

Editorial

Imphal, Thursday, June 2, 2016

Need for strategic changes

The greater Imphal area saw a large turnout of voters eager to exercise their universal suffrage right from the time the polling started, and is still continuing unabated. Contrary to initial apprehensions about this day, there have not been reports of any major disruptions in the polling process so far. The state government, anticipating attempts to disturb the normal polling activities from various quarters in the backdrop of the intensifying agitations for implementation of the Inner Line Permit system in the state by various civil organisations and students bodies, have already declared all 189 polling stations across the 20 wards of Imphal West District and 9 out of 66 polling stations in 7 wards across Imphal East as hyper-sensitive areas, 21 as sensitive and 36 as normal out of a total of 255 polling stations and appropriate security arrangements taken up with 945 polling personnel, around 1325 security personnel, 6 Sector Magistrate assigned duty in Imphal west and 330 polling personnel, 35 reserve will be manned in Imphal East. Seven armed and unarmed security personnel are being deployed for each polling station, including two women police.

The unexpectedly large turnout and the relative peace at the polling stations across the two valley districts have displayed the inherent trust and hope the people of the state still repose on the political system to bring about a positive change in their personal lives and the society. The matter-of-fact attitude by the public when it comes to exercising their voting rights have also driven home the point that given a fair opportunity, the public will take a peaceful and considered approach to airing their grievances and letting their complaints known rather than the alternatives which further disrupts and affects the laymen much more than the high ranking bureaucrats, politicians and officials who are well-ensconced and insulated from the destruction and mayhem purportedly carried out to disrupt their official activities. The toll on the public, and more significantly on the bleak prospects for the future generation cannot be stressed enough. The protracted method of using brute force and overwhelming with sheer number to press any issue forward may have worked on many counts. But there definitely has to be another way - an alternative that minimize the negative and harmful fallout of such collective emotional outbursts yet have a more profound impact on the issue, not for this instance alone, but as a means that will shift the focus on the efficacy rather than the sustainability of the issue which will set the trend for the future as well. Every individual under democracy has the right to protest, but when such protests and agitations usurps the individual freedoms or rights of another more than for those to whom such protests and agitations are being targeted at, then such a means would eventually prove to be the detrimental factor preventing the issue from reaching its logical conclusion. The state government and the representatives of the people being what they are, it is time to exercise restraint and follow the head rather than give in to the pent-up emotions and momentary impulses.

National News

Broad gauge service to roll from Agartala by this June

ANI Agartala, June 2: General Manager of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) H.K. Jaggi on Thursday said that the Broad Gauge (BG) rail service will be inaugurated by the second or third week of this month from Agartala. He was speaking to media at the state secretariat after meeting Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and Transport Minister Manik Day before finalizing the date of the inauguration of the BG service. The NFR GM had arrived here to review the preparation for flagging off BG train service from Agartala and inspection of the Agartala-Udaipur line said that due to heavy rain followed by landslide there has been damage of the rail line in the Silchar-Lumding sector and which

is delaying the inauguration. On the Agartala-Akhaura (Indo-Bangla) railway project, Jaggi said the Ministry Of Development Of North Eastern Region has already released the first instalment of Rs 150 crore out of the total Rs 580 crores and by this month NFR is likely to get the fund and after which land acquisition work in the India part shall start. He informed that out of the total 15 km international rail project the 5 km India part of the project will cost around Rs 580 crores which will be totally borne by NEC while the remaining 10 km in Bangladesh will cost Rs 360 crores to be funded by the India External Affairs Ministry. Jaggi further added he had requested the Tripura government to expedite the process of land acquisition for timely completion of the project.

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Is PM Modi making Manipur Assembly's ILP as anti-Indian.....

2) **ILP is a leaderless and not individual centric public movement. It is not civil societies' movement only.**

ILP movement in Manipur is a public movement, it is a movement of the entire people of Manipur all by themselves and for themselves so that their existence in India under the Indian Constitution becomes constitutionally possible and realistically pragmatic. To present the movement as for some civil societies or social organisations or some individual social leaders or representatives of some NGOs would be dishonor to the people of Manipur and mockery to Manipur Assembly which has passed the bills. Even if the entire civil societies or non-governmental organisations of Manipur become non-existent or dysfunctional, still the people of Manipur will demand and voice for their democratic rights to grant a constitutional protection of them and their land and resources under the Indian Constitution because the movement is leaderless, as it is purely public, in nature meant for the entire people of Manipur.

3) **Who is the police officer whose "direct" statements are quoted and published in The Indian Express' article?**

In the aforementioned article, it writes: *"But this is the first time we have photographic evidence of this. This photograph is new and we know to be authentic... (the militia) was funding the inner line permit movement, but since the convenor is taking the oath of allegiance it shows that they are not just sympathisers, but what we call OGWs or overground workers. This makes the Convenor of the civil society) a cadre member of the (militia)."* said the official. The name of the militia is explicitly mentioned in The Indian Express' article but neither Prime Minister's Office nor Chief Minister's Office confirms the name of the militia or whether there was such involvement of militia with regard to passing of the Manipur's 3 bills.

The argumentative questions after reading this direct statement of the police official - who is introduced by The Indian Express in the article as "a Manipur police officer who told The Indian Express that the (militia)'s involvement in the movement is known to the police, the IB and the government" are the following.

- (a) How can Manipur Governor send the Manipur's 3 bills, which - according to the Manipur police official - has the involvement of militia and such involvement is also known to Intelligence Bureau too, to the President of India?
- (b) How has ILP movement become an individual centric movement or leader based movement as it is a leaderless public movement?
- (c) How can Manipur Chief Minister and the Congress Government pass any bill which is engineered, backed and dictated by militia and the involvement of militia in the bill is also known to the state police department and government led by none other than the same Chief Minister leading the same Congress Government of Manipur?
- (d) How can Manipur Assembly Speaker entertain any bill in which the making of the bill involves militia and the information of such involvement is also known not only to Intelligence Bureau but also state police and government?
- (e) Was not Manipur Governor advised not to send the bills to New Delhi by Prime Minister's Office if Intelligence Bureau already knew about the

involvement of such militia in passing the bill? Did not Prime Minister's Office know from Intelligence Bureau much before the passing of the bills, and therefore did not the BJP party under whose prime ministership PMO functions know it? Or, is it that there is a thick and high wall between a party and a government?

(g) Is the police officer not working in the same police department of Manipur which, according to the police officer, knew the involvement of militia and the name of the militia but did not act?

(h) Has the police officer taken a prior official permission from Director General of Police of Manipur to communicate to media? If so, then has the Director General of Police taken the same permission from the Home Minister of Manipur? If so, then has the Home Minister of Manipur given the permission officially, in writing, to the DGP to pass on to the police officer concerned to communicate to media on the issue of the name of militia, justification of the photo being shared on media as authentic and new, involvement of militia in Manipur Assembly's passing of ILP bills and also to the extent of stating that not only the state police department but also the entire Government of Manipur and Intelligence Bureau knew about such involvement but did nothing? Who gave the police officer an official permission to represent the Home Department of Manipur, Government of Manipur and Intelligence Bureau of India? The article also quotes the police officer's direct statement which is given below.

He added that the police would not act on it until the state government sanctioned an operation. "This is not a simple issue. The government needs to give approval."

The argument, here, is - there is a difference between the state government's approval for an operation related to militia and the state government's concern with regard to Manipur's 3 bills because the two are disjunctively different issues, because the former, the operation related concerns, is an issue of law and order while the latter, the passing and converting of the passed bills into act by the President of India, is an issue which needs constitutional approval by the **Rasthrpati** and which is nothing to do with law and order issue of the state of Manipur. How can a law and order issue of Manipur, which is purely a state subject as an item in State List in the Indian Constitution, become comparable to an issue, which is to be decided by the President of India whose consent is required?

4) **The Indian Express article quotes confidential IB report but fails to produce it.**

The Indian Express, in its article, mentions the following: *"A confidential report of the IB last year, reported by The Indian Express, had said the (militia) was suspected to be behind the protests for inner line permits that had stalled life in Manipur, especially Imphal city, for the past few years."* There is a blue coloured mark on the name "The Indian Express" and the blue coloured mark means that another weblink (or hyperlink - a link from a hypertext document to another location, activated by clicking on a highlighted word or image) is attached so that when it is clicked, the next weblink will direct to the mentioned "a confidential report of the IB last year", but when the name "The

Indian Express", with its blue colour to show that there is a further additional referred link, is clicked the link directs to only the website of The Indian Express and not to the confidential IB report, as mentioned in the article. Usually, the blue colour is to show the reference and not to give the link to the official website of the same magazine or newspaper in which the article is published because it does not make sense to link the same magazine's website as a reference with blue colour in the midst of the article which discusses a serious "IB's confidential report".

So, The Indian Express fails to produce the confidential report of the IB, which the article has quoted and used it as a strong reference to prove that the militia was suspected to be behind the protests for inner line permits in Manipur. The failure of The Indian Express to produce its own reference, which has been used and cited to prove the justification of the content of the article, is also a proof to justify that the contents of the article published in The Indian Express, with regard to ILP in Manipur in the very aforementioned article, are totally baseless and concocted with heavily vested interests (timed exactly and precisely just before the visit of all political parties of Manipur team led by Chief Minister to New Delhi to meet Prime Minister Modi so that the Chief Minister of Manipur and Manipur Assembly become a mockery when they come to New Delhi, in the eyes of New Delhi's media.

How does Prime Minister Narendra Modi make an attempt to ridicule Manipur Assembly and Manipur Chief Minister in New Delhi?

If Indian Intelligence Bureau already knew, as it is so reported in The Indian Express in the said article, then what is Prime Minister's Office doing about the bills sent by the Governor of Manipur to New Delhi? Why is such article with such a photo of some individuals being timely leaked and spread out on social media and within hours, get published on The Indian Express just 24 hours before the visit of Chief Minister with his team to New Delhi? Why was not the photo published by The Indian Express in May 16 or one month back or one year back, why is it published just before 24 hours of the visit of the team led by Chief Minister to New Delhi on ILP in Manipur? If IB knew it, why did not IB act on it? If IB knew it, then it is imperative that Prime Minister Modi also knew it, then, why Prime Minister Modi knew it, then why was he keeping quiet, why can't the ensue to find out the truth behind? The entire governmental mechanism is all there to investigate. Why should not the photo be investigated? Why should not NIA be made to find out the militia and the links with the militia in passing the Manipur's 3 bills? Why is Prime Minister silent till today on Manipur's ILP when Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland have ILP? The silence of PM Modi is a sign that both PM Modi and his government and his party, BJP, are not at all serious about the protection of the indigenous people of Manipur, the rights of the indigenous people of Manipur, the honour of the people of Manipur and the dignity of Manipur Assembly. If Prime Minister Modi can not tell the nation that whether militia's involvement was there in passing the Manipur's 3 bills or not in Manipur then the Prime Minister is not only

serious about the people of Manipur but also about the national security of India. If Prime Minister Modi can not order an inquiry to investigate the authenticity of the photo and contents of the article published in The Indian Express which ridicule the people of Manipur and make Manipur's elected representatives as stooge of militia, then the Prime Minister himself is not even considering to have a slightest honour and respect for the indigenous people of Manipur. If Prime Minister does not order for an investigation to find out the truth behind the confidential IB report, as mentioned in The Indian Express, then merely rejecting the Manipur's 3 bills will be read, perceived and understood as nothing but a complete neglect of Manipur by the Prime Minister, and therefore, a leader who neglects Manipur shall not even dream of witnessing the lotus to bloom in Manipur in 2017. The failure to convert Manipur's 3 bills into act and implement ILP in Manipur by New Delhi will be an undoubted justification of the dusk and end of BJP in Manipur. Merely making an attempt to make a mockery of Chief Minister of Manipur, by presenting him as someone who - under the pressure of militia - has initiated the bills to be passed by Manipur Assembly, by none other than the BJP with its leader PM Modi will only make the people of Manipur realise the hidden agenda of BJP and the hidden agenda of BJP is nothing but BJP in New Delhi is in total opposition to the genuine voices of the indigenous people of Manipur - the demand to bring ILP in Manipur just like in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram.

Conclusion

The future of Manipur lies in the future of the indigenous people of Manipur. Manipur, without its indigenous people, will be like a mere geographical, commercial and political territory of India without the consciousness of Manipur-ness and if that happens - which is likely to happen if ILP in Manipur fails to get implemented as soon as possible - then the very fundamental philosophy of "Unity in Diversities" of India will become "Unity in Uniformity" and that, which is "Unity in Uniformity", will certainly result in a deliberate and well designed manufacturing of patterns that will unfailingly lead to the contradiction of the very foundation of India which was, which is, and which will be "Unity in Diversities" only, and thereby the contradiction will re-question the philosophy of modern India and its founding leaders' philosophies. Without ILP in Manipur, the future of India's Unity in Diversities will be replaced by India's Unity in Uniformity. Is India ready for "Unity in Uniformity"? Certainly, BJP can and should and will be ready for "Unity in Uniformity" but not the people of Manipur, and the people of multi-diverse and pluralistic modern India. Therefore, India, if she has to remain as Mother India, can only remain so if and only if the very fundamental philosophy of the making of modern India is intact and that fundamental philosophy is - "Unity in Diversities". One of the justifications to prove the vibrant existence of that fundamental philosophy, in India, today is to convert the Manipur's 3 bills into act and implement ILP in Manipur. Otherwise, BJP and its leader the Prime Minister Modi will be remembered in the political history by the people of Manipur as the epitome of "Unity in Uniformity to destroy "Unity in Diversities" in India.

Contd. from yesterday issue

Our common crisis : What are we to do?

Can we do anything that can make a difference in our situation is always the question. It should be asked to keep us realistic. From my own experience I know that if we simply decide to be "The change you want to see in the world", as Gandhiji put it, more things happen in unexpected ways than we can imagine or understand. There is a verse in the Gita that says we are to do what we know is our duty leaving the results in His hands. There is more in this truth than we realize. I shall cite two statements of conviction and commitment given to the world from the Middle East. The first one: Landrum Bolling was a scholar, journalist and a widely respected worker for peace between Israelis and Arabs. He wrote, "The real issue, significant for everyone, is whether the sterile negative of today's life in the middle east, by which all men are imperiled, can be converted to a pattern of human co-operation not yet known or seen among men. This is

not sentimental nonsense if we can believe that there are no hopeless situations, but only hopeless men." The second one: In the third week of May this year the highly popular annual Euro-Vision musical extravaganza was held in Norway. An Israeli actress-singer and a Palestinian Arab actress singer sang together in the competition projecting their common dreams for their peoples. They were not strictly from within Europe. But that was not questioned by anybody. They did not win the first prize but they stole the show by their vibrant presence and their sheer courage in taking a common stand. They said they were taking part in the contest to signal to their own peoples and to the world their conviction that "There must be another way" and it could not be abandoned, the way of "acknowledgment of one another's right to exist", apologizing for the wounds and hurts inflicted to one another and "sharing" in the building of a common future. They were demonstrating what converting the "sterile negative of

today's life" in their devastated region to human co-operation would entail. If there is to be another way, a better way, in all situations of prolonged disorder, distrust, vengeful hatred, despair and violence, the "sterile negative" in situations like ours in our region also has to be addressed with the seriousness that the problem deserves. "Sterile" according to the dictionary means, "barren, fruitless, incapable of producing offspring, results, ideas...". Is not this barrenness, this pervasive sterility that breeds despair and evil, one of the explanations of our crisis also? We should know in what ways we are a part of the sterility and learn simply to end it for the sake of our common future we must build together. I shall conclude what I have tried to convey by restating the main points of my talk: * The quality of our response to the challenges and needs in our crisis decides the quality of our people and our society. This dictum of history allows

no concessions. * Evil is born and it becomes malignant when normal human failures and shortcomings, or mistakes and wrongs done, are denied, defended or justified because of pride, fear or selfishness. Hurts not transformed are then transferred causing wider damage. "The most terrible process of all is not the war-making that takes lives and villages and towns, but the irrevocable damages to the majority who survive. The killing may stop... But societies undermined by distrust, and burdened with criminalized economies do not recover". (Martin Wollacott, writing in 1998 on the disaster that overtook the former Yugoslavia). * Sustainability of our ideas and plans for solutions to our problems depends on our acceptance of reality and the ethical, moral soundness of the values we live by. (Concluded) (The write up was presented by the author on 4th Annual Arambam Somendra Memorial Lecture held at Imphal on 10/06/09).