

# Editorial

Imphal, Tuesday, August 16, 2016

## Insignificant Independence Day

India celebrates 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day yesterday. The day should have been the happiest moment for the entire citizen across the country irrespective of cast, creed, community and gender. The joy of carrying the tricolor flags should have been the moment of joy for almost all of us living in India.

The supposed to be proud moment for each and every one of us turn out to be gloomy day for many people particularly for those living in the state of Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir.

It is 70 years that India got freedom and still half the population never know that that are citizen of free country. Poverty, chauvinism, corrupt practice of bureaucrats and politicians, the Mandarini system, dowry dead, suicide of farmers unable to clear debt still is hot issue for this 70 years old country. Change of government fails to bring any changes. It is nothing different than the same old wine in a new bottle.

On the other hand people in NE states particularly those in Manipur and Nagaland and people of Jammu and Kashmir are treated as second class citizen in this country where proudly declared the world to have the world largest democracy.

In November middle week, 2014, during the 9<sup>th</sup> Asian Summit held at Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had stated that - In a world of Interdependence and globalisation, there is no option but to follow international laws and norms. Again while speaking at Madison Squar Garden, New York city our respected prime Minister had stated that he will scrap outdated law.

The heart touching speech was made by Mr Modi he was barely 100 days in the PMO.

Even though Mr. Modi had shown much interest about the need for following the international law and morns his government still is not a signatory to the Rome statute for setting up of the International Criminal Court. Mr. Modi is still silent in the part of draconian law AFSPA which is outdated.

Imphal Times did not say AFSPA as outdated but it was the former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Former Home Minister Chindambaram and dozens of lawyers, journalist, columnist writers and common people which said that AFSPA is inhumane law and outdated as it was an ordinance established by the then British government to suppress the freedom struggle of that time.

Coming to Manipur, for years people of the state have been witnessing several rebel groups boycotting the Independence Day by freezing all wakes of live under the spell of general strike. The rebels do have their cause in calling the day general strike and most surprising thing the irresponsible attitude of both the state and central government to the calls made on this day. The silence of both the state and central government seems to be a clear indication on the righteousness to the call of the rebel or else why shouldn't there be any statement from the government authority regarding the reasons that the rebels had put forward justifying their cause.

A stitch in time save River Nine - the saying should be well think upon. For someone who wanted to go deep into the genesis of all this chaos arisen out of the conflict we certainly do have reason to blame the Central government authority for all the present state of our state.

In his book "Open Secret", Maloy Krishna Dhar, the then joint director of the SIB, an intelligent agency had categorically stated the political and economic condition of the state. As according to him he had submitted reports on why the youths especially the Meitei had frustration to the merger of the erstwhile Kingdom to the Indian Union terming it as ignorance from the part of the Union government authority. It was in the late 60s that intelligent agency had understood and further cautioned the Union leadership about the possible raise of a separatist movement as an outcome of negligence and proper understanding about the problem of the state. Points here we wanted every guardian of the country's constituency is the need of special attention to the problem of the state. A mere policy for awarding rehabilitation package to some of the rebel groups and signing of peace deal or cease fire is not a lasting solution. Rather it would bring major problem to the state.

A wrong is a wrong, and a right is always right. What is wrong in correcting the wrongs. India now is emerging as a super power and it is not wrong to speculate in the possible interference of external force to distort the country's unity. The only means to strengthen the ties of the country's unity is through proper clarification on what had been committed before. It was a fact that people in the state believed that merger of Manipur with the Indian Union was illegal - a resolution adopted by a peoples' convention held at GM Hall Imphal in 1993.

Now the mindset of the youth had change a lot , no individuals are foot enough to be driven by some cheap provocative propaganda. So it is better the government accept what has happened before and should sort out the conflict with proper understanding. After all, rebels waging war are also human beings.

# World Indigenous Peoples Day: A Commemoration with a Protest at Sendra

By: Mamta Lukram



*in broken syllabi... my daughter which is barely 10 months old got hurt....(breaking down in utter helplessness.... unable to stand and share.... sits down...still continue to sob.... forgetting that it was a sharing) my traumatised daughter cried sleepless nights after the incident"*

The heart wrenching episodes of life seems to have altered the feeble, ignorant selves into undominatable spirits. The prototypic bitter life experiences of being an eviction victim were explored with heavy hearts in a row. Bewildered children with hazy expressions from the prolonged exposure to the trauma were made to fancied cheerful daydreams, culled together and lying idle over a mat in the corner of the shabby makeshift. The denial of access to any basic amenities of life like proper food, education, medical facilities, sanitation etc. transformed the lives of the children into living in an ordeal. The clement weather of frequent rain with humid atmospheric conditions compounded their pathetic plight of vulnerability to sporadic diseases. Most of the little children below 10 years of age are infected either with skin disease, flu or other. One young lady called Moirangthem Mona, quoted a remark of an empty promise made by deceptive leaders convincing them to leave the place;

*" Pigani, noigi leifam pigani, yunfao saraga piba yabani (meaning [free style translation]-will provide, will provide you resettlement; would have provided constructed houses even, if possible). (.....continues.... in an aggressive tone....) then why chasing away people using tear gas shell? The forceful militarisation and brutality they have committed over the helpless ignorant villagers like us is intolerable. Even if we lost our lives in the struggle to protect our land and rights, we will never take a step back. Where should we go? Are we like birds or terrestrial being that can take off any moment? Watching our kids sitting idle when they saw their friends going to school infuriated us that... we can sacrifice our lives for them... all their school books, school dresses and other necessary items have been destroyed in the inhuman destruction. This is our firm final stand that we will never take a single step back from reclaiming our lost land (.....pause a while...breaking....) this is the land*

*we inherit from our forefathers (...sobs....getting touched everyone sob....)"*

According to one of Moirangthem Maipakpi, most of the victims of that eviction are the doubly victimised groups which have already been evicted from Sendra in 2002 and were made to resettle there after arriving at an understanding with the authorities to settle there for good. However the government served a notice to leave the area on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016. On August 3 the concerned officials came up with a large number of police official personnel and started evicting. Scuffle broke out between the villagers and the military personals in the villagers' mere attempt to defend their houses and belongings from being dismantled. Curfew was instantly imposed in that area and during the act of brutalities at least 21 people were injured, some during the eviction, some during the lathi charged by Manipur Police, while others by rubber bullets and tear gas shell. She shared condemning views as:

*"The Day 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016, a nightmarish incident took place in front of us...no one would be as much helpless as a person deduced to mere spectator, who can't stop the merciless dismantling his/her own home....by destroying our houses, they not just simply turn down the concrete walls but ripping apart our intrinsic entirety...."*

The forbidden pages of eviction episodes beckoned the World Indigenous Peoples' Day at Sendra to unfold the life's reality of how people are striving for existence only; leaving behind the equal assessment to educational facilities as a far echo.

**Militarisation, Eviction and conflict** Gender dimension negates the fact that women are weaker than the men. Nevertheless the social virtue apprehends women to be more emotionally weaker than the man. Emotionally breaking down is a matter interpreted very much as a 'women phenomena'. A social trend of imposition is upon men not to break down in public places to glorify the strength of masculinity. Whenever a man breaks down in public, the traditional connotation conveys an in-depth meaning. A man whose family has suffered the scar of eviction twice shared out one of the haunting life experiences in the

eviction; *"my second son stayed at Imphal for his higher studies, when the incident came to light from media report, he returned home the second day of post- eviction.....(.....pauses a while....continue.....) seeing the dismantled house, in vagueness he enquired, 'Baba kadaidano chaggadourisibo' ( meaning; father where is the entrance/ where should I get in?) (...breaks down...summoning courage...pause a while....continues....) The stories of the forceful eviction makes him so restless and an avenging spirit seems to guide him the whole day long....I am much concern about it.....this act of eviction is a metamorphosis of exhuming us from the cuddle of nests...as if we are birds and animals. Such development policies will merely retaliate to more conflicts in the future; it will dump the society in perennial conflict situations....the society will never progress with this type of policies"*

Plundering peoples' lives in the name of development will accentuate chaos in the society. The Development politics primarily focus on the infrastructural development upholding the material culture. Its progress check parameter doesn't accommodate the destruction it causes on the non-material culture. Lives, culture, the intrinsic entirety of the innocent villagers is never a part in the infrastructural development policies. Forceful displacement seems to be the most commonest method deployed in acquiring land for the various projects. Hues and cries from the victimised people cursed every development projects in the state. Development projects thus become the essence of unrest and conflict in the society. Conflict and displacement threats engrossed in the development projects could have minimise through proper consideration of land management patterns of the indigenous communities. It is a critical concern for the development policy framers and stakeholders that traditional cultures and ancestral domains persisted; therefore consultation, resettlement arrangements must be top priority in taking up projects. The need to enquire into the real implementation part of the projects have been ringing aloud since the decades back so one can engineer a way out where development projects took up successfully with the wishes showered from the innocent, ignorant hearts of the marginalised people. As a symbolic support to safeguard and defend the indigenous people's land and resources, without which no children can ever dream of accessing education; the World Indigenous People's Day commemoration at Sendra, Manipur concluded with a Protest slogan of "Uphold Indigenous People's Rights over their Land and Resources in Manipur."

## Rio Olympics 2016

### Kidambi Srikanth, PV Sindhu win, but path gets much trickier

India's Kidambi Srikanth and PV Sindhu, both seeded ninth in their respective singles events, produced commanding performances against higher ranked opponents at the RioCentro Pavilion on Monday. Both shuttlers have advanced to the pre-quarterfinals, and kept alive the Indian challenge at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

In a hugely entertaining encounter that pitted Srikanth's unbridled aggression against the retrieving skills of fifth-seeded Dane Jan Jorgensen, the Indian managed to just about keep his nose ahead, to notch up a straight-sets triumph at 21-19, 21-19.

The speedy Srikanth expended a lot of energy in going on an all-out attacking spree against a player known to have one of the best

defences on the international badminton circuit, and kept peppering the sidelines, particularly on the forehand side, with powerful and well-directed smashes, following them up with net rushes to put away even slightly weak returns.

It was a carefully calculated strategy, but one that could have backfired if the match had gone to a decider, for the 23-year-old Indian would have found it hard to match the stamina and stonewalling tactics of the doughty Danish star. But Srikanth managed to pull back from a 14-17 deficit in the second game, kept pace with Jorgensen until 18-all, and then unleashed a high-risk, no holds barred attack to bag the all important winning point, much to the delight of coach Pillela Gopichand. The otherwise poker-faced national

coach showed rare emotion at court-side, exchanging a bear hug with his ward, his face wreathed in a huge grin of delight.

Sindhu was far more convincing against the redoubtable No 8 seed, Tai Tzu-ying of Taiwan, and notched up a facile 21-13, 21-15 triumph. The margin of victory could have been even more comprehensive had Sindhu not suffered end of match nerves, which is becoming worryingly common for the 21-year-old. At match point on 20-12, she allowed the Taiwan girl to claw back a few points.

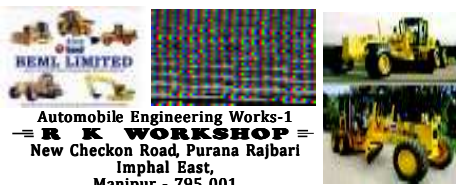
She perfectly read Tai's deceptive strokes, doing far better than her more illustrious compatriot Saina Nehwal, who has lost to the Taiwanese opponent on the last six occasions that the two have met.

Sindhu's ability to reach Tai's deadly overhead crosscourt drops and counter them either with tight dribbles or late flat pushes to the forehand baseline completely threw the No 8 seed off her rhythm.

The dominating strokemaker that she is, Tai looked utterly disconcerted by the sheer number of shuttles that kept coming back over the net in unexpected spots. Sindhu often assumed total control of the rallies, making Tai do all the chasing. From the initial even jousting until 5-all, Sindhu put on a spurt that gave her a handy 11-6 lead at the break. Though Tai managed to reduce the deficit and come within striking distance at 13-15, Sindhu stepped up a gear and left her bewildered rival floundering in her wake as she streaked to the tape

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