

Editorial

Imphal, Tuesday, February 2, 2016

When normalcy is still a dream

Almost every member of a society aspires to lead a peaceful, normal and progressive life, taking up jobs that enable them to provide livelihood for themselves and their loved ones. This necessary social atmosphere however has remained an elusive dream for most of us, as those who are supposed to ensure the peace and security of a society is still being regarded with caution and distrust by the common public. The assertion by the Deputy Chief Minister who is also in charge of the Home department that the law and order situation in the State has improved considerably merits some credibility. The rise in the number of armed insurgent groups who are willing to lay down arms to try out a political solution to their grievances and visions are an encouraging indication of the growing acceptance and inclination towards mutually acceptable solutions to the myriad problems and hindrances afflicting our present day society. It would, however, be a bit too early and premature to gloat about the developments and to rest on the inadequate and still uncertain positive aspects of it all. A large number of armed personnel of the state are dutifully and conscientiously discharging their sworn duties of protecting and securing the peace of the society, and yet a handful of disruptive and rowdy elements in the state armed personnel have caused a rift between the public and the police as a whole. While it is unfortunate and undesirable, yet the outcome couldn't have been any other way. The excessive and unnecessary use of force and show of power as practiced by a few State police personnel is the reason for the suspicious and hesitant mindset of the public when it comes to dealing with the Police. Only time and consistent efforts on the part of the concerned authorities can hope to win back the trust and understanding of the public. Yet recent developments in which Head Constable Herojit, one of the accused in the 2003 fake encounter have repeatedly confessed and reiterated his statements is a clear indication of the redundant and indifferent law and order system in the State. It is evident that the Government has neither learnt nor attempted to address such deviations and aberrations in the society. Meanwhile, the fear psychosis that has been deeply ingrained in the minds of the public will take a long and arduous effort to be erased from their minds. The onus of endearing themselves to the public and to win their support and acceptance rests entirely on these parties whose trigger happy image as portrayed needs to be changed and altered significantly. But above all, a firm yet committed form of governance coupled with the capacity to see through the promises made, with the tenacity and an earnest attitude towards making a visible change in their approach towards alleviating the society and a willingness to admit and atone for the errors made is a prime requisite at the moment. After all, a great leader should be an astute follower of the wishes and aspirations of the common people. The public will not have to wait much longer now to decide if they really have what it takes to walk the talk.

Students' protest outside Delhi Police headquarters

ANI
New Delhi, Feb. 2: Scores of students from different political wings on Tuesday staged a protest outside the Delhi Police headquarters against an incident of alleged cop brutality with students protesting outside the RSS headquarters in Jhandewalan with regard to the suicide of Dalit research scholar Rohith Vemula. Students from the All India Students' Association (AISA), Prantikari Yuva Sangathan (KYS) protested shouting slogans against the Delhi Police. The Delhi Police is facing their ire after a two-day-old video surfaced showing them in police uniform, and even in civil dress, ruthlessly beating up some students. The students targeted in the video were reportedly protesting against the tragic death of Hyderabad University Dalit scholar Vemula. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took to Twitter to express his ire over the incident, saying that the Delhi Police was being used as a private army by the BJP and the RSS. Kejriwal also attacked the Narendra Modi government, accusing it of being "at war with students all across".

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Of Yoga, culture and domination

If the idea of calling Ramadev 'a yawllooi' is analyzed in our social or historical position, it can be taken as one of the many ways of displaying how deeply we have been rooted to Indic values. It also implicitly points to the changing locus of domination, that is, from economic realm to cultural realm.

We all know that, we have lived for years with a borrowed identity singing 'JOYO JOYO RADHE GOVINDORADHE' or 'JOYJAYA JAGANATHE' overshadowing who we actually were; and now we have reached the acme of an unsurpassable domination where it no longer needs deliberate actions on the parts of (Indian) ruling class that we are dominating ourselves in the name of 'Bharat Mata'.

In the debate some of my friends who have often been dubbed as 'Meitei-centric' or 'religious-fanatic' shared a powerful idea reorienting the debate to a subjective direction recalling us the importance of the understanding the subjective elements of social life with special reference to Kanglei life at both individual and cultural levels, while they are still acknowledging the dialectical relationship between economic base and cultural superstructure.

In so doing, the debate seems to have integrated idealistic concerns of subjectivity with an objective structure of economic base outlining how cultural life relates to the political economy they are living with.

Though it would be a tall claim to say that they seek to restructure Marxian theory shifting the locus of domination from economic realm to cultural realm, they seem to have demystified the fact that, at a particular stage in the development of a capitalist society superstructures tend to become instrument of domination, more powerful than the economic base as put by critical theorists.

Now, it is more than clear that we have come to dominate ourselves in the name of larger Indian socio-cultural fold. And if the publicity heralding the coming of Ramdev is anything to go by, we can evidently say that there are some among us who are wittingly or unwittingly catalyzing the process of mutation already set in motion.

Besides, the idea of encouraging our sons and daughters to learn Vedic ideals via yoga says a lot more than just cooing or to a dying to people like Baba Ramdeva who in every sense or definition is no less peripatetic than Santidas Goshai who once strangulated Kanglei way of living way back in 1709.

Here I would like to tip off those who still have the guts to live as 'being ourselves' rather than 'being-others' about the fact that we have reached to such a stage of cultural domination where some of us will no longer perceive the domination as damaging or alienating, instead they will rather think as if they are living the way it is supposed to be. In other words, they have coopted and internalized values which have taken as alien and foreign to our socio-cultural life by us.

Though we are thinking to shift our interest to a concern with cultural superstructure rather than with the economic base, nevertheless we can still claim that if taken economic activities of a group of people as a culture in itself, that economic determinist were never wrong in focusing on economic realm while studying the development or collapsing of a society, here Kanglei society.

So, we do not fail to see how feeding ourselves with imported grain and wearing clothes woven outside twist our arm to cling to their cultural life when every set of our means of production has fallen off our hands in the post-merger period. But the necessity of shifting our interest to a concern with cultural superstructure has been spawned

by numerous assaults on the Meitei sensibility and traditional values in recent time by what can be described as external influence. And some of us has already started identifying themselves with imported values rejecting values constituting who we are.

Re-observing what has so far been observed, we, at least, come know that, the more we internalize 'other's way of life', the more we are nearing to what we call 'KhangulMatpa'.

In addition, the series of distorted ideas conceived in our mind about almost everything beginning from our idea of sexuality, political immorality and even social mores seem to have pointed to the need of such a shift.

If you observe a little deeper you will evidently see how the process of Sanskritization distorted cultural contour of Kangleipak in the post-merger period and how that distortion led to the disappearance of cultural contradiction between Kangleiyets and Indian mainlanders.

Now the False consciousness about ourselves have pervaded in every mind of Kangleicha that all social classes including layman besides political elites benefited from the system have been ardent supporters of mainland India's cultural onslaught. So we have been compelled to look at cultural superstructure while searching for the major source domination.

To the previously discussed ideas can be added another set of concerns, the most notable of which is legitimization—this system of idea generated by Indian political system to support the existence of their system of domination, often false and obfuscating. They have designed idea systems to mystify the system to make us unclear exactly what is happening.

Here I would like to quote what Akhu Chingangbam, a Kanglei singer-songwriter, wrote in his Facebook post, the post wrote as under:

They killed the poorest of the poor
And passed the judgment
Inside the classy court room
In some foreign language

That the mother has no clue about.
The killer got a medal from Delhi
The post-mortem report was forgotten.....

The death certificate kept travelling
From desk to desk looking for justice.
When we cut into the sentence,
"they killed the poorest of the poor
and passed the judgment inside the classy court room in some foreign language that the mother has no clue about", we see how they mystify

their system and prevent us from knowing what exactly is happening to us.

Now our people get used to it, and they no longer identify themselves as a member of a culturally marginalized group of people. They think that everything goes well, and it is the way it ought to be. This can be called "the culture of silence" or "culture of hopelessness" as Paulo Freire puts. They have reached the point critical domination and the domination itself has been their life—the way they ought to live.

They prefer chanting Hare Rama Hare Krishna to struggling to regain their lost humanity, a struggle that would make them more fully human. True, if they remain singing and chanting "Hare Ram Hare Krishna, there will be no AK 47 pointing at their heads. May be, in doing so, they could probably earn money and peace, a kind of peace often clothed in false generosity.

And this view gives us the reason why some of us seem so happy while heralding the news of Baba Ramadev's "Five-day-Manipur-visit" without thinking anything about its possible negative impact on our culture which has already been trapped in Hindi heartland's cultural onslaught launched in the name of 'unity in diversity'.

I am really concerned about our young boys and girls how they have been impacted by this cultural domination. Not only they have been culturally divorced, they have also been made not to have allegiance to their culture which is made to be hated from the very inception thus delinking them from 'who they are'.

It even distorts the idea of 'Leibknecht' or to love his/her nation, and this gives me the reason to introspect why the threat to Kanglei national identity can be traced back to our inability to check the inflow of alien values from the mainland India. That is why we the people of Kangleipak fail to develop a revolutionary consciousness, a consciousness that will enable us to rediscover ourselves from within our own being. So, my appeal to Kanglei people is 'please know the reality and be out of the cage. Let's know the reality, or else ours will be a lost nation in the next few decades. So let's think out of the box and help one another in uplifting our consciousness to a level of revolutionary consciousness allowing ourselves to understand the domination as the eventual cause of the failure while developing revolutionary consciousness among us.

How rich is Prime Minister Modi?

The value of these rings has come down slightly from Rs 1.21 lakh since last disclosure as on August 18, 2014. The latest disclosures are updated till January 30, 2016, as per the PMO website.

Modi's investments include L&T Infra Bonds (Tax Saving) worth Rs 20,000, as also National Savings Certificates worth about Rs 5.45 lakh and life insurance policies worth Rs 1.99 lakh, taking the total value of his movable assets to Rs 41.15 lakh. The immovable assets include one-fourth part in a residential property in Gandhinagar and his share is 3,531.45 square feet with a built-up area of 169.81 square feet. Stating that this was not an "inherited property", the disclosure mentions the date of purchase as October 25, 2002.

The cost of purchase has been disclosed as Rs 1,30,488 while the "investment on the land by way of development construction, etc" has been shown as Rs 2,47,208. The "approximate current market value" of the property has been disclosed as Rs 1 crore. This puts the total appreciation at over 25-times over the cost of the property and the investment made there in over 13 years since the purchase. Modi's bank deposits include Rs 94,093 with SBI and Rs 30,347 with Rajkot Nagrik Sahkari Coop Bank Ltd. Besides, he had fixed deposits totalling Rs 30,72,017 with SBI. He has no agricultural land, nor any commercial real estate property. Regarding assets of his wife Jashodaben, the disclosure states "not known".

Lanka observing World Wetlands Day today

ANI
Colombo, Feb. 2 : Sri Lanka has planned national and regional events to mark World Wetlands Day, which falls on February 2nd.

The Daily Star reported that the date marks the 1971 adoption of the Ramsar Convention, an intergovernmental treaty that helps protect wetlands, reached in Ramsar, Iran.

In Sri Lanka, the national ceremony to mark the World Wetlands Day will be held at the premises of Mangrove Conservation Project of the Sudeesa (formerly known as Small Fishers Federation of Lanka) at Chilaw today. President Maithripala Sirisena will grace the occasion as the chief guest. The theme for this year is 'Let's protect wetlands for the future for a sustainable living'.

Contd. from previous issue

History of Manipur as reflected in the socio-cultural ties of hills & plain

(6) Adoration of Sanamahi and Leimaren :

As far as the household deities like Sanamahi and Leimaren is concerned the Chothe, Kabui, Koireng, Kom had practised the worshipping of such deities like the Meiteis did at one point of time i.e. before the advent of Christianity. It will be pertinent to note that the Chothes also followed the same custom giving emphasis to local deity worship. It is one customary law other than they have such several similar customs and tradition with other fellow tribes. It is obligatory for a newly married daughter-in-law as soon as she enters the house of her husband for the first time, to pay homage to Ima Leimaren and then to Sanamahi. Adoring of Sanamahi is still retained among the Chothes.

(7) Seven Clanned Societies :

The system of clan arrangement among the Chothe, Maring, Anal, Tangkhul, Kom, Moyon-Monshang, Koireng societies are divided into seven clans like the Meiteis and the Kabuis, such as

also Mangang, Luwang, Khuman, Angom, Khaba-Nganba, Moirang and Sarang Leishangthem practices of marriage restriction within the same clan is also practised among the Chothes and Kabuis.

(8) Wangbrel - Shangu Tradition :

Wangbrel, one of the nine deities who protect the south direction married an Anal lady named Shangu of Anal Khullen Wangbrel was the God of Water even today homage is regularly paid at the Shrine, erecting two stones of which the bigger one symbolises Wangbrel while the smaller symbolizing Shangu. Gangmumei, a noted historian maintained that on the basis of Wangbrel-Shangu tradition, some claim is made of the village as having a hoary antiquity of 2000 years which appeared a conjectural work. Thus, this legend plays a significant role in the historical development as well as in the socio-cultural ties among the inhabitants of Manipur in particular. Reasons for drawing such conclusion may be attributed to the - tradition of common origin

prevalent among the hill tribes that the Meiteis were their descendants; the linguistic affinity between the Meitei, Naga and Kuki-Chin people that exists as established by Grierson; close connection of some Meitei clans that exists with the hill tribes who were in close proximity of their habitat; striking similarity of the coronation costumes of the royal couple with that of some Naga tribes; and architecture of the coronation halls of the Kanglei with the ritual houses of the Chiefs of the Naga tribes.

Tribal origin of the Meitei clans was strongly opposed by some writers in the 19th and 20th centuries mainly on the ground that there was no legend or tradition among the Meiteis to substantiate their common origin with the tribes. Nevertheless, instances are galore that there are migrations of some individual Meitei heroes or families in the hills who absorbed themselves into the societies of tribes in whichever they might choose to be converted into.

(To be contd.)