

Even though cracks between NPP and BJP stitched, Joykumar unlikely to accept the reallocated portfolios unless offered the one he desire

IT News
Imphal, July 7:

Even as the cracks between the NPP and the BJP in Manipur has been stitched with the N. Biren Singh government re-allocating all the portfolios that were removed from Y. Joykumar, the Dy. CM of Manipur, the dust seems not settled yet as Joykumar is not letting the chance of getting what he desired missed so easily. Reports at sections of reliable media said that Joykumar

Singh had admitted that he won't take the matter lightly just by re-allocation of the 3 portfolios but will settled after the matter is discussed with Union home minister Amit Shah. Source said that the Deputy CM want Home portfolio in addition to the in-charge for Finance department.

A media report quoted Joykumar as saying, "I might have been misquoted. But all I said was I will not take the three reallocated portfolios until I get the

'matter discussed' with Union home minister Amit Shah."

However, the NPP leader did not further elaborate the terms of his agreement discussed with Amit Shah during the meeting held in Delhi.

In a notification issued by Manipur chief secretary J Suresh Babu on Sunday, Governor Najma Heptulla reallocated three previously held ministries — finance, science & technology and economics & statistics — to

Joykumar Singh. However, names of the other three NPP MLAs did not feature on the new list of portfolios despite reports of retaining them as ministers.

In a major reshuffle of portfolios, chief minister N Biren Singh retained 13 portfolios, including home, personnel, transport, tourism, minority affairs, and MAHUD, among others. The political turmoil in Manipur surfaced after nine MLAs, including four NPP MLAs, withdrew their support

to the BJP-led coalition government while equally accusing CM N Biren Singh for functioning the government in an autocratic manner.

However, the party revoked their decision and renewed their support after the four NPP legislators, accompanied by its chief Conrad K Sangma and convener of the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) and Assam minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, met Union minister Amit Shah in Delhi.

AMCTA resolved to resume Cease Work strike

IT News
Imphal, July 7:

The All Manipur College Teachers Association has resolved to resume the suspended cease work strike. A statement said that the decision to call off the suspended Work Strike scheduled from 12th February, 2020 which was announced by AMCTA honouring the announcement of the Chief Minister made through media on February 11, 2020, was taken during an emergency executive meeting held today through online mode.

The meeting also resolved to urge the Government of Manipur to implement the 7th UGC Pay Scales and UGC Regulations 2018 in ToTo by adopting a clear cabinet decision before reopening of the colleges of the state.

The AMCTA also threatens democratic movement as and

when the colleges are reopened if the Government fails to implement the 7th UGC Pay Scales and UGC Regulations 2018 during the lock-out period.

The decisions have been made since the college teachers are not in the position of launching the strike/agitation at present as the colleges are closed due to pandemic Covid-19 outbreak while the AMCTA has been keeping a close watch over the outbreak of pandemic. It may be reminded that the AMCTA has already urged the Government of Manipur to implement the 7th UGC Pay Scales to the college by adopting a clear Cabinet decision which was approved in principle by Cabinet setting dated 11.2.2020 during the lockdown period submitting letters on 26th June 2020, the statement said.

'We don't procure sub-standard mask, we encourage hand made three-layers masks under the Ministry's guideline'

IT News
Imphal, July 7:

Officials of the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department today said that there is no question of procuring sub-standard handmade masks for distribution to the MGNREGA workers. Reacting to a news report appeared in yesterday's edition of this newspaper, an official of the RD & PR talking to some reporters said that three layers handmade masks are being procured from various village level facilitators (VLF) formed by groups of self help groups comprising of women only. "As per the ministry guidelines, we encourage the VLFs to produce handmade



three-layers-masks that are also washable and re-usable for distribution to the active job cardholders under MNREGA", the official said. In connection with some of the sub-standard masks showed to Imphal-Times yesterday by some reliable source, the official said that they have no idea of how those could be claimed as those masks which we procured and kept in packed.

"If in case any such masks showed to Imphal Times office were found we will immediately return it to the producers", the official said showing a bunch three layers masks made by various VLFs. Government of India has advised encouraging homemade masks and even the Chief Minister of Manipur had appealed the people to wear masks while going out of their respective home and so

providing protective masks to active job card holders of MNREGA is mandatory during this COVID-19 pandemic.

In connection with the fund for procurement of the masks, the PR & RD official said that those masks for protection of the MNREGA workers and the promotion of the local self help groups which numbers are over thousands are utilized from the Administrative fund.

"6% of every sanction amount for the MNREGA are meant for administrative expenditures and the guideline permits to utilise the fund for public propose to counter the spread of the COVID -19 pandemic", the official said showing the

guidelines that stated permissible activities under the administrative expenditures.

Utilization of the said fund is allowed under the worksite facilities mentioned in the guidelines.

As the Union Ministry of Home Affairs has ordered to allow MNREGA works, the department felt it necessary to procure the face masks and also hand sanitizers that too are locally produced, the fund for such will be utilised from the administrative expenditure, the official added.

The official also took the reporters at the warehouse where bundles of hand made masks submitted by the VLFs form by 10 to 15 SHGs. Reporters present at the scene were allowed to check the masks and found all to be three-layer masks unlike the one shown to Imphal-Times.

AR Recovers Huge Quantity of Cash and Contraband Items

IT News
Imphal, July 7:

Assam Rifles has been resolute in curbing trans border smuggling of cash, illegal consignments and other items and has been at the forefront of foiling the plans of smuggler and insurgents alike. Troops of Assam Rifles under the aegis of HQ IGAR (South), on 05 July 2020 at 1830hrs, during regular vehicle check at Mobile Vehicle Check Post Sita, stopped an individual named Mr KhulpuwaMoshil, Age 27 yrs, S/o KhulpuwaKonai, PO

Pallel, Tegnoupal, riding a Kenbo bike carrying a rice bag. On thorough checking, cash bundles amounting to Rs 21 lakhs were found hidden inside the Rice bag. The cash is suspected to be extortion/illegal money. The individual was carrying the cash from Heirok to KhampangKunou. In another such incident, based on specific input received at 1700h, team of Assam Rifles intercepted a Maruti Suzuki Swift Regn No MN 01AK 2904 driven by Mr Oinam Chakrabarti Singh, r/o vilThoubal, Age-31 yrs, in General Area KhunbiTuinam. After carrying out a thorough check of the vehicle 5400 packets of imported cigarettes worth lakhs were recovered. They were being carried without a valid permit or documents.

Due to the COVID 19 lockdown, people of NE as well as the insurgent groups are facing financial troubles. The drug dealers and insurgents have resorted to using unsuspecting tribals and making them conduit in lure of petty returns to further their nefarious designs. Moreover, the insurgents have resorted to extortion from locals to compensate for their depleting finances in view of lock down. Assam Rifles has recovered huge amount of illegal consignments during the lockdown which is a testament to the resolve of the security forces to reduce the trans border smuggling and make Manipur a safe state. Moreover, it's time that the unholy nexus is exposed and the latent insurgency is hit sequentially, the larger interest of national integrity is paramount than the petty local illegal trail presenting a roadblock to sustained growth and end of insurgency in the north east.

UGC directs universities to hold conduct final year exams in September

A big jolt to states who have cancelled the examinations

IT Correspondent
New Delhi/Mumbai, July 7:

The University Grant Commission (UGC) on Monday, directed all universities and colleges to conduct final year University Exams 2020, in either online or offline or blended mode, by September-end and made it clear that the examinations will not be cancelled.

The decision came after Union HRD ministry sent a letter to the Union higher education Secretary permitting universities and institutions to conduct examinations. The final year examinations are to be compulsorily conducted as per the UGC Guidelines on examinations and academic calendar for the Universities and as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) approved by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, the letter stated. In a circular issued on Monday, UGC Secretary Prof. Rajnish Jain, said that above decision was based on the report of the expert committee

and the guidelines already issued by UGC on 29 April, 2020.

As per the guidelines, those students who have backlog should compulsory be evaluated by offline or online examinations as per 'feasibility and suitability'. If a final year student is unable to appear in the examination, the university must arrange special examination for the student. This provision will be applicable only for the current academic session 2019-2020 as a one-time measure, UGC underlined.

In case a student of terminal semester/final year is unable to appear in the examination conducted by the university for whatsoever the reason, he or she may be given opportunity to appear in special examinations, which may be conducted by the university as and when feasible, so that the student is not put to any inconvenience or disadvantage, UGC said. The educational institutions were shut in the last week of

March to curb the coronavirus spread and various examinations conducted by universities and higher education institutions remained suspended since then.

In the academic calendar for higher education institutions released on 29 April, UGC had stated that universities can conduct final-year or terminal semester examination between first July and 15 July and declare results by end of the month. However that decision was deferred.

A chaos prevailed in Maharashtra, when on 19 May, the Government wrote to UGC, saying that it will not be possible to conduct exams due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases. On 30 May, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, declared that the final-year exams will not be conducted after discussing the matter with VCs of different universities. Following this, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari, in his capacity as a

chancellor of universities in state, wrote to Thackeray, saying "You cannot unilaterally decide whether exams can be conducted or not."

Then on 19 June, the Maharashtra government officially cancelled final year examinations of non-technical courses (like B.A., B.Sc., B.Com) and stated that those who were willing to take up exams, should submit a letter to respective colleges/institutes, who will decide the future course of action. However about the courses like engineering, law, pharmacy, hotel management, management, architecture, planning, computer science, physical education and pedagogy, the Government decided to seek the advice from the central councils.

Now with UGC's new guidelines Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh, who have cancelled all exams in higher education, will have to revisit their decision.

CCTea donates tea packets to RIMS & JNIMS for front line workers

By- Merina Mayanglambam
Imphal, July 7:

As the world struggles to cope with Covid19, a relatively small company from Manipur called SuiGeneris Agronomy who is the manufacturer of the much loved, CCTea, donated 600 packets each to the two government hospitals — Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, and Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences, for its front line as a part of the company's Giving Back to Society Program.

Representatives from the company visited the two hospitals and met with the directors of these institutions — Prof. A Santa Singh, Director, and Prof. T Bhimo Singh, Director and handed over the packets. Manipur is amongst the top three worst affected states in the North East and as our front line workers struggles to

cope with various challenges and limitations, this noble initiative from the company to help our front line workers in ensuring they are protected and strong to be able to continue to lead the fight and help the people of Manipur in fighting the dreaded Covid19.

CCTea, recently in a report shared by the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati noted that it has anti-viral and immune building properties. While more research is underway, this initiative from the company to give our front line workers and these institutions is commendable. When contacted the Chairman & CEO of CCTea, Mr. Ragesh Keisham said, "I am really proud of our front line workers who are selflessly working with dedication and conviction to help our citizens at this crucial time. I am looking forward to extend more such initiatives in the future".

★ Editorial

Conquering the art of bloody politics

An egalitarian society runs with the wisdom of good politicians. And the wisdom of a politician comes from a good company. That is perhaps the reason for the human being to believe in a democratic form of government rather than living in a monarchy or autocratic state. But when the company of the politician turns rather like a prostitute, then anger, anguish, and frustration haunt the people including the state subjects. According to Indian great scholar Chanakya, "The prostitute deserts a customer when he becomes bankrupt. The subjects desert a powerless king". So, it is not only important for a politician who takes the lead role in running the state, to segregate who are prostitutes and who are real friends among those who actually or pretended to give the so call good advice. Or else, politics which is an ingredient part of running an egalitarian state sometimes turn bloody, either due to the arrogant nature of the man leading the society or due to lack of understanding in the segregation of who is a prostitute or who are real friends encircling around him.

It will be over speculation to consider all politicians who have been elected by the people to represent them and run the society as bloody politicians. But those around him are those making him performing the role of bloody politics. Again, it is worth remembering Chanakya's word – "Shun a friend who speaks fair on the face but acts foul in the absence, like a pitcher filled with venom but having milk in the opening". Such a friend or in other words such advisors or close associates who use to be near and dear ones of the politician are not friends at all, and the leader should understand that such people are more dangerous than enemies.

Bloody politics is what the people of Manipur have been witnessing since the last many decades. The picture comes clearer during the 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly where a coalition government led by the BJP, with Chief Minister N. Biren Singh runs the state. The unfortunate part is that there has not been a game of first among the equals – a political revelation of who should be leading the team who has been elected by their respective people on equal status. Thus, the present team running the state has no idea that a separation from the team, an insult by the close relations, unpaid debt, and association with the crooked incinerate the whole team even without fire.

This is what we the people of the state of Manipur have been seeing. As the 11th Manipur Legislative Assembly has been crowded with many newcomers, who had never tested to prove themselves as first among the equal, many played games with fire for some selfish gain. The bloody game has started since the inception of this government and it is not yet over now.

To all the politicians, who have been handed over people's mandate to run the society – "A man doing some noble deeds and living for a very short duration is more welcome in this world than a man living for many years but working against the welfare of the world?" – Chanakya.



By-Janghaolun Haokip

G.K Chesterton's message about Love will always lead the rest. He was an English writer, and philosopher who was also referred to as "the prince of paradox." In his message about love, he preached a strong and lucid concept of love, stating that *love means loving the unlovable*.

The statement may well spark our curiosities albeit in unspecific terms. We may ask ourselves what would be the intended meaning. In fact, several conclusions could be drawn from this statement. Out of many, one can simply be an unconditional love. This means to love a person without having to look for reasons, which then points us to loving a person not because of his/her virtues but because of our own – of the simple fact that we are loving. A more noble bearing could be to love a person because he/she is utterly pathetic, and with that we are compassionately moved towards that person in whatever manner which can be largely defined as love.

A question may then be asked, "Why do we love the unlovable?" The answer is rather simple albeit unnoticed by most

Loving the unloved

people or, maybe, simply ignored. It is plainly because that is the true essence of Love. Otherwise, what is love that loves only in return for love? In fact, that would cease to be love at all, instead, all it will be is just a mere relationship with mutual benefits – a mere misconception. The Christian Bible (1 Corinthians 13) markedly points that LOVE is kind; it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs, it does not delight in evil but rejoice with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hope, always persevere, and most of all, the Bible says, *Love never fails*. I believe with it we can retrospect our concepts of Love; that it must be realised in its essence; that it transcends and is the greatest of all virtues, and can in no way be limited to the privileges of the self alone.

However, sadly, our society has fast-forwarded itself and with it seems to have lost the essence of Love in its swift transition. The supposedly redefined love has unfortunately in its core mostly the craving for materialism – something which can be seen and gained – something which is physically appealing and pleasurable – as opposed to an abstract yet a transcending value that holds our lives together until so far. This redefined love has come to defy about all forms of genuine benevolence and the true essence of kindness but has encouraged opportunism and other forms of self-centred dispositions in our outlook of the world and subsequent thoughts and actions. Thereupon, this has grown to crumble the morale of our society, and above all, our humanity towards one another as the same human kind.

While we are grumbling over the ostensibly morally decaying

world and human society, unfortunately, we are often blinded of our own negative impacts on the society. The point is that we do not realise that most of our thoughts and actions of everyday lives can be detrimental to the shaping of the nature of the society. This means that most of what we dislike about our society has itself deeply rooted in each of us. That is because the society is primarily the product of each of us. Stating that, the imperatives of realising our roles in building a desirable society has to be prudently addressed. Furthermore, the issues concerning moral values and principles of life are also to be given its proper emphasis in order to bring about a shift in our emotional and intellectual dispositions from self-centrism to humanitarianism.

For instance, while it is naturally commendable to felicitate success, one may wonder why failure remains unaddressed. The culture of felicitating successful persons, HSLC candidates in context (HSE examination results are also awaited), has grown extensively. A particular successful candidate or a position holder will be feted by almost every notable personalities and agencies (newspapers today are filled with *who fetes who*). What about the unsuccessful? When the successful alone are encouraged, what happens to the failing? Who encourage them? Implicit then is the fact that we don't truly care. This is not to be against the courtesy of individuals and corporations in encouraging people (students) for greater heights nor is it an antagonism against such. However, the question is "why not" also for the people who obviously need it the most. In fact, successful people are successful because they have the potential and are already encouraged. Who essentially

needs encouragement are rather those who fail. What then do we do about that?

Pressing on, one can be reminded of Charles Darwin theory of survival of the fittest in his on the *Origin of Species*. But on the other hand I guess science is all about statements and proofs and has therefore, to an extent, disregarded the essence of being human – of our hearts and emotions that set us apart from others. Wherefore, we cannot leave the left. By every sensibility of the essence of humanity and love that is naturally attached to it, we have every responsibility therefore to find means to approach and address the issues of failure which maybe mental ignorance of lack of inspiration and motivation, intellectual incapability, financial strains, and individual and societal impediments among others.

For that reason, tomorrow, I wish to learn that an encouragement and a career counselling meeting was held for the unsuccessful candidates of the recently declared HSLC examinations. The otherwise, one can be utterly convinced, defies love and defiles humanity. I wish to believe that many, if not all, have realised their potentials and have found ways to awaken them; that these students have garnered the courage to break the stereotype and were able come out to explore beyond the academic opportunities. I wish to hope that the society has turned its minds and actions towards inclusiveness from exclusivity, and from not caring to actually caring, and that above all, the hopeless are given hope.

Who will then begin this divine mission? This is a challenge not just to you and me but for the entire humanity – who will love the unloved?

The changing trend of Media in Manipur

The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses." - Malcolm X (African Civil Rights activist)

By- Biros Singh Kshtrimavum

In the nascent stages of media Industry in India and Manipur in particular, the aim was not merely dissemination of information to the public. The people were more concerned about their daily sustenance and also myriad issues such as plagues, famine, and drought dominated public discourse. The Colonial hegemony of the British Empire was so deeply interwoven in the psyche of the masses that the ideas of civil liberties, social equality, democratic principles, free speech was an utopian dream. As every evolution of sorts need radical individuals who within their capacity try to wake up the *hoi polloi* with ideas which are extreme yet progressive, the media in the country were lucky to have a few. The resolute freedom fighters who were active journalists themselves had realized early that media was one tool which could be wielded with potential to not only rock the very foundation of the mighty colonial empire but also weed out the social manifestation which see one human being as superior or inferior. Mahatma Gandhi had preceded social emancipation over Political emancipation and pursued the former with earnest throughout his political life. The tiny landlocked kingdom of Manipur had a humble beginning with

journalism when a cyclostyled monthly magazine – *Meitei Leima* in 1917-18 first came into publication. The journalists of the 1940's had a tumultuous existence with Editor Keisham Kunjabihari of *Anouba Pao* being one of the first journalists to be arrested. His articles were considered seditious. It is undeniable that the authorities during this period have tried to muffle the voices of dissent and used extensive measures to arrest such growing opinions. The legacy of these eminent journalists of the state and the country of that era were their often call for press freedom. But it is an irony that the very constitution drafted on the backdrop of a prolonged freedom struggle with pangs of oppressed press still fresh on the eve of independence have failed to safeguard freedom of the press which we vehemently argued for. Did the country missed out on an opportunity on press freedom or do we still have enough resources to right the wrongs of the past, is concealed in deep chasm of the future unknown.

There is very little argument on the technological advancement of the industry in Manipur. The state now boasts of a strong media presence which now employs state of the art system to produce fine prints. The Newspaper circulation figures of English, *Meiteilon* and other tribal

dialect local dailies have not set any charts on fire but it has still been able to hold on to a steady growth in recent years. The inter paper rivalry have only egged the scribes to come out with news reports which are original and initiator of social change. These rare breed of Independent and courageous journalists who with their spirit of activism coupled with journalistic responsibilities, though scarce have made the public take notice and maybe shudder the errant lawbreakers with their strong writings.

Despite a strong *de novo* technology in the form of internet which often tried to whisk away readers, the print media have stood its ground in the state. The newspaper survived the radio, the TV and it will survive the internet. As long as local elders huddle together every morning at local *Cha hotels* where they discussed at length about stories read from the tea stained newspaper passed on from one table to another, it is safe to say that the print media is here to stay. The rustic charm of newspaper is real and not a myth. The interconnectivity of remote corners of the globe which is a modern phenomenon of 21st century means that the print media in Manipur can't live in a visionary cocoon of self insulation. Multiple issues afflict the media today. The media industry of the state which once stood on *terra firma* of morality and ethics seemed to have muddled somewhere and the once balancing power to the mighty and overzealous Legislative and

Executive is now getting attacked and questions about its neutrality fervently raised.

The print industry at times have failed to render its service and when it have been called out to perform the much desired task of a fourth estate of democracy, it has been left wanting. In recent years, the Executive and the Judiciary have been called out for playing servitude to the Legislature and it's a sad story that the Media is also seen toeing the line. It would not show up or even if they do it is perfunctory. With the proverbial Sword of Damocles hanging overhead the media fraternity in form of various legislations, coercions, gross misuse of power; the media is often silenced. India's ranking has spiraled downwards on the Global Press freedom index, a rating signifying the comparative freedom enjoyed by the media fraternity in the country while performing their duties, and today it stands at a lowly 142nd out of 180 countries. The media belongs to the society and is not immune from the law of the land. It is within the given ambit of legal provisions of the country that media should exercise its rights without fear and apprehension. Maybe a good start would be to call and not fold the cards, who knows the people in the power corridors are just calling a bluff. It is rightly said that fear sells until one stop buying it.

Certain Media houses in an effort to bring in more readers into its fold, often engages in sensationalism.

The quality of news is often questionable, and stories are put for print without verifying. The din of fake news keeps getting bigger and bigger. Well-oiled propaganda machinery works full time to feed us with false information which would distract the scrutiny of public from the real issue at hand. It is at times like this, that the print media must take up the responsibility and fill up that trust deficit with news which are accurate, factual and neutral. "Media in the country has been on receiving end of lot of criticism recently; it is up to the people in the media industry to debunk the general conception of the public. The drive to clean the image must come from within. It is only with our sincere work, keeping the ethos of journalism, that we might salvage the pride and glory of this great institution" says Rajkumar Bobbichand, Director, Free Press School of Journalism. Maybe its time the media fraternity go back to the drawing board and relearn how to differentiate the chaff from the grain. Another challenging aspect of the print media in Manipur is the dwindling number of readers. This is a trend seen in rest of the world. But does it signify that people had stopped caring about the news and events, the answer to that is a resounding no. The modern phenomena of internet have allowed certain freedom to the readers which means they are consuming news digitally. Newspaper readers in its tangible

form are becoming a niche community. Unable to maintain the escalating production cost amidst growing awareness on environmental issues related to the paper industry, a large number of reputable media firms have closed down their print production and have shifted to only a digital presence on the world wide web. The shifts have not been tectonic, but gradual. Only in May this year, 100s of newspaper firms in Australia announced end of their presses and shifted to only digital format. The tech savvy youths of Manipur like their counterparts elsewhere are hard pressed for time and always seem to be in a hurry. The social media though unmatched in its speed of news dispensing, can't be a match for an organized media firm. The print media of Manipur having realized that, have atleast a social media presence where news is updated from time to time. The financial viability of such a measure is though questionable and shift to an online subscription system where limited number of free articles per month to non-subscribers, limited access of article content, have to become a norm.

The print media in Manipur may not be on life support as of now, but the writings are already on the wall that unless we arrest the slide, the press would be reduced to mere vestigial whose existence or not have no significant impact on the society. The day maybe nearer than what we would want to believe.

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