

Editorial

Imphal, Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Facing the flaks

If a week is a long time in politics—then fifteen years is eternity. The vagaries of politics and the fact that things change very quickly has been proved otherwise in the context of the state of Manipur as social unrest, disruptions and public protests have been the order of the day for as long as one cares to remember. Despite the protracted scramble for development and progress in a comprehensive manner, the irregular spurts of activities, especially last minute frenzies and haphazard efforts still defines the work culture of the present government with precious little emphasis on smoothening the ever present ethnic and communal conflicts and confusions. The unfortunate and undesirable situation everyone is experiencing in the society today is evidently a culmination of the built-up of the long neglected issues and problems much of which could have been avoided or dispensed off had the authorities been proactive and took up the matter in time. The way things stand now, most of the issues plaguing the society and are being dumped on the state government are ones which will not have a single or ideal solution, given the arbitrary nature of the issues themselves. The situation is aggravated by the very nature in which the state government and the authorities are handling the matter, playing to the gallery and continuing with its power and popular politics instead of critically engaging with the society, accountability and citizens in the conventional and newer spheres of administration so that it can adapt to the changing preferences, sensibilities and aspirations of the people in the state.

As of today, the state is beset with protests, agitations and pressures from every quarter. The intensifying agitations and protests for implementation of ILP system in the state, the various JACs clamoring for justice for various crimes, the increasingly vocal objection to the demand for the ILP system by various tribal bodies, and the ensuing agitations against inaction by the government regarding the candidates who have passed the examination for the selection of policemen have collectively brought the state to a standstill, and in all probability, things are destined to get worse.

The unfolding social conditions have rendered the idea of a normal life a thing of the past. Children have been subjected to uncertainties and exposed to the ugly truth of public protests and destructive mob mentalities—aberrations which should have been kept at bay but are now a part of their young lives. Every development activities have come to a standstill, widening the already distant gap in development with the rest of the country. The government should stop pandering to the destructive forces or pacify the vocal demands and shake off the air of despondency. It is time to take a resolute stand and deliver its decisions. It should be prepared to face whatever repercussions such actions might incur. It is time to assert authority and decisiveness before things get out of hand. Soon.

Opposing STdemand: an insulated world view not crossing Sekmai

By : Kh Ibomcha

Amidst frenzied war of words between STub-thumpers and anti-ST campaigners as widely seen on social networking sites, on May 3, 2016 in "ISTV GI AYUKSIDA", giving comment on STDCM's campaign to get the Meitei enlisted as ST under article 342(1) of the Indian constitution, a renowned senior journalist retorted that the campaign could never be translated into reality as it is nothing but "mee gi chakluka khujai thanjinba" (likening the move towards sort of ruse aiming to snatch the quotas, reservation and scholarship from the hill people.

"In certain phase of human history we were also tribe, but it has been long since we lost tribal traits by dint of Kanglei national identity formation process started from the time of Pakhangba, more than 2000 years ago. Well, does it talk any sense to go all these years back to history to get listed in ST?" said he, continuing his oratorio leaving me completely disoriented and flummoxed.

I still find it difficult to relate myself to his words. The word 'we' he used while making his argument does not seem to include 'hill settlers' subliminally projecting highlanders and valley settlers as two disjoint groups putting an end to the idea of 'hill-valley machine-manau'. Yes! He left out 'chingmees' from his idea of Kanglei.

I was really terrified by his words seemingly loaded with implicit class interest to lord it over 'chingmee' that may give birth to several other unpredicted issues rendering certain efforts to reconstruct an inclusive Kanglei meaningless and empty leading to grim possibility of experiencing a cold war having potentials to get 'chings' permanently severed off our cartography.

Regrettably, he seems to fail to bring himself home of the fact that exclusion of hill-settlers, or rather 'chingmee' from our idea of Manipur or Kanglei also entails a bitter sense of Chopping off the proverbial 'Chinglon Mapal' from

the territorial identity of Kanglei. We imagine justifying hill people's political demands to curve out their own political space with a map truncating out of present Kanglei physical map.

To put in simple words, if we do not think 'chingmees' as our own people, how can we think 'chings' as land?

If what he said in the discussion is anything to go by, it more than clear that their idea of Kanglei never crossed beyond Sekmai in the north, Kangvai in the south, Yaingampokpi in the east and Keithelmaibi in the west.

Reading between the lines, I cannot help but suspect if those opposing the demand represents the voice of a class—a voice excluding the interest of the people feeding hand to mouth, worst impacted by present socio-economic set up. This privileged class or rather social elites, in trying to maintain their honored social position and sphere of influence, seem to put down efforts to delude people into believing that their stance represents the interest of common people.

Yes, in Manipur, even this simple and innocuous word 'people' implies the body that carries the dominant voice of the social elites where people like the journalist I mentioned above belongs to, choking off voices representing common people—the most suppressed group within the system.

As they stand as a group of people representing creamy layer of the society, most benefited from the system with a social status standing above others, they often fail to see the miserable life we are leading. They seem to be extremely worried about their dignity if Meitei becomes ST while there are people wishing if they only could provide their children with two meals a day. Now the question is, "by opposing ST Demand whose interest are you representing? Whether the interest of those 'Bolero riders' living in big mansions, or the interest of those parents living in huts who cannot even send their children to a

government school to buy education?

So, this write up can be taken as a modest attempt to pull out those trapped into the vortex of hierarchical Indian structure that hascosolossally eroded their rationalities failing to differentiate what's right from what's not thus making them think to identify themselves under their own brother's image as something irrational,unwise and politically incorrect.

Besides, I often hear arguments made by Anti-ST-demand campaigners basically espousing schemes deceitfully crafted by Indian mainlanders aiming at quarantining 'ching' from 'Tam'.

So goes their basic argument: enlistment of Meitei in ST list of India is similar to snatching hill settler's economic opportunities given by Delhi. What's exposed with their argument is the fact that, they instead of instead of giving fitting response to the challenges we have been thrown into, they are dancing to the big other's tune.

To let themselves know whether their argument as respects snatching the quotas from hill people stands to reason or not, I would like to humbly request Anti-ST campaigners to refer to Article 16(4) of Indian constitution where it empowers state to create quota within quota.

My point is that the ST reservation quotas being enjoyed by hill people in Manipur will continue to be fortified under article 16(4) as done in case of Nagaland where ST is divided into advanced Tribe and backward tribe with different quotas. As they have already known about this clause, my question is 'why all these mind-numbing croaking'.

It seems that Indian policy of 'divide and rule' has profoundly seeped into their psychic structure that they begin to think it undable to stand on an equal footing to chingmee people. Toenable themselves perpetually on our neck, India needs to decouple 'ching' from 'tam', but ironically these anti-St demand

campaigners think that in decoupling themselves from 'chingmee' lies Kanglei national pride. Kicking where it hurts most, some intellectuals supporting Anti-ST group reason that most of valley-dwellers will turn down the move as they neverlike tagging themselves with such label as tribe taking on the tag as a brand used to denote inferior human groups.

Infusing such deceptive ideas about 'tribe' into innocent minds of Kanglei people, they try to make people think Pro-tribe's attempt to locate meiteis where his elder brother has been positioned under Indian constitution as a stratagem to relegate Meitei's socio-political status.

Merely looking at previous paragraphs, one can easily see how they look down upon hill people dubbing them as a group far inferior to Meiteis. If such perception about hill-settlers is anything to go by, it is more than clear that they (Anti ST status demand campaigners) still achingly want to lord it over hill dwellers which 'chingmees' hate most—the central cause of axiomatic Ching-Tam dichotomy.

'We were tribe and will remain a tribe' is the key rallying point on which STDCM frames its demand to get Meitei included in ST list of Indian constitution. But this demand put up by STDCM was spewed out by Anti-ST Campaigners saying that Tribal society is a temporary society fated to be died out with contemporaneousness in the same line as defined by ILO convention No.107 of 1957.

(To be cont.....) *(Disclaimer—the views expressed here is purely of the author and has not reflected the ideas of team Imphal Times. This is one first article which directly argued the stand of team Imphal Times on the issue for demand of Scheduled Tribe status for Meitei/Meetei. We welcome all constructive argument as we believe that seeing all loopholes is the only means to make some good decision. Editor)*

MANIPUR LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT NOTIFICATION

Imphal, the 10th May, 2016

No. 11(25)/2014-LA(E) AUCTION : It is hereby informed to all approved firms of the Assembly Secretariat that the following condemned official vehicles of this Assembly Secretariat are going to be disposed of on Auction Sale on 16-05-2016:

Sl. No.	Type of Vehicle	Regd. No.
1	Elantra Car	MN01W – 0218
2	Esteem Car	MN01K – 4750
3	Cosmo Bus	MN01K – 1610
4	Ambassador Car	MN01K – 2750
5	Ambassador Car	MN01K – 7300
6	Auto Ricksaw	MN01M – 4654

Therefore, the intending approved firms of this Assembly Secretariat may apply for bidding for the auction sale of the above listed vehicles on or before 13-04-2016.

Sd/-
G Tapankumar Sharma
Deputy Secretary(Admn),
Manipur Legislative Assembly

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National & International News

Bangladesh hangs Jamaat chief Motiur Rahman for 1971 war crimes

Reuters Dhaka, May 11: Bangladesh hanged Islamist party leader Motiur Rahman Nizami on Wednesday for genocide and other crimes committed during the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan, the law minister said, risking an angry reaction from his supporters.

Nizami, head of the Jamaat-e-Islami party, was hanged at Dhaka Central jail just after midnight, Law Minister Anisul Haq told Reuters, after the Supreme Court rejected his final plea against a death sentence imposed by a special tribunal for genocide, rape and orchestrating the massacre of top intellectuals during the war. Nizami, 73, a former legislator and minister during opposition leader Khaleda Zia's last term as prime minister, was sentenced to death in 2014.

Hundreds of people flooded the streets of the capital, Dhaka, to cheer the execution. "We have waited for this day for a long 45 years," said war veteran Akram Hossain. "Justice has finally been served." But the war crimes tribunal set up by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in 2010 has sparked violence and drawn criticism from opposition politicians, including leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, that it is victimising Hasina's political opponents.

Thousands of extra police and border guards were deployed in Dhaka and other major cities. Previous similar judgments and executions have triggered violence that killed around 200 people, mainly Jamaat activists and police.

Five opposition politicians, including four Jamaat-e-Islami leaders, have been executed since late 2013 after being convicted by

the tribunal. **STRIKE CALL** Jamaat-e-Islami, which has said the charges against Nizami were baseless, called for a nationwide strike on Wednesday in protest. Calling Nizami a "martyr", it said he was deprived of justice and made a victim of a political vendetta.

The U.S. State Department said that while it supported justice being carried out for the 1971 atrocities, it was vital that the trials of those accused are free, fair and transparent and conducted in accordance with international agreements.

"While we have seen limited progress in some cases, we still believe that further improvements to the ... process could ensure these proceedings meet domestic and international obligations," State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau said in a statement. "Until these obligations can be consistently met, we have concerns about proceeding with executions." About three million people were killed, the government says, and thousands of women were raped during the 1971 war in which some factions, including the Jamaat-e-Islami, opposed the break from what was then called West Pakistan. The party denies that its leaders committed any atrocities.

International human rights groups say the tribunal's procedures fall short of international standards. The government denies the accusations. The execution comes as the Muslim-majority nation suffers a surge in militant violence in which atheist bloggers, academics, religious minorities and foreign aid workers have been killed. In April alone, five people, including

a university teacher, two gay activists and a Hindu, were hacked to death by suspected Islamist militants. International human rights groups

say a climate of intolerance in Bangladeshi politics has both motivated and provided cover for perpetrators of crimes of religious hatred.

Army Jawan killed in encounter in J&K's Kupwara

PTI Srinagar, May 11: A jawan was on Wednesday killed in an encounter with militants in a forest area of Kupwara district in north Kashmir, police said. The jawan identified as Om Veer Singh was injured in the encounter and was rushed to

hospital where he was declared brought dead, a police official said. Security forces had launched an anti-militancy operation in Watsar forests in Handwara area of the district last night following information about the presence of militants there, the official said.

Car bombing in Baghdad kills 14 people

AP Baghdad, May 11: Iraqi officials say a car bomb explosion in a commercial, predominantly Shiite neighborhood of Baghdad was killed at least 14 people. A police officer says the explosives-laden car went off today at a crowded outdoor market in Baghdad's eastern district of Sadr City. The explosion also wounded up to 40 people, several seriously, and there are fears the death toll will rise.

Two medical officials confirmed the casualty figures. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they are not authorized to release information. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, which bore the hallmarks of the extremist Islamic State group that has been behind recent deadly attacks in the area. IS also controls significant areas in northern and western Iraq, including the second-largest city of Mosul.

Two Naxals gunned down in encounter with security forces in Sukma

ANI Sukma (Chhattisgarh), May 11: Two Naxals were gunned down by the security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma District on Wednesday. Several rounds of ammunition and arms, along with Naxal literature, was also recovered from the slain naxals.

On Saturday, at least two Naxals were killed in an encounter with police in Katakalyana area of insurgency hit-Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. Maoists operate in at least 20 states but are most active in the forested areas of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand and Maharashtra.