

Editorial

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

When you fail to control the L&O, why intimidation to journalists

It is not the first time that media houses in Manipur are intimidated by state actors for publishing news articles related with armed insurgents group. Before Imphal Times was re-launch in January 9, 2013, when members of our team were working in different media houses, we have seen reporters and editors going to the street and protesting against such threat many times. Saying so, reminding the media houses about excessive reporting or perhaps reporting press statement by outlawed which appear more like encouraging their (UG's) activities is in one way good. But those in the government, particularly the state Home Department should understand the challenges being faced by media houses in the state many a time. In conflict zone, to be in this profession is more like working between the devil and the deep blue sea. Intimidation to curtail the freedom of speech has never been succeeded in the history of democratically set up nation and we in the Imphal Times felt that it will never succeed. It is also right on the part of the state actors to remind the media houses about the damage that could bring by publishing press statement of certain outlaw armed group. But saying so those is the government should know the kind of threats being faced from the so call armed group for not publishing their story. Complaining about such threats is even more dangerous as the armed group easily find out the person / editor who lodge the complaint and ultimately he will be the target.

Well, 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 interest are often left of 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 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 discuss about the content on objectivity reason but dictate the media. 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 their 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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Mumbai Varsity prof. faces disciplinary action for his anti-Rahul Gandhi Teachers' bodies register protest

By Raju Vernekar
Mumbai Jan 21

Professor Yogesh Soman, Director of the Academy of Theatre Arts of the Mumbai University, has been sent on forced leave, following his criticism of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, for his remarks on Veer Savarkar, even as teachers' associations have threatened to launch an agitation demanding withdrawal of action against him. Soman had reportedly posted a video on Twitter targeting Rahul Gandhi for his remarks on Savarkar. In the video, he had said that "You are right you are not Savarkar. You have nothing of him in you, his dedication, his sacrifice his valour, but you also do not have anything to be called Gandhi. I condemn your pappugiri".

After Soman's remarks against Rahul Gandhi, students' organisations including Chhatra Bharti Students Union and the All India Students'



Federation (AISF) and National Students' Union of India (NSUI) (Congress's students' wing) sat in dharna at Mumbai University's Kalina Campus in North West Mumbai, demanding action against him. In response to the students' protest, Soman was sent on forced leave by the university administration. However Mumbai University and College Teachers' Association

(MUCTA) has threatened to launch an agitation if the action against Soman is not withdrawn. A delegation of MUCTA called on Mumbai University Vice-Chancellor Dr Suhas Pednekar and submitted him a memorandum. In the memorandum MUCTA stated that Soman is a dedicated teacher and out spoken person and he cannot be punished for any incident outside the university.

"The university administration should not succumb to bullying tactics by students coming in crowds. If the university believes in "freedom of speech" then it should not indulge in such action which has no legal base. Soman was not given a chance to clarify his position and as such action against him is one sided. If he is not immediately reinstated, then the association will be left with no alternative but to launch an indefinite agitation, MUCTA General secretary Subhash

Athavale said.

MUCTA also pointed out that the salary of teachers is pending in many colleges in Maharashtra for the last several months. It was unfortunate that instead of resolving teachers' basic issues, the vice chancellor has been taking unconstitutional actions. Coincidentally the teachers of Yadavrao Tasgaonkar College Of Engineering & Management, Karjat, Raigad district, whose salary is pending for the last two years also joined MUCTA in protes. In Maharashtra, the Higher and Technical Education ministry, under whose jurisdiction universities fall, is headed by Shiv Sena's Uday Samant. However the Shiv Sena heading the three party coalition government, badly depends upon the NCP and Congress for its survival. The students' bodies who demanded action Soman, were left oriented and affiliated to the Congress.

Breaking news syndrome undermines fundamental principle of restraint and responsibility in journalism: President

Agency
New Delhi Jan 21

President Ram Nath Kovind has said that fake news has emerged as new menace whose purveyors proclaim themselves as journalists and taint the noble profession. Speaking at the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards in New Delhi yesterday, he said, in din

of breaking news syndrome, fundamental principle of restraint and responsibility been undermined substantially. He said, journalists often assume role of investigator, prosecutor and judge. Mr. Kovind said, stories exposing great social and economic inequalities are ignored and their place taken by trivia. He said, instead of helping promote

scientific temper, some run after irrational practices in their search for eyeballs and ratings. Mr Kovind said, a democracy like India deeply relies on the uncovering of facts and a willingness to debate them. He said, democracy is meaningful only when the citizen is well informed and in that sense, excellence in journalism grants full meaning to

democracy.

Ramnath Goenka Awards in Reporting from conflicting zones category was given to Late Achyuta Nanda Sahu, Mormukut Sharma and Dheeraj Kumar of Doordarshan News. Achyuta Nanda Sahu was killed in Dantewada in Chhattisgarh while covering assembly polls with the DD News team after Naxals carried out an attack in October 2018.

Today is last day for filing nominations for Delhi Polls

Agency
New Delhi Jan 21

Today is the last day for filing of nominations for Delhi Assembly Elections. Scrutiny of nomination papers will be held tomorrow, while names can be withdrawn till Friday, 24th

MP Naba Kumar Sarania opposes UTC status for BTAD

Agency
Guwahati, Jan. 21

Lok Sabha MP Naba Kumar Sarania has opposed formation of a Union Territorial Council (UTC) replacing Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) in Assam.

Sarania warned both the State and Central governments not to divide Assam in the name of peace talks in Bodo belt.

"The BJP government is going to upgrade the BTC to UTC, through which the legislative, judiciary and administrative powers and economic autonomy will be handed over to the council's administration, including expansion of the council's area," the Kokrajhar MP told reporters in Guwahati.

He said he came to know about such a move from some informal sources. "I am not opposing any treaty to be signed after the peace talks but at the same time, I will not support division of Assam. Any ethnic group residing in the land of BTC should not be deprived of their democratic rights," Sarania said.

He added that if the ruling BJP continues its unwavering attitude and not respond to the demands of the public, then in the coming days the process to flush out the party from Assam will start from BTAD. Earlier in 2018, the several organisations representing the Koch Rajbongshi community called an Assam bandh in protest against the Centre's reported move to grant UTC status to BTC.

January. BJP and Congress released second list of candidates yesterday.

BJP announced candidates for 10 assembly seats including New Delhi, Delhi Cantt, Rajouri Garden, Shahdara and Kalkaji among others. Sunil Yadav will be the party candidate from New Delhi seat. There are two women candidates in the list, Sumanlata Shaakeen from Nangloi Jaat and Kusum Khatri from Mehrauli.

Congress announced seven new names in its list. It has fielded Ramesh Sabharwal from the New Delhi Assembly seat against AAP convener and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The

party has given four seats, Burari, Uttam Nagar, Palam and Kirari to its alliance partner RJD. BJP has forged an alliance with JDU and LJP in Delhi and decided to give three seats to them. JDU will contest on two seats and LJP on one. BJP ally Shriromani Akali Dal yesterday said it will not contest the Delhi Assembly elections. AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal will file his nomination papers today. There are around one crore 47 lakh voters in Delhi. Election for 70 Assembly seats will be held on 8th of next month. Counting of votes will be taken up on 11th February.

57 gold medals to be decided today in Khelo India Youth Games

Agency
New Delhi Jan 21

A total of 57 gold medals will be decided today in Khelo India Youth Games in Guwahati. Pugilists will vie for 20 gold medals in boxing event. Medals will also be decided today in football, hockey, lawn bowls, swimming, weightlifting, badminton and tennis. In swimming, all eyes are set on Assam swimmer Shivangi Sarma and Karnataka boy Srihari Natrajan. Shivangi has won four gold medals so far while Srihari managed to win three gold medals

Satwik & Lakshya Sen shine as Chennai Superstarz win opener of Star Sports Premier Badminton League 2020

From a Correspondent
Chennai, Jan. 21

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Lakshya Sen combined to guide Chennai Superstarz to a win over Hyderabad Hunters as the fifth edition of the Star Sports Premier Badminton League got off to a thunderous start at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here today. Appearing in Chennai's yellow colours for the very first time, the 19-year-old impressed the crowd with his aggressive brand of badminton in partnership with Jessica Pugh against Hyderabad's pair of Sikki Reddy and Vladimir Ivanov.

The World No. 11 was at the top of his game against his previous team as the home pair cruised to a 15-6 lead. Sikki and Ivanov, both being PBL veterans, knew the right moment to lift their games and levelled the encounter at one game apiece in this thrilling opener. While they had control in the initial stages of the decider and led 8-4, it all needed a spark from Thailand Open champion Rankireddy to get themselves back into contention at 12-12. The Hunters duo was able to save one match point before



Rankireddy and Pugh wrapped it up 15-6, 13-15, 15-13 in front of a roaring home crowd that witnessed a celebratory dance from Rankireddy. With a polished performance, former World Championships bronze medalist Tommy Sugiarto put Chennai Superstarz in command when he took the court against Hyderabad's Sourabh Verma. Sugiarto has won their last two matches on the BWF circuit and it was no different in PBL. Verma staged a brief comeback to equal the scores at 5-5 in the second game but his fire was soon doused by the

spirited Indonesian who won the match 15-11, 15-10. Hyderabad's Priyanshu Rajawat made a debut to remember against Chennai's Lakshya Sen even though in a losing cause in a 58-minute thriller. Rajawat's brilliant anticipation skills and his backhand returns put the World No. 30 in a spot of bother as he stormed back to take the second game after losing the first. In a breathtaking final game that had the entire stadium on the edge, Sen won a dramatic deciding point after the two were locked at 14-14 to gift the 15-6, 13-15, 15-14 win to the hosts.