

Editorial

Saturday, March 17, 2018

Luck matters; but not always

"Even the rains have stopped, or else we fear that the celebration may be disturbed". Chief Minister N. Biren Singh showed his apprehension while speaking during the celebration of 1 years of his government where Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi along with other Union Ministers, MPs attended.

Luck does matter, N. Biren Singh had never expected that he would become the Chief Minister of Manipur as BJP Manipur had already senior member who were capable becoming the Chief Minister. It was his luck that no other senior members got elected.

A slip of tongue, perhaps, while celebrating the BJP victory in the state last year, Chief Minister spells out his magic words "Go to Hill". But N. Biren Singh keep his words. Since the coming of his government, many changes have been brought. The gap of misunderstandings between various ethnic communities of the state has been bridge and the most frequently heard word "Blockade in High ways" is now history.

N. Biren Singh and his team deserved the celebration of one years of his government.

It was again luck that 105th Indian Science Congress is being hosted by the Manipur University which co-incidence with the completion of one year of N. Biren Singh Government. Scientists and scholars from across the country are visiting the state for the occasion and simultaneously witnessing the year of his government.

Luck does favour N. Biren Singh. The threat from the opposition congress party is unlikely to give any impact as the politics of Manipur always depend on the change of politics at the Center.

Well there might be some changes with the withdrawal of the Telugu Desam Party (TPD) from NDA today morning. But there is no way that Congress party rise at the center. As long as Congress don't rise at the center there is no way that Congress Party here in the state throw out the present government. The Supreme Court verdict on the parliamentary secretary issue might compel the Governor of Manipur to disapprove consent to the Bill passed by the state legislative Assembly in an attempt to rescue the 12 MLAs, but the luck this time is on the side of N. Biren Singh and his political party. In one year many changes have been shown except the promises on re-engagement of retired officials and corruptions at some sectors. BJP will surely regain the seats, as luck still favours him. But the fate of the 12 MLAs depends on how the ruling of the court comes and the response of the Election Commission of India. This is stated as Supreme Court verdicts on PS issues at Delhi State Assembly said disqualified candidate for holding office of profit cannot contest election for three years.

More State News

ICAR Emphasizes on Doubling Farm Income through Tuber Crops Based Entrepreneurship



IT News
Imphal, March 17: ICAR organized one day stakeholder's workshop on "Tuber Crops Based Entrepreneurship in Manipur-Scope and Opportunities" at Imphal on 15 March, 2018 in collaboration with CTCRI, Trivandrum and KVK, Ukhrul. Dr. N. Prakash, Director, ICAR Research Complex for NEH Region emphasized on doubling the farm income through tuber crops based enterprises. Chief Guest, P. K. Bal, Chairman of Manipur Rural Bank elaborated the role of bankers in entrepreneurship development. Dr. I. Meghachandra Singh, Joint

Director, appealed the stakeholders for optimum utilization of the Tuber Crops Incubation Centres established by ICAR at Riha and Thoyee villages of Ukhrul. The Scientific delegates from CTCRI, Trivandrum, Dr. R. Muthuraj, Dr. D. Jaganathan and Dr. T. Krishnakumar provided technical back up to the stakeholders. The Convener of the workshop, Dr. M. R. Sahoo has highlighted the success story of the tuber crop incubation centres as the life line of the tribal communities. Over 50 entrepreneurs, SHG members, scientists and technicians have participated in this programme.

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An open letter to the Chief Minister of Manipur Border area of Ukhrul demands government attention

By: Ringphami A Shimray

Hill areas of Manipur palpably remain relatively lagging far behind in all dimensions of development. One such developmentally retarded hill region lies in the eastern hem of Ukhrul district along Indo-Myanmar border. This frontier region, known for its extreme backwardness and remoteness, has remained excluded from development processes. People living in this region are leading a miserable life bereft of hope for a better future.

This border area is comprised of twenty two villages namely: Pushing, Mapum, Zingsui, Rusheah, Sahampung, Roni, Matiyang, Hangaokaphung, Chamu, Khayang, Khayang Phungtha, Kachaophung Tangkhul, Kachaophung Kuki, Maokot, Chatric Khullen, Chatric Khunou, Chahong Khullen, Chahong Khonou, Chahong Pharung, Chahong Chingthak, Chahong Chingka.

Being remote and hilly, infrastructure has been the most essential aspect of development in this border area. Unfortunately, the successive State Government has failed to give the attention the area deserves. Non-availability of proper physical infrastructure such as transport and communication facilities, electricity, irrigation facilities and poor social infrastructure like medical and health care facilities and education infrastructure have remained the key constraint for socio-economic development of the area. For instance, roads have been under deplorable condition, motorable only in summer. The area remains cut off throughout monsoon as the unfriendly topography and climatic condition of the region make the hilly terrain highly vulnerable to landslides and soil erosion causing restrictions on free movement of people, goods and services for the entire period of monsoon which normally stays for nearly six months. This border area has witnessed a large number of

premature deaths pertaining to preventable diseases. Villagers have to carry the sick and travel long distances, often on foot, to reach hospital in the district headquarters. The pathetic situation continues to exist even today. The services provided by the government health agency are indubitably far from meeting the growing needs of poor and illiterate villagers. Lack of adequate medical and health care facilities in the villages leads to deepening the existing poverty and creates a new poverty. In many instances, treatment is deferred owing to financial constraint exacerbating the bad condition of the patient to worse. In many cases, patients are taken to hospital only when their condition became beyond healing. Government schools in most of these border villages do not have enough classrooms, adequate furniture, sufficient teachers and lack access to resources thereby adversely affecting effective delivery of quality education to students leading to dismal outlook for the upcoming generation. In some of the villages, the number of students attending in government schools is insignificant. Statistical reports of many government schools of this border area are deliberate exaggeration. Students migrating to private schools in pursuance of better quality education are on the rise. If the present trend continues, then the government schools may not have even a single student in the near future. None of the villages have electricity until today despite the fact that electricity poles have been erected in some of the villages a couple of decades ago. In the absence of power and other alternative source of lighting in their homes, students have to read their books in dim light emitted from burning pinewood. Besides, most of the villages are yet to have access to telephone network and internet connectivity.

Poverty refuses to go away from this border region. It is

another grave issue causing unemployment among youth. Young people, the most powerful resource of the nation, remain very unproductive, frustrated and in a state of total hopelessness. They are susceptible to any form of anti-social elements. Alcoholism and substance abuse is rife among youth resulting in the hapless victims of dreadful diseases. Skill development training for rural youth under current BAPD is markedly far from catering to the demands of growing number of village youth. Educated unemployed village youth though willing to take up industry and income generation activities for self-reliant or any other viable projects for sustainable village economy, there is none to support them to develop their potential. In the absence of any other alternative source of livelihood, the villagers remain fully dependent on agriculture for subsistence and their primary activity is Jhum cultivation which is characterized by low productivity. Jhum cultivation is not only utterly uneconomic but is a threat to ecology, bio-diversity, water resources, climate and natural environment.

Deactivation of Sahampung SDC office has been a great deficit for this border area. Sahampung SDC headquarters, located @ 50 km. from Ukhrul headquarters, was established way back in the eighties. But unfortunately, this office has remained in abeyance for almost thirty years; the office buildings were completely demolished following Kuki-Naga clash in the early nineties. People from the area have been clamoring for resumption of the said office. Though it was approved to revive the office in 2014, the then State Government had initiated no follow up action on its part to resume the office to fulfill the decades-old demand of the people. None of the successive MLAs of the area, too, was audacious enough to get

involved into the matter thereby miserably failed to carry out the task entrusted to them. The failure of the past leadership has resulted in loss of people's faith in political leadership.

Another distinct disadvantage of the area is the ununiform distribution of the villages under different assembly constituencies and different development blocks. The villages currently fall under two different assembly constituencies, partly under 43-Phungyur A/C and partly under 44-Ukhrul A/C. The villages that fall within 43-Phungyur A/C are under Kamjong Block whereas the villages falling within 44-Ukhrul A/C are further fragmented and partly placed under Ukhrul Block and partly under Kamjong Block outside the ambit of the same assembly constituency. This is extremely unfair and is detrimental to the interest of the villages concerned. Besides, few border villages which were earlier under BAPD have been excluded from its purview of late to the disadvantage of the villages.

The situations of extreme socio-economic backwardness of this particular border area and untold hardships being experienced by the deprived villagers demand special attention of the State Government. Therefore, immediate reactivation of Sahampung SDC office, proper maintenance of the existing roads, enhancement of medical and health care facilities, improvement of educational infrastructure, electrification or alternative energy sources, development of minor irrigation projects to facilitate agricultural diversification, promotion of small-scale agro-based industries and cottage industries, implementation of self-employment generation schemes, telephone network and internet connectivity may be suggested as critical imperatives to facilitate rapid development of this remote border area and to enhance the quality of life of the inhabitants.

National & International News

Tripura CM to meet PM to seek special financial package

Agency
Agartala, Mar 17: Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon to seek a special package to tide over financial crisis in the state, a minister said today. Deb will also meet Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley with the same proposal, Transport Minister Pranajit Singha Roy told reporters here. "The state's financial condition

was reviewed in a meeting of the council of ministers yesterday. The state is reeling under deep financial crisis. The budget deficit in the current financial year is Rs 1,588.19 crore," he said. Finance department officials have been asked to put forward a comprehensive report on the state's fiscal condition in the next three days and after getting the report, the chief minister will leave for Delhi, he said. The state's revenue generation is

poor while fiscal deficit is on the rise. The state's own revenue is currently able to manage only 12.94 per cent of its expenditure, he said. To a question, Singha Roy said agriculture, tourism and many other sectors need immediate financial attention. He said the cabinet meeting also laid importance on austerity measures and the state's own revenue generation. The government would implement all

its poll pledges including 7th Pay Commission benefits, higher wages for labourers, social welfare benefits for distressed people and free smart phones to the youth. The chief minister will visit Delhi with his proposal before the Assembly session begins on March 23. Deb took oath as the first BJP chief minister of Tripura on March 9, ending the 25-year rule of the Left Front.

Gorakhpur DM, who stopped media from entering counting centre, promoted

Agency
Lucknow, March 17: The Uttar Pradesh government has transferred 37 IAS officials, including 16 District Magistrates, an official said on Saturday. Rajiv Rautela, the District Magistrate of Gorakhpur, who courted controversy on Wednesday for barring the media from accessing details at the Lok Sabha bypoll counting centre, has been shifted and promoted as Divisional Commissioner of Devidapatna. The bureaucratic rejig was effected late on Friday.

The Samajwadi Party has wrested Gorakhpur, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's home constituency, from the BJP after several decades. Anoop Chandra Pandey, the industrial and infrastructure

development commissioner (IIDC) credited with the success of the 'UP Investors Summit' held in February has been rewarded with additional charge of the NRI Department, besides the additional charge of Greater Noida. Alok Sinha has been made the new principal secretary (Commercial Tax), Nitin Ramesh has been made the new principal secretary (Housing). He replaced Mukul Singhal who has been sent to the Silk Department. Senior bureaucrat Rajeev Kapoor who was in waiting ever since his return from a central deputation has been made the chairman of PICUP; Alok Tandon has been given additional charge of Noida as its chairman. Deepak Agarwal has been made the new divisional commissioner of

Varanasi while Chandra Prakash Tripathi has been made the new commissioner of Saharanpur. Ravindra Naik, has been made the director industries, while Saumya Agarwal has been given the charge of vice-chairperson of Kanpur Development Authority (KDA). Chandra Bhushan Singh has been given charge as new District Magistrate of Aligarh. S.V. Ranga Rao is the new commissioner of Azamgarh while Shivakant Dwivedi has been made the new District Magistrate of Azamgarh. Rajendra Prasad is the new District Magistrate of Bhadohi. Krishna Karunesh (Balrampur), Pramod Kumar Upadhyaya (Hapur), Hemant Kumar (Amroha), Navneet Chahal (Chandauli), Rama Shankar Maurya (Hathras) and Amit Singh is the new

District Magistrate of Sonbhadra. Pranjal Yadav, who was special secretary in Udyog Bandhu and played an important role in the Investors Summit has surprisingly been shunted out and made the new director (Training). Surendra Vikram has been removed and replaced by Bhawani Singh as District Magistrate of Ballia. Sarika Mohan has been removed and replaced by Sheetal Verma as District Magistrate of Sitapur. Akhilesh Kumar Mishra has been made the new District Magistrate of Pilibhit. District Magistrate of Bareilly Raghendra Singh, who had created a storm after his comments on the social media on the growing communal temper in the state has also been removed.