

# Editorial

Thursday, March 1, 2018

## Equality matters

Humans, like any other living beings, are a creature of habit. Add to it the evolved mentality and concepts like aesthetics, power and pride- the resulting mix is one which threatens to change the very nature of the spontaneity of evolution and natural progression. The human brain- the one incredible enabling our race to control and manipulate everything else around us- living and non-living alike, except for one important and very interesting drawback- the inability to control oneself- rather the senses and urges that makes us who we are.

This lacuna in our physiological make up which is apparently inherent is becoming more prominent with the passage of time. The uncontrollable greed for power and land that led to wars being fought throughout the world, the unnecessary struggle for increasing power and control- all points to an irrational urge manifests into deeds that go against the very grain of human behavior- or is it so? Nothing can be further from the truth. These bloody battles and physical challenges for power, supremacy and wealth of the early days have stopped- only to re-emerge in a more virulent and sinister yet subtler form at present.

Equality- the very premise on which our present society was founded remains to this day an illusion, a convenient pacifying tool for those at the helm of affairs to keep the common public at bay so that they- some if not all- can continue with the activities induced by the very weaknesses afflicting every human. Is there any other rationale, however remote it may sound, to explain the widening chasm between the common public and those who are in power and influence- though everyone is equal- or so we are told to believe. A number of politicians serving themselves while doling out rhetoric speeches proclaiming their efforts for the public, armed forces personnel abusing their power and using force to get their demands from the frightened and defenceless public, drug peddlers and their sources being shrouded in mystery behind a façade of power and money impenetrable by the public or the discretion of those who walks the hallowed corridors of power to speak out and express only those that they wish to be made heard- more often their own achievements and trivial triumphs blown out of proportions. Is there a thing such as being more equal than equal? Why are so many seemingly mundane and simple problems being made so complex and tangled up as to make them impossible to solve? Isn't there any other way for the disturbed and concerned voices of the common man to be made heard other than be forced to resort to mindless destruction and mayhem- a natural, though unwanted, reaction of the frustrated and agitated souls who are made to feel less equal and cheated.

This feeling of discontent is made all the more intense as the public believes that solutions to a lot of wrongs in the society is so clear and right within their reach while those who are entrusted to act accordingly choose to look the other way.

The need of the hour is a bunch of people with rational minds and the resolve as well as the self-control to stick to the set plan with the habit to finish what has been started with the dignity to shoulder responsibilities for the same, and above all, a bunch that really regards the remaining majority of the population as equals. Will the search prove to be an exercise in futility- yet again?

## Chinese newspaper says reform does not mean life-long presidency for Xi Jinping

**Agency**

**Beijing, March 1:** Reforms to China's constitution to remove term limits for the presidency does not mean life-long terms, the ruling Communist Party's official People's Daily said on Thursday, after a surge of concern that Xi Jinping may stay in power forever.

The party made the announcement on Sunday, setting the stage for Xi to stay in office indefinitely should he wish, prompting accusations from some in the country that China is set to become another North Korea.

The amendment will be approved at this month's annual meeting of China's largely rubber stamp parliament, which is stacked with delegates loyal to the party who will not challenge its proposal. In a lengthy commentary, the People's Daily said the idea was an "important move" to cement the party's leadership in every aspect. "This amendment does not mean changing the retirement system for party and national leaders, and does not mean a life-long term system for leading officials," the paper wrote.

It pointed out that the party's constitution, which is different from the national constitution, clearly states that leaders cannot keep their offices forever and that if their health does not hold up they

should retire.

The rules for who heads the party, the military and the state — all positions Xi currently holds — are all the same, the paper added.

"It is a system designed to accord with the national condition and ensure long-term peace and stability for the party and the country," it said.

The party has had an unwritten rule that senior officials cannot be promoted once they reach the age of 68, though the party has said that this rule is exactly that — unwritten. There has been heated speculation since the end of a once-every-five-years party congress in October about the fate of a close Xi ally, former top graft buster Wang Qishan, who stepped down from the elite Standing Committee at the congress, having reached the age of 69.

But he is expected to be appointed vice-president at Parliament, with a specific role dealing with the Trump administration.

The move is significant because if Wang does not retire, that would set a precedent for Xi, now 64, to stay in power after he reaches what is normally considered retirement age. Xi will be formally elected to his second term as president at parliament, which opens on Monday. He began his second term as party boss in October.

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

# India is one of the most open economies: PM Modi

**By Kristina Tyler**

Speaking at a meeting with the nation's governors at the White House, Trump called for fair and reciprocal trade deals and repeatedly emphasised that the USA was "getting nothing" from New Delhi's February 12 announcement slashing customs duty on imported high-end motorcycles to 50 percent. "And we have many deals like that," Trump said. Trump referred to PM Narendra Modi as a attractive, fantastic man. He said that he received a call from the Indian counterpart informing him that India is lowering it to 50%. "Okay," Trump said during the event. Soon, he may

win over a new class of fans - bikers - thanks to his latest attempts to reduce import duties Harley Davidson bikes in India. India is on a de-regulation and delicensing drive, PM Modi said. During his address at the India-Korea Business Summit, the prime minister said his government has worked towards creating a stable business environment and removed arbitrariness in decision-making. "I would like to use this occasion to personally invite to India those who are not yet present here", he said. He gets 50 percent here, and they think we're doing - like they're doing us a

favor. "That's not a favour" he added. The US President mocked "beautiful man" PM Modi for reducing the import tax from 100 percent to 50 percent. He said the United States imposes zero import duty on Indian exports of motorcycles to the U.S., while the Asian nation imposes 100%. And I said, huh. What do I say? "Am I supposed to be thrilled?" said Trump, imitating Modi by holding his palms in a "namaste" and speaking in a low and serious voice. "That's not good for you people, especially as governors". It's just not right. In FDI, we are one of the most open countries now. "I'm the one

that's pushing it more than they are". The BJP government, in the Union Budget of 2018, announced that it had slashed the customs duty on imported motorcycles from high-end brands to 50 per cent. Recently, the Indian government's reduced tariffs on motorcycles from 75% to 50%. Trump had earlier threatened to descend to an "eye-for-an-eye" solution to the impasse over the import tariff on American motorcycles in India. The centre is also trying to hasten economic growth through higher state spending of Rs 2.1 lakh crore (32.36 billion USA dollars) for the recapitalisation of state banks.

## National & International News

### Lashkar militant killed in encounter with security forces in Kashmir's Bandipora district

**Agency**

**Srinagar, March 1:** A militant was gunned down in an encounter with security forces in the wee hours of Thursday at Hajin in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, officials said. "One terrorist of LET [Lashkar-e-Taiba] apparently FT [foreign terrorist] killed in an encounter in Hajin Bandipora today morning in a joint operation of J&K Police/Army/CRPF," director general of state police SP Vaid tweeted. The encounter ensued when

security forces launched a cordon and search operation at Hajin's Shakoor Din Mohalla in the morning after receiving information about presence of militants there, Jammu and Kashmir police said in a statement. Arms and ammunition, including AK 47 rifles, and other incriminating materials were recovered from the encounter site. Prima facie it appeared that the dead militant belonged to outlawed LeT and was a Pakistani national, the statement said.

The encounter took place barely two days after body of a Pakistani militant was recovered from Hajin. The militant is said to have escaped after suffering bullet injuries in a gunfight with the security forces in the area a day earlier. Agitated locals did not hand over the body to the police and buried it in a local graveyard. Police said in a statement that action would be initiated against those "who led the protest and instigated the public."

Later on Tuesday night, police issued another statement which said, "Certain sections of media mostly on cyber platforms are carrying news related to Hajin in a manner which is not correct. Such malicious campaign indicates designs of mischief mongers to exploit the situation. General Public is requested not pay heeds to such rumours." Local media reports said that Hajin observed a shutdown both on Tuesday and Wednesday over the militant's death.

### Guns, missiles exhibited in Riyadh: Some see deals in Saudi Army Revamp

**Agency**

**Saudi, March 1:** An army band with bagpipes marched past displays of machine guns and laser-guided missiles in Riyadh this week as international defence companies showed off their hardware.

Hours later, the Saudi government announced that several top commanders had been removed, including the chief of staff and the heads of ground and air forces.

If recent months have all been about Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's crackdown on business elites, now he's turned to the military as he extends his authority over the kingdom. The purge of top brass comes as Saudi Arabia is struggling to get a grip on the proxy war with Iran in neighboring Yemen. But, like everything in Saudi Arabia at the moment, it comes back to the country's finances and the prince's much-vaunted revamp of an economy too dependent on oil. Executives from Raytheon Co., Boeing Co., Rheinmetall AG and other international companies were at the exhibition to talk about how they fit into his "Vision 2030." The new era for defense includes developing a domestic industry so that the world's biggest importer of US weapons can make hardware itself in conjunction with foreign manufacturers.

For companies specializing in military equipment, it could mean billions of dollars in contracts as the kingdom spends decades building an industry from scratch. At the exhibition in Riyadh, dozens of companies marketed their cyber weaponry, combat vehicles and communications systems. "There is a lot a business potential over the next five, 10 years, 15 years," John Bottimore, vice president of international business development at the U.S. unit of British company BAE Systems Plc, said in an interview at the exhibition. "We won't have a position in Saudi Arabia long term if we don't work with partners and transfer capability."

The announcement on Monday of the change in military personnel came the same day as King Salman approved a plan setting out a "vision and strategy" for the Defense Ministry. In another major shift, the government also said military jobs at the rank of soldier would be open to women for the first time.

The country's sovereign wealth fund established Saudi Arabian Military Industries, or SAMI, in May. The company plans to manufacture equipment and provide maintenance services across units, including air and land systems, weapons and missiles, and defense electronics, mainly in joint ventures. "Saudi Arabia is seeking a degree of military self-sufficiency by developing a local defense industry and putting in some of the building

blocks it would need should it decide that it needs a nuclear capability," said James Dorsey, a Middle East specialist at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. U.S. President Donald Trump's opposition to Iran gives the Saudis a "window of opportunity," he said. The ultimate goal is to "localize" 50 percent of Saudi procurement from 2 percent now, according to SAMI's chief executive officer, Andreas Schwert. That will create jobs and generate \$10 billion a year in revenue for SAMI by 2030, he said in an interview at the exhibition.

Saudi Arabia started the exhibition in 2010 to develop its domestic military industry. The event, attended by Saudi companies and government officials, helps international companies find a local factory or service that they can use for their supply chain, said Major General Atyah al-Malki, general director of the general directorate for industrialization support.

Inside the hall, Saudi officers check out new uniforms, body armor, all-terrain vehicles and military-industrial components on display from companies as diverse as Ankara-based Roketsan Roket Sanayi Ve Ticaret AS, South Korea's Hanwha Corp. and Oshkosh Corp. Outside, there were armored personnel carriers, fire trucks and an artillery cannon. Raytheon Saudi Arabia is one of the

US defense companies working with SAMI. At the exhibition center, the company's executives guided visitors on a virtual tour of a military city where the viewer flies above buildings and walks through training centers.

Raytheon anticipates it will finalize details of a joint venture with SAMI over the next couple of weeks, according to Michael Pottier, vice president of business development. The company estimates it will generate \$7 billion of revenue through the localization of defense projects in Saudi Arabia over the next five to seven years, Pottier said.

It's all part of Prince Mohammed's with-us-or-against-us plan to drag Saudi Arabia into the 21st century globalized economy.

The drive to create a domestic defense company is one of the pillars of "Vision 2030," along with building new cities and developing an entertainment industry. The plan also includes selling stakes in state assets, including oil giant Saudi Aramco and creating the world's biggest sovereign wealth fund.

The purge of the military command announced this week was reminiscent of events that happened last year. Two weeks after the crown prince hosted some of the world's leading investors at the palatial Ritz-Carlton hotel in Riyadh in October, he turned the property into a luxury prison for dozens of the kingdom's most prominent princes and businessmen.

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

**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

**Faster and Fuel Efficient Construction Solutions Are Here.**