

Editorial

Saturday, April 27, 2019

The politics of survival

The greatest tragedy in today Manipur is that, persons who are in the top job never have the courage of saying "sorry". It is natural that human being commits mistake. When human being commits mistake a disaster occurred unless the mistake is corrected. A mere attempt to 'right' the 'wrong' instead of correcting it will not only sabotage the system but will keep on haunting to the wrong doer for the rest of his life as conscience is matter to human being.

This is about the press clarification by the DIPR regarding the news report about publication of a booklet called 'Go to Village' on historic Khongjom Day instead of publishing the special issue in relation to the Khongjom war.

The press clarification on why the special issue of Manipur Today on occasion of Khongjom was not released read - "To celebrate and to remember the brave sons, who valiantly fought in the Anglo-Manipuri War in 1891, the department have been publishing "Manipur Today" for the past several years commemorating the occasion. However, this year, the department has not published the same due to the State Government's decision to suspend publication of Manipur Today in view of enforcement of Model Code of Conduct for elections to Lok Sabha, 2019".

One wanders on how the highlighting of the history of our brave sons of the soil who had sacrificed for the freedom comes under Model Code of Conduct.

On the other hand, it surprises none, on assuming the reason for distribution of booklet which highlighted the achievement of the government on Khongjom Day even though the booklet was released before the commencement of the Model Code of Conduct of the 17th Lok Sabha Election. If publication of special journal to commemorate the sons of the soil who had sacrificed for safeguarding the freedom of the erstwhile nation violates the Model Code of Conduct then how come the distribution of booklets which content articles about achievement of the government with photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister N. Biren Singh as cover picture not violates the Model Code of Conduct.

The clarification of the DIPR reflects desperation in attempting to cover up the mistake.

The DIPR should have the courage to apologies the public instead of trying to 'right' the 'wrong' if there is no agenda of the ruling political party to the matter. Or else the speculation about an attempt to tarnish the history of Manipur might inject hate feeling to many young bloods against the party in government.

Air India operations expected to be normal by this evening

Agency New Delhi April 27,

The flight operations by Air India are expected to be normal by this evening. Air India Chairman Ashwani Lohani told reporters in New Delhi this morning that the operations of the national carrier which were affected since 3.30 am due to a technical glitch in its server system, were

restored at 8.45 hours. He said a total of 85 flights were delayed. They include 21 international flights. Mr Lohani said the flights were rescheduled and passengers informed accordingly. He said the server system was handed over for maintenance. Mr Lohani said the management deeply regrets the inconvenience caused to passengers.

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Understand your kids with developmental delays to boost them succeed

By : Dr Shekhar Biswas, Consultant pediatrician and New Born specialist, Jaipur Golden hospital & Director, Kindergarten clinics, Rohini, New Delhi.

All children need love, encouragement, and support, and for kids with developmental delay, such positive reinforcement can help ensure that they emerge with a strong sense of self-worth, confidence, and the determination to keep going even when things are tough.

Early in childhood, a parent might notice that a child has a global developmental delay including delays in all areas of development like language, walking, self-care skills, and/or imitative play. Cognitive deficits, also called intellectual disability, is a condition beginning in childhood in which people show significant limitations in their ability to learn and function. Children with more severe impairments or those with obvious dysmorphic features are often identified in the first year of life.

With less significant impairments, the first sign of a cognitive deficit might be difficulties in school. For example, the child might have trouble learning to read and do math. Some parents may only notice a delay in their child after a younger sibling catches up developmentally to the child with the developmental delay. In other instances, the child might first demonstrate behavioral

issues (such as difficulty toilet training), that may ultimately come to the attention of a medical professional and be found to be related to delays in development.

As a parent what you have to do is to identify how your child learns the best - is he/she a

1. Visual learner - Learns best by seeing, reading or picturizing through diagrams, maps, may love to draw read and write. Does well when material is presented and tested visually, not verbally.

2. Auditory learner - Learns best by listening, does well in lecture-based learning environments and on oral reports and tests. Benefits from classroom discussions, spoken directions, study groups

3. Kinesthetic learner - Learns best by doing and moving, benefits from hands-on activities, lab classes, props, skits, and field trips.

A multidisciplinary approach is recommended to identify and manage any concurrent conditions, academic performance, social/behavioral functioning, and independent living skills.

Early intervention and appropriate school placement are essential to meet the child at his or her intellectual level and proceed at his or her pace

towards specific objectives and goals.

In searching for ways to help children with learning disabilities, look for ways to help them to grow stronger and become more resilient. A good attitude won't solve the problems associated with a learning disability, but it can give your child hope and confidence that things can improve and that he or she will eventually succeed.

The causes of cognitive disabilities are generally divided into prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal factors. Prenatal causes may include genetic abnormalities, infections, exposures to substances that cause birth defects, and central nervous system malformations. Down syndrome are among the most common genetic causes of intellectual disability. Fetal malnutrition, prematurity and decreased oxygen supply to the fetal brain is among perinatal causes. Infections, suffocation, accidental and non accidental traumas, brain damage, CNS tumors are a few acquired causes.

A variety of therapists and services, including nursing services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, the use of



adaptive equipment, speech-language therapy, nutritional counseling, audiology services, psychological intervention, recreation therapy, and social work services, can be used to treat the associated impairments sometimes seen with cognitive disabilities. Regular and special education teachers provide educational services.

Sometimes, children with attention deficits, learning disabilities, communication disorders, or pervasive developmental disorders may be thought to have intellectual disability. About 5% of the population has cognitive deficits, and most of these individuals fall into the mild range deficit category.

Bleak Outlook for Press Freedom in West Africa

Courtesy The Wire By : Lahai J. Samboma

Any objective assessment of the relationship between West Africa governments and media organisations will conclude that, but for a few exceptions, the outlook for press freedom in the sub-region is a bleak one.

From Cameroon and Ghana, to Nigeria, Liberia and Senegal, journalists and media organisations are being attacked for simply doing their jobs. The fact that these attacks emanate from mostly state actors, who as a rule remain unpunished, points to a culture of impunity. Liberia is a case in point.

"The president does not like criticism," said Costa, owner of Roots FM and host of the station's popular *Costa Show*. "And because we are critical of some policies, our offices have been attacked on two occasions by armed men and our equipment damaged and some stolen."

Some would say Costa was lucky, for the corpse of another journalist, Tyron Brown, was dumped outside his home last year by a mysterious black jeep. A man has confessed to killing the journalist in self-defence but his colleagues are not convinced. They believe the murder was a message - mind your words or you could be next.

This climate of fear was heightened when Weah accused a BBC correspondent being against his government. Then *Front Page Africa*, a newspaper that has been critical of successive governments, was fined 1.8 million dollars in a civil defamation lawsuit brought by a friend of the president.

Mae Azango, a senior *Front Page Africa* reporter, said the government's new tactic was to "strangulate the free press" by refusing to pay tens of thousands owed for media advertisements. "One minister said since the media does not write anything good about the government, it won't pay debts that are owed, which will compel some media outlets to shut down," she said. "Some media houses have not paid staff for up to eight months."

In Ghana, once Africa's top-ranked media-friendly country, things have deteriorated to the level where a

sitting politician openly called on supporters to attack a journalist whose documentary on corruption in Ghanaian football exposed him. Ahmed Divela was subsequently shot dead last January. In 2015, another journalist, George Abanga, was also shot dead on assignment. In March 2018, Latif Iddrisu, a young reporter, was covering a story when he was dragged into the Accra headquarters of the police and given a merciless beating which left him with a fractured skull. Iddrisu told IPS by phone: "Journalists are being threatened with assault and death by politicians and people in power because they feel threatened by our exposés." He doubts whether the passage of freedom of information (FOI) legislation will improve matters.

This position is borne out in Nigeria where the passing of FOI laws has not deterred officials from denying journalists access to information they need to carry out their jobs.

According to Dapo Olorunoyi, the Central Bank and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (the NNPC) are the "most opaque institutions" in the country. Olorunoyi, editor-in-chief of *Premium Times Newspaper*, added: "So you are allowed to write what you want, but if you get it wrong you suffer the consequences." He and journalists working for him have been arrested on several occasions to get them to reveal their sources.

The case of Jones Abiri is instructive. The journalist is incarcerated for two years without trial. And physical attacks on reporters have increased four-fold in recent times. Figures show that attacks on journalists and the press quadrupled in 2015-2019, compared to the preceding five year period.

Media academic Dr Chinenye Nwabueze maintains that the violence heightens during elections. "In the 'season' of elections, a journalist operates like a car parked - at owner's risk," he told IPS. "You could end up in the crossfire between opposing parties or thugs."

The same story of violence and intimidation against journalists is replicated in francophone countries like Cameroon, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali. The most serious



of them is Cameroon, where the government continues to prosecute media critics in military or special courts.

As Angela Quintal, Africa Program Coordinator of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) told IPS, "Cameroon is the second-worst jailer of journalists in sub-Saharan Africa, and the second in the world for jailing journalists on false news charges."

Sierra Leone and the Gambia are the two countries that emerge relatively blemish-free in our survey of the landscape of press freedom in West Africa. Both have relatively new governments that have promised repeal criminal libel laws that their predecessors had used to clamp down on the media. From Sierra Leone, reporter Amadu Lamrana Bah of AYW Media told IPS - "The president says he is committed to repealing [criminal libel laws] and the process is on."

His statement echoes that of Sheriff Bojang Jr, president of the Gambia Press Union, who said: "We no longer work in a fearful or repressive environment, but our major problem is the lack of information coming out of government, the total lack of transparency. But the government have promised to make changes." This is a reference to the absence of FOI legislation in the country, which the government has promised to "deal with in due course". But the Gambians only have to look to similarly "blemish-free" Sierra Leone, to realise that FOI will count for naught if the authorities are not prepared to honour its provisions - as this

reporter discovered while researching a story on sexual violence against Sierra Leonean women and another on diamond mining.

The Ministries of Justice, Mines, and Information in Freetown refused to provide the information we requested, even though they had initially promised they would. That recent experience came to mind when, during his interview for this piece, Liberian reporter Henry Costa said the Weah government "were pretending to be tolerant" but "would go to their old tricks" when economic hardships trigger anti-government protests and the media begin to report on them.

Since Sierra Leone and the Gambia are currently implementing International Monetary Fund policies, it is only a matter of time before those policies begin to bite the people. If the "Costa equation" is correct, then it is likewise only a matter of time before we find out whether the "blemish-free" authorities in Freetown and Banjul are as toxic to press freedom as their counterparts in Cameroon and Ghana, or indeed, their immediate predecessors.

"Journalists do essential work to keep the public informed, often in difficult circumstances in West and Central Africa," Sadiou Marong, the Regional Media Manager for Amnesty's West and Central Africa Office, told IPS. "They must be protected to do their work freely, and without fear of attacks or threats. Governments in the region should promote media freedom and protect media workers and organisations."