

Editorial

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Cross border smuggling-lures and liabilities

Although no proper survey has been carried out till date, an estimated fifty thousand people in Manipur alone make a living out of smuggling goods from across the border, ninety percent of which are transacted through Moreh town bordering Myanmar. The Indo-Myanmar trade agreement signed in April 1995 legalised trade for a restricted 25 items which include ginger, pulses, fresh vegetables, mustard beans, betelnuts and leaves, fruit, minor forest products, garlic, onion, spices, chillies, reed broom, tobacco, tomato, food items for local consumption, catechu, soyabean, resin, sesame, coriander seeds, roasted sunflower seeds. While the trade in these items might seem huge by way of volume, the value of undeclared and smuggled items must be many times the legal ones.

The most significant indicator of the volume and value of smuggled goods which are primarily drugs, arms and ammunitions, precious stones and bullion especially gold can be gauged from the increasingly frequent interceptions and seizures of such smuggled items and their market value which often run into crores. Reports of such seizures by the armed security forces have consistently been getting more frequent as well as the value of such contrabands seized on the rise. It is anyone's guess as to how much of these items would have made it through the border and into the state. It is also a cause of grave concern as to what these contrabands, especially drugs and arms and ammunitions would do to the society. As it is, the very fact that they are smuggled implies that such items are to be used for illegal purposes not sanctioned by society or law. What is really worrying is that given the lucrative nature of such a trade and the necessity of forming a chain of security, influence and resources to silence and oil the palms of those who are entrusted to check the very trade, it is not a risk a common person would have the wherewithal to take. There had been disturbing instances where power and influence have been blatantly abused to coerce, instigate and stymie the authorities working to prevent such smuggling activities.

Despite every indications and telltale signs of a number of very big and powerful cartels carrying out lucrative and sizeable smuggling rackets, there has not been any significant effort on the part of the government to pull a plug into such activities which will surely cause an adverse impact on the society. There have been talks and assurances of modernizing the check posts along the way and to tighten up vigil along the border to reduce smuggling, yet things are evidently still to put into practice.

While it would be practically very difficult and almost impossible to barricade the entire length of the border with Myanmar in which one point of the infamous Golden Triangle lies, application of modern technological devices and systems such as UAVs, sensors and motion sensing cameras at strategic points will go a long way in disturbing and disabling the operations of these smugglers. Exemplary punishments for those caught smuggling without undue delay will also send out a warning of the strict intent of the government to combat the menace. It would be wise and pragmatic to take up concrete steps without further ado before greed and the lure of undeserved wealth gets the better of our society.

No. 7/1/SIRD/2009(Pt-I)
STATE INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
MANIPUR
Porompat, the 26th March, 2018

Notice Inviting Tender (E-Tender Notice)

The State Institute of Rural Development, Manipur, Porompat, Imphal East District, invites e-Tender in two cover system (Part-I: Technical Bid and Part-II: Financial Bid) from the authorized Indian eligible and reputed Suppliers/Manufacturers/Registered Firms/Authorized dealers for procurement and installation of different items of IT Infrastructure Development to the Administrative & Academic Block of State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Manipur under the scheme of Management Support to Rural Development Programmes and Strengthening of District Planning Process on the terms & conditions enumerated in detail in the tender document.

CRITICAL DATES

Bid Document download Start date	26 th March, 2018
Clarification start date	26 th March, 2018
Clarification end date	29 th March, 2018
Bid submission start date	30 th March, 2018
Bid submission end date	Up to 2.00 PM on 6 th April, 2018
Bid opening date (Technical)	At 11.00 AM on 9 th April, 2018
Financial Bid opening date (BOQ)	At 2.00 PM on 9 th April, 2018

The details of the tender may be downloaded from the website:-
1. www.manipurntenders.gov.in

Sd/-
(Dr. K. Shyamsunder Singh)
Director
SIRD, Manipur

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National & International News

Khaph interference in marriage of two adults absolutely illegal: Supreme Court

Agency

New Delhi, March 27: In a relief to inter-faith or inter-caste couples who often face threat to their lives due to their relationship, the Supreme Court today banned any interference by illegal assemblies like 'khaph panchayats' into their marriages, terming the intrusions as "absolutely illegal."

A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud also laid down guidelines to prevent such interferences and said the norms laid down by it would remain in force till a suitable legislation is enacted by the Parliament. The ruling came on a plea by NGO Shakti Vahini, which had moved the apex court in 2010 seeking protection of couples from honour killings.

While reserving its verdict in March this year, the court had observed that when two consenting adults get married irrespective of their background, no relative or a third person can interfere or threaten or unleash violence against them. During the proceedings in the matter, the Centre too had told the top court that state governments must provide protection to couples fearing for their lives due to inter-caste or inter-faith marriages and

that such couples should inform the marriage officers about any such threat so that they can be given protection.

In an indication that it would not recognise 'khaph panchayats', the top court had also said that it would refer to them only as an assembly of persons or as a community group.

The apex court had earlier said incidents of attacks against those going for inter-caste or inter-faith marriages were "absolutely illegal" and no 'khaph panchayat, individual or the society could question any adult woman or man marrying to a person of his or her choice.

'Khaph' panchayats are caste or community groups, present largely in rural areas of north India which at times act as quasi-judicial bodies and pronounce harsh punishments based on age-old customs. Several cases of women and men falling victim to 'khaph' diktats have been reported over the years, particularly in states like Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The apex court had also asked khaph panchayats not to behave like "conscience keepers of the society" and said that a marriage between two adults was governed by the law.

'Khaph panchayats' had earlier told

the court that they were encouraging inter-caste and inter-faith marriages and had referred to provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act which prohibit a union between 'sapinda' relationships or close blood relatives among Hindus.

They had claimed that they were performing their duties as conscience keepers of the society. The court had invited 'khaph panchayats' to hear their views before issuing an order to stop them from harassing or killing couples purportedly to protect the honour of a family, caste, community or faith.

The Centre had earlier pleaded with the apex court to put in place a mechanism to monitor crimes against women by khaph panchayats, saying that the police was not able to protect such

women.

The top court had also said that as a pilot project, it would examine the situation in three districts of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh where khaph panchayats were active.

In 2007, a Haryana court had awarded death to five people and sentenced one person to life for killing a couple on the orders of a self-styled 'khaph panchayat' for marrying against societal norms. In April 2015, the khaph of Notara Bhopat village had ordered a woman from Rajasthan to live with a man whose wife had eloped with her husband.

In 2014, a community panchayat in Uttar Pradesh had banned girls from wearing jeans and keeping mobile phones, claiming that these had a "bad" effect on them and were responsible for sexual harassment incidents.

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Bid opening date (Technical)	At 11.00 AM on 10 th April, 2018
Financial Bid opening date (BOQ)	At 2.00 PM on 10 th April, 2018

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1. www.manipurntenders.gov.in

Sd/-
(Dr. K. Shyamsunder Singh)
Director
SIRD, Manipur

Karnataka polls on May 12, counting on May 15

Agency

New Delhi, Mar 27: The Karnataka Assembly polls will be held on May 12 and the votes will be counted on May 15. Chief Election Commissioner O P Rawat announced on Tuesday.

There will be a single phase election for the 224-member assembly, like the last time. The notification for the polls will be issued on April 17 and the last date for filing of nomination will be April 24, Rawat said at a press conference. April 27 will be the last date of withdrawal of candidates, he added.

All electronic voting machines will be linked to Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, he

said.

To questions from reporters about the polling date being leaked even before he made the official announcement, Rawat said the poll panel will investigate the matter and take stringent legal and administrative action. The polls are being seen as politically crucial for Karnataka's ruling Congress as well as the BJP. It is the only big state where the Congress is in power after losing a string of assembly elections to the saffron party over the last few years.

The BJP is making a concerted bid to unseat the Congress. The JD(S), led by former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, is the third player in the fray.

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Bid opening date (Technical)	At 11.00 AM on 7 th April, 2018
Financial Bid opening date (BOQ)	At 2.00 PM on 7 th April, 2018

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