



There are only two tragedies in life: one is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it. Oscar Wilde

Give more teeth to War on Drugs campaign Unmask the big fishes

War on drugs. And it goes without saying that the Government will need to do more than just coin some catchy slogans to make the fight against drug abuse and trafficking more effective. The first step obviously is to win over the people, the numerous civil society organisations which are known to be very vocal in their stand and the mass rally of March 7 is a standing testimony of the position of the people. It is the stand of the people which the Government should capitalise upon to make the fight against drug abuse and drug smuggling more effective. It is also important for everyone, particularly the Government to publicly acknowledge that the large scale drug smuggling will not be possible without the participation of those who are in positions of power and influence. This is where the Government and the law enforcing agencies will need to look beyond the petty drug runner and look at the bigger picture. Pulling up petty pushers is fine, but it would be wrong to understand the fight against drugs only by looking at the number of pushers who are pulled up or arrested. It is not the petty drug dealers who are often held while trying to smuggle drugs such as heroin, WY tablets etc along the Imphal-Moreh highway that the Government should be seriously concerned about, but with the well heeled, suited, booted people who are behind the large scale smuggling of drugs. It is only those in positions of power and influence who can set up drug manufacturing units and the Government will now have to contend with not only the pushers and the small time drug traders but look at the vast network which must be there in place for such drug manufacturing units to come up.

Acknowledge that there is a vast network in place, those who can get the raw material, ship them to the manufacturing units, manufacture the drugs and yes smuggle them out to the market. While drug pushers are being rounded up regularly, it is unfortunate that there is no report of any big fishes being caught. A good pointer that all the dots do not connect. It is the seeming failure to pull up the big fishes which must worry the Government and all concerned. Chief Minister N Biren appears to be optimistic that the fight against drugs has gained traction and will ultimately be successful and while the optimism is noteworthy, more teeth needs to be given to the campaign against drugs. As stated many times in this column, the Government will need to do more than destroy poppy cultivations in the hill districts and try to find out those who have financed the poppy cultivation on such a large scale in the hill districts. Study the land ownership pattern in the hills is a point which has been raised on more than one occasion here. The fight against illegal poppy plantation should be more than destroying vast tracts of the poppy plants and should ideally be followed up by identifying those who are behind the large scale poppy plantations. In all likelihood the actually tiller of the soil, the one responsible for planting the poppy plants may not be the owner of the plantations and there is the need to follow the destruction of the poppy plantations with arrest and unmasking the system behind the large scale plantations. This will give more teeth to the war on drugs campaign of the State Government.

Etc Etc

Instead of reducing maximum speed limit, Thailand increases it to 120 kph

Bobby Ramakant – CNS
Thailand was among the countries globally that promised last year to reduce the maximum speed limit to 30 kilometre per hour (30 kph) to reduce road traffic crashes, and thus, save lives. More importantly, the Government of Thailand played a major role last year as part of the International Advisory Committee to 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety held in Stockholm during 19-20 February 2020.

But according to a news, the Thai Government is set to increase the maximum speed limit on major highways (with four or more lanes) from 90 kph to 120 kph. In addition, the rightmost lane or 'fast lane' will also have a minimum speed limit of 100 kph to reduce the risk of rear-ending collisions. During 19-20 February 2020, the Stockholm Declaration was adopted at the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, by Ministers and heads of Government delegations, which has one of these commitments enshrined: "focus on speed management, including the strengthening of law enforcement to prevent speeding and mandate a maximum road travel speed of 30 km/hour in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix in a frequent and planned manner, except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe, noting that efforts to reduce speed in general will have a beneficial impact on air quality and climate change as well as being vital to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries."

WILL ROADS BECOME SAFE OR UNSAFE IF WE INCREASE SPEED LIMIT?
This news also states that "The new speed limit will assist with traffic flow while boosting convenience and safety for road users". But stronger evidence is piling on from cities that have reduced the maximum speed limit to 30 kph. Cities that have implemented maximum road travel speed of 30 kph have shown life saving decline in road traffic crashes too. That is why, the commitment to reduce maximum travel speed limit to 30 kph was made by Governments including that of Thailand. (To be contd)

Periodic, free and fair elections, a basic structure of the Constitution

Aaron Keishing

It would not be proper for the State Govt. to postpone the ADC election unless there are compelling and substantial reasons for postponing the election in question. There is no compulsion by administrative difficulties and thus the proviso to Section 13(1) cannot be invoked by the Administrator or State Government. The action and inaction of the State Government violate the mandatory provisions of Section 13(1) of the Act, 1971. As reflected in Mr. CK Rama Murthy vs State Election Commission (2002) 8 SCC 237, "a democratic form of Government would survive only if there are elected representatives to rule. Any decision to postpone elections on unreasonable grounds is anathema to a democratic form of Govt. and it is subject to judicial review on traditionally accepted grounds. It is the duty of the State Election Commission to see that election is done in a free and fair manner to keep democratic form of Government vibrant and active."

The Hon'ble High Court may exercise its powers under Article 226 against the legislature when it exercises power not possessed by it under the Constitution or in contravention of the mandatory provisions of the Constitution or mandatory provisions of the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971. Accordingly, the High Court of Manipur was pleased to pass an interim order dated 17-12-2020 thereby the impugned order dated 30-11-2020 of supersession issued by Addl. Chief Secretary (TA&Hills), Govt. of Manipur was suspended and set aside with sharp observations stating that "the State Govt. issued the impugned order in total disregard and disobedience of the Court's order dated 27-11-2020." It was observed that "once an order has been passed by the Court, it will have to be honoured and complied with if no appeal is preferred against it." And the term of ADCs were extended by the Court till further orders, however, the State Government is reluctant to issue notification for elections and also the terms of ADCs were not extended which is highly irresponsible. It was observed in final order of the case that "the impugned order was issued superseding the District Councils which is contrary to the interim order dated 27.11.2020. The impugned order has violated the interim order, is bad in law and it being unsustainable, is liable to be quashed and set aside." Further, the order dated 02-03-2021 in W.P.(C) Nos. 613, 645, and 647 of 2020 filed by Mr. Lunthang Haokip and Mr Yaronso Ngalung, Chairman, Ukhrul ADC against the State respondents reads as "The State Govt. and in particular, the Addl. Chief Secretary (TA&Hills), Govt. of Manipur shall write a letter to the Hill Areas Committee (HAC) within a week from receipt of the order dated 02-03-2021 seeking its opinion as to whether the term of the Councils shall be extended or not till the actual completion of the election, and the HAC shall furnish its opinion within a week from receipt of the letter. Thereafter, the State Govt. shall take a decision and issue an appropriate order immediately in terms thereof. Till such an order is issued, the interim order dated 27-11-2020 shall continue (i.e. the incumbent members of ADCs are still members). The State Election Commission is directed to announce the date on which the election shall be held within a week from the date of receipt of a copy of this order."

The State Govt. has to conduct election to ADCs by initiating steps at the earliest. The period of five years has to be reckoned from the date of the notification of his election or nomination or from the date on which the vacancy in which he is elected or nominated has occurred, whichever date is later as mandated under section 13(1) of the ADC Act, 1971. Keeping the ADCs in supersession mode which could have been avoided and that too without any stipulated time period is unconstitutional to say the least. The last election to ADCs was held on 01.06.2015 and the term of the Councils was for a period of five years which came to an end in May 2020. However, the State Govt. did not issue notification to hold election till date. The State Govt. would have to hold elections and discharge its Constitutional obligations and as stipulated in section 13(1) of the Act. However, there have been no steps initiated in that direction, instead the State Govt. has put the ADCs in supersession mode since 30-11-2020 and there is an apprehension that it may keep for longer period. The term of the Councils has expired and that the State Govt. is seen to have adopted dilatory tactics to postpone holding of election to ADCs. The State Govt. shall issue notifications for elections at the earliest possible date as per the intention of the Act, failing which the primary spirit of the local bodies will be defeated and left redundant. It is pertinent to mention here the Constitutional provisions regarding duration of Municipalities, etc. enshrined under Article 243U(3)(a) in the Constitution of India 1949 for better examination of Constitutional intention in the matter. "(3) An election to constitute a Municipality shall be complete:- (a) before the expiry of its duration specified in clause (1)"

The dilatory tactics of the State Govt. would destroy the constitutional set up in Part IX. It would also make 13(1) of the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971 totally unworkable, otiose and redundant. The language used in Section 13(1) clearly stipulated that the term of office of ADC members is 5 years which is clear, unambiguous and unequivocal. The proviso to this section is purely for the administrative convenience and not for dilatory tactics. It is, therefore, the decision of the State Govt. shall be revoked at the earliest by upholding the validity of Section 13(1) and comply with the said section and to act in accordance with the constitutional intention in the matter. The relevant provisions shall be interpreted keeping in view the intention of the Legislature in respect of local governance and avoid the dilatory tactics which is unlawful or inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution or of the Act. As quoted in M/S Gujarat Pradesha Panchayat Parishad & Ors. vs State Of Gujarat & Ors., a question similar to one in hand of interpretation of provisions of the Constitution in Part IX-A concerning Municipalities came up for consideration before a Constitution Bench of Hon'ble Apex Court in Kishansing Tomar v. Municipal Corporation of the City of Ahmedabad and Ors., (2006) 8 SCC 352 : JT 2006 (9) SC 320.

(To be contd)

Bards from the dawn-lit mountains: What is the literature of Arunachal Pradesh ?

Yater Nyokir

Situated in the lap of the Himalayas, Arunachal Pradesh is a unifying abode of diverse ethnic communities following their own distinct tongues and cultures. There are 26 major tribes and hundreds of sub tribes with more than 90 languages being spoken. But amidst this plurality, there is one common feature among all the communities, that is that they are great storytellers. Without any authorised script of their own, they preserved their stories of time in their memories and disseminated them through word of mouth. This is how they were passed down to subsequent generations. When they took the form of chants, the stories were narrated by shamans and rhapsodists in social gatherings and at occasions like birth, marriage and at death ceremonies. They were didactic in nature and were meant to teach collective beliefs. When we talk about the literature of Arunachal Pradesh we mean both the oral and the written. Oral literature is a manifestation of folklore and comprises sayings, anecdotes and stories of the origin myths as well as stories of animals and the universe, and of human beliefs and customs. Written literature includes works of fiction, poetry, drama, short stories, in creative interaction with oral literatures. There is an organic relationship between oral and written literature. The twentieth century brought written literature to Arunachal Pradesh. The embrace of modern education stirred the artistic zeal in a few fertile minds and after 1947 we began to see the writings of authors such as Tagang Taki, Lummer Dai, YD Thongchi, Rinchin Norbu Moiba, Samuru Luchang and Kensam Kenglam. They were the first generation of literary luminaries from Arunachal. Lummer Dai's debut novel Pharor Xile Xile (1961) could perhaps be considered the first novel of Arunachal Pradesh, written by an Arunachali. Given the absence of a script, writers of that period faced considerable difficulty in expressing themselves. In those days, Assamese was the medium of instruction in schools and many chose it as their language of writing. Crossing the linguistic bar, these first generation writers, with their versatile and unique stories, made an important contribution in the growth of literature in Arunachal Pradesh. Their works were reflections of social reality. They often looked to folklore as a source for their writing. They derived

unique inspiration from orature, myth, folk belief and customs, and this finds expression in their writings. Thongchi, in Sonam, explores the traditions and customs of Brokpa society. Dai celebrated the ethos of Adi folk life in his novels Paharor Xile Xile, Mon aru Mon, Prithivir Hanhi. The year 1972 was a turning point for language in Arunachal Pradesh. English and Hindi were introduced in schools. English became the medium of learning and Hindi became the lingua franca by gradually replacing Assamese. As a result, those writing in Assamese began to feel a disconnect with the reader and Assamese as a writing language began to disappear. Meanwhile, the growth of education led to people becoming more curious about their history and identity. In 1978, the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act was passed and enacted for the protection and promotion of indigenous culture and faith. As a result, writing on anthropological issues made its appearance. Among the writers here are Tumpak Ete, Osong Ering, Bani Daggen, NN Osik, L Khimhur and many others. Since the introduction of English and Hindi in Arunachal a new generation of writers has emerged. Jumsi Siram's Aye-Aluk (1993) is the first novel in Hindi by an indigenous writer from the State. Yumlam Tana's The Man and the Tiger (1999) and Mamang Dai's The Legend of Pensam (2006) registered the entry of Arunachali writers in the literary canon of English and Hindi and also helped to take Arunachali writings beyond the borders of the State. Mamang Dai re-created the pre-historic past of Arunachal Pradesh in The Legends of Pensam and Black Hills. Jumsi Siram in his novel Matmur Jamoh Gumnam Swantantri Senani re-invented the history of the murder of Captain Noel Williamson leading the Anglo-Abor War of 1911. In the contemporary scenario, reeling under the effect of globalisation, all aspects of culture and tradition have seen dramatic changes, and a kind of cultural amnesia has resulted. People have begun to question the established equilibrium and have started to abandon age-old customs and traditions. The effects of globalisation can also be seen in the shifts in the literary paradigm of Arunachal Pradesh. Oral literature has begun to disappear into a state of oblivion. This friction of globalisation and tradition is reflected in the themes of identity crisis, bucolic nostalgia and confrontation of social issues in

contemporary writings. Mamang Dai bewails in "This Summer" ...begging the forgiveness of butterflies, and beauty that we destroyed in our hunt for life. Yumlam Tana addresses the issue of identity crisis thus: The book of maps says nothing about our lands and forest rights. In recent years a number of young, educated writers have taken their place on the literary scene. What differentiates them from the writers of the first generation is their willingness to experiment with new styles and genres. With their refreshing tales and unique temperament, they have established themselves in the global literary arena. Tai Tagung in his drama, Lapiya, intentionally employed Arunachali Hindi. This has brought the attention of linguists to the Hindi spoken in Arunachal Pradesh. Gumlat Maio's trilogy Once Upon a Time in College is a campus novel. Dai's Stupid Cupid can be described as chick lit. Shaping the destiny of ethnic literature in recent times, there is also another body of writing coming up in indigenous languages. Some important names here are Takop Zirdo, Tony Koyu and Yabin Zirdo. There are also a number of Hindi poets and writers such as Taro Sindik, Jamuna Bini and Joram Yalam who have made a significant contribution to the progress of Hindi literature in Arunachal Pradesh. The work of all writers, whether from the earlier generation, or more recently, draws on and confirms the continuity of the strength of myth and folklore in creative writing in Arunachal. Mamang Dai's anthology The Balm of Time, River Poems, Tana's Man and the Tiger and Wind also sings and LW Bapu's Khanduma's Curse are the explicit assertion of the amalgamation of traditional literature and creativity. The emergence of creative literature in Arunachal Pradesh is a relatively recent phenomenon. With a handful of writers it made its debut in the middle of the 20th century. Within this short journey the many awards and honours won by Arunachali writers speak of their versatility. "Bards from the Dawn-lit Mountains", by Yater Nyokir, excerpted with permission from The Inheritance of Words: Writings from Arunachal Pradesh, edited by Mamang Dai, Zubaan. Scroll.in

Women empowerment through economic independence in Manipur

Thingbaijam Dhamen

Contd from prev issue
It is said that the traditional skill of handloom weaving is not only a status symbol for the womenfolk, but it is an indispensable aspect of socio-economic life in Manipur. As per the National Handloom Census, 1995-96, Manipur has 4.62 lakh

handloom workers (4.25 lakh weavers, 0.29 preparatory, 7,488 dyers & hired which is 2nd position among the top States of the country, 2.81 lakh looms which is 4th position among top States, consuming 12.196 lakh kg of yarn per month which is 7th position among top States and produced 96.07 lakh meters

of handloom fabrics which is also 7th among top States of the country). About 70% of the total weavers are outside the co-operative fold and the remaining 30% are under co-operative fold and a large number of weavers are self-earners. In 2011-12, the Department of Commerce & Industries is envisaged to further broaden and intensify the development of the handloom industry and safeguard the health care of the weavers with impregnation of additional components of the existing programmes/projects while, at the same time, providing adequate funds for State share contribution re-

World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development

Solution to the surging congestion in Imphal : Societal Engineering Approach

N Shyamsundar Singh FIE

Contd from previous issue
Societal Engineering Approach
Societal Engineering is a concept which tries to encapsulate purpose and potential of engineering for development of the society and the nation. The aim of Societal Engineering is to cater to the daily requirement of life with powerful, quantitative and creative problem solving skills of engineers with a view to creating a social consciousness for improving the quality of life and a better society. Now, therefore, further analysis of the man-made hindrance by using Societal Engineering approach will definitely show that the root cause of the problem is the centralization of many a number of activities at a common place. Each of the activities needs its own space and flexibility to adapt to different situations. However, the available facilities do not provide for it. Therefore, the only possible way with which the crisis is surmountable, is the substantial expansion of the capital town which is otherwise very small and congested.

Master Plan
The expansion shall be followed by a detailed survey and demarcation. This activity will enable the planners and the designers to draw a physical map of the Imphal City where a Smart City is proposed to be planned and developed. Without knowing the exact area of the proposed site and also seeing the true pictures of already available components, it may not be possible to prepare a Master Plan of the city. Moreover, without a Master plan which essentially shows Market Area, Institutional Area, Residential Area, Recreation Parks, Hospital Complex, Banks and other public & private official complex etc. development of a Smart City may not be meaningful and perfect. **Recommendations**
1. Capital town is too small to accommodate all activities.
2. Development programmes in the pipeline suggest expansion upto the foothills.
3. Vertical Expansion is not encouraged by Geo-technical studies.

4. A Master Plan that can guide the development of the Smart City is a must.
5. The Master Plan shall be prepared on an approved physical map of the site.
6. Well planned market complex may be developed at Lamlong, Lamphel, Tera, Kwakeithel, Singamei and Kongba etc. through retrofitting.
7. Imphal Ring Road (IRR) alignment may be incorporated in the Master Plan.
8. Implications-financial, political and administrative, may be taken into consideration while finalizing the Master Plan. In addition, valuable services of experienced Architects, Engineers of different disciplines, Academicians and other knowledgeable persons are also required at important relevance. **The writer is Former Chairman, JERC for Manipur & Mizoram**