

Editorial

Thursday March 14, 2019

Interfering the media

The advancement in information technology has made today's world a 'Global village' - the term first coined by Canadian-born author Marshall McLuhan. Man born at the extreme corner of Far East Asiatic countries knows, cry and pray for the kind of disasters that happen in Middle East countries or in Latin America. Installation of internet technologies to cell phones which every human being can afford makes the people of our Earth- whose circumference is estimated at about 40,075 Kilometer staying at a communicable distance. Now every human being equipped with cell phone can now talk or stay in touch with any of their friends or relatives staying thousand miles away. Point bringing here is about the changes in the theory of mass media in relevance to today's journalism. The very concept at which the older generation considered 'proximity' as a characteristic of news is somewhat losing its foot.

Professor M.L Stein, the then chairman of Department of Journalism, California State University, Long Beach, California in his book "Shaping the News" in 1974 wrote that people are more interested in what happens in their neighbours. The one time presumption that 'a dog fight on Main Street is of more interest to our readers than fifty thousand foreign troops killed in battle somewhere' seems to have no relevance in today's society. Readers are now interested about happenings at distance places if the subject matters is his or her interest.

However, another characteristic of news - 'Prominence' on the hand is becoming a matter of more interested subjects for almost all readers. People now want to know what had happen to their leaders, celebrity or the bureaucrats irrespective of where they stay or which country they reside. Every news readers are eager to know the story of successful personality.

Points bringing up here are not to lecture on what is news and what should be reported but this is an attempt to make some of our critic to understand on why the newspaper especially the kind of ours often published story about real heroes or events that happen far far away from our state. Sometimes a mere insignificant event at which some people are of vested interested are often left and the result is not always good for we in the media fraternity of Manipur state in particular. The other kind of pressure that the media persons sometimes remain helpless is their intentions to get publish their story.

Manipur or say Imphal is not a safe place for even VIPs who are escorted by security personnel days and night. It is an open secret that almost all the politicians including MLAs or Ministers or even the Chief Ministers have linked with the UGs, the only thing we don't have is the proof.

So, what would be the security of those working with the media if in case, some of the individuals or rebels force us to publish stories of their interest. Being taken up this profession, we always stand with our ethics and there is no question of compromising our ethics while publishing stories. But when the government said that this should not be published and this should be published then where is the freedom of speech provided under the constitution of our country. Government machineries can invite news editors and can discussed about the content on objectivity reason but should in no way dictate the media on what or what not to publish. Calls of bandh or blockade by any organisation are in some way an essential news items for media houses living in conflict zone - because it is for the safety and security of the common people that the government machineries cannot guarantee safety. We have PCI guidelines, local code of conduct and this should be respected.

Bottom line is that media should not be harassed at any cost for any reason because we chose this profession not merely to earn for living but with full intention to serve our nation.

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Myanmar army takes NSCN-K leaders in custody; death knell for NE rebel groups

By - Subir Bhaumik
Courtesy : Ne Now
Mandalay, March 14,

The Burmese Army, Tatmadaw, has taken more than a dozen leaders of the NSCN-K faction into custody after the operation against their base at Taga in Sagaing Division of Myanmar last month.

Top Burmese army officials told Northeast Now that these leaders have been told to dismantle their bases in Sagaing and continue their negotiations with Burmese authorities under the framework of the Nationwide Ceasefire arrangement.

The NSCN-K has maintained the ceasefire arrangement with Myanmar government since 2012, despite renegeing on their ceasefire with India.

"We will not allow any hostile activity against India from our soil," said a top Burmese army official but he requested anonymity because he was not officially authorized to speak to the media.

The Tatmadaw aided the NSCN-K bases at Taga in early February and dismantled them. The NSCN-K



leaders did not resist because they wanted to maintain the ceasefire.

The Burmese army official said that the NSCN-K leaders will have to remain in designated camps and not carry out any hostile activity against India from Burmese soil.

The Burmese army has also attacked ULFA bases and that of Manipuri rebel groups in and around Taga. Some ULFA rebels like 'Major' Jyotirmoy Asom have died in the Burmese army operation. Sources in NSCN-K confirmed that

they have been told to stop aiding anti-Indian rebel groups or face severe consequences.

The developments in Sagaing spells the death knell of the north-eastern rebel groups because this remote hill region in Myanmar was their last trans-border base area after Bhutan and Bangladesh had cracked down against anti-Indian rebels in their territory in 2003 and 2009.

Indian army sources say many rebels from Manipur and Assam

have surrendered to authorities after fleeing Sagaing following the Burmese military operations.

"The chain of command in these groups has broken down following the Burmese military operation. Many of them are running around like headless chickens," they said. Burmese military officials say they have 'excellent understanding' with Indian military officials, cemented during the last several months following regular visits by top commanders on either side.

Delhi Association of Manipur Muslim Students (DAMMS), urged the Scheduled Tribe Demand Committee (STDC)

IT News
Imphal March 14,

Delhi Association of Manipur Muslim Students (DAMMS), New Delhi has urged the Scheduled Tribe Demand Committee (STDC), Manipur to look into the "Unclearity" in its demand for the Meitei/Meetei community in the Scheduled Tribe list under the Indian Constitution. Stating that indigenous people's movement has taken place all over the world where there are "oppressed, conquered and colonised people," a release from the Association said that Manipur has also recently seen the rise of indigenous people's movement in the demand for Inner Line Permit (ILP). "However, the demand for the rights of indigenous people has now shifted to the demand for the inclusion of Meiteis in the ST list," it said while stating that the theoretical explanation of

the shift is that the indigenous people are the same as tribals in the Indian context. Asserting that Indian academicians and the government of India (GOI) do not acknowledge the category of indigenous people, the release contended that the understanding of the word 'Tribal' according to International Labour Organisation (ILO) says that "Tribal people also retain some or all of their social, economic, cultural and political institutions, irrespective of their legal status" as an argument to back up DAMM's allegation that the demand for the inclusion of the Meiteis in the ST list is a forced equation that indigenous peoples are tribals. "Yelhoumi" which translates as indigenous is now forced to mean tribal given the limitation imposed by the Indian Constitution, it added. DAMM also stated that "The Meitei Pangals (Manipuri Muslims) have

settled in Manipur since the early 17th century even before the Brahmin migration in the Imphal Valley; and there is no denying that both Pangals and Bamons are indigenous to the Manipur valley." While contending that the listing of both Pangals and Meiteis in the same category as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) is problematic given the vast economic and social equality between the two communities, the release argued that the demand of the STDC leaves the Meitei Pangal community in a precarious state. It further asserted that if the Pangals remain OBC and Meiteis become ST, then it would mean that Meiteis are less economic and socially capable than Pangals while adding that the Meitei Pangal community is one of the most marginalised communities in the State.

EC holds meeting of central observers in New Delhi today

Agency
New Delhi, March 14,

The Election Commission is holding a meeting of central observers in New Delhi today as part of preparations for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

The meeting is being held to brief the central observers about their roles and responsibilities while being on election duty.

This is the first such meeting since election dates were declared earlier this month.

The Commission's mechanism to curb black money and illegal inducements like liquor and drugs will be shared with the expenditure monitoring observers during the day-long meeting.

The observers are drawn from various central services like the Indian Revenue Service, the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service, apart from others, and they are considered to be on EC duty till the elections process ends.

Assam Rifles Rescue Kidnapped Woman, Apprehend NSCN(IM) Kidnappers

IT News
Imphal March 14,

Yesterday late afternoon, a quick response team of Chandel Battalion rescued a woman from Village New Wangparal, Chandel District who had been kidnapped by NSCN IM cadres on Tuesday, 12 Mar 2019. The operation also resulted in apprehension of two of the NSCN(IM) cadres involved in the kidnapping who have identified themselves as Self Styled Lt Colonel Justin Khapai from GHQ Hebron of NSCN(IM) and Self styled Sergeant Korungthang of AC Battalion Chandel of NSCN(IM). The cadres were found in possession of one AK 47 rifle, one magazine and 27 live rounds of AK 47 Rifles. At around 1430 hour on 13 March 2019, a specific information was received by Chandel AR Company Commander from the villagers regarding presence of two armed cadres of NSCN(IM) in a school building of village New Wangparal along with a woman in blindfolds who had been kidnapped a day prior from her



village Thamlakhuren. The Chandel AR Battalion immediately launched a search and rescue operation under the Pallel Company Commander. At around 1530 hour the AR team reached the village where the woman and the kidnappers were reported to be present. Taken by complete surprise by the swift action by AR troops,

the armed NSCN(IM) cadres ran into a nala. The AR team led by their officer immediately gave chase on which the team was fired upon by the two cadres of NSCN(IM) who had kidnapped the woman. Despite the grave provocation and danger to their own lives, the AR team maintained restraint and did not fire back fearing loss of life and

property to the civilians. The NSCN(IM) cadres were finally cornered and asked to surrender on which the cadres raised their arms and were apprehended.

The swift and timely action of the team of Chandel Battalion led to the rescue of the kidnapping victim in record time along with apprehension of the criminals. Equally importantly, the commendable restraint displayed by the AR men in the face of grave provocation and firing by the NSCN(IM) criminals ensured no casualty or damage to property of the villagers.

The two cadres have been handed over to Chandel Police. An FIR has been launched against the cadres for kidnapping, attempt to murder and under Unlawful Activities Prevention Act for being in possession of restricted calibre weapon and ammunition. On initial investigation the victim revealed that few more cadre of NSCN(IM) were also involved in the crime. Further investigation by the Chandel Police is under progress.