

Brinda's affidavit: Congress demand resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Moral ground

IT News
Imphal, July 15:

Following the affidavit filed by former Additional SP (NAB) Th. Brinda, in connection with the alleged drug lord Lotkhesoi Zou, the Manipur Pradesh Congress Party today demanded the resignation of the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on moral ground.

"This is a serious case, and if the government is transparent than they should convene a cabinet meeting immediately and hand over the case to an independent body like the CBI", Congress Party Legislative Wing leader Okram Iboi Singh told media person at Congress Bhavan today.

The former Chief Minister Okram Iboi Singh along with the president of the MPCC M. Okendro Singh have also demanded the resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Moral ground.

"This government is claiming to be transparent and even



stated that no one will be spared if found guilty, but how", Okram Iboi Singh question saying that the Chief Minister, who is also in charge of Home department had utilized the department as per the affidavit and how could anybody believe that justice will be delivered when handed over the case to the State Police.

He further said that such a case should be handed over to a body like the CBI, for that, an immediate cabinet meeting should be convened and later the resolution adopted should be sent to the Prime Minister Office and get approval for the

investigation.

The leader of the Congress Legislature Wing Okram Iboi Singh also mocked the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh for serving lip service only and for failure to show action to whatever he had spoken in public.

MPCC president M. Okendro while speaking on the occasion said that during the congress tenure when Okram Iboi Singh was the Chief Minister of Manipur the infamous Pallel drug hauled case and the Airport Drug Hauled cases have been handed over to the CBI without making much delay.

Anti-Repression Day commemorated to mark 16th Anniversary historic protest by Imas in front of Kangla Gate

"Spirit of defiance will be the greatest gift the 'Imas' could give to the younger generation" – Babloo Loitongbam

IT News
Imphal, July 15:

The annual Anti-Repression day organised by Observation committee, Anti-Repression day to mark the protest of July, 2004 whereby 12 elderly unclothed women folks in a swift and unsuspecting manner had unleashed one of the most epoch making demonstration of public anger against military atrocities in the state by protesting nude in front of Kangla Gate was held at the conference hall of Human Rights Alert (MHRA), Keishampat Thiyam Leikai, Imphal, today. It may be mentioned that the naked protest of 2004 was a gritty response following custodial rape and murder of Thangjam Manorama by armed forces suspected to belong to 17th Assam Rifles on the night of

July 10, 2004.

The programme which started at 9 AM was attended by 10 surviving protestors of that day, their family members, with Khangembam Anandi, Advisor AMKIL, Babloo Loitongbam, Executive Director, HRA and Sunil Karam, President UCM as guest speakers. Floral tributes were paid and 2 minute silence was observed as a mark of respect to the departed souls of two protestors who have expired ever since that fateful protest. Khangembam Anandi in her keynote address recounted the various atrocities meted out against the women in the state in the garb of counter insurgency operation by armed forces since long. The liberation of historical site, Kangla from control of Assam Rifles that same year has to be attributed to the protest of 2004, she said.

Babloo Loitongbam,



Tribute paid to the 2 Imas who were among the historic protest but today left us all for heavenly abode

Executive Director HRA, in his speech termed the protest of 2004 as one of the many milestones of women in the state and will be forever written in golden letters of Manipur history. He lauded the efforts of the 'Imas' and said the biggest legacy they can leave behind is to inculcate the spirit of defiance to younger generations.

Sunil Karam, President UCM in a scathing remark has

termed the reduction in fake encounters and other atrocities not because of improvement in public administration but prolonged struggle of the public spearheaded by the women of the state. He credited the reduction in fake encounters, removal of AFSPA from certain assembly segments, marking of police vehicle with their area of jurisdiction etc as result of the unrelenting spirit of Manipuri women.

Congress functionary suspended for supporting Sachin Pilot

IT Correspondent
Mumbai, July 15:

Maharashtra Congress on Tuesday suspended estranged party leader Sanjay Jha "for anti-party activities" and his open support to Sachin Pilot, a rebel Congress leader attempting to topple the Ashok Gehlot Government in Rajasthan.

"Sanjay Jha has been suspended from the Congress Party with immediate effect for anti-party activities and breach of discipline", Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) President Balsaheb Thorat stated in a press release and also on twitter.

Jha's suspension came soon after he appeared in the programme "Left, right and centre" aired on NDTV. In the programme, he supported Pilot and criticised the Congress leadership.

He was a national spokesperson for the Indian National Congress since 2013. However he was recently removed from that post. Subsequently he had resigned from the post of the President of the All India Professionals Congress (AIPC), Maharashtra. That time he wrote "I have submitted my resignation as President, AIPC, Maharashtra. My political outspokenness conflicts with my official position. I am glad my signature #AIPCInteractive brand is being used by the Congress".

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IPSA blames agriculture department of present fertiliser crisis; Warns intense agitation

IT News
Imphal, July 15:

International Peace and Social Development (IPSA) in a press release today ridiculed the constant call of Manipur as an Agriculture land by law makers and the Agriculture Department, whilst ignorant to the plight of the farmers of the state. IPSA has termed the Dept.'s decision to distribute fertilizers only to those farmers who can submit their land *patta* at this time of Covid-19 crisis and busy sowing season, as inappropriate. The

Agriculture dept. will have to take the blame for shortage of fertilizers to common farmers while it allow easy access to fertilizers for people with connections to Ministers and MLAs, the press release further added.

The organization warned of intense agitation in collaboration with the farmers if the Department due to its failure to estimate fertilizer requirement in the state and poor supply to the farmers, lead to a situation of poor food grain production and high price rise in future.

NHIDCL Neglected NH 37 from Taobam to Rengpang

IT News
Imphal, July 15:

Khongsang Village Authority of Nungba Sub Division, Noney District has slammed the government for neglecting the Taobam Rengpang Road. In a press statement chairperson of the village authority Kilongdi Gonmei stated that the road has become highly prone to road accident.

The authority served public notice to National Highways Infrastructure

Development Corporation, Limited (NHIDCL) and general public to be more vigilance of the matter. The NHIDCL had neglected the National Highway (N.H)-37 for many seasons, which can be seen that filling up of potholes and jungle clearance of the Highway left unreturned for a couple of year. The initiative is taken up for the well-being of transporters, commuters and general public for easy access to their destination it added.

He further state that a notice

is served to National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation, Limited (NHIDCL) for filling up of potholes and to work out jungle clearance on both the side of Highway from Taobam to Rengpang. If the Corporation/Company fail to do the needful in seven days from the date of press release, any form of democratic agitation will be initiated. Advocating the grievances faced by the general public, it is a fervent appeal to the concern authority to address the need of an hour it said.

UNMM shows serious concerns over the rise in crime against women; expressed shock and urges govt. to punish culprits behind the killing of 23 years old girl

IT News
Imphal, July 15:

Showing serious concerns over the death of a 21 years old girl from Bihar state whose body was recovered from the riverbank of Imphal River near Sanjenthong bridge, Imphal River. The UNMMM in a statement suspected sexual assault or rape before killing her. While condemning such brutal inhuman crime, the UNMM said that the entire concerned citizen should carefully note that such an act of crime against women is not the first time in Manipur.

The statement of the UNMM also stated that such systematically targeting innocent women and girl have been continuing since the

1980s when the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act 1958 is in place in Manipur. It said the UNMM suspects that such act of crime is carried out by a group of people who are the habitual offender or by a group of people who are under the protection from some powerful agencies. UNMM also further suspects that some powerful agencies are using a group of individuals to kill women. UNMM suspects that this is part of their experiment to test the capacity of the people in Manipur to react to such crime.

"In many earlier cases, we observed that the cases of rape, rape, and murders were committed by the people who

are engaged in counter-insurgency activities. Such a group of criminals seems to be taking the opportunity of Covid-19 and lockdown to rape and killed women because police and government agencies are busy dealing with Covid19," the statement added.

It further said, on July 7, 2020, a minor girl who was a rape survivor from Langol, Imphal West was taken to hospital from a shelter home due to the suspected health problem but unfortunately, she was dead in the hospital. The reason for death needs to be further investigated. The concerned citizens of Manipur are having serious fear of getting justice

due to the many challenges in the Criminal Justice System. Many human rights activists, women activist, victims, and their families are under constant threat, intimidation, harassment, surveillance, arrest, etc. Now the very urgent question is how the criminal justice system is operating in Manipur. The rate of the prosecution of the criminal in 2012-13 in Manipur was just 4% and we assumed the rate of prosecution of criminal this year must be less than 10%. This shows that there is a big problem in the Criminal Justice system of Manipur.

There is a need to pay serious attention to this matter.

Mentioned can be made about the killing of Arambam Shanti at Moreh on 22nd May 2017 by the suspected soldiers of security forces and their closed associates in the broad daylight and at the public place. Now still the victim's family are waiting for justice and the criminal are not yet arrested. We are thankful to the police for registering FIR. However, justice calls for to move beyond it. There are incidents of killing/murder of women & children during the COVID-19 Pandemic and its lockdown. There are also cases related to violence against women & children at home and outside.

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JFA mourns demise media corona-warriors
By our correspondent
Guwahati, July 15:
Journalists' Forum Assam (JFA) expresses shock and profound grief over the demise of two media corona-warriors in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh within a few hours. The media forum urges every scribe to be cautious and careful in safeguarding themselves and their families while performing their duties during the Covid-19 pandemic.

★ **Editorial**

Why no action to MCPCR chairperson?

When many are arrested for Face book post, one lady is still not taken any action for insulting the state government as well as violating the Prime Minister's reformed CCS (Conduct) rule.

After the coming of the Right-wing BJP led government in the country, there was much criticism to the government for not respecting the voice of dissent. Even the Supreme Court of India even though gave its verdict that the voice of dissent is the right of a common man and it cannot be treated as anti-national. Before the arrival of the social networking site like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or the Whatsapp, the issues in connection with the voice against the ruling regime or to any politicians in power did not exist or not known to the general public. However, after the social networking site provided room for every citizen to express their feelings the issue becomes a problem to the ruling regime. The so-called voice of dissent guaranteed as the rights of a common man by the Supreme Court was sometimes blanketed for political reason or otherwise.

In the state of Manipur too even the son of the deputy chief Minister has been filed FIR in connection with a post that he uploaded at Facebook criticizing the Prime Minister of India. Perhaps the first person to have been arrested for uploading post that allegedly defames the BJP led government was a Journalist identified as Kishorchand Wangkhemcha.

One Kansam Victor, a common man was pulled up by the police for a post uploaded at Facebook questioning people if they knew how much Chief Minister N. Biren Singh had contributed from his own account to the COVID-19 relief fund. Right activist Laiflungbam Debaratra was also arrested by the police on April 3, 2020 for his FB post that stated that the present Manipur Chief Minister, especially at this time of crisis, should desist from wasting State resources, time and personnel in carrying out any political agenda or vendetta. It demeans and belittles the position occupied and responsibility that entails. He was arrested under section 108 of the IPC.

During April month this year, there were several people arrested in connection with FB post criticizing the government of the BJP. One among them is RK Ichantombi, a Vlogger.

Point wanted to bring here is that the government act sharp when any comment that may defame the government or the prime minister of India.

However, for reason best known the present N. Biren Singh led government is silent when the Chairperson of the Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MCPCR) disregards the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi by violating the reformed CCS (Conduct) Rule. As per rule 4(1) of the CCS (Conduct) Rules, no government servant shall use their position or influence directly or indirectly to secure employment for any member of their family in any company or firm. In violation of the Modi government reformed service rule, the Chairperson appointed her husband as a consultant to the office that she headed. The Chairperson Sumatibala also said that the government of Manipur paid the lump sum amount as salaries of the employees, which is even more insulting than any other person who had posted at FB against the N. Biren Singh government.

Surprising thing is that when any person who talks against the government was arrested or punished, the MCPCR Chairperson is left untouched even though he criticized and insulted not only the government of Manipur headed by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh but also the prime Minister of India.

War on drugs: A losing battle in Manipur



By: **Sanjenbam Jugeshwar Singh**

In Manipur a sizable portion of the young brigade has lost its energy, strength and power to drugs and psychotropic substances. According to the survey conducted by National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC) and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in 2017-2018, it has been reported that Manipur listed amongst top 10 alcohol dependence state. In Manipur scenario, the lists of substance use range from tobacco products such as Zarda pan, Kheini and Cigarettes to alcohols such as Beers, Whisky, local brands like Sekmai, Andro, Phayeng; from cough syrup such as phenosydyl, Corhex., Epidex, Sericodine and Bonolex to pain killers like proxyvon, Parvon spas, Spasmo proxyvon, Relipen, Prozep and tranquilizers such as Diazepam, valium, Nitrogen-10 (N-10), from psychoactive substance such as Morphine, poldrom, Mandrake to the infamous Heroin No-4, the menace of substance abuse has almost devoured the young physique and minds of Manipur's. Drug trade is considered as the third largest business in the World, next to Petroleum and arms trade. It has been a backdoor business of almost every country, hindering the wholesome development of the nation and destroying precious lives of resourceful youths with drugs addiction and immense human distress. Manipur being close to golden triangle in South-East Asia (Laos, Myanmar and Thailand) of drug trafficking has affected drug usage and a large number of HIV cases. The engraved customs and traditions of Manipur society is also one of the factor that number of drug use is hesitant to go down. Ganja or

cannabis and homemade brew have been used for religious purposes since time immemorial. Raw opium or Kanni were also widely used as a medicine during childbirth to subside delivery pains in ancient times.

The menace of drug trafficking and drug abuse is rapidly spreading its tentacles in Manipur despite numerous and increasingly larger hauls on record. In a major haul for the state on 29 June 2019, NAB with police team busted a brown sugar factory at Lillong in Thoubal District worth ' 100 crore in International market. For this the State government had on 16th July 2019 honoured the team in a grand manner worth ' 10 lakh. Police had earlier busted a heroin manufacturing factory and seized 183 kgs of drugs worth over ' 160 crore in the international market from Moijing Awang Leikai area of Thoubal District on 17th August 2019. Manipur biggest haul of banned narcotic drugs in the North-East region with the seizure of 40 lakh tablets of contraband WY (World is yours), worth ' 400 crore in the international market at the inter-village road (IVR) at Phoudel Keirenbi Mathk leikai on 24th August 2019, under Thoubal District, assisted by local youth Clubs and women welfare associations in the locality. On 2nd December 2019, Monday, in a joint operation conducted by police and 26 Assam Rifles, about 40.61 Kgs of heroin was found at a house in Sada Khumbi village. Many more such cases had been happened earlier too. The dubious distinction is nothing new or unexpected and if the past is any indication, many more and bigger hauls are yet to be expected. This is an alarming indication of the volume of banned psychotropic drugs which is coming through the state. However Manipur government is keen to deal drug menace in the state. On 3rd November 2018, Shri N. Biren Singh, Chief Minister of Manipur declared "WAR ON DRUGS". According to a report of Manipur Narcotic and Affairs of Border (NAB) department, 963 drug traffickers were arrested including 768 men and 195 women

under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substance (NDPS) Act, from April 27 till June 2019. It also reported that 3,716 acres of illegal poppy plantation and 5.51 acres of ganja (Marijuana) were destroyed as part of War on Drugs. This, when circulated in terms of money, would have cost around ' 260 crore. The destruction drive is mostly conducted by joint teams of Manipur Police, Assam Rifles and Narcotic Department and at times various Civil Society Organizations, Students Unions also take part in the drive. Besides these, Meira paibis or Local Women Torch bearers of every colony also take the lead in controlling drug use in their own level. With their strong base and strict rules, it is able to control not only drugs issues but other social issues on their own. There are also other Civil Society organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working actively to promote a drug free state. Organization like "Coalition Against Drugs and Alcohol" (CADAA), All Lillong Anti-Drug Association (ALADA) among others are some organizations working to uphold the same. State government also launched "NISHA THADOKLASI" campaign on 26th June 2018, on the very day of International Day against Drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

While the society is immersed in the never ending political tangles and one-upmanship, resulting from a conflict of interest between the state and self of those who are elected to represent the aspirations of the people, the deadly but silent menace of drug abuse is swiftly spreading its tentacles in the state and despite numerous and increasingly larger hauls on record the state authorities are evidently unable to make much headway into stemming the flow of drugs into Manipur. In 2013, it was estimated that 57,814 hectares were under poppy cultivation, a significant increase of 13%, compared to 2012. Evidently, the biggest hurdle to controlling the drug menace has been established to be the nexus between drug traffickers, organized criminals networks, corrupt public

figures and politicians which created a force powerful enough to cause instability in the country in general and in our state in particular. The pertinent questions right now: What happened to the seized drugs which should have run into tons by now? What about the so-called big boss/es running the drug cartel in the state? Has the state authority been able to unearth any significant information and intelligence regarding the identity and operation of any of them? It is not amazing that Manipur Government is still unable to trace the owner of huge drug consignment seized from Imphal Airport on 11th January 2013. That the consignment was seized but the owner is still a mystery. It depicts the prevailing nature of trafficking in the state. If so, has any practical and sustainable plan of action been laid out in this regard? Reports of seizing drugs worth crores of rupees is flooding in the local media every day. At the same time it is also reported in local medias about hustle & bustle in Judiciary, Police department & involvement of elected representatives in the drugs racket. Shooting the messenger will have no impact on the people who are really in control of the trafficking and dealing. It is also questionable as to how huge shipments of drugs have repeatedly been able to get past the seemingly through and time consuming frisking carried out with ardour by the security forces in various places along the highway to and from the border. The fight against drug calls for unconventional and innovative means as the dangers posed by drugs transcends religions, border or social strata. Only a determined honest and concerted effort following a sustainable and broad based plan of action will stand any chance of achieving success. The cooperation and support of CSOs, NGOs and local bodies will make the differences between success and failure. But the present trend of drug menace seems to indicate the war on drugs in Manipur is a lost battle.

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UNMM shows serious concerns over the rise in crime against women.....

The secretary-general of United Nations Mr. Antonio Guterres had issued a report stating that during the response of COVID 19, all the member states of UN should ensure the protection and promotion of human rights including the cases of crime against women (rape and murder). Unfortunately, the human right situation of women and children remain with less attention from the states.

The UNMM called upon the Governor of Manipur Chief Secretary of Manipur Members of the Committee on Women and Children of Manipur Assembly to give urgent attention to arrest the criminal who rapes and killed the woman whose dead body was found on July 12, 2020, near Mithumong, Imphal. It also urged to call the deport of crime against women especially rape, rape, and murder from the Directorate of Prosecution, Government of Manipur with the details of action taken report and details of the cases delay to arrest the criminals and procedure to take legal action.

The UNMM also urged the Governor of Manipur and Chief Secretary of Manipur to seek the details reports from the Manipur Women Commission about the rape and murder of girl mention above and also detail report of the death of a girl child from Langol, Imphal West on July 7 in the hospital and details of the cases of rape, rape, and murder dealing by the Commission and the progress.

The UNMM also urged to extend the Hon'ble Commission's technical support to build the capacity and functioning of the Manipur Women Commission to protect the lives of the women and promote human right of women in Manipur which is a mandate of the Human Rights Council of UN besides urging to commission a special Team to arrest and investigate the cases of the woman whose dead body was found on July 12 in Imphal River. It also urged for serious attention to the killing of Arambam Shanti (49 years) w/o A. Ilobi which occurred on 22nd May 2017 at around 04.00 p.m. at Moreh, Tengnoupal District of Manipur.

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Mumbai Police bust global social media marketing influencers' fraud

By **Raju Vernekar**
Mumbai, July 15:

In a significant development, the Mumbai Police have busted an international racket involved in creation of fake profiles on social media and inflating number of fake influencers, to promote social media marketing business and nabbed one person in this connection.

Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh said that the accused was nabbed from Gauri Shankar Nagar, Kurla, Mumbai, by the Crime Branch officers, after gathering information with analytical techint (technological-intelligence) and through own sources. The accused has been remanded to police custody till 17 July. Investigations reveal that the accused is part of a larger global fraud racket involved in creating crores of fake identities on various social media platforms and making fake performance statistics like fake followers, fake comments, fake views etc, to inflate the influencers' performance statistics.

Given the huge ramifications of the unfolding probe, Singh has announced the formation of a Special Investigation Team of Central Intelligence Unit(CIU) and Cyber Cell under Deputy Commissioner of Police (Detection), Nandkumar Thakur to unravel and



curb these malpractices. This will be the first ever SIT of such a kind that will investigate the illegal aspects of social media marketing businesses operating in violation of the IT Act, Singh said.

The police chief said that the accused has so far created over half-a-million fake followers for 176 profiles of Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and other social media platforms in order to fraudulently project them as influencers, through manual operations or using certain illegal softwares called 'bots'. The lid of the mega-scam was blown off following a complaint by Bollywood playback singer Bhoomi Trivedi, who approached Singh on Saturday, 11 July 2020, demanding action after some unknown person created her fake profile on Instagram and approached other film personalities to create such profiles. Singh directed the Crime Branch to

investigate the matter, while Joint Commissioner of Police V.K. Choubey, ordered the CIU to take up the probe, even as a case (CR 439/2020) was registered with the Bangur Nagar police station in Goregaon West in North Mumbai. The arrested accused worked for one such portal, www.followerskart.com. The Police Commissioner said that this is the first time such a racket with international ramifications has been busted in the country and such fake profiles and followers are also being used to create rumours and panic in the society.

The CIU also found that more than 100 such Social Media Marketing (SMM) portals are providing fake followers, through fake identities and the scamsters are operating through Indian and international Internet networks and servers. The CIU has already identified 54 such Indian portals and now action is being initiated against them.

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Congress functionary suspended

After pilot was sacked from the post of Deputy Chief Minister and President of the Rajasthan Congress on Tuesday, Jha wrote on Twitter, "For five years Sachin Pilot gave his blood, tears, toil and sweat for the Congress party between 2013-18. The Congress came back from a wretched 21 seats to 100. We just gave him a performance bonus. We are so meritocratic. We are so transparent."

While Jha was suspended, other Congress leaders also endorsed the stand taken by Jha. Former Congress MP Priya Dutt from Mumbai, tweeted " Another friend leaves the party.(Both Sachin and Jyotiraditya) Sachin and Jyotiraditya were colleagues & good friends. Unfortunately our party has lost 2 stalwart young leaders with great potential. I don't believe being ambitious is wrong. They have worked hard through the most difficult times".

Similarly Congress leader Jitin Prasad tweeted " Sachin Pilot is not just a colleague but my friend. No one can take away the fact that all these years he has worked with dedication for the party. Sincerely hope the situation can still be salvaged. Sad it has come to this".