

Veewon Thokchom arrest sparks criticism from across students' communities and Rights Bodies

IT News
New Delhi, Feb 16,

Right activists and students from the North East state of Manipur along with members of the MSAD has been waiting at Patiala House Court waiting for student leader Thokchom Veewon who was picked up by a police team from his rent room at Saket around 5.30 pm yesterday. The former MSAD president was arrested under charges of sedition (Sect 124 (A) IPC). Unaware of his whereabouts till early morning on Saturday, his family and friends feared he would be presented before a magistrate in Imphal, not New Delhi, as the protocol mandates. Veewon brother and sister were at home at the time of his arrest. As per reported from Delhi the sister was given the special cell address and two contact number by the cops who came in civil dress. "The cops at the special cell told us that the Manipur police took him away and they do not



know where he is and gave us two phone numbers. When I called up the number they gave us, the Manipur police personnel said he cannot disclose the location for security reasons". Veewon sister told activists and media persons..

According to Venus, brother of Veewon, there's a clear attempt to conduct the entire procedure in Manipur. "A sub-inspector of the Manipur police told me that if he can be presented in Manipur within 24 hours, then he doesn't have to be produced in Delhi," he added. The police team also seized Veewon's laptop and mobile phone at the time of arrest. The former president of Manipur Students' Association in Delhi was picked up from his residence in Saket at 5.30 pm by four police personnel, two of whom were from Manipur police. A case under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code was registered at Lamlai police station (Imphal West) for a Facebook post criticising the recently lapsed Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016. Thokchom's friends and family say that he was picked up by the police without an arrest warrant. Veewon was scheduled to produce at Patiala House Court at 11 am but again postponed at 2.00 pm. Manipuri students

and supporters from across the country waited till he was produced. Human Rights Law Network members are already present for his bail application at the court since 11 am.

As he was not produced in the court till 2 pm Veewon supporters moved to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate under Section 97 of CrPC requesting him to search for Veewon as he is not produced before the Magistrate till 2 pm. As per a report in a web portal Javed Mehdi, Thokchom's friend and fellow student leader, alleged that the state chief minister Biren Singh directed the state police to raid Thokchom's home in Imphal on February 12, the day when the controversial Bill was listed for consideration and passing in the Rajya Sabha.

"That day, he put up a post on Facebook speaking against the Bill and called the CM 'a puppet of New Delhi'. The police told his family that they had come on the direction of the home minister," he said. Thokchom's Facebook account was deactivated hours after his arrest although it isn't clear on whose behalf. Mehdi says that the police had similarly paid a visit to his family residence in Imphal about a month ago.

Imphal East SP, on the other hand, said that Veewon was booked under sedition for his

call for independence, not his criticism of the CM.

"It was based on his Facebook post, where he wrote, 'Since the citizenship amendment bill was going to be passed by the Central government in the Rajya Sabha at any cost, people in Manipur have no option but the right to self determination i.e. independence'". This has been the very demand of separatist organisations in Manipur, he added.

He said that Veewon's Facebook post had prompted a suo moto inquiry by the criminal investigation department of the crime branch, who then submitted a report based on which the case was filed in Lamlai police station.

Despite several attempts, CM N Biren Singh and the BJP state spokesperson could not be reached for a comment.

Thokchom completed his Master's degree from Ambedkar University and was preparing for UGC NET and M Phil programme. Barely two weeks ago, he was in a panel discussion in New Delhi with Supreme Court lawyer Colin Gonsalves and Justice (Retd) Markandey Katju protesting the detention of Manipur journalist Kishorchandra Wangkhem under the National Security Act. Lamenting the use of draconian laws against journalists and political and human rights activists, he had said, "This has become a norm to detain someone under NSA as far as Manipur is concerned. And this is disheartening to know that this is the kind of society we are living in. What freedom means for us is Lingthamba - the right to protest without violence."

Zenhang Lamka Meet cum Cultural Exhibition held



IT News
CCpur, Feb 16,

The 1st Zenhang Lamka Meet cum Cultural Exhibition was held today from 11 am at Zenhang Lamka Playground. Dr Kimboi was the Chief guest of the Meet. Chief of Zenhang Lamka Letkhochinhang the meets father.

To begin with, the meet was

opened by Rev. Dr. Jacky Simte in prayer after which cultural exchanged and other activities followed.

Cultural troupe from Hmar Youth Association, HYA, Young Mizo Association, YMA, Young Paite Association, YPA, and Zomi Youth Organisation, ZYO performed their items with other items being carried

out.

During her speech Dr Kimboi said Zenhang Lamka was one of the oldest village in Churachandpur where all the good and bad things had started.

She called on to the people to remain united for growth and development.

In session 2 the organizers are organizing a musical night.

International Seminar held at MU

IT News
Imphal, Feb 16

"Tourism can bring closeness between two societies or countries", says Prof Soe Win, the rector of Monyia University of Economics, Myanmar.

Speaking in the inaugural function of the three day international seminar on Culture, Tourism, Indigenous People and Sustainable Development as a Chief Guest of the function held at Mu centenary hall, Soe Min further said that even though tourism has given various facilities, it also gives negative impact of the society. So,

sustainable development is needed in tourism sector also. He further said that there need a good balance between the society and its environmental impact arising from the heavy use of resources in the name of tourism.

Soe Min further concluded that they need to encourage the tourism sector but not only that they should also minimize the ill effects given by it on the local community, its culture and traditions and finally the environment.

The three day international Seminar was organised jointly by Research Forum (REFORM), Centre for Entrepreneurship and Skill

Development, Manipur University in collaboration with the Planning department, Govt. of Manipur.

The inaugural function was attended by President of REFORM Dr. M. Lokendra, Administrator i/c Manipur University Prof Amar Yumnam, Dean of Social Sciences MU Prof N Lokendra, Head of Department of Commerce, Monyia University Aung Kyaw, Director of CESD, MU Prof Ch. Ibohah Meitei and director IQAC, M.S University, Udaipur Rajasthan as the functional President, Guest of Honours and Keynote Speaker respectively.

Review Meeting on Anti CAB movement held



IT News
Imphal Feb 16

Even though the apprehension of passing the contentious CAB has been lifted partially for a while as the bill hasn't been tabled in the Upper house of the parliament, the discussion on the CAB continues for further strategy to deal with it.

Today Manipur Peoples against CAB (MANPAC) which spearheaded the Anti CAB movement in Manipur organised a review meeting on The Anti-CAB movement in Manipur and North East held at Lamyamba Sanglen, Imphal.

Speaking at the function General Secretary of NESO Sinam Prakash said that Detection and Deportation

of illegal immigrants is the need of the hour. He added that the NRC needs to be updated in the State to know the foreigners residing the land.

Prakash further said that the BJP government introduced a long term visa of about five years which can even allow to buy a piece of land and also can issue driving license etc. So appeal to scrap such policy. He also said to pressure the government to give assent the Manipur Peoples Protection Bill and to implement the ILPS in the state.

He finally concluded with an appeal to bring unity among various NE states and fight for a greater cause of the region.

Speaking to media person Core committee member of

MANPAC Sunil Karam said that the Contentious Bill was not tabled at the Rajya Sabha because of the various movements of the indigenous people of the land. He further said that the people haven't won a complete victory against the CAB as the government can bring out through ordinance or any other means. He further concluded that the people of the land need to stay alert as the Bill is not completely dead.

The Review Meeting was attended by Convenor of MANPAC Yumnamcha Dilipkumar, Co-convenor of MANPAC Amu Kamei, Advisor of MMWO Ishlam Makakcha and General Secretary of Kom Union T. Achum Kom as the presidium members.

Disaster Management Training Program Conducted

IT News
Tengnoupal, Feb.16

A Disaster management training program on comprehensive landslides and effects of deforestation for village chief, headman, community leaders and educated youths of Tengnoupal District was conducted by Department of Forest Civil Defence Manipur under the sponsorship of Department of Relief and Disaster Management Government of Manipur at Tuinom Village Community Hall on Friday.

The training program was attended by Th. Guite, chief of Ngibethany Village, Mohd. Ayub Khan, deputy controller Relief and disaster Management Government of Manipur, Thongphem Haokip, chief of H. Kotlanphai village, Thongpao Zou, chief of Tuinom village, M. Inaocha Singh, Beat Officer



Monoi and Ch. Bihari Singh, staff Manipur Forest Department as chief guest, president and guest of honours respectively. In his presidential speech Ayub Khan Deputy Controller CD/ Relief and disaster management gov of Manipur quoted that we have been facing lot of disaster in our life whether it may be man made it should be eradicated from the society and it may be natural preparedness/ mitigation and respond should be initiated before coming or we will die. He described the roles of village

chiefs in disaster. Village chiefs spoke about preventive measures to be carried out by the community leaders of Tengnoupal district. M. Inaocha Singh Beat Officer Monoi Tengnoupal district Manipur imparted to the participants of the trg conducted at the Tuinom village community hall Tengnoupal district Manipur regarding wild life Act imposed in the state. 60 village chiefs/ headman/ community leaders/ educated youths etc took part in the training program.

Popular Front joins the grief of the nation in the death of CRPF personnel

IT News
Imphal, Feb 16,

Popular Front of India chairman E Abubacker has expressed shock over the terror incident in Kashmir on Srinagar-Jammu highway in which at least 37 CRPF personnel lost their lives. He conveyed deep condolences to the bereaved families. He said: "We have lost our brave soldiers in this attack which is strongly condemnable."

He further stated that there is an unprecedented increase in the number of violent incidents in J&K in recent years and it is a matter of serious concern. In the present incident, it is more serious that there were serious security lapses in spite of intelligence inputs.

E Abubacker demanded that instead of misusing the incident for political advantage in view of forthcoming election, the whole matter should be investigated thoroughly and remedial measures taken so that similar casualties are not repeated in future. He has also reminded that it is high time to initiate a permanent solution to Kashmir problem through appropriate political steps.