned. Dead bodies that were buried earlier as 'unholy' were taken out, cremated and last rites performed. The payment of obnoxious taxes and the system of 'sacred' and 'unsacred' were defied. As a result of the efforts made by Lamyamba Irawat and likeminded people, cultural disparity began to wane and the characteristics of a

composite culture prevailed again. The King was no longer absolute. Establishment of Constitutional monarchy in 1949 is a vivid example in this regard. Religion was no longer the source of truth and reality. Reason and logic won over faith and belief. This change heralded the beginning of Modern Period in the Manipur History.

Conclusion: At a time when Manipur was yet to consume and fully embrace the age of science, the complex digital revolution in 1970s kick started the Information age. The Information Age is a period in human history characterized by the shift from traditional industry to a society based on information technology. As a result of sharing of knowledge through information technology, people's socio-economic and political outlooks have changed tremendously. It even challenges science as source of truth and reality; truth stopped being absolute as it became subject to interpretations. Man had moved on from objectivity to subjectivity. The existence of other gods and cultures is acceptable in the mind of the post-modern people as there is no single defining source of truth beyond the individual. For post-modernists spiritual pluralism exists. God is welcomed until he doesn't play God. Neither religion nor science is the yardstick to measure truth, beauty and goodness. As such post-modern culture itself defies certainty and absoluteness. They group and re-group with likeminded people beyond the traditional cultural and religious boundaries. Post-modernism makes assimilation and integration more fluid. But individual or group ideologies can be clashed in the absence of an unifier, that might spin towards social chaos and anarchy. To me this is the social order prevailing today in Manipur though the characteristics of both modern and pre-modern still persist.

(Concluded)

WHENEVER YOU SEE CONSTRUCTION AND MINING EQUIPMENTS, JUST THINK OF US

CASE
1800 4199 770

CASE
CONSTRUCTION

Automobile Engineering Works

New Checkon Road Purana Rajbari, Imphal East

Authorised Dealer: Case New Holland Construction Eqpt. (I) Pvt. Ltd & Kirioskar Engines Oil Limited (Kirioskar Silent Generator)

Contact No.: 0385-24520117, 9862566601



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