

# Editorial

Tuesday March 12,

## The truth unfolded

Behavioural experts have, time and again, extolled the virtues of positive reinforcement- of the benefits of appreciating a right move or action, however small, over the detrimental effects of criticism and discouraging remarks. The same views have increasingly been used in the fields of education and different forms of therapeutic practices. The same idea would undoubtedly work, if the experts are to be believed, for our much maligned and harassed government. Looking at the bright side to start with, the ruling government has been able to stabilize the fiscal deficits. Progress has been made, and is still making strides towards development in various fields including power, public amenities, water and other necessary public infrastructures in the state. All these efforts are worth appreciating, and have been felicitated by various social organizations and groups on many occasions. Getting the consensus of the entire population of the state is an almost impossible task, given the different and often contrasting views and opinions professed by each group of people or community. Nevertheless, efforts are still apparently being made to cater to the greater good of everyone. This unenviable task being borne by those in governance should be something everyone of us should bear in mind while dispelling our opinions and views on matters relating to public governance.

Yet, having said that, it is a sign of human adaptability and progress that one should learn from mistakes- the sooner the better. It is also another unique human trait- perhaps the most important one that distinguishes ourselves from the rest of the animals is the ability to rationalize and control our emotions and thoughts. The present scenario unfolding in front of the public regarding the handling of public affairs by the representatives of the people as well as some top authorities still leaves much to be desired. The collective dilemma of the present government is obvious in the confusing and often self-contradictory ways things are being handled. There is a visible lack of transparency and responsibility in all spheres of public service, while the law and order issue still plagues the common people no end despite the assurances from the government of making remarkable strides in this regard. For those of us who cannot afford personal escorts or unworthy of state-sponsored security measures, the ground reality is still frightening and fraught with danger- from both sides of the ideological and political divide.

The most disconcerting questions plaguing the minds of the general public is: why is there still an apparent lack of cohesion and coordination between the different departments and sections of the government? Why has the general public been unable to shed the uneasy, insecure and suspicious feelings for the state and central security forces ostensibly deployed to safeguard the common public? What earnest and sustainable measures have the government taken up till date to address the burgeoning educated unemployed and qualified people in the state? How much of the long-drawn plans and policies regarding the development of commerce and industries have been implemented so far? Are there any plans and policies to guide and support the pioneering entrepreneurs and industrialists whose endeavours will decide the future industrial and commercial prospects of the land? Why couldn't or shouldn't the state government open a dedicated grievance cell to entertain and address genuine complaints and issues concerning the various departments from the distanced general public if its much publicized claims of the ongoing efforts to improve governance is sincere?

The bewildered public is still seeking an explanation to these and many more apparent discrepancies in our society, and still hoping that perhaps the government would be earnest enough to answer these nagging questions, and own up to its mistakes and blunders. The entire population of Manipur will whole-heartedly appreciate such a bold gesture.

## Poking the nose in Someone's Business is the act of jealousy. (Meitei's Demand for ST)

By: Sanienbam Jugeshwor Singh

Attention of UNITED TRIBAL PEOPLE'S COUNCIL MANIPUR (UPTCM) is being drawn in regard to their strong opposition at Meitei/Meetei demands for the inclusion in ST list of Indian Union. Kindly note the following few points so that the apprehension in this regard may overcome. Who is a tribe? According to OXFORD DICTIONARY, a tribe is a group of families or communities linked by Social, economic, religious or blood ties and usually having a common culture, dialect and recognized leader. Going by this definition, Meitei/Meetei are more or less a tribe (Sans Primitiveness). However the degree of primitiveness or tribalness is normally measured by the observer from outside. I have gone through many writings of the Britishers of colonial era and in their accounts, the Meitei/Meetei were often directly or indirectly referred to as tribal. Inquisitive minds may refer to the accounts of Pemberton, Gordon, TC Hodson, William McCulloch etc. Even by post-independence Indian cultural Anthropologist recognized Meitei as tribal Hindu of North East India. To understand more clearly I am giving a synopsis of why Meitei/Meetei should not be included in the ST list of Indian Union is given below, which had already published in some of our local daily for general awareness.

According to the census records of 1891, 1901, 1931, the Meitei/Meetei was once Scheduled Tribe. But from the Gazetteers of 1951 onwards Meitei has been removed from the ST list of Indian Union without any information or communication to the people of Manipur as well as to the Government of Manipur, even without the approval of Minister of tribal Affairs GOI. In 1949, Ministry of Tribal affairs, Govt. Of India, constituted a minority Commission, led by shri Gopinath Bardoloi of Assam and Mr Nicolas Roy, to verify the social status of Meitei. During the survey of the commission, statements of few prominent Meitei leaders (L.Banka

Bihari Sharma, Sinam Krishna Mohan, Lalita Madhav) of the state were recorded leaving aside general public for the mass opinion. The statements of those few, recorded by the Commission could be the basis or reason for deleting Meitei from ST list of Indian Union. However, it's amazing that the report of the commission in this regard is not found vis-a-vis not communicated to the State Govt. at that time.

Who are Scheduled Tribes? The framers of the Constitution took note the fact that certain communities in the country were suffering from Social, Educational and economic backwardness on account of the primitive agricultural practices, lack of infrastructures facilities and geographical isolation. The Constitution of India in Article 366(25), prescribe that the Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 of the Constitution to be Scheduled Tribes. The provisions under Article 342 read as : 342(1) Scheduled Tribes—the President may with respect to any state or Union territory and where its state, after consultation with the Governor thereof by a public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes in relation to that state or Union territory as the case may be. 342(2) Parliament may be law, include or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause(1) any tribe or tribal community or part or group within any tribe or tribal community but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

While the Constitution silent about the criteria for specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe, the word and phrase "Tribes or Tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities", in Article 342 however to be understood in terms of their historical backgrounds of backwardness, primitiveness,

geographical isolation, shyness and social, educational and economic backwardness due to these reasons are the traits that distinguish Scheduled Tribe communities of our country. It takes into account the definition of tribal communities adopted in 1931 census. These facts are the basis for provision in Article 342(1)

Which mandates to specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribe or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribes in relation to that state or Union territory as the case may be. Thus the list of Scheduled Tribes in state /UT specified and a community declared as a Scheduled Tribe in a state need not be so in another state. The presidential notifications under clause (1) of Article 342 of the Constitution are issued as the constitution order. Two constitution orders were initially issued in relation to two distinct categories of states as existed at the time of adoption of Constitution of India.

The Meitei belongs to the mongoloid race and first settler of the state of Manipur (according to historians). We lost fraternity, brotherhood, sisterhood among tribal communities and Meitei quite for some time. We were in false pride and misunderstanding. But some of the opinion are trying to pull out the attention of the people by diverting people's mind with the concept relating to religion, which doesn't relate to Scheduled Tribe status of Meiteis. This is purely a matter related to Culture which is still alive in Meitei community. We are microscopic minority in India, being 0.06% of India's population. We still believe in animism though we were partially Hinduised. When Sana tan Dharma was adopted by Meitei, the community never part away from our culture rather has been associating with our age old rich cultural heritage and practices. Hence Meitei Dharma conglomerated Sana tan Dharma. Though Meitei worshiped Lord Shiva, Lord Krishna or other deities, Meitei still preserve our age old primitive culture as *Animism rituals like, Thou Touba, Kheiyom Lakpa, Epan Thaba, Saroi Khangba, Ushin Touba, Kwak Tanba, A m a i b a A m a i b i, Maibana Khut Thaba* (Commonly known as Beitya practice, the Person who declare a person is death)

*Lu hong bada Kabok Chaiba, Sanamahi Sidha Thinba, Lai Haroaba, Laibou Chongba, Sageigi Apokpa Chaklon Katpa,*

*Mangani Chakouba, Lai Loukhatpa, Lai Loiba etc.*

In addition to these we are geographically isolated, economically backward (from per capita income & GDP record), we are very shy in nature, that's why our boys and girls don't have the habits of saying good morning, thank you etc. (it doesn't mean they are indisciplined), educationally backward (this is fact that everybody will accept), we are microscopic minority, we are very much lack in infrastructure for our development processes, agricultural practices in general, are still in primitive mode. Thus all the criteria laid down in the Article 342 of Indian Constitution to be Scheduled Tribe are still intact with Meitei Community. Since all the criteria is fulfilled at the same time Meitei was once Scheduled Tribe, then why shouldn't Meitei be included in the Scheduled Tribe list of Indian Union? It's our rightful demand to include Meitei to be in ST list within the framework of Indian Constitution. No community should intervene the rightful demand of other community.

It is not about reservation in jobs & educational Institutions and tax relief alone that Meitei demands to be ST, it is more about protecting the Lands, culture and identity of the people; once we are declared as a scheduled Tribe, our land ,culture and identity is protected either under Article 241(1) or 244(2) and 275(1). The purpose of ILP, anti CAB and NRC will be largely served by declaring the state a Tribal state-it is easily feasible, once Meitei are enlisted as ST and moreover the Meiteis, Nagas and Kukis can live together under the same constitutional Umbrella. Apprehension of United Tribal Council Manipur (UPTCM) in the inclusion of Meitei in ST list may be (if Im not mistaken) that if Meitei includes in ST list, the majority community Meitei will exploit and snatch away all their rights which they already had. However inclusion of Meitei in the ST list of Indian Union is not at all related to what they think of. It is purely misconception and it is appealed to UPTCM, not to intervene in our rightful constitutional demand from Government of India. Inclusion of Meitei in ST list has nothing to do with anything that has already existed for our hill tribal brethren, rather they should support the movement for future collective betterment of our Manipur.

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## A R Conducts Monthly Security Meet Cum Conducts Anti Drug Campaign

IT News Imphal March 12,

Tulihal Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) conducted a monthly Security Meet at Mayang Imphal Company Operating Base (COB). The security forum was attended by village Pradhans, Councilors, Ward members, shopkeepers and locals.

During the meet various aspects concerning security in the area were discussed. There was also an interaction carried out on necessary measures required to be undertaken by locals in synergy with Assam Rifles for maintaining a strict vigil in the area. In addition to the security issues, career counseling for youth and future action plans of civic projects were also discussed.

The locals accentuated the need of conduct of such security meetings on a regular basis as it offers them an opportunity for mutual interaction with the Assam Rifles and achieve a sense of belongingness so as to collectively accomplish all goals to bring peace and harmony in the area. The security meet concluded with tea and refreshments for all

the attendees. Mantripukhri Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) conducted an Anti Drug Campaign for Drug Free Manipur at Tingri village on 11 March.

As part of the campaign, an interactive lecture was conducted at the village to enlighten and to generate awareness about the ill effects of drugs among the youth and to guide them to lead a healthy and prosperous life. The lecture was attended by children, Meira Paibis and members of local Youth Club. The lecture was followed by an Anti Drug Rally which started off from Tingri Primary School and covered the entire village of Tingri. The rally witnessed the attendance of over 200 Meira Paibis and locals. The campaign was a success in educating the villagers on this sensitive issue and various measures to counter the drug menace.

The villagers expressed deep gratitude for organising such awareness campaigns from time to time and appreciated the efforts and commitment of Assam Rifles to the cause of making Manipur a Drug Free State.

## Assam Rifles Conducts House To House Polio Campaign

IT News Imphal March 12,

Continuing with the efforts towards the National aim of 'Polio Free India', Keithelmanbi Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) organised a House to House Polio Drive as part of the Mega Pulse Polio Campaign in various parts of Imphal Valley on 11 Mar 19.

As part of the campaign the Battalion organised a 'House to House Vaccination Programme' by visiting maximum number of houses in Andro, Canechpur and Janglemphei villages to ensure hundred percent vaccination of

children in these areas. Aimed at eradicating polio from Manipur and to ensure maximum benefits to the locals of the area, a number of medical teams of the Battalion accompanied by respective area PHC teams, reached out to the locals of remote locations and carried out immunization of over 100 children.

The initiative of Assam Rifles received overwhelming response from the local populace. All the attendees conveyed their heartfelt gratitude for facilitating the outreach of the National programme and for successful conduct of the Pulse Polio Campaign.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### On Kangpokpi District

Sir The tripartite talked between representative of union Government(MHA) and the state BJP ruling talked on 10 March at Senapati HQ seems only to pacify the Manipur Nagas with the cost of Louis ancestral land. How long the UNC is going against the upgradation of Kangpokpi ADC into DC? Are not the Manipur Nagas under the aegis of UNC that developmental works for Kangpokpi district had been siphoned off since 1972 when Manipur attained statehood and till date? It will be the most appropriate that the UNC should returned all developmental works fund mean for Kangpokpi(Sadar Hills) District diverted to Senapati from 1972 till date. Was there any historical that the Manipur Nagas had resisted or war/battle with the imperialist The British to fulfill their political or issues? The Kukis by far had fought war with the British for more than three years(Anglo-Kuki war 1917-1919)This history is the political backbone of the Kukis who are far scattered and wide in South East Asian countries. So the state BJP Government and Union Government should take a soft stand regarding the UNC against the upgradation of Kangpokpi (Kangguu) ADC into DC for peaceful co-existence.

Yours Faithfully, Nekhholien Haokip via email