

Editorial

Friday, December 27, 2019

State of our state

Times are a changing- but the sort of changes happening in our state is nothing to write home about- or rather everything that should be made public. It has become a breeding ground for unscrupulous elements where the name of the game is "instant wealth".

Gone are the days when enterprising people, by dint of their sheer tenacity and unwavering pursuit made fame and fortune. The "get rich quick" mantra being increasingly subscribed to by the younger generation has begun to bear fruit- rapes, murders, extortions, thieves and burglary, drug trafficking and corruption- the list growing longer by the day.

The race to amass wealth- even at the cost of giving up one's peace of mind and the health and home have taken precedence over the concept of a peaceful and fruitful easy life. Conscience and morality have been shoved off to the furthest corner of one's mind- shedding the last remnants of humility to enter the temple of mammon. The result is a society where might is right and truth is relative.

Honesty and sincerity is at a premium and the ideology of high thinking - simple living having been replaced by the reckless aim to attain power and influence. Humility and respectfulness has begun to be looked down upon and is being equated with weakness- a trait to be avoided. Truths are being sold and brought at a price and the collective mentality has started to revert back to the Stone Age where survival of the fittest holds true. Making things worse are the growing number of indolent youths accustomed to luxury and exhibitionism influenced in no small measure by the western cultures but failing to capture the essence of the dignity of work and the regard for fellow humans that underlines the basic principles of these western societies. Abusing the powers entrusted to them and turning their official domain into their personal fiefdom is the order of the day for bureaucrats and politicians while the common people are left in the lurch with a feeling of betrayal and alienation in their minds.

This has created a chasm that is growing wider with each passing day leading to a feeling of suspicion and getting cynical of the steps the Government is taking up for the professed good of the public. This social turmoil paves the way for a breed of human parasites living off the sweat of another's labour- intimidation and fear being their weapon of choice and not thinking twice about taking lives if their whims are not catered to. Shouts of negligence and deprivation trying to drown out the screams of the unfortunate public destined to lead a life of uncertainty and fear. Tolerance is no longer a virtue and wealth is the benchmark of a person's worth- never mind the means one used to acquire it. Public memory has inexplicably shrunk to let matters pass- if only to wash their hands off the trouble of facing the bitter reality or to rectify it. Rationality has succumbed to power and ethics is an alien notion. A bleak future is in the offing- it is for us to stand up and stand fast- for the life we lead the way we want to. It is in us to walk with our heads held high and taste the sweat and the fruit of our own labour.

At the end of the day what really matters is an unburdened mind and a good sound sleep.

Letter to the Editor

On the issue of Nupi Manbi Community

Dear Imphal Times,

I am glad to have people like you who are sensible towards gender and sexual minorities' rights. We have been receiving support from Imphal Times continuously and help in scaling up awareness to the people about the reality faced by Nupi Maambi Community.

Today I have read an article from your end and it is reflected certain concern of the community that has been neglected by the state in spite of the legal developments that comes out in the recent years. However in the article there are few areas where I found confusion and conflated.

* The transgender rights bills comes out later 2014 and it is extremely regressive and harming the community. And the introduction of the article seems the bills is in favour of the community and because of the non implementation community have not been getting benefit out of it. Which I think it falsely address the bill

* The bill recognised only transgender/third gender but not as either male or female which has totally against the rights to self determination, body autonomy and gender non binary and this is contrary to the Supreme Court NALSA judgement. And the article convey the supportive message the recognition of third gender and failed to reflect the direction of SC NALSA judgement on freedom of self identification

* Manipur has transgender welfare board and it was formed in 2017 and chaired by the minister of social welfare but is not functioning. The article didn't mention this fact

I would be happy to share information in the near future, if any of the journalist wish to write article about the community of the state.

Warm Regards,
Santa Khurai

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The year 2019 saw various measures taken up for protection of the Women and child rights

PIB Feature

In order to ensure development, care and protection of children through cross-cutting policies and programmes the Ministry of Women and Child Development has undertaken various measures to spread awareness about child rights and facilitate access to learning, nutrition, institutional and legislative support for enabling children to grow and develop to their full potential.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Section 28 of the POCSO Act 2012 provides for establishment of Special Courts for the purpose of providing speedy trial. Further, Section 35 of the POCSO Act provides that the evidence of the child shall be recorded within a period of thirty days of the Special Court taking cognizance of the offence and reasons for delay, if any, shall be recorded by the Special Court. Further, Section 35 also lays down that the Special Court shall complete the trial, as far as possible, within a period of one year from the date of taking cognizance of the offence.

The Government of India has taken the following steps to ensure speedy dispensation of justice: In furtherance to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018, the Government has finalized a scheme in August, 2019 for setting up of total of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for expeditious trial and disposal of pending cases pertaining to rape and POCSO Act, 2012, in a time-bound manner under Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The Scheme is for one year spread over two financial years i.e. 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 was enacted for effective deterrence against sexual offences. Further, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 was enacted to prescribe even more stringent penal provisions including death penalty for rape of a girl below age of 12 years. The Act also inter-alia mandates completion of investigation and trials within 2 months each.

A "National Database on Sexual Offenders" has been launched on 20th September, 2018 to facilitate investigation and tracking of sexual offenders across the country by law enforcement agencies.

An online analytic tool for police called "Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences" has been launched on 19.02.2019 to monitor and track time-bound investigation on sexual assault cases in accordance with the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018.

In order to improve investigation, steps have been taken to strengthen DNA analysis units in Central and State Forensic Science Laboratories. This includes setting up of a State-of-the-Art DNA Analysis Unit in Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Chandigarh.

Guidelines have been notified for collection of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases and the standard composition in a Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit. A total number of 6023 officers have been trained by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) and Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan National Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science. BPR&D has distributed 3,120 Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits to State Governments/UT Administration as orientation kit as part of training. A scheme namely Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) has been approved under which an online cybercrime reporting portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in) has been launched on 20th September, 2018 to enable public to report complaints pertaining to child pornography/child sexual abuse material, rape/

gang rape imageries or sexually explicit content.

Women empowerment and protection

Empowered women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination; and, well-nurtured children with full opportunities for growth and development in a safe and protective environment Promoting social and economic empowerment of women through cross-cutting policies and programmes, mainstreaming gender concerns, creating awareness about their rights and facilitating institutional and legislative support for enabling them to realize their human rights and develop to their full potential.

Strengthening of AHTUs & WHDs in States Across the Country The Empowered Committee (EC) under Nirbhaya Framework, chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, recommended setting up of Anti-Human-Trafficking Units (AHTUs) at the cost of Rs. 100 crores for safety and security of women and girl victims of trafficking.

100% cost of setting up of these AHTUs has been recommended to be borne by the Central Government under Nirbhaya Fund as per the MHA proposal. The EC has also suggested that psycho-social counselling and legal counselling and aid should be made available through these AHTUs to the beneficiaries.

The EC also recommended setting up of Women Help Desks (WHDs) in Police Stations in all States and UTs at cost of Rs. 100 crores to be funded 100% by the Central Government under Nirbhaya Fund. WHDs will be gender sensitive desks for grievance redressal of women through the policing system, as well as catalysts for improved community interaction of the police with focus on crime against women and children. The desks will also help create a conducive atmosphere for distressed women and girls to approach the police stations without any hesitation and fear.

The EC has suggested that these WHD should preferably be headed by women police officers not below the rank of Head Constables, and preferably by women officers not below the ranks of JSI or ASI. Further, training, orientation and sensitization of both men and women police officials working at or in relation to WHDs at police stations, should also be taken up. Presently, WHDs have been approved for ten thousand police stations. However, the EC has suggested that the facility may be expanded to all the police stations in the country over a period of time or in phases.

P r a d h a n
MantriMatruVandanaYojana
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Reaches One Crore Beneficiaries
P r a d h a n
MantriMatruVandanaYojana (PMMVY), a flagship scheme of the Government for pregnant women and lactating mothers has achieved a significant milestone by crossing one crore beneficiaries. The total amount disbursed to the beneficiaries under the scheme has crossed Rs. 4,000 crores.

PMMVY is a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme under which cash benefits are provided to pregnant women in their bank account directly to meet enhanced nutritional needs and partially compensate for wage loss. Implementation of the scheme started with effect from 01.01.2017. Under the 'Scheme', Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) receive a cash benefit of Rs. 5,000 in three instalments on fulfilling the respective conditionality, viz. early registration

and registration of the birth of the child and completion of first cycle of vaccination for the first living child of the family. The eligible beneficiaries also receive cash incentive under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). Thus, on an average, a woman gets Rs. 6,000.

One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme

Indira Gandhi MatritvaSahyogYojana (IGMSY) has been discontinued on 31st March 2017. The One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme provides a range of services including police facilitation, medical aid, psycho-social counselling, legal counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence in an integrated manner under one roof. So far 728 OSCs have been sanctioned and 595 OSCs have started operations. Recognizing the need to prevent women from exploitation and to support their survival and rehabilitation, the scheme of Short Stay Home for women and girls was introduced as a social defence mechanism, by the then Department of Social Welfare in 1969.

The scheme is meant to provide temporary accommodation, maintenance and rehabilitative services to women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism or are being forced into prostitution and are in moral danger. Another scheme with the similar objectives namely Swadhar was launched by the Department of Women and Child Development in 2001-02 for women in difficult circumstances. The scheme through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid aims to rehabilitate women in difficult circumstances. Centre for Market Research and Social Development, New Delhi conducted an evaluation in 2007 to assess the performance of both the schemes. The evaluation report while citing the effectiveness and positive impact of measures adopted under the schemes for counselling and rehabilitation found that the profile and category

of residents, admission procedure, counselling, quality of service, vocational training, rehabilitation and follow up procedure are almost similar in both the schemes. It, therefore, recommended merger of these two schemes for better functioning and outcomes with lesser administrative burdens and procedures. There were total number of 307 Short Stay Homes and 311 SwadharGrehs functioning in the year 2013-14.

The Guidelines and SOP for the OSCs have been circulated to all the States/UTs and districts for effective implementation of One Stop Centre (OSC) scheme. Awareness generation programmes related to One Stop Centre scheme are conducted by State Governments/UT Administrations from time to time. Nirbhaya Fund

Government of India has set up a dedicated fund called Nirbhaya Fund for implementation of initiatives aimed at enhancing the safety and security of women in the country. Under the Nirbhaya Fund, the proposed projects should have the features like direct impact on safety and security concerns of women, optimum use of existing infrastructure, innovative use of technology, no duplication of existing government schemes/programmes, provision for real time intervention as far as possible, strict privacy and confidentiality of women's identity and information and defined monitoring mechanism. The Central Ministries/Departments, States/UTs, Autonomous and other Government Bodies can submit proposals as per the prescribed procedure. As per the guidelines issued by Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal authority for appraisal of the schemes/proposals received under Nirbhaya Fund. An Empowered Committee of officers (EC) under the Chairpersonship of Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development has been set up for appraising various schemes/projects proposed to be funded from the Nirbhaya Fund.

Medical Science

Timely treatment helped a mother to escape paralysis

By a correspondent
Ludhiana, Dec. 27

A 30 year old housewife was successfully treated at Artemis Hospital recently. She had been suffering from a rare spinal cord tumor for over 6 months, which was persistently troubling her daily chores and could have left her paralyzed.

"Even though the tumor was in stage 1, if left untreated, it would have left her paralyzed from one side. Such tumors are benign in nature and are very rare, with only 0.5 - 1% of the population being affected. Keeping in mind the size and location of the tumor, which would have been risky to treat with conventional radiotherapy, the team decided to perform cyberknife robotic surgery. The procedure took 40 minutes and the patient was discharged immediately. Radiographic reports revealed that the tumor had subsided completely after the first session without affecting the healthy cells." Says Dr Aditya Gupta, Director, Neurosurgery and Cyber Knife Center, Agrim Institute for Neurosciences, Artemis Hospital Gurgaon.

The patient had always been ignoring the aggravated pain in her left shoulder for months. Being a mother of two, she thought the pain

was due to exertion, but she had been in consistent and unbearable pain that led to difficulty in walking at times. It was only then, when she started paying heed to. She started losing sensation in her arms and legs.

"Even though conventional surgery was kept as an alternative, but had a mild risk on patient getting paralysis and hence was not advisable. This is where cyberknife is effective and a safer treatment option. Being a non-invasive and pain free procedure, the tumor was completely removed with high dosage of targeted radiation." Added Dr Gupta Early diagnosis is an important factor in the outcome of spinal cord tumors. Though many other treatment methods may be available for treating spinal tumors but due to the advantage of being totally non-invasive and eliminates the requirement of any kind of anesthetics, cyberknife is a very useful tool saving the patient's time and helping in better and quicker recovery.

Treatment for spinal tumors remaining a challenge in India, due to the reason that only limited technology is available, and also the fact that the spine is sensitive and can receive only limited amount of radiation. Cyber knife being flexible in producing radiations is one of the best options for treatment of spinal tumor.