

## Fate of 7 defected Congress MLAs uncertain; HC lists hearing on June 5

IT News  
Imphal, June 3:

Manipur High Court has listed the hearing of the case in connection with the plea for disqualification of the 7(seven) Congress MLAs day after tomorrow, i.e. on June 5, 2020.

"After having heard the learned counsels appearing for the parties, this court is of the view that the applications can be listed day after tomorrow i.e. on 05-06-2020 for disposal so that the counsels appearing for the respondents will have the opportunity to go through them. If the respondents wish to file any objection, it can be done by Thursday, i.e., 04-06-2020", an order by the bench of Justice Singh of Manipur High Court said today.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal appeared for the

applicants while Senior Advocates H.S. Paanam and Chittaranjan appeared for the respondents.

It may be mentioned that the Supreme Court of India had directed the Tribunal of the Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly to dispose the case for disqualification of the 7 congress MLAs who had defected and joined the BJP (unofficially). However, as the case remain pending at the Speaker's Tribunal and following the election notification of the lone Rajya Sabha seat, the Congress party filed 7 (seven) different miscellaneous case to the Manipur High Court yesterday with prayer for either a directive to dispose the disqualification case or to prevent the 7 defected MLAs from entering the Congress Assembly complex.

The Election Commission

of India has notified the Rajya Sabha Election for Manipur on June 19. Three candidates - one each from BJP, Congress and NPF had filed nomination for the seat. However, the NPF candidate withdrew its candidature leaving straight fight for the Congress Candidate T. Mangibabu and BJP Candidate Leishemba Sanajaoba.

Earlier on May 28, 2020, the Speaker Tribunal of Manipur Legislative Assembly had disqualified MLA Thounoqam Shyamkumar Singh who had defected from Congress Party and joined the BJP.

The Speaker's decision to disqualify Shyamkumar came after the Supreme Court had, on January 21, expressed its strong disapproval to the delay by the Speaker in deciding the disqualification petitions filed by Congress MLAs. The top court had

eventually passed an order on March 18, restraining Shyamkumar from entering the state assembly and also directing that he shall cease to be a minister in the BJP government. Shyamkumar was a minister of town planning, forest and environment. Shyamkumar had resigned from the house on March 26 after the Supreme Court order.

On March 18, 2020, the Supreme Court had barred Shyamkumar from entering the Legislative Assembly, and ruled that he would cease to be a minister immediately. The order was passed after the top court noted that despite its direction to the Manipur Speaker in January this year to decide on the disqualification petitions pending against Singh within four weeks, no such decision had been taken.

## COVID-19: Nos. of positive cases reached 102 in Manipur

IT News  
Imphal, June 3:

13 (thirteen) more persons - all returnee from outside the state, have been tested positive with novel Coronavirus late yesterday night at VRDL of RIMS and JNIMS, a statement from the State health dept, issued at 11. a.m. said.

The total number of persons tested with novel coronavirus now reached 102. So far 26 people with the virus has been tested negative and discharged. Present active case with the novel coronavirus is 76. All the persons tested positive cases are returnees from outside the state, who were quarantined at centers. They are kept for observation at

COVID care centers at RIMS, JNIMS and other district hospitals. So far none of the persons tested positive with the virus showed COVID-19 symptoms, said an inside source.

The statement by Dr. Khoiram Sasheekumar Mangang, Additional Director & Spokesperson of the Health Dept, Manipur said that 7 (seven) males and 6 (six) females were confirmed as COVID-19 positive late yesterday night. Among these 2 were tested positive at VRDL of RIMS while 11 were tested positive at VRDL of JNIMS. Of the 13 people tested positive, one is from Bishnupur district, another from Churachandpur, three from Senapati, two from

Tamenglong, four from Tengnoupal and two from Ukhrul district. The first two persons and the two from Tamenglong district are returnees from Chennai. The three persons from Senapati are returnees from Mumbai while the four persons from Tengnoupal are returnees from Delhi. All the persons tested positive have been shifted to COVID care facilities at RIMS and JNIMS, the health department statement said.

Meanwhile, 12 positive cases from RIMS were discharged after they were tested negative of the virus on two consecutive RT PCR tests at VRDL, RIMS. The total number of recovered case has reached 26.

## Cyclone "Nisarga" causes heavy damage in Maharashtra

By Raju Vernekar  
Mumbai, June 3:

The roofs of many buildings in Raigad district were blown off and several trees were uprooted in Mumbai and other areas, even as the cyclone "Nisarga" made landfall in Alibaba (about 96 km from Mumbai) in Maharashtra, on Wednesday afternoon. The cyclone that developed

over a low pressure area over the Arabian Sea in Goa (about 580 km from Mumbai), was moving towards Mumbai and had done considerable damage along the Konkan coastal belt.

The trees were uprooted at Nariman Point, Fort and Mumbai Central, Kala Chowkie, Sion, in Mumbai and in Navi Mumbai, with the winds blowing at a speed of 72 kmph. The country's financial capital

continued to receive intermittent showers from early morning. The power supply in Konkan the winds blowing at 120-140 kmph, had done considerable damage with the roofs of many buildings in Thane and Palghar near Mumbai and in Uran, Roha, Srivardhan and Murud in Raigad district blown off. In Ratnagiri district a Merchant Vessel "Basra Star" was drifted. But NDRF teams rescued it in time and brought it to the shore.

The cyclone was moving on uncharted path and had also impacted Nasik district in Central Maharashtra, where the winds were blowing at very high speed and a foggy atmosphere prevailed.

Cyclone Nisarga is moving along the predicted path and is expected to make landfall till 4.30 PM, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Director General S N Hazran said.

(Contd. on Page 2)

## 'Tenant farmers face the worst in draught'

IT News  
Imphal, June 3:

Tenant farmers are facing the worst situation during draught situation here in the state of Manipur as the state government policy fails to mention on whom to be compensated by the relief sanctioned by the center. Besides, the amount sanctioned for the year 2019 as relief for draught will be able to distribute an amount of Rs. 2,675/- per hectore even as amount spent for cultivation of an hectore is around Rs. 15,000/- to Rs. 20,000/-, said a statement by Irabot Foundation Manipur. The statement added that farmers in the state faced extreme hardship during Kharif Crop season due to scarcity of rainfall in 2019. The year saw scarcity of over 60% of water in natural water reservoir due to lack of

proper rainfall, however, each farmers tried to cultivate their land spending around Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 20,000/- per hectore to yield the product. As most of the cultivable land dried, government of Manipur declared the state 'draught' on August 31 of 2019. After a team from the center has inspected, a sum of Rs. 26.53 crore was sanctioned as relief for the

draught hit state. The Irabot Foundation Manipur questioned on how to distribute the compensation as many farmers are yet to get the relief compensation for the year 2017, notwithstanding that the sanctioned amount (Rs 26.53 Crores) will be able to distribute only Rs. 2,675/- per hectore, as the total devastated cultivation land due to the

draught in the state of Manipur is 95,153 hectore as reported by the department of Agriculture. The government have not properly mentioned on how the tenant farmers will be able to get the compensation. The Irabot Foundation Manipur urged the government distribute the compensation on time without favouritism or nepotism.

## JFA mourns untimely demise of Manik Sarma

By our correspondent  
Guwahati, June 3:

Journalists' Forum Assam (JFA) has expressed profound grief at the untimely demise of television news presenter and video editor Manik Sarma, who breathed his last on 2 June 2020 in a city hospital.

Manik, 47, faced a brain stroke on Sunday night and it turned fatal for the young media person, who left behind his wife, a minor baby with other relatives and well wishers.

Hailed from Bilasipara in western Assam, Manik promoted himself as a reliable video editor during his tenure as an employee

of NETV and DY365. A qualified Tabla (leather) player, soft spoken Manik used to direct and performed in many programs telecast by Doordarshan. He earned applause as a relator too.

"Manik is the sixth media person who died untimely during the nationwide Covid-19 lockdown in

Assam," said a statement issued by JFA president Rupam Baruah and secretary Nava Thakuria adding that earlier the State lost Pijush Kanti Das, Mozahedul Haque, Padmeswar Chittrakar,

Bhaskar Dutta and Pranjal Hazarika to various ailments.

JFA also urged the media

houses in the State to organize regular health awareness and check up camps for the benefit of their employees. The forum expresses hope that the practicing physicians with other health workers would support the endeavour as a preventive measure to save precious lives of many media persons in Assam.

## Let's Pedal.... "World Bicycle Day 3rd June"

By: Mandakini

"When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking." These words by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle beautifully express the alluring nature of cycling.

There is no denying that good time begins with good memories and learning to ride a bicycle is an integral part of it. Childhood memories is incomplete without learning how to ride a bicycle, falling down number of times and of course injuring knees. Walking up to elders and cribbing them to accompany with confidence without

fearing of failing again and again.

During childhood, learning bicycle was the biggest challenge, we fell, tried every pace and controlled to balance, one rotation of peddle and balancing is sort of achievement and not to forget repetitively sharing with folks around. I remember my dad getting me a second hand tiny bicycle during my childhood and my happiness knew no bounds. I immediately started cleaning it off and asked my brother to paint it yellow. Every evening washing the mud and the sand off the wheels. Caring like a friend because it became a part of family. Nurturing it with machine oil and towel to make it shine now and then. We grew up with a lot of memories in one baggage,



but bicycle always remain in "brackets". When you are young if you get to ride one, you remember those old days fondly. In April 2018, the United Nations General Assembly declared June 3 as International World Bicycle Day. The resolution for World Bicycle Day recognizes "the uniqueness, longevity and versatility of

"promotes tolerance, mutual understanding and respect and facilitates social inclusion and a culture of peace."

The bicycle further is a "symbol of sustainable transport and conveys a positive message to foster sustainable consumption and production, and has a positive impact on climate." It's a great feeling & privilege to be a part of a movement that is 350.org Moving Planet and caring selflessly for the earth which needs us and such small steps on grass-root level can be extremely salutary.

350.org is an international environmental organization addressing the climate crisis. Its stated goal is to end the use of fossil fuels and transition to renewable energy by building a global,

grassroots movement.

The 350 in the name stands for 350 ppm (parts per million) of carbon dioxide, which has been identified as the safe upper limit to avoid a climate tipping point. As of 2019, the current level has reached 415 ppm.

Through online campaigns, grassroots organizing, mass public actions, and collaboration with an extensive network of partner groups and organizations, 350.org has mobilized thousands of volunteer organizers in over 188 countries.

I encourage the youth and everyone to come forward and be a part of such revolution to protect our environment.

"Let's pledge for a pollution free environment today to protect our tomorrow."

## ICMR tests 41,03,233 samples so far

IT News  
Imphal, June 3:

The Indian Council of Medical Research, ICMR said that a total one lakh 37 thousand 158 samples of corona virus were tested in the last 24 hours. With this, figure of total number of tests reached to 41 lakh 03 thousand 233 in the country. Meanwhile, ICMR is continuously scaling up its testing facilities for Covid-19 by giving approval to government and private laboratories. As of now, total 688 laboratories across India have been given approval to conduct tests for Covid-19 including 480 government laboratories and 208 private laboratories' chains

# ★ Editorial

## Battle for RS seat

It is again the Congress candidate T. Mangibabu and the BJP candidate Leishemba Sanajooba that will be contesting for the lone Rajya Sabha seat from Manipur, after NPF candidate Honreikhu Kashung had withdrawn its candidature. When one looks back to the history of Rajya Sabha election of Manipur Legislative Assembly, it was always the ruling party that won. This time too, the BJP is confident of win the seat, however, for reasons that have been happening in the political theater of Manipur the Congress party is hopeful of creating history by defeating the BJP candidate.

Congress arithmetic of winning the seat is completely based on the pending disqualification case of 7 MLAs who had defected and joined the ruling BJP. After MLA, Thanoajam Shyamkumar who won from Andro Assembly Constituency in INC ticket but joined the BJP, had been disqualified, the Congress party is confident that the 7 defected MLAs who had joined the BJP will surely face the music or else may not be allowed to cast vote in the RS election as there was already a Supreme Court ruling similar to that in connection with a case for disqualification of MLA Th. Shyamkumar.

Now, if one analyzes the arithmetic of Congress – it can be easily found that the congress party will play cards with MLAs of the BJP ally political party and independent MLA. This is being presumed with the emerging souring relationship between the ruling BJP and its major coalition political parties. The Naga National Front (NPF) and the National Peoples' Party (NPP) which has 4 MLAs each in the 11<sup>th</sup> Manipur Legislative Assembly were the target of the Congress party. Relation between the BJP and both the parties was souring some months back however, the BJP manage to settle the matter with NPF after the party's state president Awangbou Newmai has been inducted to the Ministry on March 28. The relation between NPP and the BJP cannot be speculated as all the MLAs are Ministers in the BJP government. The only problem is with the legislature wing leader of the NPP Yumnam Joykumar who is also the deputy Chief Minister in the N. Biren Singh government without any portfolio. Even as other Ministers from the NPP seem to support the BJP, people had seen the souring relationship between Yumnam Joykumar and Chief Minister N. Biren Singh many times. With the BJP MLAs demanding for major reshuffle and the possibility of at least 2 NPP MLAs dropping from the ministry spotted, it is likely that the NPP may play a game to take political advantage. So Congress party may be hoping the 4 MLAs plus the Independent MLA from Jiribam Assembly constituency. The number expected than stands at 25 assuming the 4 and another one adding to the congress party considering the 7 defected MLAs are not allowed to cast vote.

The total member of the 11<sup>th</sup> Manipur Legislative Assembly now is 59. Leaving Speaker of the House, a number can be assumed as 58. Of this original BJP MLAs is 21. Without the 7 defected Congress MLAs, the BJP still counts 31 MLAs. If suppose Congress arithmetic is right, the number with the BJP is still 31 minus 4 minus 1, i.e 26, leaving Speaker.

With the speculation, the BJP still have its number to get the Rajya Sabha seat. As for the Congress even if it lost the party will gain moral victory if their arithmetic is correct.

Contd from page 1

## Cyclone "Nisarga" causes heavy damage.....

The 16 teams have been deployed in Maharashtra, while 17 teams (including two on standby), have been deployed in neighbouring Gujarat.

In Mumbai NDRF teams were deployed as : one team each in Colaba (Ward A), Worli (G/South), Bandra (H/East), Malad (P/South) & Borivali (R/North) & 3 teams in Andheri (K/West). While the Mumbai Fire Brigade was engaged in relief measured, 93 lifeguards were deployed at 6 Mumbai beaches by the BMC.

NDRF team along with BMC evacuated local residents near the seashore in Versova in North West Mumbai, while the BMC had arranged about 35 schools as temporary shelters for citizens.

In Mumbai, movement of people near coastline has been banned till Thursday noon since the cyclone is expected to turn into a 'severe cyclonic storm' by Thursday.

A storm surge - as high as two metres (three to 6.5 feet) above the astronomical tide is expected to inundate the low-lying coastal areas of Mumbai, Thane and

Raigad districts during the landfall.

The air traffic at Mumbai airport was stopped till 7 PM. The cyclone also affected the rail traffic. DGCA had already cautioned airlines about the dangers of operating during stormy conditions.

Around 40000 people have been evacuated to safer places till now from various locations (sea belt areas) of Maharashtra NDRF Commandant Anup Shrivastava, said. Similarly around 3,000 people were evacuated in Daman and operations were on, NDRF Deputy Commandant AK Pathak said. Besides, the Indian Coast Guard Region (West) mobilised 8 Disaster Relief Teams for Maharashtra to respond to any requirement of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

While Nisarga is not likely to have an intensity like Cyclone Amphan, which hit West Bengal last month, it is still feared that it may impact Mumbai. The storm is being continuously tracked by the Doppler Weather Radars or DWRs in Goa and Mumbai.

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By: Sanjenbam Jugeshwar Singh

Locusts is a polyphagous feeders, which attacks in swarms and causes extensive damage to crops. These locusts can change their DNA according to prevailing environmental situation. In the season of availability of adequate food, the locusts multiplies their progeny faster from eggs to nymphs and adults. Due to its ability to change itself continuously to the prevailing environmental conditions, the control of locusts becomes difficult. Locust can assess the location of crops at harvest stage and fly as a swarm in the direction of the wind and cause severe damage to crops. A desert locust swarm of one square kilometer has about 4 crore locusts which can eat and destroy crops of about 80,500 Kgs overnight according to the experts of FAO. The insects not only causes immense damages to crops on farmland by ravaging leaves, flowers and fruits but they also destroy plants just by their weights as they come in massive numbers. Even a small swarm of locust engulfing an area of 1 sq.km devours food in a day that can feed as many as 40,000 people as reported by FAO. An outbreak usually occurs within an area of 5000 sq.km in one part of the country. If an outbreak or contemporaneous are not controlled and if widespread or usually heavy rainfall in adjacent areas, several successive seasons of breeding can occur, causing further hopper band and adult swarm formation called an upsurge. This can affect an entire region.

Parts of India are experiencing the worst locust invasion the

## Locusts Invasion of India

country has been for 25 years. Skies above large part of North India have darkened during the day due to millions of locusts. Rajasthan is the worst affected state but Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Punjab have also experienced damaging swarms. A swarm of locust species have attacked banana, rubber plantation dominated districts of Tamil Nadu- causing concern among farmers over the possible destruction of their crops. Farmers in Poovankodu and Vivanur in Kanyakumari district bordering Kerala have claimed that the locust have ravaged the banana and rubber crops to a large extent. India is gearing up for what could be one of its worst locust invasion in decades. Outbreak of the insects attack have been reported from Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Garhwa district bordering Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh has been put on high alert on Saturday the 30th May 2020 for locust attack. The swarms were last spotted 200km from the district. The swarm reached as far as Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh making it possible for them to enter Jharkhand through Garhwa. On Thursday, May 28, the Delhi government issued an advisory to farmers to spray pesticides and keep a possible attack at bay. Last year, Gujarat and Rajasthan had reported infestations. But it could be worse this year because of a chains of climate events, administrative laxity in several countries and the difficult circumstances brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Experts have warned of huge crop losses if the swarms are not stopped by June when the monsoon will lead to a new season of sowing rice, sugar cane, cotton and other crops.

A pattern of warming in the Indian Ocean may be a trigger. A phenomenon called the **Indian Ocean Dipole**, in which the western and eastern part of the

ocean, warm differently tend to have an outsized impact in bringing excessive rains to India and west Asia. A positive, dipole is when the western part is hotter by a degree or more than the eastern. Last year saw one of the strongest positive dipoles in the Indian Ocean neighborhood which brought on a difference of more than two degrees. The Indian Ocean Dipole was so strong that it over-rode- concerns of a draught in India last June and brought torrential rainfall – the most India has seen in decades. It also lasted nearly one month more than what is normal. This extended rainfall continued in several parts of West Asia, Oman, Yemen and in the Horn of Africa- Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya – so much so that the dry sand became heavily moisture laden, facilitating the formation of several locusts swarms. While this dipole was beginning to take shape by late 2018 and locust outbreak were growing in Africa, it increased last year. Due to favorable winds, it helped swarms to fly and breed in traditional grounds in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO) a specialized agency of the United Nations has been sending alerts on developing swarms. Somalia announced a national state of emergency due to the locusts' outbreak in February 2020 while Pakistan declared a national emergency for the second time this year in April. The unusually mild summer this year, which saw several bouts of rainfall over north and western India from March to May also helped the insects breed. The normal locusts season in India spans June-November and coincides with the Kharif season. So far swarms have been re-landed in nearby 50,000 hectares in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and if they continue to thrive as the monsoon arrives, it could cause serious agricultural damage.

In India, existing groups of swarms have continued to move

east and to the central states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Much of these movement were associated with strong westerly winds of cyclone "Amphan". Several successive waves of invasion are likely until July in Rajasthan, with eastward surges across northern India as far as Bihar and Odisha followed by westward movement and a return to Rajasthan on the changing winds associated with monsoon. These movements will cease as swarms begin to become less mobile. The swarms are less likely to reach Nepal and Bangladesh and south India according to experts. But another stream passing over the Indian Ocean can directly attack farms in Peninsular India and then head towards Bangladesh. The long gap between the last and present locust attack in India has had a consequence. The destructive power of a typical locust swarm, which can vary from less than 1 sq.km to several hundred sq.km is enormous as per the websites of FAO. The locust attack which could undermine food security in Afro-Asian region, follows the economic devastation and saving of income by COVID-19 pandemic. The director – general of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), admitted that there hasn't been much "systematic research" on desert locust since the 1990s and the current invasion is a wake-up-call to revive the program. This is indeed a wake-up-call. The earth has entered a period of hydrological, climatological and biological change that differs from previous episodes. Therefore it is important that India puts in enough funds to predict the course of the present global environmental changes to understand the sources, consequences and formulate national response of locusts' invasion.

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## Delimitation: Redrawing the limits of political ambitions

By- Janghaolun Haokin

As the news of Delimitation rings aloud like church bells on Sundays in a Christian neighbourhood, it has become the *hot-topic* in every tea-hotel around the state. There are the younger group of people who basically have heard the term for the very first time and are curious about the hype it creates, the older group of people who are ready to brace themselves, the intellectuals and academicians who sees an imminent threat to the already threatened peace and harmony of the state, and finally the politicians who sees but opportunities that will come along a great *by hook and by crook* fight ahead.

Delimitation, in its simplest terms, is the process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a province with a legislative body. It seeks to maintain equitable representation by checking overrepresentation and underrepresentation of people due to distortions in population size, and thereby ensures equal representation for the people. On the other hand, with the constitution of the Delimitation Commission under the Delimitation act of 2002, Manipur is likely to struggle through another wave of uncertainty amidst the COVID-19 pandemic due to its socio-cultural and ethnic diversity. Manipur therefore needs

to yet again brace itself and boldly face its challenges.

A critical question thus arises, what would this redrawing bring to our tiny beautiful land. Would it bring a war of dissent, a debate of destruction, or a consensus of disagreements? It is for everybody to answer these critical questions to save our tiny state from another possible wave of terror and unrest amidst the already deadly pandemic. It is more for the decision makers, people in positions and power to decide the fate of the state as it is preparing to go through a major change that will be in force for another 30 long years. Meanwhile, it is also to be carefully understood that the Delimitation Commission in India is a high power body whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called in question before any court and therefore unalterable once settled. It is therefore all the more important for the people and the leaders as well to rightly discern in the true spirit of democracy the future of our state. At this critical juncture, therefore, the state has to carefully devise its plans in a big table, gathering as much information in forms of suggestions and advisory directions. It must clearly understand that it can, at no point, and in no condition, make the smallest mistake that would go against the will of the entire people of the state. The state has to make every minute

observation, covering all aspects of socio-cultural and ethnic differences within the state, and give due credence to the various social groups existing within its walls. Further, the state also has to rightly discern communal concerns and make no favour of any major groups but with a neutral approach fondle the issues in its essence. Doing so alone, without the goal of narrow political gains must be the principle in which delimitation has to be carried out.

I would agree to a former minister and BJP leader Mr. N. Nimaichand Luwang who had told *The Hindu* that delimitation will be a political justice for thousands of voters, especially in segments of Thoubal and Jiribam districts, who had been voting for an Outer Manipur Parliamentary without having the right to contest elections because they are not tribals. On the contrary, I strongly feel that the word of Mr. O. Ibobi, the leader of the State Congress Party, that there will be inevitable fallout, is also notable in the light of the lawlessness and others forms of ferment that the state will witness. It is inductively, therefore, imperative to look at different dimensions of the prevailing situations or any that can possibly arise, otherwise which confusions will stem from our miscalculations and misinterpretations. On the other hand, the politicians also have to

let go any scheme for selfish political gains, and neither social nor regional groups to assert programmes that could contravene with the others. These are important to counter as a failure will be a threat to peace and tranquility of the state.

Important now, and more than the voices of our elected representatives is the voice of the people, us. What do we want? How do we want it? Why do we want? Would our wants be justifiable? Are they just and righteous? When our constituencies go through a redrawing, where would that lead us? It is then very much necessary for us to raise the right voices amidst the challenges that surrounds, because, diversity, as we have, as beautiful as it can be, can also be as complex and as destructive. This diversity has to be explored and not exploited for the beauty to remain.

It is an earnest appeal therefore, to join hands, to raise our voices, to come together and be responsible, and to contribute, each what we can, for the good of our state. Because as Patrick Henry, an American attorney, planter, politician, and orator had stated, "United we stand, divided we fall. Let us not split into factions which must destroy that union upon which our existence hangs," we ought to stand united for peace and prosperity for all, and for our beautiful state.