

Editorial

Imphal, Monday, August 22, 2016

On rescue mission to make Imphal 'a smart city'

As a prelude to encouraging cities to improve urban, sanitation the Minister of Urban Development (MoUD) had conducted a 'Swachh Survekshan-2-16' survey for the rating of 73 cities in January 2016.

Imphal, the capital city of Manipur ranked in the fifth position. In a bid to scale up the coverage of the ranking exercise and encourage town and cities to actively implement mission initiatives in a timely and innovative manner, the MAHUD now proposes to conduct its second survey to rank 500 cities with a population of one lakh and above under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-U). The mission is to create healthy towns and cities a better and cleaner place to live in. Alongside, the central Government has launched a comprehensive mission "Housing for all by 2022" with a vision to provide each and every family a pucca house with water connection, toilet facilities, 24x7 electricity supply and access by the time India completes 75 years of independence.

Is Imphal prepared for this adventure? Having a clean city and a good all weather houses is easy if we have smart people with clean mind and a good sanitary thinking. People in Imphal particularly or Manipur in general have high ideals of leaving but they have the habit of dumping garbage's, solid waste along the roadside in the trenches, ponds, rivers or open places. Is this the failure of the local or municipal bodies to give Imphal a clean face or the failure of state Government for not having a proper city plan for Imphal. It won't be wrong to say that Manipur is a failed State.

The rescue team is with a team captain, Mr. Gitkumar, Director, MAHUD, Government of Manipur, a visionary who is envisaged with the task of cleaning Imphal city on its way to the goal of making a smart city. The media sensitisation programme of August 14, 2016 at the Manipur Press Club on Sachh Survekshan 2017 and Housing for all 2022 sponsored by MAHUD is a hallmark for the team in acknowledging the role and the importance of media in successfully implementing any scheme or mission launched by the state or the central Government. In the next major step the team led the town planning department and Manipur Urban Development Agency (MUDA) in organising and the sensitization programme for all the councillors and the members of all the 27 wards under the Imphal Municipal Council at the city convention centre on August 21, 2016 in which a deadline was fixed for demand survey by September 20, 2016. The first priority area shall be the declaration of Imphal an open defecation free city.

Nonetheless, dirty politics always play a hidden game in hampering or derailing every project taken up in Manipur. Now is the time the conscientious citizens of Manipur to teach every politician a befitting lesson if they play their election card in implementing Sarchh Survekshan-2017 and Housing for All-2022. We urge the dynamic leader of the team, Mr Gitkumar to reach out to the people to get the goal of making Imphal a smart city as a dutiful public servant

Somalia bombings kill 17 at local govt HQ, market

Mogadishu, Aug 22: A suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden vehicle at the gates of a local government headquarters in Somalia while another bomber targeted a nearby marketplace, killing at least 17 people and wounding more than 30 others, police said. Abdalsalam Yusuf with the police said one bomber rammed the car into a checkpoint in Galkayo town yesterday morning after reaching the main gate of Puntland's local government.

In northern Somalia, controls the northern part of the town, while the southern part is controlled by rival regional state Galmudug.

Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke condemned the twin blasts, saying that "evildoers" had targeted innocent civilians.

The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab group claimed responsibility for the attack. The town, unlike other parts of the country where al-Shabab continues a deadly guerrilla campaign, rarely sees such attacks.

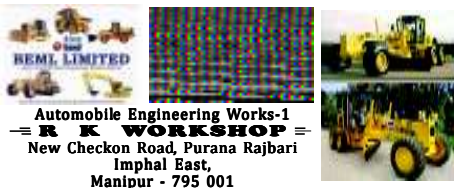
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Missing focus in proposed Manipur Regulation of Non-Local People Act, 2016

By: **Mohammad Imtiyaj Khan and Md. Nasir Khan**
A critical analysis

The bill under section 1(2) seeks to implement the act in whole of the state of Manipur. However, Manipur has areas where schedule 6 is already in place. This brings one to the confusion that if passed, will the act supersede Hill Area Committee provisions? The present form of the draft bill overlooks this issue which will be a point of contest between valley- and hill-based groups, as seen last year. It appears that there is lack of consultation and inclusiveness in drafting the bill. Indias decadal exercise of census is not an inclusive and definitive exercise as experts have time and again highlighted the loopholes, including poor training of surveyors, and connectivity issues keep remote areas out of census.

A base year of 1972 proposed under section 2(b) will be difficult to verify. Although 1972 is much more logical one compared to 1951 (The protection of Manipur peoples bill 2015), it will still be a challenge for local people to prove their domicile. The reasons are many. The literacy rate in 1981 of Manipur was less than 40% and border districts like Senapati and Chandel had less than 35% (Komol Singha, Conflict, State and Education in India: A Study of Manipur, American Journal of Educational Research, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 6, 181-193). Do not judge the awareness level of those decades (1960-1980) by todays wisdom. One needs to consider multiple factors to construct the awareness level. India has been essentially a country with socialist schemes since beginning, but, in those years (1970s), social welfare schemes were limited and concentrated in selected areas leaving out a large section of the deserving population from their entitlements. Unemployment problem remained untamed for decades. Way back in 1990s, educated unemployed youths above 35-40 year-old used to burn down their academic certificates as hopes of employment dried up with age. All these socio-economic characters of those decades point to the fact that general public particularly rural residents didnt have any pressing reason to possess an identity card. The draft bill is kind enough to take this into consideration by mentioning that in case of non-

availability of acceptable identity proof, nearest subsequent year for which record is available can be used as identity proof. Is not it vague? Is it okay with 1981, 1991, 2001? A maximum time limit is needed. The main intention of this draft bill is to regulate entry and exit of non-locals to and from Manipur by issuing a pass. Apart from the obvious reasons to limit the movement because of limited resource that locals are forced to share with non-locals/migrants since 1970s and impending explosion of Manipurs population, we need to understand some sociological reasons for movement. Every person who comes in or goes out does so because of various factors. Since the beginning of 17th century, trans-state population movement in the region has been driven by political truce (e.g., mass influx of Pangals/Muslims), conflicts (e.g., displacement of communities during seven years devastation), tribal/nomadic nature of communities (e.g., hill to plain migration before 1970s and reverse migration after 1970s), and economic considerations (e.g., migrant workers influx after 1970s) (these factors are mentioned at http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/2710/1/212_chapter%204.pdf). In view of this, to say the least, migration or flow of human population is imminent. In fact, human beings are social nomads. From nomadic tribes looking for food, we have evolved to the socio-cultural/religious/economic nomads. A pass to flow of population is against natural evolution and it will not stand the test of time. We believe the main reason why the president of India didnt give assent to the earlier bill (The protection of Manipur peoples bill 2015) was the very unconstitutional nature of the bill which regulates movement of citizens in India. Tribal cultures are bound to give way to more homogenised/monolithic culture. In this global village, it will be a waste of resources and time to regulate movement, issue pass, set up checkpoints. Moreover, migrant workers, who are the main targets, are viewed with a myopic vision by those who drafted this proposed bill. How can one ignore the enormous economic, infrastructure, and technological contributions of migrant workers in Manipur? The bill fails to mention these pluses. From a tourists point

of view, a person who wants to travel to Manipur from Silchar or Kohima will be reluctant to undergo this pass profiling to visit Manipur. So close, yet so inaccessible for them.

This bill proposes for opening up of a directorate for issuing passes to regulate non-locals moving in and out of Manipur. Since the bill intends to bring whole of the state of Manipur under the ambit of the act to be passed, the first question is where will the directorate be located and how many checkpoints will be commissioned. On one hand, in an attempt to be non-local friendly, section 4 (4) lays down a provision for temporary pass to be issued to the applicant to enable her/him to approach the director for redressal of grievance, in case s/he is denied a pass at a checkpoint. However, it is unclear about the validity of such temporary pass. How much s/he can travel using temporary pass? Why there is no mention of the actions liable on non-locals staying without a pass? On the other hand, sections 5(2) and 7 mandate a local person/owner of properties to report every fortnight on the number of non-locals staying/employed in his/her property/business. This is torturous. In addition, penalty of minimum Rs. 2000 will be fined for failing to intimate the directorate about non-locals associated with him/her. We believe this provision will be in conflict with police department who is authorised to maintain such registers. Moreover, these sections will disturb peace of mind of owners and they may be by-default discouraged from letting or leasing out property to non-locals. This may adversely affect Manipur centre-assisted economy, which is by any standard not faring well.

We presume that matters concerning economic blow should be highly accountable. In contrast, section 9 exempts the authorities of the proposed directorate from punishment in the pretext of work done in good faith. This creates room for misusing the provisions in the section. The directorate can break down Manipurs economy. Then, why is their accountability check/system check not included in the bill? It will be quixotic to presume that the efficiency of the registration authority including director, checkpoint, and its sophistication (in the matters of

databases, IT peripherals, connectivity) will be state of the art. What about corruption? Manipur is notorious for unchecked corruption. Even CM O Ibobi Singh last year agreed that there is corruption in Manipurs secretariat. Remember, ration cards, and voters ids are forged. A newspaper report in November 2014 indicated around 3 lakh fake voters in Varanasi alone, at present represented by PM Narendra Modi. Subsequently, EC announced that those were repeated names, not necessarily fake. Such repetitions result from relocation, death and other reasons. Though EC is routinely carrying out physical verification before updating their database, we cannot deny the fact that voters id is not full-proof. In Assam, Bangladeshi fear has led to suspecting residents even if they have ration card deriding the authenticity of ration card as id proof. There is still more clarity needed about the directorates (registration body) powers. For example, what will be its relation with Home ministry of India who will control entry of non-Indians at Moreh or other porous portions of the border with Myanmar? Change the lens

It appears that the drafting committee of this bill are unclear about the aim of this bill. Is ILPS to preserve, protect locals, or isolate them from other states of India? Protection or preservation wont need regulation of flow of migrants or visitors. Only, exclusive land rights to locals will protect them from uprooting, and also prevent overcrowding in Manipur. This is to say that to preserve local culture or character, land should be not sold to non-Manipuris, just like in Himachal Pradesh. For regulating sale/purchase of land, this bill is inappropriate.

The intent and form of the proposed bill is regressive. We need emancipation. Change the lens which gives a bigoted view of the situation in Manipur. Adjust the focus. And you will see that economically, such regulations will be disastrous. (Mohammad Imtiyaj Khan teaches at Gauhati University, Md Nasir Khan is a Development Officer with LIC. MIK is Vice-President and MNK is General Secretary of Manipuri Muslim Online Forum, a not-for-profit registered society.)

National & International News

Swaraj in Myanmar; to hold talks with Suu Kyi

PII
Nay Pyi Daw, Aug 22: External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj arrived here today to hold talks with the top Myanmar leadership, including State Counsellor and Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi, in pursuance of India's 'Act East Policy'. The one-day trip by Swaraj, accompanied by Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and other senior Ministry of External Affairs officials, is the first high profile

Indian visit after Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won a historic landslide election last year that finally brought an end to five decades of military rule. She will call on President U Htin Kyaw, apart from meeting Nobel laureate and democracy icon Suu Kyi, who is the de facto leader. Banned from becoming president by a junta-era Constitution, Suu Kyi has a strong control over the country's first civilian-led government.

The Constitution effectively bans her from the top post as it rules out anyone with foreign-born children or spouses from becoming president — Suu Kyi married and had two sons with a British national. The military also retains control of the key home, defence and border affairs ministries, while 25 per cent of parliamentary seats are reserved for uneducated soldiers. Incidentally, Swaraj's visit comes just days after Suu Kyi made a high-profile trip to China.

3 killed in bridge collapse in China

PII
Beijing, Aug 22: Three people were killed when two vehicles fell into a river after a bridge collapsed in east China's Jiangxi Province. The bridge in Xiushui County collapsed last night when an electric motorcycle and a minibus were passing over it. Two people on the motorcycle were rushed to the county's hospital by rescuers, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Mega Miss North East Meriya Subba to walk the ramp of Lakme Fashion week for Reliance Trends



August 21, 2016: Meriya Subba from Namchi, Sikkim, who won the coveted title of **Sunsilk Mega Miss North East** earlier this year, will soon grace the ramp of Lakme Fashion Week 2016. As a part of her award, Meriya had won an opportunity to walk the ramp of the country's biggest fashion extravaganza **Lakmé Fashion Week** for Reliance Trends in Mumbai. The Reliance Trends show, scheduled to be held at Lakme Fashion Week on 26th August, 2016, will offer Meriya an opportunity to share the ramp with various established models and Bollywood superstars. Meriya Subba was crowned the 14th

Sunsilk Mega Miss North East in a glittering ceremony held at Guwahati in June this year. 18-year-old Meriya is the third young woman from Sikkim to take home the **Sunsilk Mega Miss North East** crown. Meriya, whose parents are school teachers, said that she must thank the people of Northeast for the support and specially her family members who supported her throughout her life. "I owe my success to my parents and mentors. Special thanks **Mega Entertainment**, and especially **Abhijeet Singha**, for helping me live my fairytale. I am so excited for my first international show... This is a dream-come-true moment

for me," said Meriya. **Abhijeet Singha, fashionpreneur and Founder of Mega Entertainment**, spoke during the crowning ceremony. "As in the previous years, this year too our winner Meriya will walk for **Reliance Trends** at the **Lakmé Fashion Week**. She had travelled to Bangalore in July for a two-month-long grooming and training session. She learns so quickly, and has so much potential. We are so proud to see how easily she has assimilated the techniques. It is amazing to see her grow as a professional within such a short span of time. We are as excited for her big day as she is now!"