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Vocal ahead of polls, parties now mum on critical issues
By Our Reporter

SHILLONG, Oct 9: Most political parties, which were vocal ahead of Assembly election on issues afflicting the state, are now maintaining a stony silence on them. The reason, possibly, is that there are no elections in the near future. The next assembly election is four and a half years away while the state is still seven to eight months left for the Lok Sabha election.

The Comptroller and Auditor General, in its report filed on the floor of the assembly, had pointed out various irregularities, worth crores of rupees, but none of the political parties took any interest in questioning the government.

While saying safe, the Congress is up to the Public Accounts Committee to look into the matter. The BJP, which claims to have the policy of zero tolerance to corruption, is silent, perhaps because it is a constituent in the government. Trinamool Congress and Voice of the People Party are also maintaining silence.

Under dispute between Assam and Meghalaya is now with tension flaring at Lapangap recently. However, none of the political parties is raising this issue.

Police to act against illegal donation collectors
By Our Reporter

SHILLONG, Oct 9: A day after the Shillong Times pub-



The rubble of the Yassin Mosque, destroyed in an Israeli airstrike, is seen at Shati refugee camp in Gaza City, on Monday. (PTI)

Gaza will be under siege, says Israel as toll crosses 1,200

There will be no electricity, food or fuel: Tel Aviv

JERUSALEM, Oct 9: Israel's defence minister Yoav Gallant on Monday ordered a "complete siege" of the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, two days after shock attacks by the militant group killed more than 700 Israelis, including soldiers.

Israel formally declared war on Sunday, portending greater fighting ahead, and a possible ground assault into Gaza - a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties. Palestinian militants continued firing barrages of rockets, setting off air raid sirens in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Civilians are already paying a high price. Around 700 people have been killed in

Israel - a staggering toll by the scale of its recent conflicts. Nearly 500 have been killed in Gaza, a tiny, impoverished enclave of 2.3 million Palestinians bordering Israel and Egypt.

Palestinian militant groups claimed to be holding over 130 captives from the Israeli side.

Gallant is currently conducting an operational assessment at IDF (Israel Defence Forces) Southern Command, together with the Head of Southern Command, Yaron Finkelman.

"I have given an order - Gaza will be under complete siege. There will be no electricity, food or fuel [delivered to Gaza]. We are fighting

barbaric [terrorists] and will respond accordingly," Gallant said.

Gaza depends on Israel largely for its basic supplies and such a decision will have far-reaching consequences for 2.3 million people living in the densely populated area.

While Hamas activists looked celebratory on the streets of the coastal territory on Saturday, wary commentators were seen looking to stock up on basic needs speculating about the imminent harsh attack.

The streets of Gaza for the last two days look completely deserted, much like most Israeli towns in the south. (AP) **More on P-10**

Centre flags drop in school enrolment

Closing institutions with 10 students or less is not the solution: Rakkam Sangma

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG, Oct 9: The Ministry of Education has expressed concern over the drastic drop in the enrolment of students in Meghalaya's primary and upper primary schools.

Citing the ministry's data, Education Minister Rakkam A Sangma said on Monday that 168 primary schools in the state have less than 10 students. The enrolment in 101 upper primary schools is equally dismal.

Terming the situation as alarming, he said closing these institutions down would not be the solution as the Meghalaya government would first have to verify the report and find out the reasons for such low enrolment.

"It is a matter of concern and challenge for me," Sangma said.

Regarding the consolidation of schools due to

low enrolment, he acknowledged that some schools have undergone this process. However, he highlighted the impracticality of merging certain schools, especially those located in remote or inaccessible areas.

He pointed out that there are some schools situated atop hills and students face difficulties in travelling 5-10 km to and from these schools.

Sangma, however, said the department will take steps to rationalise the enrolment in these schools.

He also said that two months' salary for the SSA teachers would be released within the next two weeks. The money is expected to be released by the Centre soon.

In a related development, the All Garo Hills SSA School Teachers' Association has urged the state government to release their salaries from

July to September.

Pointing out that Durga Puja festivities are just around the corner and that annual exam fees of their children need to be cleared, the association urged the authorities concerned to release their pending salaries immediately.

'NEP going smoothly in state'

After the initial controversy, Meghalaya has chosen to go ahead with the new National Education Policy, 2020, but organising the funds for improving infrastructure to make it successful is still a worry.

"The NEP is no longer debated. It has been implemented by every college and we are going smoothly," Sangma said, adding that the Centre is supposed to provide assistance for improving the infrastructure of the educational institutions.

MCTA's anti-NEP stir on

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG, Oct 9: The Meghalaya College Teachers' Association (MCTA) remains steadfast in its opposition to the hasty implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, and has decided to continue with its indefinite non-cooperation movement against NEHU.

Speaking to The Shillong Times on Monday, MCTA general secretary Airpeace W Rani said they are continuing with their protest since NEHU has refused to revoke

its July 12 notification directing all affiliated colleges to implement the NEP from the current session.

"Since the protest is on, none of the MCTA teachers are taking classes for the first-semester students," Rani said.

"It looks like the present situation is going to continue for some more time since the first semester is due to end soon," he said.

Rani said the MCTA is waiting for NEHU Vice Chancellor Prabha Shankar Shukla to convene a meeting of the Academic Council at the earliest. (Contd on P-4)

NH-6 disrepair KSU files FIR against NHAI officials
By Our Reporter

SHILLONG, Oct 9: KSU East Jaintia Hills on Monday filed an FIR against the general manager/project director of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for dilapidated NH-6 disrepair. The NHAI is promising to do so within two weeks.

East Jaintia Hills SP Pradeep Singh Dhanoo said district police is examining the FIR.

The complaint said Biju Jyoti Lankar, the Technical manager of NHAI, assured that the stretch Lushimong toll plaza will be repaired within six weeks but no action was taken.

GHADC state call off strike
From Our Correspondent

TURA, Oct 9: Employees of the GHADC under the banner of the Non-Gazetted Employees Association (NGEA) on Monday called off the proposed sit-in, after months' salary were released to them by authorities.

The employees have decided to begin the sit-in on the non-payment of salaries for altogether three months from Tuesday.

"We have called off the protest since the GHADC authorities have released two months of the pending salaries today," NGEA Brijesh Sangma informed.

Sangma said that the employees would continue the agitation at a later date if the authorities do nothing more about their pending dues.

KHADC to address waste woes with funding from World Bank

By Our Reporter

Umkhen, Umpling, Pynthorumkhrah, RRC Mawlai Mawron and Mianten to assess and further develop the solid waste management plan.

MCTA's anti-NEP stir on...

(Contd from P-1) Members of the Academic Council (AC) have requisitioned a special meeting to discuss the alleged inappropriate implementation of the NEP at the under-graduate (UG) level without its approval.

NEHUTA president, Lakhon Kma said the responsible members of the AC are deeply concerned with the act of infringement and violation of the established norms and procedures as per NEHU Act, Statutes and Ordinances.

Kma further maintained that the AC members are not harping on the roll-back of the NEP but on the urgent need to rectify the procedural flaws through discussion and approval.

More than 100 bonafide members of the AC from Shillong and Tura campuses of NEHU have signed the requisition of the special/emergency AC meeting which is much higher than the requirement of one-third of the total members of the AC as per NEHU regulations, Kma said.

Road between Dalu...

(Contd from P-3) Meanwhile, talking about the condition of the road, the deputy commis-

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