

Editorial

Saturday, March 9, 2019

Changing Manipur - which direction?

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 three day. The race to amass wealth- even at the cost of giving up one's peace of mind and the hearth 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 Honesty and sincerity is at a premium and the ideology of high thinking - simple living having been replaced by the reckless aim to attain power and influence.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 worst 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.

Retrospection on the 8th March- "The International Women's Day"

By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwor Singh

International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated on 8th March, every year. It is a focal point in the movement for women's rights after Socialist Party of America organized a Women's Day on February -8 in 1909 in New-York. The 1910, International Socialist Women's Conference suggested, a women's Day be held annually. After women gained suffrage in Soviet Russia in 1917, March 8 became a National holiday there. The day was then predominately celebrated by the socialist movement and communist countries until it was adopted in 1975 by the United Nations. It is claimed that the day was commemorating a protest by women garment workers in New-York on 8th March 1857. The United Nations began celebrating "International Women's Day" in the International Women's Year 1975. In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly invited members state to proclaim March 8 as the United Nations Day for Women's right and World peace. The theme for International Women's Day-2019 is "Think Equal, Build Smart, and Innovate for change". The focus of the, on innovative ways in which to advance gender equality and empowerment of women particularly in the area of social protection system, access to public service and sustainable infrastructures.

Yes, it is very much necessary and a must to celebrate this day widely and also celebrating

worldwide. But, is the situation dismal to be a woman in India? In a survey of experts done in 2018, India ranks as the world's most dangerous country for women. It had ranked 4th in the same survey done 7 years ago. The Global Gender Gap Index 2017 by the World Economic Forum, placed India at 108 positions out of 144 countries benchmarked on the basis of gender parity in the field of economic participation, education, health and political empowerment. India ranked 131 out of 153 countries in the global women peace and security Index 2017-18, that is based upon 11 indicators incorporating inclusion, justice and security. Despite women accounting for 49% of India's population, only 12% of seats in the national legislature are held by them. The female labor force participation rate in India fell from 37% in 2006 to 27% in 2017 as per World Bank report, ranking India at 163 out of 181 countries.

Yes, it is also true that, more women are getting educated and coming out of their cocooned existence. They are entering professions that were till recently considered to be the domain of males. They are flying planes, driving e-rickshaws and trains, wielding the surgeon's knife and winning Olympic medals. It is heartening to know that amongst the top 79 global airlines, Indigo Airlines employs maximum percentage of women pilots (14%) followed closely by Air India (nearly 10%). Even rural women are becoming more independent, working outside of their homes and

exhibiting active leadership at local government level. The Economic survey -2018 shows that 43% of all gram Panchayat (Village Councils) in India are headed by women so as in Manipur also. In spite of all these, there are still problems at ground level in actual practice. The number of women in the work force is dismally low and even those who are working do not get equal wages as compared to their male counterparts. Women do not even have the right to take personal decisions; they do not have the right to enter into matrimony or walk out of a relationship of their own choice. Sometimes somebody also raised the question like: why is a woman expected to fit in the framework designed by a patriarchal society and conform to the social norms laid down by others, even if they are detrimental for her own wellbeing? There are women, who are financially independent who suffer in silence and stay in abusive marriages. Perhaps, due to emotional weakness, they are scared of what others will say. Even though more and more girls are going to school, education of the girl child is still beset with problems. This is more so in rural areas where girls schools are still not a plenty and parents do not feel safe for their daughters to travel long distances. Also most rural schools have poor toilet facilities, which is another deterrent for girls. This is fact in case of Government schools in Manipur, as per ASER -2018 report and at the same time girls students are not safe in private boarding's, where many

sexual harassment news often came out in our local dailies. Patriarchal mindsets when coupled with poor economic status make matters worse.

India has several women friendly laws on girls' education, prohibition of child marriage, equal inheritance of property, curbing of sexual and domestic violence etc. However, lack of political will power and a deeply entrenched patriarchal society makes their implementation very poor. Moreover, most women -even the educated and working women- do not have much knowledge about them and many are clueless even about their existence. India is a vast country, which, despite the skewed sex ratio (945 females per 1000 males) is home to 65 crore women. That is a huge women power, who should neither bow down in fear nor remains silent, but to bravely and snatch their rights to exercise their choices- be it their education, marriage, profession, or health (including sexual and reproductive health). The International Women's Day 2019 campaign theme of Balance for Better also calls for driving gender balance across the world- gender balanced boardrooms, a gender -balanced government, a gender balanced media coverage, a gender balanced of employees, more gender -balanced in wealth. So let us celebrate our womanhood every day and fight till win. In solidarity we all should stand together.

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Assam Rifles Observes International Women's Day

IT News Imphal March 9,

Units of 9 Sector Assam Rifles in the aegis of IGAR (South) organised a series of activities in various parts of the Imphal Valley to commemorate the International Women's Day on 08 March 2019.

As a kind gesture by the members of Assam Rifles Wives Welfare Association (ARWWA), ladies of 9 Sector Assam Rifles visited an Orphanage being run by EMA Foundation which is tucked away in the outskirts of Imphal town in a small village of New Keithelmanbi. It was brought to the notice of 9 Sector Assam Rifles by a social worker and so the ladies of 9 Sector Assam Rifles visited the Orphanage and were pleasantly surprised to see that despite the modest facilities, the children were looked after with lots of love. The Orphanage has 14 children in the age group of one and half year to 10 years and runs on a



mere income generated by selling chicken and ducks. Mrs Shubhra Kabthiyal, President ARWWA, 9 Sector Assam Rifles alongwith other members of the Association expressed happiness in celebrating the Women's Day with the women of substance Mrs Rebati Haokip who is running this

foundation single handedly with her husband Mr Doujalal Haokip. In an effort to further empower her, the President ARWWA gifted Mrs Rebati Haokip a Sewing Machine so that she can be self reliant and continue her good work. She also gifted rations and eatables to children and assured every possible

help to make the place a beautiful home away from home for the children.

In another event, Andro Company Operating Base (COB) of Keithelmanbi Battalion alongwith FXB India Suraksha which is an NGO of Manipur, organised an Awareness Programme in Chungingkhok village. As part of the programme, the Project Officer of FXB India briefed the ladies and locals of the area regarding various Government welfare schemes for women empowerment.

In another event by the Keithelmanbi Battalion a Health Awareness cum Medical Checkup Programme was organised for the women and locals of Manamjang village. As part of the event, the Medical Staff under the Regimental Medical Officer, Capt Susan Nelson, conducted medical examination of over 50 villagers, provided free medical treatment to the patients and also distributed free medicines to the needy.

Mantripukhri Battalion organised an Awareness Programme for women at Sawombing Company Operating Base (COB). As part of the programme, an interactive lecture was organised for women including students, teachers and Meira Paibis. The programme was focused towards highlighting the importance of women in today's world and gender equality in the society. The lecture was followed by an active discussion on success achieved by women in various fields and their immense contribution to the society. The series of activities conducted by the Units of the Sector received overwhelming response from the local populace especially the ladies. All the attendees expressed profound gratitude to the Units for undertaking such a widespread initiative on the occasion of International Women's Day and appreciated continuous efforts and commitments of Assam Rifles in reaching out to the local populace and reaffirming the faith of people in the Assam Rifles.

Indian Army Rescues Local Youth After Accident

IT News Imphal March 9,

On 07 March 2019 at around 1600h a civilian named Thangminlen Haokip Son of Ngullkholam Haokip resident of Village Khopijang, PO- Sognu, Distt Chandel (Manipur) met with a motor accident on the way between Khengjoi and Khemdo.

Troops of Moltuk Bn under 26 Sector Assam Rifles deployed at Khemdo Post and Nursing Assistant with First Aid Kit

reached the accident site and pulled him out from the steep hillside and administered immediate first aid and thereafter brought him to Khemdo Post.

The army personnel informed the family members of Mr Thangminlen Haokip and also that he was out of danger. The relatives reached the army base and thanked the soldier for the precious assistance and medical support to save a life of injured person and they appreciated Moltuk Battalion as well as Indian Army for this military civic action.

Maisnam Meiraba Luwang enters third round at Yonex German Junior

By a correspondent New Delhi, March 8,

Maisnam Meiraba Luwang continued his fine form to enter the third round of the Yonex German Junior 2019 at Berlin on Friday. The Manipur boy needed 31 minutes to win an all-Indian clash with Ishaan Bhatnagar 21-6, 21-19 to set up a meeting with the sixth seeded Yonathan Ramile. This is the second consecutive straight-game win for Luwang at this tournament after beating U Min Jeong of Korea 21-11, 21-10 in 29 minutes in the first round.

Earlier on Thursday, 2017 Asian Junior Championships U-15 gold medalist Samiya Imad Farooqui and Gayatri Gopichand made a winning start to their campaign. Farooqui needed just

27 minutes to dismiss Denmark's Clara Rober 21-10, 21-17. Gopichand was equally impressive in her 21-14, 21-15 first round demolition of England's Alexandra Oprisan.

Kerala girl Treesa Jolly set up a second round meeting with Gopichand after her 21-17, 21-11 win over Germany's Friederike Rudert. Amolika Singh Sisodiya, hailing from UP, was the fourth girl to progress into the second round following her 21-13, 21-8 victory over Caroline Raclow of Switzerland. Aashi Rawat, however, departed with an 18-21, 12-21 loss to Korea's Da Jeong Chung.

Nashik girl Smit Toshniwal, the only Indian girl to be seeded at the German Junior, will begin her challenge on Friday after receiving a first round bye. Andhra Pradesh boy Sai Charan Ravi prevailed over Poland's Patryck

Kordek 21-16, 21-16 for a showdown with Finn Achthoven. 16th seeded Priyanshu Rajawat will open his campaign on Friday a week after being the only Indian to reach the quarter-finals of the Dutch Junior International.

India had a solitary win in doubles on Day 1 of this Junior International Grand Prix event with the girls' doubles pair of Kavya Gupta and Khushi Gupta notching up a hard-fought 21-12, 21-23, 21-13 win over the German-French combine of Sarah Bergedick and Romane Cloteaux-Foucault. While the Indian challenge got over in mixed doubles, Navaneeth Bokka and Vishnu Vardhan Goud Panjala will hope to continue their good run in boys' doubles after making it to the pre-quarters at Haarlem last week.

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