

## Memoirs of Khelen Thokchom recounted on his 59<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary Babie Shirin conferred 2<sup>nd</sup> KTT Media Fellowship for this year



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Memoirs of Khelen Thokchom, the renowned Journalist who had left for heavenly abode on April 1, 2018, were recounted today on his 59<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary observed at Manipur Press Club. The Birth Anniversary observance was organised by Khelen Thokchom Trust. On the occasion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> media fellowship conferred by the Khelen Thokchom Trust since last year has been conferred to staff reporter of Imphal Free Press, Babie Shirin. This year topic of the fellowship programme is on theme – Water crisis and its management in Manipur. The media fellowship contain a sum of Rs. 50,000/- Prof. MC Arun of the Manipur University while recounting his association with late Khelen Thokchom said that Manipur has lost a visionary journalist with his absence. “He was an angry man, he was angry about the rotten system of our society, he was not happy about the attitude of the politicians, government officers and he was very unhappy and angry towards the declining morals of the youth of Manipuri Society”, Prof. MC said. He added that Khelen was a journalist who reported news and events with a cause and was never bored of starting argument with people who were in power to find his story line. President of Editor Guild

Manipur Khomdram Khogendro, while sharing his days with late Khelen Thokchom said that he had struggle a lot to reach his position until he breath his last. “He was never a happy man, poverty had stricken him during his school and college days and his dream of continuing PhD after completing his master degree was shattered due to his poverty”, Khogon said. Khogon further said that Khelen thokchom always think for the welfare of the journalist. “This room that we are observing his 59<sup>th</sup> Birth

Anniversary was constructed on his idea”, Khogendro added. President of All Manipur Working Journalists’ Union, Bijoy Kakchingtam also recounted on how they suffered when they started their profession. Earlier, floral tributes were paid to the portrait of late Khelen Thokchom. Certificates of the two journalists who had completed the 1<sup>st</sup> KTT media fellowship were also conferred. Booklets of the publication (Compilation from the works under the KTT media fellowship) was also released.

## KRU-NEI and KRSU-Ghq says no organization or bigger tribe can represent Kom tribe

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The Komrem Union (NEI) and the Komrem Students’ Union (Ghq) has appealed all the umbrella of Komrem Union to be cautious from misinformation and misuse by the other illegitimate organization formed by vested interest persons among the Kom tribe. “No other than the Komrem Union and Komrem Students’ Union can represent the Kom tribe which is under the

umbrella of Komrem Union and Komrem Students’ Union since generations”, a joint statement of KRU-NEI and KRSU-Ghq said. The Komrem Union and Komrem Students’ Union still remains independent and stays non-alliance to any of the larger organization/tribes of Manipur, it added. The umbrella bodies also appealed to refrain from participating in any of the ongoing issues which are not related to the Komrem tribes.

## S.C. Jamir says Nagas of outside Nagaland are not indigenous inhabitants of the state

Courtesy Nagaland Post  
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Against the backdrop of the contentious issue of preparation of Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN) and at a time when the Naga political issue was expected to see an early resolution, former governor and also former chief minister of Nagaland, Dr. S.C. Jamir has categorically pointed out that Nagas of Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Myanmar are not indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland state. Dr. Jamir, who is a surviving member of the Naga People’s Convention (NPC) that signed the historic 16-point agreement, made this remark while addressing the launch of Nagaland Indigenous People’s Forum (NIPF) Saturday at the Auditorium of Don Bosco School, Dimapur. “We have Nagas in Manipur, Arunachal, Manipur and Burma but they are indigenous of their respective states and country. Just because they are Nagas, they can’t claim to be indigenous inhabitant of Nagaland,” said Dr. Jamir.

He illustrated his point by citing the example of Chinese people inhabiting in different parts of the world. Dr. Jamir said the mainland China does not claim that all of them should be indigenous inhabitants of China. “Nagas of Nagaland should not be confused, nor intimidated by any elements or vested interest on this vital issue,” said Dr. Jamir.

The veteran Naga political said the issue of identifying indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland should be approached dispassionately and with political foresight as it would affect the lives of the inhabitants of Nagaland, now and in future.

The former five-time chief minister of Nagaland who also served as governor of several states for 14 years, said that while deliberating on the subject, a broader view should be maintained without any prejudice – be it communal, tribal or even religious. “The issue of indigenous is both emotive and sensitive and yet our deliberations should not be emotional nor

sensational,” said Dr. Jamir. He pointed out that at present Nagaland state covered a little over 16,000 sq km with about two million population and by 2050 Nagaland is projected to have about five million population. “We must know that space available at present is not sufficient for the indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland and the population will keep increasing whereas the area shall remain the same and job opportunities will be very limited if we go at the present trend and rate,” cautioned Dr. Jamir.

The former governor of Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Odisha then said that when the state was over burdened, nothing should be done to overload the state by bringing “extra luggage from outside”. Dr. Jamir said survival of people of Nagaland, especially the younger generation, would be determined by the decisions of the present leadership of the Nagas on the indigenous issue.

In his message to indigenous inhabitants of north-east region, Dr. Jamir said with India’s ‘Act East Policy’ (AEP) the region would be exposed to influx from South East Asian countries. As the corridor of the mainland country, he said the region should be prepared for “crisscrossing of civilisation and invasion of tremendous economic forces”.

Dr. Jamir cautioned that not a single state of the region could singularly face this invasion and asked the entire region to come together and be prepared by developing themselves and elevating their present education system.

“Unless we develop, unless we improve the kind of education that we have to match the worst time we will be second class citizens in our own land”, warned Dr. Jamir. Apart from focusing on customary and traditional practices, he said the region should talk about the modern culture which can match the contemporary culture of the world and make the indigenous people indispensable.

He said the objective of North East Indigenous People Forum

(NEIPF) should not be only talk about the past but be focused on the future so that the indigenous could grow along with the rest of the country and world.

He said the indigenous people of north east should imbibe the spirit of Israelites that is – will to survive, will to excel and will to dominate in all activities.

“If we imbibe this kind of spirit then there is no reason why indigenous people should worry about their existence or survival,” said Dr. Jamir.

Guest of honour of the programme, chief convener of NEIPF, Anup Chetia, called for unity of indigenous people of north east region to fight against the “infiltrators”. Chetia said the identity of the indigenous people of region was at threat due to the influx of “outsiders” from the mainland country and Bangladesh.

He also warned the people about the contentious Citizen Amendment Bill (CAB) 2016 saying that if the Bill was passed then “Hindu migrants would settle in our land”. Chetia said the forum’s objective was to fight for the indigenous people of the north east region so as to protect their culture, identity and language.

Another speaker, Khekiye Sema drew similarity between the “Red Indians” (Native Americans) – the indigenous people of the United States – to that of Nagas of Nagaland. As similar to western civilisation which took over the indigenous culture of Native Americans, Khekiye said Nagas have lost the oral history which was passed down by their ancestors from generation to generation until the Christianity and the written script came into being. “We call ourselves the indigenous people but we are half a man compared to our ancestors in every good quality that they had as non Christians. We, as Christians, do not even measure up to half of their good value system they live by. I am afraid we people are lost people”, said Khekiye.

Deliberating on Article 371 (A), Khekiye lauded Dr.S.C Jamir and his generation of Nagas of being visionary.



Khekiye said everybody takes a “pot-shot” at 16-point agreement but reminded that Article 371 (A) is the consequent result of the agreement and constitutionally protects the Nagas of Nagaland.

“This is the elementary protection that the indigenous people would want to ensure that our future cannot be contaminated by other kind of civilization”, said Khekiye.

However, he lamented that the Nagas have not been able to utilise the Article for their benefit saying, “Government of India has given us a dao (machete) so that we can clear our path to the future instead we are using that dao to cut our own limbs.”

Khekiye also spoke on the ongoing Naga Peace Process and asserted that Nagas must be given time to understand the ongoing negotiations before the final agreement.

“We want to know exact demands of the Naga Political Groups. Issue such as this deals with your future and the future of your children and nobody can decide that for us. We need to know what the future is being craved out for us”, said Khekiye.

The launching programme began with an invocation by Dimapur Baptist Pastor Fellowship president, Rev. Tenga Seb, welcome address by NIPF convener, advocate P Pius Lotha and launching of NIPF by the guest of honour and speakers.

Highlights of the programme include cultural presentation and dances from Sumi, Ao, Chakhesang and Kachari cultural troupes and special song by Discipleship Bible College choir.

The programme concluded with word of gratitude from NEIPF executive member, Dr. T Lima Jamir and benediction by Dimapur Women Baptist Church Fellowship president, Nukshila Aying Doulo.

## High alert in Nagaland, Manipur ahead of Naga talks

Agency  
Imphal/Kohima Oct 27,

With the next round of peace talks to end the protracted Naga political problem scheduled for October 31, the Nagaland and Manipur governments have taken steps to meet any eventuality and have put their respective police forces on “high alert”. Officials said in Kohima that the Nagaland government has directed all deputy commissioners of the districts and administrative officers to remain in their place of posting and within their jurisdiction till further orders.

The Nagaland police headquarters has issued an order banning all kinds of leaves and directed all unit commanders to recall all officers and personnel on leave immediately except those on medical leave.

In neighbouring Manipur, where Nagas have a sizeable presence, security forces in the state have been put on high alert and a large number of security forces, including women personnel have been deployed at important areas including near the Raj Bhavan in Imphal to thwart any “unwanted activities”, a top state government official said.

A BJP delegation along with those of other political parties of Manipur are seeking to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to convey the feelings of the people of Manipur on the Naga peace talks issue, a senior BJP member told Agency from Delhi.

The crucial round of talks on October 24 to find a lasting solution to the seven-decade-old Naga insurgency problem has remained inconclusive. Seeking to rule out any apprehension on the peace talks, Nagaland chief secretary Temjen Toy told Agency, “Everything is normal and the

public need not worry of any unwarranted situation ... We are not apprehensive but we don’t want to be caught unawares and so we are remaining alert to face any kind of eventualities.” The Nagaland director general of police T John Longkumer ruled out any scope of apprehension by the people saying, “We are preparing for any law and order situation that may come about. We are always like this whenever anything is to come about.” “Instead of panicking, people should be happy that the state police is on high alert for their security,” the DGP told

Agency. The Police Headquarters in Kohima circulated in the social media a direction to the India Reserve Battalions to keep at least two months stocks of rations and fuel in view of the fluid situation in the state. This has reportedly created apprehension amongst the people and Mr Toy said the police department has already been warned against issuing such orders. Sources in the NSCN(IM), which had signed the Framework Agreement with the centre in August 2015, said the outfit will stick to its demands for a separate flag

and constitution during the October 31 round of talks.

The Framework Agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations spanning 18 years, with the first breakthrough made in 1997 when the ceasefire agreement was sealed after decades of insurgency in Nagaland which started soon after Independence in 1947.

The demands have been made after the Centre’s August 5 announcement scrapping the special status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370. With the annulment of the special status, the separate flag and the Constitution of

Jammu and Kashmir cease to exist.

Naga tribal organizations, civil societies and political groups have been saying that any agreement on the Naga issue should be “inclusive, honourable and acceptable to all sections of the people”. In Manipur, government orders have been issued for adoption of preventive measures to deal with any “possible disruption in the supply and distribution of essential commodities due to the impending fallout of the Naga Peace talks”, officials said.

(Contd.on page 2)