

Editorial

Thursday, October 1, 2018

Media that criticize are not your enemy Mr. CM

Today is indeed an auspicious occasion for all of us working in media. Department of Information and Public Relations celebrates '70th Information & Public Relations Day' commemorating its existence of 70 long year. Both media persons - directly serving the department as well as those working at various private media houses need to celebrate the Day. For small state like ours the DIPR is playing a pivotal role in bridging the gap between the common masses and those running the government. Even as media houses in larger states which have cosmopolitan cities may not take that important the way we in the state are considering DIPR.

The consortium of mass media runners across the world is taking a new shape with the fast changing technology. For some in the field - they consider running of a media houses is purely business matter. For some the tool is important for promotional propose - either politically or for advertorial proposes. For some exceptional - who are in the profession, it is their passion, dedication and their ethos of pushing up the society towards the right direction. In a state like Manipur, as of now there are not many who utilize the media houses either for political propose or promotional proposes of their work. As for business propose one or two survive. In a state, where the population is around 28 lakhs people, with over 33 multi-ethnic communities speaking different dialect, even a shop runner, earning his or her daily bread understands that somewhat successfully run media houses in the state are all free from either politics or business motive individuals even though they have proprietor, reason - those proprietor too establish their media houses due to their passion for journalism. Even those tiny papers with 2 page evening newspaper, they continue to publish even at the cost of selling their properties and there is no doubt that they can be influenced by any force.

Saying so, it is now the talk of the town that the government (present) having in-depth knowledge about the power of media, is using all means to control the media. Intimidation, friendly talks, building good rapport, are open secrets. For those in the government it is no wrong to try everything to keep control of the media houses as there are chances of misusing it by some vested interested people who wanted to sabotage the good work of the government.

This newspaper expressed opinion that fencing of the Chief Minister office and the Governor Bungalow with iron barricades with barb wire is not a good decisions. The justification about protecting from protestors trying to kick the gate will be laughing stock of the people. Those supporting the justification are toddlers who were waiting for opportunity but never bother about the fame and dignity of the Chief Minister or the government.

On the other hand existence of newspaper which directly criticized government affairs in constructive manner should not be treated the way it is dealing by the present government. One go through the writings may annoyed those who are being targeted, but twice or thrice reading will surely make one understand the motive of such reporting or writing the news. When an English newspaper analyzed and tried to uphold the sanctity of the highest office of the state giving logical reasoning of celebrating a mere announcement of being 'best' or 'third best', the mentioned leader should think two or three times why such report are being focused. Defamation against a newspaper who tried to incite wisdom to the government in the near future will be nothing but will appear more like an immature decision by an angry young man. A systematic analysis on the news and the event by someone specialized in the matter and making the public known that "your report is wrong" will do much better. After all the DIPR has changed and is now equipped with many hard working employees under the Directorship of Heisnam Balkrishna.

One thing worth reminding is that, all persons in media loves you but when something went wrong, those who really care about you always wanted you to decide and act the right thing.

Whether we criticize you or your government, we will always stand by your side at the time of your trouble and believe us, there will be no other group who will support you more than the community you once belongs to.

On this occasion of the 70th Information and Public Relation day, Imphal Times hopes the IPR will surely take its role in making the Chief Minister of our state understand the reality by passing this write up. Nevertheless do remind him to read at least 2 or 3 times before making a decision.

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Governance, State Capability and Public Services: Power reforms in Manipur

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Abstract: Public services and citizens access to public services is an important indicator of the performance of the government. It emphasizes the nature of governance particularly whether a strong capable state or a weak state. This paper attempts to study the reforms initiated in the delivery of power services, to highlight upon the capability of the government of Manipur to deliver public services and the nature of governance prevailing in the state.

State capability and public services, integral to governance

Citizen's access to basic goods and service is an important indicator of the nature and quality of governance. Public services and the delivery of public services is a primary responsibility of the nation state, particularly a welfare state such as India. In fact, state formation and the rise of governments can be traced to the capability of the ruler to provide security, policing, and protection to its subjects. Mancur Olson thus says that governments particularly in larger groups or societies emerged not because of any divine right or through social contract or even on the basis of any voluntary transactions but "rather because of rational self-interest among those who can organize the greatest capacity for violence (1993, 568). A stationary bandit was much preferred over a roving bandit, because while the roving bandit was only interested in exacting maximum tributes a stationary bandit whilst taking only a part of the income, maintained monopoly over its kingdom by providing security, order and protection to its subjects. In modern states, this active role of the state in public services has widened from the fundamental duty of providing law and order and social justice to ensuring access to basic public goods.¹ In the 21st century developmental discourse public goods and services is a fundamental right - a rightful entitlement of the citizen and the duty of the state to deliver. For instance, Article 21A of the Constitution of India makes the provision of school education upto 14 years of age a fundamental duty of the state towards its citizens.

Citizen's access to public services consequently indicates the performance capability of the state and the quality of governance. The concept of capability herein implies the administrative capability of the state to implement policies and programmes and its ability to perform its most basic functions such as the delivery of public services, policing, law and order, regulation, etc., inherently a trait characteristic of governance or good governance. The World Development Report defines state capability as the ability to undertake and promote collective actions efficiently (1997, 3). The OECD/DAC discussion paper on "State Delivery in Fragile Situations: Key Concepts, Findings and Lessons" refers to state capability or capacity as "having the core features that enable the state to mobilise resources for such key objectives as economic development and poverty reduction. These core features include territorial control and presence, effective exercise of political power, basic competence in economic management and sufficient administrative capacity for policy implementation (2008, 15). Fukuyama (2009) refers to state capability as stateness or enforcement, the capability of state institutions to enforce its

primary functions. State capability in its most basic understanding thus refers to the capability or incapability of state institutions, to perform its basic core necessary functions, to design policies and be able to elicit the necessary consensus and involvement to ensure the successful implementation of policies and programmes (World Bank 1997, Fukuyama 2009, Soifer and vom Hau 2012, Giraudy 2012).

State capability, as a concept however is multi-dimensional and varies not only across states, but also over the different activities of the state and importantly across time (vom Hau 2012). While traditional theorists such as Max Weber and Charles Tilly viewed state-building as the ability of the state to maintain control over its territory, exercise monopoly over the use of legitimate violence, and the ability to neutralize rivals inside its own territory, in the 21st Century developmental policy discourse state capability is the ability of state institutions to reverse the phenomena of state fragility and strengthen weak state institutions so that the state can effectively and efficiently perform its most basic functions such as law and order, public service delivery, infrastructure development etc., (Weijer 2013). Nevertheless it is manifested in the strength of the state institutions such as its ability to formulate and carry out policies and enact laws, to administer efficiently and with a minimum of bureaucracy, to control graft, corruption, and bribery, to maintain a high level of transparency and accountability in government institutions and most importantly to enforce laws, and not in the scope or even the size of the state (Fukuyama 2009). For instance, one of the most important function of the state is the delivery of public services - which is not just a technical task - but determined by the process of governance, reflecting the quality of governance particularly the nature of the state - whether strong or fragile and state capability to ensure accountability in public service delivery (Rotberg 2002, World Bank 2003, OECD-DAC 2008, Joshi 2010, Chand 2006).

The performance of states in terms of whether they are able to deliver to its citizens the most basic public

services such as education, healthcare, law and order, infrastructure etc., effectively and efficiently is an important indicator of the nature of the state, and the quality of governance. For while in fragile or weak states where the state government lacks both the capacity and willingness to perform its most fundamental functions, state capability to deliver public services is poor, restricted and diminishing (OECD-DAC 2008). Thus only a capable strong state as compared to a weak state can ensure the provision of basic goods and services, and provide the rules and institutions to enforce accountability in public services (World Bank 1997).

State capability, a growing concern

State capability has become an important concern of governments around the world. Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock (2017) employing the indicators of rule of law, bureaucratic accountability, government effectiveness, public services, and corruption² examined the policy implementation capability level of 102 developing countries. It revealed that:

1. Only 8 of the 102 countries, such as United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Brunei, Qatar, Singapore, Bahamas, Chile and South Korea have attained strong capability
2. 45 countries are in the middle range of state capability - neither weak nor strong. Moreover within this range state capability is variously grouped as: (a) 13 countries facing rapid deterioration in state capability, such as South Africa, Argentina, Morocco, the Philippines, Thailand, and Iran, (b) 18 countries that had negative growth in state capability, e.g. India, China, Egypt and Tunisia, Brazil, Mexico, (c) 6 countries with positive state capability but very slow progress e.g. Kazakhstan, Ghana, Ukraine, Armenia, Russia, and Botswana, and (d) 8 countries for which "business as usual" would produce high capability by the next century i.e. the "years to strong capability", such as Indonesia (68 years), Colombia (56 years), Turkey (55 years), Algeria (55 years), Albania (42 years), Saudi Arabia (28 years), Uruguay (10 years), and Croatia (1 years).
3. 49 of the 102 countries have very weak or weak capability, and,

given these low levels of current capability, the long-run pace of acquiring capability is very slow. Of this 36 countries have experienced negative growth in state capability.

4. Further 12 of the 16 largest developing countries such as China, Pakistan, Brazil, Mexico, Egypt, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, South Africa and India exhibited negative trends in state capability.

Declining state capability is a rising challenge in India. The Economic Survey 2016-17 writes that every city in India faces serious challenges in areas such as basic infrastructure and services like water, power supply, waste management, education, healthcare, transport, safety and pollution (2017, 303). Even metropolitan cities such as New Delhi and Mumbai are ranked at a dismal 47th and 50th positions respectively on the States of World Cities 2012/13 index. Thus the general capability of India to ensure public services is weak, as supported by the report on the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on access to sanitation, which shows that as against the MDG target of 77% by 2015, India has managed to provide access to only 63% of its population.

According to Pritchett (2009, 27), a major cause of India's poor state capability can be attributed to the inability of India's administrative system to transition to administrative modernism - to create capable public sector organizations to carry out the range of functions required in a modern polity and economy from delivering the mail to teaching children to enforcing the law, makes India a failing state (Pritchett 2009, 27). Consequently while India may have better track record on matters such as democracy, human rights or even strong capability at the state level - such as India has a comparatively better score of 5.4 as compared to Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh or Pakistan on the "Suspension or Arbitrary Application of the Rule of Law and Widespread Violation of Human Rights" index, however on the "Progressive Deterioration of Public Services" index India ranks worse than Sri Lanka or Nepal and only modestly better than Bangladesh and Pakistan. Therefore India's inability to maintain sufficient control of its administrative machinery particularly its incapability to ensure the effective delivery of public services makes India a failing state. (To be contd....)

Services, Railways boxers dominate to enter medal rounds; Himanshu stands tall in their midst

New Delhi, Nov. 1

The domination of Services and Railways boxers was evident in the early session on the fourth day of the third Elite Men Boxing National Championships at the AIS rings in Pune as six each of their pugilists entered the medal rounds on Wednesday.

The Services boxers, who make it to the semifinals included Deepak (46 kg), P.L. Prasad (52), Madan Lal (56), Manish Kaushik, Duryodhan Singh Negi (69) and Manjeet Singh (75), from the Railways Sachin Siwach (52), Gaurav Bidhuri (56), Ankush Dahiya (60), Rohit Tokas (64), Dinesh (69) and Prayag Chauhan (75) were successful.

But it was Himanshu Sharma of Punjab who, in the light fly (46 kg) category proved his superiority over Neeraj Swamy of Delhi as the Belgrade International Boxing

gold winner, won his bout 4:1 to enter the semifinals.

Manish Kaushik, of the Services defeated Sunil Chauhan from Uttar Pradesh with 5:0 verdicts as the CWG silver medal winner pounded combination blows of his hapless UP rival and romped home easy winners. Replicating the results was his teammate Deepak who downed Vinod Tanwar of Haryana as the former won without having it sweat it out much on the day.

Prasad, a well-known boxer on the national scene, was equally severe on his Andhra Pradesh opponent, P.A. Raju, who failed to stop the Services pugilist from advancing. The 5:0 decisions in favour of Prasad made it more than clear who conquered the ring in the afternoon bout.

In the middle weight class, Manjeet Singh managed the second round RSC verdict when he forced the All

India Police boxer, Faiz Ahmed, take a couple of standing counts. In the second, the referee stopped the contest, giving Manjeet the advantage.

As for the Railways, Sachin found an easy prey in his West Bengal rival, Manjeet Kumar Shaw, who brooked no challenge to the winning punches from the former World Youth Boxing champion. The 19-year-old from Haryana was not only calculative in his approach but also never missed the opportunity to score to make an impression on the judges very early in the first and second rounds.

Rohit Tokas, another highly rated RSPB boxer, started with a jab and upper cut before going all out against Sachin of Chandigarh in the light category (64 kg). The Chandigarh boxer, all the time ducking to avoid Tokas, ended up without scoring a point to make a take exit.